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VISUALISING THE CITY

Terence Heng, *University of Liverpool*
Jesse O'Neill, *Glasgow School of Art Singapore*

ABSTRACT

In 2017 the fifth iteration of the International Visual Methods Conference was held at the Singapore Institute of Technology.

The theme, “Visualising the City”, brought together more than 110 participants from 26 different countries, with a combination of paper presentations, art exhibitions and walking workshops. Deliberately interdisciplinary, the conference theme sought submissions from the arts, humanities, social sciences and hard sciences.

This special issue of Visual Ethnography follows on from the conference theme, in which the contributions, again drawn from a diverse set of disciplines, approaches and theories, considers how (and why) we visualise global urban environments, and what are the implications for such methods. In this introduction we reflect on the conference’s theme, keynotes and papers, and how these have led to the formation of the issue. We seek to contextualise the issue’s articles and photo-essays within theories of visual methods in the social science and the city, and propose that visual methods in ethnographic traditions have particular strengths in revealing urban place-making through everyday praxis, subtle resistance and deliberate narratives.

Bio

Terence Heng is a lecturer in Sociology at the University of Liverpool, where he is also an associate with the Centre for Architecture and the Visual Arts. He is the author of *Visual Methods in the Field: Photography for the Social Sciences* (Routledge 2016), and his work has been featured in *Area*, *The Sociological Review*, *Geographical Review* and *Cultural Geographies*. His research interests cover the intersection of Sociology, Cultural Geography and Creative Practice, and include sacred space, photography as a research method and the materiality of deathscapes. He is the winner of the inaugural International Visual Sociology Association’s Prosser Award for Outstanding Visual Methodologies, and the 2015 Sociological Review Prize for Outstanding Scholarship.

Jesse O’Neill is a Lecturer at the Glasgow School of Art, where he coordinates undergraduate Design History and Theory at the school’s Singapore campus. He received his Ph.D. from the University of New South Wales for research into the history of printing in colonial Australia, and his current work concentrates on the development of design and lifestyle in the British colonial centers of Southeast Asia.

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Introduction



In Georg Simmel's famous treatise of the city, he describes the making of the blasé urbanised individual as a result of "(an) over-growth of objective culture (becoming)... less and less satisfactory for the individual. Perhaps less conscious than in practical activity and in the obscure complex of feelings which flow from him, he is reduced to a negligible quantity. He becomes a single cog..." (Simmel 1903:8). The blasé individual is overwhelmed and anonymised – he or she becoming numb to the over-stimuli of a hyper-modernised life that simultaneously inspires and demotivates. But we know that the city does so much more than this. It allows for great creativity but at the same time takes away identity. This dialectical tension of opportunity and obstruction in the city was the basis for the 'conference photograph' of the fifth International Visual Methods Conference (IVMC). The image was a wide-open landscape photograph of a single maintenance engineer wearing an orange safety helmet, dwarfed by the immense architecture of Singapore's Central Business District – in particular, the roof of Singapore's Esplanade Theatre, a multi-million dollar initiative to project Singapore as a regional performing arts venue. Flanking the roof were archetypal glass-fronted skyscrapers so common to our time, testaments to Singapore's relentless pursuit for economic growth and its identity as a global city (Sassen-Koob 1990).

Cities are vast, sometimes autonomous, sometimes oppressive. To visualise the city is to visualise many things – its architecture and spaces (Jones 2011, Kwok and Coppoolse 2018), its inhabitants (Harper 2006, Ye 2013) and its practices (Orr 2012) to name but a few. The choice of IVMC's theme, *Visualising the City*, was borne out of not just the conference's location – Singapore – but also as a unifying focus for the myriad number of disciplines we had hoped to attract. Initially conceived within social science disciplines, IVMC was first held in 2009 at the Open University in the United Kingdom, before travelling to other venues in the UK (2011, 2015), as well as New Zealand (2013) and Singapore (2017). In 2019, it will be held in Eastern Europe for the first time in Bucharest, Romania. The conference now attracts participants not just from the social sciences, but also the arts, humanities and creative disciplines.

Our keynote speakers reflected this diversity of interests. Caroline Knowles, a sociologist; Alan Oei, a curator and Richard Koeck, an architect and film-maker, delivered a series of thought-provoking lectures aimed not just as a catalyst for discussion during the conference, but also as a response to topics and issues raised by delegates in their own presentations. Knowles, currently Professor of Sociology and the British Academy's Programme Director for its Cities and Infrastructure Programme, and also known for her work on the social life of flip-flops (Knowles 2014), as well as migrants in Hong Kong (Knowles and Harper 2009), brought delegates on a visual journey of London's ultra-rich quarters, narrating the sociology of walking, photographing and seeing. Oei, who is the Director of the Substation, Singapore's oldest arts venue, hosted the second keynote at the Substation itself, discussing the role of the arts and

arts intervention in Singapore, and the historic role of the Substation and its location in the centre of the city as a place to visualise and engage with state and society. Koeck, Professor of Architecture and the Visual Arts and Director of the Centre for Architecture and the Visual Arts at the University of Liverpool, recounted the affordances of new technologies and film in the visualisation of historic elements of the city, creating new and exciting interpretations of amalgamated architecture and human traces (see also Penz and Koeck 2017).

Conference presentations and workshops were equally diverse and enriching. Based around six different sub-themes of mapping, activism, teaching, criticality, urbanism and walking – participants demonstrated, used and critiqued visual methods from a stunning array of perspectives. A key highlight was the moving of the conference beyond the physical bounds of the university campus into the city, not just through Oei's keynote at the Substation, but also through a number of walks and workshops facilitated by the delegates themselves. Going forward, we have found these workshops to resonate deeply with participants, who were able to see visual methods as live methods (Back and Puwar 2012).

In developing the theme for this special issue, we chose to retain the title *Visualising the City* to provide continuity to the highly participatory and immersive elements of the conference. The papers and photo-essays in this issue thus reflect the ethos of participation, observation and visualisation – elements within the methodological scope of visual ethnography. The practice of visual ethnography has been well documented (Banks 2001, 2013, Pink 2007, 2012), and it is not in the purview of this introduction to repeat what has already been very well-argued in this journal dedicated to the method. Indeed, the act of doing visual ethnography or visually-focused participant observation (Heng 2016) has found its way beyond anthropology, being embraced by a much wider range of disciplines such as Geography (Hunt 2016) and Sociology (Heng 2015, Grant et al 2018, Pauwels 2009). The contributions in this issue span disciplines and approaches, but through them, we see a number of propositions emerge.

