THE SUBJECTS OF SUBJECTIVE MAPPING: LOCATIVE ART, CRITICAL THEORY, AND CREATIVE SYSTEMS

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Edward S. Prutzer III, B.A.

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Edward S. Prutzer III, B.A.

Thesis Advisor: Matthew Tinkcom, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

What ideologies are constituted in the practices of locative art? What effect do the creative systems supporting locative art projects have on the circulation of these ideologies? How do developers and academics frame locative art projects, and how do their remarks concur or differ with the ideologies apparent in locative art projects? What does it mean to artistically represent contemporary social relations as data, and how do developers and academics address this? To address these questions, this thesis performs an ideological critique of four locative art projects – Iain Mott’s Sound Mapping, Christian Nold’s San Francisco Emotion Map, Mushon Zer-Aviv’s You Are Not Here: A Dislocative Tourism Agency, and Paolo Cirio’s Street Ghosts – and supplements these findings by investigating each project’s creative system. This thesis analyzes the sign systems of each project, applies relevant critical theory, traces the effect of competing discourses within each project, and contextualizes these findings by presenting each project’s creative system. In doing so, the thesis emphasizes two key findings. The first is that each project reflects the market ideologies of capitalism and the commodification of place through interpellative activities that reveal the importance of technological infrastructure in mediating one’s sense of place. The second is that the dislocative tension becomes a telling site of contradiction within the pieces, one that reveals more about the commodity and technological fetishes of each project than their purported content.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I. Cartography, Locative Art, Locality, and Power

In both their physical and digital forms, maps fulfill a guiding function, but the meticulous designs of maps can easily go unnoticed in everyday use, without any recognition of their cultural implications. Each year, for instance, the Cartography and Geographical Information Society holds a competition featuring the finest maps produced, ranging from pieces from the CIA’s Cartography Center to National Geographic (Stevenson, 2013). In writing about the 2013 winner for Best in Show at its annual Cartography and Geography Competition, Seth Stevenson (2013) remarks:

These days, almost all the data cartographers use is provided by the government and is freely available in the public domain. Anybody can download databases of highways, airports, and cities, and then slap a crude map together with the aid of a plotter. What separates a great map from a terrible one is choosing which data to use and how best to present it.

This shows that the translation of data into a particular mode of representation through maps is a significant process. Stevenson (2013) proceeds to discuss how the labeling, color assignments, and tinting affect maps’ representations greatly, using the Best in Show winner as an example.

All narrative spaces, whether one looks at literature, photography, or video games, dictate certain subjective experiences for viewers in accordance with a given artist’s message. Stevenson details this through the arrangements of a map’s subtle elements that create meaning. Subjective mapping is no different. As opposed to prototypical forms of mapping, subjective mapping, entailing “maps that are tailored to the context of the observer,” can be more experimental (Chen, 2011). When applying this definition to locative art, subjective mapping can be extended to include an artist’s incorporation of urban dwellers’ subjective experiences in navigating a given city. In
locative art projects, designers use geospatial technologies to capture many of these additional elements. They include said elements in their unique depictions of locality.

This thesis shows that a body of critical theory incorporating semiotics and ideology is useful in analyzing locative art beyond its resonance with theories of place-making. Such a framework allows a critic to focus not only on the content of the piece, but also on the artistic decisions behind a given work’s presentation. This is necessary to research what is being represented, rather than to merely examine the relation of pieces to theories of place-making in a broad sense, while analyzing the range of subjectivities that inhabit the piece. By applying ideological critique and the systems approach to creativity, this thesis presents two key findings. First, each project reflects the market ideologies of capitalism and the commodification of place through interpellative activities that reveal the importance of technological infrastructure in mediating one’s sense of place. The second finding relates to a conflict that I refer to as the dislocative tension.

Locality describes a place as a scene of specific patterns of actions amongst those who inhabit it. Accordingly, locative projects represent place in this manner. In contrast, if a work is described as dislocative, this implies a reverse effect – the expression of a particular place and the patterns of behavior in it amongst those who do not actually inhabit it. In this, the dislocative experience both asserts and dismisses the uniqueness of localities simultaneously. The dislocative mode reinforces how places host unique activities amongst its subjects, but implies at the same time that these actions could still be performed not only by others who do not inhabit that place, but also performed in a different place altogether. This is a tension with which several locative art projects struggle. Furthermore, the mobility of such pieces exacerbates this tension, as they often rely on geospatial technologies that annihilate space and time. Thus, as its second key finding, this thesis
argues that the dislocative tension becomes a telling site of contradiction within the pieces, one that reveals more about the commodity and technological fetishes of each project than their purported content.

As reflected in the locative projects in this thesis, this means that one’s sense of place is being guided by global, rather than local, technological infrastructure. This guidance mirrors the power dynamics inherent in the projects, as they are in all cultural productions. To borrow from John Fiske’s perspective, a careful analysis of power in these productions will investigate both how the individuals behind the projects seek to impart a message onto their subjects and how subjects use the text’s parameters as a mode of expression (Cormack, 1992, p. 22). Accordingly, this thesis will perform an ideological critique of four different locative art projects, from one of the earliest projects considered as locative art to the present day, in order to historicize the different subjective experiences locative art has created for its subjects over time. The broader question that frames this research is implied in the title of this thesis through its double meaning. The title calls attention to ‘subjects’ as the users of locative art and ‘subjects’ as the topics that locative art projects address. Both of these facets to the projects are critical to the indirect appeals and messages that they attempt to convey to their audiences.

II. Research Questions

Relevant literature has seldom analyzed how locative art projects are situated in a larger body of critical theory and in creative systems involving educational institutions, companies, and museums. Accordingly, this thesis asks: what ideologies are constituted in the practices of locative art? What effect do the creative systems supporting locative art projects have on the circulation of
these ideologies? How do developers and academics frame locative art projects, and how do their remarks concur or differ with the ideologies apparent in locative art projects? What does it mean to artistically represent contemporary social relations as data, and how do developers and academics address this?

These questions can be best addressed by examining locative art pieces as creative cultural productions. In treating the four locative art pieces in this analysis as creative, this thesis treats each work as a product of a creative system that provides the inspiration and support for each project. Likewise, this thesis explores how each project operates in a system of pre-existing cultural meanings as well as how each project calls out to its subjects and online viewers. To clarify how each will be treated, this thesis incorporates the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a creativity scholar, and Michael Cormack, a cultural critic who provides a framework for critiquing the elements of cultural productions.

III. Methods

Csikszentmihalyi (1998) sees social, cultural, and psychological dimensions to creativity. He also claims that “what we call creativity is a phenomenon that is constructed through an interaction between producer and audience. Creativity is not the product of single individuals, but of social systems making judgments of individuals’ products” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1998, p. 314). Due to these distinctions, Csikszentmihalyi (1998) envisions a triadic model to creativity that he calls the systems approach to creativity.
Figure 1.1: Csikszentmihalyi’s Systems Approach to Creativity

Through it, he deems creativity “a process that can be observed only at the intersections where individuals, domains, and fields interact” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1998, p 314). The domain refers “to an existing pattern. ‘New’ is meaningful only in reference to the ‘old’” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1998, pp. 314-315). In this sense, for example, the domain could be a pre-existing discipline, style, or movement. The field is comprised of the “gatekeepers” that encompass “the social organization of the domain – to the teachers, critics, journal editors, museum curators, agency directors, and foundational officers who decides what belongs to a domain and what does not” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1998, p. 315). Csikszentmihalyi (1998) distinguishes between creativity and originality in accounting for the social dimension of creativity: “there is no way, even in principle, to separate the reaction of society from the person’s contribution. The two are inseparable. As long as the idea or product has not been validated, we might have originality, but not creativity” (p. 321). As a method, Csikszentmihalyi (1998) argues that the systems approach can reveal aspects surrounding creative works that often go unnoticed:
The systems model makes it possible to see the contributions of the person to the creative process in a theoretically coherent way. In the first place, it brings attention to the fact that before a person can introduce a creative variation, he or she must have access to a domain, and must want to learn to perform according to its rules . . . . But it also suggests a number of additional factors that are usually ignored, for instance, that cognitive and motivational factors interact with the state of the domain and the field (p. 327).

In spite of the insights it affords, the systems model of creativity is inherently reductive. A network model, in contrast, enables researchers to account for the specific trends in social interaction that create the zeitgeists wherein the potential for a creative environment arises. This would then more readily explain creativity in cities, institutions, universities, and the like. However, the systems model of creativity provides a useful heuristic by which a researcher can analyze the situations that yield a creative work. Simply put, by using the systems model, one can create simple visualizations for creativity while acknowledging the complex elements embedded in creativity, even if it does not always directly address them. As such, this thesis will scrutinize each instance of a locative project for its creative system. It will contextualize the results within the findings reached through ideological critique, which will show how each work functions as a cultural production comprised of meaningful signs.

Cormack (1992) argues that signs assume much of their readers. In this, subjects are “continually being subject to ideological address and, through our response to it, continually confirming and maintaining our ideological status” (p. 19). Due to this dynamic, it is critical to analyze cultural productions for the ways they reflect and mediate ideologies. Cormack (1992) defines cultural products as “specific, identifiable objects and events in which the culture is made manifest. This should clarify the relationship between culture and ideology. The culture . . . is a material manifestation of ideology” (p. 28). Given this, “[t]he analysis of cultural products then
becomes a convenient way in which to study ideology” (Cormack, 1992, p. 26). To this end, Cormack (1992) outlines five areas of analysis fundamental to the investigation of cultural productions: “content, structure, absence, style, and mode of address” (p. 27).

Content, comprised of “judgments, vocabulary, characters, and actions,” is “used to express a view of reality – one that the audience is asked to share” and, in this invitation, is confronted with producers’ “perspective on the world” (Cormack, 1992, pp. 28-29). Structure, in turn, describes how meaning is made in the organization of different aspects of a cultural product in relation to each other and the whole (Cormack, 1992, p. 29). Elements of a cultural product that Cormack (1992) deems as absent are those that “might have been expected to be in the text but which are missing from it” (p. 31). Style describes the coherence that the text assumes – be it through use of colors, the angle of a camera, or the inclusion of text – aside from the ties that emerge from structure (p. 32). Lastly, a cultural production’s mode of address is tied to the interpellative activity the text dictates. Therefore, the mode of address “concerns the way in which the cultural product is aimed at us, the way in which it ‘speaks’ to us” (Cormack, 1992, p. 33).

While this project will investigate locative art as works of cultural productions from all of Cormack’s elements, it will particularly focus on the mode of address and scene of interpellation instantiated by each work. This, of course, requires a synthesis of various schools of critical theory to develop a unique theoretical apparatus that reveals locative art’s cultural operations. The literature review outlines such an apparatus before applying it to each of the works addressed in this thesis. The thesis then applies this apparatus to four different locative art pieces – Iain Mott’s Sound Mapping, Christian Nold’s San Francisco Emotion Map, Mushon Zer-Aviv’s You Are Not Here: A Dislocative Tourism Agency, and Paolo Cirio’s Street Ghosts. This analysis traces locative
art from one of its earliest projects, as Sound Mapping was originally performed in 1998, to the present day.

While this thesis will not attempt to generalize upon the entire digital locative mode based on these four projects alone, it does present several insightful commonalities between these four different projects. The intent behind these assertions is not to criticize the projects for these tendencies; each project is unique and an expressive digital artifact that often provides new outlets for their subjects. However, these tendencies do reveal that these representations of space are hegemonic, presenting bounded experiences in their interpellative exercises and encouraging participation only to a certain extent. Antonio Gramsci coined the term hegemony to refer to how those in dominant positions incorporate “elements of subordinate ideologies into the dominant ideology.” In this, “[t]he dominant class gives a little, in order to retain a lot” (Cormack, 1992, p. 15). Accordingly, in their interpellative exercises, the artists instill ready-made interpretations for their subjects conveyed through indirect modes of address while emphasizing how the particular media practice involved is still liberating for subjects.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

I. Theories of Locative Media and Place-Making

Locative media covers “a range of experimental uses of geo-technologies including location-based games, artistic critique of surveillance technologies, experiential mapping, and spatial annotation” (Hamilton, 2009, pp. 393-94). As a field of art, it began maturing in the mid 2000s – though “artists such as Masaki Fujihata (Japan), Teri Rueb (U.S.A.), Stefan Schemat (Germany) and Iain Mott (Australia) had for many years been producing work we may term locative art,” it was during this time that “locative media and locative art were simultaneously opening up new ways of engaging in the world and mapping their own domain” (Hemment, n.d., p. 394). Anthony Townsend (2006) recognizes that the Clinton administration’s “removal of the Selective Availability in the Global Positioning System [GPS] . . . launched the era of location awareness” and eventually, the zeitgeist in which locative media would thrive (p. 347). GPS itself began with physicists William Guier and George Weiffenbach, who worked together at the Johns Hopkins’ Applied Physics Laboratory, calculating the trajectory of Sputnik by capturing its “audio fingerprint” through the Doppler effect (Johnson, 2010, pp. 183-184). They were then asked to reverse the process to calculate the position of U.S. submarines using satellites, and it was this investigation that laid the foundation for GPS (Johnson, 2010, pp. 185-186).

Researchers promote locative media for its relevance to theories of space and place as well as urban dynamics and media. Scholars writing on the topic draw from contemporary urban sociology in contending that “stable places no longer exist and have been replaced by fluid and ever-changing spaces” (Diamantaki et al, 2007, p. 2). Place, according to Timothy Creswell (2008), simply refers to “locations with meaning” (p. 138). Such scholars invoke “Castells’ ‘spaces of flows’, Urry’s
‘horizontal mobilities and fluidities’ and Augé’s ‘non-places’” to assert that “places no longer exist as unified, stable and durable contexts, but rather as fluid and rather impersonal meeting points of highly mobile individuals” (Diamantaki et al, 2007, p. 2). To match this sense of fluidity, as “[a] poetic form of data visualization,” locative projects can “counter the Cartesian logic of grid-based maps and reinscribe space with the temporal, fluid and irregular rhythms of peoples’ meanderings” through experiential mapping (Hamilton, 2009, p. 394).

Theories from the Chicago School of Sociology, also prevalent in academic works on locative media, supplement this idea of fluidity. Many theorists of the Chicago School “argued that associational life exists in highly urbanized, industrialized metropolitan cities” (Shin, 2009, p. 427). The relational aspect of urban life, then, reinforces a “moral region [that] enables diverse moral codes to prevail and individuals to create associations with others . . . for stimulation and moral support.” As such, “the great cities are also a space for community, which is mobilized by the means of transportation and communication” (Shin, 2009, p. 435). This introduces the importance of infrastructure in the cultures of cities.

Likewise, Martin de Waal (2011) includes the work of Louis Wirth, one of the figures from the Chicago School, in his discussion of different technocultural imaginaries evident in locative projects. de Waal discusses “Urbanism as a Way of Life,” an article from 1938 wherein Wirth “laid out how the density of the city leads to cultural specialization, a spatial segregation of lifestyles, and a breakdown of rigid social structures.” Katerina Diamantaki et al (2007) also mention the Chicago School before detailing the standpoint of new urban sociology. They explain that “[u]rban studies, from the early Chicago School thought . . . has always depicted the city as a complex and highly
ambivalent space, where the contradicting forces of modernity coexist in . . . often unpredictable ways” (Diamantaki et al, 2007, p. 2).

While many researchers focus on a place-making narrative, there remains much to consider in terms of projects’ capacities for ideological critique. This, in turn, will be the main point of intervention for this thesis and its prime contribution to the existing literature. de Waal (2011) astutely notes that locative artists “work with these very technologies to critique their role in promoting a consumer based society or bringing about a ‘society of control.’” Furthermore, Marc Tuters and Kazys Varnelis (2006) assert that “locative media offers a conceptual framework by which to examine certain technological assemblages and their potential social impacts” and that “locative media strives, at least rhetorically, to reach a mass audience by attempting to engage consumer technologies and redirect their power” (p. 362). This places locative media within the cultural forces of production and consumption as both artifacts of those processes and, in some cases, standards by which those processes may be critiqued.

Three influences on modern cultural theory central to such an investigation – Walter Benjamin’s theorization of the flâneur, Guy Debord’s Situationist mapping, and Michel de Certeau’s *The Practice of Everyday Life* – appear several times in the relevant literature alongside theoretical insights on place-making. Benjamin’s conception of the flâneur implies the positioning of city inhabitants at “a safe distance about urban phenomena, . . . never really engaged or called into action” (de Waal, 2011). Flanerie is slightly more complex than it may seem, as Phillip Smith and Alexander Riley (2009) posit that “[o]n the one hand, the flaneur is an active agent . . . in the nonchalant study of human nature. On the other hand, he or she is an alienated individual seeking superficial solace in the anonymous crowd [and] the fetish of the commodity” (p. 41). Likewise,
Benjamin’s unfinished exploration of space in the Arcades project includes Benjamin’s conclusion that “this relationship between subjectivity, space, and the commodity was to continue with the department store” (Smith and Riley, 2009, p. 41). This places added emphasis on the importance of the commodity fetish in generating a sense of place when considered alongside Benjamin’s notion of the flâneur.

Meanwhile, the Situationists, prominent in the 1950s and 1960s, “worked to counter the rationalist city models tailored to the consumerist logic of the ‘society of spectacle’ with an approach centered on subjective experiences of the city” (de Waal, 2011). They contended that the city is “conditioned by and [conditions] human emotions and social experiences. To take an example, walking the city is an act that ends up creating the very city and ‘constructing’ it as a tangible experience.” Hence, the city “is not only geography, but as the Situationists would claim it is also “psychogeography” (Diamantaki et al, 2007, p. 3).

Tuters and Varnelis (2006) state that “Situationism is frequently claimed as a precursor to the locative media movement” given that “Situationist leader Guy Debord steadily whittled away at art practices, finally leaving the movement as a series of programmatic texts that advocated intervening in the city with only minor modifications” (p. 359). Likewise, Tuters and Varnelius envision that “locative-media projects can be categorized under one of two types of mapping, either annotative – virtually tagging the world – or phenomenological – tracing the action of the subject in the world,” both of which they contend match “the twin Situationist practices of détournement and the dérive” respectively. While annotative projects mirror the former in their aim “to change the world by adding data to it,” phenomenological projects mirror the latter “in adopting the mapping-by-wandering tactics of the dérive” to “suggest that we can re-embody ourselves in the world, thereby
escaping the prevailing sense that our experience of place is disappearing in late capitalist society” (Tuters and Varnelis, 2006, p. 359).

