CITIES AND CULTURES

Edited by Sara Brandellero, Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues, Derek Pardue

Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces

Cultural Encounters after Dusk

Amsterdam
University
Press

Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces

Cities and Cultures

Cities and Cultures is an interdisciplinary book series concerned with all forms of cultural expression, practice, and transformation associated with modern and contemporary cities. Global and comparative in scope, the series takes a special interest in the urban-cultural dimensions of inequality, sustainability, technology, and creativity.

Series editors
Christoph Lindner, Royal College of Art

Advisory Board
Ackbar Abbas, University of California, Irvine
Myria Georgiou, London School of Economics and Political Science
Derek Gregory, University of British Columbia
Mona Harb, American University of Beirut
Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, University of Lincoln
Shirley Jordan, Newcastle University
Nicole Kalms, Monash University
Geoffrey Kantaris, University of Cambridge
Brandi Thompson Summers, University of California, Berkeley
Ginette Verstraete, VU University Amsterdam
Richard J. Williams, University of Edinburgh

Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces

Cultural Encounters after Dusk

Edited by
Sara Brandellero,
Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues
and Derek Pardue

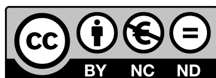
Amsterdam University Press

The publication of this book is made possible by a grant from the European Commission through the Humanities in the European Research Area programme (grant number 2.060) as well as financial support of Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society and Aarhus Univeristy. Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg (HWK) Institute of Advances Studies supported the development of this book through research fellowships awarded to Brandellero and Pardue.

Cover illustration: JM Alkmim

Cover design: Coördesign, Leiden
Lay-out: Crius Group, Hulshout

ISBN 978 90 4855 874 2
e-ISBN 978 90 4855 875 9
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742
NUR 906



Creative Commons License CC BY NC ND
(http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0)

© All authors / Amsterdam University Press B.V., Amsterdam 2025

Some rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, any part of this book may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise).

Every effort has been made to obtain permission to use all copyrighted illustrations reproduced in this book. Nonetheless, whosoever believes to have rights to this material is advised to contact the publisher.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations 7

Introduction 11
Sara Brandellero, Derek Pardue and Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues

I Urban Policy, (Self-)Governance and Infrastructures of the Night

1. Dark Practices: Sensing the City After Dusk 21
Nick Dunn
2. Spaces to Cope, to Connect and to Relax for Refugee Youth 37
Ilse van Liempt
3. Queer Spheres: Making and Un-making Worlds and Nations through London's LGBTQ+ Night Spaces 53
Ben Campkin
4. Planning for Nocturnal Cultural Encounters 75
Marion Roberts
5. A Nightnography of Food Couriers: Precarity and Inequality in After Dark Platform Work 89
Julius-Cezar MacQuarie
6. Transformers of the Urban Night: Platform Work, Migration and Smart City 111
Laura-Solmaz Litschel
7. Digital Day Labourers—Sleepless in the Gig Economy 127
Laura-Solmaz Litschel

II Cultural Narratives and Experiences of the Diverse Urban Nightlife

8. Pandemic Dusks 135
Derek Pardue
9. Spaces of Night-Time Encounter: Nocturnal Politics in Global Cinema, 2018–2022 143
Will Straw

10. Music within Nocturnal Constellations: A Photo Essay from Two Irish Cities 159
Ailbhe Kenny and Katie Young
11. (De)migrant(izing) Music Nights: Intergenerational Cultural Flows and Transnational Belonging in the Rotterdam Cabo Verdean Diaspora 167
Seger Kersbergen and Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues
12. Tejo Bar: A Portal for the Cosmopolitics of Musicking 183
Alcides J. D. Lopes
13. Night Spaces as *Terreiros*: The Case of Amsterdam's Theatre Munganga as Ground for Intercultural Citizenship 201
Sara Brandellero and Francianne dos Santos Velho
14. Let's Night Draw! Darkness and Light in the Urban Night 219
Chantal Meng

III Contested Cities

Afterword 237
Adam Eldridge

Index 253

List of Illustrations

Fig. 2.1.	Dressing up and going to the city centre as a way to feel at home.	42
Fig. 2.2.	Yallah Yallah party in Amsterdam.	45
Fig. 2.3.	Kickboxing as a way to cope with stress.	47
Fig. 3.1.	The City of Quebec.	57
Fig. 3.2.	Drawing and history of The City of Quebec displayed inside the pub.	58
Fig. 3.3.	The Chateau, showing stained glass with biblical scenes.	64
Fig. 3.4.	Turkish Delight, The Glory, screenshot of website documentation of events, 2017–2018. Courtesy Queer Art Projects.	67
Fig. 5.1.	Johnathan with author in a McDonalds in South-East London, past midnight.	96
Fig. 5.2.	The Deliveroo device that Özcan and other couriers are using shows the only available outlets open past midnight in the light purple colour and in sexagonal shapes. The clock shows eight minutes past midnight. The device also displays the “Not busy” message sent by the algorithm-based system. These kinds of messages are updated every five minutes. The algorithm’s advice to couriers in a “not busy” area is to try “exploring other areas nearby” with busier restaurants.	100
Fig. 5.3.	Three Deliveroo food couriers waiting for orders in the City of Cork.	101
Fig. 6.1.	Advertising of the food delivery service Gorillas.	118
Fig. 6.2.	Food delivery service advertising in Berlin Neukölln and Kreuzberg.	119
Fig. 7.1.	Broken app-driven mobility machines.	129
Fig. 7.2.	Lieferando driver in Neukölln at dusk.	129
Fig. 7.3.	Escooters under the stars at the Brandenburg Gate.	130
Fig. 7.4.	‘Hallo Berlin’: Platform Labour as Arrival Infrastructures.	130
Fig. 7.5.	Saving Time: Three in one go.	130
Fig. 7.6.	Intersections: Collecting Escooter in the parcel service van.	130
Fig. 7.7.	Old and New: Midnight at Gendarmenmarkt.	131
Fig. 7.8.	So fast, almost invisible.	131
Fig. 7.9.	Night worker: Solitude of the night.	131

Fig. 7.10.	Gamification? Items are collected in the city.	131
Fig. 8.1.	Side of building in Lisbon, November 2020.	136
Fig. 8.2.	Lisbon street, November 2020.	137
Fig. 8.3.	Amadora, Lisbon metro area, December 2020.	138
Fig. 8.4.	Night walk in Lisbon, December 2020.	138
Fig. 8.5.	Barreiro, southside of Tagus River, Lisbon metro area, November 2020.	140
Fig. 8.6.	Amadora, Lisbon metro area, December 2020.	140
Fig. 9.1.	Illuminated windows. Les Olympiades (2021)	145
Fig. 9.2.	The night of storytelling begins. La Nuit des Rois (2020)	150
Fig. 9.3.	Longa Noite (2021). The forest as container of popular history	154
Fig. 10.1.	Viybz event. Rappers, hip hop artists and DJs perform in an expansive, multi-level space; this space used to be a cinema in the form of the Pavilion building in Cork (and following the closure of Dali during the pandemic, the space has now reopened as a renovated cinema space). The sunken dance floor bridges the DJ booth on stage and the bar above.	161
Fig. 10.2.	Touché performs at Róisín Dubh for the “Save Theo” fundraiser in January 2020, an event protesting the deportation order for Theo, a musician and rapper in the Galway community. With the stage in the corner of the downstairs portion of this famous Galway music venue and pub, the crowd forms a semi-circle facing the stage as Theo raps and talks about his experiences living in Galway. Mixed within the crowd are other Galway-based musicians who at different points in the night have gone on stage to perform in support of Theo.	162
Fig. 10.3.	The beginning of a Good Music night at Cyprus Avenue in Cork in January 2020. In the cold winter night, it takes some time for the crowd to arrive, yet the slow start does not deter dancers from coming onto the dance floor as the first performer sets up his DJ gear in order to warm up for subsequent performers. Later in the night, rappers arrive and perform in between DJ sets, as the dance floor expands with night revellers.	162
Fig. 10.4.	A community in motion at an AfroMusic Night at Áras na nGael in February 2020, with DJ Black MC performing his DJ set. Community members move in and out	

of the small venue space, dancing and engaging with Black MC and with each other. 163
Fig. 10.5. A snapshot of the Edison cocktail bar in Cork; this small, L-shaped venue is lined by a well-lit pedestrian lane. Night walkers moving through the city pause for a drink and a chat in this intimate space while listening to DJ Safarii's set. 163
Fig. 12.1. Entrance to Tejo Bar. 193
Fig. 12.2. Night performance at Tejo Bar. 195
Fig. 13.1. Making-of: Carlos and Claudia give an interview at the theatre's cafe. Behind them, you can see posters of their past productions. 208
Fig. 13.2. Munganga's theatre facade. From: *MUNGANGA* (2022) – a documentary. 210
Fig. 13.3 & Fig. 13.4. Rhythms of the samba are performed across Mungaga's stage as the audience enjoys the music, swaying and twirling in a dance. From: *MUNGANGA* (2022) – a documentary. 212
Fig. 13.5. Pajé Kamarati's words bring the audience into a moment of reflection on Noke Koi's indigenous people's experiences in Brazil. From: *MUNGANGA* (2022) – a documentary. 215
Fig. 14.1. Night Drawing Event — Pier 35. New York, 2019. 220
Fig. 14.2. Night Drawing Event — Mile End Park. London, 2018. 221
Fig. 14.3. Night Drawing Event — Brooklyn Bridge Park. New York, 2021. 222
Fig. 14.4. Night Drawing Event — Washington Square Park. New York, 2021. 223
Fig. 14.5. Night Drawing Event — Staten Island Ferry. New York, 2022. 224
Fig. 14.6. Night Drawing Event — Mile End Park. London, 2018. 225
Fig. 14.7. Night Drawing Event — Mile End Park. London, 2018. 226
Fig. 14.8. Night Drawing Event — Pier 35. New York, 2019. 227
Fig. 14.9. Sketches made by various participants at different Night Drawing events. London/New York, 2018–22. 228
Fig. 14.10. Night Drawing Event — Pier 35. New York, 2019. 229

Introduction

Sara Brandellero, Derek Pardue and Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues

The urban night has been viewed, experienced, narrated and imagined in diverse and complexly entangled ways. For a long time it has caused suspicion in authorities concerned with law and order and has struck horror in lonely street walkers fearful of the surrounding darkness. It has equally appealed to revellers out and about in the small hours and inspired writers and poets with its twilight and flickering shadows, while providing work opportunities to the city's invisible workers of the "after hours." *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk* brings together a collection of essays that capture the multifarious nature of the urban night, by discussing how it is lived, structured, and reflected upon in diverse cultural and artistic expressions.

This volume places the urban night as an often-overlooked key dimension necessary to understand the complexities of today's urban spaces. Indeed, the book argues that many of the questions around multicultural living together and the often-polarizing question of migration, can only be fully grasped if they are considered within the context of circadian rhythms. After dusk, we argue, urban social challenges are often magnified, as questions of who can be where and when—along ethnic, racial or gender lines, for example—gain an additional dimension.

Historically, the night has been associated with danger and threats to both public order and personal safety, elements sometimes exploited to police and restrict access to public spaces after dark. This volume, however, pays special attention to how the city "after hours" becomes an important setting for socialization and exchange between diverse groups and communities. As the title of this volume indicates, our findings show that the urban night is a site of contested spaces, where some groups are still more vulnerable, but it is also an important site of cultural and intercultural encounters and exchange, and one that has a key role in galvanizing social inclusion.

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_INTRO

The origins of this book lie in a European-wide collaborative research project entitled *Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe* (NITE), carried out between 2019 and 2022, which undertook a transdisciplinary mapping of public spaces at night and their relationship with migration in eight European cities. NITE aimed to consider how experiences of migration and the stories that emerge from them played out in public spaces at night, and can productively inform current and future debates, policies and practices, contending that important lessons can be drawn from everyday socio-cultural interactions in night-time public spaces for "living with difference" (Bauman 2010) at local, national and transnational levels. NITE investigated traditional public spaces (streets, squares) in relation to private spaces, alongside semi-public commercial and cultural venues (cultural centres; bars and nightclubs; hotels) and new virtual spaces (digital apps). The range of spaces covered in this volume reflects our project's ambition to deepen our understanding of urban spaces by considering diverse settings in the often-overlooked night-time hours. As such, it considered nocturnal public spaces as sites of belonging and intercultural exchange, acknowledging the "worlding" (Roy and Ong 2011) of European cities. As our findings demonstrated, night spaces play key roles in community building, fostering a sense of belonging, promoting creativity and self-expression. They are intrinsic parts of the fabric and heritage of urban lives. Building on our original project, this volume provides a socio-cultural investigation of material, symbolic and virtual public spaces in night-time urban settings, many of which are associated with and produced by groups with diverse experiences of migration. This volume, thus, contextualizes a range of European urban spaces with global transnational dynamics.

Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces is divided into two sections, encompassing and highlighting the diverse approaches to experiencing, governing and studying urban nightlife: "Urban Policy, (Self-)Governance and Infrastructures of the Night" and "Cultural Narratives and Experiences of the Diverse Urban Nightlife." This structure underscores the multidimensionality of night spaces, where bottom-up, grassroot initiatives provide opportunities for self-expression by traditionally marginalized and silenced groups. The chapters of this book span disciplines of urbanism and urban history, literary, film and cultural studies, music, sociology of labour, anthropology of migration, alongside autoethnographic contributions and practice-based photo essays by artists for whom the night is their habitual setting and canvas. This volume's transdisciplinary methodological approaches include fieldwork-based research, policy analysis and close cultural analysis of a variety of cultural artifacts in different media. Together, the

chapters highlight how night-time culture (e.g., music, film, digital platforms, performance) opens up new opportunities and spaces of belonging and intercultural understanding. In this way, this volume aims to encourage an appreciation of the urban night beyond traditional associations of night-time with potential danger or disorder. The focus of the book also looks beyond an increasing emphasis that is being given to the financial value of the "night-time economy," which Eldridge and Smith (2019) have duly acknowledged as an important dimension of urban tourism.

Without overlooking the fact that harnessing the potential of the night-time economy is an important factor for consideration in discussions on the urban development and policy, it is also true that its increasing significance raises a number of contentious issues. These relate to regulation of leisure activities "after hours" as well as to a growing night-time labour sector, the latter often including some of society's most vulnerable workers. With this in mind, this volume considers night-time in both its associations with leisure and labour. Indeed, it highlights how night-time employment is, more often than not, carried out by workers with a migrant background, frequently relegated to social invisibility. We argue that governance of the night cannot be fully successful without due attention to the diverse experiences and cultural expressions that make up the complex mesh of cities after dusk.

The first section, "Urban Policy, (Self-)Governance and Infrastructures of the Night", is, thus, focused on issues of (self-)governance and infrastructures that enable or, on the contrary, constrain cultural production and consumption. It includes attention to recent developments in online and offline labour in our 24/7 society, and to how these impact on community dynamics, facilitating the creation of spaces for negotiating structural forms of exclusion and discrimination as well forming new networks of solidarity. Contributors to this section reflect on how cities at night foster, or have the potential of fostering, an inclusive society. These chapters address issues of social justice, asking how it is or can be reached and supported by formal and bottom-up infrastructures.

There are two dominant approaches in this section: fieldwork-based approach and policy analysis. The former is comprised of a heterogenous mix of urban anthropological and sociological participant-based fieldwork as well as specific forms of notetaking via nightwalking. Policy analysis in this context consists of close readings of municipal governmentality measures or urban planning. What unites these chapters is a concern with experienced inclusion, as opposed to what is a merely rhetorical inclusion grounded in neoliberal logics of capitalism or common-sense notions of citizenship.

Section one opens with Nick Dunn's chapter, "Dark Practices: Sensing the City After Dusk," an exploration of nightwalking as a method to engage with traditionally invisible cityscapes and the individuals and groups that frequent them. The chapter unearth*s* the nocturnal experiences and needs of the diverse urban population and sets out a methodology for how we might redesign the city after dusk to be a more convivial and inclusive place. Ilse van Liempt's chapter, too, focuses on the importance of nocturnal experiences for creating a sense of belonging. In "Spaces to Cope, to Connect and to Relax for Refugee Youth," van Liempt zooms in on the perspective of newly arrived refugee youth, who forge their connections to the city of Amsterdam at night. After dusk, these newcomers interface with the city on their own terms, beyond the formal infrastructures offered by the local administration. The conviviality of urban nights emerges here as an important dimension to experiences of arrival and placemaking. While van Liempt addresses bottom-up, creative and subjective ways of navigating the city and its multicultural social texture, Ben Campkin's chapter "Queer Spheres: Making and Un-making Worlds and Nations through London's LGBTQ+ Night Spaces" focuses on London as a case study to understand how campaigners have used local and national planning and heritage tools in attempts to safeguard or re-provide LGBTQ+ venues. Indeed, this chapter shows how more mobile and transient queer nightlife events proliferated and how these have vital functions in sustaining LGBTQ+ populations. This helps us understand how and why LGBTQ+ populations create, hold, lose, or relinquish night spaces within global city dynamics. This policy-oriented approach is built upon in Marion Roberts' chapter, "Planning for Nocturnal Cultural Encounters," *which is centred on questions of* inclusivity in night-time urban planning in the UK. The chapter identifies failures in night-time planning and urban design in England and Wales when it comes to taking into account the needs of Black and minority ethnic groups. Roberts' research homes in on a notable exception to this pattern in the case of London's Night Time Enterprise Zones. Looking at the planning and design policies concerning nocturnal activity that were implemented in the Greater London Area between 2016 and 2022, the chapter reveals their progressive character as well as the limitations that call for further action.

The last two chapters of this section focus on gig work in the night-time economy of European smart cities and provide answers to Robert's call for more empirical research on nocturnal cultural experiences of marginalized communities. Julius-Cezar MacQuarie's chapter, "A Nightnography of Food Couriers: Precarity and Inequality in After Dark Platform Work," explores the social inequalities experienced by migrants working as food couriers

in London and Cork, while Laura-Solmaz Litschel's "Transformers of the Urban Night: Platform Work, Migration and Smart City" takes the case study of Berlin's established platform sector to explore how delivery services and maintenance of e-scooters impacts urban space and challenges the day-night binary. Both chapters, therefore, highlight the precarity and exploitation that sustains much of what is now taken for granted in the 24/7 smart city. The section closes with a photo essay by Litschel, which documents the encounters that the researcher experienced during night-time fieldwork. It also critically reflects on the condition of the smart city at night. This creative visual reflection invites readers to appreciate the value of cultural representations of the night as a form of critical inquiry, a bridge to the subsequent section of the volume.

The second section of this volume, "Cultural Narratives and Experiences of the Diverse Urban Nightlife," focuses on the cultural expressions, affects and experiences that the urban night-time elicits. The night constitutes an "atmosphere," as a cadre of geographers have discussed (e.g., Anderson 2009; Brennan 2004; Shaw 2014), which is felt and thus produces meaningful connections between spaces and embodied experiences. The diverse nature of these connections is investigated in this section through analyses of a range of media, including music, theatre and film. Held in common among the authors in this section is the notion that darkness and "the night" are both routinized as a regular feature of existence and ephemeral as a highly variable play on our senses that embodies becoming. Art allows us to assess, perform, and share becoming while darkness ("the night") provide energies and sensorial feedback to foster new possibilities of becoming. Artistic practices, as implicit in this section, can be thus forms of theoretical practices.

In "Pandemic Dusks," Derek Pardue reflects on how the evenings during the recent Covid-19 pandemic facilitated a kind of sharing, albeit a guarded sharing. The chapter bridges social theory, fiction, and auto-ethnographic writing, to create a prose piece that attempts to recreate the feeling or "sensorial landscapes" produced by dusk and darkness. Moving from lived experience to representations of the night, Will Straw's chapter "Spaces of Night-Time Encounter: Nocturnal Politics in Global Cinema, 2018–2022" interprets the night as a rich resource for contemporary cinema that affords a range of aesthetic qualities and provides a canvas for a range of socio-political narratives. In fact, the night has a considerable history in cinema and has been depicted in recent film through intentionally artistic scenes of illuminated urban infrastructure as well as the critical temporal frame of one night. Straw discusses the increasing "nocturnalization" of contemporary

cinema, an aesthetic tendency that has been poignantly deployed with particular significance in addressing broad socio-political issues.

Shifting from cinema to live music, Ailbhe Kenny and Katie Young's contribution "Music within Nocturnal Constellations: A Photo Essay from Two Irish Cities" focuses on African migrant and diasporic cultural expressions in the Irish cities of Cork and Galway. To connect individual/collective and performer/audience experiences, the authors explore the combination of visual and textual materials to bear witness to diverse diasporic cultural expressions that the night facilitates and foster a multisensory reader engagement. Music and diaspora remain central in Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues and Seger Kersbergen's chapter, "(De)migrant(izing) Music Nights: Intergenerational Cultural Flows and Transnational Belonging in the Rotterdam Cabo Verdean Diaspora," which highlights the significance of intergenerational relationships as expressed through music and nightlife in Rotterdam. The city is home to the third largest Cabo Verdean population in the diaspora and is a historical landmark for Cabo Verdean musical production and recording, having been the site where the first Cabo Verdean record label, Morabeza Records, was set up in the 1960s.

Still connected to the fertile links between night-time and music making, Alcides Lopes turns his attention to one particular site in the city of Lisbon. In his chapter, "Tejo Bar: A Portal for the Cosmopolitics of Musicking," Lopes discusses the well-known venue Tejo Bar, considering it as indicative not only of musical expressions, but also of popular imaginations of the urban night in Lisbon. Reflecting on audience reactions in his discussion allows Lopes to discern a certain code of conduct that, he argues, helps create an environment where *musicking* brings together diverse groups of people to imagine the Lisbon night as a true collaboration. Sara Brandellero and Francianne dos Santos Velho's chapter "Night Spaces as *Terreiros*: The Case of Amsterdam's Theatre Munganga as Ground for Intercultural Citizenship" also concentrates its focus on one site, in this case the Theatre Munganga in the city of Amsterdam. Brandellero and Santos Velho identify the figure of the *terreiro*, a space with a long history in Afro-Brazilian resistance and cultural politics, as a helpful lens through which one can understand the Theatre Munganga. As the authors explain, the theatre represents an important space where experiences of crisis are shared, but also of regeneration through cultural encounters. Its dimension as "terreiro" is also linked to its significance as a space of personal and collective memory and heritage, community solidarity and growth, being an important venue for independent, night-time culture in Amsterdam. Following this contribution on night-time performance spaces, Chantal Meng's chapter "Let's Night Draw!

Darkness and Light in the Urban Night" takes the theme of collaboration and night-time aesthetics and argues for a more practice-based approach. Her reflections on her ongoing project of "night drawing" and "seeing darkness" oblige the reader to (re)consider the basic question of how much artificial light we really need for meaningful perception.

We are grateful to Adam Eldridge for contributing to this collection with a rigorous discussion on this volume's contribution to current debates on the urban night in a closing "Afterword." At a time of global political and social tensions such as the ones we are living through, we argue that better understanding of what happens in cities "after hours" is topical. As such, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces* contributes to the transdisciplinary field of urban "night studies," following trailblazing work by scholars such as Melbin (1978); Williams (2008); Gwiazdzinski, Maggioli and Straw (2020), among others. In particular, this volume's focus on cultural practices and narratives after dusk aims to contribute to a deeper and more nuanced awareness of urban living and of the potential of public spaces to foster social inclusion, also in relation to the highly political question of migration.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) for funding the European, collaborative research project *Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe* (NITE), from which this book stems. They would also like to thank the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg (HWK) Institute for Advanced Study (Germany) for supporting the development of NITE and awarding Brandellero and Pardue research fellowships that contributed to bringing this book to fruition. The authors also acknowledge the financial support of Leiden University's Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS) in the final editing of the book, and Aarhus University for supporting the production of the index. Finally, they would like to thank research assistants Angel Perazzetta and Marianna Rios for the revision and editing of the manuscript.

Bibliography

Anderson, Ben. 2009. "Affective Atmospheres." *Emotion, Space and Society* 2: 77–81.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 2010. *44 Letters from the Liquid Modern World.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Brennan, Teresa. 2004. *The Transmission of Affect*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Eldridge, Adam, and Andrew Smith, eds. 2019. Special Issue "Tourism and the Night." *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 11 (3): 371–483.

Gwiazdzinski, Luc, Marco Maggioli, and Will Straw, eds. 2020. *Night Studies: Regards croisés sur les nouveaux visages de la nuit*. Grenoble: Editions Elya.

Melbin, Murray. 1987 [1978]. "Night as Frontier." *American Sociological Review* 43 (1): 3–22.

Roy, Ananya, and Aihwa Ong, eds. 2011. *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*. Malden and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Shaw, Robert. 2014. "Beyond Night-time Economy: Affective Atmospheres on the Urban night." *Geoforum* 51: 87–95.

Williams, Robert. 2008. "Night Spaces. Darkness, Deterritorialization and Social Control." *Space and Culture* 11: 514–32.

About the Authors

Sara Brandellero is a university lecturer at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. She explores cultures of the Portuguese-Speaking world, with a particular focus on Brazil. Between 2019–2022 she was Project Leader of the European project *Night Spaces: migration, culture and integration in Europe* (NITE).

Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues is an assistant professor at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. She was a co-investigator in the HERA-funded grant "Night Spaces: Migration, Culture, and Integration in Europe" and is currently leading the ERC project "City Tales: An Art-Based Participatory Framework for Studying Migration-Related Diversity".

Derek Pardue is author of *Ideologies of Marginality in Brazilian Hip Hop* (Palgrave McMillan, 2008/2011), *Cape Verde, Let's Go: Creole Rappers and Citizenship in Portugal* (University of Illinois Press 2015) and *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (Bloomsbury 2021). He is an Associate Professor in the Global Studies Department at Aarhus University, Denmark.

I

Urban Policy, (Self-)Governance and Infrastructures of the Night

1. Dark Practices: Sensing the City After Dusk

Nick Dunn

Abstract: Different claims are made about the city after dusk as individuals and groups occupy, demarcate, and appropriate urban spaces. Presences are not necessarily visually apparent but are detectable in other ways such as sound and smell. What methods are available to sense how the city after dusk is constituted and reshaped because of the people who move and work through it? This chapter presents a mixed methods approach to help navigate and document the temporal micro-geographies of the urban night. Specifically, the chapter examines the work done within the inner-city area of Cheetham Hill in Manchester, UK. It sets out a methodology for how we might redesign the city after dusk to be a more convivial and inclusive place.

Keywords: Design, Multisensory, Nightwalking, Praxis, Urban Night

Introduction

The urban night is an uneven landscape of social and economic inequalities, often manifested in various forms of 24/7 gig economy work. As such, different claims are made on the city after dusk as individuals and groups occupy, demarcate, and appropriate urban spaces. Presences are not necessarily visually apparent but are detectable in other ways such as sound (Dyson 2014) and smell (Henshaw 2014). What methods are available to us to sense how the city after dusk is constituted and reshaped by the people who work through it? This chapter presents a mixed methods approach of "nocturnal praxis" to help navigate and document the temporal, even fleeting, micro-geographies of the urban night. Specifically, the chapter examines the work done within the inner-city area of Cheetham Hill in Manchester,

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH01

UK. The district is home to a multi-ethnic community, the consequence of successive waves of immigration to Britain. This has resulted in the area having a diverse, if rather discordant, and ever-mutating character. This chapter seeks to contribute a methodological approach that facilitates a nuanced appreciation of the city after dusk. Following the introduction, this chapter is divided into four subsequent sections. In the first section, the multisensory experiences and aesthetics of urban places at night are investigated. The second section presents the method of nightwalking as integral to a nocturnal praxis of exploring the city after dusk. The third section gives an extract from an autoethnographic account of a nightwalk in Cheetham Hill to demonstrate its potential for conducting fieldwork in marginalized and underrepresented places after dusk. The final section reflects on how we might redesign the city after dusk to be a more convivial and inclusive place.

Like many cities around the globe, the grand narratives that emanate from Manchester have proved pivotal in its cycles of post-industrial reinvention and are key to shaping how the city is perceived. Yet a city is much more than the official or dominant voices that seek to articulate its identity. Across its numerous postcodes, diverse alternative stories abound, away from the centre stage of urban life but no less significant. Manchester's cultural fabric is the result of myriad narrative threads being interwoven. This is perhaps most apparent in the inner-city district of Cheetham Hill. Home to a multi-ethnic community, the identity of the area has developed through consecutive flows of immigration to Britain (VCH 2011). In the mid-nineteenth century, Irish people fleeing the Great Famine were drawn to the district. This was followed by Jews settling in the area during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as they fled persecution in continental Europe. During the 1950s and 1960s, migrants from the Indian subcontinent and Caribbean formed new communities in Cheetham Hill. More recently, it has become home to people from Africa, Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. It is immigration policy as an urban landscape, as its kaleidoscopic stories continuously evolve and permeate the city beyond (Mason 1977; Bielewska 2011).

Cheetham Hill became heavily urbanized after the Industrial Revolution. The area is bisected by Cheetham Hill Road, which features churches, mosques, synagogues and temples along its stretch. These are accompanied by terraced houses that date from its history as a textile processing district. Thrown into this heady mix of architectural form and function is HM (His Majesty's) Prison Manchester, previously known as Strangeways. This stern, inward-facing brick colossus dominates its patch and despite the close

proximity of security services and surveillance technologies, red-light activity remains evident in the shadowlands of the prison. This disreputable dimension to the area, however, belies the rich cultural heritage of the wider district and the corporeal experiences it offers. Specialist supermarkets along the road trade in foodstuffs and wares from all around the globe. As olfactory and gustatory encounters go, there is the potential to be immersed with an astounding variety of smells and tastes here. However, as Harries et al. (2019) have discussed, directly in relation to Cheetham Hill, it is essential to be cognizant of how a label such as "diverse" can conceal the lived experiences and inequalities of ethnic difference and urban living. But what of the city after dusk? As Williams (2008, 514) reminds us, "[n]ight spaces are neither uniform nor homogenous. Rather they are constituted by social struggles about what should and should not happen in certain places during the dark of night." How might we better understand the contribution that sound makes towards the shaping of an identity and experience of place? In the next section, I consider how the practice of nightwalking can support a form of mobile sensing of the city through the practice's capacity to both perform within and relate to the nocturnal city via the entanglements that occur between the body and urban landscape, sound and migration, presence and identity.

Multisensory Experiences and Aesthetics of the City After Dusk

The city after dusk is always in a process of becoming, arguably even more so than the city during the daytime since boundaries of identity and place may appear more uncertain and less recognizable. This chapter aligns with a vitalist understanding of the city that is conscious that the potential future of places informs their past and present (Deleuze 1966; Grosz 2004). Cities after dusk, therefore, are spaces of possibility. Indeed, when daylight fades, we witness the emergence of a "second city—with its own geography and its own set of citizens" (Sharpe 2008, 14). The variegated coexistences of light and dark across the city after dusk provides opportunities for the secretive, illicit, subcultural, and marginalized to be manifest in ways that are profoundly different from the quotidian routines and confines of the daytime. These transformations are both psychological and physical. People are frequently able to move differently at night, perhaps under less scrutiny than during daylit hours and outside of the roles and responsibilities they may be committed to in the daytime. Immersion in dark spaces changes how our sensory capacities work (Serres 2008).

This mobilization of a different multisensory experience of place can completely alter how we perceive and encounter the city after dusk (Edensor 2013). Sounds and smells become more prominent, taste is enhanced, and tactile skills are needed to negotiate the crepuscular city. Crucially, as diurnal creatures, our visual capacities are significantly recalibrated after nightfall. This enables greater visual sensitivity to light, movement and shape, but our ability to distinguish colour is restricted. Experiencing this shift in our senses and the multisensory attunement to the urban night can be powerful. In aesthetic terms, this shift in non-visual senses and the affective experience of the city after dusk can "dim the sharpness of vision, make depth and distance ambiguous, and invite unconscious peripheral vision and tactile fantasy" (Pallasmaa 2005, 46). It is this capacity of the night, its ambiguity and porosity of borders along with the heightened alertness that it can provoke, that has provided considerable inspiration for creative engagements and interpretations concerning nocturnal aesthetics and experiences (Briggs 2013; Bronfen 2013). In relation to the migrant communities of Cheetham Hill, this chapter aims to illustrate how engaging with the city after dusk makes visible or invisible the presence, agency and interconnection of different people and how their narratives and silences are formulated within different scales of power (Glick Schiller and Schmidt 2015).

It is across these multisensory ways of experiencing the night that there is considerable opportunity for practices in architecture, urban design, and urban planning. The concept of the lit world acknowledges how, with a few exceptions, our experiential worlds are typically interpreted in and through different quantities and qualities of light. New interdisciplinary inquiry aims to illustrate how feelings of comfort, care, safety, security and wellbeing can be represented in and through how people experience different coexistences of light and dark, and that improved experiences of the built environment can result (Sumartojo 2022). The point here is how we gain knowledge of a more extensive set of sensitizations and coexistences between light and dark than are usually accounted for in increasingly brightly lit cities and understand what the implications might be for practices in architecture, urban design, and urban planning. In particular, I am interested in the potential of darker nightscapes that can improve how people interact with urban spaces as well as how such spaces feel (Hvass, Waltorp and Hansen 2022). Specifically, how can we make meaning and better understand the subtleties of the city after dusk so that we might design it to become a more convivial and inclusive place?

Night reformulates the framework of thought of action in the field of the imaginary, of spatial planning, and of landscape practice (Dunn 2016; Stone

2018). Essential practices concerning how we design cities need to consider, "[i]f night means the ephemeral, the fragile, the spontaneous, how does one construct this element without distorting it?" (Armengaud, Armengaud and Cianchetta 2009, 6). An ethos of "Dark Design" would encourage further investigation into how cities could be "designed differently to promote positive, non-consumer-orientated experiences and encounters" (Dunn 2020, 25). Reshaping the relationship between light and dark also offers opportunities for the city after dusk to be redesigned at the scale of a building, as part of the urban experience of night. It is through "understanding how articulations of architecture—envelopment, permeability, scale, edge, recess—influence nocturnal spatial practice, alternatives in building and lighting can be imagined" (Downey 2020, 16). The night evidently offers a distinctive spatio-temporality and a diversity of places in the city after dark. These conditions require tools and techniques to enable us to better understand these dynamic contexts and their rhythms, patterns, interactions, and geographies.

Nightwalking and Nocturnal Praxis

One of the principal challenges in how we are able to consider darkness across the urban night is the significant weight of cultural meanings and values throughout history that still influence our contemporary perspectives. Darkness remains misunderstood, enmeshed with negative connotations and frequently portrayed as both philosophically and physically inferior to light. There is a long history that depicts those who are out and about at night as being problematic or questionable when compared to the manner that daytime frames activity. As a result of this common perception, complex interactions can occur between bodies when they encounter one another in the city after dusk, especially in its emptier and quieter places. This is particularly relevant with regard to migration, where presences may be evident in ways that are distinctive, or even more conspicuous, than in the daytime. Since the movement of the body through space both affectively and virtually shapes place (Atkinson and Duffy 2019), the practice of nightwalking has both a performative and a relational function, being able to simultaneously contribute towards while also comprehending the character of the city after dusk.

Yet, when we think about how cities are shaped, we do not necessarily think about how light and dark are disputed and, in some situations, reinforce existing power dynamics. It is important to recognize that the

distribution of lighting technologies is bound up in issues of inequality. Historically, this was manifest where the brightly lit commercial areas of the city contrasted with the dark neighbourhoods of the poor wherein darkness was "a symbol and a determinant of urban differentiation" (Otter 2008, 335), as "old light retreated into the fare streets and lesser known neighbourhoods, disregarded and disparaged in relation to the new" (Brox 2010, 104). Recent scholarship has emphasized the significance and urgency for the night to be better understood. Whether broadly conceived as a "science of the night" (Acuto 2019) or night studies (Kyba et al. 2020), it is apparent that urban conditions represent a notable type of night, albeit one that is plural and diverse (van Liempt, van Aalst and Schwanen 2015). Despite design's potential to contribute to the shaping of the urban night, thus far it has typically been left out of the discussion. Rather, as far as the city after dusk is apprehended, architecture, urban design, urban planning, and lighting design have typically become synonymous with safety and security. This formulation is very reductive, serving as it does to simply reinforce the binary relationship of light and dark. Although a common perception in many societies, an emerging body of work has sought to question this binary narrative (Gallan and Gibson 2011; Le Gallic and Pritchard 2019; Dunn and Edensor 2020).

During the last nine years, I have spent many hours walking across different urban landscapes after dusk, interested in how my physical and psychological relationships with place change within various coexistences of light and dark. Initiated as a response to a temporary inability to sleep, over time it became apparent to me that nightwalking also constituted a valuable spatial practice, through which I could gain knowledge and insight via direct experience of places. It also provided me with a useful way to document changes to the city after dusk. For example, in 2014 Manchester City Council launched its comprehensive replacement of 56,000 sodium streetlamps with LED lights. Over the intervening years, I have applied nightwalking as a method to both navigate and document the city through an extensive series of surveys (Dunn 2019). This fieldwork has resulted in several thousand hours of nightwalking through different urban places after dusk and the production of an archive of photographs, maps, and autoethnographic notes. This archive has been created as a way to record some of the different ambiances of light and dark and how they are being changed. As a secondary outcome, this work has also enabled me to witness who is out and about at night during this time period. This latter aspect of my research would prove increasingly significant when considering how others establish their identities in, and make sense of, the city after dusk.

Why explore the city after dusk? Night is captivating as a subject of inquiry as it “has a being different to a thing, a subject, a person, an animal; it is a collection of relations, possibilities and materialities. While there are material features to night, and elements of night that act in unison, there is no material, thing or form that we can point to as ‘night’” (Shaw 2018, 3). If we aim to examine how our patterns, rhythms and exchanges co-produce the city after dusk, what methods are available to investigate these entanglements? Walking is well established as a methodology for creative practice, bringing together the body and landscape, their rhythms, and multisensory interplay (Middleton 2010; O’Neill and Roberts 2020). If we seek to account for how we move through the night and how it moves through us, then the perambulatory autoethnography afforded by nightwalking can be valuable. Nightwalking here is positioned as a mobile method that can reveal empirical sensitivities and new avenues for critique (Ingold and Vergunst 2008; Büscher, Urry and Witchger 2010) pertaining to the city after dusk—how and why it is constituted and by whom. The “who” in such processes is critical. Jacques Rancière (2009, 13) explains how understanding a sense is inherently political since it concerns, “what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time.”

In relation to this latter point, although my nocturnal praxis seeks to provide some form of articulation to various presences of the urban night and begin to illustrate the heterogeneity of experiences, it is important to recognize that there will always be those who do not wish to be represented by virtue of how they act within and move through the city after dusk. This perspective enables the mobilization of the variety of belongings that are situated in, relational to, and may also coexist within a specific context. This distribution of the nocturnal sensible is what I refer to in the context of this chapter as the “everynight” of the city after dusk. By this term “everynight,” I am referring to those mundane aspects of the presences and rhythms that co-produce it, rather than as a highly/over-illuminated spectacle. It enacts “previously unanticipated ways of apprehension, soliciting perceptions that expand the capacities for imagining and sensing place” (Edensor 2017, 125). Nightwalking is thus positioned as intrinsic to a nocturnal praxis of qualitative methods, which along with autoethnography, photography, and sound recording, can make certain aspects of the environment legible. By applying this methodology, this work seeks to contribute to an emerging body of methods that acknowledges that experiences and representations of the city after dusk are frequently overlooked in humanities and social sciences research (Diamanti and Boudreault-Fournier 2021; MacQuarie 2021;

Brandellero, Kenny and Pardue 2022). This nocturnal praxis highlights an understanding of the night as being a non-linear period by engaging the body in multiple temporalities (Griffiths and Dunn 2020). In addition, it provides an embodied way to experience how lighting "informs multiple, overlapping, and intersecting urban temporalities and mediates our experience of an ever-changing city" (Ebbensgaard and Edensor 2021). Nightwalking, therefore, contributes to the ways we might rethink how to do sensory ethnography (Pink 2015).

I undertook a series of twenty-four nightwalks between May 26 and December 20, 2022 in the city centre of Manchester and the adjacent areas of Cheetham Hill and the Irk Valley. I made audio recordings and autoethnographic notes during each of these nightwalks, and also took photographs at regular intervals. At the end of each nightwalk, I first wrote down my recollections of the event then listened to the recordings to understand any resonances or discrepancies between my encounters as memories and the sonic documentations. The sound recordings proved valuable in contributing to rich descriptions of place where presences may not be visible but are detectable in other ways. As a means of sharing the embodied and embedded nature of this work and describe how the city after dusk appears and changes by moving through place, I give an extract from an autoethnographic account of one of these nightwalks in the next section. This particular nightwalk took place on December 12, 2022, starting from the edge of the city centre at the junction of New Bridge Street and Cheetham Hill Road, at 8 p.m., approximately four hours after sunset, and lasted just over four hours.

Sensing the City After Dusk

The city is glazed with the frosted kisses of below zero temperatures. The night air is cold and dense with moisture. Plumes of my breath billow out, quickly dispersing into the surroundings. The freezing air soon holds my face still, a temporary death mask for the night. Pavements and roads offer their sheen as static rivulets of ice stretch out in all directions. My feet move tentatively across these arctic tendrils, seeking purchase on their burnished surfaces. Beside me, a slow-moving car crunches its way along the street as salt and ice crackle underneath rubber. It is cold tonight. Where possible, people move quickly through the city. Yet, the slippery coating of the urban realm means that in most cases the city is locked in a gentle ballet as people and vehicles navigate their way cautiously across the night. Other figures

are pressed firmly into doorways and other recesses, the pockets of the city holding them in shadows. The burble of a mobile phone spills out in front of me as a semi-lit face leans into the wall and listens before replying with rapid-fire patois. Off peak dreams and second-hand schemes are being made out of view. An electric scooter zips across the brow of the road ahead, its whirr disappearing as quickly as it arrived. This is Cheetham Hill on a mid-December night. The clear sky wraps its inky bruise around the city.

The metallic whip crack of a roller shutter around a corner breaks the quiet. Moving along Empire Street, I pass silent wholesalers and light industrial units. Around the corner, Sherborne Street carries me towards suburbia. Festive lights twinkle and throb along the facades of houses and domestic interiors. Frozen clothing hangs like starched ghosts along the occasional washing line. The air is dense and damp. There is a palpable absence of people and activity in general. As a consequence, the soundtrack of the night is muffled—the babble of television sets and music of those lives behind glass, brick and mortar. The fluttering colours of screens adorn the edges of curtains and blinds as artificial auroras. The low-rise housing schemes in this area seem to hunker down against the bitter weather. Although the landscape is at a more human scale than the previous warehouses and industrial units, the weather means my feet maintain their pace through the night, the body keen to stay warm and on the move. Where other figures are briefly glimpsed, they are inanimate, held taut and still with only the blueish white tinge of a mobile phone against cheek and hushed tones to indicate life.

Threading through the warp and weft of suburban streets, Bignor Street Park stretches out before me, a vast, crisp baize awaiting the tableau of morning activity. Onwards and upwards, I re-join Cheetham Hill Road just before its curved brow slips down and it becomes Bury Old Road. Along here, the unfurling smells of fried chicken and other takeaway foods speak of comfort and warmth against the night. Swirls of steam escape doors and windows as deep fat fryers plunge and sizzle behind glass windows and acrylic counters. Delivery drivers wait inside doorways, enjoying a brief respite from the cold, ready to transport the delicious food in their insulated cubes to the hungry neighbourhoods beyond. Above their heads, a psychedelic frieze of illuminated signs follows the nightwalker along the road, mutating across a sea of colours, fonts and anthropomorphic characters. An idling taxi spouts its exhaust fumes and thrums with the low bass of its sound system on top of which the animated voice of its driver adds sporadic half of a conversation into his phone. His untethered hand adds flourishes to the speech as if conducting the scene beyond his windscreen.

Three teenagers, hoodied and huddled, a six-legged lifeform scouting its surroundings and chattering its way along the pavement in fast slang and furtive looks. Their intense sound bubble passes by and disappears out of earshot. In its wake, the retail landscape consolidates itself, boxes of brick and glass with adjacent car parking for consumer convenience. Not now though. Right now, this place is empty of shoppers and the surfaces gleam with a thin layer of frost. The convivial choreography of cooks, couriers, and customers is evident in various formations along a string of takeaway restaurants. Grease, heat, and pungent aromas slice through the air, escaping from doorways and opened polystyrene boxes. Kebabs, curry and rice, chicken and chips, pizzas and other hot treats to sustain those who share the night. Apart from the street theatre adjacent to the takeaways, the blank expressions of shuttered-down shopfronts render the rest of the street mute. Turning 180 degrees, I make my way back up the hill and then head back down the arterial road. The patchwork of communities that reside here is reflected in the district's architecture. Synagogues are gathered and then there is a pause before mosques announce themselves in the skyline and streetscape. The mostly derelict St Luke's Church stands solemnly within its unlit graveyard, no bicycle couriers seeking respite and recuperation around there tonight. From this point, the road rolls its asphalt ribbon down to the city centre again. Large retail parks block into view, their stripped-down sheds offering discounted desires and free parking. Behind this budget landscape, North Street peels away from the main thoroughfare and with it a longer history of light industrial units slowly unfolds. This is a micro-utopia of demand and supply. Few things or services cannot be bought around here as it provides the city with portals to the world through its procurement and logistics of goods and services. Electric light weakly blooms within fogged windows or along the cold steel of a door, yet whatever operations are happening they remain out of sight and out of time. The still-warm container of an improvised burner radiates its charred smell from within as dead cigarette ends lie prone around it, witnesses to harried and poorly paid labour. The cold, dense air carries the murmurs of the unseen city towards me, its whispers alternating around corners and along streets as I trace my way back to the centre.

Redesigning the City After Dusk

This chapter contends that understanding how the city after dusk is used differently by various people is essential to shaping how it might evolve.

This is crucial if we are to develop wider and deeper knowledges of the situated, relational and practised nature of the city after dusk. To be able to rethink and redesign it as a time and place that supports a diversity of conviviality while also being inclusive is increasingly urgent and important. In an attempt to respond to this premise, I have sought to elucidate the ongoing entanglements between light and dark. This has first been done by examining the multisensory experiences and aesthetics of the city after dusk. Responding to the need for alternative tools and techniques to study the urban night, the method of nightwalking is presented as intrinsic to a nocturnal praxis of qualitative methods, which through their application can make certain aspects of the environment legible. An extract from an autoethnographic account in Cheetham Hill is then given to share its potential for conducting fieldwork in underrepresented and marginalized places after dusk. This final section reflects on how we might redesign the city after dusk to be a more convivial and inclusive place.

What does such knowledge imply for design? The complexity of contemporary urbanism and the diversity of communities it may represent indicates we need new methods to express how its spaces are used by different people at different times. This is especially relevant at night. Urban spaces, particularly those beyond the brightly lit city centres, can be subject to various forms of temporary demarcation, occupation, and contestation. Although access and equality, or the lack of them, are typically visible during the daytime as we can literally see them or identify their absence, after dusk this becomes much harder to discern. This is not just an issue of visual observation but also due to the needs and motives of different people at night being distinct from those during the daytime, even in the same space. Practices of architecture, urban design and urban planning have increasingly shifted toward illuminated homogeneity where the urban night is concerned. This chapter, however, has illustrated that experiences within the city after dusk are situated and relational. Therefore, if we are to account for the diversity of a city's personal geographies and exchanges then we need to identify appropriate ways to study them and better understand how they can inform the redesign of the city after dusk. By comprehending how nightscapes are used differently by various people, it seeks to contribute to a thick description that might beneficially challenge existing approaches to designing the urban night. The dynamics of the city after dusk can, therefore, be supported via an ongoing process that adopts a temporally sensitive approach to the built environment (Gwiazdzinski 2015). Applying the nocturnal praxis set out in this chapter, I have attempted some preliminary investigations through which we might record and convey the

marginalized and underrepresented places of the city after dusk. Through gaining insight into how and why spaces are used at night and by whom, architecture, urban design, and urban planning practices can develop suitable design values that are relevant to context and the dynamics of the city after dusk.

By focusing on specific spaces, streets, and micro-geographies rather than trying to understand the whole city, the approach offered in this chapter consciously seeks to engage with the vitalism of the urban "everynight." The nocturnal praxis presented in this work is envisaged to feed into principles and practices for Dark Design by generating empirical data as part of an evidence base that can inform decision making and, subsequently, the design outcomes for urban places at night. To conclude, it is apparent that further work needs to be done to establish how such ethnographic data can be translated into a set of criteria that supports the different access requirements of a diverse population living and working at night in an equitable manner. While this lies beyond the scope of this chapter, it has shared its theoretical framing and methodology to demonstrate how existing darker spaces that usually reside outside of brightly lit city centres provide different people, including migrant communities, with various opportunities to support their activity and movement through the urban night.

Bibliography

Acuto, Michele. 2019. "We Need a Science of the Night." *Nature* 576 (7787): 339.

Armengaud, Marc, Matthias Armengaud, and Alessandra Cianchetta. 2009. *Nightscapes: Paisajes Nocturnos/Nocturnal Landscapes*. Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili.

Atkinson, Paul, and Michelle Duffy. 2019. "Seeing Movement: Dancing Bodies and the Sensuality of Place." *Emotion, Space and Society* 30: 20–26.

Bielewska, Agnieszka. "The Settlement Patterns of Polish Immigrants in Manchester in the Context of Move from Modern to Postmodern Understanding of Place." *Geographica Polonica* 84 (2): 19–32.

Brandellero, Sara, Ailbhe Kenny, and Derek Pardue. 2022. "Night Stories: Urban Narratives of Migrant Lives in Europe." *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture* 13 (1): 3–10.

Briggs, Bryan, ed. 2013. *3am: Wonder, Paranoia and the Restless Night*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press and the Bluecoat.

Bronfen, Elisabeth. 2013. *Night Passages: Philosophy, Literature, and Film*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Brox, Jane. 2010. *Brilliant: The Evolution of Artificial Light*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Büscher, Monika, John Urry, and Katian Witchger, eds. 2010. *Mobile Methods*. London: Routledge.

Deleuze, Gilles. 1988 [1966]. *Bergsonism*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. New York: Zone Books.

Diamanti, Eleonora, and Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier. 2021. "Sensing the Night: Nocturnal Filmmaking in Guantánamo, Cuba." *Visual Anthropology Review* 37 (2): 290–309.

Downey, Claire. 2020. "Shape Shifting: Architecture in a Wakeful City." In *ICNS Proceedings*, edited by Manuel Garcia-Ruiz and Jordi Nofre, 16–29. Lisbon: ISCTE.

Dunn, Nick, and Tim Edensor, eds. 2020. *Rethinking Darkness: Cultures, Histories, Practices*. London: Routledge.

Dunn, Nick. 2016. *Dark Matters: A Manifesto for the Nocturnal City*. Winchester: Zero Books.

Dunn, Nick. 2019. "Dark Futures: The Loss of Night in the Contemporary City?" *Journal of Energy History / Revue d'histoire de l'énergie*. Special Issue: Light(s) and Darkness(es) / Lumière(s) et obscurité(s) 1 (2).

Dunn, Nick. 2020. "Dark Design: A New Framework for Advocacy and Creativity for the Nocturnal Commons." *International Journal of Design in Society* 14 (4): 9–23.

Dyson, Frances. 2014. *The Tone of Our Times: Sound, Sense, Economy and Ecology*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Ebbensgaard, Casper Laing, and Tim Edensor. 2021. "Walking with Light and the Discontinuous Experience of Urban Change." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 46: 378–91.

Edensor, Tim. 2013. Reconnecting with Darkness: Experiencing Landscapes and Sites of Gloom." *Social and Cultural Geography* 14 (4): 446–65.

Edensor, Tim. 2017. *From Light to Dark. Daylight, Illumination, and Gloom*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gallan, Ben, and Christopher R. Gibson. 2011. "Commentary: New Dawn or New Dusk? Beyond the Binary of Night and Day." *Environment and Planning A* 43: 2509–15.

Gidley, Ben. 2013. "Landscapes of Belonging, Portraits of Life: Researching Everyday Multiculture in an Inner City Estate." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 20 (4): 347–60.

Glick Schiller, Nina, and Garbi Schmidt. 2015. "Envisioning Place: Urban Socialities Within Time, Space and Multiscalar Power." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 23 (1): 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2015.1016524.

Griffiths, Rupert, and Nick Dunn. 2020. "More-Than-Human Nights: Intersecting Lived Experience and Diurnal Rhythms in the Nocturnal City." In *ICNS*

Proceedings, edited by Manuel Garcia-Ruiz and Jordi Nofre, 203–20. Lisbon: ISCTE.

Grosz, Elizabeth. 2004. *The Nick of Time: Evolution and the Untimely*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Gwiazdzinski, Luc. 2015. "The Urban Night: A Space Time for Innovation and Sustainable Development." *Articulo: Journal of Urban Research*. https://doi.org/10.4000/articulo.3140.

Harries, Bethan, Bridget Byrne, James Rhodes, and Stephanie Wallace. 2019. "Diversity in Place: Narrations of Diversity in an Ethnically Mixed, Urban Area." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (17): 3225–42.

Henshaw, Victoria. 2014. *Urban Smellscapes: Understanding and Designing City Smell Environments*. New York: Routledge.

Hvass, Mette, Karen Waltorp, and Ellen Kathrine Hansen. 2022. "Lights Out? Lowering Urban Lighting Levels and Increasing Atmosphere at a Danish Tram Station." In *Lighting Design in Shared Public Spaces*, edited by Shanti Sumartojo, 151–72. London: Routledge.

Ingold, Tim, and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds. 2008. *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*. London: Routledge.

Kyba, Christopher M., Sara B. Pritchard, A. Roger Ekirch, Adam Eldridge, Andreas Jechow, Christine Preiser, Dieter Kunz, Dietrich Henckel, Franz Hölker, John Barentine, Jørgen Berge, Josiane Meier, Luc Gwiazdzinski, Manuel Spitschan, Mirik Milan, Susanne Bach, Sibylle Schroer, and Will Straw. 2020. "Night Matters—Why the Interdisciplinary Field of 'Night Studies' Is Needed." *J: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal* 3 (1): 1–6.

Le Gallic, Stéphanie, and Sara B. Pritchard. 2019. "Light(s) and Darkness(es): Looking Back, Looking Forward." *Journal of Energy History / Revue d'histoire de l'énergie*. Special Issue: Light(s) and Darkness(es) / Lumière(s) et obscurité(s) 1 (2).

MacQuarie, Julius-Cezar. 2021. "The Researcher's Nightworkshop: A Methodology of Bodily and Cyber-Ethnographic Representations in Migration Studies." In *Visual Methodology in Migration Studies: New Possibilities, Theoretical Implications, and Ethical Questions*, edited by Karolina Nikielska-Sekula and Amandine Desille, 293–313. Cham: Springer.

Mason, Tim. 1977. "Residential Succession, Community Facilities and Urban Renewal in Cheetham Hill, Manchester." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 6 (1&2): 78–87.

Middleton, Jennie. 2010. "Sense and the City: Exploring the Embodied Geographies of Urban Walking." *Social & Cultural Geography* 11 (6): 575–96.

O'Neill, Maggie, and Brian Roberts. 2020. *Walking Methods: Research on the Move*. New York: Routledge.

Otter, Chris. 2008. *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800–1910*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2005. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. London: Wiley.

Pink, Sarah. 2015. *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Rancière, Jacques. 2009. *The Politics of Aesthetics*. Translated by Gabriel Rockhill. New York: Continuum.

Serres, Michel. 2008. *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies*. Translated by Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley. London: Bloomsbury.

Sharpe, William Chapman. 2008. *New York Nocturne: The City After Dark in Literature, Painting, and Photography*. Princeton: Princeton University.

Shaw, Robert. 2018. *The Nocturnal City*. London: Routledge.

Stone, Taylor. 2018. "Re-envisioning the Nocturnal Sublime: On the Ethics and Aesthetics of Nighttime Lighting." *Topoi* 1 (1). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-018-9562-4.

Sumartojo, Shanti, ed. 2022. *Lighting Design in Shared Public Spaces*. London: Routledge.

van Liempt, Ilse, Irina van Aalst, and Tim Schwanen. 2015. "Introduction: Geographies of the Urban Night." *Urban Studies* 52, no. 3 (2015): 407–21.

VCH. 2011. "Townships: Cheetham." In *A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 4*, edited by William Farrer and J. Brownbill, 259–62. London: British History Online. http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/vch/lancs/vol4/pp259-262. Accessed December 21, 2022.