Revealing Praxis of Place-Making in the City

The first proposition is the ability of visual ethnographic methods and (mobile) technologies to capture the praxis (Heng 2018) of place-making at home. Charishma Ratnam's paper on using visual and mobile methods to document and reveal the home-making practices of Sri Lankan refugees in Australia does just that. While "home" is a common theme in the study of urban spaces (Koch and Latham 2013, Shanaathanan 2015), fewer have tried to incorporate visualising and walking within the home as a method. Here, Ratnam both videos and interviews her collaborators as they walk through their homes (and then "re-walk" while watching captured video) in Sydney, and also considers the use and creation of photographic portraits of home spaces. Ratnam's aim of documenting how a sense of home is created by migrants through both material and symbolic practices like prayer, sacredness, identity and memory shows forth in images of shrines mixed in with everyday domestic spaces. While not shown in the article itself, the importance of the moving image in Ratnam's approach and insights is highly evident – kinetic movements of the body, as participants move through their homes, sometimes to emphasize points made during interviews are captured and coded, revealing Ratnam's point of the necessity of visual ethnographic methods in the methodological process of understanding home.

Place-making activities are also central to Brian Kwok's paper on the tactics of Hawkers in Hong Kong, but this time in public, liminal streets. The city is often a regulated space (eg Kong 1993) – one which is managed by state and/or private interests. Undermining, or at least challenging these regulations would be subversive attempts by actors whose interests do not always tally with the dominant narrative (see Watt and Minton 2016). Kwok examines a particular place in Hong Kong – Fa Yuen Street, as a case study into the variety of ways Hawkers resist regulation from the state. Kwok makes use of a combination of coding, sketching and photography to reveal spatial arrangements and arranging, and subtle acts of subversiveness that enables Hawkers to appropriate without being seen as aggressive. Of note is the combination of two genres of the visual – illustration and photograph – of the same subject (a hawker stall). This approach reveals to us ethnographic details not just through image, but imagery as well. The stall produce and layout vividly recreated through another way of seeing (Berger 2008).

The proposition of 'subversive tactics' continues on in Terence Heng's visual essay, aptly entitled "Precarious Spaces: Visualising Unofficial Sacred Spaces", Heng examines the continued tension between the desire of the Singapore state to control which spaces are sacred and which are profane (Kong 1993, Woods 2018). Official sacred spaces in Singapore, those approved by the state for use in

religious and/or spiritual activities, are often rare and expensive, requiring religious organisations to have large financial resources in order to bid for and compete in auction-style purchases. Unofficial sacred space, encompassing informal (Woods 2013), transient and ad-hoc sacred spaces emerge from such regulation, where individuals and smaller organisations find ways and means to appropriate space for their faith. In this visual essay, Heng uses visual ethnographic methods (in this case documentary photography) to uncover the various ways in which Chinese religion practitioners, particularly spirit mediums, engage in the use of both aesthetic markers (Knowles 2003) and performative praxis (Heng 2015) as a way to negotiate the tensions between regulation and (spiritual) reward.

It is not just individuals who engage in place-making throughout the city. Ross McGarry's visual essay looks at how large organisations engage in altering and appropriating spaces to develop narratives of not both the space and of themselves. McGarry's visual autoethnography of the temporary militarisation of the city – evidenced through the British Armed Forces's use of the city of Liverpool's historic waterfront docks during Armed Forces Day – examines the various identities performed by the Armed Forces in their parades and exhibition stands. The display of weapons and equipment, marching of soldiers/veterans and 'non-public' areas all contribute as aesthetic makers associated with military identities. The images created in this visual autoethnography are in turn realist and symbolic (Knowles and Sweetman 2004), reflecting both the literal militarisation of a quotidian civilian space (thereby normalizing the military (see Basham 2013)) as well as the metaphorical public-private, performed-hidden dialectics at play in military identities.

Innovation in Visual Methods and Visual Ethnography

Another proposition that emerges from the Ratnam's and Kwok's papers is the importance and significance in innovating for visual methods in visual ethnographic practices. Whether that is through the use of new technology or a re-imagination/re-combination of techniques, finding new and previously underused ways of seeing and/or visualising is crucial to our engagement with the visual. To this extent, the final two papers in this special issue are focused on the novel approaches they have undertaken to engage with the city. Loh Chin Ee's paper on juxtaposition (Heng 2016) proposes innovation in both the application of the concept (through compositional discovery – that is, to compare and contrast elements in an image, whether intentional or not) as well as the tools used to create such images (amongst others, time-lapse photography – see also Simpson 2012). Loh's study draws from a much larger ethnographic dataset of reading practices and library design in secondary schools in Singapore, as Loh and her team work to understand best practices for policies and strategies meant to encourage greater and deeper literacy amongst students aged 13 to 17. In particular, collaborating with school and school libraries has allowed Loh and her team to establish different ways of creating images, from more traditional documentary photography techniques to GoPro cameras that allow for different methodological approaches that still embrace the spirit of observation in an ethnographic vein (Dewalt and Dewalt 2011).

In calling for papers, we chose to leave the widest possible interpretation for authors to engage with "the city", whether it was the more public and performative spaces of Liverpool's tourist attractions, well-trodden streets of Hong Kong, or semi-hidden living rooms and factory spaces in Singapore, each paper and visual essay sought to make full use of the visual in their ethnographic explorations. Like other special issues, we also sought a balanced mixing of disciplines and approaches, looking also for inter-disciplinary innovations that better our understanding of the spaces in which we spend much of our quotidian life (Lefebvre 1996). The city, then, does not always make us blasé, but is a source and subject of great curiosity and engagement.