Tuters and Varnelis (2006) are quite clear that this re-embodiment of the subject within his or her surroundings is most certainly an issue of code in the digital age (p. 359). Drew Hemment (n.d.) attests that the scope of modern locative projects “shifts the focus from mapping or visualization to performativity—enabling normally hidden operations to be not only brought into view but also performed” (p. 351). This suggests that locative projects can expose the iterative processes subjects undergo in different urban environments, and that the surfacing of this in locative pieces can be construed as a process of dictating specific subjective experiences. Furthermore, this focus on performativity reveals an added element of corporeality in such projects, given that “many locative artworks incorporate the body and the subjective experience as the key feature of the performance” (San Cornelio and Ardevol, p. 320). In doing so, locative projects can match how “[p]ublic space is the place of (identity) politics and performance, where subjects show themselves, where they learn how they are different or similar from others, where they forge new alliances and relate to each other” (de Waal, 2008). Manovich incorporates both annotative and phenomenological projects under the broader category of augmented reality:

The main point in his theory is that physical space is converted into a data space by two applications which are interrelated: 1) extracting data from space (surveillance mapping) and 2) augmenting space with data (computer displays). Thus, an augmented reality system helps the user to do the work in a physical space by augmenting this space with additional information (San Cornelio and Ardevol, 2011, p. 320).

The work of de Certeau is also applicable to this emphasis on code in place-making interventions. de Certeau envisions urban dwellers as “practitioners that make use of spaces that cannot be seen”
(San Cornelio and Ardévol, 2011, 316). To de Certeau, this underscores not only how subjects inhabit space, but also the subjects themselves:

The presence and circulation of a representation (taught by preachers, educators, and popularizers as the key to socioeconomic advancement) tells us nothing about what it is for its users. We must first analyze its manipulation by users who are not its makers. Only then can we gauge the difference or similarity between the production of the image and the secondary production hidden in the process of its utilization.

Such a formulation introduces two new processes into a discussion of locative art and locative media: production and institutional influence. Both are promulgated by the nature of the representation or ‘image’ that a given locative project assumes. This demands an expansion of the theoretical framework established in prior literature on locative art.

II. Relevant Theories of Production and Consumption

Theories of the commodity fetish are important to the content of many locative products. According to Theodor Adorno (1991), “Marx defines the fetish character of the commodity as the veneration of the thing made by oneself which, as an exchange-value, simultaneously alienates itself from producer to consumer.” He proceeds to quote Karl Marx in further explaining commodity fetish: “the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labor is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labor” (Adorno, 1991, p. 278). Additionally, Debord (1970) treats the commodity fetish as “the domination of society by ‘intangible as well as tangible things,’ which reaches its absolute fulfillment in the spectacle, where the tangible world is replaced by a selection of images which exist above it.” In the relation between the artist and the viewer, locative projects can in many ways also be seen as
commentaries on technological fetishism. To elaborate, Tuters and Varnelis (2006) clarify that, regarding technological fetishism, “[i]f Marx considered the object the result of alienation of the product from its production and, by extension, its origins, Freud understood it as symbolic replacement for an irrecoverable object lost in a primordial trauma” (Tuters and Varnelis, 2006, p. 362).

Specifically, “[t]he fetish arises because we endow technologies – mere things – with powers they do not have,” and because of the blindness that results from this fetish, users invest greatly into idealized operations of these technologies stemming from these imposed powers (Harvey, 2003, p. 3). Technological fetishism is worth theorizing because of the meanings invested in technologies by dominant groups reinforcing the relations of production and the meanings embedded in the social contexts by which they rise (Harvey, 2003, pp. 4-5). In regard to locative projects in their representations of the lived environment, “a great deal has been written and debated, particularly since the exertions of the Frankfurt School from the 1930s on, about the fantasy of the total domination of nature through technological forms” (Harvey, 2003, p. 14). Overall, users’ consumption of technology is a significant personal tendency within modern capitalism.

With the commodity fetish and technological fetish in mind, one can see how production and consumption may affect place-making. Debord (1970), in particular, finds that “[c]apitalist production has unified space” in “an extensive and intensive process of banalization. The accumulation of commodities produced in mass for the abstract space of the market . . . also had to destroy the autonomy and quality of places” (Debord, 1970). Marx’s conceptions of production and the resulting alienation of the worker correspond to this universalism. To Marx (1971), production “can have no other existence except as an abstract one-sided relation of an already given concrete
and living aggregate” (Marx, 1971, p. 35). Within this system, subjects feel a sense of liberation from “free competition,” which Marx (1971) deems “the most complete suppression of all individual liberty and total subjugation to social conditions which take the form of material forces” (Marx, 1971, p. 131).

Before supplying a condensed definition of ideology as “the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group,” Louis Althusser (1971) accounts for different Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) that maintain this suppression (p. 158). These include the religious, educational, and communications ISAs – all, by Althusser’s (1971) definition of an ISA, “realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions” (p. 143). Each of the ISAs Althusser (1971) lists “contribute to the same result: the reproduction of the relations of production, i.e. of capitalist relations of exploitation” (p. 154). It will later be seen how locative representations can show the influence of ISAs in sustaining subjects’ identities as alienated consumers in urban environments, in terms of both their symbolic and material content.

Moreover, the universalism that capitalism brings forth affects the aura of places and, in turn, how places are “consumed”:

Tourism, human circulation considered as consumption, a by-product of the circulation of commodities, is fundamentally nothing more than the leisure of going to see what is already banal. The economic organization of visits to different places is already . . . the guarantee of their equivalence (Debord, 1970).

Debord (1970) further details how cities have become organized around consumption, describing that “[u]rbanism is capitalism’s seizure of the natural and human environment; developing logically into absolute domination, capitalism can and must now remake the totality of space into its own
setting” (Debord, 1970). In turn, he finds that the tensions of urban environments arise from the forces of production, as “[u]rbanism is the modern fulfillment of the uninterrupted task which safeguards class power: the preservation of the atomization of workers who had been dangerously brought together by . . . production” (Debord, 1970). Given how capitalism alters the economic organization and consumption of cities, often the subject of locative projects that intervene in place-making through technology, one must examine the urban technological infrastructures and creative networks that such projects draw from.

III. Media Urbanism, Globalization, Creativity, and Affect

Media urbanism recognizes the influence of digital infrastructures on urban planning, potentially subverting pre-established power dynamics through a proliferation of information and communications technologies (“MediaArchitecture – Media Urbanism,” 2007; Sundaram, 2010, p. 5). The role of urban media as manifested in these technological infrastructures can be complex in the operations of a given city, as, “for Parsons and Habermas, media is the main conceptual tool to understand social integration, in which different types of media function to integrate different social domains” (Shin, 2009, 435). According to Simmel, society is “the product of the ceaseless interactions of individuals” (Smith and Riley, 2009, p. 16). As such, in line with the emergent infrastructures of media urbanism, “in the contemporary city . . . we are constantly bombarded by information and there is an ‘intensification of nervous stimulation . . . . [C]itizens are surrounded by strangers and advertisements, traffic signs, and other such messages’” (Smith and Riley, 2009, p. 17). Simmel contends that “the deepest problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social
forces.” Simmel claims that urban dwellers must “develop a blasé attitude,” in response, or, in other words, to remain “cool, distant, and aloof from other people and from the streetscape around us . . . and not to take any interest in any one thing in the urban environment” (Smith and Riley, 2009, p. 18). This blasé attitude is, unsurprisingly, cited in the previous literature on locative media as a means of, in line with Simmel’s formulations, “preventing metropolitan dwellers from the emotional upheaval generated by a constant stream of stimuli from the urban setting” (San Cornelio and Ardévol, p. 427).

One could envision locative media and its appropriation through locative art as a vital avenue of media urbanism for the manner in which it incorporates ubiquitous computing. de Waal (2011) relates the rise of ubiquitous computing to the emerging technological infrastructures associated with media urbanism:

Ubiquitous computing, it is argued, will create “seamless experiences” where computers operate calmly in the background. This particular way of understanding the city can be linked to a historic modernist idea of urban technology in which the city is envisioned as a collection of efficiently managed, ever-improving technological infrastructures whose successive rollout will bring us a better life.

GPS is certainly an example of ubiquitous computing in its pervasive yet discreet nature. By appropriating and visualizing geospatial infrastructure, it is clear that “locative media offers a conceptual framework by which to examine certain technological assemblages and their potential social impacts” (Tuters and Varnelis, 2006, p. 362).

Some critics, in fact, point to the American government’s control over the geospatial infrastructure that locative projects appropriate as dangerous in that “we allow ourselves to be targeted by a global military infrastructure and be ‘interpellated into Imperial ideology,’” in the
words of Brian Holmes (Tuters and Varnelis, 2006, p. 361). Interpellation, which will be revisited in the next section, describes “the way in which ideology ‘calls out’ to individuals. The text, then, is a structured product which calls out to an audience, attempting to elicit a specific reaction” (Cormack, 1992, p. 18). In this, Tuters and Varnelis point toward “something peculiar, even comical, in how the [locative] movement is ‘the Next Big Thing’ to some and a capitalist apocalypse to others.” To situate this contradiction, Tuters and Varnelis borrow from Frederic Jameson in arguing that art often “simultaneously represents the . . . brutal world of labor and toil while creating a Utopian gesture.” As Jameson puts it, this “replicates the specializations and divisions of capitalist life at the same time that it seeks in precisely such fragmentation a desperate Utopian compensation for them.” While this may sound bleak initially, such a formulation allows for criticism of locative art regarding any contradictions it may embody without being so hypercritical that the redemptive aims of such projects cannot be taken into account (Tuters and Varnelis, 2006, p. 361).

Through this particular mode of representation, locative media can depict cities through new perspectives and metrics. In doing so, the practice of locative art matches the need to re-conceptualize urban spaces that William Mitchell (1996) articulates:

In a world of ubiquitous computation and telecommunication, electronically augmented bodies, postinfobahn architecture, and big-time bit business, the very idea of a city is challenged and must eventually be reconceived. Computer networks become as fundamental to urban life as street systems. Memory and screen space become valuable, sought-after sorts of real estate. Much of the economic, social, political, and cultural action shifts into cyberspace. As a result, familiar urban design issues are up for radical reformulation.

To this end, Gemma San Cornelio and Elisenda Ardévol assert that “locative media artworks act upon distinctive ways to understand the mediation of technology in current placemaking practices” (p. 314). While this obviously ties into the place-making narrative discussed previously, the
emphasis here on the mediation of technology opens up avenues of critique toward media urbanism. Moreover, through this emphasis on technology, locative works “have proposed . . . to create a shared interpretation of urban space. Admirably, they offer tools . . . to gather multiple perspectives of place . . . [and] enable a collective memory” (Sant, n.d.).

Institutional networks are key to this intervention. Tuters and Varnelis recognize that locative projects are either “delivered live to a user in the field who then performs the piece or . . . crystallized as an indexical trace of the event, later displayed at a gallery or on a web site” (359). In the latter case, this crystallization shapes the exigence of many locative projects: “[i]n the case of locative media, this means that artists adopt the model of research and development wholesale, looking for corporate sponsorship or even venture capital” (Tuters and Varnelis, 2006, p. 360). Hence, locative art can be influenced by the entities which fund and present them – namely, universities, academic conferences, art galleries, museums, and institutions of the like.

This is precisely where creative networks come into play. A network approach toward creativity mirrors how “scholars have pointed to the social ties that link companies together across a geographic region as the foundation of innovative, creative, and emergent industries and social networking as the process in which . . . creative milieus form” (Neff, 2005, p. 135). Particularly, according to Allen Scott (2001), “cities function as creative fields generating streams of both cultural and technological innovations” (p. 11). He also deems cities as “dense agglomerations of social life” which “emerge out of a need for proximity” in different realms of production (Scott, 2011, p. 12). To Scott (2001), even artistic communities are influenced by the resulting division of labor in generating creative works (p. 13). In general, cities are where “the entire local system of production, employment, and social life makes up a geographically-structured creative field that under
appropriate conditions acts as a fountainhead of learning and innovation effects” (Scott, 2001, p. 17). As Gina Neff describes, consumption sites within the city can be quite significant to artists’ creative productions:

neighborhoods with the reputation for fostering artistic production provide individual cultural producers with “both material and symbolic resources that facilitate creative activity, particularly in the early stages of a cultural producer’s career” (Lloyd forthcoming). Far from being “the other of productive practice,” consumption within these industrial structures forms the basis of creative production (Lloyd 2002). The art galleries, bars, restaurants, and other nightlife venues represent new intersections of consumption and production in urban space that “potentially operate as key features in a new regime of capital accumulation (Lloyd 2002, 518-19) (p. 140).

In this, artists can showcase the diversity of urban environments, which, as de Waal (2011) describes, is at the core of various schools of urban theory:

The Chicago School saw evolutionary ecological forces at work (Sennett 1969). Others see the city mainly as a superstructural effect of the logic of capitalism (Harvey 2005). Others again try to understand the city as an “assemblage”, a complex phenomenon on a higher level that arises from the many interactional processes of individuals and institutions on a lower level as well as through feedback processes between these levels (De Landa 2006) . . . What these theories have in common is that generally they describe the city as a “situation” or an “interface” that brings these differences together.

Specifically, Chicago School theorists purport that cities “are multilevel . . . , constructed around ‘flows’ of capital, technologies, people, images, texts, sounds and symbols.” From there, different imaginaries result through which artists can appropriate “[t]he various . . flows . . and networks that make up the modern city are the ‘building blocks,’ as Appadurai would suggest, of contemporary imagined worlds.” (Diamantaki et al, 2007, p. 3).
Such building blocks also make cities more connected with each other due to globalization. While globalization can be a lofty term, most scholars have converged on the following definition of globalization:

globalization refers to fundamental changes in the spatial and temporal contours of social existence, according to which the significance of space or territory undergoes shifts in the face of a no less dramatic acceleration in the temporal structure of crucial forms of human activity. Geographical distance is typically measured in time. As the time necessary to connect distinct geographical locations is reduced, distance or space undergoes compression or “annihilation.” The human experience of space is intimately connected to the temporal structure of those activities by means of which we experience space. Changes in the temporality of human activity inevitably generate altered experiences of space or territory (Scheuerman, 2010).

These altered experiences of space “are working to undermine the importance of local and even national boundaries in many arenas of human endeavor.” The emergence of communication technologies has exacerbated these altering experiences, as they “dramatically heighten possibilities for human interaction across existing geographical and political divides.” This plays into deterritorialization, wherein “a growing variety of social activities takes place irrespective of the geographical location of participants.” Overall, “the impact of recent technological innovations is profound,” as, with the rise of new technologies, subjects “are shaped by it in innumerable ways as citizens and consumers (Eriksen 2001, 16)” (Scheuerman, 2010).

In spite of globalization, judging from prior literature on locative media, there are various opportunities for applying the intersections of place, production, and creativity in studying locative designs. For instance, in discussing potential designs and uses for future locative projects, Hamilton (2009) addresses the complexities of production and creativity in relation to locative projects, elucidating:
Online communities largely cluster around topics of interest, which take precedence over participants’ geographical locations. The site of production is often disregarded when creative content appears online. However, for some, a sense of place is a defining aspect of creativity” (p. 393).

Jillian Hamilton (2009) also points out that “for some . . . regional artists . . . a sense of place is a particularly important aspect of representation, and the starting point of conversations” in the locative mode (p. 393). In terms of representation, locative art can at times engage with various different aspects of media through its use of geospatial annotation. According to Hamilton (2009), this “involves tagging site-specific content (image, sound, text) with spatial (lat/long) co-ordinates.” In doing so, such projects can “provide documentary or social history information” (Hamilton, 2009, p. 394).

Scott (2001) also elaborates on cities, often the focus of locative pieces, as channels of production with a constant, broad flow of information that ties the economic and cultural together as a by-product of capitalism (p. 11). This leads to areas open to new insights and that have the potential to “destabilize norms” (Scott, 2001, p. 13). Likewise, Neff (2005) elaborates on “the role of place and place-making within cultural industries in the digital era,” concluding that place is becoming increasingly important to cultural production (p. 134). As such, many locative projects explore urban areas, aggregate sits of cultural production, in creative ways. To San Cornelio and Ardévol, “[s]ome of the most attractive uses of ‘locative media’ are often related to creative purposes such as exploring in-site narratives or gaming, through strategies of geotagging, mapping, walking around cities, etc” (p. 314).

The manner in which these works portray different imagined worlds deals directly with theories of affect. Affect is treated as synonymous with “passion, sentiment, mood, feeling or
emotion. Most discussion of affect in media theory and aesthetics revolves around questions of the production and transmission of affect” (Shepard, n.d.). According to Ben Shepard, Jameson holds that “affect shapes representation itself,” pointing toward Munch’s *The Scream* as an instance of emotions transforming whole landscapes. Subsequent theorists such as Massumi proclaim “that the postmodern age is one of excess affect,” to the point that “the temporal experience of the viewer” can be “mapped” onto the temporal dimensions of contemporary media (Shepard, n.d.). Moreover, Mark Hansen’s “Affect as Medium, or the ‘Digital-facial-image’” fashions affect as “an interface between the domain of information (the digital) and embodied human experience” (Hansen, 2003, p. 205). Given the way that locative art appropriates technology and data to depict urban experiences, locative art fits this view on contemporary affect. Creativity itself is an emergent event charged with affect. Creative works are born from complexity, as they cannot be analyzed as simply a product of their components, and appeal to emotions.

IV. Semiotics, Ideology, Subjectivity, and Memory

Along with an understanding of creative networks, researchers can also investigate a variety of cultural productions in depth through a perspective centered on semiotics, ideology, and cultural memory. Semiotic analysis can reveal the ideological functions of different signs and images through syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis. Within semiotics, syntagms bring meaning to a text in cohering sequences of signifieds through spatial and temporal relations, while paradigms are categorizations of signifiers, words or sound-images, and signifieds, the mental concepts being represented. Together, “they are the structural forms through which signs are organized into
codes.” The influence of ideology is seen in this code. Additionally, authors can use paradigms and the connotative level of the sign to their advantage to convey a given message (Chandler).