Williams, Robert. "2008. "Nightspaces: Darkness, Deterritorialisation and Social Control." *Space and Culture* 11 (4): 514–32.

About the Author

Nick Dunn is Executive Director of ImaginationLancaster, the design and architecture research lab at Lancaster University, where he is also Professor of Urban Design. Nick is founding Director of the Dark Design Lab and author of *Dark Matters: A Manifesto for the Nocturnal City* (Zero 2016).

2. Spaces to Cope, to Connect and to Relax for Refugee Youth

Ilse van Liempt

Abstract: Refugees usually become entangled in a web of reception centres and civic integration requirements upon arrival, hampering their belonging to the city and directing them to specific spaces. This chapter explores how recently arrived refugee youth in Amsterdam navigate the city on their own terms, building connections beyond administrative borders. It investigates how refugee youth use public and semi-public spaces as an important counter narrative to formal and institutional procedures. Moreover, a focus on the night and urban nightscapes reveals the meaning of encounters, leisure time, conviviality and urban dynamics that take place in the city at night, offering a hopeful perspective that helps to explore new ways to live together in an increasingly diverse world.

Keywords: Asylum seeker youth, Conviviality, Cultural encounters, Urban nightlife

Introduction

Academic research tends to overlook what happens when night falls (Liempt et al. 2015, 1; Melbin 1987; Shaw 2018). The daytime is often the dominant frame of reference and appears to be perceived as the standard for human existence (Ekirch 2006, 347). Academics tend to focus on urban daily activities and geographies of everyday life, thus overlooking night-time experiences. Sociologist Lodewijk Brunt uses the neologism "diecentrism" to describe the long-lasting night-blindness within the social sciences and humanities (Steger and Brunt 2003, 5). As a result of this bias, research questions also tend to follow the rhythm of civil servants, who mostly work from 9 to 5. In this chapter I want to explore the potential of the city during

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH02

the day and night for refugee and asylum seeker youth who have recently arrived in Amsterdam.

I argue that researching refugees' lives after dark is essential for a comprehensive understanding of refugees' social relations, economic activities as well as health concerns, and that the impact of night-time on the social life of refugees has so far been under-researched. Refugees, especially youth, make an active use of evenings, nights and early morning hours, so these should not be overlooked. Nocturnal life differs in many respects from social life during the day, also for refugee youth.

A striking feature of scholarly literature on social life at night is that the majority of studies are concerned with elite members of Western industrialized societies; when it comes to night research, the economically disadvantaged are routinely overlooked in scholarship.

Arrival Infrastructures for Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers become entangled in a web of reception/asylum seekers centres and all sorts of requirements when they first arrive somewhere new. Arrival infrastructures can be defined as "those parts of the urban fabric within which newcomers become entangled on arrival, and where their future local or translocal social mobilities are produced as much as negotiated" (Meeus et al. 2019, 1). This concept allows us to see not only the formal, but also the informal infrastructures and connections that are made. When we look at timing, an important first observation needs to be made. Support around arrival is, like most support, predominantly organized around daytime activities. When people arrive somewhere new late at night, they find no formal place open where they can register or find support. In this case it is volunteers, often identified as those involved in "repair work," who help to find them shelter for the first night before asylum seekers can then enter the formal arrival infrastructures laid down for them.

In the summer of 2015, when many refugees escaped Syria and arrived by train in cities all over Europe, this was mostly a late evening/early morning affair. At Amsterdam's Central Station, volunteers waited for night trains to arrive from Germany and provided newcomers with food, pointing them to warm places where they could wait until the official bus would start working in the morning to transport them to their place of registration.

After being registered, asylum seekers must await the outcome of their procedure in reception centres. These arrival spaces are very formal and

institutionalized; people there suffer from lack of privacy, occupying a space typically permeated by stress and uncertainty. These environments offer little for young people to do. One of the young men we interviewed was a Dublin claimant from Eritrea who officially was supposed to go back to Italy, as this was the country where he had first arrived, and according to the Dublin Convention was where his asylum claim was meant to be processed. But, as many do, he decided to wait a year and a half in the Netherlands and start a new asylum procedure there. As a result, he lived a hidden life as an undocumented migrant in Amsterdam for eighteen months, biding his time until he could enter the asylum procedure. When he started his asylum process in the Netherlands, he moved to a reception centre outside of Amsterdam. But, he explained, he missed his previous life as an undocumented migrant in Amsterdam:

> I miss Amsterdam. I still spent most of my time at my friend's place in Amsterdam to learn the language and build social ties. This is not possible in the reception centre here. There is nothing you can do there.

Not only are reception centres boring places with limited activities one can do; the system in the Netherlands also prohibits asylum seekers who are still in procedure to work. Most people spent their time waiting and doing nothing. Reception centres are also often located in isolated places, at edges of towns, which may further increase people's sense of isolation (Zill et al. 2020). Upon arrival, most asylum seekers feel very disorientated; it often takes a while before they can look beyond the formal infrastructures laid out for them. When one does not know how to read the urban landscape, this also sparks fear and insecurity. We found that, since they are forced to follow language courses and are struggling with financial constraints, stress and loneliness, asylum seekers feel limited autonomy to discover the city and meet other people.

When studying which encounters refugee youth are looking for beyond any spatial or temporal limitations, it is possible to understand refugee lives outside of formal institutions and highly regulated spaces. This approach aims to make visible a wide spectrum of encounters that structure refugees' lives, specifically the often-overlooked informal encounters happening outside State intervention. Nonetheless, it is important to stress that it is not to be taken for granted that refugee youth immediately explore the full potential of urban contexts, as there are many obstacles and constraints on their ability to do so (such as limited access to public transport, financial obstructions and insecurities around not speaking the language).

Everyday Experiences in Urban Public Space

While investigating refugee youth's own explorations of cities after arrival, the level of the city in general and public space more specifically are important points of analysis. Public space is legally defined as a space that is accessible for all. It is exactly this public and open character that makes it so interesting to study in relation to the potential for inclusion in cities. In our conceptualization of public space, we move beyond the strict legal definition, and also include semi-public spaces such as public libraries, language cafés in community centres, cafés and nightclubs. We argue that it is these public as well as semi-public spaces that offer refugees a lot of their opportunities to meet new people, learn new things and start to feel at home in the city.

When we follow refugee youth's own way of navigating the city it is important not to limit ourselves to the neighbourhood level, but really see how refugee youth navigate the urban landscape at large. We thus refrain from setting a territorial limit but take the city as an entire space.

As well as moving down from the national to the local level, we focus more on the mundane, everyday forms of interaction in cities that shape the experiences of refugee youth. We also opt not to set a time limit, in order to explicitly include evening and night-time in our study.

Methods

The findings are based on empirical research carried out in Amsterdam with young people with a refugee background who recently arrived in the city. The research was part of a European project funded by HERA (2019–22). Participatory observations were conducted in a community centre in the east of Amsterdam, eighteen semi-structured interviews were held with young visitors with a refugee background and a photo voice workshop was organized in another art-led community centre in the north of Amsterdam in which six female refugees participated. Using creative methods such as the photo voice method allowed us to document the role public space plays in their homemaking process in the local area. We started with mapping and trying to get a sense of how refugee youth who recently arrived orient themselves. We found that in general they feel secure and safe compared to their country of origin. Nonetheless, they describe many insecurities and anxieties at the local level, always in relation to specific places, and also to specific times.

The ages of participants varied between nineteen and thirty-seven years old. Most originated from Syria, Eritrea or Sudan. We discussed their experiences upon arrival in relation to their aspirations to the city. All participants were generally able to speak Dutch or English at a sufficient level to be interviewed.

Spaces Where You Can be Free from the Label "Refugee"

When asylum seekers arrive in the Netherlands they are registered and housed in reception centres. These centres are dispersed across the country and asylum seekers have no say in where they wait the outcome of their procedure. When they receive a refugee status, they have the right to leave the reception centre and receive a house of their own. A dispersal policy applies however which means they do not have a choice in where this house is located. They receive a one-time housing offer by the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA). There is no formal obligation to accept this offer and refugees can take up residence anywhere and find housing independently, but in practice this is difficult due to tight housing markets and refugees' lack of social networks.

This particular context, where refugees are assigned housing in areas that might not be their preferred place puts urban public space in another perspective. Many young people reported liking places where they could be free from the label "refugee" and that they liked to escape the deprived area they were living in. Such places stand in stark contrast to spaces explicitly designed for young refugees. It is often a huge contrast to places that are explicitly designed for them and where they initially spent most of their time. Our respondents told us that it can be liberating to have a coffee on a terrace, to do touristy things and just sit people-watching, or to go to a party where nobody knows that you are a refugee.

One of the female refugee participants in the photo voice workshop we organized described how going out to town makes her feel hopeful and confident about future opportunities the city and its people might have to offer to her. She explained how she likes to dress up and go to the city centre of Amsterdam. When she looks at the beautiful buildings and strolls along the canals, she really feels part of the city of Amsterdam, she feels she belongs. It is also important to acknowledge that she makes the city her own with this strolling behaviour and that this is an important aspect of homemaking and finding her way in.

Fig. 2.1: Dressing up and going to the city centre as a way to feel at home. Photo by and courtesy of Golsume Sandjani.

As such public space allows refugee youth to build their own connections with the city and it plays a vital role in the experience of refugee youth in how they feel they belong to the city, but also in how the city makes sense to them and helps them in their everyday struggles.

Public space after dark has another meaning. Robert Williams (2008) pointed out that the night is much more than the absence of daylight. He emphasized that, when night falls, a variety of practices and emotions gain traction within a particular space-time which generates a special atmosphere associated with particular activities, experiences and possibilities. Murray Melbin (1987) found that people relate differently to each other at night because night-time has a more relaxed and permissive social atmosphere than the day as a result of an easing of the flows and pressures of the city. Melbin also found in his study that people feel a special form of solidarity when they share the night.

Studies of the night are structured around different definitions of the night. Some refer only to late night. But when we use darkness as a criterion, the evening also counts as the night and—depending on geographical location—darkness may fall early. Shaw (2018) distinguishes between "biogeoastronomical" components of the night, that is those which emerge from physical and material conditions of darkness, and the "social" components of night, which emerge from practiced social rhythms and routines. Gwiazdzinski (2016) argues that it is important to understand the ways in which diurnal and nocturnal societies come to mix, merge and interact instead of separating the day and night as we often do. So, rather than trying to claim a particular definition of night, it is the shift to nocturnality that allows us to think through the difference that the nocturnal makes (see Shaw 2018).

Amsterdam's Nightlife

During our interviews nightlife in the sense of clubbing was mentioned by a few respondents but not by a majority. Specifically for LGBTQ refugees, we found, Amsterdam's nightlife is an important time-space where they can feel liberated and make new friends. One Syrian young man, for example, explained that he has a lot of international friends in Amsterdam with whom he likes to go out and always meets new friends through them:

> [S]ometimes you meet a guy, or a girl and they are social butterflies. So, that Italian guy that I've met in one of the, we were in a bar with my friends and he just like come to us and he was like talking to all of us, he was super nice, he talked to me and, oh from Syria interesting and he start talking to me, we switch number so, he start like calling me, yeah I'm in this place, come [...] and he start introducing me to his friends, so I became friends with his friends. So, it's like this.

In the beginning he said he had to adjust a bit culturally, but soon he discovered that people are actually very friendly and open to his cultural habits, such as not drinking alcohol.

> First, I kind of struggled a bit. Because I was trying to find my way. For example, I don't drink, but all my friends they do drink, and they go to bars. I have never been in bar before, but the bar concept here is totally different than Syria. The bar in Syria is for the bad people there, this is the idea. Because we have other facility, we have the café and we have a lot of things to do other than going to bar for example in the evening. But here in Amsterdam all the cafés like close at six o'clock and then there is only bars you can go to. But the bars here it's similar to the I in my country. So, I took some time to start like understanding this, if okay it's fine I am going to go there so I start going with my friend and what actually encouraged me also, all my friends like, okay what you want to drink, beer? No, I don't drink. Okay, cola? Its wasn't a big deal for them as well. So, that also encouraged me that I am not feeling I am strange in here. I felt very welcome and very normal as any other.

Next to bars and clubs, concerts of famous Arab musicians and food-related activities were also mentioned as things people liked to do at night. These activities were sometimes rather segregated, as the Syrian young man quoted above further explains:

> I actually have three tribes. Yeah, I have like the Arab group, and I have the international group and I have the group from work. So these are my three groups which are quite separate. With the friends from work, we went once to a bouldering, like climbing, event. So, we met, and then I've met them again when we did uh, like sport activities. So, we are more interested in sports, so whenever we have an event for sport I see them. So, after like couple of times, we become like, okay let's have drink later and then, okay let's have dinner and we become friends. The Arab tribe is all about food, food, food. Always! Always! There is a Jordanian, Lebanese, Egyptian and a Syrian man, it is a mix but all Arabic. I met one guy, and he introduced me to the others. And then there is the international friends, they are mainly for going out. With them I always meet in the city centre, and we go places there. For my Arab tribe, we mostly meet in people's houses actually.

One special dance event that was mentioned quite a lot by young refugees in Amsterdam is called Yallah Yallah. It is organized a couple of times a year. In Amsterdam, Yallah Yallah evenings are organized in mainstream clubs like Melkweg or Paradiso. As a result of these events taking place in mainstream clubs, the audience is very mixed. What binds them together is an interest in Arabic pop music. Yallah Yallah is a great example of a new phenomenon that has popped up in the city as a result of new arrivals. Yallah Yallah started at the Lowlands Festival in 2017, and now features Moroccan and Palestinian hip-hop, Egyptian and Israeli reggaeton, speeddabke from Lebanon and trap from Syria. It has turned into a popular club night, and the concept has been adopted by many Dutch cities. The DJs are collaborating with Productiehuis Paradiso Melkweg and working on a training programme and offering workshops for young Arabic DJs. By collaborating with community centres, gatekeepers from the communities and reception centres, Yallah Yallah manages to attract a mixed crowd of young people.

The example of Yallah Yallah is definitely not accessible to all youth with a refugee background, and especially not the ones with lower incomes, as there is an entrance fee. There are also more low-key examples of parties, music nights and more interactive music events organized where refugee youth who have less money to spend can participate. These relaxed spaces and events are important safe spaces where young people can listen and dance to music, meet their peers, participate in the building of a communal space and sometimes musically interact with members of the host society as well.

A specific social space that was often mentioned in our interviews was the shisha bar. Many larger cities have a growing infrastructure of shisha bars

Fig. 2.2: Yallah Yallah party in Amsterdam. Photo by and courtesy of Jitske Nap.

after the influx of migrants from the Middle East. One Syrian young man explains how often he goes to the shisha bar to meet with his Arabic friends.

> Oh yes, we went every week, almost one time a week it is our weekly meeting with the friends, we drink Turkish tea, I love it, I like to drink it there and my friends smoke shisha and we also eat baklava there.

Those who live in less well-connected areas may suffer from their disconnection and miss out on events and opportunities to socialize. Like one of our interviewees explains:

> I mean I have a friend, he got a shared house with another guy in a village around Utrecht and he has been in the Netherlands for four years, he hardly speaks the language, he is trying. I mean now, when he got his driver license and a car, he starts going out. Because the public transportation in his place stops at six o' clock, so he cannot go out. I mean, there is a lot of events in Utrecht, but he cannot go because there is no bus to bring him back home. So, he is missing a lot of events to meet people, to get integrated and all this stuff. Yeah, I think that is a shame.

Apart from its location, nightlife as a time-space is also known for its exclusion, implicit but also explicit in the form of refusals at the door (Boogaarts de Bruin 2011; Bose 2005; Kosnick 2008; Measham and Hadfield 2009; Talbot

2007; Valentine et al. 2010). These studies overwhelmingly show that ethnicity is an important line of division in urban nightlife districts. The marginalization of ethnic minorities occurs through entry requirements, members-only strategies and discrimination by door staff. The criminalization of Black music and the refusal of certain clubs to host Black music nights on the basis of racist stereotypes is a telling example (Talbot 2007). Yallah Yallah evenings, on the other hand, celebrate specific ethnic music and have different mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. One of our interviewees, for instance, told us that at one nightclub in Amsterdam a bouncer with a Syrian background made it possible for him to enter the club and enjoy nights out.

During the pandemic there were periods of lockdowns when clubs were closed but also moments when clubs were open, sometimes with limited closing hours and requiring a QR code for entrance. During these moments, new lines of division were created, most noticeably between the vaccinated and the unvaccinated, which sometimes overruled ethnicity as a marker as this was the only criteria that was heavily controlled.

Coping with Loneliness and Nocturnal Stress

A substantial number of respondents were confronted with loneliness and social isolation upon arrival, something that also made them feel they were excluded from society. They appreciated citizen initiatives and actions by volunteers, but these encounters were short, pragmatic and often not sustainable (see also Liempt and Staring 2020). It was difficult to replicate these types of encounters and contact beyond semi-public spaces and in refugees' private homes and lives (Liempt and Kox 2023).

When discussing interpersonal interactions they have in the Netherlands, refugee youth often refer to their life back home as having been much more social. Early nights and empty streets are also described as making it more difficult to experience a vibrant social life in the Netherlands. One of the interviewees observed that in the Netherlands people withdraw with their family behind closed doors as soon as 5pm strikes, which makes it very difficult to become part of their social life. This observation also points to the strict distinction between public and private spheres and the limited, or at least very different, degree of "publicness" of public life.

Many respondents reported visiting the gym as an important part of their life. This semi-public space was described as a popular place to go not only because it is a place to exercise, but also because it is a place where

Fig. 2.3: Kickboxing as a way to cope with stress. Photo by and courtesy of Sara Aljeroudi.

you can be free from worries around asylum migration and arrival. Like a young man from Syria explains:

> I registered there and I now have the card and I decide like I have to go every day to the gym to just make my body more sportive, I have to build a little bit my body.

As well as allowing our young respondents to work on their physical appearance, sports also represented a valuable strategy to deal with insomnia. Many went to the gym late at night to tire their bodies out and be able to sleep well after. Many reception centre residents experience difficulties with sleep. Not only do shared rooms make for noisy environments, but issues related to traumatic experiences and recurring nightmares are also very common among refugees. As such, the beneficial effects of late-night workouts are much appreciated.

One Syrian female participant in the photo voice workshop shared a picture of her favourite place in Amsterdam, which showed her practicing kickboxing. She explained that kickboxing makes her feel strong and is

good for her mental well-being, because it allows her to release stress. She frequented to a female-only indoor gym to practice kickboxing, but she also found a spot in the open air where she trained after work. The place itself has become special to her; she described how, when she is there, she feels she belongs in Amsterdam. As such, her outdoor kickboxing training is also a placemaking practice.

Conclusion

The lack of meaningful activities in reception centres upon arrival contrast heavily with the aspirations of asylum seekers and refugees: they would like to start to learn Dutch, enter the labour market, engage with Dutch citizens and start to build their lives in the Netherlands as soon as possible, but they are forced into passivity. Many of the young people we talked to felt that the most important times of their lives were wasted because of all the restrictions imposed on them by the asylum system.

Interviews revealed that, in order to be able to understand how everyday life works in new places of arrival, newcomers with a refugee background often need information and knowledge that the state or the city council is currently failing to provide. They also complained that life in the places assigned to asylum seekers is very hard because of a severe lack of privacy, constant insecurity around the future and lots of stress. As a result, in the first arrival phase people often feel quite disoriented and lost in the new place, especially when their social networks are small. Leisure opportunities have been shown to be important to compensate for the feeling of not being part of society. Urban nightlife, or evening life, has much potential as a time of social transactions, as a realm of play, as a time of friendship, love and conversation (Bianchini 1995; Lovatt and O'Connor 1995). All these factors allow forms of sociality and conviviality to emerge that are not normally encountered during daylight hours.

Integration or, as I prefer to refer to it, emplacement (Glick Schiller and Caglar 2016) goes beyond bureaucracy; it takes place in many different settings and places. The overall argument of this chapter is that researchers and practitioners need to pay more attention to the social life of refugees after dark. Socializing in public and semi-public settings helps refugees to find their way in cities beyond the formal arrival infrastructures. Research on refugees' social lives after dark would improve our understanding of the social and cultural life of their communities, thus correcting simplistic imagery of refugees. Interviews also showed that nocturnal stress is something to

take into consideration if we want to deepen our comprehension of refugees' protection needs. More exploration of refugees' nocturnal livelihood and coping strategies in general might reveal important information around refugees' everyday experiences. While we do not touch upon night work in this chapter, refugees are often dependent on jobs in the lower end of the labour market which often involves nightshifts (see Litschel and MacQuarie, this volume). Nightwork is also heavily under-researched and deserves more attention (see also Shaw 2022, MacQuarie 2023).

Taking an inside perspective that moves beyond the formal infrastructures and focuses on how people themselves navigate the city allows us to see what matters to refugee youth themselves. It also shows us what they add to the urban fabric, and how cities change as a result of their presence. This emphasis on conviviality and urban dynamics is the way forward if we want to find a way to live together.

Funding

The project, the everyday experiences of young refugees and asylum seekers in public spaces is financially supported by the HERA Joint Research Programme (www.heranet.info), which is co-funded by AHRC, BMBF via DLR-PT, F.R.S- FNRS, NWO, and the European Commission through Horizon 2020.

Bibliography

Bianchini, Franco. 1995. "Night Cultures: Night Economies." *Planning, Practice and Research* 10 (2): 121–26.

Boogaarts de Bruin, Simone. 2011. *Something for Everyone? Changes and Choices in the Ethno-Party Scene in Urban Nightlife*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Bose, Martina. 2005. "Difference and Exclusion at Work in the Club Culture Economy." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 8 (4): 427–44.

Caglar, Ayse, and Nina Glick Schiller. 2018. *Migrants and City-making: Dispossession, Displacement and Urban Regeneration*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Ekirch, Roger. 2006. *At Day's Close: A History of Nighttime*. London: Phoenix, 2006.

Glick Schiller, Nina, and Ayse Caglar. 2016. "Displacement, Emplacement and Migrant Newcomers: Rethinking Urban Sociabilities Within Multiscalar Power." *Identities* 23 (1): 17–34.

Gwiazdzinski, Luc. 2016. "Penser la ville, panser le temps." In *La Ville 24 heures sur 24*, edited by Luc Gwiazdzinski, 7–12. Paris: Rhuthmos.

Joliffe, Pia. 2016. "Night-time and Refugees: Evidence from the Thai-Myanmar Border." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 29 (1): 1–18.

Kosnick, Kira. 2008. "Out on the Scene: Queer Migrant Clubbing and Urban Diversity." *Ethnologia Europaea* 38 (2): 19–30.

Liempt, Ilse van, and Mieke Kox. 2023. "The Inclusionary Potential and Spatial Boundaries of (Semi-) Public Space: Refugee Youth's Everyday Experiences in the Urban Fabric of Amsterdam." In *Refugee Youth: Migration, Justice and Urban Space*, edited by Mattias de Backer, Peter Hopkins, Ilse van Liempt, Robin Finlay, Elizabeth Kirndorfer, Mieke Kox, Matthew Benwell, and Katherine Horschelmann, 65–80. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Liempt, Ilse van, and Richard Staring. 2020. *Nederland Papierenland: Syrische Statushouders en Hun Ervaringen met Participatiebeleid in Nederland*. Den Haag: Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau.

Liempt, Ilse van, and Richard Staring. 2020. *Nederland Papierenland: Syrische Statushouders en Hun Ervaringen met Participatiebeleid in Nederland*. Den Haag: Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau.

Liempt, Ilse van, Irina van Aalst, and Tim Schwanen. 2015. "Introduction: Geographies of the Urban Night." *Urban Studies* 52 (): 407–21.

Lovatt, Andy, and Justin O'Connor. 1995. "Cities and the Night Time Economy." *Planning, Practice and Research* 10 (2): 127–34.

MacQuarie, J-C. 2023. *Invisible Nightworkers in 24/7 London*. Springer: IMISCOE series.

Measham, Fiona, and Phil Hadfield. 2009. "Everything Starts with an 'E': Exclusion, Ethnicity and Elite Formation in Contemporary English Clubland." *Adicciones* 21 (4): 363–86.

Meeus, Bruno, Karel Arnaut, and Bas Van Heur. 2019. "Migration and the Infrastructural Politics of Urban Arrival." In *Arrival Infrastructures: Migration and Urban Social Mobilities*, edited by Bruno Meeus, Karel Arnaut, and Bas Van Heur, 1–32. Springer International Publishing.

Melbin, Murray. 1987. *Night as Frontier: Colonizing the World After Dark*. New York: Free Press.

Shaw, Robert. 2018. *The Nocturnal City*. London: Routledge.

Shaw, Robert. 2022. "Geographies of Night Work." *Progress in Human Geography* 46 (5): 1149–64.

Steger, Brigitte, and Lodewijk Brunt. 2003. "Introduction: Into the Night and the World of Sleep." In *Night-Time and Sleep in Asia and the West*, edited by Josef Kreiner, Lodewijk Brunt, and Brigitte Steger, 1–23. London: Routledge.

Talbot, Deborah. 2007. *Regulating the Night: Race, Culture and Exclusion in the Making of the Night-Time Economy.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Valentine, Gill, Sarah Holloway, and Mark Jayne. 2010. "Contemporary Cultures of Abstinence and the Nighttime Economy: Muslim Attitudes Towards Alcohol and the Implications for Social Cohesion." *Environment and Planning A* 42 (1): 8–22.

Williams, Robert. 2008. "Night Spaces: Darkness, Deterritorialization, and Social Control." *Space and Culture* 11 (4): 514–32.

Zill, Marielle, Ilse van Liempt, Bas Spierings, and Pieter Hooimeijer. 2020. "Uneven Geographies of Asylum Accommodation: Conceptualizing the Impact of Spatial, Material, and Institutional Differences on (un)Familiarity Between Asylum Seekers and Local Residents." *Migration Studies* 8 (4): 491–509.

About the Author

Ilse van Liempt is Associate Professor in Urban Geography in the Human Geography Department at Utrecht University and Research Leader of the university's wide Focus Area "Migration and Societal Change." She has been involved in several EU-funded research projects concerning irregular migration, refugee migration, and public space.

3. Queer Spheres: Making and Un-making Worlds and Nations through London's LGBTQ+ Night Spaces

Ben Campkin

Abstract: Queer heritage is an area of contestation in the planning of night-time space. This chapter focuses on London and looks at how dedicated LGBTQ+ night-time venues and mobile, pop-up events have been framed through optics of nationality and migration. In the late 2010s, in response to closures and threats in redevelopment contexts, campaigners used local and national planning and heritage tools in attempts to safeguard or re-provide LGBTQ+ venues. Concurrently, more mobile and transient queer nightlife events proliferated, and these have had vital functions in sustaining LGBTQ+ populations. Many have been presented through migrant positionalities and performative responses to national identities, helping us to understand how and why LGBTQ+ populations create, hold, lose, or relinquish night-space within global city dynamics.

Keywords: Sexuality, Identity, Heritage, Nationality, Migration, Nightlife

Introduction

Queer heritage has recently been a contested area in the planning of night-time space in London. This chapter focuses on the ways that dedicated LGBTQ+ night-time venues and mobile, pop-up events have been framed through the optics of nationality and migration. Numbers of licensed LGBTQ+ venues declined by 58 per cent in the decade to 2017 (Campkin and Marshall 2017). These businesses have faced new challenges since the Coronavirus pandemic, associated, for example, with rising energy costs and the cost-of-living crisis. In the late 2010s, in response to closures and threats

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH03

in redevelopment contexts, campaigners used planning and heritage tools in attempts to safeguard or re-provide venues. In so doing, listing requirements directed them to narrate the social and heritage value of long-standing venues in ways that have emphasized not only local but national and international significance (Campkin 2023). Concurrently, as in other global cities, more mobile and transient queer nightlife events have proliferated, and these have had vital functions in sustaining LGBTQ+ populations (Stillwagon and Ghaziani 2019). A significant number of these have been presented through migrant positionalities and performative practices of disidentification with national identities. This chapter considers case studies of both long- and short-term formal venues and transient events for their different potential to inform understandings of how and why LGBTQ+ populations create, hold, lose, or relinquish night-spaces in the dynamics of the global city.

The late feminist geographer Doreen Massey offered a nuanced understanding of the ways that the local and global are deeply entangled in London and other global cities (Massey 2007). Massey cautioned us to avoid simplistic judgments about the authenticity of the local or global, or hierarchical assumptions about the relationship between them, and to see them, rather, as closely intertwined. "The global is also locally produced; and global forces are just as material, and real, as is the local embeddedness," Massey wrote (Massey 2007, 21). She further argued that "the very characterization of cities as 'global' is a strategy whereby the part stands in for the whole, where the city is defined by its elite and the rest are consigned to invisibility" (Massey 2007, 216).

Massey was directly involved with London government, and offered many insights for understanding how London, as an experimental ground for neoliberalism, and a city built on its imperial legacies, was deeply entwined with other regions and cities. In *World City* (2007), she pushed for a reading of global cities that extends beyond their financial and command functions to consider other dominant "spheres of activity" (Massey 2007, 36). The example Massey briefly mentioned was Sydney's "sphere" of "gay and lesbian networks." Although *World City* was about London, Massey did not mention the UK capital's own gay and lesbian networks. However, as someone who worked inside City Hall during two distinct periods of governance in the 1980s and 2000s, she would have been aware of multiple interactions between formal city politics and LGBT rights and social movements. The politics of LGB (and to a lesser extent T) equality were increasingly mainstreamed within the activities of City Hall after the establishment of a new mayoralty and the London Assembly and Greater London Authority in 2000 (Campkin 2023, 47–66). Yet, even in this period of mainstreaming, there were tensions

between political rhetoric on global London, mayoral positioning on the city's diversity and cosmopolitanism, the legacies of the city's imperial past, and the lived experiences of a heterogenous and changing LGBTQ+ population.

Massey's reflections on world and global cities, cosmopolitanism and diversity only touch tangentially on gay and lesbian networks. Yet there is a long trajectory in gay and lesbian, and later queer and trans, studies and activism which has articulated migration and citizenship in a variety of ways, and which we can draw from in considering the intersections between queer night-time spaces and migration. For example, a first wave of geographies and sociologies considered the "great gay migration" to cities which was part of the gay liberation visibility politics of the 1970s and 1980s (Weston 1995). The spatial turn of the 1990s further opened discussions of a broader spectrum of LGBTQ+ identifications with place in relation to questions of citizenship, globalization and queer political orientations. For example, in the influential anthology *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*, political theorist Michael Warner described sexuality as historically "a political form of embodiment that is defined as noise or interference in the disembodying frame of citizenship" (1993, xx). At this time, during the AIDS epidemic, "Queer Nation" formed as an internationally minded local direct-action group in protest against anti-gay violence and discrimination in New York City.[1] Later, in the context of feminist and queer theorists' critiques of urban theorists' accounts of postmodernism in the 2000s, queer and trans theorists including José Esteban Muñoz, Susan Stryker and Jack Halberstam engaged directly with Massey's work (Halberstam 2005; Muñoz 1999, 2009; Stryker 2008). Halberstam noted that sexuality complicates our understandings of the local and the global (Halberstam 2005, 12).

Questions of queer and migrant positionalities and temporalities also feature in debates about what Lisa Duggan identifies as the homonormativity of mainstream LGBT politics in the 2000s (Duggan 2002). For example, Jasbir Puar articulated "the emergence of national homosexuality, what I term 'homonationalism' in political discourse in the US" (Puar 2007). This concept underscores the inclusion of white, liberal, gay and lesbian liberationist politics in mainstream policy debates, creating "a regulatory script not only of normative gayness, queerness, or homosexuality, but also of the racial and national norms that reinforce these sexual subjects" (Puar

1 In parallel with the trans-Atlantic migration of AIDS activism through the establishment of a branch of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), Queer Nation launched as a London nightclub in 1990, and would continue until 2019 as a space popular with the Black community, in the context of London's white-dominated LGBTQ+ scenes.

2007). Queer-feminist philosopher Sara Ahmed conceived of queerness as a migrant orientation, one which is disruptive and disorientating in geographic and temporal terms, where straight temporalities and lifepaths are redirected towards new horizons (Ahmed 2006).

Accounts of queer space have long considered the multiple roles of night-time venues as part of the urban social and cultural infrastructure. This has included analysis of the utopian and democratising functions of venues as important spaces of contact and creativity; as well as critiques of the entanglement of such venues with commodity capitalism and gentrification (Delany 1999; Chisholm 2004). Providing opportunities "under the cover of a protective darkness," night-spaces have been essential to queer populations' livelihoods, safety, survival (Muñoz 2009, 52). Yet they have been contingent upon externalities and precarious, and can reproduce—as well as challenge—exclusions, especially for marginalized LGBTQ+ people (Campkin and Marshall 2017; Campkin 2023).

In the rest of the chapter, I turn to examples which illustrate different intersections between LGBTQ+ night-spaces, heritage, nationality and migration. First, I consider the case of a long-standing venue, to show how LGBTQ+ heritage has appeared in contested planning processes. I indicate other examples where more formal and long-term venues have been subject to campaigns to protect or reopen them in contexts of redevelopment, which have given new prominence to LGBTQ+ social history, unsettling "the heritage" story in multicultural Britain at the local, national and international scale (Hall 1999). Then I turn to a pop-up venue located in a hotel basement, and finally to a temporary and mobile event series. I trace the different ways these night-spaces are framed through optics of migration and nationality.

The Elephant's Graveyard

The case of the City of Quebec (figure 3.1), formerly known as the Old Quebec Public House, in the central administrative borough of Westminster, in a highly touristic area just north of Soho and Oxford Street, demonstrates some of the ways that contestations around LGBTQ+ venues circle around different understandings of heritage. It is not clear when exactly the Quebec acquired its reputation as queer, but all accounts emphasise an association with returning RAF servicemen following World War II. One source, for example, places the opening in 1946, linking the venue to "gay pilots and crew from the Royal Airforce, who had played such a crucial part in defeating the Nazis" (Reid-Smith 2015). A former barman, Marcus Proctor, writes that:

Fig. 3.1: The City of Quebec. Photo by and courtesy of Cameron Foote.

> From 1946–2016, this bar was a refuge for our proud servicemen returning from WWII [...] and it's been a safe haven for men at risk of being thrown in jail, mental institutions, being bashed in the street or being homeless merely loving another man. When I worked there I knew punters who had been going there from day one and grew up together. Men who were told to marry and have kids, creating years of heartache and sadness for many involved. Elderly heroes who had played a part in the LGBTI+ fight for rights in the ensuing dark decades (Proctor 2018).

This conflation between military service against fascism and service in fights for equality sees the latter homonormatively assimilated into a patriotic national heritage story. It emphasises LGBTQ+ history as following a linear path towards liberation, one which erases the diversity of experiences amongst the heterogeneous LGBTQ+ population.

In recent times, a framed and annotated drawing (figure 3.2), positioned outside the Quebec's gentlemen's lavatories, has similarly presented the pub's queer credentials through its link to gay servicemen who had fought for LGBTQ+ rights. Although the pub had existed earlier, from 1936, the Royal Airforce narrative fits the image of a West End gentlemen's club that the venue cultivated (LGBT Archive 2014). The architecture enhanced the sense of respectability. The Quebec is a purpose-built pub in a large, modern, 1930s brick-built block with a mix of uses, the ground floor layout of which has been

Fig. 3.2: Drawing and history of The City of Quebec displayed inside the pub. Photo by Cameron Foote. Courtesy Cameron Foote.

consistent from the 1930s.[2] It features two bay windows to the street facade, an understated gesture towards Georgian English domestic architecture, lending respectability to this semi-public building. These windows being the only openings, the long, deep plan provided the sense of secure interiority that was deemed a positive feature in queer night-venues until the 1980s. In the early 2010s, the pub's original form was still easily recognizable, modified here and there, and appended by air-conditioning and audio-visual units which fill out the otherwise uninterrupted, high-ceilinged space. One of the cellars had become a basement nightclub and cabaret venue.

Although just around the corner from Soho, the recurrent image is of a venue that is both more exclusive than nearby bars, with a "West-End club feeling," and one that features a more inclusive atmosphere for older gay men who would travel to the venue because it felt comfortable to them (Anon, interview, March 2017). Although predominantly gay, and associated with elder gents, a customer notes the pub's sense of inclusivity: "it was never closed doors to anybody that wants to come along and have a party sort of attitude.

2 The layout of the ground floor remains similar to drawings from the 1930s. These show the long, deep and narrow plan of the pub, which at that time was compartmentalised, as was typical, into private, public and saloon bars. Correspondence between Burnet, Tait & Lorne and London County Council, January 25, 1934; City of Quebec drawings, F. J. Erole & Meyers Architects of London Bridge, approved by London County Council Architects.

No-no, no, all welcome" (Anon, interview, March 2017). By the mid-2000s, and into the 2010s, the Quebec had very visible and eclectic gay programming throughout the week, with advertisements in gay listings magazines such as *QX* embellished with the venue's illuminated rainbow logo (Morris 2012).

In 2011, having taken over the venue, pub co Greene King described it on the official website as London's "oldest gay bar," dating it to 1936, and continuing:

> We offer a "non-camp," "non-scene'" venue with weekly entertainment including DJ's on Friday & Saturday and our famous Caberet [sic] on Sundays. We offer a friendly, traditional pub atmosphere in the upstairs bar, with a bar/night club in the Lower Bar offering a comfortable sit-down bar mid-week and a dance floor with DJs at the weekend (Greene King, undated).

The association with elderly customers led to the pub being nicknamed the Elephant's Graveyard. The branding as a "non-camp" venue contrasted with the overtly camp programming evident in gay press advertisements, for basement parties, DJs, and a lively drag and cabaret scene. Behind a façade of respectability, the pub's popularity was also for its accommodation of discrete play—as one patron put it, the basement was where you could "go downstairs to be a bit more sort of fun, raucous or whatever-whatever and [...] everything just lent itself to it" (Anon, interview, March 2017). By distancing from camp, scene venues could express what Lisa Duggan has termed an assimilationist politics of "homonormativity" (Duggan 2002). The description was oriented towards an elder gay male clientele, appealing to the desire for respectability and acceptance. But it is also important to note that the venue was—like other long-standing venues—used and valued by people from multiple generations and backgrounds. As well as the senior crowd of gay men, some of whom had used it for decades, it was popular with younger and trans clientele.

In 2014 and 2015 the pub went through a refurbishment. Its owners, one of the UK's largest commercial pub companies, Greene King, had had their planning application to install a new frontage approved by Westminster Council. During this period, a conflict arose between the pub company and the pub's regular customers. The tensions over respectability evident in the venue's branding were paralleled in the planning discussions. The expert evaluation in the Heritage Statement, part of the application to replace and redesign the facade, is unequivocal:

> It is of our opinion that the City of Quebec public house does not currently display any significant features of architectural or historical merit, nor

does its mock-Victorian appearance sit well with immediate surroundings (Sampson Associates 2014).

As is common in the UK, the approach to heritage value in the proposals was fabric- and aesthetic-based, focused on creating a "more contemporary, inviting facade" (Gibbs, forthcoming; Sampson Associates 2014). This report notes that the building is designated "an unlisted building of merit."[3] But the application is justified on the basis that the pub has "declined in popularity over recent years." Yet the Heritage Statement made no reference to the pub's long historical association with the LGBTQ+ community, or the potential impact of the aesthetic changes on their identification with the venue. The designs would replace the "mock Victorian" facade and create a "more attractive," "simpler, cleaner aesthetic," removing the two bay windows to create a "vast improvement over the cluttered and dark nature that currently occupies the pub's elevation" (Sampson Associates 2014).

Following the announcement of the refurbishment plans, a campaign group formed, with a "Save the City of Quebec" public group set up on Facebook in July 2014 (Save the Quebec 2014). In the run up to and during the refurbishment Greene King had made several operational changes that patrons had deemed controversial, and it was these issues, rather than aesthetic or fabric-based changes that they objected to. The issues are summarised in the minutes of a meeting held at the pub in July 2016, attended by regular customers, and with representation from the Metropolitan Police, after a series of conflicts between the customers and management. Although the refurbishment had not been fully realized, and the exterior remained the same with its black-painted, bay windows, customers were unhappy about a range of subsequent operational changes, from the removal of LGBT identifiers from branding and from the pub itself, such as the rainbow flag and gay press, to the designation of the pub by the manager as a "gay friendly" rather than "gay" venue, to additional door charges and increased drinks prices, changes to entry policy, dress code and programming for the basement, and hostile door staff (meeting minutes 2016).[4] The pub company were, on paper, making public statements about inclusivity while, in practice, the

3 This refers to a citation as such in the Portman Estate Conservation Area Audit which provides the basis for Supplementary Planning Guidance.

4 Minutes of Meeting on the City of Quebec Public House Thursday July 21, 2016, 5–7 p.m. These notes mention an ongoing court case, in which a customer is accused of hate crime against the manager. Although the meeting "condemned any such behaviour", it was perceived that the manager, and therefore Greene King, were attempting to create a hostile environment that excluded customers who had been regulars for 40 or 50 years. The minute provide a long list

refurbishment and operational changes, justified on commercial grounds, were making customers feel uncomfortable and threatened.

Some customers perceived the management to have shifted away from a permissive approach to intimacy, to an actively surveillant approach to behaviour. The note records, "individual customers when greeting a friend with a kiss and a hug have been warned not behave in such a lurid (!) manner." These comments suggest how the pub had been associated with specific forms of intimate sociality that were no longer deemed palatable as the pub company attempted to make the venue more profitable, and as the management exercised its license with new rigour. This situation suggests how—as geographers Phil Hubbard and Eleanor Wilkinson's have argued in relation to the Olympic-led regeneration of London in the 2010s—the city has been subject to contradictions between the diversity rhetoric of "gay friendly" and tourism-driven place-making and the actual elimination of sexual practices and venues "not easily accommodated within normative, Western models of sexual citizenship, tolerance and inequality" (Hubbard and Wilkinson 2015, 598).

As conflicts flared up, they were reflected in colourful reviews posted on Trip Advisor. Read alongside other evidence, the affective texture of these posts reflects anxieties linked to the wider context of LGBTQ+ venue closures and threats of closure in the mid-2010s, performing the debates these triggered in the context of a specific venue as customers and staff negotiated a shifting policy context driven by intensifying commercialisation. On this platform, there is less need for the restrained discourse of a public meeting, or the tactical argument of public responses to planning applications.

As the community vented, tensions became apparent: between the historical imaginary of the venue as a queer institution, the commercial context, the management, the various groups of customers, with differing degrees of attachment, inclusion or exclusion in relation to the venue and the situation around it. There are complaints of poor decor and a frustration that the pub was "stuck in a time warp," a "relic," and associated with "working boys," which suggest the venue to be anachronistic. Yet the entries also emphasise "legendary drag shows," intergenerational mix, and the ways that the pub's layout and late-night opening provided spaces for intimacy and anonymity, with "lots of nice dark corners" (Trip Advisor 2015). The comments attest to the subtle changes introduced by Greene King to police behaviours deemed anti-social: CCTV in the toilets, brighter illumination

of issues and records that the Greene King senior management had been invited to attend the meeting but had not accepted.

and changes to fixtures and fittings. Regulars and tourists experienced the pub on different planes, with the latter often unaware of its queer status.

The conflict between Greene King and customers reached a resolution in 2015. *Gay Star News* announced in November that "one of the world's oldest gay venues" had been "saved from closure" (Reid-Smith 2015). This language reflects the campaigners' efforts to raise the international significance of the venue's heritage. In this article, Greene King's Local Pubs managing directors commented that:

> We are very proud of the legacy that the City of Quebec holds, as are our customers. Therefore, we wish to ensure [*sic*] them that the pub has a long-term future. This pub has a heritage as one of London's oldest gay pubs and we want to create a new look space inside that is welcoming and inclusive to all.

Both the campaigners and the pub company emphasised that the pub should be "inclusive to all," but beneath the surface there were quite different ideas of what that might mean. The pub company projected a future for the venue, recognizing its heritage value, but without any reassurance that future LGBTQ+ uses would be safeguarded.

Those representing the clientele and struggling to keep the pub as an LGBTQ+ venue, and for it to be recognized as an LGBTQ+ heritage venue, presented this as a continuation of earlier struggles for gay rights. This meant pointing tactically to the pub's customers as the frontline of the gay rights movement:

> We are adamant: The City of Quebec is an important part of London's LGBT Heritage and on that basis, we intend to fight for our rights, so recently hard won and now respected and cherished the length and breadth of the land. It is worth finally mentioning that these rights were won by the hard struggle and campaigning of some of our Quebec clientele.

More moderate than militant, they collectively asserted their sympathy with Greene King's need for the pub to be commercially successful; and for it to operate within the remit of its license. These micro dynamics unfolded in the context of Westminster's business-centric approach to urban management and the redevelopment of Oxford Street, where the pub co is part of a wider set of retail and leisure industry organizations working in concerted ways to maximize profit in this high-profile tourist location (Westminster City Council 2019).

Although customers found it difficult to attract attention to the City of Quebec, they joined up with Queer Spaces Network, which had formed to share resources across various venues that were subject to contested planning and redevelopment processes. These included The Black Cap and The Royal Vauxhall Tavern (RVT), which also had claims to be the UK's oldest queer pub. Campaigners working to protect these venues had similarly located their value in long-term use by queer populations and articulated the ways that they had fostered political organizing and supported diverse communities. These struggles had seen campaigners required to articulate the value of venues both as local community and heritage assets, and as places of national and international significance. For example, the RVT achieved Grade II Listed Building status through an elaborate narrative which compared its role in the gay movement to that of Stonewall Inn, in New York City, site of the Stonewall uprisings which are commemorated through Pride marches, and through direct association with royalty and international celebrities (Campkin 2023, 119–46).

The campaign at the City of Quebec was more modest and produced less momentum to engage through official planning and heritage tools. It did not feature the performative, colourful and high-profile direct-action campaigns around other venues (Campkin 2023, 119–46). Those who tried to draw attention to the situation at the Quebec complained that the "LGBT media don't want to know" because the story was "not sexy like the Joiners [Arms] or [The] Black Cap," which had received widespread coverage and articles in the mainstream media (interview, 21 April 2017). Nonetheless, just as at The Black Cap, there was engagement with the local neighbourhood LGBT forum and the Mayor of London's Night Czar, who helped facilitate a dialogue between the campaigners and other stakeholders. Greene King's representatives began to attend the Night Czar's new LGBT Venues Forum. Following this, some of the visible markers of the pub's gay identity were reinstated. In sanitised form, the pub's identity as an LGBTQ+ venue continues, so far as it can balance with commercial imperatives. Since 2019, Westminster City Council has included a Soho Special Policy Area in its local plan, which seeks "to retain existing, and encourage new, LGBTQI+ venues," although the Quebec sits just outside the designated area.

The Chateau

If the City of Quebec situation was embedded in the fabric and long-term social use of an established and licensed venue, how have debates about

Fig. 3.3: The Chateau, showing stained glass with biblical scenes. Photo by Tasha Doughty. Courtesy The Chateau/Laurie Belgrave.

queer heritage and inclusion connected with more mobile and transient forms of night-space? In the following section, I turn to a pop-up venue and transient series of cabaret parties. One individual concerned about the declining number of LGBTQ+ venues and threats to long-standing ones in London in the 2010s commented anxiously that "[t]hese venues are not re-opening somewhere else. We're losing them altogether, and for me that is the most alarming. Where will we go?" (Campkin and Marshall 2017, 18). One answer to the question is that queer night-spaces have continued to exist but in more transient and mobile forms. Indeed, for many in the LGBTQ+ population, mainstream, formal licensed LGBTQ+ venues—mostly operated by white, cisgendered gay men, and managed by a variety of commercial entities with different degrees of visibility—have never been inclusive or experienced as such.

The Chateau (figure 3.3) was a dedicated LGBTQ+ space in the London Borough of Southwark which opened in 2018 and closed in 2021. Rather than a formal, licensed venue, it was a pop-up that opened in the basement bar of the boutique Church Street Hotel, initially for six weeks. Musician and event organiser Laurie Belgrave, who founded and ran The Chateau, emphasised its inclusivity across the LGBTQ+ spectrum and its "super diverse crowd" (Levine 2018). Belgrave framed the venue as a response to the lack of LGBTQIA+ venues in South-East London—an area with a large LGBTQ+ residential population—and as "a new way for queer nightlife to thrive"

(Levine 2018; The Chateau 2021). Although data showed that Southwark has a large LGBTQ+ population, the borough had no licensed venues that were full-time LGBTQ+ spaces (Office for National Statistics quoted in Southwark LGBTQ Network 2019). The Chateau was pitched affirmatively as an inclusive space and had overtly political event programming, often centring Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour. The attention to intersectional discrimination through such programming could be seen as a response not only to local superdiversity and lack of venue provision, but to the disproportionate impact of venue closures for marginalized LGBTQ+ community members due to the relative lack of provision, and the relative precarity of provision of venues for these groups (Campkin and Marshal, 2017).

In a tradition of queer appropriation and aesthetic kitsch, The Chateau's promoters built the identity of the venue around its existing religious décor as a hotel chapel. Event producer Laurie Belgrave commented on the aesthetic appropriation of religious imagery which also enabled cross-association with earlier queer populations and their venues:

> The stained glass around the venue depicts various biblical stories including Moses parting the red sea, and my particular favourite, the story of the golden calf, which has for centuries represented naughty behaviour. I love that one of the earliest gay bars in London was called "The Cave of The Golden Calf" (Belgrave 2021).

In addition to symbolic resonance, the venture required lower investment, risk, fit out and operating costs; albeit the labour and emotional investment involved were still substantial. The appropriation of such spaces comes with challenges. The Chateau prioritized physical accessibility, with the organisers going to great lengths to describe the venue, down to the surface materials and lighting, and offering assistance to those who might need it. Basement spaces have often provided possibilities for radical congregation, but they continue to pose problems for wheelchair users and others with mobility challenges.

The operators had no free- or leasehold in the property, low ambitions commercially and are not substantively entangled in the gentrification processes linked to large-scale redevelopment. Are larger or intimate-scale, pop-up spaces such as The Chateau resulting from political intentions or because of the lack of opportunities to establish more secure premises? The evidence suggests both. Campaigner and researcher, Ben Walters has commented:

> It's obviously always incredible the way that people find ways to say okay, if we can't have a permanent space, then we will find ways to at least try to meet some of these needs in incredibly creative and dynamic and diverse ways, but that shouldn't be the obligation: it should be possible to do that and also to have a fixed physical premises to do that (interview).

In a critical evaluation of recent pop-up typologies in London, geographer Ella Harris links these to intense precarity, generational inequality and the exploitation of affective labour (Harris 2020). For queer communities in Southwark and elsewhere, these kinds of pop-up are in some ways a return to 1970s modes of nightlife, with pubs and other venues hosting regular drag and disco events, prior to the emergence of dedicated gay bars and clubs as typologies. If some of the arguments put forward in media discussions emphasize outmoded venue types as a cause for decline, it is interesting to note that new and popular venues are connecting to older forms in their intimate scale and policies of inclusion—albeit aligned to today's intersectional politics. There is not a linear evolution of business types or operational models—the dominant types from different periods, or associated with different generations, co-exist or overlap, even if out-of-sync with the vanguard of LGBTQ+ politics. The cocooning of The Chateau in a hotel, as a temporary queer space, afforded certain freedoms and the possibility to closely manage the space according to the organizers' criteria. However, it also required acceptance of permanent insecurity and the kind of invisibility in planning and urban management that had led to closures of other community-oriented venues in the 2010s.

Turkish Delight

As well as temporary venues, to understand a fuller picture of today's queer night scenes it is important to consider the role and framing of events. Long-running club nights have served as important networks for specific LGBTQ+ groups (Campkin and Marshall 2017; Ritu and Marshall 2022). These of course inhabit licensed premises but are more mobile. Whether long running or less established or transient, such events are also a valuable part of the social and cultural infrastructure in the global city, even if they are more elusive to the city authorities.

In East London, a region noted for its complex superdiversity (Vertovec 2007), the late 2010s and early 2020s saw a proliferation of night-time events

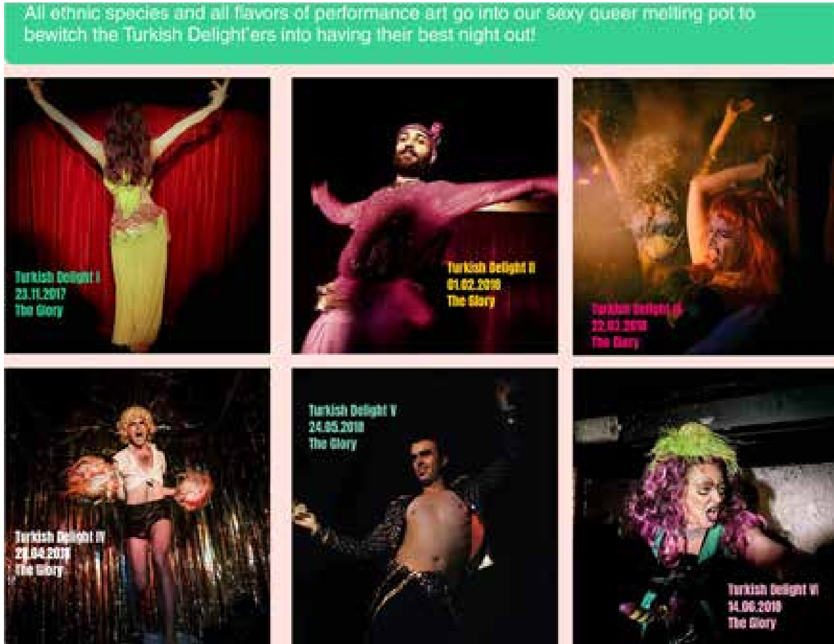


Fig. 3.4: Turkish Delight, The Glory, screenshot of website documentation of events, 2017–2018. Courtesy Queer Art Projects.

organized around constructs of national, ethnic and cultural identity. This is interesting in the context of the Olympic-led regeneration and gentrification processes, where the East has been a focus for projections of London's global city status and constructions of the convivial, multicultural city. These processes are enacted in the name of public benefit but have been evidenced to put most pressure on minorities. The queer creatives who organized pop-up queer events around national identities are individuals and collectives who have migrated to London for a variety of reasons. Their stories connect East London with other locations in the UK and internationally, for example, to the north of England, to Wales, but also to Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Italy and Turkey. In this final section, through focusing on a third case study, Turkish Delight, I consider what the creation of such night-spaces tells us about precarious queer lifeworlds, the navigation of nationality and citizenship, trans-national activism and the local-global dimensions of urban space.

Turkish Delight (figure 3.4) was a "bilingual [Turkish-English] queer night" of Turkish pop, performance and "to die for belly dancers both male and femme" (Queer Art Projects, website, undated; Urban Laboratory, Queer Nation, July 2021). Produced by Queer Art Projects (QAP),

it featured Turkish artists, DJs and music, and engaged directly with imaginaries of Turkish national identity and heritage, playfully referencing orientalism and exoticization in its name. The series took place during 2017 and 2018 at a cabaret pub which is a mainstay of London's queer performance scenes called The Glory. Further events were planned but did not happen due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The series was run by two artist-academics who moved to London from Istanbul fleeing intensifying conservatism in Turkey (interviews A and B, QAP, 2021). In migrating to the UK and in establishing QAP, these creative workers took advantage of a scheme for Turkish entrepreneurs known as the Ankara Agreement, an agreement between The Republic of Turkey and the European Economic Community signed in 1963 which provided a framework for European cooperation. Although in the UK this scheme was mainly used by small businesses such as grocers and restauranteurs, it was also used by artists and creative workers. Coincidentally, the area of East London where QAP launched Turkish Delights—Dalston/Haggerston in the London Borough of Hackney—has a large Turkish residential and business population, and there is an interesting symbiosis between Turkish grocery stores and queer cabaret venues and nightclubs. However, the organizers felt that their efforts to attract a local Turkish clientele failed, with those attending rather being from a wider catchment area. The events served to enable a network for internationally mobile creative practitioners and others who had migrated to London; helping the promoters to build their own network.

The organisers of Turkish Delight had visited London and had positive associations with East London's queer night scenes before deciding to move to the city:

> I remember a night that we were invited to the Dalston Superstore actually, and we had so much fun, I mean I love Dalston Superstore; the atmosphere, the environment, the music, the people, the [...] I mean it's so, so familiar and so [...] that you, I could feel a part of. I think it was, it was one of the reasons that I thought that I *could* live in London. So, we can say that it's because of the nightlife, I mean not maybe rationally [...] but I mean emotionally it just made us to feel London as an alternative. And then we moved to London, yes, five months later than that (Queer Nation, long-table 2021).