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USING VISUAL AND MOBILE METHODS IN THE HOME

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides methodological insights into everyday routines and encounters in the homes of Sri Lankan refugees settling in Sydney, Australia. The home is a frequented place which facilitates our daily interactions and routines where person-place bonds can develop. A critical ethnography, including the use of visual and mobile methods, can uncover how our person to person, person to place and non-human interactions shape and (re)create the home. In this research, an ethnographic method comprised two parts: first, a walk-along interview in each participant's home was combined with videography followed by an in-depth interview. This visual ethnography has sought to reveal the journeys, stories, and memories of refugees as they settle. Part of these journeys, stories, and memories involve understanding how Sri Lankan refugees (re)create feelings of being 'at home' – through their daily practices, sensory articulations and encounters with objects – that foster (or not) their settlement in a host city.

KEYWORDS

Mobile methods, visuality, home, senses, materiality, Sri Lankan refugees

BIO

Charishma Ratnam is a doctoral candidate in geography at the University of New South Wales, Australia. Her research examines the intersections of memory and identity in the home among Sri Lankan refugees and asylum seekers settling in Sydney. Charishma's fieldwork combines ethnographic, visual and mobile methods to analyse how home-building practices contribute to building a wider sense of place for these refugees and asylum seekers.

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Introduction

This paper explores the private space of the home to understand experiences of settlement among Sri Lankan refugees and asylum seekers¹ in Sydney, Australia. By using visual ethnography in the suburbs of Sydney, I seek to demonstrate how this methodological approach can contribute to a growing body of research on how refugee settlement in the home can be captured, articulated and contested. For migrants and refugees, home facilitates 'spatialised social practices' where migrants attempt to 'reproduce, reconstruct and possibly rebuild meaningful home-like' places (Boccagni, 2017, p. 23; see also Ratnam, 2017). Home-building is a process where our everyday practices, routines and habits generate meaning for those who live in the home (Gorman-Murray & Dowling, 2007). In this research, I filmed Sri Lankan refugees as they walked through their homes. The visual ethnographic techniques employed 'produce[d] rich and visual narrative data' guided by the participants as they walked and talked (Bayre et al. 2016, p. 7). Walking with participants provided deeper understandings of the home

¹ The terminology used to define 'refugees' and 'asylum seekers' has been contested, particularly in the Australian political landscape. Asylum seekers have fled their home country and have applied for protection as a refugee, while refugees have had their application approved. Both refugees and asylum seekers are unable to return home due to a fear of persecution. However, in Australia, there is public opinion and rhetoric that the term 'asylum seeker' is used to undermine refugee legitimacy to live and settle in a host country. In this paper, I use the term 'refugee' to refer to both refugees and asylum seekers.

by the mobilities and routes they created. Thus, such routines and habits were drawn out by examining Sri Lankan refugees' connections to objects, smells, textures and practices in their new homes in Sydney.

In what follows, I discuss the motivation, novelty and the conceptual framework grounded in this research. I then provide background on Sri Lankan refugees and contextualise this research within the setting of the city of Sydney. Prefacing with the conceptual framework and contextual background is important since it underpins the participants' narratives that emerged as I carried out the methods. Next, I outline the visual ethnographic approach, analysis and considerations of ethics undertaken in the research. In the discussion, I explain how conducting visual and mobile methods in Sri Lankan refugee homes revealed the way homes were (re)created—both materially and sensorially—during settlement in Sydney.

The motivation for this ongoing research has been to understand how Sri Lankan refugees experience and (re)create their homes as a way of settling in Sydney. As a debated and contested topic in Australia², this investigation draws on individual narratives, stories, and experiences to consider how refugee settlement and integration ensues (or not). Such consideration of individual narratives has created a space for participants to express opinions and perspectives about war, settlement, journeys, and experiences of going through a fractured immigration system in Australia. Part of uncovering these deeply personal and harrowing experiences and memories has involved analysing how they evolve (or not) into everyday encounters and practices *in place(s)*, and in this case, the home. Everyday memories of home, war and settlement were key considerations as I sought to understand refugee experiences.

As a Sri Lankan migrant living in Sydney since 1995, I have been able to draw on my own family's migration experiences while undertaking this research. My parents, grandparents and extended family's experience of the war 'amass[ed] as knowledge' in this research context (Drozdowski, 2018, p. 249). My positionality was, and continues to be, interwoven together in the methodology and analysis stages captured in the homes of the participants in this research. My heritage has been a motivating factor in this research; it has helped to understand the multiplicity of life-courses, journeys, and experiences of war and settlement through a visual ethnographic lens. Combining visual ethnography in the home exposed how Sri Lankan refugees engaged with their host communities while maintaining links with their past homes through memories, routines and traditions. Maintaining these links were imperative in reconstructing a sense of place for many participants (Ley-Cervantes & Duyvendak, 2017). The visual ethnography approach captured participants' expressions of memory and identity, where their verbal, non-verbal, material and sensory encounters came to the fore.

The novelty of this research lies in the visual ethnographic approach taken to critically analyse the interconnections of Sri Lankan refugees, their stories and encounters in/with home. Such analysis involves capturing, articulating and presenting the different 'layers' that construct home – ways of walking, talking, encountering objects and sensory articulations – for people who have been on the move (see also: Ratnam, 2018). While conducting visual ethnography in private places is not a new methodological approach, there is a desire to capture and analyse the everyday experiences of refugees in host countries given their movement(s) from place to place over time (Rishbeth & Finney, 2006). Interest in research ethics also forms a focus in this paper's remit, given the nature of working with vulnerable groups. Being attentive to research ethics involved specific considerations of the use of video, navigating the research setting with participants, the participants' recollections of traumatic incidents, and undertaking this research in the private place of the home. The dynamics of *being in* the home as a place of privacy and comfort informed the way participants responded to the research and the method. Being in participants' homes also meant that they were positioned as valuable knowledge holders (Moss, 2002); the power relationship was balanced in this setting as it was a place of familiarity and security. This paper extends existing visual ethnographic work, with an emphasis on how memory and identity intersect in the process of (re)creating feelings of being 'at home', both materially and sensorially.