Emile Benveniste’s work applies semiotic precepts to language and refines them. In “The Nature of the Linguistic Sign,” Benveniste contests Saussure’s notion of the relation between the signifier and the signified being arbitrary. Instead, he deems the relation between sign and object arbitrary in conveying values that are relative (Adams and Searle, 1986, p. 727). This, in turn, “commands . . . a dialectical necessity of values of constant opposition, and forms the structural principle of language” (Adams and Searle, 1986, p. 728). Benveniste’s claim borrows from Hegelian thought; Hegel posits that “if History . . . can be interpreted as a dialectic of Mastery and Slavery, it can also be understood as a dialectic of the Particular and the Universal in human existence,” as subjects seek for particular values they place on objects to be recognized by all similarly (Kojève, 1980, p. 58). This provides a place for Benveniste’s subject positions in language, in direct relation to the sign, to intervene in reinforcing the intended code. This can be achieved in universalizing individual experiences and then imposing this collective interpretation upon the audience, the implicit “you” in the text’s indirect mode of address. Cormack (1992) discusses how texts can still wield power in an indirect mode of address, which “works to conceal the positioning of the audience and thus to situate viewers/readers/listeners within an ideology but without their explicit consent” (p. 33). To this end, Cormack (1992) defines ideology as “a process which links socio-economic reality to individual consciousness. It establishes a conceptual framework, which . . . gives rise to our ideas of ourselves” (p. 13).

The dialectical structure of language is paramount to how Benveniste’s theorization of the subject in language relates to theories of ideology. According to Cormack (1992), self-image is
grounded in ideology and articulated in appropriations of language. Cormack summarizes that “[t]he interaction between the symbolic system (spoken language) and the social system (the framework in which speech takes place) produces meaning” (p. 12). He furthers this as he ventures into subjectivity, “the seeming mental coherence of an individual” wherein the individual is constituted in being “a subject of an action” and “being subject to something else” (Cormack, 1992, p. 11). Borrowing from Gramsci’s conceptualization of hegemony, Cormack (1992) confirms that “ideological struggle is a continuing feature of any society in which one social group has dominance over another,” later citing Sigmund Freud’s Oedipal complex as an example of identity being realized through a dialectic (p. 15). Cormack’s (1992) very definition of signs clarifies the role of signs in this social dynamic, which he states includes “everything which stands for something else in a social situation, including words (spoken or written), symbols, images, gestures, and sounds. Such signs become meaningful by being used according to specific codes” (p. 17).

These ideas of subjectivity and dialectical ideological struggle are apparent in Benveniste’s ideas on subject positions in language. If an individual is both “subject of” and “subject to” ideologies, Benveniste’s dichotomy of “I” and “you” reflects that opposition. The dialectic of “I” and “you” allows for the role-reversal of different subjects – one being a producer of a message, another being the consumer of it – necessary for ideologies to continue. This, too, is precisely how discourses are propagated. While Benveniste refers to discourse simply as “language put into action” (Adams and Searle, 1986, p. 728), Cormack (1992) describes discourse as “the many ways of speaking, understanding, and acting which make up social life” (Cormack, 1992, pp. 22-23). Furthermore, by making these subject positions seem natural in the act of conversation, such a dialectic masks to a degree the sign system and social system in which discourses and subjects are
embedded. This may leave subjects less critical of their interactions and surroundings. In turn, this affects processes of interpellation, as “[e]ach discourse interpellates subjects but competing discourses will interpellate us in contradictory ways. In such a culture we become ‘decentered’ subjects without a unifying, coherent identity” (Cormack, 1992, p. 23).

In this sense, language constitutes a struggle. Subjects attempt to assert their own definitions of themselves as others try to impose different definitions on them. This ties in with Simmel’s description of urban dwellers as subjects attempting to assert their autonomy in settings with endless interactions and powerful social forces. Indeed, Benveniste explicates that “language puts forth ‘empty’ forms which each speaker, in the exercise of discourse, appropriates to himself and . . . relates to his ‘person,’ at the same time defining himself as I and a partner as you” (Adams and Searle, 1986, p. 731). Even in writing, this struggle can be seen in the way the author of a text seeks to convey a particular meaning. As Cormack (1992) writes, “[t]he text . . . is a structured product which calls out to an audience, attempting to elicit a specific reaction” (p. 18). Hence, through this assertion of power in pushing a given ideology, Benveniste’s conceptualizations of subject positions in language inherently relates back to the study of ideology.

Mikhail Bakhtin also deals with the dialectical nature of language and extends Benveniste’s work by extending his formulations more broadly toward expression. According to Martin Irvine (n.d.), Bakhtin proclaims:

an expression in a living context of exchange--termed a ‘word’ or ‘utterance’--is the main unit of meaning (not abstract sentences out of context), and is formed through a speaker's relation to Otherness . . . A ‘word’ is therefore always already embedded in a history of expressions by others in a chain of ongoing cultural and political moments.
Thus, in the operations of expression, “[t]he utterance is filled with dialogic overtones . . . [O]ur thought itself -- philosophical, scientific, artistic -- is born and shaped in the process of interaction and struggle with others' thought” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 92). Due to the dialogic nature of expression, “the entire utterance is constructed, as it were, in anticipation of encountering this response” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 94). Likewise, the dialectics of expression are continuous: “[e]ven past meanings, that is those born in the dialogue of past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all) - they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 170). As such, there are obvious parallels between how Bakhtin and Benveniste conceptualize language:

Language is . . . populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others. Expropriating I, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process... As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other (Bakhtin, 1992, p. 294).

To Bakhtin, then, cultural productions contain “heteroglossia (an other's speech, and many others' words, appropriated expressions) and are necessarily polyphonic (‘many-voiced,’ incorporating many voices, styles, references, and assumptions not a speaker's ‘own’)” (Irvine, n.d.). Given these theories, it can be said that locative art can embed different dialectics between artist and viewer as well as between different subjects and places portrayed in each piece. In this, interpellation occurs through dialogic representations of technological infrastructures. Through this aim, locative art demystifies how people are subjects of and subjected to infrastructures – be it the built environment, the internet, or the infrastructure of surveillance technologies – in shaping their conceptions of place.
To make sense of all these multifaceted levels of cultural productions, this signifies that, according to Umberto Eco, the audience plays a large role in the act of interpretation. Eco (1981) calls texts “a lazy machinery which forces its possible readers to do a part of its textual work, but the modalities of the interpretive operations . . . are by no means indefinite and must be recognized as imposed by the semiotic strategies conveyed” (p. 36). Through the semiotic strategies imposed, “[a] text casts into doubt all the previous signification systems and renews them; frequently it destroys them” (Eco, 1981, p. 37). This is made possible by the very nature of signs, as “[t]he notion of a sign presupposes a rigid mechanism which has, at its input, the subject in the guise of a transparent screen upon which reality designs, by means of reflection, its substances and accidents” (Eco, 1981, p. 38). The importance of the reader, as well as the reader’s active role in interpretation, is further seen in how the comprehension of signs occurs:

abduction governs even the comprehension of an isolated word or indeed every other possible sign . . . . In other words, what I have to do is to look for possible contexts capable of making the initial expression intelligible and reasonable. The very nature of signs postulates an active role on the part of their interpreter” (Eco, 1981, p. 45).

It is then feasible that in the different imaginaries that locative artists construct, they invite their readers to make sense of the sign systems presented by relating them to more recognizable sign systems through this process of abduction. Each highlighted urban environment, therefore, becomes a text read by both artist and audience, the former selecting a sign system by which a particular message can be conveyed and the latter relating the final product to pre-established, culturally significant sign systems.

For both parties involved, tapping into cultural memory is critical to these processes. Cultural memory is filled with knowledge, and the nodes of cultural memory are constantly
reorganized in a continuous process of remembering as well as forgetting through the shuffling of new links for old ones (Lotman, 1978, pp. 215-216). With this process in mind, Yuri Lotman (1978) attests that the “fundamental ‘task’ of culture . . . is in structuring the world around man. Culture is the generator of structuredness, and . . . it creates a social sphere around man which . . . makes life possible; that is, not organic life, but social life” (p. 213). Due to this, culture becomes “a social phenomenon” and “a record in the memory of what the community has experienced,” which must be articulated as “that which, they presume, will become a memory from the point of view of the reconstructable future” (Lotman, 1978, pp. 213-214). The collective memory forged through locative works that Alison Sant discusses is comparable to Lotman’s view; both emphasize that subjects possess the ability to construct the world around them by playing with different cultural tropes and sign systems.
CHAPTER III: SOUND MAPPING, IAIN MOTT

I. Introduction

In 1997, Iain Mott presented a paper for Interface 1997 entitled “Sound Mapping: An Assertion of Place.” It describes a project called Sound Mapping that he would complete a year later. The paper, in introducing the project, “proposes an argument for the role of sound installation in addressing the physical relationship between music and the general public.” To Mott, the goal of the project was to “assert a sense of place, physicality and engagement to reaffirm the relationship between art and the everyday activities of life.” In order to do this, Mott, through Sound Mapping, proposes a unique mode of participatory group sound art wherein “[m]usic will react to the architecture and urban planning of Sullivan's Cove by means of GPS which will be used to correlate musical algorithms to specific urban structures” (Mott, 1997). He also details how the project will work:

Groups of individuals will wheel the suitcases with a Museum attendant through a specified district of Sullivan's Cove (Figure 1) following a path of their choice. Each individual plays distinct music in response to location, movement and the actions of the other participants. In this way a non-linear algorithmic composition is constructed to map the footpaths, roadways and open spaces of the region and the interaction of participating individuals (Mott, 1997).

To Mott, the mobility of the project is key. However, he notes consistently that the project also draws power as an installation piece. Being a mobile project, Sound Mapping is certainly not an installation in the prototypical sense, but Mott (1997) describes it as such due to having a specific environment in which it is performed – Sullivan’s Cove.

Accordingly, Mott asserts that role of the installation in “computer music” is especially significant:
In computer music, installation can strategically bridge the gap between a body of artistic research and the general public. Installation can offer tangibility and an environment in which individuals kinaesthetically engage with the work and with other individuals. Works have discrete physicality as well as a location within the greater spatial environment. Music installation can reassert the matrix of time and space and has the capacity to anchor a potentially metaphysical musical object (pure sound) to the physical realities of life (Mott, 1997).

Sound Mapping, though, features a tension between installation and mobility. This is a direct consequence of the project’s focus on its own technology, the music of which produces varied reactions to sites of consumption and symbols of infrastructure. Furthermore, this focus undermines Sound Mapping’s aspirations to be an assertion of place; as such, the project exhibits the dislocative tension. This is seen both through the nature of the project’s video recordings as well as the creative system of the project.

II. Reading Sound Mapping

Iain Mott’s website features two videos that document Sound Mapping. The first video describes the technical components of the technologies Mott employs, and the second documents the performance of the project in Sullivan’s Cove. Interestingly, the first part of the video is slightly longer than the second. As indicated in the video’s closing credits, Matt Perkins, not Mott, films the second video. The framing and sound bridging of the Sound Mapping video are notable. Regarding the former, the opening and final shots of the video are scenes with a number of cars included as part of the camera shot. In reviewing the video, the opening shot stands out, as it is one of only a few shots in the entire video where the camera’s focus is not centered on Mott’s subjects in their
performance. There is a row of cars in the foreground of the shot with several buildings in the background.

![Figure 3.1: Opening Shot of Sound Mapping Part 2](image)

In turn, the final shot of the video is also nearby various cars, but this time, they are being driven down a major street.

![Figure 3.2: Closing Shot of Sound Mapping](image)

This influences the project’s structure by creating a frame for the video wherein Perkins returns to cars as a meaningful object in the record of the project.

The first and final shots of the video depict, arguably, the most normal actions of those captured in the video. Even though the music carries on as the final shot fades in the video, the
performers have ceased the exaggerated movements they made previously in the video to trigger the project's music. Were it not for the music in this portion of the video, one might think the performers are actually travelers carrying their belongings as they walk beside a major road, a fairly commonplace act in an urban area. This shows that the video questions what might constitute an authentic performance of urban subjects in their environment. The video, in turn, uses this particular framing to set a juxtaposition that asks that very question regarding these performances.

Perkin’s use of sound bridging provides further insight in analyzing the style of the video. At the 2:29 and 4:08 marks in the video, sound bridging occurs between the two different camera shots Perkins presents. Chandler (n.d.) describes a sound bridge as “[a]dding to the continuity through sound, by running sound (narration, dialogue, or music) from one shot across a cut to another shot to make the action seem uninterrupted.” Even though the scene remains the same between the two shots, the nature of the shot has been altered. Sound bridging, then, instructs the viewer that they indeed are watching a scene from the same location as the last shot or angle. Otherwise, the viewer may be confused at first as to whether or not the scene in the video has changed.

Moreover, when the role of the music in the video is considered against its more conventional roles in relation to the moving image, it is clear that the music of Sound Mapping disrupts many contemporary paradigms in film. This emphasizes various absences in the project's representation. While the video does follow the typical framing of the title shot with ending credits, the video lacks various film and narrative elements, such as dialogue, characterization, and plot. Instead, many of these elements are provided, or at least they are meant to be, through the music created by the participants. Thus, the music becomes the content of the project. For Sound
Mapping, participants carry wheeled suitcases across Sullivan’s Cove, Tasmania, and music is emitted from the suitcases. The tonality of the music varies in accordance with participants’ positions within the city and the particular ways they move their suitcases. In adding the visuals of the performance alongside the music, the lack of these elements emphasizes the sign system of the project and of the urban environment being depicted. In Eco’s process of abduction, wherein the reader must search for contexts that make the text understandable, the sign system of Sound Mapping becomes critical for the viewer because it is one of the few aspects of the video that one can use to interpret the video.

For instance, several typical sign systems within cities become more noticeable through abduction in the lack of other conventional elements. At the video’s 47-second mark, the subjects are around highway infrastructure. The music itself in this environment has a greater diversity of tones yet shorter sounds, which mimic the sounds of people talking. This occurs on a stretch of road without cars. As such, the project mirrors how infrastructures sustain a sense of place in Sound Mapping consistent with what the participants might do in that area at the time even if they were not there participating in the project. Likewise, the intentional use of suitcases in Sound Mapping carries quite a bit of symbolic value into the project. They convey meanings embedded in tourism and mobility to the audience. Mott (1997) indicates this as he explains their use in Sound Mapping:

The suitcases in Sound Mapping, as well as providing a practical solution to the transportation of music modules, serve as a metaphor for travel and exploration. This is particularly relevant to the way the composition is structured but also to the function of Sullivan's Cove. The Cove was once the major port of Hobart however the majority of heavy shipping has since left the district. The region now has dual purpose as a port and leisure district and is characterised by a major influx of tourists during the summer months (Solomon, 1976).
This prepares the reading of the project to a significant extent. Mott describes the subject of his endeavor, Sullivan’s Cove, in terms of production, tourism, and leisure, meanings embedded in the project that are also sustained through the symbol of the suitcase. The fact that the suitcases are identical is also telling. All of the suitcases are black, which conveys a sense of professionalism alongside mobility. Were the suitcases a different color, one might otherwise associate the suitcases just with leisurely travel. Overall, the connotations of the suitcase, alongside the performances of the Sound Mapping participants, helps to open up the critique of Sound Mapping to a broader range of critical theory.

III. Examining Relevant Theory

Sound Mapping exemplifies the performative aspects of locative art that Tuters and Varnelis outline. It can be described as a phenomenological project in accordance with the Situationist tactic of dérive. In this, Mott’s attempts to provide an assertion of place through Sound Mapping also emerge as a critique of capitalist society. For instance, the relationship between the artist and the audience in contemporary relations of production is critical to Mott. He contends that “[t]he introduction of the phonograph and radio in the early Twentieth Century broke the physical relationship between performer and listener entirely” (Mott, 1997). In this sense, Sound Mapping speaks not only to dislocation, but also disillusionment. He elaborates that the “[m]onopoly share of music production by the mass media serves to reduce society's participation. Its sheer abundance is responsible for this and further, can discourage society from listening (Westerkamp, 1990).”

This sets up several interventions Sound Mapping takes into Debord’s assertions. Through the simple act of moving suitcases, participants make modest interventions into the logic of cities
and reveal how sign systems of infrastructure and consumption mediate subjects’ sense of place. Mott also expresses a sentiment that resonates with Debord’s thoughts on tourism when he attests that through Sound Mapping, “a convergence is created between the familiar home (or holiday destination) of the participant and a sonic fantasy mapping known territory” (Mott, 1997). Thus, in his Interface ’97 paper, Mott brands Sound Mapping as confronting not only Debord’s banalization of place, but also the resulting banalization of music in the age of mass communication.

This aim pertains significantly, as seen in the project’s operations, to several areas of critical theory. To start, de Certeau, who asserts that subjects create space through their practices within it, even if their role is often hidden, is a clear influence on Sound Mapping. The focus of the project, as reflected in Part 2 of the Sound Mapping video, is almost always on the participants themselves rather than their surroundings. This means that the project, in line with de Certeau’s assertions, illuminates participants’ active manipulation of space in their performance as a group. Such a focus empowers the participants to navigate, interpret, and alter perceptions of space.

Likewise, Lotman’s theories of cultural memory relate to the project when considering how Mott selects where and how the music emitted from the devices will change. In discussing the impact of the area’s history on the music of Sound Mapping, Mott indicates that “[w]here historical references are made in the music, they will relate to history widely known by the general public. Reference will only be made if historical usage and events have a significant bearing on contemporary function” (Mott, 1997). Mott elaborates on this in Part 1 of the Sound Mapping video:

We constructed a series of musical zones that correspond to, you know, the physicality of each particular region that the group passes through . . . . The music relates to architecture
and it also relates to historical references, so we’re trying to produce a music . . . and a way of listening that actually connects people to a particular place (“Sound Mapping – Part 1”).

Mott decides what connections between the lived environment and its history are relevant enough to be included in the project and have a specific effect on the project’s music. This results in a particular, subjective configuration of cultural memory in relation to the area’s history.