As with other migrant night-space organizers, for the organizers of Turkish Delight, London and East London contained contradictory

associations. The feeling that, "London nightlife was what felt like home, away from home" had both positive and negative aspects (Queer Nation long-table 2021). They had been attracted to London, for its image of conviviality, for economic opportunity, and East London specifically, for its relative affordability for housing, specifically because of its queer night scenes. Another promoter described this as the *pull* of London (Queer Nation long-table 2021). But they also spoke of the discomfort of life in London, and of ways that, as queer women, they had negative experiences as part of their everyday life in London which were reminiscent of Istanbul.

Istanbul has some parallels with London and other global cities in the ways that queer space has been eliminated through neoliberal and heritage-driven redevelopment processes (Atalay and Doan 2020). However, noting the increasing difficulty of being queer in Istanbul – even in formerly more bohemian neighbourhoods – these promoters emphasized a positive impression of what London offered. In distinction to earlier critiques of the dominance of Western gay liberationism, which Joseph Massad has argued is implicitly orientalist (Massad 2002), reproducing the world in its own image, these night-space producers find solace in a global queer culture which transcends nationality:

> [W]e really realized that the *queer* culture, actually, wherever you go, is similar; there is a nationality there that is beyond nations. And the way we entertain ourselves is very much the same in Istanbul and in London, so we wanted to be part of that connection; that's why we started the Turkish Delight nights (interview A QAP 2021).

We can draw on Cuban-American performance scholar José Esteban Muñoz's (1999; 2009) conceptualization of "disidentification" to understand how these cultural workers approach nationality, citizenship, coalition politics and the local-global dimensions of urban space (Campkin 2023). Munoz, whose work focused on night spaces and performance practices in New York City, explored cabaret venues as places of radical, utopic queer politics. He is interested in how queer aesthetics and practices create "networks of queer belongings," which draw from the past [the "no-longer-conscious"] to survive and critically engage in the present, while offering hopeful *transport* to illuminate better futures [the "not-yet-here"] (2009, 109; 116; 123). He models a nuanced approach to identity, and attachment, for what he terms "minoritarian subjects" and counterpublics, specifically queer people of colour and performance practitioners. Identity is a site of *struggle*,

which becomes "formatted" in particular places and times. It involves both attachment to "subcultural circuits," and the "survival strategy" of *dis*identification—that is, necessary but semi-detached relations with "toxic" representations, such as cliched popular culture stereotypes of minority sexualities (1999). Following this logic, although they directly frame their work through national cultural imaginaries, the organizers of Turkish Delight, and other comparable events, disidentify with these frameworks, holding them in question. The creation of night-spaces, and the aesthetics they pursued, were part of a set of practices, storytelling and engagement which forged connections locally and transnationally in ways that would not have been imagined by the policymakers who conceived the Ankara Agreement.

Conclusion

In Massey's terms these three cases are examples of queer night spaces and scenes as sites of local and global politics. Formal and dedicated LGBTQ+ venues, which are licensed by the city authorities, have been designated for protection alongside other vulnerable forms of "social and cultural infrastructure" in the *London Plan*. Sexual and gender diversity are built into the imaginary of the city projected by the authorities at both the metropolitan and local scale. Yet even the longest established queer venues have had to narrate their worth and value as heritage through criteria which prioritise national and international significance, aesthetic considerations and the maintenance of a dominant national heritage story. In these contexts, debates about architectural aesthetics and commercial policies on diversity are infused with deeper issues of safety, respectability, homonormativity, assimilation and transgression.

Thinking beyond established venues to a wider queer infrastructure of pop-up spaces and events highlights the variety of interconnected spaces and activities and power asymmetries in the distribution of resources within diverse LGBTQ+ populations. Pop-up venues and mobile events demonstrate queer utopianism but also pragmatism, opportunistically creating temporary refuge, and working in practical ways to attend to the structural inequalities built into property dynamics or night scenes. Such spaces are vital to the sustenance of marginalized LGBTQ+ people but are under-recognised within formal heritage protection processes and in the identification of at-risk cultural venues.

Bibliography

"A_Z of Cabaret." 2013. *QX Magazine*, April 3. Accessed October 11, 2018. http://www.qxmagazine.com/2013/04/the-a_z-of-cabaret/.

Ahmed, Sara. 2006. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. London and Durham: Duke University Press.

Atalay, Ozlem, and Petra L. Doan. 2020. "Making Lesbian Space at the Edge of Europe: Queer Spaces in Istanbul." *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 24 (3): 255–71.

Campkin, Ben, and Lo Marshall. 2017. *LGBTQ+ Cultural Infrastructure in London: Night Venues 2006–Present*. London: UCL Urban Laboratory.

Campkin, Ben. 2023. *Queer Premises: LGBTQ+ Venues in London Since the 1980s*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Chisholm, Dianne. 2004. *Queer Constellations: Subcultural Space in the Wake of the City*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Delany, Samuel R. 1999. *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*. New York: New York University Press.

Duggan, Lisa. 2002. "The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism." In *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*, edited by Russ Castronovo and Dana D. Nelson, 175–94. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Gibbs, Clemency. Forthcoming 2024. "Facadism in London: Exploring the Gap between Critical Heritage Theory and Conservation Practice." PhD diss., UCL.

Greene King. Undated. Quoted in "In a Pub." Accessed March 16, 2023. http://www.inapub.co.uk/venues/city-of-quebec/london/w1h7af/23763. Original URL http://gkpubs.co.uk/pubs-in-london/city-of-quebec-pub.

Halberstam, Jack. 2005. *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York and London: New York University Press.

Hall, Stuart. 1999. "Whose Heritage? Un-Settling 'the Heritage,' Re-Imagining the Post-nation." *Third Text* 13 (9): 3–13.

Harris, Ella. 2020. *Rebranding Precarity: Pop-up Culture as the Seductive New Normal*. London: Zed Books.

Hubbard, Phil, and Eleanor Wilkinson. 2015. "Welcoming the World? Hospitality, Homonationalism, and the London 2012 Olympics." *Antipode* 47 (3): 598–615.

Istanbul Queer Art Projects. Undated. "Turkish Delight." https://www.queerart-projects.co.uk/turkish-delight.

Levine, Nick. 2018. "Take a Break at The Chateau, South-East London's Revolutionary New LGBT+ Venue." *Time Out London*. Accessed July 26, 2019. https://www.timeout.com/london/news/take-a-break-at-the-chateau-south-east-londons-revolutionary-new-lgbt-venue-091018.

LGBT Archive. 2014. City of Quebec." Accessed October 9, 2018. http://lgbthistoryuk.org/wiki/City_of_Quebec.

Massad, Joseph. 2002. *Desiring Arabs*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Massey, Doreen. 2007. *World City*. Cambridge: Polity.

Morris, Colin. 2012. "Earl Grey at the City of Quebec, 8 April 2012." Accessed October 11, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkGK72fBXLQ.

Muñoz, José Esteban. 1999. *Disidentifications: Queers of Colour and the Performance of Politics*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Muñoz, José Esteban. 2009. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York and London: New York University Press.

Preciado, Paul B. 2020. *An Apartment on Uranus*. London: Fitzcarraldo Editions.

Proctor, Marcus. 2018. "A Brief History of… The City of Quebec." *Quiltbag*, Issue 1, unpaginated pamphlet.

Puar, Jasbir K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Reid-Smith, Tris. 2015. "One of the World's Oldest Gay Venues in London Saved from Closure." *Gay Star News*, November 5. Accessed July 13, 2021. https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/one-of-the-worlds-oldest-gay-venues-in-london-saved-from-closure/#gs.yYlYI9k.

Ritu, DJ, and Lo Marshall. 2022. "Club Kali." In *Queer Spaces: An Atlas of LGBTQIA+ Places and Stories*, edited by Adam Nathaniel Furman and Joshua Mardell, 92–93. London: RIBA Publishing.

Sampson Associates. 2014. "Heritage Statement to Support the Planning Application for Proposed Alterations at the City of Quebec Public House." March 12.

Save the Quebec. 2014. Accessed May 16, 2019. https://www.facebook.com/groups/savethequebec/.

Southwark LGBTQ+ Network. 2019. *Southwark LGBTQ+ Community Consultation 2018–19: Key Background, Findings and Draft Recommendations*. London: Southwark LGBTQ+ Network.

Stillwagon, Ryan, and Amin Ghaziani. 2019. "Queer Pop-Ups: A Cultural Innovation in Urban Life." *City & Community* 18 (3): 874–95.

Stryker, Susan. 2008. "Dungeon Intimacies: The Poetics of Transsexual Sadomasochism." *Parallax* 14 (1): 36–47.

The Chateau. "About." Accessed August 27, 2021. https://www.thechateau.org.uk/about.

Vertovec, Steven. 2007. "Super-Diversity and its Implications." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (6): 1024–54.

Warner, Michael, ed. 1993. *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Westminster City Council. 2019. *City Plan 2019–2040*. London: Westminster City Council.

Weston, Kath. 1995. "Get Thee to a Big City: Sexual Imaginary and the Great Gay Migration." *GLQ* 2 (3): 253–77.

Interviews

Anonymous. Interview by Ben Campkin and Lo Marshall. UCL Urban Laboratory. March 31, 2017.

Anonymous. Interview by Ben Campkin. Telephone. April 21, 2017.

Belgrave, Laurie. Email correspondence with Ben Campkin. October 15, 2021.

Minutes of Meeting on the City of Quebec Public House. Thursday, July 21, 2016.

Queer Art Projects. Interview A. September 22, 2021.

Queer Art Projects. Interview B. September 23, 2021.

UCL Urban Laboratory. "Queer Nation." Online long-table. July 22, 2021.

Walters, Ben. Interview by Ben Campkin. UCL Urban Laboratory. July 16, 2019.

About the Author

Ben Campkin is Professor of Urbanism and Urban History at The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, and Vice-Dean for Public and City Engagement for The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment.

4. Planning for Nocturnal Cultural Encounters

Marion Roberts

Abstract: This chapter springs from a project which examines the interrelation between night studies and urban design in England and Wales. Guidance for urban design mainly ignores black and ethnic minority experiences of exclusion in the time/space of the urban night. This omission illustrates the normative thinking that underpins urban planning for new urban extensions and regeneration projects. A striking exception comes from London with its Night Time Enterprise Zones which take inclusion, particularly for black and minority ethnic groups, seriously. Using secondary sources, this chapter discusses the potentials for and barriers to planning for cultural nocturnal encounters in the UK context of neoliberal governmentality, issues with policing, an economic crisis and post Brexit labour shortages.

Keywords: Urban design, Enterprise zones, Night, Exclusion

Introduction

London's status as a "world city" is jealously guarded by its mayor and advisers and the diversity of its population is seen as a cause of celebration. The significance of the night-time economy as a component of London's prosperity rose up the mayor's agenda in the period prior to the election of Sadiq Khan as Mayor in 2016. Following the election, in a bid to retain London's cultural status, new policies were put in place and existing ones revised. Urban planning and urban design policies play a part in sustaining cultural encounters, through the provision of welcoming and functional urban spaces and cultural premises and venues. This chapter suggests that London's approach to facilitating diversity

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH04

at night is progressive, especially when compared to the nostalgic and normative scope of national design and planning policies. Nevertheless, the difficulties posed by London's context cannot be ignored, particularly with regard to property development and policing. The chapter concludes that there are substantial barriers to be overcome before the mayor's ambitions for a world beating night-time culture can be achieved (Greater London Authority 2017).

Methods

The research for this chapter is drawn from a project that brings together insights from studies of the urban night with contemporary urban design theory and practice.[1] In the course of examining design guidance and planning documents, London's progress had to be acknowledged. The commentary that follows in the chapter is based primarily on these secondary sources. It is important to point out, though, that the author of this paper has had over twenty years of experience in living in inner London, working in central London and research on the urban night in London.[2]

Urban Design, National Policy and the Night

A simple way of describing urban design is that it is about the organization of the urban landscape, operating as a kind of three-dimensional urban planning, with a primary focus on public space and the public realm (Cuthbert 2017). In regulatory terms, urban design policies form a sub-set to the quasi-legal system of urban planning. The "cultural turn" has long been a preoccupation of planning (Harvey 1991) but the interaction of urban design in terms of spatial design strategies and frameworks and the evening and night-time economy has received less attention (Van den Nouwelant and Steinmetz 2013; Tiesdell and Slater 2006).

1 The research supporting this chapter was supported by Leverhulme Trust Emeritus Fellowship grant EM-2020-077.
2 Two direct contacts with Mayor's office and the Greater London Authority (GLA) need to be declared. The first was as a researcher investigating whether over-regulation was having a depressing impact on nightlife, a study commissioned by the GLA (Roberts, Eldridge, Osborn and Flacks 2020) and the second was as an adviser to the Research and Data Sub-Committee for London's Night Time Commission. Involvement with the GLA ended in 2018 and the scrutiny of the policy documents is therefore independent of any official influence.

With regard to the night-time economy, past national policies have been little short of disastrous, first by allowing the creation of large retail parks which undercut traditional high streets, then by championing retail over other land uses in town centres, meaning that night-time economy uses have been relegated to "secondary" streets with a lesser footfall. Planning policies in the 1990s and early 2000s sought to mitigate the negative impacts of an expansion in the numbers of licensed venues, facilitated by government, by encouraging local councils to impose "cumulative impact policies," limiting the size of clusters of pubs, clubs and takeaways. While concerns about the negative impacts of concentrations of licensed premises remain (MCHLG 2021), greater attention is now being paid to the importance of providing a mix of land-uses and the promotion of the experience economy. This aims to ameliorate/solve the "crisis on the high street," which is caused by a high number of vacancies in high streets devoted to shopping (Carmona 2022).

Planning practice guidance issued by the government suggests that "evening and nighttime uses have the potential to increase economic activity within town centres and provide additional employment opportunities" (DLUHC 2019).

In a move to reverse developers' preferences for peripheral and fringe development, town centre policies support the provision of major cultural and leisure facilities through a "sequential test." This means that proposals for cultural and leisure facilities over a certain floor area have to demonstrate that there are no suitable sites within town centres before planning permission can be determined in their favour. Although there may be no causal connection or association, prior to the pandemic one of the private organizations providing data sources for the hospitality industry reported a trend for night and late-night venues to close down in smaller towns and urban centres with those in major centres and medium sized urban centres remaining open. Meanwhile design guidance for neighbourhoods focuses on housing, with images of sun-drenched residential schemes in bright daylight (MCHLG 2019). Little mention is made of any social or community facilities, other than a cafe, restaurant, or pub and possibly a community hall in a neighbourhood centre. More detailed design guidance offered by quasi-governmental organizations frequently refers to cafes and pubs as focal points for social interaction in urban centres (Airey, Wales & Scruton 2020). Pubs are referred to as desirable in design guidance for new-build housing neighbourhoods too, which—while a laudable intention with regard to social interaction—ignores evidence which suggests that older people and people with particular minority ethnic backgrounds find them exclusionary, with barriers that need to be overcome to fulfil their potential as social hubs

(Valentine, Jayne and Holloway 2010; Booth and Mohdin 2018; Thurnell-Read 2021). The number of pubs (public houses), a peculiarly national institution, have been in a process of steady decline since the mid-twentieth century, according to the British Beer and Pub Association's website. Furthermore, most cafes and coffee shops in England close around 5 p.m. or 6 p.m.

London and the London Plan

London suffers from central/periphery issues as regards the night too. London has a population of 8.8 million people and a much greater level of diversity than the majority of English cities. 54 per cent of Londoners belong to white groups compared to 87.9 per cent in England and Wales, and of the most dominant ethnic groups, 21 per cent of Londoners identify as Asian and 14 per cent black compared to 9.3 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively (UK Gov 2022; GLA City Intelligence Unit 2022). Similarly, London has approximately 1 per cent more people, or 88.000 individuals, who identify as LGB than England and Wales (ONS 2023). The West End, which occupies a small area in central London, accommodates an intensive concentration of night-time and late-night venues. Focus group research showed that London residents would like more venues and activities locally. While this finding might appear surprising, the background was that in the period 2007–2017, London lost more than half its nightclubs and more than a third of its live music venues (GLA Economics 2018, 7).

The research by GLA Economics was part of a suite of actions undertaken by the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority in the four years preceding the pandemic. Pressure had been growing from stakeholders in culture, hospitality and entertainment, alarmed at venue closures. Sadiq Khan has a background which lends itself to taking night working and night-time issues seriously since his father had been a bus driver and his father-in-law a ticket collector (MEND 2009). On taking office Khan set up a Night Time Commission with a secretariat, commissioned the research to support it and appointed a night-time advisor, a "Night Czar," Amy Lamé. With his support, she created a new committee with local councillors acting as night-time "champions" from each of London's thirty-two boroughs.

One of the first gains was a crucial change to national planning policy. The "agent of change" principle, first introduced by the Mayor of London in London wide planning policy and eventually, was included in the National Planning Policy Framework. The policy requires developers who are building new residential properties near to existing music or performance venues to

provide soundproofing, rather than placing this burden on the venue itself. This change is significant, because it reverses a general planning principle which is that the "polluter pays" (Donnelly 2019).

Meanwhile the process of spatial planning continued with an update to the London Plan. The planning system in the UK is hierarchical, such that in London, local plans have to be in accordance with national planning policy and with London's Plan. The process of plan production takes years and requires consultation with the boroughs, other stakeholders and the wider community and involves detailed negotiations. The *London Plan 2021* differs from its predecessors in the weight of policies it includes for the night, defined as occupying the time span between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. (Mayor of London 2021).

Planning for a 24-Hour City

The ambition to make London a 24-hour city, comparable to other capitals such as New York, Sydney and Tokyo, was spelt out in a forty-plus page full-colour document, *From Good Night to Great Night*. This document emphasised the importance of the night to London's prosperity (GLA 2017). Kolioulis (2018) has commented on its "city boosterist" ambition, aiming to attract tourism, and make night-time London "a hub of investment and entrepreneurship" (18). The overall message of the document is that London is a world city and has a world-class evening and night-time economy, encompassing many cultural activities.

London's Night Time Commission, which drew heavily on research conducted by the GLA's internal research arm, GLA Economics, finished its work and published a report in 2019 which widened the definition of night-time activities. The research found that, at night the numbers of workers in health-related occupations was higher than those working in culture and leisure, 191,000 versus 168,000 (London Night Time Commission 2017, 7). The report was illustrated with images of hospitals, markets, refuse workers and public spaces rather than musicians and clubbers. It drew away from the strident world city message of the 2017 document and suggested that more could be done to entice a wider diversity of Londoners out at night by increasing the "richness" of the offer of activities, "especially low and no cost activities" (London Night Time Commission 2017, 74).

Following on from a broader take on the night, the definition of culture is extended in the 2021 London Plan to include public spaces, community facilities and faith buildings such as churches and mosques as cultural places:

> [P]remises for cultural production and consumption such as performing and visual arts studios, creative industries workspace, museums, theatres, cinemas, libraries, music, spectator sports, and other entertainment or performance venues, including pubs and night clubs. Although primarily serving other functions, the public realm, community facilities, places of worship, parks and skate-parks can provide important settings for a wide range of arts and cultural activities. (Mayor of London 2021, 300)

The plan devotes a complete policy section to supporting the night-time economy and a further section to supporting pubs. Rather than attracting residents to an already over-crowded centre, London's spatial plan designates a hierarchy of town centres with regard to night-time culture, entertainment and hospitality in its "strong town centres first approach" (Mayor of London 2021, 89). This approach is to enhance cultural and social interchange in London's town centres and high streets in addition to augmenting their local economies. The significance of buildings and facilities that support cultural activities is emphasised and local planners are encouraged to identify existing or potential clusters and designating them as "Cultural Quarters."

The appointment of Amy Lamé as Night Czar championed LGBTQ+ rights and women's rights. Lamé helped venues to resist closure, most famously with the Royal Vauxhall Tavern, where she herself ran club nights. The GLA's cultural strategy commented on the white domination of the music industry and recommended that boroughs assist in providing suitable facilities for cultural production by black and minority ethnic (BAME) creatives. "BAME" is not universally liked as an acronym but is used in GLA documents. The London Plan also took up cultural consumption and recommended that boroughs are encouraged to consider "how the cultural offer serves different groups of people," such as young people, BAME groups and the LGBTQ+ community, to identify gaps in provision and to protect premises and activities, "especially facilities that are used in the evening and night time" (Mayor of London 2021, 300).

Inclusion is taken forward in a separate document proving detailed guidance on strategies and design for the night. Boroughs are encouraged to set up night-time forums and to balance representation from their diversity of residents to include people from minority groups and to "ensure inclusive balanced and intergenerational representation" (Mayor of London 2020, 8). Authorities are encouraged to seek the views of all demographics and night workers in formulating their strategy. The guidance suggests that one of the key indicators of a strategy's success is the extent to which it ensures

both a diversity of people participating in night-time activities as well as a diversity of activities.

This ambition includes people on a low income—a category which was omitted from the UK's Equalities Act 2010. The document cites survey findings which identified five key priorities for a night-time strategy. Four of these are: to have better street lighting, improved night-time transport, more free and low-cost activities and increased access to services, such as banks, doctors' surgeries and libraries. The fifth, more police visible at night, raises issues which are discussed further on in this chapter (Mayor of London 2020).

The detailed recommendations for design look to reducing the barriers for a diverse population to feel comfortable about going out at night, whether to run errands, enjoy nightlife, work, study or visit friends. Because of London's super-diversity, an increase in participation in this sense reinforces a recognition of "otherness." Planning and design can facilitate what Wessendorf (2014) calls a "civility" towards diversity by making public spaces welcoming for people from different ethnic backgrounds and heritages, and other markers of difference. The guidance recommends sophisticated improvements to lighting, public realm improvements to enhance perceptions of safety and well-designed provision of street amenities such as benches and rubbish bins. It reinforces and amplifies encouragement to local councils to protect existing cultural premises and activities which serve minority audiences and to promote new venues and initiatives. Boroughs are recommended to undertake a detailed mapping of existing land-uses and opening times to identify clusters of nightlife uses. A detailed action plan would protect these clusters, possibly even form new ones with cultural "anchors" and facilitate walking between them. The clusters could be augmented by permitting "pop up" or temporary uses in vacant premises through allowing a flexibility of use in planning and licensing permissions.

The discussion of "clusters" of nightlife venues in local neighbourhoods raises questions about mixing and segregation. Activities and premises may be segmented by a number of different factors, ranging from income and social status to age, ethnicity, particular kinds of experience or musical preferences, such as whether they are "mainstream" or "alternative" (Measham and Hadfield 2009; Crivello 2011). While in major urban centres such segregation offers choice without necessarily implying exclusion, the situation for local centres is different. Their smaller size and catchment areas mean that for local residents, and especially those on low incomes with limited free time, exclusion is a more important factor. This is one of the barriers that the Night Time Enterprise Zones are challenged to overcome.

Night Time Enterprise Zones

London's Night Time Commission recommended that Night Time Enterprise Zones (NTEZ) be set up to help save London's local high streets from decline. The first NTEZ was announced in September 2019 in the outer London borough of Waltham Forest. The borough as a whole has a median level of diversity within London, with 52.8 per cent of its population identifying as white British with the next largest ethnic group identifying as Asian, at 19.5 per cent. Just over 5 per cent of the borough's population identify as LGBTQ+ (London Borough of Waltham Forest 2023). The information that follows is taken from an evaluation report, which appears to have been commissioned by the local authority with input from the stakeholders involved in the project and an independent consultancy (LB Waltham Forest 2020). The NTEZ set out to boost the town centre, to encourage footfall on the High Street after 6 p.m. and to improve access to shops and services within the parameters of the Mayor's policies for a 24-hour city. The programme offered a fund of £75,000 match funded by the local authority.

There were seven different proposals in the NTEZ programme which ran from October 2019 to January 2020. There were consultation and stakeholder events, such as walkabouts and focus groups, which were targeted at different demographic groups, coupled with an online web survey. Asian seniors were consulted as well as young adults and young people with learning disabilities. A design charette was held with to generate creative ideas for the high street. Small numbers of people from different groups were involved in the face-to-face activities; the difficulty of reaching a diverse demographic was illustrated by the online survey. Overall, a higher proportion of responses came from white people (70 per cent) and a lower proportion from Asians (8 per cent) than in the borough as a whole.

Detailed mapping of the High Street revealed that the majority of it was taken up with small shops, with approximately a fifth of the businesses being dedicated to food and beverages. Many of the businesses were closed by 6 p.m. and nearly all by 8 p.m. Only five stayed open late: a convenience store, a fast-food restaurant, a gym and a commercial leisure outlet. A cinema provided a "cultural anchor" at one end and the Council was in the process of providing a second one at the other end, creating a performance space. The shops were encouraged to stay open later, and a council-owned premise was re-purposed to provide business advice and promotions. An event was run one night a week for seven weeks, in partnership with local education institutions, for young people to have an alcohol-free bar and to showcase their musical and performance talents. One big event took place

one evening in the High Street and Town Square where an arts company, together with local people, hosted a range of different activities.

The evaluation of the programme declared it a success. Footfall along the High Street increased by 22 per cent, 64 per cent of businesses reported seeing new customers and these together with all the measures were reported to have created a more welcoming and inclusive high street. Post pandemic, the programme's success inspired the institution/designation of three new NTEZs. Two are located in outer London boroughs. The third, in Lambeth—where the Royal Vauxhall Tavern is located—aims to connect up and enhance different clusters of activity. The funding for each of the three new NTEZs has increased to £130,000 from the GLA, match funded by the boroughs (Mayor of London 2022).

Barriers to Inclusion

The difficulties that such programmes face in achieving a more longstanding boost to cultural diversity is exemplified by the fate of one of the NTEZ pilot projects, the Jellied Eel Bar. This was a "pop up" tapas and cocktail bar which operated on Friday and Saturday nights, located in a traditional London pie and mash "shop," a café catering for a white working-class clientele on the High Street. The shop had a historic interior, which was conservation listed. Although the bar seemed to be a commercial success, it had to close down in 2020 (Richards 2020). This closure was followed in March 2022 by the pie and mash shop itself. The business owner blamed a changing customer base as the area gentrified, describing their gastronomic preferences as "fads." The premises have since been taken over by a chain of Japanese restaurants (Coghlan 2022).

The impacts of gentrification on London's nightlife have been tracked with regard to grass roots music venues and LGBTQ+ venues (Campkin and Marshall 2017). The GLA's Cultural Infrastructure Action Plan noted that hikes in land values threatened cultural venues, but that although planning policy and legislation offer the means to combat the loss of some buildings, national planning policy can also work against it. To explain, generally developers can benefit from London's high housing and land prices, giving them an incentive to replace pubs, clubs and shops with blocks of flats. To compound this further, in particular circumstances, developers can claim "permitted development rights" which prevents local councils from opposing conversions to residential uses (Mayor of London 2019).

Information about closures of live music venues, nightclubs and club nights which attract a black audience is more incidental and anecdotal.

Issues about racism are frequently raised in the media, from gigs by BAME artists being cancelled without reason and some BAME groups being denied to certain night clubs on the basis of the skin colour (GLA Economics, 7–8). From a scholarly perspective, Talbot's study of "Southview," an area in South London provides a vivid account of how black-owned drinking and music venues were gradually eclipsed by white dominated corporates (Talbot 2007; Talbot & Bose 2007). Talbot's study was carried out in the early 2000s, but the status of London's black artists and musicians has changed since then. Wicks (2022) updates Talbot's findings, pointing out that musicians such as Stormzy, who was born and brought up in a deprived part of south London, have achieved international recognition by the mainstream. She reports: "Black individuals are no longer a risk to profit accumulation but are a potential source of profit-making for venues—with 'urban nights' strategically used as part of venue manager's efforts to remain popular among the mainstream" (Wicks 2022, 27).

Racism—and in particular, racism on the part of the Metropolitan Police—has formed a discordant note within the narrative of harmonious multiculturalism promoted by London authorities. *From Good Night to Great Night* has an image of a black musician on its cover and the full-colour images used to illustrate the document are representative of London's ethnic diversity. However, relationships between London's police force (the Metropolitan Police or the "Met") and young black Londoners fracture around the issue of "stop and search," a legal power which gives the police the right to stop and search people for offensive weapons and illegal drugs. London had the highest stop and search rates for all ethnic groups in the period 2021–2022 and generally in England. Black people in England were five times more likely to be stopped and searched than their white counterparts (HM Government 2022). Deaths either in police custody or as part of police investigations sparked off major riots in London in 1985 and 2011. More recently, peaceful demonstrations were held to protest against the 2022 fatal police shooting of an unarmed young black rapper, which took place in South London (IOPC 2022).

Previous research by the author and colleagues found the manager of an independent music venue in a south London borough complaining that the police would not approve a Temporary Events Notice (TEN) for a night when certain types of "urban" music would be played (Roberts, Eldridge, Flacks and Osborn 2020). The Mayor and Night Mayor subsequently took action to ensure that TEN's would not be issued in a prejudicial way. Prejudice against black audiences and black artists is not the only barrier, however, as the ownership of property also needs to be diversified (Bernard 2018; Pratt 2018).

The extent to which planning and urban design can overcome the barriers to nocturnal cultural encounters is limited. The neoliberal framing of national planning policies prevents a more radical approach to combatting high land prices (Allmendinger 2016). A gloomy assessment of the London Plan 2021 and associated night-time initiatives to promote inclusion leads to the conclusion they are but small boats rocked in a sea of much mightier forces.

Concluding Comments

This chapter has argued that the GLA and the Mayor made considerable efforts, in the period 2016–2022, to formulate planning and design policies that seriously address night-time activities. These policies contrast favourably with national design policies and design guidance in their efforts to support nocturnal cultural activities for London's "superdiverse" demographic, which has a higher proportion of people who identify as BAME and LGBTQ+ than the rest of England and Wales. The GLA's remit is limited in several ways. While, as a regional authority, the GLA can set an overall framework for planning which the boroughs are required to conform to, it cannot pro-actively produce local plans for them. The authority's detailed design guidance for a night-time strategy is significant, but again, provides encouragement rather than prescription. Although the Night Time Enterprise Zones are a novel attempt to kick-start a more inclusive approach to reviving the night-time high street, their scope is limited too.

The background of gentrification throughout London places great pressure on nightlife venues, particularly those which reach beyond a mainstream clientele or offer services to local communities. The relationship between the Metropolitan Police and the black community has a long legacy of problems and remains a live issue. The dynamic of gentrification and the night-time economy means that Talbot's (2007) trailblazing study needs to be updated with a more comprehensive geographical scope that extends to the entire Greater London area. More independent and empirically robust research is needed on the nocturnal cultural experiences of black Londoners, as producers, consumers, owners and workers.

In the foreword to the vision for London as a 24-hour city, the Mayor comments that the vision is for a "world class night time culture" (GLA 2017, 6). With regard to planning and design, the London Plan, the night-time strategy and the NTEZ's are steps towards that. Whatever their limitations, such attempts to facilitate nocturnal cultural encounters deserve to be applauded.

Bibliography

Airey, J. R. Wales and Roger Scruton. 2020. *Living with Beauty, Promoting Health, Well-being and Social Growth*. London: Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.

Allmendinger, Phil. 2016. *Neoliberal Spatial Governance*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Bernard, Jesse. 2018. "Form 696 is Gone—So Why is Clubland Still Hostile to Black Londoners?" *The Guardian*, January 31. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/jan/31/form-696-is-gone-so-why-is-clubland-still-hostile-to-black-londoners.

Booth, Robert, and Aamna Mohdin. 2018. "Revealed: The Stark Evidence of Everyday Racial Bias in England." *The Guardian*, December 2. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/dec/02/revealed-the-stark-evidence-of-everyday-racial-bias-in-britain.

Campkin, Ben, and Lo Marshall. 2017. *LGBTQ+ Cultural Infrastructure in London: Night Venues, 2006–Present*. London: UCL Urban Laboratory.

Carmona, Matthew. 2022. "The Existential Crisis of Traditional Shopping Streets: The Sun Model and the Place Attraction Paradigm." *Journal of Urban Design* 27 (1): 1–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2021.1951605.

Coghlan, Adam. 2022. "Walthamstow's Iconic Pie and Mash Shop L. Manze Has Permanently Closed." *Eater London*, March 18. https://london.eater.com/2022/3/18/22981229/l-manze-walthamstow-closing-pie-and-mash-london.

Crivello, Silvia. 2011. "Spatial Dynamics in the Urban Playscape: Turin by Night." *Town Planning Review* 82 (6): 709–31. https://doi.org/10.3828/tpr.2011.40.

Cuthbert, Alexander R. 2017. "Urban Design." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Social Theory*, edited by Bryan S. Turner, 1–7. London: Wiley.

DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). 2019. *Planning Practice Guidance: Planning for Town Centre Vitality and Viability*.

Donnelly, Michael. 2019. "New Noise Planning Guidance Fleshes out 'Agent of Change' Considerations." *Planning*, July 29. https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1592298/new-noise-planning-guidance-fleshes-agent-change-considerations.

GLA (Greater London Authority). 2017. *From Good Night to Great Night: A Vision for London as a 24-hour City*. London: GLA.

GLA City Intelligence Unit. 2022. *Census 2021 Report-Ethnic Group*. https://apps.london.gov.uk/census-2021-reports/#/ethnic-group.

GLA Economics. 2018. *London at Night: An Evidence Base for a 24-hour City*. London: Greater London Authority.

Harvey, David. 1991. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

HM Government. 2022. *Crime, Justice and the Law: Ethnicity Facts and Figures*. https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/stop-and-search/latest/.

IOPC (Independent Office for Police Conduct). 2022. "Statement Read out at Opening of Inquest into the Death of Chris Kaba." October 4. https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/news/statement-read-out-opening-inquest-death-chris-kaba.

Kolioulis, A. 2018. "More Day in the Night? The Gentrification of London's Night-Time through Clubbing." *Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana* 14 (1): 207–18. https://doi.org/10.13128/bsgi.v1i2.536.

London Borough of Waltham Forest. 2020. *Night Time Enterprise Zones: Walthamstow Pilot Project. Findings and Recommendations*. London: London Borough of Waltham Forest.

London Borough of Waltham Forest. 2023. *Ethnicity*. https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/population/ethnicity.

London Night Time Commission. 2017. *Think Night: London's Neighbourhoods from 6pm to 6am*. London: Greater London Authority.

Mayor of London. 2019. *Cultural Infrastructure Plan: A Call to Action*. London: GLA.

Mayor of London. 2020. *Developing a Night Time Strategy Part 2: Guidance, Precedents and Case Studies*. London: GLA.

Mayor of London. 2021. *The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London March 2021*. London: Greater London Authority.

Mayor of London. 2022. "Mayor Unveils New Night Time Enterprise Zones to Support Local High Streets." November 17. https://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-unveils-new-night-time-enterprise-zones-support-local-high-streets.

MCHLG (Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government). 2019. *National Design Guide*. London: OGL.

MCHLG. (Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government). 2021. *National Planning Policy Framework*. Government: UK.

Measham, Fiona, and Phil Hadfield. 2009. "Everything Starts with an 'E': Exclusion, Ethnicity and Elite Formation in Contemporary English Clubland." *Adicciones* 21 (4): 363–86. PMID: 20011992.

MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development). 2009. "Sadiq Khan MP—The Bus Driver's Son Clocks on as Transport Minister." News, June 8. https://www.mend.org.uk/sadiq-khan-mp-the-bus-drivers-son-clocks-on-as-transport-minister/.

ONS (Office for National Statistics). 2023. *Sexual Orientation, England and Wales: Census 2021*. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualorientationenglandandwales/census2021#how-sexual-orientation-varied-across-england-and-wales.

Pratt, Andy. 2018. "Gentrification, Artists and the Cultural Economy." In *Handbook of Gentrification Studies*, edited by Loretta Lees, 346–62. Abingdon: Edward Elgar.

Richards, Laura. 2020. "London's Cherished Cocktail Bar Inside a Pie-and-Mash Shop Sadly Won't Be Returning." *Time Out*, August 27. https://www.timeout.

com/london/news/londons-cherished-cocktail-bar-inside-a-pie-and-mash-shop-sadly-wont-be-returning-082720.

Roberts, Marion, Alan Eldridge, Guy Osborn, and Simon Flacks. 2020. "The Night and Cultural Benefit: The Case for a Holistic Approach to Licensing." *Entertainment and Sports Law Journal* 18 (1): 9. https://doi.org/10.16997/eslj.245.

Talbot, Deborah, and Marina Böse. 2007. "Racism, Criminalization and the Development of Night-time Economies: Two Case Studies in London and Manchester." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (1): 95–118. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870601006579.

Talbot, Deborah. 2007. *Regulating the Night: Race, Culture and Exclusion in the Making of the Night-time Economy*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Thurnell-Read, Thomas. 2021. *Open Arms: The Role of Pubs in Tackling Loneliness*. Loughborough: Loughborough University.

Tiesdell, Steven, and Anne-Michelle Slater. 2006. "Calling Time: Managing Activities in Space and Time in the Evening/Night-time Economy." *Planning Theory and Practice* 7 (2): 137–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649350600673047.

UK Gov (UK Government). 2022. https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/.

Valentine, Gill, Sarah L. Holloway, and Mark Jayne. 2010. "Contemporary Cultures of Abstinence and the Nighttime Economy: Muslim Attitudes towards Alcohol and the Implications for Social Cohesion." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 42 (1): 8–22. https://doi.org/10.1068/a41303.

Van den Nouwelant, Ryan, and Christine Steinmetz. 2013. "Concentration vs. Dispersal of a Late Night Economy." *Spaces and Flows: An International Journal of Urban and ExtraUrban Studies* 3 (4): 31–43. https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8676/CGP/v03i04/53715.

Wessendorf, Susanne. 2014. "'Being Open, but Sometimes Closed': Conviviality in a Super-Diverse London Neighbourhood." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17 (4): 392–405. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549413510415.

Wicks, Nikhaela. 2022. "You Wanna Come to the 'Urban' Night Tomorrow… It's the Wrong Night Tonight': Black Consumers as Both 'Wanted' and 'Unwanted' in the Night-Time Economy."

About the Author

Marion Roberts is Emeritus Professor of Urban Design at the University of Westminster. She qualified as an architect and worked in practice before completing her PhD at Cardiff University. Marion has authored and co-authored many publications on the urban night, urban design and gender issues.

5. A Nightnography of Food Couriers: Precarity and Inequality in After Dark Platform Work

Julius-Cezar MacQuarie

Abstract: Food couriers working after dark are an under-researched group in "platform capitalism," remaining relatively invisible in digitized cityscapes due to the nature of their night-time work. Drawing upon multi-sited in-person and digital nightnography in London (UK) and Cork (Ireland) and employing impressionistic mini portraits, this chapter documents experiences of precarity and inequality. It argues that existing literature often disembodies platform work, whereas today's post-circadian capitalist era demands and extracts capital in traditional (bodily) ways through new denominations. Food couriers, especially those working after dark, are under duress from navigating traffic, waiting without getting orders, and staying alert. The chapter also highlights the gendered nature of platform work and contributes to debates on the digitalization of precarity and inequality.

Keywords: Nightwork, Gig workers, Migration, Exploitation, Gender Discrimination

Introduction

Food couriers often work in the after dark hours as "independent contractors" for platforms such as Deliveroo, JustEat, UberEats, Glovo or Getir. Yet, they are an under-researched category of workers in "platform capitalism." Who are they? Who works after dark? Who is more likely forced to take on such work? What do platforms demand of these workers? Are digitalized precarity and inequality any different than those experienced in other forms of work? Drawing upon multi-sited nightnography in London (UK) and Cork (Ireland), this chapter addresses these issues.

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH05

Nightwork is a continuously expanding category. Though work carried out in the after dark hours has been part of human existence (Gonlin 2022), it had long been associated with danger and the supernatural, with rhythms and rituals that shunned daytime habits, values and the established work rhythms regulated by seasons and daylight (Galinier et al. 2010; Shaw 2018, 28; Ekirch 2006). In the twentieth century, the advent of electrification in industrial societies has not only allowed for more diverse night-time activities and round-the-clock production but has also normalized nightwork by including it in the already established daytime work system (Baldwin 2012; Duijzings and Dušková 2022). In the twenty-first century, night-time services and nightlife sectors are spreading beyond the industries that have customarily relied on night-time production and have already expanded the "frontier of the night" (Melbin 1987), i.e., supermarkets, food chain distribution, or IT industries. After dark platform work is one of the last additions to this ever-developing domain—though how many of the platform workers spend their evenings or late into the night on platform work is hard to estimate.

Despite its potential for bringing about a "new" way to work, in which one could freely decide when and for how long to work, platform work is problematically structured on the basis of independent contracting without ensuring any employee rights (Schor 2020; Zia et al. 2021). Widely used "platform parasites" or "free riders," such as Deliveroo, Uber, Bolt, UberEats, or JustEat, make fortunes on the back of gig earners, many of whom are totally or partially dependent on these platforms (Schor 2020, 71). In this vein, these "new" ways of work on platforms (paid by the click or piece, with unpaid waiting time for orders), reproduce structural inequalities through "old" ways of workers' abuse (Cui, Li, and Zhang 2016; Scholz 2012). By focusing on after dark platform work, this chapter supports and, more importantly, complements this perspective. After dark platform work is shown to magnify independent contractors' precarity by reproducing—as opposed to disrupting or diminishing—bodily exploitation, entrenched inequality, and structural, gender discrimination.

Nightworkers, "sorry, we missed you"[1]

Nightworkers are an under-researched category. In support of this claim, I briefly review relevant bodies of literature. Digital platform work has

1 *Sorry, We Missed You* is the title of Ken Loach's 2019 film, an essential/indispensable viewing for anyone wishing to understand how digital platforms impact the lives of Amazon drivers. The

skyrocketed since the 2008 Great Recession, and so has scholarship on "gig economy," "platform work" or "sharing economy." Outstanding scholarship (Heeks et al. 2021; Graham et al. 2020) that proposes fair work conditions for "gig" workers on digital platforms, for obscure reasons has so far failed to even mention nightwork, much less find and propose solutions to its unique problems and challenges. Moreover, this scholarship seems to be focused exclusively on male workers. James' (2022) recent bibliometric count revealed that, out of 9.7 million publications in the social and economic research fields, only 1 per cent discusses gender. The exceptions, studies of women's waged and unwaged labour on digital platforms (Fuentes and Ehrenreich 2000; Churchill and Craig 2019), emphasise that multi-layered precariousness affects self-employed workers, enveloping their entire lives in "subjective, existential" ways, regardless of the size of the labour market (Armano and Murgia 2017, 48, 56).

Moreover, in the growing field of night studies, nightwork has not been addressed systematically, with few exceptions (Duijzings and Dušková 2022; Shaw 2022; MacQuarie 2020). Furthermore, nightwork as a theme within labour studies has been marginally addressed. For example, anthropologists of labour inexplicably left out the dispossession experiences by nightworkers (Kasmir and Gill 2022). There are, however, calls to go beyond the diurnal trend in anthropology and other disciplines and highlight issues concerning migrant nightworkers (Nikielska-Sekula and Desille 2021; Martiniello 2017; Krase and Shortell 2021). There are also calls for more interdisciplinarity among nightologists (Acuto 2019).

Despite these limits, this engagement with the relevant literature and my previous anthropological fieldwork amongst migrants doing the "graveyard" shift in London's New Spitalfields market (MacQuarie 2023; MacQuarie 2019; Macarie 2017) enables me to contextualize the findings of this research. Studies of nightwork have foregrounded the links between nightwork and migration (Brandellero, Kenny, and Pardue 2022). Food couriers, as my research confirmed as well, are more likely to be migrants. Studies of platform work, in particular Schor (2020), classify workers in three categories on the basis of their income dependency: independent, with zero dependency; the partially dependent, increasing their income with revenue made on platforms; and the totally dependent, whose livelihoods depend solely on platform-based income. Schor (2020) points out that migrants are overrepresented among the last category, the "dependent" gig workers. Food couriers are, thus, more likely to be totally dependent on this type of work.

persons I encountered during my research shared similar experiences. In this chapter, Loach's film title is taken as a metaphor pointing at the scholarship's neglect of nightworkers.

Furthermore, to gain traction when addressing the problems created by digitalizing labour migration through platform-based work, this study draws on insights from several investigations (Wallis 2021; Altenried 2021; Popan 2021; Bojadžijev 2020), projects such as *Night spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe* (NITE), and the ambitious initiatives that aimed to restore hospitality, creative and nightlife industries and support their nightworkers, who were greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in most parts of the world (Duvivier et al. 2020). Popan (2021) found that during the two years of the pandemic everyone became more and more dependent on foods delivered fast to their doors, and as such the numbers of couriers at Deliveroo, Glovo, JustEat (or Takeaways), Panda and UberEats grew exponentially, regardless of geographical location. In a time of painstaking immobility when many around the world were trapped by the pandemic, food couriers established new mobilities in less fragmented ways, spatially, and new ways to build solidarities. Thus, in contrast to online "crowdwork" or "microtasking" workers mostly hidden behind clicks and walls, dependent, precarious couriers can act solidarity that goes beyond advice and offers the potentiality for "mutual urbanism" on the street (Hall 2021), which is why Heiland (2020, 34) argues that platform mediated food delivery labour is a special case of platform labour.

Case Selection

For all the practical reasons at an uncertain time, only a month away from the start of the Russian invasion into Ukraine, I left Romania, where I started researching platform workers, and temporarily settled down in London. This became an almost ideal global site from where to investigate the universal features of platform work. One month later, I moved to Cork and continued my ethnographic work in a locality that offered insights into how global platforms entered smaller cities and who they co-opted. In addition to juggling time constraints versus resources, I found myself concerned with developing tools that engage with the public to address the problems with nightwork experienced by nightworkers in global and smaller cities. Hence, this ethnographic comparison became all the more important while studying the global-local connections through ubiquitous platform work.

My fluency in the English, Turkish and Romanian languages, gave me easier access to migrant communities in both field sites. London and Cork attract large numbers of migrants. Among other nationalities, Brazilians and Turkish food couriers were predominant among couriers in both places.

In London, the boroughs of Southwark and Hackney were more central to my research as they have long history of migrant settlers belonging to an entrepreneurial milieu. Topographically, my fieldwork has been concentrated in Camberwell and Cambridge Heath, two semi-central neighbourhoods located to the south of the River Thames. In Cork, the city centre facilitated the couriers' journeys via the car and pedestrian bridges that link the inner city, where the nightlife quarter and food courts are based, and the surrounding suburbs, where the food orders came from via the apps.

As mentioned, nightwork in these two field sites is under-researched. Yet, in the first case, I draw inspiration from the policy work produced by Autonomy, which proposes design solutions to better the experiences of nightworkers by providing rest work centres and night nurseries for workers with children (Kolioulis et al. 2021). This, however, does not discuss how irregular migrant workers on platforms could make use of these centres, who presumably would be managed by "street-level bureaucrats" respecting the government's interests to curb down unwanted migration. Notwithstanding the limitations, this is a long overdue report, which depicts the struggles and offers solutions to the precariousness faced by food delivery, care, and sex workers, sectors of work in which migrants are overrepresented in London's night-time economy. Kolioulis and colleagues' (2021) findings highlight the health associated risks, lack of logistical support and socialization for these workers in London.

In the second case, there is even less to draw upon. By and large, the geographies of nightwork in Ireland remain largely unexamined. From the existing scholarship (Doyle, O'Brien, and Maguire 2017), it is clear that door men in Ireland's night-time economy work on precarious terms. Nevertheless, the rights for the "workers in precarious employment" seem not to be among the concerns identified in the recent Report of the Night-Time Economy Taskforce, Ireland (2021, 3) Night activities appear in other bodies of literature, too. Research on urban nightlife shows that dance music brings African migrants together to share Irish cities' cultural spaces (Young 2022). This is consistent with literature that focuses on tourism at night, another important sector of the night-time economy (Eldridge and Smith 2019; Smith and Eldridge 2021).

Methodology

The ethnographic method is uniquely placed to "follow the people" (food couriers) and to "follow things" (streets) to establish the global-local

connections, despite not relying on “fixed and comparable units of analysis, as do surveys and comparative researcher” (Gille and Ó Riain 2002, 273). Streets at the “edge territories,” Hall argues (2021, 115), offer the best point of view to analyse work in the margins. Moreover, the street is one of the most banal places where “encounters with capitalism” take place daily and nightly in plain sight (Achille Mbembe, in Hall 2021, 115). From the street vantage point, I compare the effects that digitalization of inequalities has upon precarious food couriers across two locations, London and Cork.

It is on the streets where I carried out nightnography, that is, in-person observation in the late hours after dark or at night (MacQuarie 2021; MacQuarie 2023). I also added a digital dimension to this rather traditional anthropological fieldwork. I combined “schmoozing” or informal conversations during non-participant observation or “hanging out” with: a) audio-video recording in the locations where wo/men (randomly selected for this piece) work, wait for orders or chat with other workers, or entering the site (dark kitchen or depo); b) night walking (with or without interviewing) along the streets where the outlets or depos are located; and c) cyber-notes (pedometer Pacer app to record my own distances and routes), as well as participants’ app information for data triangulation—testing its validity and reliability by verifying what they say they did, with what the apps displayed on their devices upon which they relied for communicating with the platforms. Small talk with couriers is useful to ethnographers, as it validates what participants actually do, as opposed to what they say they do. Over several nights, I had conversations with half a dozen men and women in London (aged twenty to forty years old), of different ethnic backgrounds (e.g., Brazilian, Indian, Turkish). In Cork, I talked at leisure, filmed, and photographed over a dozen food couriers logged on different platforms (e.g., JustEat, Deliveroo), of Brazilian and Turkish descent. Most of the workers were approached as they were waiting for orders to come through their devices. Their waiting areas varied, but the spots in which they gathered were the main take-away restaurants (Lebish kebab and Shake Dog diner, in Cork) or McDonald’s, KFC and the local Donner-Kebab take aways in Camberwell, London.

In the following pages, I foreground only some of the people I met during my nightnography to emphasise one aspect or another of this type of work. Their names have been anonymized to preserve confidentiality (Johnathan, however, verbally agreed to appear in the photo that I took of us). The impressionistic mini-portraits offer significant possibilities for connecting the particular in the “narratives of the immediate” (Gay y Blasco and Wardle 2007, 76–95) with the larger issues concerning the relationship between humans and algorithms. This bottom-up approach will build analytical

categories of embodied, gendered and invisibilized precariousness from the empirical insights.

"Onboard" for Fieldwork

April 2022
London

Platforms welcome their "partners," that is, the couriers, "onboard" when they first log in. As COVID-19 social distancing restrictions were gradually lifted, I began conducting my fieldwork. In both sites, I located and then hung around in places where food couriers were visible, usually near or inside restaurants. In London, I also spotted and visited the less visible places, "dark" or "ghost" kitchens, near which couriers waited. At both sites, food couriers navigated the danger of busy traffic in the day, or unlit street corners at night. They rested inside restaurants, on mopeds parked on pavements, or in dead-end lanes, not yet designated as parking lots by the council. This was the way they could bear the countless hours of waiting for the next orders. This was also the time when I could talk to them.

In London, I carried out research in the boroughs of Hackney and Southwark. During one night scoping exercise in Camberwell, while feeling the pulse of the street life in this neighbourhood, I encountered many food couriers standing by the counter inside McDonald's or sitting on the bikes parked outside, on the pavement in front of the entrance. I approached Johnathan, a man in his thirties from Brazil with Italian citizenship. He was out on his second shift, delivering food at night. In his words,

> I work in two jobs. In the morning, I prepare bakery products for a restaurant. In the afternoons and late into the evenings, I deliver for UberEats or Deliveroo. [...] it's past midnight and I'm still in this McDonald's waiting for an order. It's been an hour since we spoke and [I'm] still waiting. I don't work [on] Sundays. That's for my family. But I am away from the family most days. This way, it pays the bills. [...] I buy my own insurance and I pay for the moped insurance. These companies don't pay anything for us.

Platform-mediated food delivery workers are a "precarious presence" on the streets (Hall 2021, 154). They are no longer hidden behind factory walls or in warehouses. Yet, despite being so visible on the streets they seem to remain absent for the authorities, unless immigration raids are executed,

Fig. 5.1: Johnathan with author in a McDonalds in South-East London, past midnight. Photo by Julius-Cezar MacQuarie c/o Nightworkshop.

as an interlocutor informed me that has been the case in several London neighbourhoods. The "new" ways of pushing workers into deeper precarity and inequality were central to my investigation, with a focus on how they build on "old" (yet ubiquitous) forms of labour extraction from the labouring bodies (Bauman 2002; Scholz 2012).

Close interaction with the couriers waiting for the next order also revealed that they did not occupy the same position. At the same McDonald's restaurant in Camberwell, I met Sacha, a JustEat captain. This company, initially a Danish platform, relocated to the UK in mid 2000s. Unlike companies such as Deliveroo, JustEat employs its couriers. Within its labour hierarchy, there are "captains," whose role is to oversee the activity on the streets and in the restaurants where couriers wait for deliveries. The JustEat algorithm takes all decisions and observes every move of the workers assigned within a five-mile radius.

Sacha was on duty patrol in the area surrounding the Oval depot. As I entered the restaurant, I found her sitting and constantly checking her JustEat phone app. She described herself as an Indian woman from Mumbai, in her forties, married and with two children (a fourteen-year-old boy and a six-year-old girl). Sacha was an accountant in India, and now she worked as one of the only three women "captains" based at the Oval depot. In her opinion,

> It's no different for women to do the job of a captain. But women do not work on this job because there is a misconception about women that they should do housework. When you have a 'can do' attitude, you can do anything. I can do anything. […] I worked ten hours. Today, I do another ten. Tomorrow, Saturday, I instruct ten newcomers!

I asked her what she thought about having only three women among the fifty men captains at her depot. Sacha replied:

> I think women can be as good as captains, as men can be. In the JustEat hierarchy women also occupy senior positions, but the three women captains are the first to join the ranks above the bikers, since the company opened the oval depo. More women may follow.

Sacha disclosed that a captain's pay rate was £10.15 per hour (£1.70 per hour less than the London Living Wage rate), and that she gets paid to ensure that orders are fulfilled.[2] If there are any problems signalled by the algorithms, she was the contact on the ground. She explained that:

> Today is my turn to oversee our couriers' activity in this McDonald's. I ensure that orders are picked up smoothly. For this to happen, couriers must stay within their designated area ready to pick up the orders. I watch and resolve any problems with the food packages. Generally, things do run smoothly.
> This case hints at what other authors have already signalled out as a relationship that needs to be investigated, that is, the relationship between gender and discrimination in the "gig economy" (Barzilay and Ben-David 2017, 427). Despite my repeated attempts, I could not meet Sacha's female colleagues during my stay in London.

As mentioned, I also hung around in the less visible places of the "gig economy." Getir, for example, a Turkish-owned grocery delivery firm, has been branching out into fruit and vegetable warehouse storage and on-demand deliveries. In 2021, it opened its first "dark store" in the UK.

2 The *Real* Living Wage is an hourly rate of pay set independently, paid voluntarily by employers, and is updated annually (it is not the UK government's *minimum* or *national* statutory wage). London Living Wage 2024 rate is set to £13.15 per hour (up by £1.30 since 2023). UK Living Wage (for outside of London) is currently £12.00 (up by £1.10 since 2023). 13,000 UK businesses voluntarily pay a Living Wage to their employees to meet everyday needs. Online at: https://www.livingwage.org.uk/calculation, accessed March 17th, 2024.

Deliveroo, to give another example, has expanded its billion-dollar business through the creation of Deliveroo Editions, that is, “dark” or “ghost” kitchens. The Dulwich site in Southwark hosted five Deliveroo Editions kitchens where food was prepared and delivered. Customers could only place orders online via the websites of restaurants such as Five Guys, Pho, Chilango, ShakeShack, and Honest. The Deliveroo drivers picked up the food prepared within the walls of two units between 12 p.m. and midnight. The five kitchens were separate, but they shared one front desk, managed by Deliveroo. Each order was bagged and sealed with a Deliveroo Editions sticker and placed on the shelf belonging to the respective kitchen. Once completed, the orders were picked up by Deliveroo riders. As I waited to speak to the Romanian supervisor in charge, I observed through the window how riders waiting on their motorbikes by the front entrance, men of different ethnicities, were chatting with one another.