This paper – and the broader research project – is premised on the idea that we can develop 'homely feelings' of security, familiarity, community, comfort, and intimacy as part of the home-building process (Hage, 1997; 2010; Boccagni, 2017). For migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, rebuilding and

² Since the 1970s, refugee and asylum seeker arrivals have been contested by Australia's political leaders. With the first 'boat people' arriving from Vietnam in the 1970s, refugee and asylum seeker arrivals have since arrived from Cambodia, China, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka and El Salvador. There have been several migration policies that have focussed on "stopping the boats" including the placement of refugees and asylum seekers in offshore detention centres, and limited provision of permanent residency.

reconstructing home becomes important after moving to and from different places. Such feelings of home can be experienced on different scales, from the micro-level within a household to the macro-level including cities (Boccagni, 2017; Ratnam, 2018). These feelings of home are grounded in memories – individual, familial, collective, and national, for example. In the home, memories and identities of/with the homeland are experienced through habit and routine (Jones, 2011). These home-based routines can be observed, recorded and analysed when we cook, read or pray at home, for example. When we consider migrant diasporas, paying attention to the intersections of home and memory becomes imperative during settlement. Attempts at home-building and (re)creating home provide a lens to understand how memory features in this process for migrants and refugees (Boccagni, 2017). Thus, a visual ethnographic approach helps to underscore the encounters, processes, and practices that take place in the home.

Applications of visual ethnography in the home

Conceptually scaffolding this paper in/around the context of home and feeling ‘at home’ involves highlighting the domestic practices, encounters/movements, and sensory engagements we often have there. These three ‘layers’ are important when (re)creating home in a host community, since they are key contributions for developing the ‘homely feelings’ discussed above. In the case of this research, visual ethnography provided an insight for how these constructions of home unfolded as I walked and talked with the participants. Domestic practices and spaces in the home have been a key focus of recent visual ethnographic research (Pink, 2004; Longhurst et al., 2009; Pink & Leder Mackley, 2016; Wills et al., 2016). The ethnography of such research practices focusses on human experiences and place-making practices (Pink, 2007). Walking home tours, home maps, food focus groups and sound walks and diaries have been employed to focus more directly on the ordinary and mundane practices of/in the home (Rose, 2014). Wills et al. (2016, p. 474), for instance, adopted visual techniques to understand ‘the multi-dimensional aspects of kitchen practices rather than relying on ‘just words’’. They integrated kitchen maps, photography and video observation with interviews (in-depth and go-alongs) in the research process (see also Wills et al. 2016). Pink and Leder Mackley (2016) embedded videography into their research as a way of recording their participants’ habitual routines and practices in their homes. These routines emphasised the feelings of comfort and familiarity created in the home. The method employed was reflexive in nature, where the researchers could re-watch their participants and their own walking routes in the home. Watching the videos allowed them to reflect on their own home practices. The videography meant they could interpret and analyse such routines and movements ‘as a process of embodied sensory learning’ (Pink & Leder Mackley, 2016, p. 173).

Movement, mobility and embodiment can be captured through visual ethnography by recording how people engage with places (Pink, 2008). The methodology employed in this research sought to capture and analyse the movements of participants as they walked through the home (Pink, 2007; Wills et al. 2016). The distinction is in capturing actions, senses and mobility as a way of knowing a place (the home) that can be difficult to articulate verbally (Wills et al. 2016). In Pink’s (2008, p. 2) pivotal work with/using video ethnography, she explained that “‘walking with’ [the participants] creates place on different levels’. The multi-layered nature of geographical enquiry into the home is well-suited to this visual ethnographic approach. Place (and home) can be constructed through a range of ‘multisensorial experiences and collaborative productions (between researcher and research participants) of (audio) visual ethnographic representations of urban contexts’ (Pink, 2008, p. 2). Thus, (re)creating the place of the home on these different levels involves considering sensory engagements – the smell of ‘home’ or ‘comfort’ food, the texture of plants in the garden, or the sound of the birds chirping outside in the suburban home, for example – that move us (physically through walking) around the home. These sensory articulations add another layer to feelings of being ‘at home’, through senses of familiarity, security, and community. Capturing these movements and engagements were an imperative component of gauging how feelings of being ‘at home’ ensued in the participants’ homes.

The value of the senses for perception through practices are important during the home-building process. Pink’s (2004; 2009) extensive research focussed on the ‘sensory home’; the multisensory nature of home often involves ‘unanticipated smells, tastes, sounds and textures, and unexpected ways of comprehending these’ (Pink, 2009, p. 44). These sensory articulations have the propensity to consider feelings of comfort, familiarity, and belonging as ‘home’. For example, soundscapes can emerge as

prominent when videography is used to capture the home. In Pink's (2004) research, television and music prompted familiar memories played in her participants' homes. Understanding the material and sensory engagements in everyday life both at and *in* the home challenges traditional, static methods, and calls for more visual ethnographic narratives that can be captured and analysed (Pink, 2004). Such narratives push us to think about how the material and sensory construct homescapes. Furthermore, Longhurst et al. (2009) explored migrants' visceral experiences of food in order to understand their relationship with place. Food, its textures, and aromas were central to understanding food practices of what migrants eat, how they eat, and who they eat with (Longhurst et al. 2009). Considerations of the 'sensory' in these homes have been extended to include the textures of objects, crockery and artwork, as well as smells including cooking smells, candles and pets (Longhurst et al. 2009). People use different rooms of their homes for different purposes, they arrange their kitchen in particular ways and hang specific photographs in parts of the home. While the spatial context of the home may remain much the same, the purpose of the rooms of the home can be perceived and used differently.

Context and Study Area

The context of this research is fundamental to understand refugee experiences and their journeys out of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic nation with two dominant ethnicities, where the Sinhalese majority comprise 74 per cent of the population while Tamils make up approximately 12 per cent (Grobar & Gnanaselvam, 1993). Clashes between Sinhalese and Tamils broke out in 1983 stemming from Tamil demands to form a separate state in the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka (Grobar & Gnanaselvam, 1993). This movement gave rise to several politically motivated organisations including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) (Grobar & Gnanaselvam, 1993). The civil war ended in 2009 with the majority Sinhalese government and military defeating the LTTE.