Bakhtin’s work on expression pertains to Sound Mapping. As Bakhtin believes that productions are always constructed with the possible responses to it in mind, so does Mott construct Sound Mapping in anticipation of capturing the reactions of witnesses who are outside of the project. In turn, the video shows how expression is dialogic, as Bakhtin claims, by including subjects who witness the project with no knowledge of it. Through the project, Mott creates an interpretive infrastructure only known in practice by a select number of subjects – the performers themselves. Most of the other people who may have observed Sound Mapping as it was being recorded would likely have no idea what the meaning was behind the activity.

The project, then, becomes a scene of interpellation around a city infrastructure as well as a technological infrastructure that Mott creates. Others who happen to view the project without knowledge of its meaning become aware quite quickly of their lack of knowledge. This situates these viewers as “others” to the expressive content of Sound Mapping. This is seen in one moment that occurs after the group passes the vending machines. In this moment, the performers visibly pass by a bystander who looks at them as they pass him.
Here, the video imposes a subject position upon those viewing the video. This is the first subject included in a shot other than the performers themselves. The subject’s appearance in the video indicates that at least one bystander did indeed witness the performance. It also reminds the viewers of the video that they likely have more in common with the bystander than the performers in inhabiting the subject position of the “other” who is still estranged from the knowledge of Sound Mapping’s technical elements.

This is ultimately reinforced by the alienation of the audience from the affect of the performance. The performers themselves produce the project’s affect through the data created from their labor and their mobility. In line with Jameson’s view on affect shaping representation, almost all of the Part 2 video is dedicated to the performance of the Sound Mapping participants, with no attempts at qualifying the performance through text or a diverse range of shots. This allows the movements of the participants to speak for themselves, even if Mott had already determined much of the quality of the music emitted by them previously as part of the interpellative exercise.

Mott does explain the technological components in the Part 1 video so viewers can be informed of the project as well as its technological components. He does not define the finer details
of how the technologies operate in the suitcases clearly. In spite of this, Mott still spends more time, however slight, explaining the technology behind the performance in this part of the video, which is five minutes and 34 seconds long, rather than the performance itself in Part 2, which is five minutes and 14 seconds long. This is a significant decision when considering the impact of technological fetishism. Mott describes in great detail a technology meant to calibrate the differences between different regions as an assertion of place. The added time describing the technology rather than the product of the technological work reveals an infatuation with the technologies and the power imposed upon them by the artist in an attempt to understand nature.

The othering of urban dwellers who do not happen to participate in Sound Mapping and yet witness the group performances is also seen in the gallery of photographs included on Mott’s Sound Mapping website. These images depict various figures with no knowledge of the project, including a group of witnesses clearly staring at one of the performers as the performer passes them by and a street violinist who is approached by one of the performers as the performer creates music with the technology directly in front of the street violinist.

Figure 3.4: Sound Mapping Gallery Picture
Both of these instances exemplify an ideological confrontation that occurs as part of Sound Mapping. Even though their performances are much more naturalized within their respective environments, the witnesses of the performances compose their own performances as subjects of ideology. In Simmel’s terms, the performers of Sound Mapping may stand out more to the viewers of the online video and photographs because their behavior contrasts the blasé attitude of the witnesses. Simmel believes that urban dwellers, when confronted with competing stimuli in the urban environment, must proceed unconcerned, not focusing on any single stimulus in the environment. However, the music that Sound Mapping’s participants create reacts to the variety of stimuli within the environment. The performances of the witnesses, therefore, become a recognition of the performers’ deviance from this ideological blasé attitude. In their reactions to Sound Mapping, witnesses are confronted by this recognition as an act of interpellation occurring as part of a project translating data into affect. As such, the real-time witnesses and online viewers of the project participate in an interpellative activity. This activity is dictated largely by Mott himself, as seen through the discourses conveyed in the project.
IV. Discourses of the Videos

Production and Consumption

Mott (1997) connects the dislocative nature of the project to the Althusserian model of ISAs when he remarks that “[s]uch disembodiment is tantamount to the postmodern vision with its obsessions of reproduction over production, the irrelevance of time and place and the interchangeability of man and machine (Boyer, 1996).” The dislocation of Sound Mapping attempts to disrupt the contemporary relation between producer and listener – the former dictating musical content and the latter consuming it – that reproduces the relations of production. The disruption lies in those who consume place, the performers, producing its expressive content. This disruption shapes Sound Mapping and its specific choices in affect.

The music of Sound Mapping sounds more like electronic music around cars and the sites of consumption included in the project’s video – the café and the vending machines. This quality of the music makes it seem less natural around these areas, which brings attention to the nature of the production. The selection of camera angles serves a similar role. At the 30-second mark in the video, there is a tilt to the camera angle in recording the scene at the café. A slight tilt also occurs around the 1:42 mark with the inclusion of vending machines in one of the video’s shots. This tilt has a jarring effect that changes the style of the project. As Chandler (n.d) elucidates, “[w]hen the camera is tilted on its axis so that normally vertical lines appear slanted to the left or right, ordinary expectations are frustrated. Such shots are often used in mystery and suspense films to create a sense of unease in the viewer.” Since many of the scenes lack transitions, meaning that the video cuts quickly from one scene to the next, this technique makes these particular moments in the video stand out. Through this practice, the nature of the representation is altered significantly in
accordance with subjects’ positions in relation to site of consumption. This shows that the project maps commodity fetishes to a significant extent.

The place-making aim of the project also contradicts Mott’s incorporation of Benjamin’s views from “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” into his Interface ’97 paper. Borrowing from Benjamin, Mott notes:

Talking films along with television have to a degree alleviated this crisis, however the gained relationship is purely visual and not physical; worse still is that performing musicians working in all such media, like screen actors (Benjamin, 1979), are denied direct interaction with their audience (and vice versa). The representation is dislocated from its origins in time and space (Concannon, 1990) (Mott, 1997).

This then opposes the fact that Mott has worked quite hard to record components of the project, document them online, and display the project’s merits in various different locations for an academic audience. Benjamin’s critique still holds true in Sound Mapping because the performers are alienated from the video’s viewers.

Mott’s Interface ’97 paper relates more to Adorno’s contentions from “On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening.” To Adorno (1991), music embodies affect and as such “has a disciplining function” (p. 270). However, he also talks about how in contemporary times, the consumption of communal music trivializes taste (Adorno, 1991, pp. 270-71). Further, he contends that advertising instructs consumers to see music as background noise rather than unique expression (Adorno, 1991, p. 274). This makes the consumption of music a commodity fetish promoted by the bourgeois, encouraging banality in music (Adorno, 1991, p. 274; p. 280). Therefore, Adorno (1991) argues that the consumption of music has become formulaic (p. 285).

However, the particular means by which the Sound Mapping video organizes the music plays into one of the problems that Adorno points out. Adorno (1991) asserts that rearrangements of
music become more pervasive and, by proxy, more popular than originals despite disturbing the unity of the original work. This plays into his argument of how capitalism has affected the production and consumption of music (p. 282). While Mott promotes this argument, Perkins rearranges the music of the project in the cuts he creates in the online video. This further indicates how alienated the viewers of the online video are not only from the music of the performance, but also the lived environment it purports to assert. As such, the project’s resonance with discourses of globalization shows how the circulation of the project’s music opposes the intent of the project.

Globalization

Stephen Wilson (2003) notes that as a part of Sound Mapping, “[t]he emergence of the score, the composer, phonography, radio, and ultimately digital technology all contributed to this alienation from its source in time and space, and with the producers of the sounds (p. 284). This further exposes Mott’s attempt to create an assertion of place as contradictory. If it is technology that reveals how one’s sense of place is guided by urban layouts and, subsequently, areas of traffic, interaction, consumption, and flow (as Simmel points out), then all of those are inherently revealed by a negation of space in accordance with Debord’s thoughts.

Both Part 1 and Part 2 of the online Sound Mapping video are embedded on the website via YouTube. Viewers can search for and watch the videos on YouTube’s web site as well, though the user who posted both videos has disabled the commenting functionality. This is an interesting tactic in light of Mott’s philosophies. According to YouTube’s website, “YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share . . . videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform” (“About YouTube”).

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This undermines the kinds of local ties to place that Mott advocates through the project. It also deprives viewers of the video on YouTube of a chance to start a dialogue about the project as the YouTube platform allows or attempt to reach out to the user who posted the video, or perhaps even its producers.

Overall, YouTube’s function compromises the intent of the project for its music to be experienced with a knowledge of the space in which it was produced. The video’s availability on YouTube and the Sound Mapping website clearly destabilizes that intent from the start. YouTube is a service that annihilates both space and time in promoting digital content, disregarding the means and locations of production. In turn, Sound Mapping’s creative system also shows the extent of its negation of space and how that negation of space thwarts much of the intent behind the project through the conflict between the project’s message of place-making and the various demonstrations of the projects held in different places.

V. Diagramming the Creative System

Sound Mapping was recognized in several ways. The project won an honorary mention for interactive art at Prix Ars Electronica 1998 (Prix Ars Electronica 1998). Demonstrations of the project’s technologies were also presented three times at Sonic Connections 2004, held at the University of Wollongong (“Sonic Connections ‘04”). Sound Mapping was also “exhibited at the Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria” and, in February 1998, was performed at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (“Sound Mapping (Live Electronics)”). Mott discusses this particular presentation of Sound Mapping, alongside some background on the project, in his Interface ’97 paper:
Sound Mapping is a site specific music event to be staged in the Sullivan's Cove district of Hobart in collaboration with the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. The project is currently under development and will be presented by the Museum in January 1998. The project is a collaboration between composer Iain Mott, electronic designer Jim Sosnin and architect Marc Raszewski. The three have worked together previously on the Talking Chair (Mott, 1995), (Mott & Sosnin, 1996) and Squeezebox sound installation projects (Mott, 1997).

Sound Mapping was clearly recognized quite a bit for its innovative nature. Alongside this, Sound Mapping has also been heralded as a significant influence on later locative projects and the growth of the medium itself. Hemment cites Sound Mapping as such, as does David Wilson in Information Arts: Intersections of Art, Science, and Technology.

Mott purports that the representation of the particular lived environment Sound Mapping takes place in is central to the project. To that end, Sullivan’s Cove is a major tourist area filled with historic architecture, piers, and warehouses (“Hobart: Sullivan’s Cove”). Mott’s insistence on the importance of place is just as important to Sound Mapping’s creative system as the numerous sites where the Sound Mapping technologies were showcased. Under the systemic model of creativity, the domain of the project is the broader academic endeavor of place-making, the field encompasses all the entities by which Sound Mapping was recognized, and the individual includes Iain Mott and the Sound Mapping team.
In total, the creative system of Sound Mapping reveals that Sound Mapping’s creative field is quite diverse, as seen in the recognition it received from the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Prix Ars Electronica, and Sonic Connections. However, this reveals how the project exhibits the dislocative tension – Mott and his team attempt to perpetuate place-making, the project’s domain, by showcasing the technologies that they contend aid in it in various different locations corresponding to its field other than Sullivan’s Cove. The tension within the creative system reflects many of the project’s contradictions revealed through ideological critique, including its emphasis on place yet its insistence on spending more time describing its technologies and its insistence on reproducing subjects’ authentic performances through an online record of the project.

VI. Summary

Mott promotes Sound Mapping as an assertion of place – and it is, to the extent that the technologies underpinning it are specific to the particular movements its subjects make around a specific urban environment. Accordingly, the Sound Mapping video’s frame, sound-bridging,
camera tilt near sites of consumption, and reliance on its music instead of other paradigmatic film elements guides viewers’ attention to different signs and infrastructures. This shapes the different musical qualities of different places in the project. However, Mott values certain aspects of the environment and its history over others in programming the musical responses of the project to the environment. In the video recording and photographs of the project’s performances available online, Mott also keeps returning to a specific interpellative experience between the witnesses of the performances as they happen and the performers themselves. This, in turn, becomes an interpellative activity for the viewers of the Sound Mapping website as they negotiate the meanings between these encounters for themselves.

The discourses of production and consumption in the Sound Mapping videos draws attention to the bodies of critical theory that inspire Sound Mapping yet also reveal some of the fundamental contradictions in its intentions. The project’s creative system supplements this by revealing how the scope of the project reflects the various elements of the creative field more than the lived environment the project seeks to depict. This plays into the technological fetishism and global reach of the project, opposing Mott’s view of the project’s function as an assertion of place.
CHAPTER IV: BIO-MAPPING, CHRISTIAN NOLD

I. Introduction

Christian Nold, the artist behind Bio-Mapping, “is an artist, designer, and educator who works with people to create new models for communal representation.” He graduated “from the Royal College of Art in 2004” and “has taught and lectured extensively whilst running large scale research projects across the world” (Nold, p. 10). Bio-Mapping is a project of Nold’s in which he designs maps of areas across the globe. In looking at the project as a whole, Bio-Mapping resonates with globalization in that Nold makes space and time obsolete in presenting his representations online. Three of these maps – the Stockport, Greenwich, and Brentford Emotion Maps – depict cities in England; the two other maps included as part of the project are the East Paris Emotion Map and the San Francisco Emotion Map.

Particularly, Christian Nold’s San Francisco Emotion Map (Figure 4.1) is based on the walks of 98 subjects throughout San Francisco. Each subject wore a device measuring their “Galvanic Skin Response (GSR), which is a simple indicator of emotional arousal in conjunction with their geographical location. On their return, a map is created which visualizes points of high and low arousal” (“Bio Mapping/Emotion Mapping,” n.d.). Nold confirms in Emotional Cartography, a book he edited based on the implications of Bio-Mapping:

Bio Mapping emerged as a critical reaction towards the currently dominant concept of pervasive technology, which aims for computer ‘intelligence’ to be integrated everywhere, including our everyday lives and even bodies. The Bio Mapping project investigates the implications of creating technologies that can record, visualise and share with each other our intimate body-states (Nold, p. 3).
This ambition makes Bio-Mapping a unique intervention into how ubiquitous computing becomes an interpellative activity. Specifically, in the San Francisco Emotion Map, whose content resonates with various discourses, Nold creates a sign system that depicts urban dialectics and cultural anxieties out of subjects’ interpretations of their own data in response to urban infrastructure.

II. Reading the San Francisco Emotion Map

Several of Nold’s decisions in how to present the map itself (Figure 4.1) shape its reading.

Figure 4.1: San Francisco Emotion Map, Christian Nold

These decisions in representation point out various absences in the text. First, Nold does not attempt to quantify emotional response, which is significant. Nold could have configured a scale for arousal based on the subjects’ results as a point of comparison. If so, he could have presented subjects’ emotional arousal numerically rather than through color. This would have a much different effect on the map itself, obviously, than the visual mode of representation he employs. Second, Nold does not include any visual elements, be it through lines or different node colors, to
attribute the map’s annotations to specific subjects. As such, one cannot follow the individual paths each subject took. The confluence of all the annotations, therefore, does not have a unified plot or resolution. Third, the map lacks a temporal dimension. Nold does not supply any information, such as dates or times of day, to position the annotations, a significant part of the map’s content, in relation to time. However, he does present a beginning to at least some of the obfuscated narratives. The map demarcates two different starting points in the center of the Mission District. This begs the question of why Nold includes these starting points if he does not allow the audience to trace each subjects’ story from there. One might suggest that Nold includes these points in the center of the Mission District, an area where the forces of production and consumption are likely the most pronounced, to shape, intentionally or not, the subjects’ and audience’s interpretation of the work toward a critique of these forces. This interpretive activity reflects Marxist critique, wherein economic forces propel social reactions and formations.

In fact, Nold accentuates this area of the map by providing a dedicated, close-up image of the Mission District (Figure 4.2) in the top right corner of the map.
Figure 4.2: Close-up of the Mission District

Whereas the user annotations from the Mission District are not included on the main map image, they are included in the top right image. Here, it becomes quite clear that Nold is indeed drawing the reader’s attention to the Mission District.

The Situationist International movement, as noted previously, is also seen repeatedly in scholars’ engagement with locative art. Furthermore, the Situationists even created their own mode of mapping to put their philosophies into practice:

The Situationist maps, including Guy Debord’s *Naked City* [Fig. 5], present the most radical departure from the grid. In reaction to the rational city models embraced by Parisian postwar planners in the 1950s, he and his colleagues co-opted the map of Paris, reconfiguring the experience of the city through its authority. By manipulating the map itself, they intervened in the logic of the city, constructing an alternative geography that favored the marginalized, and often threatened, spaces of the urban grid (Sant).

The San Francisco Emotion Map, in line with Situationist philosophy, clearly creates a new representation of the city based on the emotional and the social.

III. Examining Relevant Theory

From a semiotic perspective, the fact that the map’s annotations are contained within the image is important. In “The Photographic Message,” Roland Barthes (1977) writes that “[t]he closer the text to the image, the less it seems to connote it; caught as if it were in the iconographic message, the verbal message seems to share in its objectivity” (p. 26). Barthes also notes that a prime function of text when paired with a sign or image is to emphasize the connotations contained in the image (Barthes, 1977, p. 27). Nold’s imposition of the text over the image, rather than it appearing as
footnotes, makes these discourses seem natural to the city. If the annotations were included as footnotes, the annotations would seem much more explanatory due to the added distance, as Barthes finds.

The subjects appropriate language in relating their emotional responses to their surroundings and others. They thus, as Benveniste speaks to, flesh out the dialectics they inhabit in their subjectivities. This means that the map depicts the circulation of different discourses, the content of ideology itself. In the San Francisco Emotion Map, Nold presents the contemporary city as a scene of subjectivity filled with dialectic relations. Throughout the text, subjects distance themselves from individuals or groups that they do not affiliate with by appropriating the pronoun “I”, forging oppositions. One dialectic that emerges in the map lies between the subjects and groups they perceive as inferior. This takes on several forms in the annotations: for instance, “Dirty people were walking by and I was trying to dodge them,” “I was eating and saw 4 guys trying to break into a car,” “Got harassed by teenagers,” and “Lots of homeless around here and I wasn’t sure if I should walk here with the equipment.” The articulation of the “I” in these instances, whether implicit or explicit, sets these oppositions, as Benveniste elucidates, through its relation to naturalized articulations of “you” in language.