London, as a “glocturnal” city (MacQuarie 2023), offers migrant food couriers, especially to those totally dependent on platform work income, more opportunities to swap platforms and work for groceries stores, “dark” or “ghost” kitchens and restaurants in food or alcohol distribution. However, this is where the democratization of work or the manoeuvring the uncertainties of working on platforms ends for these precarious workers. As Hall observes (2021, 5–6), the “casualized urban labour market, sustained by technological platforms, such as Uber and Deliveroo, trades off the ‘entrepreneurialisms’ required of marginalized cultures.” More importantly, given that Brexit has happened, and the UK no longer aligns with EU legislation, it is very probable that in the current British political climate, characterized by a hostile, anti-immigration regime, and an anti-poor agenda, no major efforts will be made in the foreseeable future to protect dependent platform workers to the extent that the European Commission has been considering of late. Any lack in implementing new laws to protect platform workers will affect workers across the UK. The negative social impact with its embedded gender inequalities will have a greater effect on women migrant platform workers who are more invisible and less paid than their male counterparts.

April 2022
Cork

Cork also attracts very high numbers of migrants. For example, many Brazilian and Turkish citizens choose to study English in Ireland because of the bilateral agreements between these countries, which facilitate student

visas that allow them to work twenty hours per week. I introduce here three Turkish students of English, Yıldırım, Özcan and Ufuk. They combine their language studies and daytime jobs (when off college), with evening and late-night shifts on platforms like Deliveroo, UberEats or JustEat.

Yıldırım was a graduate in data science from a prestigious Turkish university. He worked the 20 hours allowed by law as a daytime concierge. In addition, he worked illegally on someone else's account registered with Deliveroo. That person went on holiday and lent him the registered device. In his words,

> The name displayed here [on his Deliveroo device] is not mine. I rent this device from another Turkish guy. He rents his device every time he goes away on holiday. It's not fair in a way, because he makes money while on holiday from renting a machine that I cannot even register for. It's not fair, is it?!

Yıldırım summarized this situation as follows: "we are modern slaves, and work unprotected. Also, Police knows that we are doing illegal work. If they want to collect us, they can do it at any time." In this state of "semi-illegality" (De Genova 2018), he contravened the visa regulations and the taxation laws in the EU. Besides, Deliveroo offers little-to-no support to its "independent contractors," except for the one-time providing of the minimum equipment. As he explained,

> In three months, I did 5,000 km on my (electric) push bike; I got the clothes and the box for free for the first time, paid by Deliveroo. But after you have to pay; if the box tears up, which it does after a few months, from the rain and cold—you pay for it when that happens.

Yıldırım, like Johnathan in London and many other food couriers I met in these two field sites, needed to take a second job to break even. As a Deliveroo courier, and daytime hotel concierge on low income, he could not but continue working in precarious conditions. He could not stop even when he suffered from COVID-related health problems. In his words,

> I had Covid and still worked, even though I had high temperature. I covered my mouth and went on; I know the mask doesn't work, but who could stop working; I needed to pay the bills. So, I worked while infected with COVID. What could I do? I pay 700 euro to rent a room and have to pay expenses on top. I told my landlord that it's

Fig. 5.2: The Deliveroo device that Özcan and other couriers are using shows the only available outlets open past midnight in the light purple colour and in hexagonal shapes. The clock shows eight minutes past midnight. The device also displays the "Not busy" message sent by the algorithm-based system. These kinds of messages are updated every five minutes. The algorithm's advice to couriers in a "not busy" area is to try "exploring other areas nearby" with busier restaurants. Photo by Julius-Cezar MacQuarie c/o Nightworkshop.

> too expensive and he said I can go if I don't like it. Everything is so expensive in this town.

Another Turkish student-cum-worker, Özcan, was an accountant by trade in Turkey. One late night, standing on his bike, he told me that he was

> Waiting to pick up orders in an area where only Lebish kebab and Shake Dog diner are still open past midnight. But no one places any orders. Everyone is out partying. It's not like it was in the pandemic. But you see, on the [Deliveroo] app, it shows that there are places still open [at this hour]. If I get an order now, it pays 1.4 x per order.[3] If I take three orders in the next hour, then I make just over ten euro.
> We continued our chat until Özcan announced "It's past midnight, but no one placed any orders in the last hour since we've been talking. I might have to call it a day." We parted our ways.

3 2022 pay rate per piece delivered was €3.00, paid by the platform to the courier. Despite its 2021 Riders' Law, vanguard legislation on platform work, similar rates as in Spain were reported by Human Rights Watch. Online at: https://bit.ly/HRW_platformwork_report.

Fig. 5.3. Three Deliveroo food couriers waiting for orders in the City of Cork. Photo by Julius-Cezar MacQuarie c/o Nightworkshop.

Ufuk was the third Turkish man with whom I spoke on several occasions. He too entered Ireland legally with a student visa but worked illegally on a Deliveroo app registered to a name other than his. He could not register with a Deliveroo app because he did not fulfil the conditions. The person who rented it to him took a cut of his earnings. Ufuk did not pay taxes on the rest of the earnings that he made with Deliveroo. Ufuk pointed out how widespread this state of "semi-legality" was:

> All of us work more [that the legal period of 20 hours per week] to pay the bills. So, we have come to Ireland legally, but we are in illegality when it comes to work hours and for not paying the taxes. But that's the only thing that makes it worth for us to go on working like this. Otherwise, money is too thin. We are not entitled to register with companies like Deliveroo because of our student status. So, we all work on borrowed accounts for which we pay between forty to sixty euro per week.

The many similar stories that surfaced during my research confirmed that, on both sides of the English Channel, inequality and precarity spread along the streets and in the public eye, not only in temporal and spatial terms, but also across and among multiple locales. However, there is a risk that platform workers will remain invisible on the national and international labour regulators' agendas, due to the delays to implement new regulations to protect them.[4]

4 A new EU Directive to Protect Platform Workers' Rights has been put forward by the European Commission. Online at: https://bit.ly/3Q8l1sQ, accessed March 17th, 2024. This legislative piece is still awaiting hearing by the European Parliament.

After Dark Platform Work

In the sharing economy, the "old" capitalist ways of exploiting labour continue to be swiftly employed. Low wages, especially piecemeal payment, result in precarity. The marginalization of workers through precarization contributes to their diminished sense of social worth, lack of respect and fairness, and unfair allocation of resources. These are the core features of social inequality. As a corrective note, during the COVID-19 pandemic, food couriers, many of them migrants, who flooded the streets during the day and deep into the night in developed Western countries, were classed as "essential" and valued. In this sense, as reductive as the category of "essential" may be, the COVID-19 crisis has served to draw close two previously distant conceptual categories, namely that of the migrant and that of the valued worker (MacQuarie 2020). Moreover, there are "new" ways of exploiting these workers, including surveillance and uncertainty. The digitalised aspects of this work are monitored, 24/7, by invisible algorithms that incessantly supervise these workers, whether they are on or offline. The monitoring continues even when workers are logged out of the digital applications. Some workers are discharged without notice if they do not log into their account regularly. In this vein, Schor (2020, 71) points out that the sharing economy is the capitalist mode of relations of production at its worst, "driving precarity to its limits."

Yet, the literature on the sharing economy tends to ignore the bodily aspects of platform work. Choonara (2019; 2020) inspired by Bauman (2002), argues that today's labourers' bodies are no longer tied to physical work, as it was the case in the "old capitalist society" (2019, 24). This chapter argues the contrary. This working environment dispossesses workers of their bodily capital, overusing their bodies until exhaustion. The bodily aspects of this work do not fall within the remit of platforms, but rest with workers, who are responsible for the maintenance of their bodies, sleep, and overall wellbeing to perform at the demand of the platforms in the absence of sickness cover, health insurance, and unpaid annual leave. Take for example, food delivery workers whose waiting time between orders delivered and taken anew is unpaid by the platform. Their bodies experience the countless hours of waiting to receive orders via the food delivery apps. While their bodies are not exhausted by carrying heavy loads, they are, nonetheless, under duress from uncertainty, waiting without getting orders.

After dark platform work brings the body into sharp focus. These workers' bodies are under pressure simply from being up and alert at night. From an anthropological-archaeological perspective, Gonlin (2022) argues that

night activities have long been part of human existence. Among researchers, there is a consensus that nightwork disrupts the 24-hour biological clock and increases the risks for bodily illness and somatic maladjustments due to lack of night sleep, which is an integral part of the body's functions (Boivin and Boudreau 2014; Arendt 2010; Archer et al. 2014; Costa 2001; 2006; Roden et al. 1993; IARC 2020). Despite the negative health consequences, the night has been incessantly colonized until nightwork has become an ordinary component in most sectors of the contemporary 24/7 economy, no longer the exception that it used to be in labour history. For workers, including after dark platform workers, the normalization of nightwork means that their biological, circadian rhythms and their emotional and social needs have been disregarded.

This chapter demonstrates that platform work is not "disembodied." On the contrary, today's post-circadian capitalist era demands and extracts capital in the same old (bodily) ways, but through new denominations. In my previous research at New Spitalfields night market, the foreman disciplined loaders' bodies, until eventually his methods forced workers into submission and exploitation (MacQuarie 2023). Regardless of whether a night market, digital warehouses like Amazon or the Deliveroo Editions "dark kitchen," these forms of work's successful trading is tied to the "labourers" bodies to keep work processes under control and extract a surplus of capital from their bodily labour to benefit venture capitalists (Bauman 2000, 120–1). This chapter argues that more research on the embodied aspects of platform work is needed, alongside established research on precarity and inequality.

Drawing upon research attentive to how precarity and inequality affect women and men separately (Lorey 2015; Pulignano et al. 2021), this chapter also offer insights into the gendered aspects of platform work. Though limited, these insights support the noted need to better understand women's contribution to platform work, capture identity processes and gender norms, and strive for the articulation of spaces and practices of resistance, support, safety, and care. (Collins and Bilge 2016; Anthias 2012).

The responsibility to further research platform work rests not only with researchers, but policy makers and investors behind the algorithms. The overall aim would be to improve the future of work and create decent standards for all, including the most invisible of workers, namely those who spend considerable amounts of time working at night. David Schwartz, a Romanian political theatre director and academic, reminds us that:

> We spend between a third or half of our lives at work. But we do not talk, watch films or plays about work. Love or home occupies less time in

> our lives than we otherwise think. I would like to show the public what happens at work. No matter what the profession or the job role.[5]

Through his plays, Schwartz aims to provoke the public to think about the challenges experienced by many who are shelving our food in supermarkets or delivering it to our doors, rain or shine, day or night. In the same vein, this chapter invites social scientists researching problems with platform mediated work and inequalities surrounding this fast-changing field to look for precarity and inequality hidden in plain sight. It is up to the human behind the machine to input a higher value into the algorithmic code. Hence, for a fairer, more equal future of the sharing economy, I concur with Schor (2020) that we need to reboot and reload a new trust-based, peer-to-peer transactional algorithm, that sets equities between parties (user-worker-platform), and democratic decision-making shared among people of similar membership.

Acknowledgments

The writing of this chapter has been made possible with the financial support from PRECNIGHTS, a project that explores precarity in women migrant nightworkers in Ireland. Funded under Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). Grant №: 101063938.

Thanks to Magdalena Crăciun for her critical input. Special thanks to the volume's editors, Sara Brandellero, Kamilia Krakowska Rodrigues, and Derek Pardue for their insightful comments on previous versions of this chapter

Bibliography

Acuto, Michele. 2019. "We Need a Science of the Night." *Nature* 576 (7787): 339. https://doi.org/10.1038/D41586-019-03836-2.

Aggarwal, Ravina. 1988. "Shadow Work: Women in the Marketplace in Ladakh, India." *Anthropology of Work Review* XVI (1&2): 33–38.

Altenried, Moritz. 2021. "Mobile Workers, Contingent Labour: Migration, the Gig Economy and the Multiplication of Labour." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*. Ahead of print. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X211054846.

5 In June 2022, I interviewed David Schwartz about his latest play, *Livrator Bucuresti* (tr. Bucharest Courier).

Anthias, Floya. 2012. "Transnational mobilities, migration research and intersectionality." *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 2 (2): 102–10.

Archer, Simon N., Emma E. Laing, Carla S. Möller-Levet, Daan R. van der Veen, Giselda Bucca, Alpar S. Lazar, Nayantara Santhi et al. 2014. "Mistimed Sleep Disrupts Circadian Regulation of the Human Transcriptome." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111 (6): E682-E691. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1316335111.

Arendt, Josephine. 2010. "Shift Work: Coping with the Biological Clock." *Occupational Medicine* 60 (1): 10–20. https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqp162.

Armano, Emiliana, Arianna Bove, and Annalisa Murgia. 2017. *Mapping Precariousness, Labour Insecurity and Uncertain Livelihoods: Subjectivities and Resistance*. London and New York: Routledge.

Baldwin, Peter C. 2012. *In the Watches of the Night: Life in the Nocturnal City, 1820–1930*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Barzilay, Arianne Renan, and Anat Ben-David. 2016. "Platform Inequality: Gender in the gig-economy." *Seton Hall Law Review* 47 (2): 393–431.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 2002. "Global Solidarity." *Tikkun* 17 (1): 12–14.

Boivin, D. B., and P. Boudreau. 2014. "Impacts of Shift Work on Sleep and Circadian Rhythms." *Pathologie Biologie* 62 (5): 292–301. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.patbio.2014.08.001.

Bojadžijev, Manuela. 2020. "Digitalisation of Labour and Migration." Digitalisation of Labour and Migration Project (DLMP). http://platform-mobilities.net/en/ueber.

Brandellero, Sara, Ailbhe Kenny, and Derek Pardue. 2022. "Night Stories: Urban Narratives of Migrant Lives in Europe." *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture* 13 (1): 3–10. https://doi.org/10.1386/cjmc_00051_2.

Choonara, Joseph. 2019. *Insecurity, Precarious Work and Labour Markets: Challenging the Orthodoxy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Choonara, Joseph. 2020. "The Precarious Concept of Precarity." *Review of Radical Political Economics* 52 (3): 427–46. https://doi.org/10.1177/0486613420920427.

Churchill, Brendan, and Lyn Craig. 2019. "Gender in the Gig Economy: Men and Women Using Digital Platforms to Secure Work in Australia." *Journal of Sociology* 55 (4): 741–61. https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319894060.

Collins, Patricia Hill, and Sirma Bilge. 2020. *Intersectionality*. John Wiley & Sons.

Costa, Giovanni. 2001. "The 24-Hour Society between Myth and Reality." *Journal of Human Ergology* 30 (1–2): 15–20.

Costa, Giovanni. 2006. "Flexibility of Working Hours in the 24-Hour Society." *Medicina Del Lavoro* 97 (2): 280–87.

Cui, Ruomeng, Jun Li, and Dennis Zhang. 2016."Reducing Discrimination with Reviews in the Sharing Economy: Evidence from Field Experiments on Airbnb." *SSRN Electronic Journal – Management Science*: 1–38. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2882982.

De Genova, Nicholas. 2018. *Migration and the Mobility of Labour*. New York and London: Oxford University Press.

Doyle, Kirstin, John O'Brien, and Niamh Maguire. 2017. "Precarity in the Night-Time Economy." *Irish Journal of Anthropology* 19 (1): 19–30.

Duijzings, Ger, and Lucie Dušková, eds. 2022. *Working at Night: The Temporal Organisation of Labour Across Political and Economic Regimes*. Munich: De Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110753592.

Duvivier, Tara, Sipho Sithole, Merjlin Poolman, Kate Durio, and Julius-Cezar MacQuarie. 2020. "Sustaining Our Nightlife Scenes: Support Models for Nightlife Industry Workers, Individuals, and Vulnerable Populations." In *The Global Nighttime Recovery Plan*, edited by Michael Fichman, Richard Foster, Lutz Leichsenring, Mirik Milan, Diana Raiselis, Andreina Seijas, and Jia Yuan. Amsterdam and Berlin: VibeLab. www.nighttime.org/recoveryplan.

Ekirch, Roger A. 2006. *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past*. London: Norton.

Eldridge, Adam, and Andrew Smith. 2019. "Tourism and the Night: Towards a Broader Understanding of Nocturnal City Destinations." *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 11 (3): 371–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2019.1631519.

Fuentes, Annette, and Barbara Ehrenreich. 2000. "Women in the Global Factory." In *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, edited by James Spradley and David W. McCurdy, 164–71. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Galinier, Jacques, Aurore Monod Becquelin, Guy Bordin, Laurent Fontaine, Francine Fourmaux, Juliette Roullet Ponce, Piero Salzarulo, Philippe Simonnot, Michèle Therrien, and Iole Zilli. 2010. "Anthropology of the Night." *Current Anthropology* 51 (6): 819–47. https://doi.org/10.1086/653691.

Gay y Blasco, Paloma Gay, and Huon Wardle. 2007. *How to Read Ethnography*. London: Routledge.

Gille, Zsuzsa, and Seán Ó. Riain. 2002. "Global Ethnography." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (1): 271–95.

Gleeson, Jessamy. 2016. "'(Not) Working 9–5': The Consequences of Contemporary Australian-Based Online Feminist Campaigns as Digital Labour." *Media International Australia* 161 (1): 77–85. https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X16664999.

Gonlin, Nancy. 2022. "Ancient Maya Nights." *Anthropology News*. https://www.anthropology-news.org.

Graham, Mark, Jamie Woodcock, Richard Heeks, Paul Mungai, Jean Paul van Belle, Darcy du Toit, Sandra Fredman, Abigal Osiki, Anri van der Spuy, and Six M. Silberman. 2020. "The Fairwork Foundation: Strategies for Improving Platform Work in a Global Context." *Geoforum* 112 (June): 100–3. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.GEOFORUM.2020.01.023.

Gwynne, Joel. 2013. "New Femininity, Neoliberalism, and Young Women's Fashion Blogs in Singapore and Malaysia." In *Bodies Without Borders*, edited by Erynn M. Casanova and Afshan Jafar, 51–73. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137365385_4.

Hall, Suzanne. 2021. *The Migrant's Paradox: Street Livelihoods and Marginal Citizenship in Britain*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Heeks, Richard, Mark Graham, Paul Mungai, Jean Paul Van Belle, and Jamie Woodcock. 2021. "Systematic Evaluation of Gig Work against Decent Work Standards: The Development and Application of the Fairwork Framework." *Information Society* 37 (5): 267–86. https://doi.org/10.1080/01972243.2021.1942356.

IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer). 2021. "IARC Biennial Report 2020–2021." Lyon: International Agency for Research on Cancer.

James, Al. 2022. "Women in the Gig Economy: Feminising 'Digital Labour.'" *Work in the Global Economy* 2 (1): 2–26. https://doi.org/10.1332/273241721X16448410652000.

Kasmir, Sharryn, and Lesley Gill. 2022. *The Routledge Handbook of the Anthropology of Labour.* London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003158448.

Kolioulis, Alessio, Julian Siravo, Paul Apostolidis, Camille Kummer-Buléon, Louis Matheou, and Cosimo Campani. 2021. "Working Nights: Municipal Strategies for Nocturnal Workers." Cranbourne. https://autonomy.work/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Working_Nights-2.pdf.

Krase, Jerome, and Timothy Shortell. 2021. "Story-Making and Photography: The Visual Essay and Migration." In *Visual Methodology in Migration Studies*, edited by Karolina Nikielska-Sekula and Amandine Desille, 141–159. IMISCOE Research Series. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67608-7_8.

Krieger-Boden, Christiane, and Alina Sorgner. 2018. "Labour Market Opportunities for Women in the Digital Age." *Economics* 12 (1): 1–8. https://doi.org/10.5018/ECONOMICS-EJOURNAL.JA.2018-28.

Lorey, Isabell. 2015. *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*. London and New York: Verso Books.

Macarie, Julius-Cezar. 2017. "Invisible Denizens: Migrant Night Shift Workers' Fragile Possibilities for Solidarity in the Post-Circadian Capitalist Era." 4. Centre for Policy Studies. CPS Working Papers. Budapest. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.13770.06084.

MacQuarie, Julius-Cezar. 2019. "Invisible Migrants: A Micro-Ethnographic Account of Bodily Exhaustion amongst Migrant Manual Labourers Working the Graveyard Shift at New Spitalfields Market in London." *Journal of Health Inequalities* 5 (2): 198–202. https://doi.org/10.5114/jhi.2019.91400.

MacQuarie, Julius-Cezar. 2020. "While Others Sleep: The Essential Labour of Migrant Nightshift Workers." *Society for the Anthropology of Work* (September): n/p. https://doi.org/10.21428/1d6be30e.fb029d9b.

MacQuarie, Julius-Cezar. 2023. *Invisible Migrant Nightworkers in 24/7 London*. IMISCOE Research Series. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-36186-9.

Mallon, Mary, and Laurie Cohen. 2001. "Time for a Change? Women's Accounts of the Move from Organizational Careers to Self-Employment." *British Journal of Management* 12 (3): 217–30. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.00195.

Martiniello, Marco. 2017. "Visual Sociology Approaches in Migration, Ethnic and Racial Studies." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40 (8): 1184–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1295163.

Melbin, Murray. 1987. *Night as Frontier: Colonizing the World after Dark*. New York: The Free Press.

McKie, Linda, Ingrid Biese, and Marjut Jyrkinen. 2013. "'The Best Time Is Now!': The Temporal and Spatial Dynamics of Women Opting into Self-Employment." *Gender, Work and Organization* 20 (2): 184–96. https://doi.org/10.1111/GWAO.12019.

Nikielska-Sekula, Karolina, and Amandine Desille, eds. 2021. *Visual Methodology in Migration Studies*. IMISCOE Research Series. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67608-7.

Popan, Cosmin. 2021. "Embodied Precariat and Digital Control in the 'Gig Economy': The Mobile Labour of Food Delivery Workers." *Journal of Urban Technology* 31 (1): 109–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/10630732.2021.2001714.

Pulignano, Valeria, Markieta Domecka, Karol Muszyński, Lander Vermeerbergen, and Me-Linh Riemann. 2021. "Creative Labour in the Era of Covid-19: The Case of Freelancers." ETUI Research Paper—Working Paper 2021.02. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3832553.

DTCAGSM (Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media). 2021. "Report of the Night-Time Economy Taskforce." Dublin: Government of Ireland. https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c1ba7-report-of-the-night-time-economy-taskforce/.

Roden, M., M. Koller, K. Pirich, H. Vierhapper, and F. Waldhauser. 1993. "The Circadian Melatonin and Cortisol Secretion Pattern in Permanent Night Shift Workers." *Am J Physiol Regulatory Integrative Comp Physiol* 265 (1): R261–267. https://doi.org/10.1152/ajpregu.1993.265.1.R261.

Scholz, Trebor. 2012. *Digital Labour: The Internet as Playground and Factory*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203145791.

Schor, Juliet. 2020. *After the Gig: How the Sharing Economy Got Hijacked and How to Win It Back*. Oakland: University of California Press. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520974227.

Shaw, Robert. 2018. *The Nocturnal City*. London: Routledge.

Shaw, Robert. 2022. “Geographies of Night Work.” *Progress in Human Geography* 46 (5): 1149–64. https://doi.org/10.1177/03091325221107638.

Smith, Andrew, and Adam Eldridge. 2021. *Tourism and the Night: Rethinking Nocturnal Destinations*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Wallis, M. 2021. “Digital Labour and Social Reproduction: Crowdwork in Germany and Romania.” *Spheres Journal for Digital Cultures* 6 (October): 1–14. http://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/18038.

Young, Katie. 2022. “Producing Locality at Night: From Lagos Hometown Meetings to Galway’s G Afro Vibez.” *Crossings* 13 (1): 11–26. https://doi.org/10.1386/CJMC_00052_1.

Zia, Sarah, Anushree Gupta, Simiran Lalvani, Aayush Rathi, and Ambika Tandon. 2021. “Platformisation of Ride Hailing, Food Delivery and Domestic Work.” Panel presented at the 2021 AoIR conference.

About the Author

Julius-Cezar MacQuarie conducts PRECNIGHTS, a project funded by the European Commission that explores precarity in women migrant nightworkers in Ireland. His latest publication, *Invisible Migrant Nightworkers in 24/7 London* (2023) has been published with Springer Nature, in the IMISCOE-Springer Research Series.

6. Transformers of the Urban Night: Platform Work, Migration and Smart City

Laura-Solmaz Litschel

Abstract: In cities like Berlin new time inequities are shaped by the continuous expansion of digitally organized platform labour ("gig work"). While some work under high temporal pressure in the gig economy sector in order to satisfy the basic needs of city dwellers and thus allow them time for other needs and activities, gig workers themselves lack the time sometimes even to sleep or rest. The chapter shows in what way these workers experience the digitally shaped night. Services, offered for example by food delivery services or electric mobility providers, are transforming urban space and therefore the night in "smart cities," such as Berlin.

Keywords: Urban Metropolises, Gig Work, Digitalisation, Night Work, Urban Space

Introduction

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In urban metropolises like Berlin, services of all kinds can now be accessed via smartphone apps, a consequence of a flexible and digitized work culture. A glance at our smartphone shows us this: Google Maps guides us through the city, Facebook and Google structure our access to information, Glovo or Just Eat brings us dinner and Amazon everything else, Helpling finds us a cleaner, Uber a cab ride, Airbnb a vacation rental, and Tinder our next relationship (cf. Altenried, Animento, Bojadžijev 2021). With multiple apps for everything, the satisfaction of numerous basic human needs can be outsourced to platform companies. As the pace of work and life keeps accelerating, everyday life

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH06

without such services can feel almost inconceivable, as they now give access to mobility, food, housing and even social contact. The human labour behind these apps often remains invisible. Sometimes it seems as if the smart city is magically reproducing itself.[1] However, this magic is sustained by largely invisible platform workers, often referred to as "gig workers" (Brown 2009; Scholz 2017), who often do their work in the evenings and at night.

Revealingly, the term "gig" work originates from the payment per "gig"—and points to a modern form of piecework. Gig work done during the day often extends into the night because if workers do not manage to complete the number of orders their working hours often extend into the evening and beyond.

In contrast to the invisibility of gig workers, the material transformation of Berlin's public space by platform companies is in plain sight. Delivery service warehouses are spreading, e-scooters clog the sidewalks, and app-controlled service personnel are on the move day and night. In recent years, numerous warehouses of food delivery services such as Gorillas, Getir or Flink, as well as the so-called hubs of Lieferando have been implemented in the urban space. Platforms have sat on top of the city's restaurant and supermarket infrastructure and augmented it with new digital delivery systems. Numerous ride-hailing services populate city streets, taking up public space for private companies by blocking public parking spaces, for example. New mobility options such as electric mopeds, electric bicycles, and e-scooters have been implemented in urban spaces and are available for rent via smartphone apps. To maintain and store them, numerous warehouses have become necessary.

It is possible to speak of "new land-grabbing" in urban space by platform companies (see Dörre, Lessenich, and Rosa 2017). Thus, urban night-time space is increasingly being transformed by the new digitized labour. Jonathan Crary's work emphasizes how the day increasingly intrudes into the night, subjecting to production the previously passive and non-capitalizable time in which the circuit of production, commodity circulation, and consumption was interrupted (see Crary 2013). Following on from Crarys as well as on reflections on the new capitalist land-grabbing (Harvey 2005, Dörre 2013), I would like to discuss the transformation of Berlin's urban night under the concept of "time-taking."

1 Smart City stands for the idea of an intelligent, self-thinking city. The promise is that through the clever use of new information and communication technologies, cities can become more modern, more inclusive, more climate-friendly and more efficient. The concept of the smart city and the promise of smart city strategies are highly controversial, as the debate is dominated by technicist approaches and economic interests (Nuss et.al. 2016.).

Background

The night is less and less seen as an unproductive "temporal space," having instead become integrated into a capitalist logic of exploitation. The increasing digitization of urban spaces and new digital service offerings that are emerging in them play a crucial role in this process. While there were still major disputes in Germany in the 1980s about extended store opening hours on the so-called "Long Thursday," in 2023 online department stores are always open, inviting customers to consume day and night. Practices of buying services at night are thus increasingly shaping everyday urban life. Flexible working hours and the increase in home-based work are furthermore hybridizing work and leisure. A clear separation of working time and time that can be used for reproductive work and regeneration is becoming increasingly difficult. In addition the question of how the reproductive work can be organized is thus posed anew (Altenried u. a. 2021). Online platforms are responding to the progressive fragmentation of work. They close supply gaps by organizing the satisfaction of a wide variety of basic human needs with the help of algorithms, thus enabling 24/7. This reshaping is only possible because both the night itself and night-time access to labour change in a reciprocal process.

Digital infrastructures enable workers to extend their work activities into the night-time urban space. Platforms are created to offer consumption possibilities at night enabling people to ask for services for which others must work at night to supply. In that way, a new usage space of the night is emerging. Technically, the infrastructures of digitalization enable the comprehensive commodification of the night, but this process is ultimately driven by capitalist development. Customers are invited to trigger a 24/7 demand for labour in the department store of services through their consumption practices. Consumers and workers thus create a new night space mediated by the internet that relies on the infrastructures of the smart city. Thus, the night is transformed on multiple levels by sub-processes that condition each other.

Platform workers are particularly affected by these changes in the city at night. As new social figures, they shape the city night and while at the same time promoting its digital transformation through their work. On the one hand, they are dependent on the infrastructure of the smart city, and on the other they co-produce the demand for an expansion of that same infrastructure.

As already known from digital applications (cf. Chun 2016), platform workers contribute to the optimization of urban space. In a constant "update

cycle," they complete the necessary work activities in often small-scale work steps. Platform workers ensure a reproduction of the smart city on different levels by training machine learning, maintaining mobility infrastructures, relying on 4G internet, and night-time lighting to do so. They also interact with their smartphones or computers on a job-related basis and are thus constantly exposed to the "ubiquitous day" of the internet.

The processes of change described above only occur in specific urban spaces. Berlin, with its large number of startups, its smart city strategy and its electro-technical infrastructures, creates the foundations for this transformation of night-time. For this reason, Berlin, as Germany's largest metropolis and hotspot of the German startup scene (Ernst&Young 2019), is the focus of this chapter. The very existence of platform labour promotes the land-grabbing of night-time urban space by digital work.

Methods

During a three-year research project, I investigated how Berlin's nocturnal public space is transformed by the so-called platform work and how this evening and night-time gig work is shaped. My goal was to shed light on the challenges and difficulties associated with this form of algorithmically controlled work at night.

The research was conceived as ethnographically integrated on- and offline fieldwork in Berlin. As the platform sector proves to be very economically volatile, research based on only one platform tends to be difficult. To consider how platform work contributed to the transformation of night-time urban space, I opted to investigate the gig economy field from different perspectives. I focused on (1) crowd work platforms, (2) delivery platforms, and (3) mobility platforms. I grouped the three approaches under (1) maintenance of algorithms, (2) maintenance of machines, and (3) maintenance of humans.

During several intensive fieldwork phases, I researched the digital environments (service apps), the urban-spatial environments (infrastructures of the smart city), and their social figures (platform workers), in close exchange with workers as well as autoethnographically. The research spanned three phases and was conceived as a multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995). Initially, I approached the field with as open a question as possible, which I later specified based on empirical surveys. In an initial exploratory phase I reviewed the relevant literature, interviews, articles, and studies on my research topic. Thus, an overview of the field and possible cooperation partners could be generated. During this phase I conducted four expert

interviews. During the second phase, the field research phase, numerous nocturnal participant observations and dense descriptions of platform work in urban space were made. During the third phase, thirty-four in-depth problem-centred guided interviews with platform workers were conducted and two round tables with activists from the field, gig workers and researchers were organized.

Theoretical Framework

In my research, I brought together the emerging, transdisciplinary field of Night Studies with some reflections on digitized work. The progressive extension of daytime activities into the urban night has been discussed under terms like "24/7 City" (Hadfield 2015; Shaw 2010). It also connects to discourses on the so-called "colonization of the night" as first stated by Murray Melbin in 1987 (see Melbin 1987). This perspective ties in with considerations around the "colonization of sleep," which Jonathan Crary discusses in his influential book *24/7 Late Capitalism and the End of Sleep* (Crary 2013). These debates were fundamental to the development of the research question.

The flexibilization and fragmentation of working hours, outsourcing across time zones, the expansion of street lighting by LEDs, nightlife, night traffic, and the expansion of the service sector are causing a massive transformation of nocturnal urban spaces, or as Melbin has put it, an increasing "colonization of the night" (Melbin 1987). The particular focus of this chapter is on the latter phenomenon and its acceleration through digitalization.

The expansion of the service sector has become even more crucial for the transformation of the night-time urban space through the spread of so-called "platform-based services"—by which I mean the rise of platforms such as Uber, Airbnb and Lieferando.

Important keywords in this context to theoretically classify the expansion of the platform sector are the terms of digital capitalism (Staab 2019) and platform capitalism (Kirchner 2019; Schössler 2018; Srnicek 2017). Both concepts point to the fundamental changes that the rise of the platform sector means for our society: industrial conglomerates, energy companies and banks have been replaced in importance by internet giants such as Google, Apple, Amazon and Tencent. New practices, such as digital surveillance and evaluation practices that accompany the rise of these platform companies are increasingly shaping the way we all work (cf. Staab 2019; Srnicek 2017). The rise of online platforms is closely linked to

the concepts of the “smart city” (cf. Chourabi et al. 2012; Neirotti 2014), as they often create highly connected digital environments through the expansion of technological infrastructure (Hollands 2008). Research that focuses on urban public space and thinks about digitalization and night must focus on the interplay of digital capitalism and platforms, as it entails a reconstruction of public night space. By using the electromobility and delivery sectors as key examples, I will show how the rise of the mobility platform sector disruptively changes Berlin at night and what work realities are implemented through new algorithmically structured night work.

Results

Gig work is highly flexible work. It attracts many workers with a migration background, making it a relevant object of study in the context of migration research and night studies. Gig work in general is often performed by people with a migration history who have difficulties taking part in the regular labour market due to structural discrimination; for them, gig work can be a way to access paid labour. In many cases, gig work is easy to start: you usually only have to download the app and rarely have to prove any further qualifications.

In addition, gig work tends to be precarious work, often self-employed, where night and evening work are often common. Such hard and poorly paid work tends to be avoided by those who have the choice. The fact that people with a migration history in particular work in precarious jobs has not changed as a result of the new app-driven jobs as various studies show (e.g. Birke 2022).

Maintenance work in general often takes place “after hours,” which is why electric mobility devices, such as e-scooters, are often serviced at night. Cleaners also often work in the early morning hours, which has not changed significantly with platforms offering cleaning services; food delivery services such as Lieferando have also long advertised night delivery services. Their flexibility allows gig work to be combined with other, more regular work arrangements. In many cases the earnings of the regular employment were not sufficient. For example, some of my interviewees worked in security during the day and turned to gig work at night or they structured their work in phases. During the phases when there was no work, for example during winter when the outdoor pools where they worked as security were closed, they began to work seasonally as gig workers.

Example 1: Night-Time Economy and Gig Work

The remarkable influence of the platform sector can be seen in the example of Berlin's nightlife in interaction with the platforms. The city of Berlin has a unique night-time economy (NTE), of which most guests and tourists only experience the shining "front end." While they enjoy the luxury of the night-time city, numerous people work in the background of the shining scenes of the party and leisure industry. It is only through their, often precarious, work that the pleasures of the night-time economy are possible and affordable. This work is usually overlooked and remains invisible at night. This is especially true in low-threshold jobs in which people with migration history are often employed, for example as cleaners, in public spaces but in clubs and discos as well (Runst, Peter 2016).

The situation in the precarious place-based platform work, which is related to the NTE, is, unsurprisingly, similar.[2] Here, too, it becomes apparent that it is mostly those with a migration history who make a certain lifestyle possible for the city dwellers. They do this by delivering food and drinks, servicing scooters and rental bicycles, or transporting people from point A to point B. Nazim Zalur, the founder of the delivery service Getir makes the lifestyle-supporting function of the app clear by stating in interviews: "We are the butler of millions of people" or "People have a right to be lazy" (respectively, Şenyurt 2021; Benrath 2021).

This is a reference to the different ways of allocating time that are consolidated by online platforms. The temporal advantage that some can enjoy by platform-based food or grocery delivery is lacking for the ones who are pressured to deliver food to them in ten minutes. The recreational quality of night-time is similarly unbalanced: while some are partying, others are working in the delivery industry to make the night experience of others as nice and effortless as possible. Thus, the "right to laziness" postulated by Nazim Zalur is closely interwoven with the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the labour market, whose access is structured on the basis of categories such as gender, class, and race. The fact that working conditions in the delivery industry are precarious, that risks are often outsourced to bicycle couriers, and that solo self-employment plays a role in this sector is well known and recently received media attention in Berlin through the coverage of protests and strikes among Gorillas employees (see Götzke 2022).

2 On this subject the study by Simiran Lalvani is also interesting: "Delivering the Night-Time Economy Home: Nocturnal Labour and Temporalities of Platform Work" (Lalvani 2022).

Fig. 6.1: Advertising of the food delivery service Gorillas. Photocredit: Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Sociologist Andreas Reckwitz states that nowadays urban society is increasingly splitting into a well-off, academic new middle class and a precarious, often migrant "service class" (Reckwitz 2019). In the platform economy, this is exemplified by the often migrantized bicycle couriers who deliver the food that are often ordered by an urban middle class. Deliveries of food and drinks by bicycle couriers in particular have become a natural part of Berlin's nights out. An advertising campaign for the food delivery service Flink, which I photographed as part of my research, is an exemplary case of this phenomenon.

On the first billboard we see the slogan: "Night: so fulfilled. Coffee: so empty," on the second, "You: go for it. We: fill up," and on the third, "All still there. Bottle: already out." Underneath the request to order and the promise of delivery within ten minutes are always visible. Here, too, questions arise: Who gets to party while others have to work? Who has a right to laziness, rest, or just a night off from work? Who is supported in their home office and saves time while others have to travel physical distances in a short time?

But there is another way in which the different experience of the night of city dwellers and gig workers shows. In many cities the constant pressure to work flexibly leads to a crisis of social reproduction (Altenried et al. 2021). Most city dwellers are affected by it, which drives them to outsource reproductive activities. The work pressure and temporally fragmented work relationships lead to the desire, and often the necessity, to outsource more and more reproductive activities. The role of platforms in addressing this crisis of social reproduction is remarkable. Platform workers take over the reproductive activities, such as cooking or cleaning, that many city dwellers

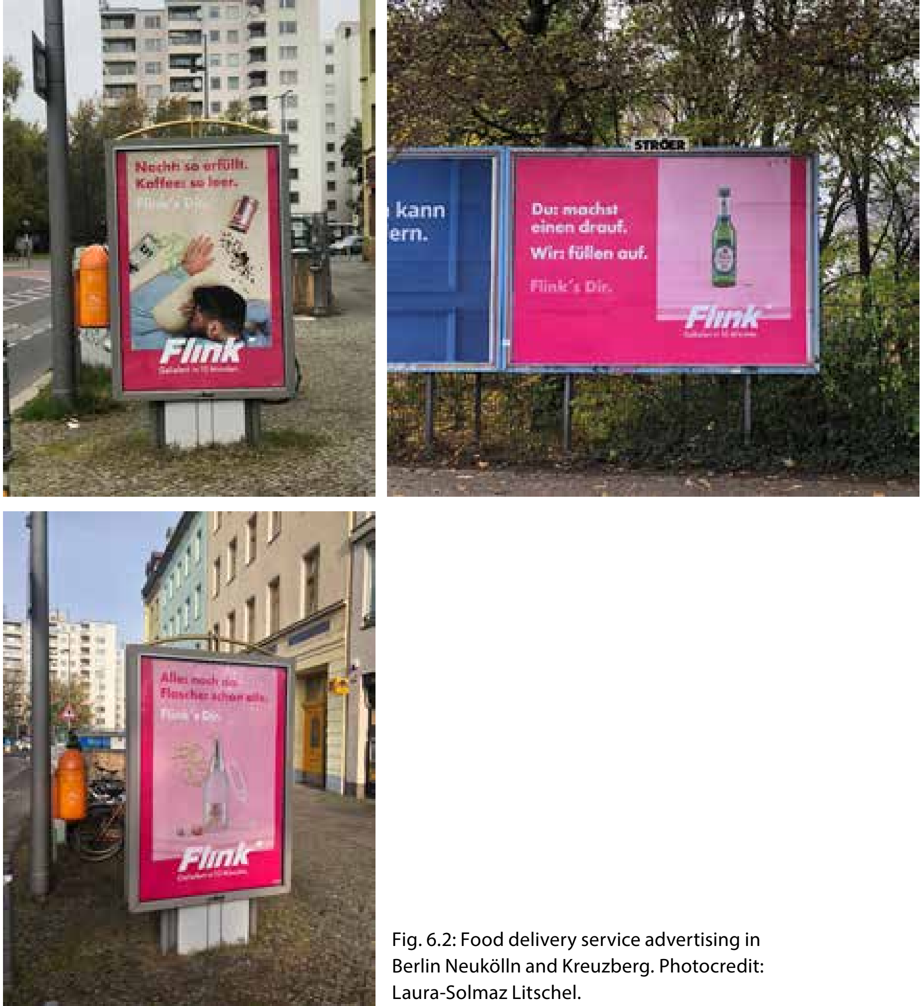


Fig. 6.2: Food delivery service advertising in Berlin Neukölln and Kreuzberg. Photocredit: Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

can no longer fit into their flexible workday. Thus, platform workers deliver to private households so that customers no longer have to go shopping and thus save time.

Figure 6.2 shows a man with a milk bottle in his hand. The slogan, "You feed your offspring 2x more often with liquid food than with solid food," is visible below. It is an advertisement for the food delivery service Gorillas, which promises to deliver groceries within ten minutes. This advertisement seems to indicate that Gorillas is compiling statistics on the purchasing behaviour of its users. Since it is a baby food delivery service, it is a clear indication that more and more city dwellers are outsourcing reproductive activities, such as shopping, to platforms and that platforms like Gorillas

are aware of this and address it in their advertising. The delivery couriers at Gorillas in Berlin are bicycle messengers.

Polemically, one could say that the time given to those who stay at home is lacking for the gig workers. The time that platform workers spend supporting the social reproduction of others is not available for their own reproductive activities. They are often too exhausted and tired in the evening after work to pursue their own reproductive activities. In addition, if the work has taken place in the evening or at night, their day and night cycles often shift significantly. At the same time, the delivery promise of ten minutes puts immense time pressure on bicycle couriers, who must fulfil this commitment to the company. They often lack time, while creating time freed up for customers.

Example 2: Maintenance of the Smart City at Night

Another focus of my research were maintenance workers, who work as e-scooter rechargers, called "juicers." Juicers maintain the mobility infrastructures of the so-called smart city, while they themselves rely on its infrastructures, such as 4G internet, a developed smart transportation system and street lighting. Thus, this app-driven form of work is an urban phenomenon.

In 2020, the year in which the main part of my research on e-scooters took place, e-scooters in Berlin were mostly exclusively collected at night to be loaded.[3] Workers were instructed to put the e-scooters back on the street, at the so-called hubs, by 7 a.m. This requirement often presented significant logistical challenges: there were too few hubs and too many other juicers, which eventually led to a fierce competition for hubs. The second reason I decided to start investigating night-time gig work in the e-scooter realm was the way the presence of e-scooters, as small mobility machines, shape night-time urban space. If you take a night walk through Berlin, you cannot avoid meeting e-scooters with their green and red lights.

E-scooter chargers receive all their work instructions from a downloaded smartphone app. This app is the same one that the customers use, but as workers log in, they can access an extra work mode. Often the interaction with the app is the only contact the workers have with their company

3 Since 2021, the situation has changed and the scooters are now sometimes picked up during the day, which is probably related to the fact that more and more subcontractors are working in the field.

during their work shifts. Thus, the app serves more or less as a substitute for the supervisor, a circumstance whose impact on everyday work and the subjectification of gig workers has been discussed in the article “App as Boss?” by Ivanova et al. The researchers “found evidence that this apps embody simultaneously the spheres of control delegated to the riders and the strategies of control” (Ivanova et al. 2018).

Usually, juicers’ work is paid by piece rate, so they earn depending on how many e-scooters they collect and charge. Solo self-employed e-scooter chargers do not receive any work equipment. Not only do they have to provide their own work equipment, such as a power bank and smartphone, but they also must provide all the resources they need to do their work themselves—including providing a van and renting a storage space. Some of my interviewees fell into debt cycles because they had to pay in advance for vehicles and facilities, without which they could not operate. One former juicer told me about his massive debt, which he had to deal with even months after leaving the job:

> Then I had to pay 650 euro in advance as a deposit. Then another 250 euros per month, so just under 1000 euro had to come up first, pay for gas, pay for the car and then best (rent the car) as long as possible, because the shorter you take the days, the more you pay, so I tried to take the car for two weeks in advance and gave my whole salary for the car. […] The cargo space cost another 400 euro. Without contract under the hand (M-00:27:49)

Interviews with juicers revealed that they often become users of other platforms in the context of their work. For example, they use car sharing platforms to borrow a van or they use apartment rental platforms to rent spaces where they can charge the e-scooters. In that way, they become so-called *prosumers*, a mixture of consumer and producer (Hellmann 2010). Many workers move flexibly between different platforms, either to work for them or to use services as customers to ensure their ability to work. Thereby they produce further work in the platform sector. The platform work of some thus becomes the condition for the platform work of others.

Furthermore, social media and messaging platforms often function as exchange platforms. At the time of my research, Telegram and WhatsApp were very relevant for the work of many juicers. Without them, everyday work was hardly conceivable, because basic information was often shared in these groups. There were also large online Facebook groups where e-scooter juicers posted thoughts, problems, jokes and tips about their daily work and spurred each other on in competitions. The use of social media platforms

seemed to have become an important strategy for numerous individual platform workers to come together online, discuss experiences and strategies, and compensate for the lack of exchange with colleagues. Migration aspects also play an important role here, as, for example, people with non-German backgrounds ask for advice regarding the German labour market in such groups and exchange and network with each other.

Conclusion

In summary, there is a close connection between gig work, the nocturnal reproduction of the labour force of city dwellers, and the nocturnal reproduction of the smart city itself.

In relation to urban space gig work accelerates tendencies toward the "colonization of the night" (Melbin 1987). The expansion of the platform sector has implications for the transformation of the city at night, green and red E-scooter lights are brightening the night, warehouses are rented, electro mobility stations are built, people are on the streets as app-driven delivery personnel, and it becomes possible to get from A to B at any time, even outside the traditional public transport timetables.

The land-grabbing of platforms in public space is additionally accompanied by a change in access to the time of workers in the gig work sector: some deliver under time pressure while others can rest, and some maintain electric mobility infrastructures at night while others sleep.

Bicycle couriers support the social reproduction of the urban population and thus contribute to a better recovery of the human labour force at night. Juicers maintain the city's mobility infrastructures, exemplifying the city's reproduction at night.

Gig workers in general work in a highly flexible manner and at times when others are resting. They therefore have a different approach to the city night and the periods in which they move in urban space are different. These gig workers experience a different night than their customers. In addition, they often work under high time pressure.

It is clear that the questions of who can use the urban night and how cannot be considered independently of socioeconomic issues. This question is also closely intertwined with issues of migration, gender, class and race, as the examples from the gig economy sector have shown.[4]

4 Gender also plays an important role here. For example, juicers in my sample were exclusively men, and there is a surplus of men among bicycle couriers as various studies have shown (e.g.,

Such differences in the ability to allocate time and access to urban nighttime are nothing new, but are part of a historical genealogy, in which night work has always affected particular groups. However, new forms of digital work, which are accompanied by algorithmically pre-structured work processes and possibilities of algorithmic control, give these differences a special quality.

Bibliography

Altenried, Moritz, Julia Dück, and Mira Wallis, eds. 2021. *Plattformkapitalismus und die Krise der sozialen Reproduktion*. 1. Auflage. Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot.

Altenried, Moritz, Stefania Animento, and Manuela Bojadžijev. 2021. "Plattform-Urbanismus: Arbeit, Migration und die Transformation des urbanen Raums." *Suburban* 9 (1/2): 73–91. https://doi.org/10.36900/suburban.v9i1/2.605.

Beaumont, Matthew, and Bastian Benrath. "Lieferdienst Getir: 'Menschen haben ein Recht auf Faulheit.'" *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 17, 2021.

Birke, Peter. 2022. *Grenzen aus Glas: Arbeit, Rassismus und Kämpfe der Migration in Deutschland*. Wien; Berlin: Mandelbaum Verlag.

Brown, Tina. 2009. "The Gig Economy: Now that Everyone Has a Project-to-Project Freelancer Career, Everyone Is a Hustler." *Daily Beast*, July 14, 2017. https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-gig-economy?ref=scroll.

Chourabi, Hafedh, Taewoo Nam, Shawn Walker, J. Ramon Gil-Garcia, Sehl Mellouli, Karine Nahon, Theresa A. Pardo, and Hans Jochen Scholl. 2012. "Understanding Smart Cities: An Integrative Framework." In *2012 45th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, 2289–97. Maui, HI, USA: IEEE. https://doi.org/10.1109/HICSS.2012.615.

Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong. 2016. *Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Crary, Jonathan. 2013. *24/7: Schlaflos im Spätkapitalismus*. Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach Verlag.

Dörre, Klaus, Stephan Lessenich, and Hartmut Rosa. 2017. *Soziologie, Kapitalismus, Kritik: Eine Debatte*. 5. Auflage. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft.

Dörre, Klaus. 2013. "Landnahme und die Grenzen sozialer Reproduktion: Zur gesellschaftstheoretischen Bedeutung Rosa Luxemburgs." In *Rosa Luxemburgs "Akkumulation des Kapitals". Die Aktualität von ökonomischer Theorie, Imperialismuserklärung und Klassenanalyse*, edited by Ingo Schmidt, 82–116. Hamburg: VSA-Verlag.

Heiland 2019).

Edensor, Tim. 2017. *From Light to Dark: Daylight, Illumination, and Gloom*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ernst & Young Report. 2019. “Start-up-Barometer Deutschland.” Ernst & Young Global Limited, June 8, 2019. https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-start-up-barometer-deutschland-juli-2019/%24FILE/ey-start-up-barometer-deutschland-juli-2019.pdf.

Götzke, Manfred. 2022. “Radkuriere bei Gorillas: ‘Das ist prekäre Arbeit’.” *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, April 1, 2022. https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/gorillas-arbeitsbedingungen-lieferdienste-fahrradkuriere-100.html.

Hadfield, Phil. 2015. “The Night-Time City: Four Modes of Exclusion: Reflections on the Urban Studies Special Collection.” *Urban Studies* 52 (3): 606–16.

Harvey, David. 2005. *Der neue Imperialismus*. Hamburg: VSA-Verlag.

Heiland, Heiner. 2019. “Plattformarbeit im Fokus: Ergebnisse einer explorativen Online-Umfrage zu plattformvermittelter Kurierarbeit.” *WSI-Mitteilungen* 72 (4): 298–304. https://doi.org/10.5771/0342-300X-2019-4-298.

Hellmann, Kai-Uwe. 2010. “Prosumer Revisited: Zur Aktualität einer Debatte.” In *Prosumer Revisited: Zur Aktualität einer Debatte*, edited by Birgit Blättel-Mink and Kai-Uwe Hellmann, 13–48. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-91998-0_1.

Hollands, Robert. 2008. “Will the Real Smart City Please Stand Up?” *City* 12 (3): 303–20.

Ivanova, Mirela, Joanna Bronowicka, Eva Kocher, and Anne Degner. 2018. “The App as a Boss? Control and Autonomy in Application-Based Management.” In *Arbeit | Grenze | Fluss: Work in Progress Interdisziplinärer Arbeitsforschung* 2, edited by Jochen Koch, Eva Kocher, and Klaus Weber, 1–27. Frankfurt an der Oder: Europa Universität Viadrina.

Kirchner, Stefan. 2019. “Arbeiten in der Plattformökonomie: Grundlagen und Grenzen von ‘Cloudwork’ und ‘Gigwork.’” *KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 71 (1): 3–25. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-019-00587-w.

Lalvani, Simiran. 2022. “Delivering the Night-Time Economy Home: Nocturnal Labour and Temporalities of Platform Work.” In *Working at Night: The Temporal Organisation of Labour Across Political and Economic Regimes*, edited by Ger Duijzings and Lucie Dušková, 237–52. Berlin & Boston: De Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110753592-011.

Marcus, George. 1995. “Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95–117.

Melbin, Murray. 1987. *Night as Frontier: Colonizing the World after Dark*. New York: Free Press.

Metz, Markus, and Georg Seeßlen. 2018. *Schnittstelle Körper*. Berlin: Matthes & Seitz Verlag.

Neirotti, Paolo, Alberto De Marco, Anna Cagliano, Giulio Mangano, and Francesco Scorrano. 2014. "Current Trends in Smart City Initiatives: Some Stylised Facts." *Cities* 38 (June): 25–36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2013.12.010.

Nuss, Sabine, Patrick Stary, Martha Dörfler, and Tom Strohschneider, eds. 2016. *Smarte Worte – Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung*. Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. https://www.rosalux.de/publikation/id/9279/smarte-worte.

Reckwitz, Andreas. 2019. *Die Gesellschaft der Singularitäten: Zum Strukturwandel der Moderne*. Erste Auflage, Wissenschaftliche Sonderausgabe. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Runst, Peter. 2016. "Beschäftigte mit Migrationshintergrund im Handwerk." *wegewerk*. https://www.zdh.de/daten-und-fakten/kennzahlen-des-handwerks/beschaeftigte-mit-migrationshintergrund-im-handwerk/.

Scholz, Trebor. 2017. *Uberworked and Underpaid: How Workers Are Disrupting the Digital Economy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Schössler, Martin. 2018. "Plattformökonomie als Organisationsform zukünftiger Wertschöpfung: Chancen und Herausforderungen für den Standort Deutschland." *WISO Diskurs* 21/2018. Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/wiso/14756.pdf.

Schweitzer, Jan. 2019. "Smartphone: Scheiben-Wischer." *Die Zeit*, 44/2019, October 30. https://www.zeit.de/2019/44/smartphone-apps-soziale-medien-nutzung-scrolling-freizeit.

Şenyurt, Sinan. 2021. "Getir-CEO Nazim Salur: 'Wir sind der digitale Butler für Millionen von Menschen.'" *Business Insider*, July 9. https://www.businessinsider.de/wirtschaft/getir-ceo-nazim-salur-wir-sind-der-digitale-butler-fuer-millionen-von-menschen/.

Shaw, Robert. 2010. "Neoliberal Subjectivities and the Development of the Night-Time Economy in British Cities." *Geography Compass* 4 (7): 893–903.

Shaw, Robert. 2018. *The Nocturnal City*. London: Routledge.

Srnicek, Nick. 2017. *Platform Capitalism*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Staab, Phillip. 2019. *Digitaler Kapitalismus: Markt und Herrschaft in der Ökonomie der Unknappheit*. Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag.

About the Author

Laura-Solmaz Litschel is an associate member of the Institute for Migration Research at Humboldt University of Berlin and of the Centre for Digital Cultures at Leuphana University Lüneburg. She is a PhD student at Berlin Institute of Anthropology and was a member of the Night Spaces Research Team (2019–22).

7. Digital Day Labourers—Sleepless in the Gig Economy

Fieldwork Photo Essay

Laura-Solmaz Litschel

If you take a night walk through Berlin, you will see green and red flashing scooters, fast Uber drivers, food couriers, delivery vehicles everywhere. In metropolises like Berlin, digital platforms now allow central human needs such as food, mobility and housing to be satisfied on-demand in a 24/7 rhythm via app-based ordering platforms. All it takes is a smartphone. What kind of working conditions does this so-called gig economy promote? As part of a three-year research project, Laura-Solmaz Litschel (NITE/HU Berlin) collected numerous photos of app-driven night work in Berlin, ten of which are shown here. UX designer Lee Hielscher helped with the graphic realization of the four image collages, which were also presented in June 2022 at FREIRAUM in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg, among other places.

The following article accompanies the photo essay. A similar version by Laura-Solmaz Litschel was first published on July 7th, 2021 in issue 20/27 of the German weekly newspaper Der Freitag.

One o'clock in the morning in Berlin-Moabit. A white van squeaks to a halt at the side of the road. It has a Polish number plate. Through the front window, you can made out a red glow in the back of the van: an e-scooter. A man with a moustache and a white T-shirt opens the passenger door. He stumbles and looks a little unsteady on his feet as he goes to the back of the van and unloads an e-scooter. He hesitates briefly and finally walks towards a rubbish bin. He shines a torch into it and pulls out a few returnable bottles. Then he gets into the van and disappears into the night.

The man is a "juicer." That's what they call the workers who collect and charge e-scooters, poorly paid, poorly secured—and mostly at night.