The 26-year civil war took a heavy toll on the country. A range of socio-political disturbances arose with reduced economic growth, destroyed human capital and a drastic deterioration in quality of life (Hugo & Dissanayake, 2014). While there are no authoritative figures for civilian deaths, a report by the United Nations (2011) stated that civilian deaths have been estimated at 40,000. The trauma and experiences of violence and marginalisation in relation to the civil war were a key driver for Sri Lankans, mainly Tamils, to flee (Ahutosh & Mountz, 2012) and seek asylum and refuge outside the country. Yet, increasingly poor living conditions and a lack of resources in Sri Lanka have motivated migration and displacement, with large numbers of Sri Lankans fleeing to India, Canada and Australia. Ahutosh and Mountz (2012, p. 341) have contended that 'the settlement of Sri Lankan Tamils... brings together geographies of violence, experiences of marginalisation and state classifications of refugees'. Refugee mobility increased following the 1983 riots; as a result, a significant number of Sri Lankan Tamils reside outside of Sri Lanka (Hyndman, 2007). Today, Australia hosts almost eight per cent of the global Sri Lankan diaspora including many who have sought refuge or asylum (Hugo & Dissanayake, 2014). Sri Lankan refugee experiences are linked to the survival of traumatic experiences—both during the war and during their journeys to seek asylum or refuge—that affect the way settlement is carried out among refugees. Such experiences have contributed to anger, grief and disillusionment among refugees, coupled with everyday struggles of settlement in Australia (George et al. 2015). It is important, therefore, to understand how everyday and place-making practices in the home and wider urban community intersect with maintaining memories and identities of previous homes and homelands (Pulvirenti & Mason, 2011).

In Sydney, where this research is being conducted, Sri Lankan refugee homes are located in the western suburbs of the city. Referred to as Western Sydney, it is a major receiving area for migrants, due to affordable housing, apartment developments, proximity to migrant reception centres, and the growth of cultural institutions (Burnley et al. 2016). These 'gateway suburbs' for Sri Lankan migrants and refugees bring challenges and opportunities in various ways (Easthope et al. 2018). Sri Lankans are an important diaspora in these suburbs, comprising two to five per cent of the suburbs' populations (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). This paper focuses on 10 Sri Lankan refugees living in the suburbs of Western Sydney—Toongabbie, Pendle Hill and Wentworthville—to explore how their homes have been (re)created (Figure 1). These dwellings ranged from stand-alone houses to apartments; all participants were renting these houses; some renting a single bed in a shared room with two or three people, and others renting one room in a shared house; participants also lived in these rented dwellings with their families. Part of the two-part method involved gathering information on their moves from

place to place, from home to home and the reasons for these moves over their time seeking refuge and during their settlement in Sydney.

Methods

A two-stage mixed methodology utilising walk-alongs and in-depth interviews was designed to provide understanding and appreciation of refugee experiences of place, inside their homes (UNSW Human Research Ethics Committee, No. HC16850). The visual ethnographic approach was employed to explore more-than-verbal experiences, interpretations and representations of cultures and communities of feeling 'at home' (Pink, 2011; Ratnam et al. 2016). The novelty of this method was its combination of videography, walking, and talking in/through/around the home with participants who had fled war-torn Sri Lanka. Mobile methods, such as walk-along interviews have been used in social research to better understand encounters, movements and practices *in* place, as they happen (Kusenbach, 2003; Degen & Rose, 2012; Sheller, 2014). New mobile methods have proliferated to include digital technologies including videography (Sheller, 2014). Video as a form of ethnographic enquiry has been used in research to learn about how participants understand and interpret the place(s) around them (Pink, 2007; Garrett, 2011; Sumartojo, 2016). However, undertaking this visual ethnography prompted considerations of research ethics in the wider project – through the process of working with refugees (commonly considered as a 'vulnerable' population) (Pittaway et al. 2015) and when conducting the method. In the following section, I explain the application of the method and then discuss the ethical considerations associated with this research.

Participants

This research sought to investigate and present the biographies, narratives, and settlement experiences of Sri Lankan refugees who moved to Sydney. The displacement of Sri Lankan civilians and their movement between countries, detention centres, and refugee camps meant that a diverse range of narratives were collected. The participants were recruited through a snowballing method, from connections within the community and networks with other researchers working with Sri Lankan refugees. At the time of writing, 10 participants were interviewed in this ongoing research. All participants had sought asylum or refuge from Sri Lanka and were residing in Sydney at the time of the interview. All participants commenced settlement between 2012 and 2018. Of the participants interviewed, six were women and four were men. Many families were involved in the recruitment process; upon initial contact, participants consulted with their partners, children, and extended family before agreeing to participate. In most instances, the interviews were conducted during weekday working hours, based on the availability of participants to undertake the research³.

³ The participants who were interviewed are on temporary visas that stipulate limited working hours per week. Other participants had limited English literacy levels to undertake work in Australia. Thus, the availability of participants during working hours was common during the fieldwork.

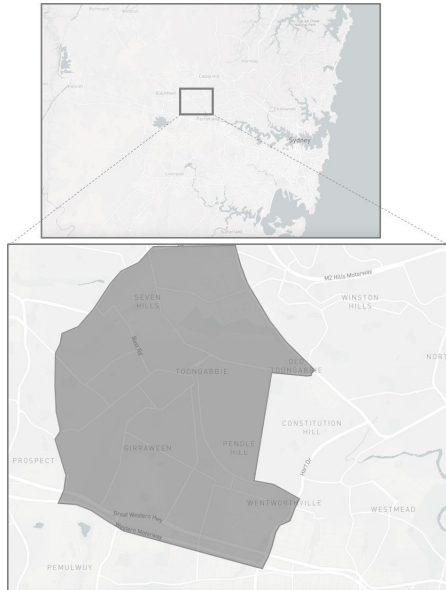


FIGURE 1: The cluster of suburbs in Sydney hosting the participants interviewed in this research so far (Source: Carto.com)

Adapted walk-alongs

The first stage of the research method comprised a ‘walk-along’ interview with videography (Kusenbach, 2003; Pink, 2007; Degen & Rose, 2012; Wolifson, 2016). I used a handheld video camera (Canon Legria Mini X) to film participants while walking through their homes. During the walk-alongs, the participants were asked to walk through the home. The participants created their own routes (guided by my questions) and walked through their kitchen, bedroom and backyard, for example. I accompanied each participant on the walk-along, with an interpreter where necessary, allowing them to communicate their experiences and journeys while moving. Participants were asked a set of questions based on the key themes of memory and identity, the home, and journeys to Australia from their home country. The interview questions enabled the participants to lead me through specific places, generating a person-centred interview (De Leon & Cohen, 2005).