Another overarching dialectic apparent in the San Francisco Emotion Map is the subjects’ perceived relation to others as altered by the device that they are wearing. This produces several annotations expressing subjects’ anxiety over being seen with this technology, such as, “Didn’t want to see people with the gear,” “Went into the bank. The teller did not ask about the equipment,” and “Maybe people thought I was a patient from St. Luke’s.” Such instances reveal elements of technological fetishism. In placing so much importance in the technology itself and being self-
conscious about it, the subjects ascribe meaning and power to the technology. On a broader level, technological fetishism is apparent in the entire Bio-Mapping project, considering how Nold felt so infatuated by the technology developed for the project that he edited an entire book on the implications of such a technology. Aside from this, in the San Francisco Emotion Map specifically, Nold’s subjects conceptualize their specific practice within Nold’s project through their surroundings. Specifically, these conceptualizations take the form of anxiety – not only in the use of Nold’s device throughout the city, but also through their anxiety of being subjects within an urban environment. This is where the influence of ideology is noticeable.

The dialectical nature of language makes the San Francisco Emotion Map, given the subjects’ annotations, as much of a map of ideologies as it is emotional responses. Reading the map in this way provides the framework needed to reach critical insights on its operations. In portraying the map in this light, it can be seen how Benveniste’s views on the subjectivity of language surface in the map. In this, the San Francisco Emotion Map shows the influence of an Althusserian institutional presence. Nold (2009), speaking about the Bio-Mapping project as a whole and not just the San Francisco Emotion Map, indicates that “[s]ometimes people who walked along the same path would have spikes at different points, with one commenting on the smells of rotting ships, while another being distracted by the CCTV cameras.” He later remarks that due to such comments he “saw the importance of people interpreting their own raw bio-data for themselves” (p. 5).

The subjects’ actions in interpreting their own bio-data, later incorporated by Nold as part of the project’s affect, can be seen as taking part in a significant scene of interpellation. Embedded in this very activity of annotation, for instance, is the individuals’ implicit recognition that Nold’s representation of their emotional arousal levels does in fact represent them. This renders them as
subjects. From there, they act accordingly to justify their arousal level as a product of their actions, feelings, and surroundings. This is done through Eco’s process of abduction, but with an added twist. Subjects must rely on the memories of their trails to pick out the symbolic content that facilitates in their act of reading San Francisco as a text. Through abduction, subjects add familiar narrative elements in characters and action to make sense of their bio-data and add to the content of the project. This, as Bakhtin asserts to happen in the act of constructing utterances – sets subjects in relation to otherness through their annotations. Due to this, the interpellative exercise that Nold puts his subjects through can be analyzed in accordance with Benveniste’s notion of subjectivity in language.

In the San Francisco Emotion Map, each articulation of the “I” refers to various different subjects, yet in the map itself, one could interpret it as one collective voice. Nold universalizes their experiences in the aggregate by excluding subjects’ names. This is especially obvious when one subject using the device notes that he or she has just run into another of the project’s subjects. Regarding Nold’s tactic, it has been noted previously that anchoring, a tactic that promotes a particular reading of a text to fit a particular meaning, occurs in maps, and this is no exception (Chandler). Nold presents what could be a dialogue between various “others” as a monologue interpreted through a single narrative voice, serving as a mechanism for anchoring. With this strategy in mind, Barthes (1977) contends that if a text of study is something other than an advertisement, the anchoring of that text is likely ideological, as it “directs the reader through signifieds of the image . . . towards a meaning chosen in advance” (p. 40).

In the San Francisco Emotion Map, some of the instances of text in the Mission District, such as “We used to live here,” “Nice looking magazine shop but seems to be closing down,” and
“Noisy environment, cars, vendors, music from shops,” depict common characterizations of urban life. Others, like “Not very comfortable on Mission Street, I have all my enemies here,” “Demonstration posters and people giving out leaflets,” and “Should I have sympathy for the old man in the truck with oxygen tube and disability placard who was trying to run us down?” are much more ideologically salient and show ideologies at work. Following on Benveniste’s notions, the invocation of the “I” in two of these examples is clearly used by the subjects to set themselves in opposition to another group through a dialectic in an assertion of identity. This tactic then also becomes part of the sign system of the map due the imposition of the text onto the map itself.

As such, these ideological expressions of anxiety through text match the sign system they are fixed in, particularly the paradigm of colors – grey, black and red – in which they are situated. This, as previously noted, plays on cultural associations for meaning. Hence, the annotations of the map are organized purposefully into colors containing a negative connotation. In fact, all the other maps of the Bio-Mapping project do not have this ominous color paradigm. Instead, they have brighter colors in representing urban landscapes, which conveys less of a sense of anxiety. The presentation of the map, then, is an instance of anchoring. The choice of the San Francisco street grid as the mode of representation in an interpellative exercise founded upon technology recognizes how vital urban infrastructure and technology is to processes of place-making. In turn, the annotations of the map reflect various discourses pertinent to subjects’ understandings of San Francisco and how they make sense of the city.
IV. Discourses of the Map

Religion

The map, through its annotations, not only shows the discourses of certain ISAs at work, it also naturalizes them as part of the image of the city. With the religious ISA, for instance, four examples from the Mission District convey religious images and figures: “Buddhist temple,” “Talked with Jesus Christ of Latter day saints missionaries,” “Evangelist,” and “Catholic bookstore.” There are similar instances outside of Mission District as well: “Remembering the miracle sighting of the Virgin Mary at the church here,” “Alley with lots of murals some of them were crude but some were nice. The last one had Indian gods,” “Little statues of Mary in gardens,” and “Saw a Christian church converted into a Buddhist temple – interesting.”

The prevalence of religious discourses in the annotations reveals the impact of those discourses on the subjects. Under the parameters of Nold’s exercise, these discourses only become naturalized in the image of the map due to the subjects’ consistent mention of them. In this activity, the subjects are reinforcing the position of religious institutions and figures as cultural authorities. Each of the ISAs Althusser (1977) lists “contribute to the same result: the reproduction of the relations of production, i.e. of capitalist relations of exploitation” (p. 154). As such, the power of the religious discourses over the subjects, seen in the invocation of these discourses in the map’s annotations, asserts the subjects’ position as a consumer of a certain domain of knowledge, rather than a producer.

Moreover, the presence of religious symbols alongside those of consumption strengthens this dynamic by pitting the subjects as both consumers of doctrine and consumers of culture. One annotation outside of the Mission District that displays this juxtaposition is “Second mural road full
of decorative stuff, flowers, dancing tacos and Buddha.” Even the previous mention of a Catholic bookstore in the Mission District combines religion, culture, and profit as a site where people consume an ideology and where the products of that ideology are assigned an exchange-value. In the San Francisco Emotion Map, consumption is also seen in more overt ways that exemplify Althusser’s notion of a cultural ISA. Althusser (1971) includes “[l]iterature, the arts, sports, etc.” as part of the cultural ISA, but in contemporary times, one could expand this description to include the culture industry as well (p. 143).

Production and Consumption

The San Francisco Emotion Map features various episodes of consumption. It is intriguing that, in an exercise of quantifying the body’s emotional responses, subjects often explain their levels of emotional arousal through different brands and sites of consumption, showing how the San Francisco Emotion Map presents the commodification of place in becoming a representation of the commodity fetish. In the subjects’ annotations, they mention different brands throughout the piece: “Martha’s Brother’s: best latte in town,” “Mitchell’s Ice Cream,” “Got excited at a car lot selling a Landover for $2000,” “Went in and got a snickers bar,” “We were laughing about how this used to be a KFC and is now a swanky restaurant,” “Sidewalk Juice, stayed here for a while,” “Got coffee at Muddy’s,” and so on.

It is unsurprising, then, that Nold discusses how people were interested in the technology he uses in the project for commercial purposes. “People approached me with a bewildering array of commercial applications” he states, including “estate agents in California wanting an insight into the geographical distribution of desire; car companies wanting to look at drivers’ stress . . . as well as
advertising agencies wanting to emotionally re-brand whole cities” (Nold, 2009, p. 4). He later deems these as “intentions to metaphorically ‘slice people’s heads open to see their innermost feelings and desires’” (Nold, 2009, p. 6).

Nold (2009) relates branding with the subjects’ narrative process in providing their annotations. He reveals that “[p]eople often walked randomly for 30 minutes before returning to the exhibition to see their emotion maps. In such context, the kind of . . . annotations that people left were mainly anecdotal: drank a coke here, had an ice cream there, was spooked by pigeons etc.” (p. 6). Nold’s description of subjects’ narrative process characterizes the identification of their emotions and experiences through commodities and anxieties. Judging from the content of the subjects’ annotations, Nold’s description of both is fitting. This means that the subjects are identifying themselves within the social relations of consumption. Further, they are narrating their experiences of the city and their emotions within it in large part through specific brands and commodities. This fits with Debord’s conception of the banalization of place. Rather than ascribing unique qualities to their experiences of place, the subjects instead resort more universal symbols of consumption that could be found in many other cities to describe their emotional reactions to their environment. This shows how the San Francisco Emotion Map exhibits the dislocative tension.

Relatedly, de Waal points out that such a critique is a common practice in locative art. He claims that locative artists “have criticized the commercial applications of urban media.” As such, a pivotal point of their work is “that the urban-technological imaginary of a . . . city tailored to one’s private preferences, while blocking out undesired places or people, endangers . . . their own urban ideal: a city [of] play, serendipity, and curiosity.” In an essay entitled “Urban Culture as Interface
Culture,” de Waal also notes that “[w]ith . . . locative media the experience of the city is not merely spatial any longer, and this has consequences for the way we theorize and understand private, parochial and public space.”

But, in relation to forces of consumption, the irony of Nold emphasizing the Mission District in his use of technology is that it is the proliferation of technology that reshaped and diversified the Mission District. The San Francisco Gate reports that in the Mission District, “[t]he Internet boom brought on heavy gentrification -- trendy restaurants and boutiques blazed in . . . . Today, there's an interesting mix of places that survived the changes and new arrivals that are trying to make the Mission home” (Banner). The New York Times also discusses how investing in technologies has altered the Mission District:

For much of the 1990s, San Francisco’s Mission District maintained a precarious balance between its colorful Latino roots and a gritty bohemian subculture. Then came the overfed dot-com years . . . . Sleek bars moved next door to divey taquerias. Boutiquey knick-knack shops came in alongside fusty dollar stores. But prosperity did not sap the district of its cultural eclecticism (Colin, 2008).

In this context, perhaps Nold’s emphasis on the Mission District gains new, likely unintended meaning. By using technology to highlight subjects’ relations to a specific area of the city that has been notably transformed by the digital age, Nold digitally catalogues these changes as indicated in subjects’ identifications with their consumption patterns through the use of geospatial infrastructure.

_Psychoanalysis_

Through the psychoanalytic lens, the subjects’ annotations on branding and practices of consumption can also be interpreted as expressive moments in the denial of the pleasure-principle.
According to Freud (1930), as part of the pleasure-principle, “[t]he tendency arises to dissociate from the ego everything which can give rise to pain, to cast it out and create a pure pleasure-ego, in contrast to a threatening ‘outside’, not self” (p. 12). In relation to this tendency, “it is simply the pleasure-principle which draws up the program of life’s purpose” as part of the individual’s strive toward happiness (Freud, 1930, p. 27).

The associations that psychoanalysis draws between subjects and bodily pleasures within the pleasure-principle are seen in several of the subjects annotations. These include “I realized I really needed to pee and raced back,” “Went into my house got the mail and used the toilet,” “Kissing is good,” “Man lying on the sidewalk had soiled himself,” “Naked sunbathers in Dolores Park,” and “Everyone was naked and there was an immense sense of bliss.” Hence, in the psychoanalytic mold, the San Francisco Emotion Map contains many annotations that highlight primarily the body itself, rather than just notions of place.

However, the psychoanalytic resonance of the San Francisco Emotion Map, in dealing with communal guilt and anxiety in relation to place, goes deeper than merely the pleasure-principle. Nold himself points toward the synthesis of individual psychology and community in the San Francisco Emotion Map by citing the relevance of Brecht’s notion of Verfremdung:

Brecht’s idea is that this performative distancing allows the viewer to take a critical distance on viewed events. In the case of Bio Mapping, the participants are vocalising their intimate internal mental life as well as public behaviour to a communal group. In effect, the participants are carrying out a type of co-storytelling with the technology, that allows them to creatively disclose, or omit, as much as they like of what happened during their walks (Nold, 2009, pp. 5-6).
Freud’s *Civilization and its Discontents* reveals how the psychoanalytic perspective can apply to the analysis of articulating subjective experiences of place. In doing so, it is seen how subjects’ decisions of what to disclose and what to omit are meaningful.

To start, Freud (1930) cautions against a comparable analysis between humans and cities when he states that “[d]emolitions and the erection of new buildings . . . occur in cities which have had the most peaceful experience; therefore a town is . . . unsuited for the comparison I have made of it with a mental organism” (p. 19). Despite this caution, Freud’s ruminations on guilt and cultural anxiety are worth noting in analyzing the San Francisco Emotion Map and perhaps, more broadly, for the study of locative art. In discussing guilt, Freud (1930) explicated that “the sense of guilt is nothing but a topographical variety of anxiety” that eventually “coincides completely with the dread of the super-ego” (p. 125). In this sense, “the community, too, develops a super-ego, under whose influence cultural evolution proceeds” (Freud, 1930, p. 136). Critics who are mindful of this, then, can analyze locative art for its expressive content in potentially relaying this communal guilt. To Freud (1930), this communal guilt is where religions can become vital: “[t]he different religions at any rate have never overlooked the part played by the sense of guilt in civilization” in their aims “to save mankind from this sense of guilt, which they call sin” (p. 126). Hence, psychoanalysis is also relevant to the presence of the religious ISA as detailed before. This ties back into the moral codes and regions emphasized by the Chicago School.

As Freud discusses anxiety in relation to community on the broader level, Nold measures and represents said anxiety in relation to place. Nold (2009) postulates that “the most important aspect of Emotional Cartography is the way . . . it creates a tangible vision of places as a dense multiplicity of personal sensations, which we are not normally aware of” (p. 10). The project, then,
becomes a confluence of both subjectivity and place. By mapping both onto a city grid, Nold in some respects creates a psychoanalytic portrayal of space. In doing so, he avoids Freud’s insistence on the impracticality of such a feat by maintaining an emphasis on subjects’ thoughts while universalizing said thoughts by excluding subjects’ names. Regarding his subjects and their annotations, Nold (2009) notes that in “[t]alking about their body data in this way, they are generating a new type of knowledge combining ‘objective’ biometric data and geographical position, with the ‘subjective story’ as a new kind of psychogeography” (p. 5). The San Francisco Emotion Map, as such, is a cultural production that one can analyze critically to interpret expressions of guilt and strives toward happiness within the bounds of the city itself.

Furthermore, Freud complicates this metaphor of topography in relation to communal guilt when he speaks of guilt as a catalyst of cultural anxieties. He posits that in discussing guilt, one is “forced to speak of unconscious . . . possibilities of anxiety” and that “the sense of guilt produced by culture is not perceived as such and remains to a great extent unconscious, or comes to expression as a sort of uneasiness or discontent for which other motivations are sought” (Freud, 1930, pp. 125-126). His stance, when considered alongside Bahktin’s, Eco’s, and Lotman’s work, incorporates the selection of expressions from a range of possible signs and cultural tropes in a process of meaning-making on the community level, hence tying psychoanalysis to cultural memory. Several subject annotations illuminate the map’s instances of urban anxiety according to this dynamic.

The San Francisco Emotion Map features various instances of subjects recognizing their environment and perceiving a dangerous element to it. The following are just some of such instances: “Was walking under the fire escape which reminded me of my first night with my ex when I disturbed an intruder,” “Saw a couple fighting and I actually dialed 911,” “Motor cyclist had just
been hit and five people were carrying him,” “Ran into my friend Ben cycling. He jumped off his bike and grabbed onto a tree while the bike crashed,” and “Fire-truck sirens. I don’t enjoy walking on this street.” Throughout these expressions of anxiety over danger, dialectics and subjectivity in language remain at play. But the added element of anxiety unearths for the audience the unconscious guilt that Freud discusses. In a situation where subjects can interpret and disclose as they please, the decision to articulate these anxieties for a published work is quite telling, as is Nold’s decision to include them on the map. Hence, Nold’s map takes cultural anxieties, as expressed through participants who are turned into subjects through language within the symbol system of the map, and naturalizes them as aspects of urban subjectivity.

V. Diagramming the Creative System

Southern Exposure, “a non-profit, artist-run organization founded in 1974 that presents cutting edge, experimental, risk taking, contemporary art and related programs including exhibitions, artists in education programs, public art projects, panels, symposia, talks, performances and publications” is where Nold was in residency while working on the San Francisco Emotion Map. It has a gallery on Mission Street where Nold would persuade visitors to participate in his project. This justifies Nold’s decision to emphasize the Mission District in the map. Specifically, the San Francisco Emotion Map “was part of SoEx Off-Site, Southern Exposure’s yearlong series of public art and related programming investigating artists’ strategies for exploring and mapping public space.” Southern Exposure traces its inspiration, in part, to the Situationist movement. Additional support for the San Francisco Emotion Map “was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the
Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Foundation, and Southern Exposure’s members (“Project Background”).

Due to this, in the systemic model of creativity, the domain of Bio-Mapping is Situationism, the field is Southern Exposure and all the other aforementioned organizations that supported the project, and the individual is Nold.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 4.3: The Creative System of the San Francisco Emotion Map**

The creative system indicates that both theory and locality must be considered in analyzing locative art. The San Francisco Emotion Map was clearly conceived with Situationist influence and the support of an artistic organization based in the city the map represents. Both of these aspects of the map’s creative system shape its specific mode of representation. The former spurs interest in intervening in the logic of San Francisco, while the latter affects the structure of the interpellative activity and emphasizes a particular area of the city as seen in the map.
VI. Summary

Nold’s decisions to portray a scale of emotion through a paradigm of ominous colors, to emphasize the Mission District, and to impose subjects’ annotations onto the map, naturalizing the annotations within the landscape while excluding subjects’ names, frame the audience’s interpretation of the map. Particularly, his decision to include the annotations reveals the dynamics of the exercise each subject undergoes as a scene of interpellation within the city and the dialectics that are revealed through the exercise. This creates instances of abduction in how the subjects interpret their own data, how Nold incorporates the interpretations into the map, and how viewers of the map online make meaning from those interpretations. The map’s scenes of interpellation draw heavily from the infrastructure of the city and the technologies that make Nold’s metric possible.