Like Cem*: "When I'm working, the scooters are shown to me in the app. I reserve them and have to look for them," the thirty-four-year-old explains

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH07

about his job as a juicer. "The other day, after a while, I saw a red flashing in the water and thought to myself 'What's that?', the e-scooters are actually floating in the Landwehrkanal, a canal in Neukölln. Some drunk people in Neukölln or Kreuzberg have fun and throw them in there. Then I have to go into the water in the middle of the night and fish the scooters out again." Cem works from 11 pm to 7 am because there is less traffic at night. So, he manages to collect more e-scooters in less time, he is paid by the piece. "The e-scooters are badly handled," he says, "often the QR codes are scratched, which makes our work more difficult."

In the meantime, fast and flexible means of transport have become part of the central infrastructures of everyday urban life in the smart city.

In order to remain cheap, the working conditions are often lousy. Working hours are in many cases hostile to the biorhythms of workers, who are usually paid piece rates that often undermine the minimum wage, the time pressure is immense, which is the rule rather than the exception in the platform sector. Work is often outsourced to subcontractors whose practices are poorly regulated and who pass on the pressure to the workers.

"They tell you that you'll earn twenty-five euros an hour, but what they don't tell you is that you have to deliver 150 parcels for that," says Marino*, aged thirty-two. He is outraged about his experience at a subcontractor of an online parcel service provider.

In the pandemic, parcel delivery services have gained in importance. Corona has shown particularly clearly how systemically relevant numerous varieties of so-called "platform work" have become. In some cities, delivery personnel were sometimes the only visible users of city streets in the evening and at night for months. Their companies are among the winners of the health crisis.

Marino describes what his life is like in the digital city: eating, drinking, even urinating, everything is done in the car most of the time because stopping takes too much time. "Maybe you can do it the first three days a week, but only if you run all the time. Most of the time you're at thirteen or fourteen hours a day." Marino delivered packages from nine in the morning until late at night. After that, he still had to go back to the warehouse. Often, he wasn't home until 11 pm.

But while some companies achieved record sales during the pandemic, others saw demand plummet and needed fewer employees. Marino is unfazed by this. Like many other digital day labourers, he simply moves on from job to job; the platform sector offers enough.

Before the pandemic, Marino was employed by a subcontractor of a well-known online on-demand ride service. He only worked at night because

of the extra night pay. He often had long waiting times between customers. At the same time, the subcontractor gave him a quota of trips he had to achieve. This also resulted in much too long working hours. During this time, Marino slept very little. He has small children who demand attention in the morning. "Working at night was bad for family life. I was like a zombie because I was always so tired."

Insomnia, attention problems and fewer social contacts: the problems of night and evening work are well known, and digital platform workers also suffer from them. But they also often work precariously, often in several jobs—and not infrequently without a night-work bonus: if they do not reach the allotted goal for the day, the work drags on into the night.

So, while some people save their evening and night's rest by ordering food or doing their shopping online, the burden of carrying out these tasks is borne by digital labourers who give up their night's rest for the job. In the smart city, some people sleep while others work for them.[1]

Fig. 7.1: Broken app-driven mobility machines. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.2: Lieferando driver in Neukölln at dusk. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

1 That some work at night so that others can sleep is nothing new and is part of a historical genealogy of night work in the city (see MacQuarie's article in this book). In the case of app-controlled labour, however, existing inequalities in night work are exacerbated by GPS tracking and real-time control of workers in the nighttime urban space.

Fig. 7.3: Escooters under the stars at the Brandenburg Gate. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.4: "Hallo Berlin": Platform Labour as Arival Infrastructures. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.5: Saving Time: Three in one go. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.6: Intersections: Collecting Escooter in the parcel service van. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.7: Old and New: Midnight at Gendarmenmarkt. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.8: So fast, almost invisible. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.9: Night worker: Solitude of the night. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

Fig. 7.10: Gamification? Items are collected in the city. Photo by Laura-Solmaz Litschel.

II

Cultural Narratives and Experiences of the Diverse Urban Nightlife

8. Pandemic Dusks

Derek Pardue

Abstract: This essay departs from shared experience while conducting anthropological fieldwork during the Covid-19 pandemic in Lisbon with Luso-African "migrant" communities as part of a collaborative research project on the urban night. The prose purposefully moves in between theoretical reflections and ethnographic fiction. Images are inserted as connotative markers rather than denotative information. In particular, I draw attention to the dusk as an atmosphere that significantly frames human interaction through a recalibration of the senses.

Keywords: Narrative, Night, Lisbon, Migration, Sensorial landscapes

During the initial waves of the Covid-19 pandemic I conducted anthropological fieldwork in Aarhus, Denmark and Lisbon, Portugal as part of the collaborative NITE project on migrant presence in European cities at night. I was fortunate to circulate somewhat freely in Aarhus, my current city of residence, and to travel to Portugal. Urban governance in Aarhus and Lisbon varied significantly as it did across the globe. In this milieu of nocturnal curfews and vigilante citizen health monitors, the dusk, that odd time-space bridging the "day" and the "night," became particularly meaningful.

Faint acquaintances and even complete strangers opened up to me. Some, anyway. We confided in each other, remembering how certain neighbourhoods were during our youth as the sun set and day transitioned into night. We reassembled parts of our respective cities and showed them to each other, drawing comparisons and contrasts. Not so much in a spirit of analysis but rather to cultivate a personal relationship. Perhaps. Even if ephemeral, forming and fragmenting, the sharing was worth it.

The milieu of dusk occasionally creates an "affective atmosphere" (Anderson 2009), in which social, emotive presences or intensities are felt beyond

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH08

Fig. 8.1: Side of building in Lisbon, November 2020. Photo by Derek Pardue.

what we as individuals say or express as self.[1] Dusk as transition, dusk as inter-subjective becoming. Dusk as an atmospheric frame.

My interlocutors and I began to lose sight of each other as dusk wore on and we relied more on stories and performance, e.g., vocal tonalities and sound effects, to convey our messages. We seemed to listen more acutely to each other but also to the surrounding urban ecologies of creatures, wind and the occasional passing bus. Darknesses are not all the same. Other sensorial presences affect the meaning of a particular dark or darkening scene. Atmospheric signs. A "prelude to knowledge" (Dufrenne 1973, 183). As Tim Edensor wrote, "darkness can also inculcate a sense of mystery, profundity, and speculation, in which the process of trying to see and feel your way through space gives rise to unfamiliar, unbidden thoughts and fantasies" (Edensor 2017, 211).

1 "Intensities that are only imperfectly housed in the proper names we give to emotions (hope, fear and so on). I will argue that it is the very ambiguity of affective atmospheres—between presence and absence, between subject and object/subject and between the definite and indefinite—that enable us to reflect on affective experience as occurring beyond, around, and alongside the formation of subjectivity." (Anderson 2009, 77).

Fig. 8.2: Lisbon street, November 2020. Photo by Derek Pardue.

And it seems to me that this "prelude" was sensorially so rich, an epistemology of emotions. A fading light that was a qualitatively different hue. A singe of crispness in the air when the heat of the sun starts to lose traction. I touch my face, as if my features were somehow now changed. I check myself. Others do, too, as we pass each other on the street, stand waiting for public transportation or steal furtive glances, increasingly nervous, inside elevators worried about the virus.

Yet, I struggled and continue to struggle with representation. I retreat to literature in search of a turn of a phrase and confront head on the impossible task of translating such an atmosphere. It is not that the "content" of our dusk encounters was so profound but rather that the synaesthetic possibilities of the scene felt new and generative. The pandemic dusk meetings became my routinized Aleph moment.[2] A regular, dim glow of knowledge.

And some of these stories/memories attach themselves to urban infrastructure, like graffiti tags on an apartment building, scratches on an elevator mirror or fresh exhaust from an unexpected passing bus limited to night schedules. Novelist Haruki Murakami in *After Dark* writes, "6:52AM—Cars trying to enter the city have already started lining up at the tollbooths of

2 See Jorge Luis Borges, "The Aleph," in *The Aleph and Other Stories*, trans. Andrew Hurley. New York: Penguin, 2004 (orig. 1945), 118–33.

Fig. 8.3: Amadora, Lisbon metro area, December 2020. Photo by Derek Pardue.

Fig. 8.4: Night walk in Lisbon, December 2020. Photo by Derek Pardue.

the Metropolitan Expressway. Chilly shadows still lie over many streets sandwiched between tall buildings. Most of last night's memories remains there untouched" (189). Murakami's characters navigate dawn, the flipside of dusk, but the queer instability of a cohesive self is remarkably similar: "The new day is almost here, but the old one is still dragging its heavy skirts. Just as ocean water and river water struggle against each other at a river mouth, the old time and the new time clash and blend. Takahashi is unable to tell for sure which side—which world—contains his centre of gravity" (173).

Like Takahashi, my interlocutors and I were often confused as to where we stood. An affinity with darkness but preoccupied with the obligations of the day. Darkness afforded an opening to do "self-care," a call to individually and collectively work through memories of place, of belonging. Dusk issued such a promise.

In the periphery neighbourhoods of the greater Lisbon metro area, police squad cars made periodic rounds to make sure the black and brown communities of Cape Verdeans, Angolans, Bangladeshis, Indians and Brazilians were following the curfew laws in the name of public health during such a serious crisis, while in the lucrative downtown areas (mostly) white Portuguese and Global North tourists lingered in public spaces. Well, as long as they continued to consume alcohol. The hygienic challenges of food preparation hindered even the wealthy and posh.

Fictive Kin

Primo Vibe never invited me into his home, located somewhere in the municipality of Amadora. I don't know his given name. It doesn't matter, really, he was always there, referred to as cousin or uncle or brother, but conventionally speaking, alone, with his biological family spread out across the Cape Verdean diaspora of Boston, Paris, Rotterdam and Madeira. A relatively common story in Amadora, which sits adjacent to the northwest of Lisbon, and whose residents constitute one of the most important landmark reference points of Cape Verdean and, more generally, Luso-Afro communities in Portugal since the 1960s.

Primo Vibe's quiet demeaner and introverted personality lent themselves well to photography and video production. He mumbled a question or a light provocation to rapper or Black entrepreneur acquaintances and stood back with his trusty camera. Primo V was never in a hurry, often fumbling through personal introductions. He was not a talent manager, certainly not the typical networking hype man. Even so, Primo V knew everyone in the

Fig. 8.5: Barreiro, southside of Tagus River, Lisbon metro area, November 2020. Photo by Derek Pardue.

Fig. 8.6: Amadora, Lisbon metro area, December 2020. Photo by Derek Pardue.

scene and was willing to let whatever unfold. No script, just vibes. He was everyone's friend, had no beef with any of the local hip hop artists, and was content to let others speak.

The mystery behind Primo Vibe's home was never revealed, but it did provide motivation for dusk and nocturnal pandemic encounters. "Modi bu sta?" Primo Vibe greeted me just outside the Amadora train station. His patience with my Cape Verdean Creole (*kriolu*) always impressed me. I felt closer to him because of that. There seemed to be an intention there, of protection, a kind of education, a stewardship of international relations.

"Hey, I'm glad we could meet. You know, given the pandemic and the curfew and everything, it's not easy," I said, trying to show my appreciation.

"Yeah, of course, there are no shows, and the police come around more and more, especially around 9 p.m. to make sure we are all in order. They want to make sure our little cafés are closing shop before the curfew," Primo V explained.

He continued, "we can go to one of the cafés up near Boba (social housing project, Casal da Boba), if you want." A grin came across Primo Vibe's face, "sure, we can do that, but also there are other places, a bit out of sight, where people get together and chat. We can do that, too." He gave a chuckle, wheezing slightly, as if he were leaking or revving up.

Dusk and marginal public spaces became more comfortable for us to meet and chat and hang out with local men. Most were patient and initially hesitant about opening up. Silences created anxieties and an eventual calm. An oscillation between tranquil breezes and gusts of rain pushed our moods this way and that. Pandemic dusks.

Such an experience, briefly sketched above, suggests an alternative approach to representation. Meanings through narratives or what Carol Levine described as the qualitative "affordances" (Levine 2015) of forms. What I partially know about dusk can be described and interpreted in sociological terms, but such an exegesis would fail to animate the sensorial, atmospheric qualities essential to dusk. The textual genres of creative non-fiction and ethnographic fiction juxtaposed with images, in a connotative rather than denotative fashion (Pardue 2019), lend themselves more to the task at hand of a "reactivating of sensuousness" (Berardi 2012; see also Görlich 2021).

Bibliography

Anderson, Ben. 2009. "Affective Atmospheres." *Emotion, Space and Society* 2 (2): 77–81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2009.08.005.

Berardi, Franco. 2012. *The Uprising: On Poetry and Finance.* Boston: MIT Press Books.

Borges, Jorge Luis. 2004 [1945]. "The Aleph." In *The Aleph and Other Stories.* Translated by Andrew Hurley. New York: Penguin, 118–33.

Dufrenne, Mikel. 1973. *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience.* Translated by Edward S. Casey, Albert A. Anderson, Willis Domingo, and Leon Jacobson. Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology & Existential Philosophy. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Edensor, Tim. 2017. *Light to Dark: Daylight, Illumination and Gloom.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Görlich, Anne. 2021. "'I Am a Fetcher': Visual Poetry and the Monotony of Life on the Edge." *Organizational Aesthetics* 10 (1): 18–20.

Levine, Carol. 2015. *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pardue, Derek. 2019. "Connotative Memories." *Writing with Light*, Cultural Anthropology website, October 29. https://culanth.org/fieldsights/connotative-memories.

About the Author

Derek Pardue is author of *Ideologies of Marginality in Brazilian Hip Hop* (Palgrave McMillan, 2008/2011), *Cape Verde, Let's Go: Creole Rappers and Citizenship in Portugal* (University of Illinois Press 2015) and *Sobrevivendo no Inferno* (Bloomsbury 2021). He is an Associate Professor in the Global Studies Department at Aarhus University, Denmark.

9. Spaces of Night-Time Encounter: Nocturnal Politics in Global Cinema, 2018–2022

Will Straw

Abstract: In 2022, critics and scholars suggested that recent cinema had assumed a darker tone and that more films than usual were set predominantly or entirely in the night. The article explores the hypotheses that recent cinema has become "nocturnalized," drawn to use night-time settings as a means of exploring a variety of social and political concerns. It focuses on three features of recent cinema: a stylistic engagement with the look of illuminated buildings at night; an increased use of single nights as the temporal frames for film narratives; and a construction of the night as the container of horrific events of a political or social character.

Keywords: Films, Night, Narrative, Trauma, Illumination

In an overview of the 2022 Berlin International Film Festival (or Berlinale), Sandra Onana, writing in the French newspaper *Libération*, began by noting the number of films in that year's programme whose key narrative events transpired within the night: "An eclipse, wanderings in the moonlight, teenagers sneaking out of the house on tiptoe […] The German film festival gives pride of place to nocturnal movies, as if thumbing its nose at a Covid that has left night owls idle" (Onana 2022; my translation).

Onana's diagnosis of the state of festival cinema in 2022 resonated with my own sense that recent cinema has been "nocturnalized," offering up dozens of films, from a wide variety of nations and regions, whose dominant themes, styles and atmospheres have centred on the night. I borrow the notion of "nocturnalization" from the historian Craig Koslofsky, for whom it designates "the ongoing expansion of the legitimate social and symbolic

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH09

uses of the night" (Koslofsky 2011, 7). Koslovsky advances the term to describe something very different from its use here—in his work, it describes the movement of social activities, like dining and theatre going, into ever later hours of the twenty-four-hour cycle in Europe during the early modern era. I employ it here as one way of capturing the growing tendency, in so many recent films, for narratives to explore a wide range of social and political concerns by casting them as phenomena of the night.

There is nothing new about cinema's affinity for the night, of course, and it is quite possible that a statistical analysis of the titles, themes and settings of films released over the last several decades would reveal little of the expanding "nocturnalization" I am hypothesizing here. Nevertheless, by examining a corpus of several films released between 2017 and 2022, I will attempt to argue that the night has recently served to generate (or reinvigorate) stylistic figures, narrative frames and affective relationships through which social worlds are offered up for understanding. If the night is what urban theorists Jeanmougin and Giordano (2020) call a "time-space"—a temporal interval *and* a territory to be inhabited—we may see it as both a widely used popular temporal setting for films of all kinds and a terrain on which more and more films stage their engagements with the social.

I will pursue this analysis by looking at three formal or thematic features of recent filmic treatments of the night. One of these—the most minor and limited in scale—is a stylistic figure I have observed in a number of recent films: a view of the built environment at night which lingers on scenes of windows through which illuminated spaces reveal themselves. A second is a narrative device which, while it has a long history, seems to have become unusually common in recent films—the restriction of a film's temporal setting to a single night. The third and final feature to be discussed here might be seen as both thematic and allegorical. In a large number of recent films, political and personal traumas are remembered or given symbolic form as experiences of the night.

Night Windows

In the opening credit sequence of the 2021 French film *Les Olympiades* (*Paris, 13th District*) (dir. Jacques Audiard), the camera roams around the 13th arrondissement of Paris, a district distinguished by its atypical (for the inner city) clusters of tall, modern apartment buildings. The fluid mobility of this sequence has led reviewers to assume that it was shot using drones (e.g., McIntyre 2022). Filmed in black and white, these first few seconds of

Fig. 9.1: Illuminated windows. *Les Olympiades* (2021). Film still.

the film offer a frontal view of tall apartment buildings with their windows laid out in rows, some illuminated and others not (figure 9.1). While this flat wall of windows is a familiar establishing shot in urban dramas, the more common vantage point in this sequence comes as the camera appears to round the corners of these buildings. In these moments, the film peers into apartments, lit within and shot from oblique angles, such that bits of their residents' behaviours are offered up for what can feel like a voyeuristic gaze. In what has long been a clichéd device in films with urban settings (Straw 2017), the credit sequence to *Les Olympiades* concludes as the camera, seemingly having "found" the apartment from which its narrative lines will depart, enters it, moving to settle on the human figures who will become the film's central characters.

One way of describing the logic of such sequences is through an idea developed by the sociologists Rowe and Bavinton—the notion that night-time space is a field of attractors and deterrents (2011, 819). The simplest version of this system is that which distinguishes the dark or curtained window from others which are open and solicit our look at illuminated human activity. In classical versions of this sort of credit sequence, the camera's apparent search through open windows for characters and elements of narrative intrigue was meant to signal the inexhaustible capacity of the night-time city to generate stories.

The opening to *Les Olympiades* evokes this tradition—it flirts, as Deshong (2022) notes, with the "slice-of-life" tradition of urban dramas. However, its roaming camera seems more clearly voyeuristic, as if it were straining to catalogue behaviours and situations rather than simply seeking out those which might support the film's narrative. At the same time, this

opening sequence reinforces common understandings of the Olympiades neighbourhood—sometimes called “Europe’s largest Chinatown” (Ivory 2010)—as curious and exotic.

In the opening of *Les Olympiades* we cannot avoid seeing the windows of illuminated apartments as media screens of a sort, a connection reinforced in those moments in which what we view through a window is clearly a television. At the same time, the windows evoke the frames dividing panels in a comic strip, as if acknowledging the film’s own status as the adaptation of a graphic novel (by Adrian Tomine) (Deshong 2022). Less obviously, perhaps, there are ways in which the multiple windows through which life is visible transform buildings such as these into something like filing cabinets or exhibition display cases. They become containers for tableaux of standardized size, arranged in rows, in which the details of individual or familial lives are condensed.

In two other recent films, we find a roughly similar fascination with the windows of illuminated apartments. In the 2018 Romanian film *Moon Hotel Kabul* (dir. Anca Damian), the central character spends the night on his balcony, reflecting on a set of traumatic recent events in his life as a journalist. When the darkness of the night is at its fullest, we are shown multiple views of apartment buildings, shot (as in *Les Olympiades*) from oblique positions which allow us to gaze into the deep corners of individual residences. The characters whom we see play no role whatsoever in the film’s narrative. In *Hellhole* (2019; dir. Bas Devos), a film notable for its variety of stylized nocturnal settings, an extended set piece involves the camera moving around the entirety of a residential building, peering into windows and through open doors at illuminated interior spaces.

In the three examples discussed thus far, the observation of domestic spaces at night, illuminated against the dark nocturnal sky, extends far beyond any narrative function such scenes might fulfil. In other recent films, illuminated night-time windows serve as destinations for character attention or movement, but here, too, there is an excessive investment in the spectacle of brightly lit openings, as if such scenes were a fashionable aesthetic tendency of the moment. In *Médecin de Nuit* (2022; dir. Elie Wajeman), distant windows in tall, imposing apartment towers sometimes signal where the titular doctor will go, but this is not the sole purpose of these images. They also seem intended to remind us, in a film which is about personal crisis and social disintegration, that something like normal life continues, albeit far from the ground on which most of the film’s action transpires. At the same time, the alternation of illuminated and darkened windows, in series and rows, functions like a system of

"on" and "off" switches, signalling the possibility and refusal of human connection.

Single Night Narratives

I will now turn to a formal device that has been used with notable frequency in films since the mid 2010s—the single-night narrative, in which a story unfolds in the course of a single night. Such narratives have a long history, reaching back to literary and theatrical antecedents, like Edward Albee's 1962 play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. In recent years, the "circadian novel," the novel taking place in a single day, has become a recognized literary form (Higdon 1992).

The renewed popularity of single-night narratives is a curious feature of contemporary cinema. In 2021, a film critic writing in the (Luxembourg) *Quotidien* wondered why so many recent French films used the narrative frame of a single night to tell a story (Maniglia 2021). The question was sparked by the critic's viewing of *Médecin de nuit*—already discussed here—but other examples mentioned in the review included the 2012 film *Une Nuit* (*Paris by Night*) (dir. Philippe Lefebvre) and the 2020 film *Police* (*Night Shift*) (dir. Anne Fontaine), both produced in France. To these, we may add other recent French-language single-night narrative films: *La Nuit des Rois* (*The Night of the* Kings) (2020; dir. Philippe Lacôte), *La Fracture* (*The Divide*) (2021; dir. *Catherine Corsini*) and *Ma Nuit* (*My Night*) (2021; dir. Antoinette Boulat). What immediately stands out in this list is the disproportionate presence of women directors, a tendency even more striking if we extend the list of such films back in time, to include such key French-language single-night narratives as Chantal Akerman's *Toute Une Nuit* (*A Whole Night*) (1981) and Claire Denis' *Vendredi Soir* (*Friday Night*) (2002).

In the *Quotidien* review of *Médecin de Nuit*, Valentin Maniglia wondered why the single-night narrative had become such an oft-used form in recent French cinema. This was an unexpected development, Maniglia suggested, given the form's fidelity to the classical theatrical unities of time and space. These unities, the critic argued, had come with time to seem conservative, and their violation had been a key project of cinematic avant-gardes from the 1960s onwards. Maniglia's commentary raised the question of whether the single night narrative is inescapably a conservative form of storytelling, one whose appeal rests on the promise that time will always be linear, and stories will always reach resolution with night's end.

We might ask, though, whether it is possible to think of single-night narratives otherwise—as radical ways of evading the teleologies of conventional narrative. Such teleologies normally require that the narrative time of stories extend for as long as is necessary for their tensions to be resolved and their enigmas answered. Is it possible that the confinement of a film's narrative to a single night functions as a clearly artificial constraint through which the necessary incompleteness (or arbitrariness) of narrative is highlighted?

It is perhaps because the single-night narrative frame offers an arbitrary set of rules, rather than a classical fidelity to narrative logic, that it has been adopted in so many recent films. A great many of these films offer as their explicit themes the ultimate unintelligibility of social worlds or the irreconcilability of social forces. That these films are set mostly or entirely in the night removes the temptation to cast social issues in terms of a distinction between the worlds of the daytime and those of the night, such that the arrival of one will always offer a solution to the problems of the other. When the night is all that there is—except, perhaps, for those brief moments at the arrival of dawn, when narrative has already run its course—then it must serve as the exclusive terrain on which battles will be fought and mysteries solved. If there is a radicality to the single-night narrative, then, it resides in the ways it casts so many social issues as features of an inescapable present.

In an earlier essay on single-night narratives in film, borrowing from the work of literary scholar Roy R. Male (1979), I suggested that we might divide such narratives into their cloistral and their picaresque variants (Straw 2015). The difference between them lay in the varying ways in which they structured the encounters which are a feature of most narratives transpiring in a single night. The cloistral narrative, I suggested, compressed social diversity within a group of people held in a specific space, like a house or bar, or in social institutions like hospitals or prisons. The picaresque single-night narrative, in contrast, extended this diversity in time and space, by following a central character through a series of encounters which were spread out over the night.

With time, I have become less convinced that these terms offer the wide applicability needed to cover the range of variations one finds within recent single-night narratives in cinema. The label c*loistral* is highly dependent on a notion of architecturally bounded space and thus inefficient as a term for describing large-scale, interconnected and porous places like hospital complexes. *Picaresque*, with its historical residues of roguish meandering, is a misleading (even frivolous) term for those narratives of movement which involve purposeful (even desperate) encounters with a series of repressive

authorities or social institutions. In place of these terms, I will speak of *compressive* narratives to describe those forms of storytelling which gather up different forms of diversity within a shared setting. *Extensive* will be used to describe stories in which encounters with various social others are stretched and scattered along an unfolding journey.

Two recent French-language films clearly partake of the compressive variant of the single-night narrative. *La Nuit des Rois* (*The Night of Kings*), filmed in the Côte d'Ivoire and released in 2020, is set in a men's prison, and begins with the arrival of a new prisoner into a population divided by a complex set of differences (racial and sexual) and struggles over authority. The film quickly establishes one of the long-standing narrative projects of the single-night film, that of a task to be accomplished by night's end (figure 9.2). We find a roughly similar frame in the Canadian American horror film *Ready or Not* (2019; dir. Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett), in which a woman must survive her wedding night surrounded by members of her husband's family who seek to kill her. In the 2004 Portuguese film *Noite Escura* (*In the Darkness of the Night*) (dir. João Canijo) the owner of a sex club struggles through the night, against an array of menacing characters, to save his daughter from being taken by the Russian mafia. In the 2021 Argentinian film *Nocturna: La noche del hombre grande* (*Nocturna: Side A – The Great Old Man's Night*) (dir. Gonzalo Calzada) a frail old man must battle the accumulated demons of his 100-year life in order to arrive at the morning. Films of this sort are often marked by a certain gamification of narrative: the task imposed must be completed by a time which is clearly stated or presumed from the outset, and clues provided at different points in a film's unfolding serve to remind the viewer of the time that remains.

La Nuit des Rois borrows from the "One Thousand and One Nights" tradition of storytelling, in which an individual must tell stories and entertain an audience through the entirety of a night in order to stay alive (Stead 2013). The central character's storytelling in the film allows for flashbacks which take us, intermittently, outside of the single night of the film's narrative frame, but these detours nevertheless thicken the drama of the single night rather than dilute it. The night of storytelling is also the occasion for the prisoners assembled as his audience to renegotiate their relationships to each other and to the authorities who rule over them. In a pattern common to the compressive single-night narrative, the night becomes a time in which power is redistributed among characters and new forms of leadership are recognized.

Another example of a compressive narrative—in many ways, a purer example of the form—is *La Fracture* (*The Divide*) (2021). The entirety of

Fig. 9.2: The night of storytelling begins. *La Nuit des Rois* (2020). Film still.

this film takes place in a Parisian hospital, during the evening and night following a major Gilets Jaunes rally which had been violently crushed by the French security service. The film deploys its hospital setting as an arena of social compression. As a microcosmic space which opens onto the city around it, the hospital becomes a place of encounter for characters marked by various kinds of diversity. With bureaucratic, institutional authority weakened at night, the hospital serves as a stage on which new forms of authority—based on charisma, hitherto undervalued forms of expertise or affectual sensitivity—may reveal themselves. In the back-and-forth between political struggles transpiring outside its limits and the challenges of institutional dysfunction within, the night-time hospital becomes a terrain on which the cleavages and breakdowns suggested by the film's title are made manifest. At the same time, shifting configurations of people moving through the space of the hospital engage in moments of intermittent solidarity or generosity. In these moments, the film is able to offer images of a lost community.

In single-night narratives, the night is rendered temporal in obvious ways, as a durational sequence which the film must traverse. However, the night is also, in important ways, spatialized. The night is a world filled with its distinctive populations and marked by the sorts of intensity commonly associated with the night—those of violence and disorder, on the one hand, and expressions of unexpected kindness or comprehension, on the other. The compressive single-night narrative, with its bounded construction of time and space, is effective at capturing the thick overlaying of these intensities.

By distributing social difference along a series of encounters within the night, the extensive variant of the single-night narrative may often seem thinner in its capacity to register social conflict and dysfunction. In the

French film *Ma Nuit* (*My Night*) (2021; dir. Antoinette Boulat) we are on the familiar terrain of the heterosexual couple who, having found each other by chance, wander through the night, pulled along by the momentum of their conversation and the estheticized, sensual attractions of the night. (The model for this variant is the series of Richard Linklater's films initiated with *Before Sunrise* in 1995). There are a limited number of encounters with other people in *Ma Nuit*—with the staff of a hospital, with a homeless man looking to lay down his mattress, and, near the film's end, with the male character's roommate—but the narrative is punctuated principally by an engagement with different spaces, such as a canal, which serve as affordances for different kinds of activity. All these encounters serve as tests by which the suitability of each character for the other within a possible coupling is negotiated.

In contrast, two Iranian films by the director Ali Asgari deal with a series of encounters in a single night from which any sense of aimless pleasure-seeking is absent. Both of Asgari's films deal with risky violations of Iranian sexual morality by young people, and with the endless meetings and transactions which are necessary if their central characters are to find help while avoiding punishment. *Disappearance* (2017) is a purer form of the extensive single-night narrative, using the night as a territory for a series of visits to hospitals and medical personnel in a search for treatment. Most of the narrative of Asgari's 1922 film *Ta Farda* (*Until Tomorrow*) unfolds during a single day, in which a mother, with the help of a friend, tries to find a place to leave her baby before her parents (who are unaware of its existence) arrive for a visit from a distant location. The final third of the film takes us into a night in which encounters become ever more intense (and dangerous) and the sense of desperation is magnified. That the journeys of both films take their characters into the night suggests the interminability of the quest for justice and care.

If the night is often, as in Asgari's films, the time of an emergency to be resolved or survived, it may also take shape as the time-space of routines. The French film *Médecin de nuit*, discussed briefly in the previous section, follows a night-time doctor in Paris as he sees patients, meets up with colleagues working in the underfunded and socially conscious sector of the medical profession, attempts reconciliation with his wife, deals with an extra-marital affair and, at the same time, tries to extract himself from the danger posed by gangsters seeking to drag him deeper into the illicit sale of prescription drugs. The film is organized as a series of encounters in different spaces: the apartments of his patients, the restaurant in which he meets his progressive colleagues, the back rooms of a pharmacy in which

an illegal commerce in drugs is coordinated, and his automobile (the site of numerous key narrative moments.)

The night, in *Médecin de nuit*, is a space of rounds to be repeated, of social breakdown to be faced and of intimate worlds to be briefly entered. One effect of these rounds is that the film offers a detailed cartography of those spaces in night-time Paris in which the disintegration of any social contract is on display. Arguably, *Médecin de nuit* derives much of its force from the ways in which it is both extensive and compressive. It is, on the one hand, a film of constant movement, of encounters organized in a series, with no central location on which characters and narrative lines converge. At the same time, these encounters—through their repetition and in their narrative interconnection—fold back on each other to produce a sense of the main character's entrapment. The circular movement through various locations assumes the form, as the film moves on, of a maelstrom pulling the central character into the thickness of his entrapment. Morning, in this and similar films, rarely offers the promise of escape or resolution. Rather, it seems, the night has no end, but only a bottom, a point at which narrative predicaments have so piled up that they have become insurmountable.

The Traumatic Night

In a wide and varied set of discourses, the night functions as a metaphor for long periods of pain or repression. In his 1979 novel *Night Studies*, the African American writer Cyrus Colter invokes Martin Luther King's reference to the experience of Black Americans as a "long night of suffering," a biblical phrase first used in reference to the plight of the Jewish people (Colter 1979, 575). In this section, I am concerned with two manifestations, in recent cinema, of the tendency to imagine repressive, traumatic political situations as phenomena of the night.

The more conventional of these uses comes in films whose narratives return, sometimes compulsively, to a night of transformative violence. The phrase "the night of," in the title of the 2022 French film *La nuit du 12* (*The Night of the 12th*), borrows from the sort of questions asked of suspects in criminal trials—as in, "where were you on the night of…"—but it may also, as in the title of the Uruguayan film *La noche de 12 Anos* (*A Twelve-Year Night*) (2018; dir. Alvaro Brechner) refer to the endless darkness of political repression. In the first of these films, a murder functions as a trauma producing a set of transformations in the lives of a police force and its surrounding

community. In the second, the night is the dark tunnel of the twelve-year period of confinement and torture of a political prisoner.

This sense of a night as the wound around which memory turns structures Alice Winocur's 2022 film *Revoir Paris* (*Paris Memories*), the story of a woman who, having survived a mass murder in a Parisian bistro, revisits it in fragmented memories which slowly reconstitute the events for her. A night, thirty years earlier, which saw the violent repression of a student movement hovers around the edges of present-day family trauma in the Thai film *The Edge of Daybreak* (2021, dir. Taiki Sakpisit), whose black and white images, even when they are of the day, seem heavy with nocturnal trauma. This sense of the night as the channel through which pain is transmitted over time is clear in the short documentary feature *Lèv la tèt dann fenwarIn* (*The Billowing Night*) (2021; dir. Erika Etangsalé). The film tells the story of a man who, having been removed in in his youth from the colonial territory of La Réunion, remembers this night of terror. Memory returns as he looks out at the nocturnal lights of the French city in which he now lives, as if a nightscape were sufficient to connect him to the trauma of his youth.

Another film, the Spanish feature *Longa noite* (*Endless Night*) (2019; dir. Eloy Enciso) borrows its title from "Longa Noite de Pedra" ("long night of stone"), a poem by the Gallician poet Celso E. Ferreiro whose own title was intended to describe the lengthy period of dictatorship after the Spanish Civil War. Following that war, a man returns to his hometown, meeting those inhabitants who had been part of the horror and others who recount the terrors to which they had been subject. (The film's script is based in part on memoirs, letters and other historical documents). The film moves, several times, from day into night, the latter represented most often through moody, despair-filled scenes in forests on the edge of town (figure 9.3). If, as one festival programmer suggested, the forest functions in this film as a "container of popular history" (Picard 2023), the night, which both encloses and fills this forest, serves as an elemental holder of terrible memory.

The status of the night will vary across these films. It may be an effective container of trauma, perhaps dissolving when characters and narrative reach states of peace or clarity. Alternately, in its repetition across the 24-hour cycle, the night may serve to endlessly transport political or personal horrors across historical or personal time. This sense of the night as emblematic of an enduring political darkness is central to *A Night of Knowing Nothing*, an Indian experimental documentary film made in 2021 by Payal Kapadia. Here, the night comes to stand for the inescapable endurance of political failure and repression. The film's title casts the night as a state of ignorance,

Fig. 9.3: The forest as container of popular history. *Longa Noite* (2021). Film still.

marked by a collective paralysis and the endless repetition of behaviours incapable of bringing change.

Indeed, in the films discussed in this section, we see something like a nocturnalization of politics. The night is sometimes imagined as a tunnel (a dark, horrific passageway through history) and sometimes as a place of storage—an archive of pain or terror which disturbs the material and psychic worlds which have grown around it. If such uses of the night may be found across the histories of cinema, they have seemed unusually common in films of the last half decade.

Conclusion

In her report on the 2022 Berlin Film Festival, Sandra Onana suggested that the predominance of nocturnal settings in recent films might be seen as partial compensation for the withering of night-time experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Others have commented more broadly on the darkened visual tones of recent films, even those which are not set principally in the night. Judith Langendorff, author of a significant book on the nocturne in cinema (2021), suggested in an interview that the sombre quality of a great deal of recent cinema has much to do with a contemporary climate of socio-political despair (Berry 2022).

Other explanations of this sombre quality have suggested technological causes. In the trade magazine *Variety*, Sasha Urban (2022) quoted "digital

imaging technician" Nicholas Kay, who suggested that dark settings are preferred by present-day filmmakers seeking to avoid the sharp and clinical "perfection" of the digital image. Situations marked by darkness (whether nocturnal or not) lend themselves, Kay argued, to a visual tonality which more closely resembles that of older, chemical-based film stock. While scenes cloaked in darkness—and usually set in the night—may indeed support a digital cinematography more able to convey a melding of shapes and colours, that same cinematography is able to give us the sharply legible images of human intimacy seen through windows in illuminated apartments, of the sort found in *Les Olympiades*.

What seems clear, in all the films discussed in this chapter, is that the night has shed some of its long-time associations with the festive and the romantic. The conventional passage from day to night in cinema, across a variety of genres and historical periods, cast the passage from day to night as an augmentation of life, or as a site of mystery which compensated for daylight's blunt legibility. More and more, I want to suggest, recent films elaborate a vision of the night which treat it as a self-contained, coherent "territory." The endless nights of political trauma or social crisis one sees in so many films become meaningful not in their difference from the day but as the very ground and condition of life in the present moment.

Bibliography

Berry, Léo. 2022. "Cinéma: Pourquoi les films et series sont-ils de plus en plus sombres." *La nouvelle république.fr*, December 16. https://www.lanouvellerepublique.fr/a-la-une/cinema-pourquoi-les-films-et-series-sont-ils-de-plus-en-plus-sombres#:~:text=Dans%20les%20cin%C3%A9mas%2C%20la%20qualit%C3%A9,lorsque%20les%20sc%C3%A8nes%20sont%20sombres.&text=Depuis%20plusieurs%20ann%C3%A9es%2C%20les%20mordus,se%20passe%20%C3%A0%20l%27%C3%A9cran.

Colter, Cyrus. 1979. *Night Studies*. Chicago: Swallow Press.

Deshong, Travis. 2022. "Paris, 13th District—Jacques Audiard." In *Review Online*, April 14. https://inreviewonline.com/2022/04/14/paris-13th-district/.

Harsin, Jayson. 2018. "The Nuit Debout Movement: Communication, Politics, and the Counter-Production of 'Everynight Life'." *International Journal of Communication* 12: 1818–39.

Higdon, David Leon. 1992. "A First Census of the Circadian or One-Day Novel." *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 22 (1): 57–64.

Ivory, Gillian. 2010. "For Meals that are Merveilleux, Head to Chinatown in Paris." Toronto Star, April 27. https://www.thestar.com/life/travel/2010/04/27/for_meals_that_are_merveilleux_head_to_chinatown_in_paris.html

Jeanmougin, Hélène and Emanuele Giordano. 2020. "La nuit urbaine, un espace-temps complexe entre opportunités et inégalités." *Emulations – Revue de sciences sociales* 33: 7–18.

Koslofsky, Craig. *2011. Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Langendorff, Judith. *2021. Le nocturne et l'émergence de la couleur: cinéma et photographie*. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes.

Male, Roy R. 1979. *Enter, Mysterious Stranger: American Cloistral Fiction*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Maniglia, Valentin. 2021. "[Critique ciné] 'Médecin de nuit,' quand la ville dort." *Le Quotidien* (Luxembourg), June 27. https://lequotidien.lu/culture/critique-cine-medecin-de-nuit-quand-la-ville-dort/

McIntyre, Belle. 2022. "Film Review: Paris, 13th District (2021) Dir. Jacques Audiard." *Musée: Vanguard of Photography Culture*. April 22. https://museemagazine.com/culture/2022/4/20/film-review-paris-13th-district-2021-dir-jacques-audiard.

Onana, Sandra. 2022. "Berlinale 2022: la nuit porte merveilles." Libération, February 15. https://www.liberation.fr/culture/cinema/berlinale-2022-la-nuit-porte-merveilles-20220215_S6RXSFWYBZDFDEL676EAPTG2JY/?redirected=1&redirected=1.

Picard, Andrea. 2023. "Endless Night: Longa Noite." *Toronto International Film Festival*, online programme. https://www.tiff.net/events/endless-night.

Rowe, David and Nathaniel Bavinton. "Tender for the Night: After-dark Cultural Complexities in the Night-time Economy." *Continuum* 25 (6): 811–25.

Shaw, Robert. 2017. "Pushed to the Margins of the City: The Urban Night as a Timespace of Protest at Nuit Debout, Paris." *Political Geography* 59 (July): 117–25.

Stead, Evanghélia. 2013. "Mille et deuxième nuit." In Dictionnaire littéraire de la nuit, vol. 2, edited by Alain Montandon, 787–808. Paris: Honoré Champion Editeur.

Straw, Will. 2015. "Chrono-Urbanism and Single-Night Narratives in Film." Film Studies 12 (1): 46–56.

Straw, Will. 2017. "Cinematic Topographies and the 24-hour Cycle." In *CHRONOTOPIES: Readings and Writings on a World in Movement*, edited by Luc Gwiazdzinski, Guillaume Dervon and Olivier Klein, 32–41. Grenoble: Editions Elya.

Urban, Sasha. 2022. "Don't Adjust the Brightness: Here's Why TV and Movies Are So Dark Now." Variety, March 12. https://variety.com/2022/film/news/why-movies-so-dark-hard-to-see-bat

Filmography

Akerman, Chantal, director. *Toute Une Nuit* (*A Whole Night*). Belgium, France. 1981.
Asgari, Ali, director. *Disappearance*. Iran. 2017.
Asgari, Ali, director. *Ta Farda* (*Until Tomorrow*). Iran. 2022.
Audiard, Jacques, director. *Les Olympiades* (*Paris, 13th District*). France. 2021.
Bettinelli, Matt, and Gillett Tyler, directors. *Ready or Not*. United States, Canada. 2019.
Boulat, Antoinette, director. *Ma Nuit* (*My Night*). France. 2021.
Brechner, Alvaro, director. *La noche de 12 Anos* (*A Twelve-Year Night*). Uruguay, Spain. 2018.
Calzada, Gonzalo, director. *Nocturna: La noche del hombre grande* (*Nocturna: Side A – The Great Old Man's Night*). Argentina. 2021.
Canijo, João, director. *Noite Escura* (*In the Darkness of the Night*). Portugal. 2004.
Corsini, Catherine, director. *La Fracture* (*The Divide*). France. 2021.
Damian, Anca, director. *Moon Hotel Kabul*. Romania. 2018.
Denis, Claire, director. *Vendredi Soir* (*Friday Night*). France. 2002.
Devos, Bas, director. *Hellhole*. Belgium. 2019.
Enciso, Eloy, director. *Longa noite* (*Endless Night*). Spain. 2019.
Etangsalé, Erica, director. *Lèv la tèt dann fenwar* (*In The Billowing Night*). France, Réunion. 2021.
Fontaine, Anne, director. *Police* (*Night Shift*). France. 2020.
Kapadia, Payal, director. *A Night of Knowing Nothing*. India, France. 2021.
Lacôte, Philippe, director. *La Nuit des Rois* (*The Night of Kings*). France, Côte d'Ivoire. 2020.
Lefebvre, Philippe, director. *Une Nuit* (*Paris by Night*). France. 2012.
Moll, Dominik, director. *La nuit du 12* (*The Night of the 12th*). France. 2022.
Sakpisit, Taiki, director. *The Edge of Daybreak*. Thailand. 2021.
Wajeman, Elie, director. *Médecin de Nuit* (*The Night Doctor*). France. 2022.
Winocur, Alice, director. *Revoir Paris* (*Paris Memories*). France. 2012.

About the Author

Will Straw is James McGill Professor of Urban Media Studies at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. He is the co-editor of *Night Studies* (with Luc Gwiazdzinski and Marco Maggioli 2020) and author of over 180 articles on music, cinema, and the urban night.

10. Music within Nocturnal Constellations: A Photo Essay from Two Irish Cities

Ailbhe Kenny and Katie Young

Abstract: This chapter explores musical spaces at night as experienced by African migrant and diasporic musicians in Ireland. Through a photo essay, musicians featured in this chapter move between and across multiple musical contexts and sites, finding new, open, and sometimes experimental opportunities across urban night space. Rooted in the individual and collective experiences of night clubs, community events, open mic nights and traditional pub settings, the photographs and accompanying text draw together connections and nuanced understandings across disparate nocturnal musical spaces in the cities of Cork and Galway. Taking the musical night as our frame and photographs as our canvas, we provide aesthetic insights into how African migrant and diasporic musicians project identities over space and time at night.

Keywords: Photography, Migrant Music, Diaspora, Musical Space, African Migrants, Urban Night Space

In this photo essay, we explore musical spaces at night as experienced by musicians who identify as, or are a part of, African migrant and/or diasporic communities in Cork and Galway, Ireland. The photographs present a series of musical spaces as sites that are fluid, open, multiple and disparate. Thus, following Lefebvre, we invite the viewer to experience the images as "perceived, conceived, and lived" (2002, 369). The photographs move between individual and collective, as well as performer and audience/consumer experiences. These experiences are contextualized within night club cocktail bars, open mic nights and community events in an Irish language centre. Helen Liggett

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH10

presents urban images as encounters or constellations, and as a means to bear witness, writing, "[t]he images 'think' and the text 'shows,' both testifying on behalf of the city" (Liggett 2003, xiv). This photo essay, too, offers both visuals and text to draw together connections and aesthetic understandings of diasporic nocturnal constellations in the cities of Cork and Galway.

Over the past several years, Night Studies scholarship has increasingly drawn on experimental methodologies as a way to conceptualize night spaces in ways that expand and extend traditional scholarly engagements with nocturnal urban space. Through night walks, films, theatre work, the development of architectural scans, as well as interactive artistic projects and alternative writing outlets, scholars have drawn on a range of creative research methods that make evident the constellations of sensory experiences of sound, image, and body that emerge from night space research. For example, Nick Dunn (2023) and Nick Prior (2023) have drawn on the intersections of night walking, image, and sound recording when thinking through Manchester and Tokyo's respective nocturnal environments, while Ben Campkin (2022) engaged with London's LGBTQ+ nocturnal urban environment through the creation of a 3D scan of the historically significant Royal Vauxhall Tavern. Sara Brandellero co-produced the documentary film *Munganga* (Dos Santos Velho 2022) with Carlos Lagoeiro and Cláudia Maoli, exploring the historical relationship between theatre and night spaces in Amsterdam through audio-visual means. The recent *Urban Pamphleteer* issue "Reimagining the Urban Night" (2022) represents another experimental engagement with night space, charting experiences of the night in Europe during the Covid-19 pandemic through an interplay of graphic design, visual arts, and photography. In our work on music and nocturnal memories in Galway and Cork, we engaged with musicians' nocturnal memories of night spaces as depicted through collaborations between musicians and visual artists as part of the "Music, Memory and the Night" project (Young and Kenny 2023). This photo essay builds on the increasingly experimental nature of night scholarship as a field, engaging with the aesthetic, visual and sensory elements of nocturnal musical space in Cork and Galway through visual elements. Thus, through our images presented here, we hope to, in Derek Pardue's words, "open up a narrative flow" (Pardue 2019).

Across the five images in this chapter, the night acts as a framework, where each distinct musical space is brought together in dialogue through a shared nocturnal temporality. Just as images can reveal urban constellations (Liggett 2003), the below images reflect nocturnal constellations, drawing together interpersonal, sonic, aesthetic and lived experiences of night across (and within) urban spaces in Cork and Galway. The images offer an

avenue for thinking through the night as it is experienced in diverse ways in relation to time, space, light, shadows, movement, mobility, energy, interaction, and engagement, as well as multiple connections between people and their lived environment, including significant buildings as well as the broader surrounding urban environment. As each image intersects with the next, they reflect Nick Dunn's (2016, 10) suggestion that, "cities at night are distinct, constellations of light within shadow and tempos of spectacle that contrast with the daytime." Some of the presented images resonate too with Robert Shaw's (2014) reflection that the urban night reveals a distinct sensation, buzz, and feel; in other images, the ability to connect (and to miss connection) in nocturnal spaces parallels the thinking of scholars Sara Brandellero, Ailbhe Kenny, and Derek Pardue (2022).

The nocturnal constellations revealed in the images are connected through another significant temporal layer, as all photos were taken in January and February 2020, reflecting a capsule of time just prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. In this way, images capture events and night spaces of significance to diverse African diasporic creative communities living in Galway and Cork prior to the closure of all public spaces for over a year in both cities. In some instances, these spaces and/or events never reopened, or have been reimagined in different capacities and/or in new spaces and venues.

Fig. 10.1: Viybz event. Rappers, hip hop artists and DJs perform in an expansive, multi-level space; this space used to be a cinema in the form of the Pavilion building in Cork (and following the closure of Dali during the pandemic, the space has now reopened as a renovated cinema space). The sunken dance floor bridges the DJ booth on stage and the bar above. Copyright: Katie Young.

Fig. 10.2: Touché performs at Róisín Dubh for the "Save Theo" fundraiser in January 2020, an event protesting the deportation order for Theo, a musician and rapper in the Galway community. With the stage in the corner of the downstairs portion of this famous Galway music venue and pub, the crowd forms a semi-circle facing the stage as Theo raps and talks about his experiences living in Galway. Mixed within the crowd are other Galway-based musicians who at different points in the night have gone on stage to perform in support of Theo. Copyright: Katie Young.

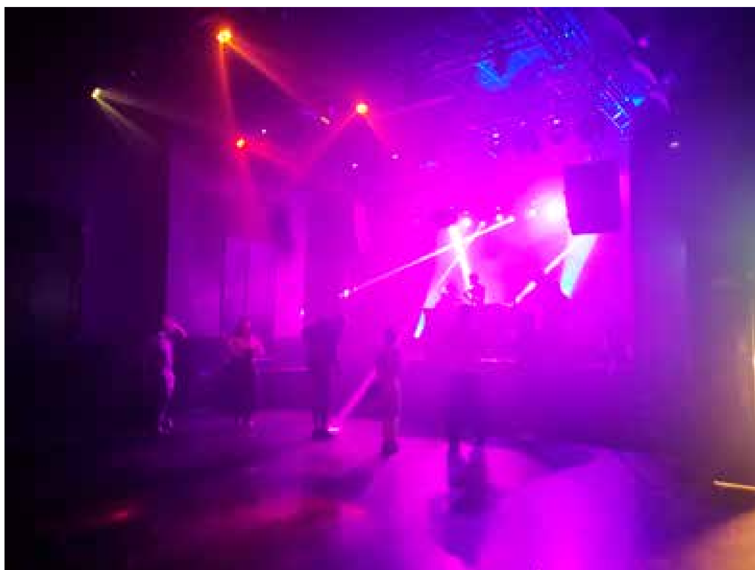


Fig. 10.3: The beginning of a Good Music night at Cyprus Avenue in Cork in January 2020. In the cold winter night, it takes some time for the crowd to arrive, yet the slow start does not deter dancers from coming onto the dance floor as the first performer sets up his DJ gear in order to warm up for subsequent performers. Later in the night, rappers arrive and perform in between DJ sets, as the dance floor expands with night revellers. Copyright: Katie Young.

Fig. 10.4: A community in motion at an AfroMusic Night at Áras na nGael in February 2020, with DJ Black MC performing his DJ set. Community members move in and out of the small venue space, dancing and engaging with Black MC and with each other. Copyright: Katie Young.

Fig. 10.5: A snapshot of the Edison cocktail bar in Cork; this small, L-shaped venue is lined by a well-lit pedestrian lane. Night walkers moving through the city pause for a drink and a chat in this intimate space while listening to DJ Safarii's set. Copyright: Katie Young.

Conclusion

It has been suggested that contemporary societies are:

> best understood through immersion in many small and situated rhythms. Big stories take their form from seemingly minor contingencies, asymmetrical encounters, and moments of indeterminacy. Landscapes show us. (Gan et al. 2017, 10)

Thus, in this photo essay we present "big stories" of migration, diaspora, identity, urban night and musical participation through the "small and situated rhythms" of varied musical nocturnal "landscapes" or "constellations" across two cities. While we have examined these spaces and actors within them through other academic texts (see Young and Kenny 2023; Kenny and Young 2022; Young 2022; Kenny 2022), we attempt here an alternative means of dissemination, interpretation and exploration through multimodal scholarship. In her photo essay documenting advertising in the outdoor spaces of Manchester, Anne Cronin states: "My camera pulls me into places. It sharpens my sense of urban temporalities" (Cronin 2011, 356). The photographs presented in this chapter were one part of our ethnographic fieldwork on the NITE project. Just like Cronin, we found that these photographs did indeed pull us into these musical night spaces in different and new ways. The photographs invite different sensibilities, responses, understandings and nuances that affectively, and aesthetically, contrast to text. In the spirit of Massey, we see these images of nocturnal musical spaces as "unfinished and always becoming" (2005, 59), where the visuals both experienced and seen are complex, blurred, intersectional and interpretive.

Bibliography

Campkin, Ben. 2022. *The Royal Vauxhall Tavern 3D-Scan*. The Royal Vauxhall Tavern.

Cronin, Anne M. 2011. "Researching Urban Space, Reflecting on Advertising: A Photo Essay." *Space and Culture* 14 (4): 356–66.

Dos Santos Velho, Francianne, director. *Munganga*. Co-produced by Sara Brandellero, Carlos Lagoeiro, and Cláudia Maioli. 2022.

Dunn, Nick. 2016. *Dark Matters: A Manifesto for the Nocturnal City*. Winchester: Zero Books.

Dunn, Nick. 2023. "Nocturnal Polyphony: Mobile Music-Making as Urban Composition." In *Sonic Signatures: Music, Migration and the City at Night*, edited by Derek Pardue, Ailbhe Kenny, and Katie Young, 67–78. Chicago: Intellect.

Gan, E., Tsing, A., Swanson, H., & Bubandt, N. 2017. "Introduction: Haunted landscapes of the Anthropocene." In *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, edited by A. Tsing, H. Swanson, E. Gan, & N. Bubandt, 1–14. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Kenny, Ailbhe and Katie Young. 2022. "'The House of the Irish': African Migrant Musicians and the Creation of Diasporic Space at Night." *Ethnomusicology Forum* 31 (3): 332–52.

Kenny, Ailbhe. 2022. "Becoming and Being a DJ: Black Female Experiences in Ireland." *Journal of Popular Music Education* 6 (2): 235–46.

Krakowska Rodrigues, Kamila, Laura-Solmaz Litschel, Derek Pardue, Jordan Rowe, and Katie Young, eds. 2022. *Reimagining the Nights: Urban Pamphleteer (9)*. London: UCL Urban Laboratory.

Lefebvre, Henri. 2002. *Critique of Everyday Life Vol 2: Foundations for a Sociology of the Everyday*. London and New York: Verso.

Liggett, Helen. 2003. *Urban Encounters*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Massey, Doreen. 2005. *For Space*. London: Sage.

Pardue, Derek. 2019. "Connotative Memories." *Writing with Light*, Cultural Anthropology website, October 29. https://culanth.org/fieldsights/connotative-memories.

Prior, Nick. 2023. "Tokyo After Hours." In *Sonic Signatures: Music, Migration and the City at Night*, edited by Derek Pardue, Ailbhe Kenny, and Katie Young, 79–82. Chicago: Intellect.

Shaw, Robert. 2014. "Beyond Night-Time Economy: Affective Atmospheres of the Urban Night." *Geoforum* 51: 87–95.

Young, Katie and Ailbhe Kenny. 2023. "Music, Memory and Migration at Night: Relational Ways of Knowing through Arts-Based Collaborations." In *Sonic Signatures: Music, Migration and the City at Night*, edited by Derek Pardue, Ailbhe Kenny, and Katie Young, 19–37. Chicago: Intellect.

Young, Katie. 2022. "Producing Locality at Night: From Lagos Hometown Meetings to Galway's G Afro Vibez." *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture* 13 (1): 11–26.

About the Authors

Ailbhe Kenny is Associate Professor of Music Education at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Ireland. She is a Fulbright Scholar, EURIAS fellow, Irish Research Council Laureate and holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge.

Katie Young is Assistant Professor of Cultural Geography in the School of Irish Studies at Concordia University, Canada. Katie has conducted research in Ghana, Ireland and Canada, and has published in a range of journals and edited volumes.

11. (De)migrant(izing) Music Nights: Intergenerational Cultural Flows and Transnational Belonging in the Rotterdam Cabo Verdean Diaspora

Seger Kersbergen and Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues

Abstract: Music has inspired physical and symbolic gatherings within the Rotterdam Cabo Verdean community and between the Rotterdam diaspora, Cabo Verde, and other Cabo Verdean communities worldwide. We analyse this multi-directional, multi-situated, and intergenerational identity negotiation through recent scholarly debates on the demigrantization of public discourses and Migration Studies (Dahinden 2016). This work highlights the multiple night and music scenes, performers, and organisers we came across during our ethnographic and co-creative research within the HERA-funded project "Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe" (NITE). The nocturnal cultural scenes, whether young crowds dancing, cultural-religious festivals, or small-scale music performances, showcase a complex web of spatial and cultural configurations, blending inside and outside, local and diasporic, traditional and contemporary elements.