Visiting places of significance becomes important in the way memories and experiences create and build attachments to those places. The expressions of memory by the participants, through narratives and movement suggested that ‘the movement of walking is itself a way of knowing’ (Ingold & Lee Vergunst, 2008, p. 5). In this research, such ‘ways of knowing’ were expressed in several ways including discussions of lived experiences, places where the participants had resided, and the significant objects that had provided a sense of agency in their lives. For example, these involved religious practices of praying in homes daily, or cooking traditional food in clay pots. I sought to bring these knowledges to the fore as participants encountered rooms, objects and memories in their walks through the home.

I used the videos to analyse sensory articulations that contributed to participants’ senses of place inside the home and helped to underpin their place-making practices (Pink, 2007). Doing research in the home meant entering private spaces and asking participants about their daily practices and activities they may not have discussed previously (Pink, 2004; Wills et al. 2016). For example, in some of the homes, participants cooked while I interviewed them, walked around to tidy up rooms, and picked vegetables from their gardens. I allowed participants to continue with their daily household routines as a way for me to understand how they were settling when I re-watched the videos during analysis. Thus, filmic approaches allowed for participants’ sensory and material interactions and encounters to be analysed in further detail alongside the walk-along and in-depth interviews.

In-depth interviews

Following the filmed walk-along interview, I conducted an in-depth interview with each participant in their homes. These interviews followed a semi-structured interview schedule allowing the participants to discuss their journeys and the key themes of the research. These interviews were coupled with data garnered from the filmed walk-along interviews. The in-depth interviews provided an opportunity for

the participants to verbalise their experiences and discuss the processes of creating and settling in their homes (Crang & Cook 2007; Minichello et al. 2008). These emplaced interviews helped to locate participants' experiences in the context of their homes and generated discussions about how their homes extended (or not) into other areas of Sydney.

Field notes

I wrote detailed field notes about my own experiences in the interviews, while also writing about the non-verbal and sensory encounters and articulations that came to the fore. Each interview had non-verbal elements; for example, participants cried, laughed and smiled; sensory articulations included the smell of food and flowers, the texture of plants/vegetables, and the way participants encountered objects, such as those in their shrines. For example:

I felt like their home was a strong representation of their culture, their identity and encompassed memories of Sri Lanka through photos, objects and their day to day practices (bindi on forehead, traditional dress, jewellery etc) (Author's field notes, 26 May 2017).

I walked in through the gate where her daughter was with four or five other children running around the house and playing while [the participant] was making food in the kitchen. It symbolised to me, a typical day in their home that was reflective of days in Sri Lanka that even I have experienced when visiting. Children running through the house and the older children looking after them while the mum prepares food, and in this case, it was in a clay pot which is a traditional means of cooking curry (Author's field notes, 26 May 2017).

Excerpts such as these revealed how participants engaged with and moved in/around/through their homes. I also used the field notes as a platform to write about my own feelings at various points of the fieldwork process (Dickson-Swift et al. 2006). My positionality has had bearing on my experiences during each interview; I filter these experiences through my positionality as an Australian researcher with Sri Lankan heritage who migrated to Sydney. Even though my experiences of Sri Lanka and the war were different, they contributed to the way I navigated each interview setting. Evidencing this knowledge in my field notes was imperative throughout the fieldwork process and provided valuable data that contributed to the analysis stage of the research.

Data analysis

Following the fieldwork, the data from the walk-along, in-depth interviews and field notes were imported and transcribed in NVivo11. NVivo is a qualitative research program that enables the combination of literature, data, logistics and demographic information from a research project into one intuitive platform (QSR International, 2016). After importing data into NVivo, I transcribed the interview material and coded them with the pre-existing thematic 'nodes' I had created during the literature review stage of this research project. As I came across new ideas, I coded them appropriately. For example, 'constructions of home' became a node that had 'sub-nodes' of materiality, routines and habits, and sensory articulations, for example. Sensory engagements and articulations were captured in the field diary that I kept throughout the interview process. The field notes I took provided additional information about each interview, including the non-verbal aspects such as smells and textures, that were not captured in the videos. The field notes were also added to NVivo for analysis alongside the interview material and video screengrabs.

Coding the video footage, then, was a separate analytic process. I watched each video and took 'screengrabs' of relevant frames as I watched and analysed them. These screengrabs were then imported to NVivo and coded accordingly. For example, when participants discussed their shrines, I would pause the video, take a screengrab of the frame and then import this image into NVivo and code it under 'materiality in the home'. While seemingly broad, or in some instances 'vague', these codes provided further insight of more collective understandings of the thematics. 'Materiality in the home' was coded when participants discussed objects (meaningful or not), bits and pieces that assembled their homes including beds, kitchen utensils, meaningful materials such as photographs and statues, and structural

elements of home that came up in the interviews. Understanding materiality more broadly meant that I could draw links between how participants thought of and interacted with the material constructions of home.

I also employed narrative analysis in the compilation of this paper, and the other outputs of this research. Narrative analysis provides connection points between the experiences, journeys and encounters of the participants in wider social, cultural, temporal and spatial settings (Wiles et al. 2005; Ratnam & Drozdowski, 2018). Narrative analysis was another layer of the analysis that helped to emphasise themes that emerged as I listened to, watched, and transcribed different stories and video footage. Specifically, narrative analysis helps researchers who are 'interested in the dynamics of everyday life' (Wiles et al. 2005, p. 90). The analysis of participants' everyday lives was a primary consideration when I investigated their settlement and feelings of being 'at home', given their temporary status and previous experiences that were oftentimes traumatic.

Research ethics

In this paper, research ethics takes a two-fold approach: first, by working with a 'vulnerable' group, and second, in terms of conducting the method. Working with 'vulnerable' groups such as refugees has meant that considerations of ethics in research is paramount (Hugman et al. 2011). Paying attention to ethics in this field of research involves questioning rigorous scholarship and the methodological tools employed in our investigations. As researchers, we operate on a baseline to 'do no harm' to our participants (see also Mackenzie et al. 2007; Hugman et al. 2011). However, the complex ethical challenges we face when working with refugees means that poor ethical practice can ensue, and 'seeking to 'do no harm' can become a well-meant but empty aspiration if refugees are put at further risk by the very process of research' (Hugman et al. 2011, p. 1272). The ethical challenges involved in research with refugees and at-risk groups include issues of 'power and consent, confidentiality and trust, risks to researchers and potential harm to participants, as well as broader cross-cutting issues of gender, culture, human rights and social justice' (Pittaway et al. 2007, p. 232).