Three themes of the map – religion, consumption, and urban anxiety – surface as a result. The map presents an array of religious signs throughout the city and, in doing so, reveals it as an ISA within its environment. In turn, the prevalence of subject annotations mentioning brands uncovers commodity fetishes in how the subjects understand place. In applying psychoanalytic theory, the map also charts urban anxiety through subject reactions to the dialectics witnessed in the city. The discourses within San Francisco that the project conveys are crucial to the project, as the creative system of the San Francisco Emotion Map mirrors the importance of the theory and specific location that inspires the project.
CHAPTER V: YOU ARE NOT HERE, ZER-AVIV ET AL

I. Introduction

Mushon Zer-Aviv (2009), one of the developers behind the two You Are Not Here – A Dislocative Tourism Agency maps, begins a blog post discussing the project with the following question: “Questionable priorities of archaeological facts on Google Maps, divisive cross-lingual links on Wikipedia… Are the ideological distortions of history on so-called balanced services here to stay?” In viewing the You Are Not Here (YANH) maps, one sees such an incisive critique, as the designers question users’ perceptions of their lived environment based on such dominant mapping representations.

According to the YANH website, “Mushon Zer-Aviv is a designer, an educator and a media activist from Tel-Aviv, based in NY. His work explores media in public space and the public space in media.” Zer-Aviv also teaches new media courses at New York University (“About”). In terms of his research, “he focuses on the perception of territory and borders and the way they are shaped through politics, culture, networks and the World Wide Web.” Notably, Zer-Aviv is also behind Kriegspiel, “a computer game based on Guy Debord’s Game of War.” The website lists several other contributors to the project, including New York-based artists and hackers and even a designer whose credentials include being featured at the Conflux festival (“About”).

de Waal (2011) provides a basic description of the project’s first piece, the Baghdad/New York map:

The project You Are Not Here—A Dislocative Tourism Agency . . . lets its participants experience the city space in an extended way. In this project a map of Baghdad is projected on the city grid of New York and participants are invited to make their way to a number of “Baghdad tourist spots” through the streets of New York. When they arrive at the corresponding
location in Manhattan, they will find a sticker with a phone number. When dialed, they will hear a story about Baghdad.

Overall, Zer-Aviv describes the project’s purpose thusly: “Ubiquitous computing and specifically cellphones [sic] merges physical presence with mediation, and that’s it’s [sic] power, YANH is built around a tension between the two.” He also notes that “the tension of tourism/colonialism is an inherent part of the project” (Regine, Interview with Mushon Zer-Aviv). Hence, YANH draws inspiration, according to Zer-Aviv, from two tensions: one between virtual infrastructures and physical spaces, and the other between the leisurely consumption of place and its manipulation.

While comparable to the Baghdad/New York map in the nature of its design and the activity it guides subjects through, YANH’s Gaza/Tel-Aviv map confronts a historical, place-specific detachment in exploring these tensions. Zer-Aviv explains:

Though geographically close . . . these two cities [Gaza and Tel-Aviv] are both emotionally and politically detached. This . . . detachment is a complicated issue, with some history. While the disengagement of Israel from the Gaza strip in the summer of 2005 was thought to open a new hope for Gazan civilians, it has practically turned Gaza to the biggest jail in the world. Where once Gazans used to work in Israel, now that the borders are closed the situation in Gaza deteriorates every day (Regine, Interview with Mushon Zer-Aviv).

Zer-Aviv elaborates that “most Israelis are tired from the 40 years long occupation . . . Yet, in Tel-Aviv the general mind-frame is that after the disengagement we are not IN Gaza anymore and . . . are no longer responsible . . . This is something we want to address” (Regine, Interview with Mushon Zer-Aviv). In doing so, he claims that this kind of detachment is very dangerous. Moreover, the sign system of the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map matches YANH’s particular mode of interpellation – through technological infrastructure – that not only emphasizes the discourses of
globalization, production and consumption in the maps, but also reveals the importance of locality
in analyzing locative projects and their commodification of place.

II. Reading a YANH Map

The Gaza/Tel-Aviv map employs several noteworthy signs as a means of anchoring in accordance with Barthes’ perspective. The first of these, the beach umbrella, can be associated easily with ideas of vacation, relaxation, and perhaps even paradise. As such, when thought of in terms of tourism, as the project suggests it should, this may initially carry a lighter tone, decontextualized from the serious, experimental nature of the project. This juxtaposes a second recognizable symbol of the map: a thick-lined circle with a slash through it, which typically conveys a warning or caution. While this sign is conventionally red, the version that appears in the background of the beach umbrella is yellow-orange, matching the color of the sun in an image directly beneath it that instructs the viewer to hold the map to the sun. This logo appears on the Baghdad/New York map as well. However, unlike the Baghdad/New York map, the yellow-orange is repeated on the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map’s images below the main map image. This occurs through quote bubbles coming from a user’s cell phone, the color of the cell phone itself, the color of markings on a cell phone tower, and the marking on the map which the user tries to read when holding the map up to the sun. With this technique, the authors link the technologies underpinning user experiences through the project to the very act of reading the map.

There are several intriguing decisions the designers made in the map’s presentation. A notable absence to the text is that there are no labels on the zoomed-out image of Tel-Aviv except for the numerical tags corresponding to the map’s highlighted sites. These sites are listed in a
separate box overlaying the image. The designers employ a similar tactic on the Baghdad/New York map, but instead of numbers, the quote bubbles are filled with lowercase letters ranging from ‘a’ to ‘k.’ This repeats the use of the quote bubble used at the bottom of the map that appears as part of the website link for the project. The quote bubble follows the yellow-orange paradigm embedded in several of the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map’s designs. The paradigm remains consistent on both sides of the double-sided map. As such, the reader’s eye is drawn much more to the directive aspects of the map, which employ a unique sign system to tell its viewers where they should go, rather than toward the landscape it presents.

Figure 5.1: Portion of Side One from the Baghdad/New York Map

Figure 5.2: Portion of Side One from the Gaza/Tel-Aviv Map
This is a critical decision on the part of the map's designers given how, from a design perspective, the images on the two sides of the map contrast greatly. Whereas the Gaza side of the map is an enlarged photographic image, with the text box directions at the bottom of the map written in Hebrew, the other side of the map is representation of Tel-Aviv, rather than a photograph. This representation, employing a prototypical cartographic color scheme, presents the land as white, filled with black-lined streets, green open areas, and blue water. These decisions regarding structure enable the reader to see the sites as demarcated by the yellow-orange quote bubbles on the one side of the map through the representative image of Tel-Aviv on the other.

Figure 5.3: Portion of Side Two from the Baghdad/New York Map

Figure 5.4: Portion of Side Two from the Gaza/Tel-Aviv Map
Amidst these differences, the consistent yellow-orange color in the map’s markers, directions, and website logo emphasizes the interpellative exercise that is central to YANH. This resonates particularly with the yellow-orange quote bubble included in the final frame of the map’s pictorial directions. In the frame, a subject holds a yellow-orange cell phone to his or her ear with a yellow-orange quote bubble containing the words “Welcome to Gaza” coming out of the cell phone. Through the repetition of this color as part of the project’s style on symbols of technological infrastructure and the directive use of the color in telling subjects they are in Gaza and not Tel-Aviv, subjects are interpellated through competing discourses prompted by the project’s use of ubiquitous mobile infrastructure as subjects of another city.

Figure 5.5: The Gaza/Tel-Aviv Map’s Directions

This makes the act of reading the maps even more intriguing. Despite the technological means by which subjects are interpellated, the way that users follow the map is an analog activity – a double-sided map that viewers hold to the sun to read. It is fitting that subjects must read the map using an aspect of the landscape that is constant in all cities as subjects walk in one urban environment as if they are in another. This factor in reading the YANH maps reflects a similarity between the lived and the simulated site in spite of the incongruity inherent in navigating the layout.
of one city as if one is in another. That activity, in turn, demands applications of critical theory to fully analyze it.

III. Examining Relevant Theory

It is not simply coincidence that the city whose streets the subjects actually walk through is represented plainly on one side of the map while the other side features a more detailed image of the simulated city. One might associate this with the banalization of place that Debord speaks of as a result of capitalism, or even with the Situationist practice of dérivative in altering subjects’ mobility through the city in an imaginative, perhaps even playful exercise. de Waal (2011) discusses how YANH relates particularly to Debord’s Situationist mapping among other locative projects that have been influenced by it. This is unsurprising considering how the project incorporates elements of both détournement and dérivative in adding to the physical landscape while re-embodying subjects in their environment through the exercise. Given this, YANH can be considered both annotative and phenomenological.

Yet, when also considering Debord’s views on tourism and places becoming increasingly banal, it is significant that the designers adopt the label of a “tourism agency.” On the one hand, the overlaying of regional sites onto a map of another region could be interpreted as evidence of Debord’s purported banalization in that one area’s sites can be substituted so easily for another. On the other hand, the activity of roaming through a place finding sites that are not actually there requires subjects to make meaning out of their surroundings for themselves. Hence, YANH’s place-making intervention only becomes clear through the practice of walking through the city, in line with de Certeau’s theories, with this alternative perspective. Zer-Aviv gives credence to this
interpretation in arguing that through the Baghdad/New York map, “[w]hile you get to ‘walk in Baghdad,’ to experience information in human scale, this Western guide reflects again the way we’re all guided through information in mainstream media” (Regine, Interview with Mushon Zer-Aviv). Not coincidently, this returns to the importance of technological infrastructure and dominant representations in understanding the environment through users’ practices.

Likewise, the role of the project under the place-making narrative purported by researchers is also recognized on the project’s website:

Placing the two maps one on top of the other echoes the Situationist act of wandering, undermining the foundations of both cities and the repressed connections between them. Streets and regions in the city are charged with unknown meanings, and are revealed to the walkers through the map of the corresponding city, by means of cellular communication and resignification of the monument (“Welcome to Gaza”).

However, the authors’ overlaying of Gazan sites onto a map of Tel-Aviv also relates to Lotman’s theories on cultural memory through reorganizing culturally salient nodes in terms of space. In incorporating foreign sites into cities, effectively rearranging the culture of a place in imposing another’s notable sites, the YANH designers subvert a standing collective memory by imposing a new logic onto the built environment.

For the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map, the selection of sites behind this new logic may have drawn inspiration from Google Maps’ selection of highlighted sites. Zer-Aviv (2009) discusses his thoughts on a Google Map image of Gaza:

I was wondering though how come . . . archeological relics like the Great Omari Mosque or even Napoleon’s Castle were omitted from the [Google] map. And how come the ancient synagogue in Gaza is mentioned on the map, while other synagogues like the older one (and arguably of a higher archeological importance) in Tzipori are not mentioned on the Google map.
The Great Omari Mosque, meanwhile, is included on the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map. Zer-Aviv (2009) also questions the power of Google in selecting sites and points to the dangers of the historical perspective Google maps presents:

What through [sic] me was the mention of “Horvat Antedon” to the North of the Shati refugee camp in Gaza. I have never heard of Antedon and was wondering if there are any relics there. Well apparently Antedon is a city built by the Jewish king Herod in the first century BC. It is definitely not an important part of history and its location is only apparently not even known but is only guessed.

In his blog post, Zer-Aviv renders Google Maps as an artifact of a modern ISA: the Google company itself. As Cary Savage (2008) notes in an exploration of an Ideological Digital Apparatus, which updates Althusser’s formulation of ISAs, while “schools, churches, and mass media shaped the ruling ideology of the ISAs of previous generations, corporations at the leading edge of the technological revolution are shaping the dominant ideology of the digital age” (p. 25). In this function, Google Maps also forms a collective memory of place, but one that becomes the dominant ideology due to the scope of its influence. YANH can thus be interpreted as a project employing Situationist tactics in confronting place to subvert a dominant ideology imposed by Google Maps. This is exactly what Zer-Aviv (2009) shows in his discussion of Antedon, as he explains:

I rather want to use this example to emphasize how the so called unbiased and technical description of the world which is a part of Google’s agenda is not and probably cannot be devoid of ideology. It is embedded in our attempt to describe the world, and no one is immune to it.

Zer Aviv (2009) also notes how this presents an opportunity for Situationist intervention:
As much as we might be disturbed by these instances of clear ideological decisions directing a so-called trust-worthy fact, I actually find them hopeful. It just shows how essential our critical thinking is and how it could never be replaced by cold alienated technology. It does however call for a wider media literacy and a critical reading of the map(s).

What Zer-Aviv points out here is that subjects must critically approach any dominant representation of the landscape they are presented with in the digital age. Such a critical mindset can lead to the implementation of Situationist strategies like détournement and dérive.

This, in turn, is what the YANH maps aim to show: that the images and their assemblages of place that subjects are told represent their lived environment may contrast greatly with their lived experiences. The sampling of the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map’s audio files shows how this is conveyed through the subjectivities implied in their use of language, which affects the project’s mode of address. The audio clips show how the YANH designers are dictating subject’s sense of place in producing a particular representation of place. In applying Benveniste’s theories, El-Haddad’s use of the pronouns “I” and “you” impose a collective interpretation of the project by fashioning the subjectivities of the audience as “tourists.” Through this, subjects are told what they should be doing in the sites demarcated on the map, an impossible exercise given, as the title of the project reflects, the “tourists” are not there to engage in such actions. This imposition of an ideological experience onto the subjects underscores how even outside of YANH’s simulation, subjects are confronted with ideologies regularly that shape their perceptions of place, even if they contradict lived experiences.

In this, the YANH maps impose readers with an interpretive task of navigating such a representation and learning from it, an act in line with Eco’s thoughts on the process of abduction. These maps are precisely the “lazy machinery” Eco speaks of which forces the reader to evaluate the
text’s sign systems to make meaning. This function is why the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map’s use of color in connecting nascent technological infrastructure is paramount to the project’s specific interpellative exercise. On a map where subjects must make sense of its unique mode of representation through abduction, the map’s pattern of color provides a connection between the charted sites and the technological infrastructure by which subjects are instructed in how they should perceive place.

IV. Discourses of the Maps

Globalization

In the tourism/colonialism conflict that Zer-Aviv cites, globalization becomes a critical theme of YANH. YANH shows an annihilation of space when considering the subjects’ ability, with the aid of technology, to tour a different place without having to transport themselves to another location. However, there is a sense of reterritorialization to the project – that is, in the claiming of sites in one place as completely different sites of another place. With this in mind, a focus on globalization in approaching these maps illuminates the tourism/colonialism tension that Zer-Aviv directs his readers toward. There is a change in space given how subjects must navigate a place as if it is another place, and a change in time in the annihilation of the distance between the two places. This ushers in the dislocative experience of touring a place that is different from one’s own but is constructed of the same infrastructure to which subjects are accustomed. As part of the project, many of the meanings embedded in the lived environment have been completely transformed. In this, there is a colonizing of space. The meanings one is used to in a given space are removed and replaced by someone else’s – in this case, the YANH team’s constructed meaning.
Production and Consumption

In turn, the emphasis on globalization relates back to theories of production and consumption. Regarding capitalism, Marx discusses how space is disappearing as a result of industrial technologies. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Marx claims that “the imperatives of capitalist production inevitably drove the bourgeoisie to ‘nestle everywhere . . .’ The juggernaut of industrial capitalism constituted the most basic source of technologies resulting in the annihilation of space” (Scheuerman, 2010). It is critical here to remember the role that Greenfield Technologies plays in YANH. In Figure 5.5, the project’s collaboration with Greenfield Technologies to power the map’s technological components is indicated on the bottom right hand corner of the map. On Greenfield Technology’s home page, the company promotes that their “mission is to create innovative and cost effective technology solutions, enhancing your business offering, while keeping in mind that your profitability comes first” (“Greenfield Technologies”). Zer-Aviv even has an endorsement of the company on its Testimonials website page, praising the company for its “VoIP [Voice over Internet Protocol] solutions” and “simple and flexible API” (“Testimonials”). The project’s reliance on and endorsement of communication technologies which annihilate space feeds back into a system of production based off profit and workers’ alienation from the product of their work. This presents an interesting contradiction. YANH seeks to show users how important the unique qualities of different places are, but does so by collaborating with a global corporation whose communication technologies seek to eliminate both space and time. This shows the effect of the dislocative tension on the project.
In the case of YANH, Marx’s critique functions both for the technological infrastructure underpinning the project as well as the symbolic capital of the sites the project depicts as its content. There are 20 sites depicted on the Gaza/Tel Aviv map. The list of sites, seen in Figure 5.5, is an eclectic range of sites. Out of the 20 sites, six - Roots Restaurant, the Arts and Crafts Village, PLO Flag Shop, Kathem’s Ice Cream Parlor, Akeela’s Hummus Restaurant, and Al Qissariya Market – are sites of consumption. Laila El-Haddad, a blogger writing about the disengagement and the voice behind the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map’s audio recordings, justifies the selection of sites for the map in this regard:

I did not want to turn it into idle, boring tourist chatter which one expects but to make the participants feel that they are inside Gaza, with me; that while listening, they will absorb the atmosphere, sense the smells and the spices, taste the food, feel the sea water and hear the taxi drivers honk (Azoulay, 2009).

Several other sites represent different institutions in Gaza. Further, other sites, like the UNRWA and Beach Refugee Camp, deal with more serious issues specific to the area.

In contrast, among the 11 sites on the Baghdad/New York map – the Baghdad Museum, the Market, the Shaheed Monument, Al Shaab Stadium, the Baghdad Zoo, the Hands of Victory Monument, the Unknown Soldier Monument, the Republican Palace, Firdos Square, the National Theatre, and the Technical University – there are not as many sites of consumption depicted as there are on the Gaza/Tel Aviv map. Instead, there is an even greater emphasis on cultural processes of remembrance as inscribed upon the lived environment. This is seen to a certain extent in the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map through the inclusion of the Monument of the Unknown Soldier and The Great Omari Mosque, but on the Baghdad/New York map, four of 11 sites fit under that category.
Accordingly, some of the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map’s audio files mirror the project’s discourses of consumption. Specifically, in two of the audio files, El-Haddad prompts subjects to spend money at the sites even though the subjects are unable to do so. El-Haddad’s first sentence of the Roots Restaurant audio file states, “I hope you’re hungry, and ready to empty your pockets.” El-Haddad then makes suggestions of what to eat in a directive tone. Likewise, the first sentence of the PLO Flag Shop audio file, which El-Haddad identifies as the “first tourist shop in Palestine,” is “It’s tourist shopping time!” Later in the audio file, she recommends that “[i]f you’d like to grab some cheap souvenirs for your family back in Tel-Aviv, this is the place to do it” (“Gaza Audio Tour Samples”).