Keywords: Demigrantization, Cabo Verdean Community, Night Culture, Rotterdam Diaspora

Rotterdam hosts the third biggest Cabo Verdean diaspora in the world, after Boston and Lisbon, and has become a cradle for the global development of Cabo Verdean music. Played, sung, listened to, and danced by night in both the public and private sphere, music has stirred physical and symbolic movements of getting together within the Rotterdam community as well as between the Rotterdam diaspora, Cabo Verde and other Cabo Verdean

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH11

communities across the world. Ethnographic research and cultural analysis of night music events and their representations—that we carried out within the HERA-funded project "Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe" (NITE)—have unveiled how music serves as a crucial means of cultivating intergenerational memory and cultural exchange. Music events and productions are, in fact, integrated into the structure of the nocturnal city, through a bottom-up dynamic of diasporic place-making that challenges essentializing identity categorizations emerging within the dominant identity frameworks centred around notions of national and ethnic belonging. This lived multisensorial experience of music-making offers a fertile ground to explore how connections to the city, its spaces and inhabitants transcend the binaries of home and abroad, Dutch and migrant, Rotterdammer and "newcomer." We propose to analyse this multi-directional, multi-situated and intergenerational identity negotiation through the lens of recent scholarly debates on the need for demigrantization of wider public discourses as well as of the very field of Migration Studies (Dahinden 2016).

Janine Dahinden argues that "migration and integration research runs the risk of supporting the view that migration-related difference is naturally given, even while it is trying to be critical of this paradigm" (2016, 2208). In a similar vein, Karin Wiest calls for the creation of new epistemological frameworks that could break away with migrantizing conceptions of society (2020). We argue that the case of Cabo Verdean music-making in Rotterdam is paradigmatic in their nuanced and spatially contextualized ways of engaging with the memory and heritage of Cabo Verdean music nights to recreate and reclaim their multi-situated sense of belonging to Rotterdam, the Cabo Verdean islands and other locations that crisscross the community's transnational network of (cultural) belonging. Following this premise, in our reading of a selection of music practices and representations, we probe the transgressive potential of the arts as a "medium of voice" (Pardue 2022, 125) that has the potential for uprooting the homogenizing national discourses and weaving in "new community narratives based on equality of all people" (Sievers 2021, 2).

In broadening our understanding of what happens in the after-hours, our case studies highlight the various engagements with multiple night and music scenes, performers and organizers we came across during the NITE project. In terms of studying nightlife in its more conventional sense—club nights, dance nights and music nights—this chapter starts with a discussion on the formation and development of various cultural scenes since the start of migration, revealing diverse ways of engaging with Rotterdam's superdiversity (Scholten, Crul & van Laar 2019) and cultural belonging. Our

case studies also include the annual São João festival, which brings together a variety of both traditional and modern artists with a multigenerational and multi-ethnic audience, hosted on the officially co-named Pracinha d'Quebrôd square. While São João is a community-led and collective celebration in the heart of the Delfshaven district, where Cabo Verdeans have traditionally settled, we also follow the individual trajectories of key figures in the local cultural scene. Furthermore, we close read the 2022 documentary by Nelly dos Reis, *Onde mar leva nos* (*Where the Sea Brought Us*) (co-produced by the NITE project) on the work of cultural producer Lena Évora. Inspired by her Cabo-Verdean and Dutch heritage, Évora explicitly targets different audiences within Rotterdam's diverse social weft (Krakowska Rodrigues 2022, 119), which makes up the community at night. We selected these music events and cultural representations for their strong intergenerational character on the one hand and on the other, for their multi-spatial dynamic of transiting across geographical, temporal, and affective borders.

Our reading of these cultural practices and representations is embedded in our own lived experience of conducting field research in Rotterdam and informed by the voices of our interviewees from the community. As a Polish (with a Portuguese connection) and a Dutch researcher, we entered the Cabo Verdean community in Rotterdam as outsiders, but to make the first contact, we could count on the help of our acquaintances from Rotterdam and Lisbon, the latter another important location on the map of Cabo Verdean transnational cultural networks, and often integrated in a web of music-making and music-sharing practices. Acting (together with the NITE's project leader Sara Brandellero) as co-producers of the documentary *Onde mar leva nos*, we accompanied Nelly dos Reis in different steps of its design and completion. Interweaving traditional fieldwork research with creative participatory methods, we attended various concerts, such as Lena Évora's concert filmed for said production as well as the one she co-organised to pay homage to Jacqueline Fortes, a key performer within the Cabo Verdean cultural circuit. This gave us the unique opportunity to relate to the experiences of place-making at night.

As Sonya Dias—storyteller and presenter identifying as a second-generation Cabo Verdean and Rotterdammer—argues, night is precisely the time-space of being together, a pillar for community building (Dias 2020). Despite the challenges imposed by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic with the ensuing isolation measures and curfews, we managed, at least to a certain extent, to engage with—and enjoy—the Rotterdam's *kriolu* night culture (*kriolu* refers to the language spoken in Cabo Verde and the local culture). There we could observe the multi-layered and highly

contextual ways of positioning oneself within and across the spaces that (in) form the identity of the Cabo Verdean community in this Dutch port city. This dynamic cannot be meaningfully captured either by the conceptual apparatus rooted in the naturalized notion of national and ethnic difference, or by erasing or denying the role of diasporic cultural heritage and of the lived experience of multi-situated belonging.

Community Building Through Music

Musical production and performance are deeply associated with the history of Rotterdam's Cabo Verdean diaspora, which started taking shape in the 1950s with the arrival of the first Cabo Verdean sailors. These sailors set sail for Europe's biggest port, seeking refuge from the anti-colonial struggle against the Portuguese and attracted by potential job opportunities. In this context, nocturnal music spaces have been crucial for the construction of a collective sense of self in which shared histories and experiences are embedded, and which are often transmitted through various music practices. Since the start of migration to Rotterdam, Cabo Verdeans have organized themselves musically, particularly at night. In fact, Rotterdam is where the first Cabo Verdean music label, Morabeza Records, was founded in 1965. In the following years, this was accompanied by an emergence of an extensive night scene, with bars, cafés and nightclubs frequented by Cabo Verdean workers, sailors and migrants.

Moreover, life in Rotterdam has been sung about by Cabo Verdean artists in many ways and has become a key theme in Cabo Verdean music. Songs capture the experience of migrants in the urban city, of the hardships encountered particularly in work life, but also the fun times in nightlife leisure venues. They capture not only how life took place, often illegally, with many migrants struggling to find work, but also where life took place: on ships, in cafes, bars, clubs, boarding houses, streets and squares. Critical visions of nightlife are present in the music of both male and female performers, with a special focus on the behaviour of Cabo Verdeans in various (night) spaces and the relation they should maintain vis-a-vis the receiving society. Music can in this sense become a commentary on what and who does or does not belong to a specific group or collective. In the diaspora, these processes often relate to membership and processes of belonging involving both communities related to the home country—such as the diasporic community—as well as to the receiving society and its various social groups. At the same time, music can give insight into the ways in which migrant

communities give meaning to different space-times. Recognizing that city spaces are socially produced (Lefebvre 1991) as well as acknowledging the diverse imagination of a diaspora (Brah 1996), music provides insights into how the Cabo Verdean community in Rotterdam is imagined, experienced and produced by its members, in particular in its relation to night spaces' potential for transgression, resistance and emancipation (Palmer 2000; Williams 2008).

To this day nightlife remains an integral element both within the Cabo Verdean community as well as across cultural borders. There is a large variety of events organized in the city, ranging from small-scale concerts in restaurants and bars—often involving music styles which are considered to be more traditional such as *morna* (a nostalgic and melancholic music style declared intangible immaterial heritage by UNESCO) or *coladeira* (a more festive and upbeat genre)—to large events with contemporary artists and DJs in city-centre nightlife venues. Even though cultural formats such as these are more accessible to younger generations, and are indeed actively engaged with, many still relate to music styles and events that are considered more traditional, as well as to more modern "Cabo Verdean" genres. In this sense, Cabo Verdean youths engage with Cabo Verdeanity in re-worked forms, highlighting that diasporas, borrowing from Brah, are "differentiated, heterogenous, contested spaces" (1996, 184).

In de-essentializing the notion of diasporic identity, it is important to emphasise that people do not exclusively engage with what could be considered "Cabo Verdean" cultural expressions, instead taking part in a complex web of spatial and cultural identifications. These various engagements testify to different forms of contestation and negotiation of diasporic and local identities, both contemporary and traditional, and through first and later generations. Morabeza Records' pioneering house band Voz de Cabo Verde, for example, was contracted in Rotterdam by Latin American nightclub La Bonanza in 1968. In this nightclub, a variety of music styles and crowds from various cultural backgrounds crisscrossed, while simultaneously becoming an important nocturnal meeting point for Cabo Verdeans (Kersbergen 2023). Evidence of this crisscrossing is also visible in some of Morabeza Records' productions, which showcase a variety of genres—mornas, coladeiras, but also merengues, sambas and cumbias—as well as a diverse contents, which reflect anti-colonial engagement but also commercial hits and nocturnal entertainment.

Although decades have passed since the first migrants came to Rotterdam who laid the foundation for a rich music scene, the heterogeneity of cultural engagements and belongings is still relevant for the second, third and even

fourth generation Cabo Verdeans in Rotterdam. DJ Arnaldo, interviewed in the context of the NITE project revealed that he only started DJing at Cabo Verdean parties after being asked to do so at a relative's baptism party. These, according to him, are sometimes celebrated from four in the afternoon until four in the morning: "the only moment the music is turned down is when the cake is cut" (Soares 2018). Arnaldo became familiar with traditional Cabo Verdean music at home, via his parents, but he was in fact more invested in the house-scene, which was booming in The Netherlands in the 80s and 90s. Yet over time he became a successful DJ within Rotterdam-Cabo Verdean night scenes, being part of various Cabo Verdean DJ-collectives and party-organizations. At one point in time, he decided to explore the house-scene under an alter ego, as well as being a DJ at a Rotterdam discotheque called "de Tempel." According to Arnaldo, audiences in what could be considered the "caboscene" have become younger and engage with different music, especially with genres such as afrohouse and *kuduro*. While he insists on spinning "Cabo Verdean" at events, he admits to being labelled as old-school now: "The audience has changed, it's much younger. You can't play Cabo Verdean for more than an hour at a time at a party. They still ask me for parties, people still dance in pairs, especially to quieter songs. But then you have a line-up with seventeen-year-old boys, and you see them thinking: 'huh, what is he doing here?'" Arnaldo also notices a change in the ways different nocturnal crowds engage with different genres. Whereas the Angolan genre of kizomba became popular in the Cabo scene in the eighties and nineties, it has become popularised well outside its border as a more choreographed dance-genre for aficionados. As he jokingly states, kizomba parties such as the popular "Kizomba Bash" still attract Cabo Verdeans, but they engage in different ways with this scene than the dance-aficionados: "kizomba is more like a gym night. Cabo Verdeans also go there, of course. But you can't really call it a party, people go there just to dance. Only the Cabo Verdeans order something stronger than Red Bull or water…" (Soares 2018).

The stories above reveal nuanced understandings of dynamic cultural engagements within the Cabo Verdean diaspora in Rotterdam, challenging essentialized notions of diasporic identity. It reflects the heterogeneity and contested space in which diasporic identities and cultural expressions develop, constantly evolving and being reworked over time. These observations call attention to a wider debate on how to approach the cultural dynamics of a superdiverse (Vertovec 2007) city in which cultures collide and cross, emphasising a shift in focus from migrant populations to reorienting research towards other scales, such as the neighbourhood, the city or beyond (Dahinden 2016, 2217–18). For generations after generations,

Cabo-Verdean musicians, producers, and DJs have been engaging in prolific cross-cultural dialogues negotiating their own and their audiences' belonging to the city of Rotterdam, always in relation to other spaces of lived and symbolic encounters. In this context, Cabo-Verdean music production and performance can be seen as a rhizomatic structure (Glissant 2006) that challenges the idea of rootedness on the one hand, but at the same time escapes also the (frequently romanticized) idea of rootlessness on the other. In order to meaningfully relate to the Cabo-Verdean music-making in Rotterdam, we need to study it as an integral part of the wider night scene of Rotterdam that constantly changes and is changed by its artistic production which is informed by the migration histories traversing this Dutch port's socio-cultural texture.

São João Festival

Even though over the course of the decades there have not been many Cabo-Verdean-owned nightlife venues, and parties were and are organized in rented venues across the city, there have been several spaces that have played a valuable role in bringing the community together. Throughout the entire history of migration, one place in the city has consistently remained known as a space of encounter for Cabo Verdeans in Rotterdam, the "Pracinha d'Quêbrod," translating roughly to "Square of the Broken Ones" or "Poor Man's Square" in Cabo Verdean *kriolu*. The square lies at the heart of the Delfshaven district, with a majority of the diaspora community living in and around the streets connecting to the square. The square, and the celebration of São João festival on the square, highlight the re-working of diasporic identity and how this is enfolded in place-making dynamics.

Originally named Heemraadsplein, the square was co-named Pracinha d'Quebrôd in 2001 by the then-mayor Ivo Opstelten and prominent members of the Cabo Verdean community. The square had become a place for seafarers to go to whenever they were broke, unable to find work and wanted to meet fellow Cabo Verdeans to share their misfortunes and their longing for their homeland. There are many Cabo Verdean cafés around the Nieuwe Binnenweg, a street that also passes along the square, and these also served mostly as a meeting points and outlets for men, but for those who did not have money to visit the cafés, the "Pracinha" served as their gathering space (Strooij 1996, 69). As of today, it is still considered an important community space.

São João festival is celebrated annually on the Pracinha around June 24, playing a fundamental role in gathering and reuniting Cabo Verdeans in

Rotterdam. In Christianity, Islam, and Mandaeism, São João Baptista—Saint John the Baptist—is hailed as the prophet who foresaw the birth of Jesus Christ and later baptized him. In Cabo Verde and other Portuguese-speaking countries São João is celebrated during the Festas Juninas ("June Festival"), with a mass held annually on June 24. This is a remnant of the colonial past during which Portugal imposed its religions, customs, and celebrations upon colonized populations. In Cabo Verde the celebrations have subsequently adopted elements of native religions and traditions, such as the kolá dance, described below, evidencing a rich cultural-religious syncretism.

Since the beginning of migration to the Netherlands Cabo Verdean migrants have organised São João celebrations. The first celebrations had no central organisation, and simply involved sailors and male labourers coming together on the square to play drums, the so called *tambores*, and catch up. During the development and growth of the diaspora a more diverse audience appeared, including women and children. One of the first organisers of São João in Rotterdam, Manuel Felipe Rodrigues, described the festival in a personal interview: "everyone went, they took their children, lemonade, croquets, pastries, *catchupa*, it was cultural" (2019, translation added). It was only later, in the 1980s, that the Cabo Verdean club Associação Centro Cultural ("Cultural Centre Association") started organising the celebrations in a more structured, officialised manner. One of the main members of this early Cabo Verdean association in Rotterdam, nicknamed Piduca, confirms that their goal was to preserve and maintain Cabo Verdean Culture in Rotterdam, and to activate people, get them out of their homes and bring them together, to convey knowledge about the culture and through culture (São João Rotterdam 2020).

It was only in the 2000s that a procession similar to that of Cabo Verde was added, seeking to revive and mirror elements belonging to the islands' cultural heritage. The statue of Saint John is collected at a church in Waddinxveen and brought to Rotterdam, which "refers to the ritual in Cape Verde, where the statue of the saint is also fetched from the highlands, after which it passes all the villages before being brought to its final destination, the parish" (Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Website n.d.). The recovery and reinvention of traditions is important for generations of Cabo Verdeans that seek to reaffirm their connection as a diaspora (Maffia 2008, 51). With the arrival of Saint John's statue in Rotterdam, a church service takes place. Then, the statue is carried to the Pracinha during a procession. Similar to the celebration in Cabo Verde, the statue of Saint John the Baptist is accompanied on its journey by a large crowd, a group of drummers, and a man bearing a miniature ship around his waist which he carries towards

the Heemraadsplein, symbolizing safe sailing for this traditionally seafaring people. During the traditional Kolá San Jon dance, men and women allow their bellybuttons and hips to collide in an act that symbolizes sexual fertility. The revival of traditions plays an important role for Cabo Verdeans in the diaspora, including those not born and raised in Cabo Verde, and allows them to feel connected to the culture of the islands. One could argue that the tradition in Rotterdam was in fact "produced" or "made." It did not exist previously, yet it elicits a particular imagination of the homeland by re-enacting the procession ritual. Indeed, the festivals' history underscores a bottom-up dynamic of place-making that involves the re-working of traditions as they are passed down and adapted through generations, yet locally produced and enacted around the square.

After the more traditional celebrations of São João have concluded, mainstream festival elements are introduced, with stalls, performances, music, and other activities that go on until the beginning of the night. In Rotterdam the São João Festival commemorates the religious feast day with food, culture and different kinds of performances presented in a party extending well into the evening. Very particular to the celebrations in Rotterdam, though, is São João's connection to the square, which itself has played a remarkable role as a community space over time. As such, the festival offers an opening for exploring how its connection to the urban environment and its inhabitants transcend the binaries of local and foreign, of tradition and cultural adaptations.

The variety of performances during the festival is large, including acts from both older and younger generations and cultural expressions coming from different islands. Indeed, using Brah's (1996, 183) words, "multiple journeys" configure how the diasporic community is imagined and represented throughout the day: the stage, for example, is first set for a traditional *batuko* group. *Batuko* is a call and response genre that is both a dance and an oral tradition in which women take turns to put themselves at the centre of a semi-circle and narrate everyday stories and events, often denouncing everyday violence and conditions, while the other members rhythmically hit a piece of folded cloth clamped between the legs. This tradition, which comes from the island of Santiago, was persecuted and prohibited by the Portuguese colonisers "because of its supposedly licentious dance moves" (Cidra 2018, 437). The genre found its revival after independence, including in the diaspora. As of today, Rotterdam hosts several *batuko* groups, each of which can be regularly found at Cabo Verdean cultural events. Even though the tradition specifically originates from the island of Santiago, in the diaspora it is often celebrated as something pure and authentically

Cabo Verdean and is in this sense seen more as a celebration of national identity than of an exclusively regional one.

Starkly contrasting with the traditionalism of *batuko*, São João Festival also includes third generation rap/hip-hop formations and artists, who touch on more common themes such as wealth and love, attracting a younger audience to the festival. The festival also hosts performances by artists from across the diaspora and the Netherlands, playing popular genres such as *coladeira*, *kizomba* and *funaná*. Indeed, it is the combination of all these elements that connect to Cabo Verdean culture, whether considered more traditional or modern, which "makes" São João. As organiser Jorge Lizardo mentions: "nowadays we really show it, from Américo Brito to Jacqueline Fortes, they wouldn't be together with Broederliefde or Bollebof. Well, on São João, they are!" (São João Rotterdam 2020, translation added.) Both Jacqueline Fortes and Américo Brito are accomplished artists living in Rotterdam and performing traditional *morna* and *coladeira* songs. On the other hand, Broederliefde—formed by members with Antillean, Surinamese, Cabo Verdean and Dominican backgrounds—and rapper Bollebof (born in Cabo Verde) are very much popular in the contemporary Dutch urban music scene. As such, the festival weaves in new narratives that reflect the multi-situatedness of diasporic lives and which has the potential for disturbing essentialist notions of cultural belonging. While this dynamic is visible in popular nightlife and cultural festivals such as São João, we also see these processes unfold in the trajectories of cultural producers and performers.

Onde mar leva nos

The production of a short film on the Cabo Verdean community in Rotterdam was planned as an integral part of the research process from the initial stages of the NITE's inception. While music comes to the fore as the artistic form that represents and, time and again, reproduces Cabo Verdean cultural heritage and identity, cinema and television are gradually gaining traction as visual narrative forms that allow for an affective engagement with Cabo Verdean Rotterdam. After the recognition of the impact of the Cabo Verdean community on the local cultural scene by the Rotterdam's municipality, visible for example in the funding for digitization of the Morabeza Records archive, popular TV series such as *De Hokjesman* started mapping the Cabo Verdean presence onto the city's history and contemporary social formation. Furthermore, we observe an emergence of a generation of Dutch filmmakers of Cabo Verdean descent who use cinematographic storytelling as a vehicle to reflect on their experience

of coming to terms with their heritage, the social tensions, and the city. Ivan Barbosa's *Cabo* (2012) or Edson da Conceição's shorts are prime examples of such creative rethinking of the ways in which individuals and communities position themselves as well as are positioned within identity discourses.

Following the premise that identity is a "production" which as Stuart Hall eloquently argues, "is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (1990, 222), the NITE team proposed to co-produce a short documentary to probe what aspects of Cabo Verdeanity would be selected as relevant and what kind of a narrative would emerge through a collaboration with a local filmmaker from the community. When looking for a suitable (and available) candidate to direct the movie, we came across Nelly dos Reis whose documentary *Liever Kroes* (2021) had just been nominated for the Debut Award at the Dutch Film Festival. Following online and in person brainstorming sessions between Nelly, the authors of this chapter, and project leader Sara Brandellero, four main, broadly defined themes were decided on which would orientate the sketching of the narrative plot: migration; Rotterdam; nightlife; and intergenerational differences and synergies. These four conceptual axes were the initial guidelines to allow Nelly dos Reis to take the lead in creating the story. Conscious of the implicit power relations that are still implicated in the participatory research methods (Weber 2019) in general and particularly in our case when the researchers are the budget holders, we shared our preliminary research findings, and the director had the freedom to choose the places and people to be portrayed.

Trying to strike a balance between presenting a unique, subjective story and making it representative of the complex negotiation of the sense of belonging among the different generations of Dutch Cabo Verdeans, Nelly proposed to portray the local renowned musician and cultural producer Lena Évora and engage with the artist's professional and personal trajectories. The film follows Lena's preparations for an upcoming Cabo Verdean concert while she is mourning the death of her father and reflecting on her own origins. Our research team welcomed the choice of the main character as Lena's music production invites us to rethink the naturalized categories used to define and label the music, or arts more broadly, produced by artists with a so-called "migrant background." In her previous work, which intertwines music and storytelling, Lena explicitly cherishes her Cabo Verdean heritage but also engages with her Dutch cultural identity, challenging any essentialist notion of the idea of "fatherland" (Krakowska Rodrigues 2022, 111). *Onde Mar Leva nos* introduces the musician as an ambassador of Cabo Verdean culture and a representative of the Rotterdam Cabo community.

Interestingly, the opening sequence has a clear didactic tone. The audience listens to Lena Évora who—accompanied by the rhythms of coladeira—presents a brief overview of Cabo Verde's history at the backdrop of the archipelago's map and archival footage. This audio-visual mini lecture is clearly directed to a wider audience, inscribing Cabo Verde and its (diasporic) culture into the public's geographical, historical, and socio-cultural frame of reference. Furthermore, this piece of educational storytelling is not simply informative but can be also read as a textual act of claiming a space of belonging. While Lena highlights that more Cabo Verdeans live in the US, Portugal and the Netherlands than on the islands, the images show prominent Cabo Verdeans figures from the archipelago and key moments in the country's history (e.g., the celebration of independence; or the world-renowned singer Cesária Évora) alongside photos of esteemed members of the Rotterdam-based community and of the Dutch port city itself. This mosaic of images tied together by music and Lena Évora's voiceover draws up a transnational network of relation and affect that operates in two contiguous yet opposite directions. On the one hand, it visualises the symbolic connection of the Cabo Verdean diaspora to their homeland, which is a key motif in the process of formation and mobilization of diasporic communities (Cohen 2008, 16–17), in a symbolic movement from Rotterdam back to the Cabo Verdean islands. On the other hand, the Cabo Verdean history presented in this collage becomes an integral part of the history of Rotterdam, replicating the movement of the ships sailing across the Atlantic Ocean to reach the one of the world's biggest ports. The title *Onde Mar Leva nos* (*Where the Sea Brought Us*) can be thus read both as a reference to the Cabo Verdean diasporic predicament and to Rotterdam's superdiversity (Scholten, Crul and van de Laar 2019) shaped by its maritime history.

The documentary follows Lena in her daily and nightly rhythms as she visits her mother, where they leaf through the family photo album together and recall the past; brings flowers to her father's grave in the cemetery in the Rotterdam's Crooswijk neighbourhood; goes with her husband, renowned composer and musician Toy Vieira (whose music is heard in the documentary), to a local grocery store to buy all the necessary ingredients to cook *cachupa*, the Cabo Verdean stew dish, for a group of friends invited for a dinner; or is getting ready to appear on stage. The camera literally follows Lena's footsteps, with several scenes starting with the shots of her back while walking. This perspective highlights how one's sense of belonging emerges through the lived experience of inhabiting a space and turning it into a meaningful place through the repeated acts of coming and going. In this way, the film recreates various "moments of home" which

Etemaddar, Duncan and Tucker conceptualise as the "numerous ways in which different forms of travel and mobility can allow diaspora people, families and communities to experience home in different ways and in different geographic locations" (2016, 516).

This aesthetic of movement reorientates possible readings of Lena's story as presented in the documentary from the essentializing categories of nation and homeland into a spatially oriented, multidimensional network of affect and relation. For instance, the night scenes of community building—the concert in the Cabo Verdean venue Oliveira's at the heart of Delfshaven neighbourhood and the dinner served at home for a group of close friends who share Cabo Verdean heritage and culture--can be interpreted as a sign of rootedness and longing for a faraway homeland. However, if contextualised within the porous passage between day and night and mapped onto the transnational superdiverse matrix of the city of Rotterdam, other layers of meaning emerge and other homes and other roots—or rhizomes as Glissant (2006) advocates—start taking shape within the stories of coming together at night.

Night Culture: Negotiating Identities Across and Beyond Nation and Ethnicity

When read not within but against homogenizing national discourses as Sievers proposes (2021, 2), the stories of Cabo Verdean cultural production in Rotterdam reveal particular and thought-provoking insights on identity building and belonging in a superdiverse urbanity. While it has been argued before that diasporas are paradigmatic in challenging the binary of "home" and "abroad" (Cohen 2006, 127), Cabo Verdean cultural production in the Dutch port city invites us to question how the borders engrained in the logic of migration policy and research might become reconfigured. Close reading of the selected events and representations demonstrates that these borders are not simply blurred. On the contrary, Cabo Verdean artistic scapes, like the first performances in the 1960s, the contemporary celebrations of São João or the personal and professional trajectories of key figures in the local music scene, make these borders become sharper while revealing their intrinsic fractal structure. Like the coastline analysed by the French American mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot (1983), the borders between here and there, home and abroad, migrant and local, but also day and night, are not a line as they seem at first sight. Rather, the more you zoom in, the more indentations you see. The nocturnal cultural scenes discussed

in this article, whether gathering young crowds for dancing, celebrating cultural-religious festivals or enjoying small-scale music performances, showcase a complex web of spatial and cultural configurations, highlighting the weaving of inside and outside, local and diasporic, traditional and contemporary. Cabo Verdean cultural scenes centred around nocturnal undertakings and venues constitute a central axis in the production of the *kriolu* diasporic identity. At the same time, this production operates within the diverse socio-cultural texture of the city, demigrantizing and vectorizing the dominant conceptualizations of diversity and belonging towards a multi-placed negotiation of identities across and beyond nation and ethnicity.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Nelly dos Reis for her enthusiasm to join us and carry out her cinematographic project and Lena Évora for sharing her story and for her unabated support for our research. We would also like to thank the many other organizers, artists and DJs for their valuable contacts, cooperation, and insightful interviews with the NITE project. Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues would also like to thank the members of the DIVCULT Standing Committee of the IMISCOE for the insightful discussion on demigrantization during the workshop organized by Aminata Estelle Diouf, Berndt Clavier, Carolin Müller, and Carolina Triana-Cuellar.

Bibliography

Brah, Avtar. 1996. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge.

Cidra, Rui. 2018. “Cabral, Popular Music and the Debate on Cape Verdean Creoleness.” *Postcolonial Studies* 21 (4): 433–51.

Cohen, Robin. 2008. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. London & New York: Routledge.

Dahinden, Janine. 2016. “A Plea for the ‘De-migranticization’ of Research on Migration and Integration.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39 (13): 2207–25.

Dias, Sonya. 2020. Personal interview with the NITE team, October 28, 2020. Available on: https://www.nightspace.net/.

Etemaddar, Mitra, Tara Duncan, and Hazel Tucker. 2016. “Experiencing ‘Moments of Home’ Through Diaspora Tourism and Travel.” *Tourism Geographies* 18 (5): 503–19.

Glissant, Édouard. 2006. *Poetics of Relation*. Translated by Betsy Wings. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, edited by Jonathan Rutherford, 222–37. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990.

Krakowska Rodrigues, Kamila. 2022. "Storytelling nights: Performing (Post) Memory of Cape Verdean Migration to Rotterdam." *Crossings: Journal of Migration & Culture* 13 (1): 107–21.

Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Website. "São João Baptista Rotterdam." Accessed February 1, 2022. https://www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl/en/sao-joao-bapista-rotterdam/.

Kersbergen, Seger. 2023. "Dancing Down Memory Lane: (Re)experiences of Cape Verdean Nightlife in Rotterdam." In *Sonic Signatures: Music, Migration and the City at Night*, edited by Derek Pardue, Ailbhe Kenny, and Katie Young, 111–27. Bristol: Intellect.

Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell.

Maffia, Marta. 2008. "Cape Verdeans in Argentina." In *Transnational Archipelago: Perspectives on Cape Verdean Migration and Diaspora*, edited by Luis Batalha and Jørgen Carling, 47–54. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Mandelbrot, Benoit. 1983. *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*. New York: W.H. Freeman.

Palmer, Bryan. 2000. *Cultures of Darkness: Night Travels in the Histories of Transgression*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Pardue, Derek. 2022. "Scars in the Soil." *Crossings* 13 (1): 123–39.

Rodrigues, Felipe Manuel. 2019. Personal interview with Seger Kersbergen, November 4, 2019.

São João Rotterdam. 2019. "São João Digital 2020." Facebook, October 9. https://fb.watch/aUFNNEEaRH/.

Scholten, Peter, Maurice Crul, and Paul van de Laar. 2019. "Introduction." In *Coming to Terms with Superdiversity: The Case of Rotterdam*, edited by Peter Scholten, Maurice Crul, and Paul van de Laar, 1–18. Cham: Springer/IMISCOE Research Series.

Sievers, Wiebke. 2021. "Towards Equality: Joining Forces with Arts and Culture in the Struggle for Change in Migration Societies." *Comparative Migration Studies* 9 (33): 1–9.

Soares, Arnaldo. 2018. Personal interview with Seger Kersbergen, November 3.

Strooij, Henny. 1996. "Eiland aan de Maas: de migratie- en integratiegeschiedenis van de Rotterdamse Kaapverdianen." PhD Dissertation, Utrecht University.

Vertovec, Steven. 2007. "Super-diversity and its Implications." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (6): 1024–54.

Weber, Sanne. 2019. "Participatory Visual Research with Displaced Persons: 'Listening' to Post-conflict Experiences Through the Visual." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 32 (3): 417–35.

Wiest, Karin. 2020. "Preface: Postmigrant City? Urban Migration Societies as a Starting Point for a Normative-critical Reorientation in Urban Studies." *Geographica Helvetica* 75: 1–10.

Williams, Robert. 2008. "Night Spaces: Darkness, Deterritorialization, and Social Control." *Space and Culture* 11 (4): 514–32.

About the Authors

Seger Kersbergen is a lecturer at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. His PhD focused on the Cabo-Verdean community in Rotterdam, investigating how Cabo Verdean migrants (have) navigate(d) and imagine(d) the nocturnal city of Rotterdam, producing both spaces of belonging and resistance.

Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues is an assistant professor at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. She was a co-investigator in the HERA-funded grant "Night Spaces: Migration, Culture, and Integration in Europe," and is currently leading the ERC project "City Tales: An Art-Based Participatory Framework for Studying Migration-Related Diversity."

12. Tejo Bar: A Portal for the Cosmopolitics of Musicking

Alcides J. D. Lopes

Abstract: This chapter examines transnational frequencies at *Tejo Bar*, a small live music pub in Alfama, Portugal, using data collected through participant observation from 2017 to 2019, during anthropological fieldwork in Lisbon. Three key features were determinant for scrutinizing how the nocturnal city is imagined or experienced by locals and tourists: a) the regular audience made up of musicians, artists, writers, actors, and music producers, from all over the world; b) talking aloud or clapping between songs were prohibited, with hand rubbing used instead to create a whisper-like sound; and c) the Cabo Verdean host musician was not always present, allowing anyone to join the gig. This paper analyses how this peculiar night space shaped social practices and fostered a cosmopolitics of musicking.

Keywords: Transnational Frequencies, Live Music, Nocturnal City, Local Communities, Migrants

Introduction

The twenty-first century has brought profound transformations to Portuguese society, especially for the urban population of Lisbon. The process of Portugal's accession to the European Economic Community in 1986 and its subsequent economic integration into European Union in 1992 caused profound changes in daily relations and encounters between African immigrants and Portuguese citizens. Before this period, encounters revolved around the legacy of the colonial past (Fikes 2009). Then, Cabo Verdean migrant communities were the largest in the country. They were heterogeneous, according to Saint-Maurice, not only in the degree of subjective and

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH12

objective insertion in the host society, but also in the relationship immigrant groups establish with their cultural heritage (1997, quoted in Monteiro 2009). Cabo Verdean migrant communities included administrative workers, academics, university students, workmen and their families, seamen, miners, janitors, etc. Social encounters were characterized by an intense musical and nocturnal life supported by Kriolu *cafés*, *botequins* (pubs), and private houses, like Tia Dedés' *Tá aqui tá lá*, that sold *katchupa* and fried chicken at dawn, along the Bairro de São Bento, or on the Sunday matinées at Trinas street, Campo do Ourique's neighbourhood.[1]

According to testimonies by several veteran musicians quoted in Monteiro (2009, 151–60), during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, the conditions were more favourable. There were many music groups, and it was easier to hold a party, a dancing session, or an African music festival anywhere in Lisbon; festive events were more common, and the halls were always full. Some argue that, making some money playing at Kriolu night parties was then easier than it is now. The fact is that, during the 1960s, labour immigration rules were looser in Portugal, and there was a significant increase of African migrants' communities, especially Cabo Verdeans, in the metropolitan area of Lisbon. Parties were held everywhere then because there was an audience formed by African migrants. In addition to Cabo Verdean communities, there were Angolans, Guineans, and Santomeans. Even though Portugal itself was considered to be a poor country, the motivation was different because Cabo Verdean musicians never had to work in only one place. They circulated among other European cities, and conditions were more advantageous, since each country had its own currency, which provided certain opportunities for favourable exchange rates. They travelled abroad, met other people, and still maintained contact with Portuguese musicians, as they were part of the Portuguese International Agency of Artists (Monteiro 2009).

However, recent studies have revealed that the practices and citizenship regimes adopted in post-colonial Portugal triggered processes of labour and residential segregation of African migrant populations living in Lisbon's neighbourhoods at different levels. For instance, Horta (2000, 7) informs us that before 1986, in terms of a broader framework of immigration policies, the representation of immigrant populations was largely absent from social

1 *Katchupa* is a Cabo Verdean dish which is common mainly to all the inhabited islands' rural populations in the archipelago, and diasporic communities. A corn, beans and salty pork chops-based stew that is not exclusively Cabo Verdean. In the Caatinga of Brazilian Northeast it is called *Munguzá Salgado*, *Pintado*, and in South Africa, as well as in parts of the USA, it is known as *Samp*.

and political discourse. But, following the accession of Portugal to the EU there has been a shift towards greater politicization of immigration and citizenship. This shift contributed to a reformulation of the way through which Portuguese society perceives itself in relation to those with whom the country had maintained strong cultural and linguistic ties, such as the populations from former Portuguese colonies. Hence, the presumption of being *tête-à-tête* with other European countries has prompted a social imaginary of a cultural identity that imposes a future by alienating aspects of the past (Santos 1994). North American anthropologist Kesha Fikes (2009), Portuguese ethnomusicologists Rui Cidra (2011), and Jorge Ribeiro (2012) demonstrate through their works how African migrant communities were literally pushed to the peripheral limits of the Lisbon metropolitan area, and suffered several types of educational, labour, residential, mobility and socio-economic segregation from the mid-1980s onwards.

In this chapter, I provide an autoethnography on nocturnal encounters experienced during ephemerous moments at a small live music pub named *Tejo Bar* in Lisbon, managed by a Cabo Verdean musician and his Brazilian partner Mira Fragoso. I approach the processes of musicking experienced by a broad spectrum of subjects with a background of Cabo Verdean traditional and popular music in the diaspora, considered in the context of nocturnal encounters. In this sense, I consider the Kriolu musician Jon Luz, and a place, Tejo Bar, mainly for the purpose of exploring the relational constructions of conviviality and acts of musicking that allow the individual not only to celebrate their own individuality, but most importantly, to affirm and celebrate the vital and reciprocal relationship between individual and diasporic community (Small 1998).

International Mobilities: The Transnational Archipelago's Musical Frequencies

In 2005, the first International Conference on Cabo Verdean Migration and Diaspora was hosted by the Study Centre for Social Anthropology (CEAS) in Lisbon. On that occasion, the challenging issues of identity faced by Cabo Verdean migrants due to their invisibility to the outside world were approached by different perspectives and later published as a book. In the introduction to their edited book, Norwegian human geographer Jørgen Carling and Portuguese social anthropologist Luis Batalha, contend that Cabo Verdean immigrants have often been mistaken for members of other African and Afro Latin American groups. Besides, they identify other factors

that make the Cabo Verdean case unique, such as the absence of a regional neighbourhood of countries with similar migration histories, considering that even though the West African mainland is geographically close, it is distant in terms of society and history. In other words, the archipelago is basically alone at sea, and its migrant population face a challenge of invisibility (Carling and Batalha 2008).

Similarly, Susan Hurley-Glowa (2015) considers the rich combination of European, African, Caribbean, and other maritime influences that have blended in Cabo Verdean culture in the USA, especially thanks to their music traditions. Somehow, these characteristics have built bridges for the Cabo Verdean diasporic communities to cope with the performance of identity as a process continuously negotiated in the context of everyday life. As stated above, Cabo Verdeans have been mistaken for other migrant groups in different parts of the world. This kind of mismatch provides a slot that allows members belonging to Cabo Verdean groups to transit between borders and question cultural boundaries, which in the case of music may be fluid, permeable and changeable (Koskoff 2005, quoted in Hurley-Glowa 2015). In turn, Brazilian social anthropologist Juliana Dias contends that Cabo Verdean identity has been shaped by an idea that presupposes an inherent musicality in the people, which plays a role in making the continuous and powerful migration flux possible, since immigration and emigration processes are inherent to Cabo Verdean culture and history (Dias 2008, 173). Migration experiences have been pointed out as remarkably diverse and of great contribution to the heterogeneity of diaspora in terms of class, racial identification, gender, and regional affiliation. Despite the smallness of the country, Cabo Verdean society, at home and abroad, is highly heterogeneous and migration has been a mark of collective identity (Pardue 2013).

Subsidies for a Cosmopolitics of Musicking

The term cosmopolitics combined with Christopher Small's concept of musicking, which are key to this chapter, draw from different aspects of theory related to music in relation to the culture in which it is embedded (Wolf 2001). It also depends on the linguistic dimension of musical discourse as well as other modalities of consciousness important to musical knowledge, such as the nature of verbal representations and the role metaphors play during the action of musicking (Feld 1981). Finally, considering that we are living in a world whose cosmopolitan condition is increasingly inevitable, it aims to assess the imperial necessity of constructing a common world and

accepts the inevitable character of our cosmopolitan condition as well as the irreversible fact of transnational mobilities (Sarr 2021). In this context, Tejo Bar is understood as a site of relational dimensions where moments of ambiguity, transition and change occur during mundane encounters between nationals, migrants, and tourists. Such a framework is better understood through: (a) moment-to-moment subjective experiences as a major musical encounter unfolds; (b) an environment of reconfigured conventions of social relations; and (c) the apprehension of tension between certain categories and living realities of individuals from diverse socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds (see Wolf 2001, 379).

Following Small (1998), the nature and meaning of music is not in the objects, not even in music works, but in action: in what people do. Therefore, it is only in the act of comprehending what people do, when they are part of a musical act, that we can understand the nature and function music fulfils in human life. Hence, the poetry sung in African and diasporic music, for instance, is expressed through the creative uses of metaphor, accent, understatement, sometimes malicious, playful, sensual, or even alerting. These aspects convey a message through which discursive practices are built by feeding on improvising performative resources and gestures (Döring 2015). Nonetheless, it is auspicious to realise emerging theoretical problems from the way one understands and represents the potential for affective complexity in music making such as the emotional contours experienced by individuals, and emotional textures displayed by heterogeneous communities, such as those depicted in this chapter. For there is a fundamental problem in the potential representation of musical meaning in a cultural totality that may be understood as a unified whole in some respects and not in others. Therefore, I must consider the fact that cultural categories are themselves problematic, since there is a fragile intersection of genres as they are lived and ideally represented (see Wolf 2001).

From this perspective, apart from the fact that, in the case of Tejo Bar, I had the opportunity to learn about the peculiarity of certain codes of behaviour practiced amongst the musicians, artists, and common people who were regulars at the bar, it was interesting to experience situations like a Simmelian sociological structure that appears to draw its form from different realities but nonetheless leave some features behind. Following Georg Simmel's approach on *the sociology of sociability*, innumerable forms of social life enunciate "associations with-one-another, for-one-another, in-one-another, against-one-another, and through-one-another" according to different social atmospheres. "All these associations are accompanied by a feeling for, by a satisfaction in, the very fact that one is associated

with others and that the solitariness of the individual is resolved into togetherness, a union with others" (Simmel and Hughes 1949, 255). Indeed, when light is shed on the mundane encounters promoted between artists (musicians) and tourists, for instance, the "artistic impulse" is perceived as a free-playing associative process related to "the concreteness of association as art is related to reality." Hence, despite the artists sharing of a common net or mesh of contacts and influences which are decisive to their activities, while interacting with tourists, the personal traits of amiability, cordiality, and attractiveness of all kinds determine the character of purely sociable association (Simmel and Hughes 1949, 255).

An Extra-Fieldwork Research Activity

In June 2017, and from April 11, 2018, to March 20, 2019, I carried out graduation fieldwork in the metropolitan area of Lisbon, some regions of the countryside of Portugal, and in the city of Ettelbruck in Luxembourg. Fieldwork research focused mostly on the collective mobilizations of African traditions of resilience through music and dance, which have not only provided diverse local vernacular forms of knowledge and interactions, but also, enabled new and revolutionizing ways for the cosmopolitics of hospitality practised amongst different migrant groups, citizens, and nationals in diasporic environments (Lopes 2020). Several perspectives were at work, namely comparative approaches on traditional festivities celebrated in Portugal, in the Cabo Verde Islands, and in the north-eastern regions of Brazil, which have been classified as an Intangible Cultural Heritage (Abreu 2009; Miguel and Sardo 2014; Sandroni 2005; Sandroni and Sales 2013). While living in Lisbon, I volunteered at the Cultural Association Moinho da Juventude in Amadora Municipality and carried out fieldwork with the Bairro Cova da Moura's traditional groups and residents. Most importantly, I studied the registration process of Cabo Verdean Kola San Jon festivity in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Portugal in the year 2013 (Miguel and Sardo 2014). No less important thematic issues, considering my PhD thesis, are the public use of urban space in neoliberal times and the modalities and consequences of its appropriation for social life (Lopes and Carolino 2020a). As I highlighted above, the focus on these aspects is based upon the various historical reasons and could be justified at least from two different perspectives, such as the conditions of Portugal's accession to the European Economic Community, and the booming of Lisbon for the globalized international tourism business.

While conducting fieldwork research in the metropolitan area of Lisbon, I used to go out in the evenings to wander around the touristy districts of the city where nightlife is intense. In my experience, I didn't find anything that would recall stories I have heard about African nightlife at the Bairro de São Bento. However, it was there that I learnt about the Centro Intercultura Cidade, an association where one could attend to Kriolu lessons and African traditional music sessions. I also found the Djair Sound Pub at Rua das Janelas Verdes, the B. Léza Night Club at Cais da Ribeira Nova, and finally, the small live music pub named Tejo Bar, in Alfama. Out of all these venues, the latter attracted my attention for several reasons. For instance, despite its small size, the pub provides opportunities for exposure to a diversity of artforms and cultural expressions, including painting, drawing, literature, but principally a diverse community of musicians, music and art lovers who are regulars and tourists.

Cabo Verdean Music in Lisbon

Cabo Verdean music is currently well known worldwide, mainly due to the career of the late Cesária Évora (1941–2011). But the history of Cabo Verdean music and its diasporic specificity related to recording and the subsequent construction of an artistic career abroad goes way back. Before Cesária, in the late 1930s, Luís Rendall and his group, Maria Bárbara and the *Cantadeiras* from Boa Vista Island were first introduced to Lisbon. Later, B. Léza, accompanied by Mochin de Monte, Djack Baliza, Tchuf, Djuto, among others, played in Lisbon during the *Exposição do Mundo Português* event in 1940. When the *Grupo Foclórico de Cabo Verde* returned home, B. Léza didn't leave with them. He stayed in Lisbon, where he composed *Ondas Sagradas di Tejo* (1940), performed regularly, and married a Portuguese called Maria Luisa; they had two sons (Monteiro 2009, 91). Others would follow B. Léza's footsteps, such as Marino Silva and Fernando Quejas. A decade later, Celina Pereira, Frank Mimita, and Norberto Tavares would struggle to achieve a music career in Lisbon. Renowned musician Bana arrived in Lisbon in 1972 from Rotterdam and opened the *Monte Cara* Restaurant and Disco. Then, thanks to his partnership with Luís Morais, he reactivated the group *Voz de Cabo Verde* with Paulino Vieira, Armando Tito, Toy Pires, Tito Paris, and others. By then, it is possible to acknowledge the existence of a migrant musicians' network among Cabo Verdean diasporic communities. Within this context, the country's musical genre of *funaná*, strongly associated with African culture, started to emerge on the Lisbon scene with the

release of the LP *Black Power* in 1976. Years later, before Norberto Tavares moved to the USA, he also released the solo album *Volta pa Fonti* (1979). It is commonly understood that he was the first artist to stylise *funaná*. Other music groups known at the scene were *Les Amis*, *Tulipa Negra*, and *Africa Stars*. During the 1980s, the Cabo Verdean traditional music in Lisbon was intense, with the strong presence of Bulimundo, playing *funaná*, and the *Tubarões*, led by Ildo Lobo, as the chief representatives of the São Bento neighbourhood night music scene. Cesária Évora played an important role in the process of internationalizing Cabo Verdean music. At that time, she lived in Lisbon and used to sing at Bana's restaurant. By the end of the 1980s, the appearance of Dany Silva is significant in the foundation of new music sites in Lisbon. By the 1990s, there was a renewal of the scene and a rising of female artists such as Lura, Nancy Vieira, Maria Alice, Ana Firmino and Ritinha Lobo (Monteiro 2009, 94). In the twenty-first century, deep transformations have occurred, and a renewal of generations. Currently, there is the Centro Cultural Cabo Verde, and an entire class of artists. Elida Almeida, Dino d'Santigo, Djodje, and Josslyn are representative of this new generation.

Jon Luz, born in Cabo Verde, came to Lisbon during the second half of the 1990s, following in the steps of many others. Besides managing Tejo Bar, he is a traditional string player and composer who is proud to acknowledge the importance of his early experiences accompanying, playing, and learning from traditional artists during the serenatas on the island of São Vicente. In Portugal, he pursued further education and eventually met other masters of the Cabo Verdean acoustic guitar and cavaquinho. According to Jon, the construction of a diverse set of musical complicities resulted in an album called *Farrope d' Poesia* (2006), which was well received by critics. Jon Luz performs live music, records, and develops artistic partnerships with a great variety of art professionals. For the last twenty-five years he has built a career as an instrumentalist and composer, produced several albums, performed shows and has had successful partnerships with other artists such as António Zambujo, Chico César, Mayra Andrade, Nancy Vieira, Tito Paris, and the late Sara Tavares, Ildo Lobo, Cesária Évora, and Orlando Pantera. Jon values an artistic and creative territory which is open to different subjects, he develops transdisciplinary artistic collaborations and writes music for dance choreographies, TV shows, and even for the cinema. He has been the artistic director at the Project Serenata do Intendente, produced by LARGO Residencias, since 2015. He is almost always involved in new and different projects such as *Baile Crioulo*, *Tertúlias* with several partnerships, the project "Twenty Years Rubbing Hands – Tejo Bar," and

Força Irmon (2021), an album produced during the pandemic in collaboration with Maria Alice.[2]

What is the Fuss about Tejo Bar?

One of the reasons that provides Tejo Bar with an aura of an eclectic spot for musical taste is that it is in the Alfama district, one of the oldest traditional neighbourhoods in the heart of Lisbon. The district is famous for its nocturnal life which flows through the narrow streets and alleys lined with traditional houses, churches, and small *mercearias* (shops). The picturesque views of the Tagus River, the nuances of the urban fabric, and the nightly lively atmosphere are impossible to overlook. Today, as a popular tourist destination, its vibrant nightlife is filled with many bars, restaurants, *casas de fado* (traditional Portuguese music venues), and several other attractions. However, in addition to the variety of people working together to keep the district cultural agenda alive, it takes a good community of musicians to attend to the demands from the clientele. Some are regulars, or at least they have occasionally been to Tejo Bar. The place itself is a gathering point for musicians. It has been a relational and dynamic field of negotiations and symbolic contestations, where the contents and logics inherent to music practicing undergo reconfiguration according to the specificities, qualities and the repertoire required.

Tourists, university students and professors, writers, Brazilian soap opera stars, ordinary working people, and different sorts of musicians enjoy coming to Tejo Bar. From the exquisitely disciplined musicians who would go there to play and stay for a while on a weekday, to the unconventional and experimentalist musicians who show up unexpectedly. Evidently, there are exceptional days when things are different and not everyone is allowed to enter the space, because someone, or even a celebrity, has reserved the place for their own private group of partying friends (Gonçalves 2018). Apart from these issues, the ambience of Tejo Bar is mostly filled with the pleasure of impromptu music-making and the assumption that the ability of musicking is as universal as talking (Small 1987, quoted in Döring 2015). There, musicians value flexibility and decentralization regarding repertoires, tuning, and their conception of the most varied musical arrangements.

In African diasporic culture the repressed but resistant "ancestral voices" are everywhere (Döring 2015), considering that the ancestral is also the

2 https://www.alainvachier.com/JON-LUZ-E-MARIA-ALICE/

culture that has survived until now. So, it is great to recall Mayra Andrade singing *Bia de Lulutxa*, surrounded by excellent musicians under the guidance of Jon and his cavaquinho. As it is to remember Cristina, a Portuguese singer, interpreting the classicals of *Coladeira* with an authentic kriolu accent. Many musicians and artists have played or sung there on an ordinary night out. While doing my research I tried to visit the bar regularly, at least three times a month. And, during the sessions I would ask permission to record audio moments of ordinary people's performances. At other moments I would get involved in acts of musicking myself. I enjoyed Tejo Bar so much that I became a regular and got used to playing the acoustic guitar along with some other musicians there and, eventually, sing mornas during the music sessions. One evening, as I arrived, Jon asked me to sing a morna song—"my voice's husky," he said; I was not surprised by his unpredicted attitude.[3]

The Best Item on the Menu

I visited Tejo Bar for the first time on a Thursday evening in June 2017. Following google map app's instructions on my screen, I walked up the narrow streets of Alfama from the Santa Apolonia Train Station. As I approached the address at 1 Beco do Vigário, I noticed a group of a dozen people standing across from a three-floor colonial-period residential building (figure 12.1). It was around 8 p.m. The pub wasn't open yet, and the sun was still shining. Some of the people standing outside were carrying musical instruments such as mandolins, violins, acoustic guitars, flutes, etc. I stood aside since I didn't know any of them. But, after some ten minutes, the pub's door opened, and a person came out of it. I immediately recognized Jon from afar. I started to walk towards him, and as I came closer, he did the same. After making a fuss, always smiling, hugging me, and saying loudly in Cabo Verdean Kriolu: "Oh Rapez, pá. Ma kasta d'ingrote ke bo é?", he introduced me to some of the musicians and their friends, letting them know that we were friends since our teenage years. Then, he opened the door that gives access to Tejo Bar.[4]

Soon, the group of people entered the pub. Some sat in chairs and benches by the tables and ordered glasses of wine and snacks. Others pulled their

3 https://soundcloud.com/tchida_afrikanu/mar-azul_tchida-afrikanu-jon-luz_tejobar

4 "Oh boy. Which kind of ungrateful one are you?" All translations are by the author, unless otherwise stated.

Fig. 12.1: Entrance to the Tejo Bar. Photo by Alcides Lopes.

instruments out of their cases and started to tune them as a young Brazilian musician sat by the acoustic piano and started to play an exquisite bossa nova music piece. The talented pianist's name is João Ventura. He is a well-known musician around the performing spaces of Lisbon. Inside, a medium size room is divided into two spaces. One is behind the bar counter, and another is filled with tables, chairs, and benches where musicians mix with the clientele. A small door at the back wall leads to the gender-neutral lavatory. Hanging from the wall, behind the musicians, there are plenty of plucked string instruments, such as acoustic guitars, mandolins, banjos, several types of Portuguese guitars, zithers, and lutes.

Inside the pub, the ambience is acoustic; it is rare to see the amplification of instruments. Usually, Jon welcomes people and kindly talks about the conception of *Tejo Bar.* He says that one should not go there just to watch or appreciate music. But, most importantly, to participate in the process of making music. And he would go on by saying that every attempt is worthwhile: the tap of fingers on the table, the humming of voices, and even the bouncing of heads and shoulders were paramount in the processes of musicking (Rice 2003; Nettl 2005; Seeger 2015). This is the case when pondering about the fundamental meaning and nature of music. For it is not inherent in the objects, not even in the musical works, but in action, in what people do. Small reminds us that it is only in the act of comprehending what people do when they take part in a musical act, that we are prone to understand their nature and function in human life. However, it is important to consider that when we make music, we bring relationships into existence that together model those of the wider world as we believe that they are

and that they ought to be. These relationships are indeed *experienced* rather than just learnt (Small 1998).

When comparing Tejo Bar with other Casas de Fado (Fado Houses) and Pubs along Alfama, it is impossible not to realise that the former is more intimate in its musical atmosphere (figure 12.2). First, it is a closed door-pub, meaning that, to get inside one needs to knock on the door. It is an important feature of the gesture of announcing oneself in a certain manner. Secondly, at Tejo Bar you don't expect to find a dish menu, or a chart of drinks promotions announced by a young and smiling bartender. The *main course*, par excellence, is music and good humour interspersed with a glass of wine and occasional snacks. But there is also an aura of receptiveness, the kind of mood that in Cabo Verde is known as *morabeza*. A way of establishing social relationships through good and caring relations characterized by forms of greeting and linguistic performances of local identity, as well as bodily posture, movement, facial expression, vocal timbre, intonation, etc. However, according to Jon, the power of silence and the inner peace it brings to people are the very conditions for the practicing of good music. That is why he insisted on asking people not to talk aloud during a music session. During his own performances, he would suddenly stop playing and deliver a warning. In the same manner he would persuade people not to clap their hands in-between songs, even if they had enjoyed them a lot. Rather, he would advise us to rub our hands together and feel the heat. Music sessions were usually from eight to eleven p.m. After that time, the building's residents would most likely call the police and complain about "the noise coming from the bar downstairs."

This opportunity enabled the conditions for participant observation through fieldwork research procedures, during which I sought to understand the common interests shared by the diverse people who frequented the place. And I kept asking to myself: what were they looking for? Amongst the people who are regulars to the pub, I came to understand that some are friends of Jon. But also, Tejo Bar represents a specific kind of gathering spot to spend time after musicians have played somewhere else. Sometimes they assemble earlier at the bar just to rehearse a specific part of a gig. During fieldwork, I met several Portuguese, Cabo Verdean, and Brazilian guitar and cavaquinho players and pianists; Moroccan and Brazilian percussionists; an Italian cellist; a German singer; an Australian composer and multi-instrumentalist; Spanish flamenco dancers; Argentinian traditional musicians; a Malian Korah player; and many other personalities who were directly or indirectly involved with different aspects of art and musicality.