Consent and anonymity in the research process were parallel reflections I made throughout the ethics approval and fieldwork process. Giving the participants the freedom to discuss (or not) their experiences, and journeys, and assuring them that their data would be anonymised was an important part of navigating the ethical process. Participants signed consent forms and were emailed copies after the interview, which stipulated the conditions of their participation. For example, their names, addresses, ages and personal details would be anonymised, their faces would not be in any part of the results dissemination, and any personal items or photographs would be blurred or cropped in the screenshots. On request, participants were given access to the video footage and transcriptions for their records⁴. Participants were also made aware that all publications and outputs would be sent to them as a result of their participation in the research. Many participants were relieved that an option to 'withdraw' from the study at any time was provided. While no participants have withdrawn, knowing this option existed was comforting.

In this research, the hesitation of the participants to partake became an ongoing challenge. Entering a space of privacy can come with hesitation for anyone and given their unknown visa statuses, the participants' indecisions were heightened even more. Many expressed fears about the video footage and interview content being 'leaked' to the Sri Lankan government and their discomfort to disclose information about their journeys and experiences. To overcome these challenges, the interpreter briefed the participants on initial contact and gave them time to decide on their participation. This period of decision-making became imperative for the participants, as they were able to consult with family, friends, and relevant case workers. We also remained cognisant of the potential for their stories to (re)induce trauma, however, recruiting participants from a researcher with a psychiatric background helped to mitigate further mental health issues after partaking in this research. All participants were given follow-up calls one week after the interview, as part of the ethical procedures stipulated by my institution. These phone calls were to ensure that participants were not significantly affected by the interview, and if they were, the research team would contact medical practitioners and counsellors for follow-up

⁴ As part of the ethics requirements for this project, participants were allowed to request the transcriptions of their interviews. However, given the limited English literacy skills, the participants did not request for transcriptions to be sent to them.

appointments. For instance, one participant was referred to their general medical practitioner for further evaluation, where a 'mental health plan' was put in place to assist with the participant's health and well-being. Being a researcher with Sri Lankan heritage and also working with a Sri Lankan interpreter helped to balance the ethical challenges faced with working with the participants. These ethical challenges were confronted throughout the fieldwork process and became a significant point of the methodological consideration (Hugman et al. 2011).

Methodological reflection involved thinking about the use of video in this ethnographic research. The ethical implications of ethnographic research have gained traction in recent methodological literature (Moss, 2002; Pink, 2011). A set of ethical considerations have been addressed in social science scholarship including discussions on consent, confidentiality, harm to participants, exploitation, the ownership of data, and participant protection, for example (see also: Pink, 2011). Working *with* participants by discussing the use of videos in the research helped to establish a meaningful and trustworthy rapport with the participants. On first contact, each participant was given a detailed briefing on the interview, the method and the content that would be covered. Participants were then given time to discuss their participation and make a decision. Participants who were apprehensive about the video element of the method were not interviewed in this research. My thoughts parallel Pink's (2011, p. 48) who stated that 'photographs and video tapes themselves become commodities for exchange and the sites of negotiation... among informants, between researchers and informants, between researchers and their families and friends at home and among researchers'. These exchanges became important as I negotiated the field setting; I used the home as a place of insight and comfort. Participants were given the opportunity to show (or not) parts of the home; for example, if they felt uncomfortable showing photographs or bedrooms, these were not filmed. Although apprehensive, the participants who took part in the research trusted my use of the video as we went through the ethical dimensions and the purpose of the videos in research outputs.

(Re)creating home

This discussion section is presented in two sections. First, I discuss how a feeling of being 'at home' was (re)created materially, particularly focussing on religious shrines. The materiality of home was a visual component captured by the method which motivated further investigation and analysis. By using visual ethnography in the home, I began to analyse and learn about how participants created, used, visualised, narrated and presented their homes. Filming while walking with participants generated richer understandings of the home, which captured encounters, multisensory experiences and the co-production of knowledge(s), between myself as the researcher and the participants (Pink, 2008). Second, I focus my attention on the visual ethnographic process by explaining how the use of walk-alongs and videography contributed to better understandings of how participants constructed their homes. The figures presented in this discussion are screengrabs from the video footage.

Material remembrances of home(lands)

Participants' memories of 'home' included their houses in Sri Lanka (where they had lived and grew up in), villages, and provinces of Sri Lanka – places where they spent much of their time before and during the war. Such places grounded home life, which extended beyond the walls of the house; for example, cultural and religious values and practices upheld by the participants were commonly practiced in their villages and provinces of Sri Lanka. Most of the participants' journeys to Australia initially commenced with internal displacements and relocations within Sri Lanka, enabling the maintenance of a sense of connection to the nation. (Re)creating home was fundamental given the lengthy periods of displacement many of the participants experienced; these reconstructions positioned the home as a place of familiarity, security, and comfort away from their disruptive experiences. Participants then established 'interim' homes between leaving Sri Lanka and resettling in Australia. Some participants constructed homes in refugee camps in India, while other participants made their way directly to Australia. For example, Kumari⁵ spent 15 years in an Indian refugee camp with her family: '[I do not] remember much

⁵ The names of participants provided in this paper are pseudonyms.

from the Sri Lankan home but in India in [the] camp, [we] were all together in the camp' (Kumari, walk-along interview, 26 May 2017). Given the proximity of southern India from the LTTE controlled northern province of Sri Lanka, some participants had fled to India—where they resided for several years—before arriving in Australia. Constructing homes in Sydney were of importance after significant periods of displacement; their homes in Sydney were very much linked to memories, and these memories helped to (re)create feelings of being 'at home' through senses of comfort, familiarity, and security. Another participant, Kamala, walked the interpreter and I through her garden to a small shed she had built with her husband for her kids. While walking towards the shed, memories of home in India were conjured when she looked and pointed at the banana plant in her garden:

The banana plant—so that reminds [me] of home. [In] India also [we] create the same thing... you know, [we] didn't have much space... [we] closed off an area... [and] grew veggies (vegetables) and plants and things (Kamala, walk-along interview, 02 June 2017).