These references to tourists’ consumption patterns are compelling when considered alongside the many politically oriented statements made in the audio files. For instance, at one point during the PLO Flag Shop audio file, El-Haddad admits that due to the symbolic value of the flags sold there, “conflict makes for good business.” Immediately afterward, El-Haddad quotes the PLO Flag Shop owner’s statement that “I want to run a tourist shop, and I want to sell souvenirs, not politics” (“Gaza/Tel-Aviv Audio Files”). A contradiction arises here. The owner just wants to sell souvenirs, but is inherently profiting off the tensions that give the flags value. The contradiction matches the nature of the entire project in some respects. Just as a whole system of meaning embedded in the environment is manipulated to match the meanings of another, so too are the symbolic aspects of the simulated city translated into capital.

Whether it is by promoting sites of consumption in the city or engaging subjects to consume unique sites of cultural memory within the city, the project, branding itself as a tourism agency, brands the cities simultaneously. This presents place in terms of the commodity fetish, as the
simulated sites are framed as a social relation between the producers of the map and the consumers of the simulation. Indeed, the maps are a specific production of each place by the developers themselves. As such, as El-Haddad suggests, the more enticing sites are selected at times to convey this constructed, branded sense of place. With the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map, this manifests in the preponderance of sites of consumption, whereas in the Baghdad/New York map, this manifests in the prevalence of sites reflecting place-specific sites of cultural remembrance. Likewise, the creative systems that make both the Gaza/Tel-Aviv and the Baghdad/New York map possible underscores the need to consider a city’s ambiance in analyzing the development of locative projects.

V. Diagramming the Creative Systems

Both YANH maps are similar in how they were presented to a larger audience at events relevant to their content. The Baghdad/New York map was presented at Conflux, a psychogeography festival (Zer-Aviv, 2006). Conflux is held annually in New York and invites “visual and sound artists, writers, urban adventurers and the public . . . to explore their urban environment.” One publication cited on the festival’s website asserts that Conflux encompasses a “network of maverick artists and unorthodox urban investigators… making fresh, if underground, contributions to pedestrian life in New York City, and upping the ante on today’s fight for the soul of high-density metropolises.” Conflux also works with Eyebeam, a local arts group, as well as New York University (“Conflux Festival: About”). Zer-Aviv is affiliated with both (“A Dislocative Tourism Agency”). When combined with the fact that Zer-Aviv is from Tel-Aviv, as mentioned previously, it is clear that Zer-Aviv’s own subjectivity factors into the maps.
The Baghdad/York Map was also done in conjunction with Block Magazine in support of a special issue and project. The specific issue of Block magazine that the project is featured in “examines contemporary paradigms of temporality in urban areas through local Israeli and global projects and texts.” The issue of Block magazine is part of a larger project called “Occasional cities. Post-It city and other forms of temporality,” an international project that sets out to investigate the different overlapping uses of urban territory, through the perspectives offered by architecture, urban design and the visual arts” (“BLOCK #4: Occasional Cities”).

In contrast, the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map was presented “in the fringe theatre exhibition at the ArtTLV biennial” (Azoulay, 2009). This biennial is one in a series of “efforts . . . made to shift Tel Aviv’s marginal status” as part of a concerted campaign “to infuse Tel Aviv with new energy (and to showcase what locals have always known)” regarding the area’s pool of artistic talent (Banai et al). While Jerusalem is the “home to Israel's major museums, Tel Aviv is its contemporary arts capital. It is a livelier, more progressive city, where young artists live, work and show their wares in more than 30 contemporary galleries” (Goff, 2008).

While both maps were presented similarly to an appropriate public, the creative systems behind them differ slightly. For the Baghdad/New York map, the domain is the discipline of psychogeography, the field is Conflux and Block magazine, and the individuals are the YANH team. For the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map, the domain is the Tel-Aviv’s zeitgeist as an ‘art capital,’ the field is ArtTLV, and the individuals are, again, the YANH team.
The two maps, though similar in design and purpose, differ in the domains they draw from.

Whereas the first project, the Baghdad/New York map, was predominantly created for an academic audience under a disciplinary domain, psychogeography, the domain of the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map was established more so out of the zeitgeist of a city region – that is, from the support garnered in
attempts to establish Tel-Aviv as an ‘art capital.’ However, the design team behind both projects remained relatively the same in both instances, and both were at least in part produced for and featured in a festival of some sort.

This complicates how prior scholarly work has contextualized locative art. On the one hand, Zer-Aviv and the YANH team seem very forthcoming in categorizing the project as Situationist work. To this end, the system behind the Baghdad/New York map seems consistent in both the categorization and the support of the project as such. The collaboration with both Conflux 2007 and Block magazine both depend on this perspective on the project. On the other hand, in the case of the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map, while the Situationist influence behind the project remains, the creative system of the map is supported by the particular transformation of a city and is not a directly academic one. This emphasizes the importance of the localities being depicted in spite of the project’s theme of globalization. While the project suggests that subjects’ sense of place is derived from technology, the particular experience of each map is not a universalizing one, aside from the mediation of technological infrastructure. The vibrant community of Tel-Aviv provides an alternative explanation of why that depicted region is being depicted: because of its successful branding as an artistic community. Such a representation of the city is what makes projects like the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map possible in the first place. Even with the Baghdad/New York map, the Conflux festival, which is held in New York City each year and collaborates with area organizations, has a deep tie to the city, one that is significant to the creative environment from which the project was born.
VI. Summary

As articulated by Zer-Aviv, YANH draws from a variety of influences, including ideological distortions of history and the tensions issued by ubiquitous computing, tourism, and colonialism. In turn, the sign system of the maps, linking the representations of the technological infrastructure that underpins the project’s interpellative exercise to the sites included in the map, reflects these foci. Situationism is an obvious influence on the project, considering how it is contextualized by Zer-Aviv alongside its indirect endorsement for Situationist intervention. Yet the project, in addition, owes much to the work of de Certeau in having subjects reconstruct place through everyday practices as well as Althusser in its critique of dominant digital representations of place.

In turn, discourses of globalization, production, and consumption are embedded in the map’s interpellative activity. In these respective discourses, the meanings embedded in cultural memory are colonized and reconfigured through communication technologies that annihilate space as a product of capitalism. Sites of consumption and sites of place-specific symbolic capital are selected for both maps, encouraging a consumption of place in line with capitalism. While the creative system behind the Baghdad/New York map reflects the project’s Situationist ambitions, the creative system behind the Gaza/Tel-Aviv map reflects the Tel-Aviv arts community, specifically the work and funding involved in branding it as an “arts capital.” This emphasizes the localities themselves when examining locative art. Even though subjects are interpellated by overarching technological infrastructures, regardless of physical location, locative art can also incorporate the unique characteristics of the cities they reconfigure. This is crucial both the representations of the individual projects as well as their overall development.
CHAPTER VI: STREET GHOSTS, PAOLO CIRIO

I. Introduction

For Street Ghosts, Paolo Cirio prints out images of figures captured by Google Street View and pastes them to the locations where subjects were originally captured. He explains the project thusly: “As the publicly accessible pictures are of individuals taken without their permission, I reversed the act: I took the pictures of individuals without Google’s permission and posted them on public walls” (“Street Ghosts”). Some of the original Google Street View images are linked to the city of capture onto a Google Map. Other images of the Street Ghosts are highlighted on the project’s Google+ page. In several instances, subjects captured by Google contributed to the project by sending their own captured images to Cirio (Isaacson, 2012).

Cirio himself is “[a] former street artist turned digital,” which informs his decision to place his print-outs “next to old, elaborate lines of graffiti” (Isaacson, 2012). Cirio’s prime interest as an artist lies in “corporate and state interventions through the tactical use of information power.” This also matches his interest in the self as data, as his projects feature how “data take on forms that are able to influence a mass audience actively, while embodying innovative aesthetic qualities” (“Paolo Cirio”).

Street Ghosts is global in scope. Cirio has placed print-outs in various cities, including New York City, Berlin, London, Marseille, Lyon, and Stuttgard. Part of the reason for this is that Cirio is engaging with ethics in computation on a broad level. Indeed, Vint Cerf (2013), widely regarded as one of the fathers of the internet, has noted the difficulties inherent in maintaining a multicultural sense of social norms and ethics online. Cirio’s selection of sites stemming from different cultures in examining capture certainly seeks to explore this challenge in Street Ghosts.
The range of cities also reflects how Street Ghosts features a comparable interpellative activity occurring through technological infrastructure to those of previous projects analyzed. However, Street Ghosts complicates this exercise by aiming to make subjects cognizant of their sense of place being mediated by technological infrastructure, rather than simply using technology to guide subjects through place-making activities. In turn, various aspects of the project’s creative system, including region and institutional support, shape the project. This indicates that an analysis of a locative project should investigate these components of the project accordingly.

II. Reading Street Ghosts

A semiotic analysis of Street Ghosts, both in terms of the Google map of the project that Cirio has generated and the images Cirio posts on Google+, reveals much about the project. Overall, Cirio takes “naturalized” aspects of Google Street View images and re-imposes them onto lived urban spaces. To apply semiotic terminology, this requires extracting one element of the syntagm from Google Street View and re-aligning a landscape based on said extraction. In this, he presents half of the globe as defined solely by scenes of capture on the Google Map he composes. Interestingly, this chosen mode of representation adopts the structure of the dominant portrayal of space that Cirio critiques in order to mount that very critique. The image incorporates many elements of the typical Google Map sign system, including the Google logo on the bottom left-hand corner; the navigation and zoom functionalities in the upper left-hand corner; and the base map, satellite image, terrain image and Earth image tabs at the top right hand corner.
It is a practical choice on Cirio’s part. He is able to link to the very digital artifacts that he appropriates and incorporates into lived space as a means of collecting evidence against Google. To this end, Cirio notes, “Legally, I'm violating the copyright of the images that Google pretends to own, but more important, this project may influence the verdict of next time that Google Street View will be debated in a court case” (Isaacson, 2012). In yet another of the project’s ironic twists, because of Cirio’s use of a Google map, the copyright is attributed to Google on the bottom right-hand corner, indicating that Google even owns a piece that critiques Google.

Clicking on one of the Google Maps nodes opens a small window on the map that offers a link for a Google Street View image of the captured subject or subjects and a picture hyperlinked to a Google+ album featuring Cirio’s imposed Street Ghosts. This approach toward directing users to different facets of the project takes advantage of the hyperlinked architecture of the internet. In addition, this particular presentation reinforces that Google hosts not only the data that it originally captured, but also the data that Cirio has re-imposed upon those scenes of capture. Since this is also seen in the main map image through the Google copyright, this is clearly a point that Cirio wants his
audience to recognize. This point speaks to the power of Google in dictating certain experiences for its users intentionally. By proxy, Street Ghosts does the same.

Specifically, there is a particular instance on the Google+ pages that call out to their audience. At the top of each page, one finds a red hyperlinked rectangle overlaying a grey-black background that invites users to join Google+. To the right of the hyperlinked rectangle, there is a phrase in white text that reads, “Share the right things with just the right people.” In most other Google+ photo albums, this call for users to join Google+ may seem more innocuous. Given the intent behind Street Ghosts, this address is jarring when included with the project’s photo albums on Google+. In many ways, the viewer’s reaction to this message encompasses a test; one either does or does not recognize the irony of the message in light of the images presented through the project. Moreover, this shows interpellation at work in operating interfaces that dictate particular subjective experiences of place for its users. Google conceals the subject positions behind each of the two messages and situates subjects into inopportune subject positions that they are unable to see as such, fitting Cormack’s view of interpellation. Of course, Street Ghosts is an interpellative exercise itself, which will be discussed further in the next section.

Cirio’s approach also, in contrast to the other locative pieces surveyed here, encourages interactivity. Viewers can manipulate the presentation of the map by zooming in or out, moving left or right, or clicking on a node to view specific Street Ghosts images. However, as the map image appears on the Street Ghosts website, it is quite zoomed out. This means that the majority of the image’s space is dedicated to representing the Atlantic Ocean, which separates the map’s New York City node from the rest of the nodes in Europe. That decision emphasizes the project’s scope in terms of space and distinguishes the European sites from the lone American one. The decision may
also be informed by Cirio’s subjectivity as a European who now resides in New York (“Biography and CV”). When that is considered, the emphasis on European cities alongside the inclusion of New York makes more sense.

What appears initially as an ironic selection on Cirio’s part becomes a very effective mode of representation for Street Ghosts in showing how subjects’ sense of place is dictated by the particular way Google Maps depicts spatial nodes in relation to each other. A complex Google infrastructure of technology and information, of course, enables this depiction. As such, place becomes shaped for subjects by the infrastructures empowering Google. As a range of cultural theory suggests, the appropriation of the sign systems Google uses that are synonymous with its infrastructure gives Cirio more power in how he designs Street Ghosts.

III. Examining Relevant Theory

Cirio’s use of Google Maps to attack Google facilitates Eco’s process of abduction. Users are quite familiar with the Google Maps’ sign system and mode of representation, making the project’s map more palatable to the audience. This also alleviates the need to explain the navigational functionalities of Google Maps due to user’s previous experiences with the form, which makes interacting with the Street Ghosts platform much simpler. From there, users can focus on the particular selection of sites and captured images Cirio presents.

These selections and the way they are presented in the Google Map resonate with Lotman’s theories on cultural memory. Google Maps create a sense of culture by presenting a structure highlighting certain businesses, monuments, and attractions over other elements of urban spaces. In the case of Street Ghosts, this process is meant to render the entire Google Map image as a scene of
interpellation. The nodes of the Google Map, often designated when one searches for a location that he or she is interested in visiting, instead designate an unfavorable sight for the audience – capture. In this engagement with cultural memory, Street Ghosts also exemplifies an annotative project of Situationist influence. The world is tagged through Google Maps in particular arrangements reflecting cultural operations.

Street Ghosts’ lengthy home page is replete with a verbose artist’s statement from Cirio, a slideshow with many of the project’s images, and even a photograph taken after Cirio wrecked a Google Street View tricycle. One of the more telling features of the website, though, is a short address to its viewers located on the right margin of the webpage in a sidebar:

Browse through the Map, which has the links to the original screenshots and to related photos documenting affixed paper posters. Or browse through photos of the ghosts. Keep your eyes open! Street Ghosts hasn't ended, and it may appear soon in your city and maybe with your ghost! (Street Ghosts).

Benveniste’s work illuminates this address. Cirio implies a subject position for the audience with his use of the word “your” three times to both represent and direct his audience. This subject position renders his audience just as susceptible to Google’s capture as any of the subjects featured in Street Ghosts.

This choice of language reveals how Street Ghosts performs an ideological ploy in its indirect mode of address. Through his work, Cirio wants people to think they themselves could be captured in public in toying loosely with the semiotic concepts of langue and parole. According to Chandler, “[l]angue refers to the system of rules and conventions which is independent of, and pre-exists, individual users; parole refers to its use in particular instances” (n.d.). While Cirio (2012)
offers a lengthy artistic statement on his website, one particular moment in his explication features his phrasing of this tactic:

The obscure figures fixed to the walls are the murky intersection of two overlain worlds: the real world of things and people, from which these images were originally captured, and the virtual afterlife of data and copyrights, from which the images were retaken. The virtual world, as a transposition of the real world into an enclosure owned by multinational corporations, is no less real for its seeming withdrawal; it has material effects. Media is the interface that bridges the two worlds, and maintains a constant mutual influence between them.

In discussing this fusion of the real and virtual worlds as encompassed in Google Street View, Cirio justifies his use of the images he appropriates (langue) in his practices of using Google Street View’s own images to subvert Google (parole). As such, Street Ghosts exemplifies détournement. The imposition of artifacts back into the real world after being translated from the real world to the virtual world alters the environments wherein Google has captured subjects. This tactic can be further scrutinized in applying Barthes’ theories on mythology.

Barthes’ conceptions of myth as expressed in his essay “Myth Today” merits attention when critiquing Street Ghosts. He defines myth as a “second order semiological system.” In myth, the sign is situated as a signifier – simply, through its form – in its expression. Its counterpart is the concept, which encompasses the “drives behind the myth” that make the myth more universal. Barthes accounts for this process of universalizing through his formulation of metalanguage, the product of the myth-concept pairing. The concept distances myth, which is already incomplete and ready for a given signification, from meaning.

To Barthes, critiquing the consumption of myth is pivotal to ideological critique due to myth’s naturalizing function. Myth, according to Barthes, constitutes a theft of language. He claims
that “nothing can be safe from myth.” In turn, the perspectives of the dominant social group, which controls the propagation of myth, constrain society. This is because “all that is not bourgeoisie is obliged to borrow from the bourgeoisie,” allowing bourgeois ideologies to diffuse silently into society. This means, according to Barthes, that the bourgeoisie determine subjects’ relations to nature. In doing so, myth dissolves the appearance of dialectics in its essentializing nature, masking contingency. Barthes finds that the only non-mythical language is that of those negating nature and producing something, which is why revolutionary rhetoric is also non-mythological (Mythologies).

Pablo Cirio’s Street Ghosts makes an ideological point by exposing how people captured by Google Street View are in a sense mythologized by Google. Cirio comments on the disturbing naturalization of such images on Street View by taking it a step further and incorporating the images in the actual settings where they were captured. Even in attempting a subversive discourse, Cirio, as Barthes discusses, borrows from the dominant Google representation. Yet, in negating nature, in the act of producing, he is able to avoid mythology and explain his work as subversive. In this sense, Street Ghosts has a de-mythologizing function.
Cirio’s work also points to Lévi-Strauss’ view of mythology as bricolage. Lévi-Strauss held that the bricoleur builds new syntagms and paradigms by adopting existing signifieds as signifiers and speaking “through the medium of things,” as the new medium created becomes the basis of expression (Chandler, n.d.). Through his appropriations, Cirio certainly seems to be fulfilling that role in making these images seem less natural by, paradoxically, fully naturalizing them. He pastes the captured images to the real scene of capture, but the cut-outs are flat and blurred. Due to the style of the representation and subjects’ happenstance capture on Google Street View, subjects are less likely to think critically about their appearance. But in Cirio’s mode of putting the subjects back into the lived scenes of capture, subjects are more likely to look closer into the appearance of the Street Ghosts due to the newfound way they stand out in the urban environment. To the typical city dweller, seeing a Street Ghosts piece may still just be an aberrant sighting quickly forgotten and naturalized completely within its environment. To the informed viewer, however, it gains an added resonance of ideological critique, which becomes the connoted message of the Street Ghosts figures.