Fig. 12.2: Night performance at the Tejo Bar. Photo by Alcides Lopes.

Transnational mobilities and international migration processes are increasingly important phenomena in contemporary humanities studies across Europe. This kind of research is relatively recent in Portugal, but the scope of the thematic proposed allows a differentiated perspective and the possibility of multiple gazes on migration, culture, and the integration processes of Cabo Verdeans in Lisbon. However, most of the studies so far published on international migration processes, which construe notions of Cabo Verdean mobilities and supposed we-identities, have generally been categorized by academics writing from institutions abroad, from outer perspectives, and with their own interests and objectives. Notwithstanding the great contribution from those studies, this work, in its turn, provides an opportunity to look at the different cultural aspects with which Cabo Verdeans identify themselves in Portugal from an insider perspective.

Interestingly, Tejo Bar doesn't figure in previous research on Cabo Verdean musical identity in Portugal published during the last two decades (see Monteiro 2009; Miguel 2010; Cidra 2011; Ribeiro 2012; Sardo 2013; Pardue 2013). The pub emerges in the current cultural scene as a unique and highly regarded musical environment mainly amongst artists, locals, and tourists. There are aspects that emerge in opposition to a common characteristic that lately has identified contemporary *Kriolu* parties. When comparing Tejo Bar to B. Leza Night Club, Djair Sound Pub and other places, the differences in how music is performed and appreciated are notable. Firstly, one must acknowledge that B. Leza is a famous spot for African live music in Lisbon. Therefore, there is a huge difference between the places' profiles, including

the fact that sometimes Jon plays at B. Léza. Secondly, although the Djair Sound Pub has a profile quite like that of performing traditional music during dinner time in sort of an intimate setting, they still preserve certain conventions and amplify musical instruments and voices, so people can still chat during the shows and clap their hands effusively when celebrating. In turn, at the Tejo Bar, as we have previously seen, there is an enactment of ritual through a kind of performance that embraces every subject in the act of musicking. There we witness the dilution of the separation of audiences and artists as well as the celebration of the different aspects of musicking.

Conclusions

The socio-political situation involving migrant populations in Lisbon has received much attention in the last decades, for many reasons. Among these, there are the negative effects of increasing tourism and gentrification, long before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, and the property speculation which has driven away entire African migrant communities to the periphery. Nonetheless, it is important to draw some inferences regarding the role played by music encounters promoted among migrants, nationals, and tourists at Tejo Bar. Historically, as noted before by Pardue (2013), Cabo Verdean *Kriolu* has been influential in shaping Portuguese society via popular culture as its people's migration experiences are remarkably diverse and contribute to a heterogeneous diaspora. Although recent studies have contended on issues of identity in post-colonial societies, unearthing notions of liminality between exclusionary cultural practices and a nostalgic past, or rootedness in neighbourhood boundaries, and the repurposing of tradition to current contexts (Pardue 2013, 114), Tejo Bar's atmosphere, in turn, suggests a cosmopolitan environment mediated by transnational frequencies. Patterns of sociability that allow the pleasure of the individual mediated through musicking to be contingent upon the joy of others; by definition, no one can have his satisfaction at the cost of contrary experiences on the part of others (Simmel and Hughes 1949).

Free access to the bar area for musical performances and the encouragement to participate collectively in the act of musicking seem contagious, producing a positive aura around the project. As a nocturnal space, the Tejo Bar music sessions shape different social practices through which people oppose established conventions in a creative way, and, instead, offer optimal opportunities for a cosmopolitics of musicking. The meanings of

performance and listening can attend to a great variety of practices. Most fundamentally, I believe that those creative practices are responding to the questions of who belongs to the transnational community and how is it made up.

Bibliography

Abreu, Regina. 2009. "A emergência do patrimônio genético e a nova configuração no campo do patrimônio." In *Memória e patrimônio: ensaios contemporâneos*, edited by Regina Abreu and Mário Chagas, 30–45. Rio de Janeiro: Lamparina Editora.

Carling, Jørgen, and Luiz Batalha. 2008. "Cape Verdean Migration and Diaspora." In *Transnational Archipelago: Perspectives on Cape Verdean Migration and Diaspora*, edited by Jørgen Carling and Luiz Batalha, 13–31. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Cidra, Rui. 2011. "Música, Poder e Diáspora: uma etnografia e história entre Santiago, Cabo Verde, e Portugal." PhD Dissertation, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa.

Dias, Juliana Braz. 2008. "Images of Emigration in Cape Verdean Music." In *Transnational Archipelago: Perspectives on Cape Verdean Migration and Diaspora*, edited by Jørgen Carling and Luiz Batalha, 173–88. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Döring, Katharina. 2015. "Memórias fractais do Samba de Roda. Patrimônio cênico-musical em voz, gesto, som e movimento." *TRANS-Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 19.

Feld, Steven. 1981. "'Flow Like a Waterfall': The Metaphors of Kaluli Musical Theory: For Carl Voegelin." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 13: 22–47. https://doi.org/10.2307/768356.

Fikes, Kesha. 2009. *Managing African Portugal: The Citizen-Migrant Distinction*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Gonçalves, Mauro. 2018. "What does Tejo Bar Have? With or Without Madonna, this is a Place to Welcome Friends." *Observador*, August 12. https://observador.pt/2018/08/12/o-que-e-que-o-bar-tejo-tem-com-ou-sem-madonna-este-e-um-sitio-para-receber-amigos/.

Horta, Ana P. B. 2000. "Constructing Otherness: Nationhood and Immigration Politics in Portuguese Post-Colonial Society." PhD Dissertation, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Simon Fraser University.

Hurley-Glowa, Susan. 2015. "Walking Between the Lines: Cape Verdean Musical Communities in North America." *The World of Music* 4 (2): 57–82.

Lopes, Alcides J. D. 2020. "Sobre Adriças e Cabrestos: o Kola San Jon de Cova da Moura e as formas resilientes da tradição na diáspora africana em Lisboa-Portugal." PhD Dissertation, Recife, Pernambuco, PPGA-UFPE.

Lopes, Alcides J. D., and Julia Carolino. 2020. "Formas Resilientes da Tradição na Diáspora Africana em Lisboa: o Kolá San Jon e o direito à cidade." *Finisterra* LV (114): 173–88.

Miguel, Ana F. L. 2010. "Kolá San Jon. Música, Dança e Identidades Cabo-Verdianas." MA Dissertation, Departamento de Comunicação e Arte. Universidade de Aveiro.

Miguel, Ana Flávia, and Susana Sardo. 2014. "Classifying Heritage by (Re)Classifying Identities: The Inclusion of Kola San Jon in the Portuguese List of Intangible Heritage." *E-Cadernos CES* 21 (June), edited by Regina Abreu and Paulo Peixoto, 52–75.

Monteiro, César A. 2009. "Campo Musical Caboverdiano na Área Metropolitana de Lisboa: protagonistas, identidades e música migrante." PhD Dissertation, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa – ISCTE-IUL, Dep. of Sociology.

Nettl, Bruno. 2005. *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

Pardue, Derek. 2013. "The Role of Creole History and Space in Cape Verdean Migration to Lisbon, Portugal." *Urban Anthropology* 42 (1/2): 95–134.

Ribeiro, Jorge C. 2012. "Inquietação, memória e afirmação no batuque: música e dança cabo-verdiana em Portugal." PhD Dissertation, Departamento de Comunicação e Arte, Universidade de Aveiro.

Rice, Timothy. 2003. "Time, Place, and Metaphor in Musical Experience and Ethnography." *Ethnomusicology* 47 (2 Spring–Summer): 151–79.

Sandroni, Carlos, and Sandro Sales, eds. 2013. *Patrimônio Cultural em Discussão: Novos Desafios Teórico-Metodológico*. Recife: Editora Universitária da UFPE.

Sandroni, Carlos. 2005. "Questões sobre o dossiê do samba de roda." *Registro e Políticas de salvaguarda

Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 1994. *Pela Mão de Alice – O Social e O Político na Pós-Modernidade*. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.

Sardo, Susana. 2013. "Etnomusicologia, música e ecologia dos saberes." *Música e Cultura* 8 (1): 66–77.

Sarr, Felwine. 2021. "Cosmopolitique de l'hospitalité / Cosmopolitics of Hospitality." In *CFFS transatlantic lecture series On Inequity and Its Contemporary Forms*, edited by Anne-Marie Bryan. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohryMod9wRw.

Seeger, Anthony. 2015. *Por que Cantam os Kĩsêdjê: uma antropologia musical de um povo amazónico*. Translated by Guilherme Werlang. São Paulo: Cosac Naify.

Simmel, Georg, and Everett C. Hughes. 1949. "The Sociology of Sociability." *The American Journal of Sociology* 55 (3): 254–61.

Small, Christopher. 1998. *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*. Hanover and London: University Press of New England/Wesleyan University Press.
Wolf, Richard K. 2001. "Emotional Dimensions of Ritual Music among the Kotas, a South Indian Tribe." *Ethnomusicology* 45 (3 Autumn): 379–422.

About the Author

Alcides J. D. Lopes aka Tchida Afrikanu holds a degree in Music and a PhD in Anthropology from the Federal University of Pernambuco. He is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Federal University of São Francisco Valley, Brazil. He teaches Cultural Anthropology and does research on the African Diaspora.

13. Night Spaces as *Terreiros*: The Case of Amsterdam's Theatre Munganga as Ground for Intercultural Citizenship

Sara Brandellero and Francianne dos Santos Velho

Abstract: This chapter focuses on Theatre Munganga, an independent arts venue in Amsterdam, as a case study to better understand how the production of night-time culture is key to intercultural citizenship within the often-polarized question of migration. It takes its cue from the definition of "night spaces" as "culturally mediated and socially produced" (Williams 2008) and the Brazilian spatial image of the *terreiro*, which translates into English as "yard," but also carries multiple and hybrid connotations related to an Afro-Brazilian history of cultural and religious resistance. Drawing on Sodré's (1988) notion of reterritorialization and Santos' (1978) notion of the roughness of space, it analyses the material and symbolic resonances of this Amsterdam theatre and the making of the co-produced documentary *Munganga* (2022).

Keywords: Urban Spaces, Night-time Cultural Spaces, Multicultural Encounters, *Terreiro*, Migration

Introduction

This chapter stems from research carried out between 2019 and 2022 as part of a three-year European collaborative research project entitled *Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe* (NITE).[1] A key hypothesis of NITE's research was that a focus on urban night-time cultural spaces can

1 Night Spaces: migration, culture and integration in Europe (NITE) was funded by the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) and European Commission 2019–2022.

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH13

provide new and productively variegated insights into the often divisive and polarizing question of migration (Albada, Hansen and Otten 2021). Following our overarching hypothesis, this chapter focuses on the Munganga Theatre, an independent Dutch-Brazilian arts venue in Amsterdam, which we take as a case study to demonstrate the value of night-time, independent cultural spaces as sites of intercultural citizenship. In our understanding of intercultural citizenship, we build on Aihwa Ong's definition of cultural citizenship as "cultural practices and beliefs produced out of negotiating the often ambivalent and contested relations with the state and its hegemonic forms" that establish who belongs where and how in a national territory (Ong 1996, 738). In this chapter, we argue that night-time cultural spaces such as Munganga facilitate the interplay of multicultural encounters, fostering intercultural awareness, skills and a sense of belonging and community in often challenging contexts of prejudice and exclusion. Spaces such as Munganga demonstrate how they are assets to fostering social inclusion and wellbeing, supporting priorities also outlined in the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme.

Founded in 1987 by husband-and-wife Carlos Lagoeiro and Cláudia Maoli, both actors and artistic directors originally from Brazil, Munganga has become an important reference in Amsterdam's independent theatre and arts venue scenes. Research into Munganga led us to reconceptualize this night-time cultural space, taking our cue from the Brazilian spatial image of the *terreiro*. This image was originally suggested by Lagoeiro during an interview in 2020, when describing his own experience of night-time cultural production. Asked to describe the significance of night-time, Lagoeiro referred to the night as a *terreiro*, a Brazilian word that literally translates into English as "yard," but that in fact carries multiple and hybrid meanings that conflate different historical temporalities. As we will discuss below, the multifarious connotations surrounding the *terreiro* relate it variably to a town square, to bare earth, cultivation, popular festivals, rituals, worship as well as open-air places of work.

In Brazil, *terreiros* also refer to the spaces where Afro-Brazilian religions such as Candomblé are practiced. These religions, despite religious freedom being enshrined in law in Brazil, have historically been stigmatized by the State, the Catholic Church and neo-Pentecostalism. Indeed, these institutions associate *terreiros* with criminality and the image of the "devil" (Silva 2021, 24). Many *terreiros* are frequently plundered and burned and forced to adopt extreme protective measures or close their doors. For example, Candomblé rituals, whose ceremonies often take place at night (De Oxalá 2012), have seen their establishments often come under attack after nightfall, and often

in the early hours of the morning (e.g. Brito and Bechara 2015). Today, the image of resistance that the *terreiro* evokes has become particularly resonant in view of the surge in Christian fundamentalism in recent decades and the increase in violence against Afro-Brazilian religious institutions. A notable increase took place during the years of the Bolsonaro government (2018–22) (Chestnut and Pinezi 2021, Cunha 2021). The many acts of violence against *terreiros* should constitute crimes against humanity or genocide (Boaz 2020).

With this historical background in mind and inspired by Lagoeiro's reflections on the nature of the *terreiro*, we argue that the *terreiro* provides a useful conceptual lens to reframe night-time cultural spaces. We take Munganga as paradigmatic of how such spaces are key sites of cultural expression fostering personal and collective memories and heritage, community solidarity and growth.

As we embarked on our research of the space and the production of the documentary, we adopted a co-creative, participatory methodology (Horvath and Carpenter 2020), creating a collaborative process between academic researchers and non-academic communities and artists in producing collective creative outputs and shared scholarship. We drew on immersion, participant observation, informal conversations, and non-structured interviews. From the start, the memories, experiences and knowledge of Munganga founders and directors Lagoeiro and Maoli were fundamental. Our research was facilitated by access to their archival material and biographies. We also harnessed their theatre production expertise for advice in directing specific scenes and editing our short documentary.

In reflecting on this experience, this chapter will begin with a brief overview of Munganga's background and its activities and will then outline some of our theoretical underpinnings. Following this, we analyse the material characteristics and symbolic resonance of the venue. We then discuss the experience of co-producing the documentary *Munganga* (2022), directed by Francianne dos Santos Velho. The close analysis of this cultural space and the spatial agencies at play in the theatre and which the documentary aimed to capture, we argue, help to illustrate the value of the image of the *terreiro* for the understanding of a range of contemporary cultural spatial practices at night.

Munganga and the Image of the *Terreiro*

Lagoeiro and Maoli initially arrived in the Netherlands in 1987 for what was intended as a short stay as part of a European theatre tour. Their short

stay turned into years. In 1987 they set up the Munganga theatre company, which specialized in innovative shows for children inspired by Brazilian indigenous and Afro-Brazilian stories, canonical literature, and personal family tales. Munganga quickly gained public and critical recognition. Named after a Brazilian word of African origin that means communicating through exuberant gestures, expressive faces, grimaces, and dance, Munganga embodied Lagoeiro and Maoli's vision of combining theatre with music, dance and puppetry (Louzada, Maoli and Lagoeiro 2012, 20–25), and reflects its ability to bridge language and cultural divides. In the 90s and '00s, the Munganga theatre company created, produced, and presented around 115 shows a year for children and young people, helped, in part, by government funding support.

From its inception, the company had its rehearsal space and warehouse on the premises of a quintessentially Dutch gable-roof building—formerly a horse-drawn tram depot—located close to the city's Vondelpark, in South Amsterdam. The building became Munganga's base when Lagoeiro and Maoli joined the squatters' occupation that had taken over its disused premises, part of a larger squatters' movement that had taken off in different Dutch cities in the 1980s in response to a growing housing crisis, increases in rent and gentrification (Van Gent 2012). In 2014, following drastic cuts in Dutch funding for the arts and culture that had started in 2008, Lagoeiro and Maoli renovated the building, which had until then only been used as the theatre company's rehearsal space, turning it into the home of Munganga, now a theatre venue in its own right (Louzada, Maoli and Lagoeiro 2012, 20–25).

With this transition, Munganga took on an additional dimension as a space hosting a wide range of music and theatre acts, as well as diverse cultural events. It is still run as a cooperative organization strongly supported by an indefatigable team of volunteers, working on the building's maintenance and various events and activities under Lagoeiro and Maoli's direction. Munganga's independent and socially engaged cultural programming reflects Lagoeiro and Maoli's vision of theatre as social practice, which is significantly influenced by the work of the radical Brazilian theatre producer and writer Augusto Boal, who saw theatre as a "weapon of liberation" (Boal 1991, 13).

The dynamic schedule of events includes many activities linked with Brazilian artistic productions, reflecting the founders' cultural background, but it is an intensely multicultural space, hosting local and international artists and an extremely diverse audience. Later in this chapter, we will go into further details about the material reality of Munganga and some of the activities run on their premises, which make it a space of significant impact in facilitating intercultural exchange and understanding. Before

we explore Munganga further, however, we turn our attention to some of the key concepts that will guide our discussion of the social and aesthetic significance of this space and its relationship with the urban night.

To do so, we start by considering an interview given by Lagoeiro in mid-2020, as the Covid-19 pandemic was raging, and the first lockdown was underway. The conceptualization of the night and its cultural spaces as a *terreiro* that we propose in this chapter stems from Lagoeiro's own perception, and it relates to other concepts of night spaces in the academic field of Night Studies. Indeed, many of the socio-cultural-religious practices in the *terreiros* take place at night and this feature invites an association of the *terreiros* with Robert Williams' conceptualization of "night spaces" as socially mediated. As Williams argues, night spaces "do not exist prior to, or apart from, human practices and the attendant social relationships that seek to appropriate, even control, the darkness in its myriad human uses and meanings" (Williams 2008, 514).

During the interview, Lagoeiro discussed the significance of the night-time hours for cultural production and interaction. Casting our minds back to 2020, we return to a time when most commercial and cultural premises were forced to close, leading many businesses to experience grave economic hardship and even ruin. Curfews and the closure of nightlife venues across the world also highlighted the importance of after-hours cultural opportunities and settings for people's mental and emotional wellbeing. In the interview, Lagoeiro defined the night in the following terms:

> The night is like a square. Like those tiny ones from a countryside village. A square that takes us back to a time when television was still a new phenomenon. A nocturnal place of meeting, exchange, knowledge, growth, frustrations and achievements. A permanent state of feeling alive. A site that allows interaction between people from diverse groups and backgrounds. Within this perspective, during concert nights, political events and theatrical performances, Munganga becomes a centre of reception and exchange of energies between people who visit it. The night is a *terreiro*, where Munganga is established as a meeting and exchange point between artists and the public.[2]

The night here conjures up images of community, of sharing and vitality. If these are initially evoked in the image of the town square as a space for conviviality, Lagoeiro's reference to the *terreiro* adds a further political and

2 Translated from Portuguese by the authors.

historical dimension to his vision of the nocturnal. In Portuguese, *terreiro* conjures a constellation of images that are associated with a history of cultural popular creativity. It can refer to a town square or a backyard of beaten earth. In many of its meanings, it implies a degree of spatial and temporal multidimensionality, sitting between the built-up and the rural environment, the open space, and the built elevations.

The association of *terreiros* with historically persecuted Afro-Brazilian cultural and religious practices, referred to above, means that they are spaces associated with a history of cultural and religious resistance and resilience (Schwarcz 2019; Silva 2021). According to Brazilian sociologist Muniz Sodré, in his acclaimed study *O terreiro e a cidade: a forma social negro-africana* (*The Terreiro and the City: the Black-African Social Formation*), in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé religion, a *terreiro* beyond a physical space is also a symbolic "reterritorialized Africa" (Sodré 2002, 55).[3] Indeed, through the practices of religious worship, dance and music there, the *terreiros* have been key sites for preserving the cultural memory of the Black diaspora. As such, the *terreiros* foster cultural and existential diversity, they are territories of social power and a reference to historical subjectivities for subaltern people in Brazil (Sodré 2002, 19). Similarly, we argue that Munganga reterritorializes Brazilian and many other migrant communities' symbolic references in Amsterdam. Spectators and artists, primarily migrants or with a migrant background, are brought together at Munganga, exchanging cultural practices and values, negotiating and recreating traditions and converging local and global dynamics and knowledge. Munganga's significance as an independent cultural space of inclusion and diversity is underpinned by the connections it has fostered to people's heritage, personal and collective memory.

This historical understanding of space aligns with conceptualization of space by Brazilian geographer Milton Santos (1929–2001). In his celebrated book *Por uma geografia nova* (1978) (*For a New Geography*) Santos conceptualized space as a "social fact," in which history was embedded in its material and symbolic fabric. In the same book, Santos developed the notion of "roughness" or, in Portuguese, *rugosidade*. According to the author, "roughness is constructed space, historical time that has been transformed into landscape, incorporated into space" (Santos [1978] 2004, 173).[4] This multidimensional theorization of space is especially penetrating for our appreciation of the reality of Munganga, in its transformation from tram depot to one of Amsterdam's most cherished independent cultural venues.

3 It is translated from the original quote in Portuguese by Francianne dos Santos Velho.

4 Literal translation from Portuguese by the authors.

Forty years on, Amsterdam is a city where challenges for independent venues such as Munganga persist to an exponentially more severe degree. The theatre's survival in the face of pressures from gentrification and cuts in government structural financial support for the arts are a testament to its resilience across time, and its history of cultural and social resistance.

Through its arts and cultural programme, Munganga is an important site where diverse intercultural dynamics provide connections for sociability as well as support beyond traditional facilities destined for migrant communities (such as reception centres), and outside the nine-to-five traditional business schedule (see also van Liempt's chapter in this volume for a discussion of the issue of "after-hours" alternative venues for people with a migration background).

When discussing "after hours" social and cultural interactions, Nick Dunn and Tim Edensor have drawn attention to the importance of darkness in facilitating individual and community self-expression. Drawing on Steidle and Werth (2013), Dunn and Edenson argue that "darkness decreases feelings of self-consciousness and freedom from scrutiny, providing conditions in which creativity is more easily inspired" (Dunn and Edensor 2020, 233). In the *terreiro* that is Munganga, we see the potential of darkness being explored in the layout and half-light of the theatre. The darkness of the night and softened contours created by the warm stage and side lightings combine to create an inviting and uninhibiting space. As we will discuss below, the "roughness" and "reterritorialization" qualities associated with the *terreiro* in Munganga broaden possibilities of creativity, belonging, and community building.

Munganga as Night Space of Memory and Belonging

Lagoeiro and Maoli share their charming and cosy stage and backstage with a host of other artists, as well as activists. With the support of a group of volunteers, Lagoeiro and Maoli have created a space where multiple narratives are brought together in concerts and plays, lectures and debates, performances, and interventions. Tickets are always sold at accessible prices, between five and twenty euros, or free of charge. The theatre space is 80 square meters, and has a bar, a piano and a projector, a stage, microphones, vintage chairs, and a dressing room. Table lamps and theatre lights create intimate overlays of light and shadow.

The "roughness" of space at Munganga is perceived in traces of the past in the materiality of the space (following Santos, [1978] 2004, 173) and

Fig. 13.1: Making-of: Carlos and Claudia give an interview at the theatre's cafe. Behind them, you can see posters of their past productions. Copyright: Thiemi Higashi 2021.

reflects the coexistence of elements of different time periods. For example, Munganga's side walls, covered in dozens of posters of past performances and events, preserve the memory of a lived space. When visitors enter the room, they are absorbed into the colourful surroundings and bold shapes of the wall decorations that tell stories of personal and collective trajectories.

The space connects different times and spaces, from the Brazilian cultural references brought alive by the props and wall decoration, to the smell and creaking of the old wooden floor and that remind us that we are in an old station for horse-drawn trams in South Amsterdam. The colourful posters from Munganga's past events, designed by Amsterdam designers Marion Hoekveld and Karen Hofstetter often in collaboration with Lagoeiro and Maoli, reference Brazilian literary works and popular traditions, which influence many of Muganga's programmed events. These include adaptations of works by canonical writers Guimarães Rosa and Raul Bopp, as well as the scary tales of Maoli's grandmother Amelia [*Munganga*, min 10:33].

The space also features Lagoeiro's puppet collection, which he created in partnership with the Brazilian visual artist Alvaro Apocalypse. Puppets are displayed around the venue, and the visibility of puppetry in Munganga demonstrates the theatre's commitment to traditional performing art forms alongside embracing new technologies and media formats. Puppet

shows continue to feature in Munganga's programme, and also appear in the documentary. Munganga's tradition of puppetry is also a way in which we might see it as a *terreiro* that bridges different cultural traditions. In fact, puppetry is an ancient form of art that has been particularly influential in the Netherlands since the eighteenth century and recalls a time when no permanent theatres existed. Instead, large gatherings watched performances in open-air public places, town squares, and fairs (Steenhoven 2013), which we can see as a kind of Dutch equivalent iteration of *terreiros*.

The space of Munganga also brings together a cultural iconography from different corners of Brazil and provides a stage for diverse cultural practices and rituals, meaning that for many of its visitors it is a memory of home as well as a space of encounter between diverse cultures and localities. Props "reterritorialize" (Sodré 2002) Brazilian traditions and cultural elements within Munganga's space. All around the venue there are gifts from friends and visitors, and objects brought to the Netherlands by Lagoeiro and Maoli themselves. For example, there is a "Bumba-Meu-Boi" ox, a black ox figure decorated with embroidery and ribbons, typical of the popular theatrical traditions of the north and northeast of Brazil. Behind the bar, we see the image of "Iemanjá," the sea goddess, an important Candomblé deity. Maoli and a seamstress friend created the red carnival banner made of recycled materials that hangs on the wall, a collaborative community practice common in carnival preparations in Brazil.

The multi-layered nature of the venue is also suggested in the opening shots of the documentary *Munganga*. Indeed, the initial sequence of the documentary situates Munganga within Amsterdam's urban context, while also capturing it as something of an in-between space nestled between the urban and the natural environment. The camera slowly roams across the brick-tiled, tree-lined Schinkelhavenstraat at night-time, capturing the lit residential windows of the neighbourhood and the front of the theatre venue softly illuminated against the darkened cityscape. The large entrance doors of the former horse-drawn tram depot prefigure Munganga's nature as a venue that proposes to be an open, democratic and welcoming space, while the illuminated, hand-drawn Munganga lettering that frames the entrance heralds its support for an artist-based, craft-inspired aesthetic and social vision. A still camera captures the theatre from behind the tree-lined curb side, an image accompanied by the sound of crickets chirping in the evening air. Soon after, the documentary cuts to a small group socializing on the pavement outside the venue, a circle of chairs laid out in the half-light of the city.

Fig. 13.2: Munganga's theatre facade. From: MUNGANGA (2022)—a documentary, copyright NITE.

Among the small group sharing a moment of conviviality are Lagoeiro and Maoli themselves, while a voice-over from Lagoeiro comments on his thoughts about the significance of night-time. The montage is tied together by Lagoeiro's words on the night as a *terreiro*: shots of a small gathering outside in the evening air, of an after-show social happening inside Munganga, a music concert and audience dancing, puppetry, and music. The documentary's incipit thus conveys Munganga's affinity with the hybrid space of the *terreiro* that Lagoeiro references. A space of meaningful connections, play, encounters and artistic creation.

During our fieldwork, we were struck by the fact that Munganga is more than a physical performance venue. Belonging is a constitutive part of its space. While we were interviewing Lagoeiro and Maoli or recording scenes outside of the showtime, we were often interrupted by spectators, neighbours, or friends of different nationalities, classes, races and genders who wanted to chat, say hello, or share materials, news or food. Moreover, Munganga's doors are usually unlocked. Passers-by stop to ask about events and the theatre venue's rental rules. Loreto Calao, a regular Munganga spectator and volunteer, says the following in an interview with the documentary *Munganga*:

> Carlos and Claudia fill the performances they put on for kids with love, and this makes us feel at home immediately. I am Spanish, and I really missed the feeling that comes from a communal space where you feel part of a family. For the last six years, we have been coming every Sunday. I always say that Munganga is our church. Every Sunday morning, we come

> here, we never miss one. The community they create makes one feel part of something bigger, a family in the diaspora [min 16:07]

Belonging here is intimately connected to the image of *comunidade-terreiro* (terreiro-community) (Sodré 2002, 171–82). For Sodré, the terreiro-community is not built in a space without conflict but in a historical space where tradition is larger than individual experiences. It is not based on race or nationality, as intended by western, fixed, universal and hegemonic identities, but in the assertion of a space of joy (Sodré 2002, 171–82). We often met Calao at Munganga during the day and night, at events directed to children and adults, debates, and live music concerts. Calao was not a passive spectator but a frequent and active contributor to Munganga's activities. She had a close relationship with Carlos and Claudia, visitors and the venue. We saw her backstage, interacting in shows, working at the bar and chatting with other community members from diverse backgrounds.

In this context, Munganga finds in the night-time a fruitful potential to foster belonging and community building through music and dance. Following Dunn and Edensor (2020), darkness can be seen to act as a kind of mask, a device that can disinhibit and provide opportunities for playful self-expression and role-play. In the documentary *Munganga*, we watch part of a samba concert by Lilian Vieira, Marijn van der Linden and Udo Demandt [min 19:11]. The warm yellow spotlight and candles create a cosy, homely environment. The samba band's vocalist, Vieira, says, "performing here at Munganga is like arriving home. The whole place embraces you."

On June 11, 2021, the Covid-19 measures determined that only twenty-five spectators could be in a venue. After a long confinement, live activities were slowly returning. We observed how the audience would gradually get involved with the show, sitting at first, and eventually being gripped by carefree excitement, standing up and dancing. Their movement echoes Sodré's thoughts on how the body's territory in motion invites a greater openness towards difference, and when "festively relating to the space through dance, through the liberation of the senses, the individual modifies his energy, his personal strength approximating the ethnic difference to a greater awareness of the world" (Sodré 2002, 147).[5]

This awareness of the world is fostered by Munganga through diverse events, in which different music and dance such as tango, jazz and samba often play a central role. Samba is a Brazilian drum-based music born of the black diaspora and it is a genre that frequently features on Munganga's

5 It is translated from the original quote in Portuguese by Francianne dos Santos Velho.

Fig. 13.3 (above) and Fig. 13.4 (below): Rhythms of the samba are performed across Munganga's stage as the audience enjoys the music, swaying and twirling in a dance. From: MUNGANGA (2022)—a documentary, copyright NITE.

programme and attracts a large audience. In the Brazilian context, Simas (2021) draws attention to the link between the community building in *terreiros* and samba:

> Samba schools and the *terreiro* are largely extensions of the same thing: associative institutions for the invention, construction, dynamization, and maintenance of community identities, redefined in Brazil because of the fragmentation imposed by the black diaspora (Simas 2021, 32).[6]

6 It is translated from the original quote in Portuguese by Francianne dos Santos Velho.

In Amsterdam, Munganga serves as a hub for intercultural citizenship, fostering the invention, construction, dynamization, and maintenance of community identity. This role is particularly significant in the Netherlands, where social fragmentation and a pervasive sense of isolation and exclusion are often experienced by migrants, as shared by Muganga's visitors and volunteers.

Munganga as Night Space of Resistance

Munganga venue was squatted in the 80s when Lagoeiro and Maoli "occupied the occupiers" [min 17:16], given the higher costs and lack of housing in Amsterdam. Although Munganga enjoyed public funds and excellent critical reviews for decades Maoli reports that the Dutch cultural scene did not substantively harness Munganga's expertise. Instead, they were seen as the "exotic." Journalist Marla Klein said that despite being "innovative," with diverse influences and "so much to offer," they could not engage with the closed theatre field. According to Klein, other migrant, non-Dutch, performers shared comparable experiences of exclusion.

With the 2008 financial crisis, public subsidies were cut, and cultural venues began to shut down, in what Lagoeiro described as "a total bloodbath" [min 14:01]. Lagoeiro and Maoli had to seek alternatives to ensure Munganga's survival. In 2014, they turned their rehearsal space into a theatre venue. Here, supported by volunteers, alongside a programme of daytime activities, they invested in a rich schedule of night-time performances. This urban night space presented itself as an opportunity to overcome an economic crisis, but also as a space where artistic, cultural, political, and social expressions found new ground.

Since the '90s, Lagoeiro and Maoli have developed social and educational projects at Munganga, as well as outreach, community activities in schools, refugee centres, retirement homes and psychiatric institutions. Munganga's political commitment inspire its vision of theatre as a space of social activism, and Lagoeiro claims he sympathized with anarchism and follows Boal's radical philosophy of theatre as a means of emancipation.

Currently, Munganga endorses events regarding marginalized groups worldwide, from the cause of, indigenous people in Brazil to the anarchist movement in the Netherlands. The venue also becomes the stage for the organization of events responding to urgent matters, such as the case of extreme hunger in Afghanistan in 2022. Environmental crises, racism and sexism, and migrant experiences are topics that inspire the venue's

programme of debates, film screenings, book launches, and round tables. Events have included talks and discussions with the eminent indigenous rights activist Ailton Krenak and environmental activist Ângela Mendes, daughter of the murdered Amazonian rubber tapper trade unionist Chico Mendes. These activities are non-profit; during the fieldwork we noticed Maoli's concern about facilitating different groups to raise funds. She often reshuffles the schedule to make Munganga available free of charge to events that need support. Ticket and product sales are destined for the institutions or activists and their causes.

Many of these events occur during night hours, thus facilitating the participation of the visitors, who primarily work during the day. Williams notes how "the darkness of night facilitates opposition to policies or practices that seek to create a 'one-dimensional society'" (Williams 2008, 515). Debates which are usually restricted to trade unions, political parties, universities, and schools, are here available to a broader audience, promoting community engagement. The events organized by Munganga are particularly important to migrant groups, who are encouraged through them to take part in discussions about topics that can have national and international implications.

The documentary *Munganga* shows scenes from the event "Amazonia meets Amsterdam," part of the "People of the Rain Forest" festival in November 2021. From the Brazilian state of Acre, in the North of the country, the Noke Koi group visited Munganga after a meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Glasgow (2021). The event was co-produced by Munganga and the Forest Forces Foundation to discuss problems and solutions about deforestation in the Amazon in the context of climate change, Indigenous land rights, and the influence of trade markets and foreign investments from the EU and the Netherlands in the region. This kind of event attracts an avid audience and counts on volunteers, who often are not professionals, to provide translations and make everyone feel included.

Volunteers, artists, or activists are also responsible for the backstage arrangements. In the shadows, lit only by a warm star-shaped light, we see Maoli in the sound and light system working with an Indigenous person who is part of the entourage from Brazil [min 18:28], sharing the backstage arrangement of the night. A medium shot focuses on the spiritual leader *Pajé* Kamarati (shaman) asking people to listen to his words [min 17:43]. The talk stresses the fact that it is not only about an Indigenous group from a remote area of Brazil suffering from deforestation, but also about the role that urban inhabitants of Amsterdam can play in addressing the issue. This idea is underscored in the next scene, when the Indigenous group make a clear demand to the Netherlands: "stop buying soy from Acre state." This is

Fig. 13.5: Pajé Kamarati's words bring the audience into a moment of reflection on Noke Koi's indigenous people's experiences in Brazil. From: MUNGANGA (2022)—a documentary, copyright NITE.

particularly poignant when we consider that in 2020 the Netherlands was the largest EU soya bean importer from Brazil (Statistics Netherlands 2020).

In the following shots, the camera moves along the theatre walls, scanning photos of indigenous people hanging there, documenting the way that their lives and plights are inscribed on Munganga's walls, a venue in Amsterdam, a former colonial metropole. Following Santos, the contact between the wall and the photos, bridging past and present space and time that seem unrelated, is the materialization of "roughness" (Santos [1978] 2004). The marks imprinted in space left by formations of past now generate tension, conflict and change between the new and the old. Munganga is the material and symbolic space where the mediation of this friction can happen.

The event addresses the exploitation, racism, and extermination experienced by the Noke Koi group since colonial times. Its hosting in Amsterdam is poignant, given the Netherlands' contribution to the global historical system of colonial oppression through the Dutch West India Company (Koekkoek, Richard, Weststeijn 2019). At the same time, the event pointed to its potential to facilitate future solutions through dialogue and cooperation. In the voice-over, we hear the *Pajé* Karamati's plea: "we share the responsibility, and we do not have the right to destroy the future of those who are not yet born. My hope for the future is to see everyone taking care and preserving the Amazon" [min 18:48].

In this scene, we see an example of Munganga as a *terreiro*, as a subversive space, precisely because it offers possibilities of living differently. Contrary

to the White, European, capitalist mode, it challenges the "notion of family, work, use of resources, magic, nature, services, construction of knowledge, humanity, which sails against the flow of capitalist society. It is the territory of the being that creatively brings an entanglement of cultures, practices and social experiences that have been considered unworthy of existence and power" (Silva 2021, 39).[7]

Conclusion

As we draw towards a conclusion of our analysis of Munganga as a night space of citizenship and resistance, we recall Lagoeiro's words connecting the Night with the spatial image of the *terreiro*: "the night is a *terreiro*, where Munganga is established as a meeting and exchange point between artists and the public."

In this chapter, we have argued that Munganga encapsulates many of the qualities ascribed to the *terreiro* as a space in which past and present intertwine in an entanglement of memory, resistance and future vision for a fairer, more equitable and sustainable world. The city "after-hours" and the darkness in which it is often immersed, we argue, provide fertile ground for the roughness of space as conceptualized by Santos to manifest itself more clearly. When attuning to the thread of history and social experience that connects Munganga with the material and symbolic reality of the *terreiros* to their lived past and present, we get a better picture of Munganga's significance within Amsterdam's urban space. This independent theatre venue is a night space where diverse personal and collective migrant and non-migrant experiences and memories coalesce, galvanizing and supporting intercultural citizenship in the city through arts and cultural production. Its role in bringing diverse groups together in the city "after hours," fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion through artistic and cultural activism that envisages an accessible, more inclusive city cannot be underestimated.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Munganga's Carlos Lagoeiro and Claudia Maoli for their collaboration in this project. Their professionalism and

7 It is translated from the original quote in Portuguese by Francianne dos Santos Velho.

vision for the arts have been an inspiration to us. Thank you also to HERA and Leiden University's Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS) for funding this research and the production of the documentary.

Bibliography

Albada, Katja, Nina Hansen, and Sabine Otten. 2021. "Polarization in Attitudes towards Refugees and Migrants in the Netherlands." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 51 (3): 627–43.

Boal, Augusto. 1991. *Teatro do oprimido e outras poéticas políticas*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

Boaz, Danielle N. 2020. "'Spiritual Warfare' or 'Crimes against Humanity'? Evangelized Drug Traffickers and Violence against Afro-Brazilian Religions in Rio de Janeiro." *Religions* 11 (12): 640. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11120640.

Brito, Maíra de Deus, and Caroline Bechara. 2015. "Incêndio Destrói Terreiro de Candomblé em Brasília." *Metrópoles,* November 27. https://www.metropoles.com/distrito-federal/incendio-consome-terreiro-yle-axe-oya-bagan-no-paranoa?amp.

CBS Statistics Netherlands. 2020. "Soybean Imports from Brazil Up by 40 Percent." October 1. https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2020/40/soybean-imports-from-brazil-up-by-40-percent.

Chestnut, Andrew, and Ana Keila Mosca Pinezi. 2021. "Sacking the Saints – Pentecostal Persecution of Religious Rivals in Brazil." *Pantheos*, May 11. https://www.patheos.com/blogs/theglobalcatholicreview/2021/05/sacking-the-saints-pentecostal-persecution-of-religious-rivals-in-brazil/.

Council of Europe. 2023. "Intercultural Citizenship Test." Accessed February 29. https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/icctest#%7B%2274621939%22:%5B0%5D%7D.

Cunha, Patrícia. 2021. "Ataques a casas de culto afro são investigados na capital maranhense." *O Imparcial*, June 14. https://oimparcial.com.br/noticias/2021/07/ataques-a-casas-de-culto-afro-sao-investigados-na-capital-maranhense/.

De Oxalá, Pai Paulo. 2012. "O Axé da madrugada." *Extra Online*, May 30. https://extra.globo.com/noticias/religiao-e-fe/pai-paulo-de-oxala/o-axe-da-madrugada-5075660.html.

Dicionário Aurélio. 2023. Accessed February 29. https://michaelis.uol.com.br/moderno-portugues/busca/portugues-brasileiro/terreiro/.

Dunn, Nick, and Tim Edensor, eds. 2020. "Afterword." In *Rethinking Darkness: Cultures, Histories, Practices*, 229–40. London: Routledge.

Horvath, Christina, and Juliet Carpenter. 2020. *Co-Creation in Theory and Practice: Exploring Creativity in the Global North and South*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Koekkoek, René, Anne-Isabelle Richard, and Arthur Weststeijn. Eds. (2019). *The Dutch Empire between Ideas and Practice, 1600–2000*. Springer Nature.
Louzada, Sandra, Cláudia Maoli, and Carlos Lagoeiro. 2012. *Munganga 30 jaar / 30 anos*. [s.l.].
Ong, Aihwa. 1996. "Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making." Imm
Santos, Milton. 2004. *Por uma geografia nova*. São Paulo: EdiUsp, [1978].
Santos, Milton. 2012. *A Natureza do Espaço: Técnica e Tempo. Razão e Emoção*. 4th ed., 7th reprint. São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo.
Schwarcz, Lilia Moritz. 2019. *Brazilian Authoritarianism Past and Present*. Translated by E. Becker. Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press.
Silva, Carolina Rocha. 2021. "A culpa é do Diabo: as políticas de existência na encruzilhada entre neopentecostalismo, varejo de drogas ilícitas e terreiros em favelas do Rio de Janeiro." Unpublished Thesis.
Sodré, Muniz Sodré de Araújo Cabral. [1988] 2002. *O terreiro e a cidade. A forma social negro-africana*. Salvador: Secretaria de Cultural e Turismo/Imago.
Van de Steenhoeven, Ruth. 2013. "Netherlands." *World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts*. https://wepa.unima.org/en/netherlands/.
Van Gent, Wouter. 2012. "Neoliberalization, Housing Institutions and Variegated Gentrification: How the 'Third Wave' Broke in Amsterdam." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (2): 503–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2012.01155.x.
Velho, Francianne dos Santos, director. 2022. *Munganga—A Documentary.*
Williams, Robert. 2008. "Night Spaces." *Space and Culture* 11 (4): 514–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331208320117.

About the Authors

Sara Brandellero is a university lecturer at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society. She explores cultures of the Portuguese-Speaking world, with a particular focus on Brazil. Between 2019–22 she was Project Leader of the European project *Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe* (NITE).

Francianne dos Santos Velho is a PhD candidate at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts and Society. She was a research assistant within the NITE project and directed the documentary *Munganga* (2022). She holds a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies (Leiden), in the field of Cultural Analysis.

14. Let's Night Draw! Darkness and Light in the Urban Night

Chantal Meng

Abstract: Night Drawing explores the visually contested nature of our nocturnal lives by collectively drawing in the urban night. The project challenges our modes of perception, enabling new ways of seeing by focusing on contrasts, shadows, spotlights, and atmospheres created by night-time illumination. Drawing after dark forces a more conscious bodily experience, starting from a more unfamiliar vantage point, to create a visual translation that transcends representation. Night Drawing aims to negotiate assumptions about nocturnal lighting conditions and encourages us to rethink our relationship with darkness in urban spaces. The project emphasizes that artificial lighting should not only be considered in terms of its functional use and optical appearance, but also in its social and ecological impacts.

Keywords: Urban Spaces, Night-time Illumination, Artificial Light, Drawing, Visual Practice-based Research

At a time when new lighting technologies are transforming our experience of the urban night, it has never been more important to understand the socially mediated nature of our nocturnal lives as well as to examine the aesthetic and atmospheric properties of light at night. Our encounters with darkness in the city nightscape are more of a habit than an intentional choice. Technological progress, urban growth, and politics have limited our access to darkness while radically changing our perception of it. Many factors—fear and myth, protection and safety, mobility and economics—have pushed us over the years to make the night ever brighter. But brightening the night has its drawbacks. For example, the way public housing developments are lit demonstrates the perceived value of the neighbourhood and the

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_CH14

Fig. 14.1: Night Drawing Event—Pier 35. New York, 2019. Photo: © Brandon Perdomo.

value of its poor, often systematically marginalized residents. Conversely, neighbourhoods where it is dark at night become a luxurious retreat from daily sensory overload.[1] It is crucial to critically re-examine the influence of night-time lighting, as the forces and motivations behind the city's illumination continue to decisively shape our approach to darkness. Architect Peter Zumthor writes: "[s]ensing, smelling, touching, dreaming in the dark—that's just not enough. We want to see. But how much light do people need to live? And how much darkness?" (Zumthor 2006, 90).

I started Night Drawing events in 2018 as a practical method for my PhD research project *Light at Night: What is the Matter with Darkness?* (Meng 2024). Since then, I have been organizing guided and collaborative drawing events in London and New York.[2] The events are free, open to the public,

1 See, for example, the research project *Configuring Light* launched by sociologists Joanne Entwistle and Don Slater and the related articles "Tackling Social Inequalities in Public Lighting" (Sloane, Slater and Entwistle 2016) and "Making Space for 'the Social': Connecting Sociology and Professional Practices in Urban Lighting Design" (Entwistle and Slater 2019).

2 The sites arise from where I live and work and explore only a small slice of the respective nocturnal urban experience. Given the complex social ecology of the large urban centres in which I work, Night Drawing cannot capture the full range of residents in terms of race, gender, age, class, and ability. I am also aware that a city night in the affluent neighbourhoods of London or New York is very different from a night in underprivileged areas, which in turn is very different from a city night in a small rural town, a small industrial city in the north of England, or Shenzhen in China, and so on. Exploring the night (and especially the dark) in more

Fig. 14.2: Night Drawing Event — Mile End Park. London, 2018. Photo: © Lucy Parakhina

and posted on various social media platforms (see also nightdrawing.com). The goal of the project is to encourage people—with or without drawing skills—to raise awareness, reflect and make close observations that open up alternative perspectives on how the use of light is practised at night. The appearance of our surroundings, such as visual impressions created with various methods of artificial light, are also shaped by the power of urban politics. This impact cannot be taken for granted and needs to be questioned. Night Drawing aims to challenge the city dwellers' preconceived notions towards darkness by perceiving and rewriting lightscapes on site, with paper and pen. The expeditions strive for critical observations, such as city silhouettes at night that glow like postcards, or the surveillance of public space by floodlights.[3] The issue of night-time lighting requires

privileged urban centres such as London and New York is also not without its complications and understandably raises questions about First World problems. However, these cities are considered urban utopias of bright illumination and often serve as romanticized models for the future of urban planning, politics, and design. Such cities reveal a visual tension between the imaginary and the real. This ambiguity is shaped by architecture, a utopian society, Hollywood romances and the influence of a 24/7 environment (Crary 2014). I am therefore convinced that there is an urgent need to address problems of urban night lighting in the context of such supercities, as they serve as models for other urban environments of different scales and shapes, as well as for our future thinking about cities.

3 See, for example, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio's efforts at luminous "omnipresence," in which the De Blasio administration installed 150 mobile floodlights in public spaces across the

Fig. 14.3: Night Drawing Event—Brooklyn Bridge Park. New York, 2021. Photo © Brandon Perdomo.

a closer look at the aesthetic and atmospheric effects that unfold in the urban night. Last but not least, Night Drawing insists that alternative ways of seeing and thinking require greater physical investigations that lead to a stronger kinaesthetic understanding.

What is considered a "good" or "bad" drawing is another challenge Night Drawing addresses, based on the influence of our trained visual perspective and conventional preference for sight over other senses in visual representation. Art critic John Berger details this when he states: "[t]o draw is to look, a drawing of a tree shows not a tree, but a tree being looked at" (Berger 1976, 82). Night Drawing explores perceptible traces of light properties as atmospheric aspects beyond the formative visual dominance of design and appearance that manifests itself so representatively in public space. Contemporary philosopher Gernot Böhme (2017) emphasizes that atmospheres are an important but often overlooked component of the built environment. Böhme argues that capitalist forces use urban atmospheres to tint the field of vision, writing: "we have to ask whether light as *lighting* may not be even more important, insofar as it allows us to see the world in a particular way and thereby founds our affective participation in the world"

city in 2014 as part of a strategy to facilitate the work of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) (Kortava 2021). The film *Omnipresence* by Nadia Hallgren (2021), which tells the story of the floodlights in a housing project in the Bronx, further reflects this theme.

Fig. 14.4: Night Drawing Event—Washington Square Park. New York, 2021. Photo © Brandon Perdomo.

(Böhme 2017, 156). Night Drawing seeks to challenge our over-reliance on vision, as this sense is often the primary way of perceiving and representing the world and is criticised by authors such as architect Pallasmaa (2012, 22–23) as 'ocularcentrism' which disregards the importance of our tactile and haptic experiences.

Can Night Drawing help us better understand the socially mediated and visually contested nature of light in our nocturnal lives? Night Drawing does not promise a solution to the manifold complications of nocturnal lighting, but rather aims to trigger a change of perspective, asking participants to see darkness in a new light. The practice strives for a collective exploration of nocturnal urban lightscapes, a method that is an embodied gesture to literally "re-view" the light of the night with paper and pen. In doing so, we begin to see lighting the night as visual storytelling. It is of a theatrical nature. In the theatre, the dynamic between light and dark shapes the space of attention and creates settings where actions do and do not take place. We can say the same about the urban night. It is a fabricated light environment where power structures play out to bring things both in and out of sight (see also Schivelbusch 1995; Edensor 2017; Elcott 2016). Artificial light not only illuminates important urban landmarks, but also hides others, turning "unattractive" areas into impenetrable darkness (McQuire 2005, 133). It is crucial to learn how nocturnal lighting methods leave traces of atmospheres and shadows and how they interact with darkness. Without

Fig. 14.5: Night Drawing Event—Staten Island Ferry. New York, 2022. Photo: © Brandon Perdomo.

light, no darkness; without darkness, no light. Light properties—dark and bright alike—go beyond the obvious pictorial representation and presentation (as of architecture) and further affect spatial environments, their habitats and events.

The various influences of cultural and political systems that present the world to us and thus affect our lives cannot be underestimated. As social scientists Mikkel Bille and Tim Flohr Sørensen note, "shedding light on objects is about attributing perceptual form to the objects, and hence the social use of light is not as much *on* the object as it is *for* the object" (Bille and Sørensen 2007, 270). The perceptual is cultural and political, not simply (as some psychologists and neuroscientists suggest) a matter of cognitive processes or neurological mechanisms located in the individual subject (Howes 2005, 322). Drawing after dark explores the connection between the body, architecture and visual representation to explore how spaces with bright and dark light can modulate patterns of behaviour and impact people's imaginations and visions. Stuart Hall (1997) emphasized that the design of our environment is a fundamental practice of representation; not only what is shown, but when and how it is shown is crucial. The method of representation becomes a method of symbolic stereotyping. When a certain type of representation is practised over and over again, it becomes

Fig. 14.6: Night Drawing Event—Mile End Park. London, 2018. Photo: © Lucy Parakhina.

a powerful trope and appears natural and inevitable. (Hall 1997, 170; 259). Design ambitions that aim to show everything better through light, such as putting architecture in the spotlight, vehemently shape our perception of the night and thus our impressions of darkness. This echoes Hall's arguments about how our viewing habits and experiences are modulated; constantly seeing things in light can also easily reinforce a discomfort with darkness in the city at night. The crucial question is once again how, when and what is represented by/in the light.

Night Drawing asks participants to enter the luminous spectacle of the urban night—a kind of theatre—both as actors and spectators. It serves as an active gesture that confronts and challenges the passivity of the human visual habit, which barely notices or even ignores its surroundings. Reviewing urban life in large metropolises in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Georg Simmel notes a "blasé attitude" among city dwellers who protect themselves from too much disturbance and stimulation by seemingly walking around with fictitious eye patches to switch off (Simmel 2010, 105–6). Similarly, Böhme asks what listening as such means when one is not really listening: when "[t]he noise of the modern world and the occupation of public space by music has led to the habit of not-listening (*Weghören*)" (Böhme 2000, 17). Embodied awareness is key to the practice of Night Drawing. This awareness demonstrates that urban light is not static. Rather, darkness is malleable and ever-changing, and should not be taken

Fig. 14.7: Night Drawing Event—Mile End Park. London, 2018. Photo: © Lucy Parakhina.

for granted. Instead of just lamenting light pollution, Night Drawing aims to deconstruct and explore how dark urban spaces come about. Darkness is also created by shadows from artificial lighting. I call this "urban darkness" (Meng 2024)—which requires investigation of the potential atmospheric traces of artificial light.

Drawing at night is surprisingly hard, in my own experience, and confirmed by feedback from participants. Dimly lit spaces challenge and contradict sights familiar to us during the day. Transcribing the space that we apprehend onto paper requires imagination and re-imagination. At the same time, it requires relinquishing fixed ideas of how something should look. Anthropologist Michael Taussig (2011, 22) writes that drawing is like having a conversation with the thing drawn. Drawing, Berger (2005, 116) continues, is an activity with a component of corporeality. And artist Kimon Nicolaïdes (1975, 5) emphasizes that learning to draw "is really a matter of learning to see [...] and that means a good deal more than merely looking with the eye," as it includes all the senses. Drawing intervenes in a way that photography or writing do not; drawing operates its own reality with an imprint of the senses. Drawing has a "kinaesthetic sense," while "photography is a taking, drawing is a making" (Taussig 2011, 18–23). The intention of Night Drawing is to create a level of awareness that is not least a physical experience that goes beyond vision (i.e., seeing with the eye). I argue that the ocular-centric experience carries dangers because it neglects not only

Fig. 14.8: Night Drawing Event—Pier 35. New York, 2019. Photo: © Brandon Perdomo.

sensory and embodied experiences, but also kinaesthetic knowledge (see also Kleinberg-Levin 1993; Alexander 2017).

Drawing at night requires active, performative perception. This method recalls the distinction between hearing and listening, as pointed out by composer Pauline Oliveros: "the ear hears, the brain listens and the body senses vibrations." Oliveros lays out the critical differences between them by referring to "ear-training techniques" taught in music schools—"the ear cannot be trained, what really happens is a cultivation of the musical mind" (Oliveros 2015). The way urban night cultivates a certain style of nocturnal light is reminiscent of the music school example. We can compare the techniques of ear training with the methods of design training, cultivating hearing and seeing, versus the practices of listening and looking. While the act of seeing can become a passive habit, looking is active (like looking for someone). Night Drawing asks us to look at things in a different light. The practice is in line with Oliveros' (2005) call to active "listen deeply" to "see more deeply." Night Drawing encourages us to expand our modes of perception and heighten our awareness of how light shapes the environment beyond "looking good."

The emphasis of Night Drawing is on practice, not product; the drawings are not the primary concern (see also Meng 2022). Darkness helps to focus on the visual experience and less on the visual result—the drawing itself. The dim environments are liberating; difficult lighting conditions free

Fig. 14.9: Sketches made by various participants at different Night Drawing events. London/New York, 2018–22.

Fig. 14.10: Night Drawing Event—Pier 35. New York, 2019. Photo: © Brandon Perdomo.

participants from the burden of producing a "faithful" representation through drawing. Drawing in the dark embodies the concept in Merleau-Ponty's (2005) writing on the phenomenology of perception, suggesting that some spatial attributes exist but may not always be noticeable through sight alone. Night Drawing is the deliberate inversion of the discrepancy between what the person drawing thinks they see and what they can translate onto paper. And although Night Drawing exercises attempt to shift the focus from the drawing itself to observation and bodily experience, interesting kinds of drawing corrections always emerge. For example, it is not uncommon that stars are added to drawings or imitate the style and look of night postcards or posters. Such pictorial translations tellingly show how vision is also shaped and moulded by what we have previously seen and learned through forms of representation. Here the matter of darkness, its urban representation, and our perception of it help us further understand how we have come to see and reveal its shortcomings.

To gain a fresh perspective on the light of the urban night and re-evaluate our understanding of darkness, it is necessary to challenge established beliefs and traditions. Night Drawing allows us to comprehend, observe, and experience the atmospheric effects of light that go beyond its mere shining appearance. It is of utmost importance for the citizens of a city to thoroughly question the bright night-time displays that present their urban environment as a mere postcard tourist attraction or control social

life through light. The same applies to urban policy ambitions for light and safety.[4] Nocturnal lighting methods have a profound impact on the quality of life, equality, and democratic character of a city. We need to keep reminding ourselves that lighting has significant impacts on our environment, such as climate change, birds crashing into buildings, human health and the unequal distribution of energy resources worldwide (Schulte-Römer, Dannemann and Meier 2018).

In our present approach of illuminating the urban night we are further forced to consider more carefully our "right to darkness" on top of our "rights to light."[5] It is not my aim to "canonize" or preserve darkness in the city or to criticize urban modernity. Indeed, my work does not celebrate natural darkness as some kind of ideal for a healthy society. Rather, I believe that we need to re-evaluate our relationship with dark environments and challenge our reliance on artificial light. This is not just about rediscovering darkness, but also about re-imagining, re-shaping, and even re-constructing dark aesthetics and atmospheres in our environment. I therefore suggest that we attend to darkness and engage with it, rather than seeking to eliminate it by illuminating it. This should not prove to be an impossible task.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Stuart Hall Foundation and the Swiss National Science Foundation for their generous support in carrying out this research. I am especially grateful to Lucy Parakhina and Brandon Perdomo for their tireless efforts to photographically document this project. I also thank Macushla Robinson and Michael Hassin for their helpful comments and edits throughout the text. All errors and omissions remain my own of course. Finally, a big thank you goes to all the participants of the Night Drawing events and to the generous provision of their work!

4 The US Bureau of Justice Statistics shows that despite the widespread fear of darkness, 67.5 per cent of violent crimes are committed during daylight hours, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. (Petrusich 2016). The effectiveness of night-time lighting in preventing accidents and crimes is controversial as various studies indicate that this is not necessarily the case (Riggs 2014; Sloane 2021; Yang, Berry, and Kalms 2022).

5 The lack of shade in public spaces is a health threat, especially in areas affected by global warming (Kite 2017; Bloch 2019). On the other hand, laws protect residents' right to daylight when tall buildings cast shadows and affect their quality of life (Francis 2008; Mathiasen, Frandsen and Grønlund 2022). Everyone has a right to light and darkness, but the right to darkness, especially at night, often seems to be neglected or ignored.

Bibliography

Alexander, Zeynep Çelik. 2017. *Kinaesthetic Knowing: Aesthetics, Epistemology, Modern Design*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.

Berger, John. 1976. "Arts in Society: Drawn to That Moment." *New Society* 37 (718): 81.

Berger, John. 2005. *Berger on Drawing*. Aghabullogue: Occasional Press.

Bille, Mikkel and Tim Flohr Sørensen. 2007. "An Anthropology of Luminosity: The Agency of Light." *Journal of Material Culture* 12 (3): 263–84. https://doi.org/10.1177/1359183507081894.

Bloch, Sam. 2019. "Shade." *Places Journal*, April. https://doi.org/10.22269/190423.

Böhme, Gernot. 2000. "Acoustic Atmospheres: A Contribution to the Study of Ecological Aesthetics." *Soundscape* 1 (1): 14–18.

Böhme, Gernot. 2017. *Atmospheric Architectures: The Aesthetics of Felt Spaces*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Edensor, Tim. 2017. *From Light to Dark: Daylight, Illumination, and Gloom*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Elcott, Noam Milgrom. 2016. *Artificial Darkness: An Obscure History of Modern Art and Media*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.

Entwistle, Joanne and Don Slater. 2019. "Making Space for 'the Social': Connecting Sociology and Professional Practices in Urban Lighting Design." *The British Journal of Sociology* 70 (5): 2020–41. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12657.

Francis, Andrew. 2008. "Right of Lights Ahead!" *Journal of Building Appraisal* 4 (1): 5–13. https://doi.org/10.1057/jba.2008.18.

Hall, Stuart. 1997. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: SAGE.

Hallgren, Nadia. 2021. *Omnipresence*. Documentary.

Howes, David. 2005. "Architecture of the Senses." In *Sense of the City: An Alternate Approach to Urbanism*, edited by Mirko Zardini, 322–31. Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture = Centre canadien d'architecture.

Kite, Stephen. 2017. *Shadow-Makers: A Cultural History of Shadows in Architecture*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Kleinberg-Levin, David Michael, ed. 1993. *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kortava, David. 2021. "The Controversial Floodlights Illuminating New York City's Public-Housing Developments." *The New Yorker*, June 30. https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-documentary/the-controversial-floodlights-illuminating-new-york-citys-public-housing-developments.

Mathiasen, Nanet, Anne Kathrine Frandsen and Louise Grønlund. 2022. "Daylight Conditions in Housing—Its Role and Priority in Danish Building Regulations."

Architecture, Structures and Construction 2 (March): 23–37. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44150-022-00036-x.

McQuire, Scott. 2005. "Immaterial Architectures: Urban Space and Electric Light." *Space and Culture* 8 (2): 126–40. https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331204266372.

Meng, Chantal. 2022. "Night Drawing: Re-writing Darkness in the Nocturnal Land/Cityscape." *Ethnologies* 44 (1): 153. https://doi.org/10.7202/1096061ar.

Meng, Chantal. 2024. "Light at Night: What Is the Matter with Darkness?" PhD dissertation. Goldsmiths, University of London. https://doi.org/10.25602/GOLD.00036046

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 2005. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge.

Nicolaïdes, Kimon. 1975. *The Natural Way to Draw: A Working Plan for Art Study*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Oliveros, Pauline. 2005. *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice*. New York Shanghai: iUniverse.

Oliveros, Pauline. 2015. "The Difference between Hearing and Listening." *TEDx Talks*, Indianapolis, December 11. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QHfOuRrJB8.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2012. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. Chichester: Wiley.

Petrusich, Amanda. 2016. "Fear of the Light: Why We Need Darkness." *The Guardian*, August 23. https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/aug/23/why-we-need-darkness-light-pollution-stars.

Riggs, Mike. 2014. "Street Lights and Crime: A Seemingly Endless Debate." *Bloomberg.Com*, February 12. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-02-12/street-lights-and-crime-a-seemingly-endless-debate.

Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. 1995. *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schulte-Römer, Nona, Etta Dannemann, and Josiane Meier. 2018. *Light Pollution—A Global Discussion.* https://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:14-qucosa2-356415.

Simmel, Georg. 2010. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." In *The Blackwell City Reader*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 103–10. Chichester, West Sussex, U.K: Wiley-Blackwell.

Sloane, Mona, Don Slater, and Joanne Entwistle. 2016. "Tackling Social Inequalities in Public Lighting." *Configuring Light/Staging the Social*.

Sloane, Mona. 2021. "Surveillance Society: Artificial Lighting for a Policed Public." *Architectural Review* (blog), September 15. https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/technology/surveillance-society-artificial-lighting-for-a-policed-public.

Taussig, Michael T. 2011. *I Swear I Saw This: Drawings in Fieldwork Notebooks, Namely My Own*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.

Yang, Hoa, Jess Berry, and Nicole Kalms. 2022. "Perceptions of Safety in Cities after Dark." In *Lighting Design in Shared Public Spaces*, edited by Shanti Sumartojo, 83–103. New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003182610-5.
Zumthor, Peter. 2006. *Thinking Architecture*. Basel & Boston: Birkhäuser.

About the Author

Chantal Meng holds a PhD in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London. She is a Fulbright Scholar, Stuart Hall PhD Fellow, and received a Doc.Mobility grant (Swiss National Science Foundation). She is a visiting assistant professor at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY.

III

Contested Cities

Afterword

Adam Eldridge

A starting point for this edited volume is that in this age of social and political tensions we need a more robust understanding of what is happening after dark. As someone with an interest in all things nocturnal, I agree. Any additional insights or conceptual clarity about the night, how it can be researched or understood, or how people live, imagine or experience it is to be welcomed. What stands out, however, is that this call to better understand the night is justified in terms of "political and social tensions." It is common to see research legitimated on all sorts of grounds: that it has not been done before, there is a gap, or it is new, for example. For the editors here, this anthology is not just about responding to absences, however. Instead, they claim that "many of the questions around multicultural living together and the often-polarizing question of migration […] need to be considered within the context of circadian rhythms." They go on to explain that having this greater knowledge of what is happening after dark will provide "a deeper and more nuanced awareness of […] the potential of public spaces to foster social integration, including in relation to the often highly political question of migration." Later, van Liempt suggests "[a]n emphasis on leisure time, conviviality and urban dynamics is hopeful if we want to explore new ways to live together in an increasingly diverse world."

There are a number of concepts circulating here: conviviality, diversity, public spaces, integration, migration, and, acting as an umbrella for them all, the night. There is also that powerful word from van Liempt: "hopeful." The night is frequently associated with pleasure and adventure, so hope is often part of the discourse, but the hope identified here specifically refers to the night as "an important site of cultural and intercultural encounters and exchanges, and one that has a key role in galvanizing social inclusion and integration." There are two points I take from this. When we think of migration, encounters, conviviality, or a range of other terms used to explain intercultural sociality, these are not atemporal. The night matters.

Brandellero, S., K. Krakowska Rodrigues and D. Pardue, *Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk. Amsterdam*: Amsterdam University Press, 2025
DOI 10.5117/9789048558742_AFTER

Second, public space is not atemporal and at night it enables and constitutes conviviality, sociality, and political assembly.

In the discussion below, and motivated by the preceding chapters, I reflect on the themes that have circulated through this anthology, particularly the contested city, public space and conviviality, and consider how the night, especially public space at night, contours the ways these might be understood and practised. Starting with a reflection on the concept of the contested city and public space, I then examine these concepts in relation to nocturnalization and the multifunctionality of nocturnal spaces. The discussion goes on to address questions about the ways "encounter" and "conviviality" have been understood in relation to "circadian rhythms," before concluding with a reflection on some of the methods that have been used and why these are so important for strengthening our understanding of the night and its capacity for coexistence and social connection. I argue that though the night has long been "contested," what and who is being contested, by whom and for what purposes has in some cases changed, but all too often remained stubbornly the same. As the chapters in this anthology have established, for the study of the night to be more than just "interesting," it needs to provide insight into the highly structured and politicized nature of nocturnal spaces and nocturnal practices.

Contested Cities / Contested Publics

For Gaffikin, et al. (2010), cities are contested due to finite land and resources. They draw a difference, however, between those contested on the basis of *sovereignty* and those contested in terms of *pluralism*. In regard to the former, Hepburn's (2004) work on Belfast, Montreal or Jerusalem addresses those cities where competing ethno-nationalist claims generate competing discourses around history, belonging, and state legitimation. Pluralism, in contrast, is where we see "disputes about social reproduction around differentials in class, ethnicity, power and status" (Gaffikin et al. 2010, 494). Cities might also be contested on the basis of economic changes and debates over the role of the state versus private business (Mollenkopf 1983), or, for Harvey (2005), they might be contested on the grounds of neoliberalism, inequality and gentrification. Yip et al.'s (2019) anthology examines squatting movements, cycling in Hong Kong, and food justice as examples of contestation while other studies examine the contested city in terms of secular, post-secular, and religious claims to public space (see, for example, Beaumont and Baker 2011). Of particular relevance to the study

of the night are numerous examples of spaces (and free assembly in those spaces) being contested around such issues as noise, residential status, morality, the temporal appropriateness of different practices and activities, and commercialization (Chatterton and Hollands 2003; Shaw 2017; Acuto et al. 2021). There are numerous outcomes to all these contestations including securitization and the promotion of fear (Simpson et al. 2017), control and surveillance (Pullan 2011) as well a range of urban interventions such as the gating of suburbs as a well cited example, legal interventions, or the development and use of technologies that act to further control public space. The sites and rationales might change, but these multiple forms of division operate across the city, through its institutions, in its commercial spaces and, of relevance here, in its public spaces. As Hall reminds us:

> Cities have always been divided. They are divided by class and wealth, by rights to and over property, by occupation and use, by lifestyle and culture, by race and nationality, ethnicity and religion, and by gender and sexuality (Hall 2004, 2, cited in Tselika 2018, 280).

Much has been written on this concept of the contested city, what drives it, and its consequences, but as Gaffikin, et al. (2010) note, it is not entirely a new debate. The contested city thesis is often framed in relation to questions of modern identity, diversification, globalization, or late capitalism, but the question of how we live together—or live with or alongside difference and diversity in rapidly changing contexts—is not a question that is unique to contemporary Western society. Gaffikin et al. (2010) argue that early sociologists, when studying the “early modern city,” were similarly concerned with “heterogeneity” and “estrangement” (see also Inglis 2009). Such work similarly asked what would happen to existing alliances, communities or solidarities as a result of the rapid expansion, secularization and industrialization occurring in European cities. It is important to state this because as we will see later, echoing Watson (2006), while cities have long been marked by competing discourses, the response of officials and the content of those discourses does change. In other words, while there are unique conditions in different contested cities and it is important not to conflate and ahistoricize terms such as alienation, globalization, or estrangement, there are nonetheless historical frames which continue to reverberate and structure the ways contemporary debates about public space play out. This is especially the case at night, when, while some narratives remain relatively stuck, the solidarities generated, the public spaces in which they occur, and the policy response, all have a history. Curfews are perhaps the

most obvious example of how claims to the nocturnal city have long been curtailed, debated, and imposed (Goldberg-Hiller 2023; Ekirch 2005). But a question I want to consider when teasing out some debates about public space and the night is when, how and for whom did these spaces at night come to be seen as "public space," with all its associated promises and ideals of freedom, democracy and free access? In other words, is an ordinary plaza or park, a waterfront or street understood as "public space" in the same ways at night as it might be understood as public space during the day? This is not a flippant question: what is worth noting of this volume is the way it has demonstrated that the public and nocturnal realms, the promises and hopes of both, and the solidarities, struggles, and communities that are generated in public space at night have a context and a history. Public space is not just there, finished and complete in meaning, and nor is the night. Both are explored here as co-constitutive and only come to mean something—in this context—in their confluence. Before addressing this, it is worth reciting some well noted points about public space and the ways it is understood at night.

Despite frequent concerns about its demise, and the well cited argument that public space is always marked by inclusions and exclusions, it remains firmly in the imaginary as important and needing protection if democratic and freely accessible cities are to exist. Carmona (2010) characterizes recent work on public space into two broad camps: those that emphasize the themes of undermanagement and neglect versus those pointing to over-managed spaces evidenced in commercialization and securitization. In the latter camp, terms such as encroachment, erasure, corporatization or neo-liberalisation (see, for example, Smith and Low 2006) are often centred. Much of the work defending public space owes in part to Lefebvre's (1996) right to the city. This is a conception of public space which sees it as process and product; as Purcell elaborates, it is a right to both participation and appropriation (Purcell 2002). This echoes Routledge's focus on spatial politics when he states: "This struggle for rights produces space, and political action—in the form of actively claiming urban space—acts as the fulcrum upon which the right to the city is leveraged" (2010, 1167). Marcuse's review of the right to the city situates it in one sense as a metaphor of what a city could be. He says:

> [I]t was not a right to the City, not a right to be included in what the city already was, but rather a right to a city that could and should be, to the city as a metaphor for a new way of life, one whose characteristics were directly related to the new processes of urbanization, which for Lefebvre

> encompassed a new way of life, of everyday life as well as of government, or a social system as well as, even more than, a physical place, a particular built environment or legal jurisdiction (Marcuse 2014, 5).

As Lefebvre clarifies, this is not a city that is, but "a right to urban life" (Lefebvre 1996, 158, cited in Marcuse 2014, 5). He goes on to suggest that:

> The transformation of society presupposes a collective ownership and management of space founded on the permanent participation of the "interested parties," with their multiple, varied and even contradictory interests (Lefebvre 1991/1974, 422, cited in Purcell 2014, 148).

We will return to this idea of contradictory interests later; for the moment I want to bring the discussion back first to the night. The right to the city at night is similarly not just about access but also about the right to assembly, to organize, to be heard, and to participate in its governance, as much as its promises: leisure, rest, warmth, and fun just to start with. A significant theme in this anthology is precisely what inhibits self-governance and self-determination and how the promise of public space at night is controlled and limited.

As noted, this management is in part historical, and Butler (see Seeliger and Villa Braslavsky 2022) warns against a-historicizing the public. Public space is not just "there." As Harvey elsewhere has argued, space is not just a passive container. For Harvey, there are three ways of conceiving the contested city, the first being that space and time are "containers of social action" (2005, 22), which is an approach that renders the city as little more than a passive backdrop. At night, in this account, the city just happens to be where competing debates about time, use or morality—the time to work, shop, sleep or dine, for example—are played out. There is nothing constitutive of the city or darkness here, both are just where action is located. The second approach sees the city as a container but not neutral; the example he uses is mapping and how it is variable dependent upon that which is being mapped. A final approach for Harvey draws on Leibniz and it is that each process has its own spatio-temporality. In this sense, cities are defined by multiple if not infinite spatio-temporalities "within which conflictual social processes are worked out" (Harvey 2005, 23). In more simple terms, cities are not only defined by processes, but they also make them. The well-cited axiomatic that cities make tourism and tourism makes cities comes to mind.

My own thinking is more aligned with Massey (2004, 2005) and her conception of place as having multiple meanings, as always in process, and

as not bounded or contained. Following this argument, to defend public space at night and to celebrate its promise of free-assembly and potential does not mean foreclosing its meaning or fixing it in some romanticized vision of the past, be that associated with pre-neoliberalism, tourism, or commercialization. It means recognizing that this all unfolds within historical, political and cultural contexts. Just as the public spaces and the public of today are being made, so too their histories must be acknowledged. To discuss night spaces within a historical context, one that pays close attention to the ways histories are always highly contested themselves, also means thinking through the ways that the aspirational promise of public space, who it is for, and its audience, also changes. This, then, means turning to the ways the night, nocturnalization and public space can be thought alongside each other.

Koslofsky (2012) provides an important historical context to the nocturnalization of European culture and links this to public space. In this narrative, the public sphere and the night are intimately bound, with the nocturnalization of European culture occurring alongside the emergence of the coffeehouse in the seventeenth century (2012, 175). Though open during the day, their late hours allowed people otherwise busy working in daylight hours to attend them after work and discuss all things political. In Paris, their hours were heavily restricted, including the lighting of lanterns outside, as also happened in Frankfurt am Main and Vienna, but by the late seventeenth century they were part of urban life during the day as well as at night. As Koslofsky suggests, the representation of the coffee house was "always" after dark with candles on the table. This history of the coffeehouse clearly illustrates the ways public space at night was never there but was made, contested, and came to be through newly emerging patterns of global trade, new technologies of lighting, and new patterns of work and urban living. Already contested, he argues that "together, ministers of state and consumers of leisure colonized the night and created the time and space in which the bourgeois public sphere formed" (Koslofsky 2012, 184). As he emphasises, this was not linear, and it is a timely reminder that even now the expansion of nightlife recedes and rises in waves, intersecting with other moral and political processes, infrastructures, institutions, and structures. What Koslofsky does is also to document the emerging governance of the night and the consumption of time; time that could be controlled through lighting and new work patterns. The entanglement of power, the public and commercialism in the newly illuminated nights of European modernity constituted a way of occupying public space which involved a new form of assembly, visibility and spectatorship.

This framing of the night, nocturnalization and the production of the public and public space is redolent also of Habermas' understanding of public space, that this was not just something built and finished, but that there was a "staging of publicity" (cited in Seeliger and Villa Braslavsky 2022). Butler suggests that to whom it was staged changed. Butler, in reference to Habermas states:

> The spaces deemed public are those into which "anyone" can go, including those who are not invited to aristocratic dinners and parties. At the end of the eighteenth century, the "public" becomes, he argues, the public authority, understood as separated from the aristocracy and the Church (Seeliger and Villa Braslavsky 2022).

This was also happening right alongside colonialism and the institutionalization of racism, so this configuration of the public, public space and nocturnalization cannot be considered outside of those processes of racial exclusion and notions of who is the public and who is a citizen.

The night that is discussed in this volume is largely about these relations between people, about relations between bodies and policies, bodies and institutions, music, darkness, and different cultures and histories. This is where we return to the theme of contested cities and multiple publics. As noted, the night has long been contested in terms of morality, but it is also contested on grounds of who it is for, resistance to its commodification and over management, or celebrated for its diversity. To address this, I want to discuss another key theme of this volume, which is that of multifunctionality.

Multifuncionality

Space, for Massey (2004), is always open, unbounded, forming and being formed by action, processes and structures of the here and elsewhere. A further key point for Massey is space is always full—not full in the sense of being complete or finished, but in the sense of having multiple meanings and forces operating. In a more literal sense, I am also drawing on Batty et al. (2004) here who suggest that if cities in the past were more segregated in spatial and temporal terms, now there is a call for more diversity and multifunctionality. The promotion of nightlife is one such example where the maximum use of space is promoted. A very good example of this would be a barbershop in Amsterdam which becomes a lesbian bar in the evening (Ekenhorst and van Aalst 2019). Another example might be the chameleon

bars found in British cities, which transform from cafes to bars then dancing venues over the course of the day, in each form attracting new audiences, different music and lighting, and producing different effects and affects. Multifunctionality is a feature of many of the spaces that have been discussed in this anthology. Munganga, for example, as explained in Brandellero and Santos Velho's chapter, was a squat, tram depot and now arts and club venue. It is the sort of venue which typifies multifunctionality in its use and users, as well as its history. In a Masseyean sense, it is also—like all spaces—constantly becoming.

In some ways, part of the debate about cities at night is this multifunctionality and whether the night should be kept distinct from all that plagues the day (Crary 2013), or whether the day and night are becoming increasingly alike. Though many of the chapters here on workers roundly debunk the idea that the night is somehow immune from capitalism or work, this does not mean the day and night are the same. They are different in terms of affect, atmosphere, histories and methodologies, exclusions operating, who gets to go out, how it is legislated, the policies enacted, and indeed the enchantments they offer, for some. The night is "full" of meaning and possibility, and part of that owes to the ways the narratives and uses change from day to darkness. To situate the night as a mere extension of the day, or as its antithesis, deprives us of thinking of the night in its specificity and with its own history. Equally, the problem with seeing the night as only becoming more like the day leaves no room for similar sense of enchantment, pleasure, resistance to capitalism, non-work, risk, danger, or self-determination during the day. To think of the night and day in opposition deprives us of any understanding of the night as anything other than derivative or oppositional and not of its own context and its own qualities, materialities, and generative of unique forms of sociality and solidarity. The night is not divorced from the day, but it is "filled" with meaning and functionality in different ways. A point made by scholars of the night is that spaces, their meaning, use, and representation will change between day and night. Yeo refers to the plural meanings of the night; segmentation, a sense of freedom but also heightened forms of structure and control (Yeo 2020).

It follows, then, that at night public space is contested space in the sense of serving different functions, communities, ambitions and purposes which might not always align. Whether it is about noise or morality, which venues are allowed to thrive, and which are more heavily surveilled, or which bodies can pursue leisure unhindered, public space at night is thoroughly steeped in multifunctional uses. This is where we turn to the second main theme of this Afterword, which is conviviality. Though the examples demonstrate

the multifunctionality of space, what might this tell us about such spaces as spaces of intercultural citizenship?

Encounter AND Conviviality

I've argued that public space is not atemporal and that we need to consider it as the editors suggest in relation to circadian rhythms. Koslofsky (2012) provides a good overview of the ways public space and naturalization must be considered together. A public space at night is not just the darkened (or illuminated) version of the same public space from the day. Likewise, the night is not just an empty backdrop in which things happen; as public space is not atemporal, the night is not aspatial. In the previous section, I explored two reasons why multifunctionality is important; firstly, in a literal sense of multiple uses or at least changing users between day and night. The second reason I turned to multifunctionality was to crudely illustrate Massey's (2004) point about the open-ended incompletion of all spaces, and the ways they are formed and transformed through interaction. But what then to make of this interaction and the way it has been framed here in terms of conviviality? This has been a central theme of this volume, and it has been particularly well illustrated by the chapters engaging with nocturnal spaces in relation to migration and exclusion. If space is defined by the relations producing it, multifunctionality and conviviality are both integral to this production. Conviviality is a way of thinking about what people do in diverse spaces, what is allowed, and the everyday ways those intercultural connections transform spaces and their meanings. But, as Hepburn asks, "[w]hat happens in a context where the political and social facts dictate conflict and separation, but proximity and economy require interaction?" (2004, 3–4). To answer, it is important to return to the opening premise of this collection and the claim that knowing what is happening after dark is crucial for understanding questions around migration and diversity. I do not propose here that if contestation is the issue, then conviviality is the solution. I want to use conviviality instead to think about the very conditions under which public spaces at night might be conceptually framed—and within a context which recognizes the highly politicized stakes of such interactions. In accordance with the examples illustrated in this anthology, about multifunctionality and multi-publics, these interactions can also be a resistance to other claims on public space and can generate new configurations and solidarities. Again, a question running through the discussion is what this might mean at night and what does it allow.

Following Wilson's citing of Shapiro (2010), cities are where the encounter is a defining feature and where difference, diversity, or what Massey refers to as "throwntogetherness" (Massey 2005, cited in Wilson 2017) are central. For Massey, this term refers to the ways multiple and complex elements such as the social, political, ecological, and other cross categorical elements come together and intersect to produce a sense of place in the here and now. As we have seen, this translates into other features of urban life already discussed; multifunctionality, diverse needs, plural forms of belonging, and at times competing claims to public space. Drawing on Gilroy (2004), current work on conviviality examines the everyday ways communities come together. Nowicka, for example, uses conviviality as a way of thinking about "human togetherness" (2020, 17). There is a long history to this term that I cannot do justice to here, but de Noronha (2022) provides an excellent overview, defining conviviality as "negotiation across lines of difference in the context of inequality and division." In exploring the shortcomings and oversights in how the term has been deployed, he argues that other writers do not necessarily erase conflict and tension but that "the friction is insufficiently theorised" (2021, 164). By this he means that isolating examples of conviviality or multicultural interaction without theorizing or connecting these observations to the wider structural and political context does not always engage in the anti-racism work the concept requires. As de Noronha asks:

> How should the existence of fairly banal forms of multiculture be weighted and interpreted in relation to analysis of economic conditions, state practices, and racist cultures—all of which appear to be becoming more brutalising as we speak and write? (2021, 174).

Again, if we centre the night here, public spaces—the pavements, parks, waterfronts, and other public spaces where these interactions occur—function temporally. On the one hand, night spaces are often designed precisely to facilitate engagement. It feels clumsy to say so, but considerable work does go into making us comfortable in some nocturnal spaces. Swartjes and Berkers (2022) provide a detailed overview by looking at festivals and how they facilitate conviviality. As they ask, however, at festivals is it more a case of bonding or bridging? We might ask the same of other nocturnal venues. That is, night spaces, perhaps like conviviality more generally, can be overly romanticized as erasing cultural differences and, more generally, power. As Swartjes and Berkers (2022), explain, however, symbolic and cultural capital are common features of nightlife spaces. Some corners of nightlife are committed to doing precisely the bonding and the bridging which has

been called for. Garcia-Mispireta (2023) has recently documented this in terms of rave culture, but with an understanding of how night spaces enable pre-existing groups to bond rather than always doing the work to bridge is in a sense what is being asked here of conviviality at night.

Feminist and Black writers have also for decades been central to calling attention to the ways the night excludes and the dangers it holds. Talbot and Böse (2007), Wicks (2022) and Buford-May (2014), among many others, have examined the exclusionary and dangerous component of the night, as well as the ways narratives of nocturnal culture have centred some experiences to the exclusion of others. Finn Mackay's *Radical Feminism* (2015) explores the Reclaim the Night marches, for example, including the debates about the racist history of night-time policing and policy against Black communities. There is further important work continuing to be done on reclaiming the history of Black nightlife and music (see, for example, Pawel-Rammingen 2021; Adeyemi et al. 2021).

Articulating the relationship between the night and conviviality is not then to suggest that it might be a remedy for social and political tensions. It is true that the night in the UK is sometimes deployed as a panacea for depressed economies and it has become integral to the promotion of cities to tourists. The night is supposed to *do* something, in other words, whether that be to enchant us, provide a space to meet, resolve the current emphasis on making and marking boundaries, strengthen an economy or allow communities of difference to find common ground in leisure. When adding conviviality to this, it is not surprising for concerns to be raised about it being all too happy-clappy (Wise and Noble 2016). But the night is marked by both closure and opening. Wilson, drawing on Leavelle (2004), suggests that "the spatial concepts of border, boundary, margin and frontier are commonly deployed when discussing cultural encounters" (2017, 456). The distinction between the day and night is a border and, as Wilson says, it is at the border where encounters happen. Melbin (1987) similarly wrote of the night as a frontier, and it is a metaphor which still circulates today.

What are those encounters at the border supposed to do? Encounters can challenge misconceptions and allow us to engage with others. There are multiple embarrassments awaiting us at night, as well as real and persistent dangers that continue to inhibit the autonomy of certain groups. There are also the enchantments, the bodily pleasures of drugs, dancing, sweating, or food. There are theatres, a favourite band, or a much-loved restaurant to be enjoyed, as well as, for example, the enchantment of Christmas lights or the swell of being at a stadium. The sensory nature of many night-time activities is part of the conviviality discourse and how it connects us or bridges us to

other bodies. Night spaces cannot easily resolve certain historical attitudes and practices designed to alienate or exclude; taste and distinction operate as formidable boundaries to the promise of conviviality. Nonetheless, as with public space, there is a promise and aspiration for the night and conviviality which has been amply demonstrated in this volume.

Methods

In this final section and by way of bringing this Afterword together, I will reflect briefly on the methods used in some of the preceding chapters and consider them in light of the points raised above. De Noronha (2021) has noted that work on conviviality has tended to privilege the ethnographic. Chatting to people, observing them, and being part of the community is a good way of teasing out and identifying specific issues. We have seen this put to good effect in several chapters here. Other methods have also been featured here, including textual and photographic. There are two points which I want to consider and end with. The first is to return to that opening point made by the editors—we are in an age of social and political tension. The second is de Noronha's question about why people are drawn to examples of multicultural conviviality. To start with the first point, at the time of writing, in 2024, some 49 per cent of the world's population is expected to experience an election this year and there is fear and alarm at possible outcomes. Social and political tensions are very much evident here in the UK where we have witnessed a significant upsurge in hate crimes. Across social and legacy media, in parliament (Hinsliff 2024) and in public spaces, difference is weaponized and the right to free assembly further legislated against (Home Office 2021). In this context, the question of how public space is understood as well as how it is used is crucial. The argument made here is that public space is about free association and free assembly. At night, as seen, its history is tied to nocturnalization and the emergence of the bourgeoisie, but this does not foreclose its meaning. Informed by Massey (2004), like all space, public space is always open and unfinished, and the practices and activities explored in this anthology capture this. They also point to the importance of how we understand public space informing the research we do. A focus explored in this anthology has been on the marginalised and it comes then to that second question of why we do the research we do.

Nightlife is typically about leisure, work, and people coming together so the foregrounding of conviviality is not surprising. But, as the current political context demands, we concur that "[i]n such a sociopolitical context,

there is an urgent need for us to find ways to see the human in the other to enable us to pave the way to constructing wide ranging solidarities that cut across supposed racial lines to help us forge a more hopeful present and future" (Singh 2023, 2). As a tool for understanding how people come together, conviviality can be useful, but de Noronha does warn against erasing its political edge. To focus only on the coming together without considering "economic conditions, state practices, and racist cultures" (de Noronha 2022, 174) erases the bite of conviviality, but also the ways public space at night is deeply entwined with laws, histories, and practices which inhibit the mobility and self-determination of others. I do not wish to over-celebrate or romanticize the night as some panacea for all that plagues contemporary society. Instead, it is important to balance out the competing and indeed multifunctional clams to space at night. What I take from this collection is that the night matters; venues matter, and spaces to connect matter, and it really matters how we represent that and research that in ways that recognizes its importance and its complexity. The night is complex because it is not simply an inversion of the day; for too long the night has been the day's antithesis; leisure to the day's work, freedom to the day's neoliberal capitalism. This not only strips the night of its specificity and history, but it also sets up a false binary and ignores the temporality of space and spatialization of time. Migration, contested spaces, the politics of being out and the politics of representation are all temporal, and night tempers these in ways that need to be carefully mapped against the relations of power and exclusion that shape them. The public sphere has long been conceived in terms of facilitating integration, but to consider how it does this at night, or, more accurately, to consider public space as temporal, is what this collection has expanded upon.

Bibliography

Acuto, Michele, Andreina Seijas, Jenny McArthur, and Enora Robin. 2021. *Managing Cities at Night*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Adeyemi, Kemi, Kareem Khubchandani, and Ramón H. Rivera-Servera. 2021. *Queer Nightlife*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Batty, Michael, Elena Besussi, Kees Maat, and Jan Jaap Harts. 2004. "Representing Multifunctional Cities: Density and Diversity in Space and Time." *Built Environment* 30 (4): 324–37.

Beaumont, Justin, and Christopher Baker, eds. 2011. *Postsecular Cities: Space, Theory and Practice*. London and New York: Continuum.

Carmona, Matthew. 2010. "Contemporary Public Space, Part Two: Classification." *Journal of Urban Design* 15 (2): 157–73.

Chatterton, Paul, and Robert Hollands. 2003. *Urban Nightscapes: Youth Cultures, Pleasure Spaces and Corporate Power*. New York: Routledge.

Crary, Jonathan. 2013. *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*. New York and London: Verso Books.

Ekenhorst, Marieke, and Irina van Aalst. 2019. "Lesbian Nightlife in Amsterdam: An Explorative Study of the Shift from 'Queer-Only' to 'Queer-Friendly' Spaces." *Fennia* 197 (2): 200–214.

Ekirch, A. Roger. 2005. *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

Gaffikin, Frank, Malachy Mceldowney, and Ken Sterrett. 2010. "Creating Shared Public Space in the Contested City: The Role of Urban Design." *Journal of Urban Design* 15 (4): 493–513.

Garcia-Mispireta, Luis Manuel. 2023. *Together, Somehow: Music, Affect, and Intimacy on the Dancefloor*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Gilroy, Paul. 2004. *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* Abingdon: Routledge.

Goldberg-Hiller, Jonathan. 2023. *Law by Night*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Hall, Stuart. 2004. "Divided City: The Crisis of London." *Open Democracy*, October 27. Accessed February 12, 2024. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/article_2191jsp/.

Harvey, David. 2005. *Transforming Cities*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Hepburn, A. C. 2004. *Contested Cities in the Modern West*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hinsliff, Gabby. 2024. "Brianna Ghey's Parents Met Hate with Love, and Sunak Chased Cheap Laughs. That Says It All about Him and His Party." *The Guardian*, February 8. Accessed February 13, 2022. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/feb/08/brianna-ghey-parents-love-rishi-sunak-cheap-laughs-election.

Home Office. 2021.*The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act*. Accessed February 12, 2024. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill.

Inglis, David. 2009. "Cosmopolitan Sociology and the Classical Canon: Ferdinand Tönnies and the Emergence of Global Gesellschaft." *The British Journal of Sociology* 60 (4): 813–32.

Koslofsky, Craig. 2012. *Evening's Empire: A History of the Night in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leavelle, Tracy Neal. 2004. "Geographies of Encounter: Religion and Contested Spaces in Colonial North America." *American Quarterly* 56 (4): 913–43.

Lefebvre, Henri. 1996 [1968]. "The Right to the City." In *Writings on Cities*, edited and translated by E. Kofinan and E. Lebas, 147–159. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

Mackay, Finn. 2015. *Radical Feminism: Feminist Activism in Movement*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Marcuse, Peter. 2014. "Reading the Right to the City." *City* 18 (1): 4–9.

Massey, Doreen. 2004. *Place and the Politics of Identity*. London: Routledge.

Massey, Doreen. 2005. *For Space*. London: Sage.

May, Reuben A. Buford. 2014. *Urban Nightlife: Entertaining Race, Class, and Culture in Public Space*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Melbin, Murray. 1987. *Night as Frontier: Colonizing the World After Dark*. New York: The Free Press.

Mollenkopf, John. H. 1983. *The Contested City*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Noronha, Luke. de. 2022. "The Conviviality of the Overpoliced, Detained and Expelled: Refusing Race and Salvaging the Human at the Borders of Britain." *The Sociological Review* 70 (1): 159–77.

Nowicka, Magdalena. 2020. "Fantasy of Conviviality: Banalities of Multicultural Settings and What We Do (Not) Notice When We Look at Them." In *Conviviality at the Crossroads: The Poetics and Politics of Everyday Encounters,* edited by O. Hemer, M. Povrzanović Frykman, and P. M. Ristilammi, 15–42. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature.

Pawel-Rammingen, Katharina von. 2021. "Black Feminism and the Violence of Disco." *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture* 13 (1): 25–35.

Pullan, Wendy. 2011. "Frontier Urbanism: The Periphery at the Centre of Contested Cities." *The Journal of Architecture* 16 (1): 15–35.

Purcell, Mark. 2002. "Excavating Lefebvre: The Right to the City and Its Urban Politics of the Inhabitant." *GeoJournal* 58: 99–108.

Purcell, Mark. 2014. "Possible Worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City." *Journal of Urban Affairs* 36 (1): 141–54.

Routledge, Paul. 2010. "Introduction: Cities, Justice and Conflict." *Urban Studies* 47 (6): 1165–77.

Seeliger, Martin, and Paula-Irene Villa Braslavsky. 2022. "Reflections on the Contemporary Public Sphere: An Interview with Judith Butler." *Theory, Culture & Society* 39 (4): 67–74.

Shapiro, Michael. 2010. *The Time of the City: Politics, Philosophy and Genre*. London: Routledge.

Shaw, Rob. 2017. "Pushed to the Margins of the City: The Urban Night as a Timespace of Protest at Nuit Debout, Paris." *Political Geography* 59: 117–25.

Simpson, Deane, Vibeke Jensen, and Anders Rubing, eds. 2017. *The City Between Freedom and Security: Contested Public Spaces in the 21st Century*. Basel, Switzerland: Birkhauser.

Singh, Amit. 2023. "'Carnal Conviviality' and the End of Race?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (forthcoming): 1–21. DOI 10.1080/01419870.2023.2234013.

Smith, Neil, and Setha Low. 2006. "Introduction: The Imperative of Public Space." In *The Politics of Public Space*, edited by S. Low and N. Smith, 1–16. New York / London: Routledge.

Swartjes, Britt, and Pauwke Berkers. 2022. "Designing Conviviality? How Music Festival Organizers Produce Spaces of Encounter in an Urban Context." *Leisure Sciences* (forthcoming) 1–18. DOI: 10.1080/01490400.2022.2106328.

Talbot, Deborah, and Martina Böse. 2007. "Racism, Criminalization and the Development of Night-Time Economies: Two Case Studies in London and Manchester." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (1): 95–118.

Tselika, Evanthia. 2018. "Ethno-Nationally Divided Cities and the Use of Art for Purposes of Conflict Resolution and Urban Regeneration." *Visual Studies* 33 (3): 280–94.

Watson, Sophie. 2006. *City Publics: The (Dis)enchantments of Urban Encounters*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Wicks, Nikhaela. 2022. "'You Wanna Come to the 'Urban' Night Tomorrow… It's the Wrong Night Tonight": Black Consumers as Both 'Wanted' and 'Unwanted' in the Night-Time Economy." *Conflict and Society* 8 (1): 20–37.

Wilson, Helen F. 2017. "On Geography and Encounter: Bodies, Borders, and Difference." *Progress in Human Geography* 41 (4): 451–71.

Wise, Amanda, and Greg Noble. 2016. "Convivialities: An Orientation." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 37 (5): 423–31.

Yeo, Su-Jan. 2020. "Right to the City (At Night)." In *Companion to Public Space*, edited by V. Mehta and D. Palazzo, 182–90. Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Yip, Ngai Ming, Miguel Angel Martínez López, and Xiaoyi Sun, eds. 2019. *Contested Cities and Urban Activism*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.

About the Author

Adam Eldridge is a senior lecturer in Sociology (University of Westminster). He holds a PhD in Gender and Cultural Studies (University of Sydney), where he explored the relationship between identity, history and geography. His current research is about the night, particularly regarding tourism, leisure and questions of belonging and identity.

Index

Amsterdam
- empirical research on asylum seeker youth 40–1
- LGBTQ+ cultural spaces 43
- nightlife 43–6
- refugee engagement with the spatiality of 41–2, *42*
- semi-public spaces 46–7
- Syrian refugee's arrival in 38
- undocumented migrant experiences 39
- Yallah Yallah evenings 44, *45*, 46
- *see also* asylum seeker youth; Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam

asylum seeker youth
- arrival infrastructures 38–9, 48
- empirical research 40–1
- emplacement strategies 48–9
- everyday forms of interaction 40
- exploration of cities 39–40
- housing 41
- loneliness and social isolation 46–8
- nocturnal stress 47–9, 207
- placemaking in public spaces 41–2, *42*, 48
- shisha bars 44–5
- social networks 44
- urban nightlife 38, 43–6, 48
- Yallah Yallah evenings 44, *45*, 46

Barbosa, Ivan 177

Berger, John 222, 226

Berlin
- ethnographic fieldwork 114–15
- food/drink delivery services 118, *118*, *119*, *129*, *131*
- inequalities of the platform economy 117–18
- maintenance of e-scooters ("juicers"), 112, 116, 120–2, 127–8, *130*, *131*
- night-time economy 117–18
- outsourcing of reproductive activities 118–20, 122
- the platform economy in 114
- as a smart city 112 n.1, 114
- visibility of the gig economy 112, 122, 127

Berlin Film Festival 143, 154

body, the
- embodied nature of Night Drawing 225–6
- embodied nature of nightwalking 28
- and nightwork 102–3

Böhme, Gernot 222, 225

Brazil
- Candomblé 202–3, 205, 206
- community-building in *terreiros* and samba 212–13
- Noke Koi Indigenous peoples' experiences 214–15, *215*
- *terreiro* spatial image 202, 205–6
- *see also* Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam

Cabo Verdean diaspora
- *batuko* groups 175
- connection to the urban environment 173, 175
- cultural production 171–2, 174–5, 179, 184
- diasporic identities 171–2, 174–6, 177, 179–80, 185–6
- experiences of home 178–9
- filmmaking 176–7
- intergenerational identity negotiation through music 168, 171–3
- *katchupa* 174, 178, 184
- *kriolu* (creole) 140, 169–70, 173, 184, 189, 192, 196
- of Lisbon 139–41, 167, 183–4
- migrant experiences in Rotterdam 170
- migrant-musician networks in Lisbon 189–90, 195
- Morabeza Records 170, 171, 176
- music and community-building in 167–8, 169–73, 180, 184, 186
- *Onde mar leva nos* (documentary) 169, 176–9
- of Rotterdam 167, 169–70
- São João festival 169, 173–6
- *see also Tejo Bar*, Lisbon

Calao, Loreta 210–11

Cheetham Hill, Manchester
- multi-ethnic community 21–2
- multisensory experiences of 23
- nightwalking autoethnographic account 28–30, 31
- urban geography of 22–3

cinema
- cloistral narratives 148
- compressive narratives 149–50
- *La Fractura* 149–50
- *La Nuit des Rois* 147, 149, *150*
- *Les Olympiades* 144–5, *145*
- *Médecin de nuit* 146–7, 151–2
- nocturnal movies 143, 144
- nocturnalization 154–5
- picaresque narratives 148–9
- single-night narratives 144, 147–52
- "slice-of-life" tradition 145–7
- traumatic night-time experiences 144, 152–4, *154*
- windows of illuminated night-time apartments 145–7, *145*

Conceição, Edson da 177

Cork
- legal status of food couriers 99, 101
- migrant food couriers 92–3, 98–101, *101*
- musical spaces of the African diaspora *161*, *162*, *163*
- nightnography research 94

cosmopolitics, term 186–7

COVID-19 pandemic
- dusk-time social interactions in Lisbon 135–9, 140–1
- food couriers 92, 102
- and night-time cultural spaces 205

Crary, Jonathan 112, 115

culture *see* nightlife; night-time cultural spaces; Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam

darkness
- conviviality 246–9
- a dark design ethos 25, 31–2
- dusk and the transition to 135–7
- light-dark binary 24, 26, 244, 245
- light-dark dynamic of theatres 207, 211, 214, 223
- lighting technologies 25–6, 219, 242
- perceptions of during Night Drawing 221–2, 226, 229–30
- personal interactions during 42, 135–6, 207, 211, 246–8
- practices of resistance 214–15
- shift to nocturnality 42
- in the urban night 219–20, 223–4, 226
- *see also* urban night

Dias, Sonya 169

digitalisation
- app-based work 99, *100*, 101, 102, 111–12, 127
- labour in night-time urban spaces 112–14, 115, 122–3, 129 n.1
- and nocturnalization in cinema 155
- of urban spaces 111–14

Dunn, Nick 207, 211

Edensor, Tim 136, 207, 211

Esteban Muñoz, José 69

Évora, Cesária 189, 190

Évora, Lena 169, 177–9, 180

food couriers
- bodily aspects 102–3
- in Cork 92–3, 98–101, *101*
- COVID-19 pandemic boom in 92, 102
- entrepreneurialism claims of the platforms 98, *100*
- ethnographic study 93–4
- gendered aspects 96–7, 103
- inequalities 103–4
- legal protections for 98, 99
- in London 92–3, 95–8, *96*
- migrants as 91–2, 98–9
- monitoring of 102
- as nightworkers 89–90
- platform workers 89, 90
- precarity 90, 95–6, 101, 102
- scholarship on 90–1

gender
- food couriers 96–7, 103
- gig economy research 91

gig economy
- digitalised 24/7 consumer economies 113
- gendered aspects 91, 96–7, 103
- inequalities of 117–18
- maintenance of e-scooters ("juicers") 112, 116, 120–2, 127–8, *130*
- parcel delivery services 128
- platform capitalism 89, 90, 115
- scholarship on 91
- and the "smart city," 112 n.1, 114, 116
- term 112
- visibility of 21, 112, 122, 127
- *see also* food couriers; platform workers

Hall, Stuart 177, 224, 239

Hall, Suzanne 94, 98

Ireland
- musical spaces of the African diaspora 159–60, 161, *161*, *162*
- *see also* Cork

Kahn, Sadiq 75, 79, 85

Koslofsky, Craig 143–4, 242, 245

Lagoeiro, Carlos 202–3, 205, *208*, 213
- *see also* Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam

Lefebvre, Henri 240, 241

LGBTQ+
- asylum seekers' access to nightlife 43
- City of Quebec (public house) 56–63, *57*, *58*
- club nights 66–70, *67*
- disidentification 69–70
- homonormativity in portrayals of 55–6, 57, 59
- mainstreaming of in the London mayoralty 54–5
- migration and night-time spaces 54, 55, 66–9
- night-time cultural spaces for in London 53–4, 64, 80, 83, 85
- queer and migrant positionalities 55, 56
- queer heritage in night-time spaces 53–4, 56–63, 70
- Royal Vauxhall Tavern 63, 80, 83, 160
- transient and pop-up venues 64–6, *64*, 70
- in Turkey 68, 69

light
- light-dark binary 24, 26
- lighting technologies 25–6, 219, 242

and social inequalities 26
see also darkness
Lisbon
Amadora *138*, 139, *140*
B. Leza Night Club 189, 195–6
Barreiro *140*
Cabo Verdean diaspora 139–41, 167, 183–4
Cabo Verdean nocturnal music scene 167–8, 184
Djair Sound Pub 195–6
dusk and the transition to darkness 135–9, 140–1
fieldwork research 188–9
location 188
migrant musician's network 189–90
policing of the pandemic curfew 139, 141
segregation of African migrant populations 184–5, 196
see also Tejo Bar
London
The Black Cap 63
The Chateau 64–6, *64*
City of Quebec (public house) 56–63, *57*, *58*
club nights 67
Cultural Infrastructure Action Plan 83
demographics 79, 80, 85
food couriers in 92–3, 95–8, *96*
From Good Night to Great Night 79, 84, 85
inclusion and diversity and access to night-time activities 80–1, 83–5
Jellied Eel Bar 83
LGBTQ+ cultural spaces 53–4, 64, 80, 83, 85
London Plan 79–80
mainstreaming of LGBTQ+ within city politics 54–5
Metropolitan Police 84
Night Czar 63, 78, 80
night drawing *221*, *225*, *226*, *228*
Night Time Commission 78, 79, 82
Night Time Enterprise Zones 75, 81–3, 85
Olympic-led regeneration 61, 67
planning policy 78–9, 85
The Royal Vauxhall Tavern 63, 80, 83, 160
segregation and access to venues 81
Turkish Delight (LGBTQ+ club night) 64–6, *67*
as a 24-hour city 79–81, 82
urban design and cultural spaces 75–6, 80, 81
"world city" status 54–5, 75, 85
Luz, Jon 185, 190–1, 192–3, 194, 195–6
see also Tejo Bar, Lisbon

Maniglia, Valentin 147
Maoli, Cláudia 202, 203, *208*, 213, 214
see also Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam
Marcuse, Peter 240–1
Massad, Joseph 69
Massey, Doreen 54, 55, 70, 164, 241–2, 243, 245, 246, 248
Melbin, Murray 42
Munganga (documentary) 203, 209–10, 214
music
acts of musicking 185, 186–7, 191–2, 193–4, *195*, 196–7
Angolan genre of kizomba 172
and Cabo Verdean community-building 167–8, 169–73, 180, 184, 186
diasporan intergenerational identity negotiation 168, 171–3
migrant musician networks in Lisbon 189–90, 195
migrants and sites of musical encounters 185, 187–8, 196
multisensory experiences of 168
musical spaces of the African diaspora 159–60, 161, *161*, *162*
Onde mar leva nos (documentary) 169, 176–9
photo essay 160–1, *161–3*, 164
at Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam 211–12, *212*
see also Tejo Bar, Lisbon

Netherlands, the *see* Amsterdam; Rotterdam; Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam
Night Drawing
challenges of 226
embodied nature 225–6
events and participants *220*, *222*, *224*, *225*, *226*, *227*, *228*, *229*
light-dark dynamics of urban spaces 219–20, 223–4, 226, 229–30
practice 220–2, 227–9
preconceptions of darkness 221–2, 226, 229–30
visual perspectives 222–3, 224–5, 226–7
Night Spaces: Migration, Culture and Integration in Europe (NITE) 12, 92, 135, 168, 177, 201–2
Night Studies 17, 26, 115, 160
nightlife
asylum seeker youth's access to 43–6, 48
Cabo Verdean diasporean community-building 184
diasporean community-building in Rotterdam 169–73, 180
ethnicity and entrance requirements 45–6
LGBTQ+ club nights 66–70, *67*
within night-time economy policy 77–8
queer heritage in night-time spaces 53–4, 56–63, 70
shisha bars 44–5
transient and pop-up LGBTQ+ venues 64–6, *64*, 70

venue multifunctionality 243–5
Yallah Yallah evenings 44
night-time cultural spaces
barriers to inclusion in night-time activities 81, 83–5
during the COVID-19 pandemic 205
migration and LGBTQ++ night-time spaces 54, 55, 66–9
night-time LGBTQ+ cultural spaces in London 80, 83, 85
queer heritage in night-time spaces 53–4, 56–63, 70
as sites of multicultural encounters 202
terreiros in Brazil 201, 202–3, 205–6
nightwalking
autoethnographic research 26, 27
embodied nature of 28
food couriers nightnography 94
invisible cityscapes 13
in Lisbon *138*
in Manchester 28–30
nocturnal praxis 25–8, 31
practice of 25, 26, 31, 160
see also Cheetham Hill, Manchester
nightwork
Autonomy's municipal strategies 93
bodily aspects 102–3
links with migration 91–2
platform workers 89–90
scholarship on 91, 93
see also food couriers
nocturnalization
of cinema 143, 144, 154–5
of European culture 89–90, 242–3
notion 143–4
time-spaces of night-time 144
Noronha, Luke de 246, 248, 249

Oliveros, Pauline 227
Onana, Sandra 143, 154
Ong, Aihwa 202

platform workers
app-based work 99, *100*, 101, 102, 111–12, 120–1, 127
within the digitised urban space 111–12, 113–14
lack of rest 129
precarity 116, 117
as prosumers 121
reproductive activities outsourced to 118–20, 122, 129
social media networks 121–2
workers with migrant histories 116, 117, 122
see also food couriers; gig economy
Portugal *see* Lisbon
public spaces
asylum seeker youth's placemaking 41–2, *42*, 48
of contested cities 238–9, 241, 243, 244
conviviality 245–9
definition 40, 243
management of 240
at night 240
nocturnalization of European culture 242–3
the right to the city at night 240–1
social life in 46–8
temporalities 237–8, 242–3, 245

race
barriers to inclusion in night-time activities 83–5
experiences of the Noke Koi Indigenous peoples 214–15, *215*
and the GLA's cultural strategy 80, 85
interactions with the Metropolitan Police 84
Reis, Nelly dos 169, 177–9, 180
Rotterdam
Cabo Verdean diaspora 167, 169–70
music and community-building in the Cabo Verdean diaspora 169–73, 180
São João festival 169, 173–6

Santos, Milton 206, 215, 216
Schor, Juliet 91, 102, 104
Schwartz, David 103–4
senses, the
multisensory experiences of music-making 168
multisensory experiences of night spaces 21, 22, 23–4, 31, 136
nocturnal aesthetics 24
political dimensions 27
visual perspective 222–3, 224–5, 226–7
Simmel, Georg 187–8, 225
Small, Christopher 186, 187
Sodré, Muniz 206, 211

Talbot, Deborah 84
Tejo Bar, Lisbon
acts of musicking 191–2, 193–4, *195*, 196–7
clientele 191, 194, 196
hand-rubbing as appreciation 194, 196
location in the Alfama district 191, 192, *193*, 194
musicians 191, 193, 194, 196
as a site of musical encounters 185, 187–8, 196
terreiros
and Candomblé practices 202–3, 205, 206
community-building in *terreiros* and samba 212–13
multiple connotations of 202, 206, 216
the night as 202, 205, 210

- and night-time cultural spaces 201, 202–3, 205–6
- as sites of resistance 206

Theatre Munganga, Amsterdam
- cultural production 204, 207, 213–14
- darkness and spatiality 207, 211, 214
- facade *210*
- foundation 202, 203–4
- materiality of the space 207–8, *208*
- music performances 211–12, *212*
- Noke Koi Indigenous peoples' experiences in Brazil 214–15, *215*
- participatory methodological research 203
- puppetry 208–9
- reterritorialization of Brazilian culture 209
- as a site of multicultural citizenship 201, 202, 204–5, 206–7, 210–11, 213, 216
- as a site of resistance 204, 213–16
- spatial theorizations of 204, 206–8
- *terreiro* spatial image 202, 205, 209, 210, 216
- venue multifunctionality 243–4

urban design
- concept of the lit world 24–5
- a dark design ethos 25, 31–2
- definition 76
- the evening/night-time economy 76–8
- inclusive access to night-time activities 81, 85
- lighting technologies 25–6
- London's cultural spaces 75–6, 80, 81
- as a practice of representation 224–5

urban night
- Cabo Verdean diaspora experiences 171, 180
- community-building in 12
- contested cities 11, 237, 238–9, 241, 243, 244
- darkness and light in 219–20, 223–4, 226, 229–30
- experimental methodologies 160
- lack of scholarship on 37
- multidimensionality of 11–13, 23, 25, 242–3
- the right to the city at night 240–1
- socio-cultural interactions 12–13, 237–8, 242
- temporalities 160–1, 164

urban spaces
- contested cities 238–9, 241, 243, 244
- local-global relationships 54–5, 70
- multifunctionality of 243–5, 246

Velho, Francianne Santos dos 203

Warner, Michael 55

Wicks, Nikhaela 84

Williams, Robert 23, 42, 205, 214

Zumthor, Peter 220

Urban Nightlife and Contested Spaces: Cultural Encounters after Dusk captures the multifarious nature of the urban night and how it is lived, structured, and reflected upon in diverse cultural and artistic expressions. The volume acknowledges the urban night as an often-overlooked key dimension necessary to understand the complexities of today's urban spaces, including the often-polarizing question of migration. After dusk, urban social challenges are often magnified, as questions of who can be where and when—along ethnic, racial or gender lines, for example—gain an additional dimension.

The volume underscores, indeed, the multi-dimensionality of night spaces, where bottom-up, grassroot initiatives provide opportunities for self-expression by traditionally marginalized and silenced groups. Chapters span disciplines of urbanism and urban history, literary, film and cultural studies, music, sociology of labour, anthropology of migration, alongside autoethnographic contributions and practice-based photo essays by artists for whom the night is their habitual setting and canvas.

Sara Brandellero is a University Lecturer at the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society.

Kamila Krakowska Rodrigues is a University Lecturer at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society.

Derek Pardue is an Associate Professor in the Global Studies Department at Aarhus University, Denmark.

AUP.nl