The nature of Cirio’s images also merits analysis. In Cirio’s own words, “[t]hese images do not offer details, but the blurred colors and lines on the posters give a gauzy, spectral aspect to the human figures, unveiling . . . a digital shadow haunting the real world” (“Street Ghosts”). These blurry representations of subjects make them seem less realistic, matching them more with the aesthetics of the street art they overlay typically than a typical subject’s photograph.
This tactic is understandable in terms of the relation of the images to the works of art with which they are grouped. However, when considering the critique that Cirio establishes, the decision seems somewhat counterintuitive. More detailed images of subjects would arguably make their aura more jarring for Cirio’s audience. His technique, therefore, directs the viewer’s attention to the images as purposefully shaped representations rather than photography in the strictest sense. Some of the lack of detail on the images may very well be dictated by a lack of detail on the original Google images. In spite of this, Cirio presents the lack of detail as intentional. As such, Cirio favors the likeness of his images to street art over the drive to make the images as effective as possible, a decision that may be influenced from his own subjectivity as both a street artist and a digital artist.

The lack of detail also fits with the intended transience of the images themselves, the project’s content. With few details that the viewer can latch on to, the Street Ghosts are more universalizing. They represent any person that could be captured by Google, rather than just the one subject that has been captured by Google in a particular instance. This is pivotal to the interpellative exercise Cirio forms through the project. Were the figures presented with more artistic detail, the viewer may not relate as much to them, affecting how viewers may come to recognize
through Street Ghosts that they could potentially become a subject captured by Google. To prompt subjects’ recognition of this, Cirio presents Google as an Ideological Digital Apparatus as Savage envisions. The mass amount of data Google aggregates, as Cirio shows, makes Google an institution of significant power. The captured images of subjects on Google Street View reproduce the relations of production, in line with Althusser’s ISAs, in that the images of the figures themselves are only one step in a broader system of producing the Street View images, a process that they participate in yet are alienated from.

Additionally, to convey its intended message, Street Ghosts also displays a synthesis of affect theory and scholarly thought on media urbanism. Through Street Ghosts, Cirio asserts that the images of the captured figures constitute “a performance, re-contextualizing not only data, but also a conflict . . . . Who has more strength in this war? The artist, the firm, the legislators, the public concern or the technology?” (“Street Ghosts”). Cirio’s views on these performances match Massumi’s thoughts on the excess affect of postmodernism, given that the temporal experience of urban dwellers (as embodied in their capture) are mapped out in the project through a pervasive media source – Google.

Therefore, through Google Street View, Cirio attempts his interpellative activity not by guiding his viewers through a unique experience as the other analyzed projects have, but by making the excess affect of Google manifest in the lived environment, rather than solely online. Cirio reads the urban environment as a scene of capture. Throughout the project, his outrage over this transforms both the lived and virtual landscape. In the latter case, it transforms the dominant online representations of space: Google Maps and Google Street View. One can see several discourses imposed on the map in this transformation.
IV. Discourses of the Map

*Globalization*

Cirio approaches globalization from the lens of media urbanism. He underscores the significance of Google’s captures by focusing on mediation and how it translates lived experiences, even if the mode of mediation may make those captures seem more illusory. Cirio, as previously discussed, offers that media bridges the real and the virtual. Street Ghosts demystifies this bridge. Cirio shows the power dynamics behind ubiquitous computing by drawing attention to the very subjects whose images, in Cirio’s view, have been used without their consent. de Waal’s tie between ubiquitous computing, technological infrastructures, and media urbanism is evident in that the dominant Google infrastructure operates silently in capturing data to incorporate into services meant to make users’ searches for different places easier.

Simultaneously, however, Cirio also annihilates space through his own Google Map, condensing the temporal dimensions of space to present a vision of space marked only by scenes of capture by Google. Hence, a critical investigation of the discourse of globalization in Street Ghosts reveals some contradictions – notably, to some extent, the dislocative tension. Not only is there a contradiction between the critique of Google infrastructure and the reliance of Street Ghosts on the Google sign system to facilitate the reading of the text, there is also a contradiction in how Street Ghosts annihilates space to critique Google’s captures of subjects, which also entails annihilating space. While Street Ghosts does not exhibit the place-making ambitions of the other analyzed locative art projects, it still annihilates space and time in representing specific places in a manner
which involves some elements that are counterintuitive with its aim in line with the dislocative tension.

In turn, Street Ghosts’ engagement with globalization reflects both the zoomed-out presentation of the map and the project’s excess affect. By taking online images and imposing them upon real places, Cirio shows how modern technology eliminates the sense of space by making distance less cumbersome. The project is founded on the ability to see the captured images in an aggregate through Google Street View as well as the ability to aggregate photographic evidence of Cirio’s Street Ghosts images through Google+. Were neither of those possible, Street Ghosts would be less effective; much of the project’s power comes from viewers’ ability to access the images easily online. Given this, Street Ghosts operates off a contradiction that complements its paradoxical use of the Google sign system to convey meaning.

Production/Consumption

The privacy issues involving Google’s use of captured images that concern Cirio play into issues of cultural production. Specifically, Cirio frames his argument in this regard as a process wherein Google profits from meanings produced by others:

Google didn’t ask permission to appropriate images of all the world’s towns and cities, nor did it pay anything to do so. It sells ads against this public and private content, and then resells the information collected to the same advertisers, making billions that aren’t even taxed. It’s a sort of exploitation by a giant social parasite that resells us what was collectively created by people’s activity and money (“Street Ghosts”). 
This argument corresponds directly to Marx’s findings on the exploitation of the masses in a capitalist system in terms of their use-value as expressed by labor. However, Cirio extends Marxist critique by linking this exploitation with processes of cultural memory:

Google appropriates the social labor we perform by constituting the public; simply by investing the city with social meaning, we unintentionally provide value for Google to capture. This Street Art intervenes by confronting the public with the aesthetic qualities of the data they didn’t even know they were alienating, and forces them to reckon with the possibility of their own image appearing as ghostly slaves trapped in a digital world forever (“Street Ghosts”).

The Marxist influence on Street Ghosts ties its use of excess affect to subject’s exploitation. By drawing attention to unknown data aesthetically, Cirio presents embodiments of exploitation in the form of images representing subjects who are alienated from those very images due to their distance from the production and use of those images. Furthermore, this signals an alienation from the meanings embedded in the city by those who encompass it. In his artist’s statement, Cirio asserts that regardless of subjects’ capture, Google is profiting off the creative labor of the city’s constituency in making the city itself.

Theories of commodity fetishes are also very relevant to Cirio’s use of Google services. One of Google’s prime roles is to highlight different businesses in terms of the space they occupy (their location) and how users can access said occupied space (directions to their location). Figure 6.4 shows how this role seeps into one of the Street Ghosts Street View images. There are two components of the Street View link that encourage consumption. One is the link for the New Museum of Contemporary Art Store in the scroll-down menu on the left side of the screen. The other is the propertyshark.com Google Ad on the bottom right-hand corner of the image.
The former presents the consumption of art in exchange for capital, while the latter presents the commodification of place. Propertyshark.com “aggregates real estate data and listings from hundreds of public and proprietary sources into an easy-to-use yet comprehensive property research website covering a dozen major markets” (“About PropertyShark.com”). If one clicks on the 81 Orchard Street link, one is directed to a propertyshark.com page featuring information on the property, its value, and its location on a Google map (“81 Orchard Street, New York, NY 10002”).

This illuminates how Google’s sign system organizes its interface in a manner that facilitates its most important operations. In promoting sites of consumption, Google Maps promotes the consumption of place simultaneously. In this mode of representation, Debord’s banalization of place is at work in that disparate places can be connected on the Google platform simply by having capital. Google embodies the market’s abstract space, wherein subjects are dictated an experience of place as dominated by sites of consumption. In this respect, then, any project that incorporates Google Maps as Street Ghosts does may be doing the same.

Street Ghosts also maps commodity fetishes when one includes the self as a mode of commodity. Cirio’s intended affect has much to do with his decision to criticize Google in terms of its use of subjects’ images rather than for its many other controversial moves regarding user privacy.
This choice presents data in a more personal light, giving the project more power for Cirio by reflecting a similar power that Google wields. If the self can be captured by Google as data, and data can be used by Google in a larger process of earning profit, then the capture of subjects’ images by Google Street View pins subjects in a system of commodities wherein their presence amongst certain sites included by Google matters. Cirio, in turn, reveals this power through Street Ghosts, and this technique empowers his critique, his chosen mode of representation, and his interpellative exercise for viewers of the project.

V. Diagramming the Creative System

While working on Street Ghosts, Cirio was a fellow at the Eyebeam Art and Technology Center, an organization also affiliated with Zer-Aviv as he developed the YANH maps. According to its website, Eyebeam “provides . . . state-of-the-art tools for digital research and experimentation. It is a lively incubator of creativity and thought, where artists and technologists actively engage with culture, addressing the issues . . . of our time.” Since 1997, when the center was founded, “Eyebeam has supported some 245 fellowships and residencies for artists and creative technologists” (“About”). As part of the Eyebeam fellowship, Cirio researched “tactical transmedia fictions, critical finance and privacy issues related to monopolistic internet platforms” (“Paolo Cirio”).

Street Ghosts reflects this research. However, as discussed previously, given Cirio’s subjectivity, the project also engages with street art on a broader level. This engagement with street art is also a pivotal part of the project’s mode of representation. As such, it is a vital part of the creative system itself. Hence, in applying Czikenthmihayli’s model of creative systems, the domain
of Street Ghosts is urban street art, the field is Eyebeam Art and Technology Center, and the individual is Cirio.

Through this creative system, it is clear once again that the localities from which the creative system of a given locative piece arises influences the scope and bias of the project significantly. Eyebeam’s role in supporting Cirio during the project allows for cultural intervention in terms of both art and technology. Further, it may have influenced the selection of New York City as a node for the project. Coincidentally, the Google Street View link for New York City, as discussed before, presents art as capital through a technological interface. In turn, the system’s influence on the project reflects the artist’s subjectivity as both a street artist and a European residing in New York.

VI. Summary

Cirio’s use of the Google Maps sign system, alongside how the lack of Street Ghosts figures’ detail shapes the project’s affect, aids viewers in understanding that they too could become subjects
captured by Google. Such a realization calls attention to the ubiquity of the Google infrastructure and how subjects’ experiences of place are frequently mediated and shaped by Google Street View’s mode of representation. In presenting place, Google Street View commodifies place by pitting sites in configuration with various sites of consumption. While the project reflects various aspects of Situationism overall, this particularly reflects Debord’s view that space is becoming increasingly banal as a result of capitalism.

In turn, by using Google’s sign system, Street Ghosts plays into the operations of Google’s infrastructure and informs the viewer that technological infrastructures often inform one’s sense of place. This is precisely what Street Ghosts informs its viewers of during the interpellative exercise it prompts. In this exercise, Street Ghosts also assumes some of Google interpellative activities, such as the call to join Google+ when one looks at Google+ albums, but with a much different tone given the nature of the project.

While the project’s resonance with globalization points out the project’s contradictions, its relevance to theories of commodity fetish shows how Google creates a world patterned by consumption. In Cirio’s decision to borrow elements of the dominant Google representation, Street Ghosts also participates in depicting the world through this particular pattern. The creative system of Street Ghosts, which emphasizes the role of Eyebeam Art and Technology Center in supporting the project, reinforces the role of specific locations influencing locative projects. This association, alongside Cirio’s subjectivity, may have helped shape the project’s aesthetic, message, and selection of sites.
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

I. Addressing the Research Questions

The locative art projects examined here are all dialogic cultural representations whose creative systems reflect the localities they depict. Their use of cultural paradigms and signs guides viewers through the interpellative activity that each artist creates. To summarize the insights of this thesis, it is worth addressing the research questions posed during the introduction:

• *What ideologies are constituted in the practice of locative art?* For all their experimental value, these projects reinforce the relations of production for consumers significantly. Hence, locative art can reflect and mediate capitalist ideologies. To this end, the projects also reveal how subjects’ sense of place is shaped by commodity fetishes. Similarly, technological fetishism is also promoted in several of these projects in how the artists frame their work. Their comments on the projects reveal how much users empower technologies – rather than the other way around – by ascribing many abstract ideals in them. These ideals include technology’s purported capacity for place-making, criticizing colonialism, and critiquing surveillance.

• *What effect do the creative systems supporting locative art projects have on the circulation of these ideologies?* The creative systems point toward a need to consider locality in examining a given locative art project because of the strong influence locality wields over the content and message of the projects. This, too, reveals much about the commodification of place and the dislocative tension. However, this emphasis on locality competes with the discourses of globalization, production, and consumption in each project.
• How do developers and academics frame locative art projects, and how do their remarks concur or differ with the ideologies apparent in locative art projects? The artists themselves present their projects as liberating, but this ideal contrasts with their presentations of capitalist ideology. Indeed, there is little that seems liberating about media practices that reinforce the relations of production and consumption in marketplace ideologies. This does not detract from the expressive content of each project, but it does reveal a tendency on the artists’ part to create bounded interpellative experiences for their subjects.

• What does it mean to represent contemporary social relations artistically as data, and how do developers and academics address this? Bio-Mapping’s “quantification” of an abstraction provides clarity in this discussion. Nold’s technology-based metric of emotion, specifically anxiety, is grounded in an interpellative exercise with its subjects. As the ability to visualize such abstractions grows with the proliferation of new technologies, so too does the range of interpellative scenes that locative artists can present to their subjects and the online viewers of their projects. Thus, the increased quantification of the self as data opens up the range of possible interpellative exercises designers can guide users through. In this, interpellation serves as the bridge in the translation of data into affect in geolocative media practices.

With these questions now addressed, the broader research inquiry can now be addressed: what are the subjects of these projects, and what types of subjectivities do they incorporate? This thesis has argued that these projects are narratives of interpellation through technology, infrastructure, and consumption. They are underpinned by creative systems founded on the power of locality, while
simultaneously being constrained by the dislocative tension. In turn, these serve as the primary topics of each piece. The result of each piece is a digital artifact that reveals the potential for interpellative exercises in the digital age that can, as these projects do, reinforce consumer subjectivities.

II. Implications for Future Research

There are several avenues for future research that stem from this project. Even though it has been researched extensively, Google Street View merits further analysis for the ubiquity of its sign system and for the critiques Zer-Aviv and Cirio make of it. A future project, for example, might perform a rhetorical analysis of Google representatives’ blog posts on Street View. The subject of such an analysis could range from Google’s legal settlements in its capture cases, episodes in which volunteers make extensive additions to Google Maps using Google Map Maker (especially the addition of information on North Korean gulags earlier this year), or Google captures of quintessential American landscape using a new camera technology called Google Trekker (Peralta, 2013; Harlan, 2013; O’Neil, 2013). These Google innovations present questions concerning surveillance in the digital age, ideological representations of cultural memory, and the nature of representation in a world of evolving photographic technologies.

Second, on a broader level, the semiotic analyses conducted here signal a need to conduct comparable analyses on the affect of emergent information visualizations brought about not only by location-aware technologies, but by big data in general. With the rise of social networking and meme culture, several publications, including The Washington Post, post cartographic information visualizations that measure place in new ways and become viral quite quickly. Similar analyses to
those conducted here on such digital artifacts would reveal how their sign systems make meaning by incorporating cultural tropes.

Likewise, research endeavors similar to the locative art projects discussed here may be scrutinized through the presented mode of critique to understand the indirect mode of address and interpellative exercises inherent in them. This will specifically show how they expand the range of interpellation in the digital mode. Projects like Livehoods, for instance, establish new metrics to understand cities by creating cartographic visualizations that use “data such as tweets and check-ins . . . to discover the hidden structures of the city with machine learning.” Supported by “the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University,” the Livehoods team deems the project a new way “to investigate and explore how people actually use the city, simultaneously shedding light onto the factors that come together to shape the urban landscape and the social texture of city life” (“About the Livehoods Project”). If the theoretical apparatus outlined in this thesis is applied to such popular visualization projects, researchers can investigate the dynamics of both the chosen mode of representation and the creative system of the project fully. They can then apply their findings to the broader cultural operations of those projects.

Third, the interplay between theories of place-making, technology, commodity fetishes, and sound can be used to analyze recent location-aware albums. Several artists, including Bjork, have supplemented their music with location-aware supplemental apps. Bluebrain has garnered significant media attention for their innovations in the media genre by taking this further. The Washington D.C. duo has created two albums available as free iPhone apps that users can play as they walk around the National Mall or Times Square, respectively. Regarding the albums, James McKinley (2011) notes that “as you walk, new musical themes hit you every 20 or 30 steps, as if they
were emanating from statues, playgrounds, open spaces and landmarks.” He adds that “the themes layer over one another, growing in volume as you approach certain points on the map and fading out as you move away” (McKinley, 2011). Location-aware albums relate to the predispositions many of the projects highlighted here assume in terms of tourism, cultural memory, and commodification. Further, in the case of the latter, Bluebrain hopes that “the musical format will become a commercially viable medium” eventually (McKinley, 2011).

Finally, this thesis justifies the need for critical investigations on open source mapping in the era of big data. Dave Cole (2013) of Mapbox, for instance, discusses how the platform relies on transparent government data systems for users to create maps whose content ranges from hunger in the horn of Africa, rainfall and drought levels, and climate change projections. The platform, in turn, relies on a community-based project called Open Street Map that differs from Google’s more controlling approach of holding licenses over data provided and maps created by users. As such, the insights of this thesis could be extended to the practices of open source mapping in order to analyze different trends in sign systems, interpellative exercises, and power dynamics inherent in both a given platform and in users’ treatments of specific kinds of data. Indeed, this thesis complicates the tension between the two and presents tendencies in locative work that merit consideration in critiquing future geolocative media practices.
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