Participants then made their journeys to Australia—some with personal possessions and some without—where many accumulated the bits and pieces (objects, plants, photographs) that constructed their homes during settlement. Participants encountered things—material objects placed and presented in the shrines—by touching them, repositioning them and walking towards and pointing to them. While following one participant, Shalini, her (re)creations of home were evident when she showed me reminders of her homeland (Figure 2):

The same colour painting... the wall paint [was the same] in Sri Lanka, and the curtain the same as well. The bean plant... the same thing, [it is] just outside. This one (bean plant) we have in Sri Lanka so like [we have kept] the same environment (Shalini, walk-along interview, 26 May 2017).



FIGURE 2: Shalini's wall and curtains are the same in her Sydney home as her home back in Sri Lanka (Video screen capture)

Ahmed (2010, p. 29) argues that objects are 'sticky'; they 'can sustain and preserve our connections between ideas, values and objects'. The paint colour on the wall and curtain material were 'stuck' parts of Shalini's home, where her memories were represented as material markers of familiarity and comfort (Ratnam & Drozdewski, 2018). They became charged with 'affect', where connections to home in Sri Lanka were stimulated with meaning that was carried into their homes in Sydney (Waterton & Watson, 2015). Encountering these material markers during the walks were important to understand their constructions of home; had the participants sat down for an interview alone, these parts of the home could have easily fallen into the background.

Moving from Shalini's front door to her living room, then, she showed me her shrine. Shrines—a religious and cultural feature—were another material part of Sri Lankan refugee homes that were linked to remembrances of past homes. For me, and despite my Sri Lankan heritage, I found the shrines an interesting site of remembrance. I had never seen a shrine (nor did I have one in my family home) before commencing the fieldwork and analysing the importance of this material structure was poignant since many participants constructed one in their homes. The construction of these shrines beckoned for deeper understandings of their role of creating a sense of comfort and familiarity, for example. Since the shrines were a very visual part of the home, the videos captured these moments when participants encountered them, talked about them, and this footage was then analysed alongside the in-depth interviews. For some participants, their construction of shrines helped to ease their settlement experience after periods of displacement. The (re)creation of shrine rooms were part of the home-building process, where a sense of familiarity and community (based on collective religious and cultural practices) was fostered (Hage, 1997). Tolia-Kelly (2010, p. 95) suggested that shrines are 'symbolic of cultural identity linked to a space of pre-migration and its [material and sensory] textures are central to this recalling process'. Shalini's shrine (Figure 3) included photographs, statues, trophies, special awards and sticks of incense to burn after daily prayers. The components of Shalini's shrine were multi-sensorial, adding layers to how a sense of home was created. For example, the material objects were encountered and touched; the incense burning in the shrine carried smell throughout all the rooms; and coloured powders added another visual and textural element both to the shrine and as markings on their bodies (Figure 4). These sensory elements in the home served as daily reminders of Shalini's past homes and routines in Sri Lanka. She said:

'[We]... have a shrine. Back home also [we] had the trophies and things... [we] didn't bring anything but here... [we] collect these [from the] kids and then... keep it just how [we did back in Sri Lanka] (Shalini, walk-along interview, 26 May 2017).



FIGURE 3: Shalini's shrine displayed with photographs, trophies and figurines (Video screen capture)



FIGURE 4: Shalini's shrine in another part of the home displaying religious figures, incense sticks and coloured powder
(Video screen capture)

Drawing again from Tolia-Kelly's (2004, p. 320) research in British Asian homes, 'the shrines reflect back into the home many moments and spaces. They both absorb daily activity and secrete a historical context'. The construction of shrines stems from how people use the material features, ornaments, photographs and things to create a 'dwelling perspective' (Ingold, 2000; see also Brighenti & Mattiucci, 2012). Shrines are a process of growth where the creator is 'a participant in amongst a world of active materials' (Ingold, 2012, p. 21). 'Making' or creating shrines (and other parts of the home) are imprinted memories in the home, alongside everyday activities, routines and atmospheres that are produced and emergent (Ingold, 2012; 2013). The presentation of the shrines in Sri Lankan refugee homes are also a visual and sensory marker of home-building. I drew on the video footage as a way of better understanding how the shrines contributed to the participants' home-building practices, through their movement and sensory connections. Producing this colourful display of objects, powders, incense sticks and photographs fostered and maintained connections to memories of home in Sri Lanka, where these displays were pivotal points of remembering.

Shrines were also created around personal memories. Another participant, Ishani, said: '[I] brought a statue of ayyapan (a Hindu God) and [a photo of my] uncle' (Ishani, walk-along interview, 09 June 2017). As we entered the kitchen and dining area of Ishani's home, she showed me a wooden cabinet they were carving; this cabinet was built to present the shrine in (Figure 5).



FIGURE 5: The wooden cabinet Ishani's family were carving to present their shrine (Video screen capture)

Ishani said that this cabinet replicated the shrine cabinet they had in Sri Lanka: '[We are] making like a shrine... [We'll] make it and finish it. [We] used to have one like that back home' (Ishani, walk-along interview, 09 June 2017). Once complete, Ishani and her family would move all the shrine components—photographs, figures, trophies—to the new wooden cabinet. The memory of Ishani's uncle was an integral component of the shrine where his photograph was placed at the centre of the shrine alongside other photographs, statues and plaques that created it. When I interviewed Ishani, the shrine was temporarily covered by a sheet as a monthly cultural practice. Ishani mentioned that when a woman is menstruating, it is cultural practice to cover the shrine, as it is seen as a site of purity; these familiar cultural practices were still conducted in their homes in Sydney. Ishani's husband moved the sheet to show me the way the shrine was presented. The 'everyday' memories of the participants from their experiences were important considerations of how their homes were built (Degen & Rose, 2012). As Jones (2003, p. 27) suggested, 'memory is 'on' and working all the time, in our bodies, our subconscious, through our emotions'. Embedding the video walk-alongs in this visual ethnographic method captured the participants' memories that were 'on' in the ways they walked, touched and talked. For example, walking with Ishani provided an understanding of how memory and the senses were 'integrated by the way the living body move[d]' (Degen & Rose, 2012, p. 2376). When speaking of the war, Ishani's sensitive memories were prompted when she looked at her husband and then walked towards the shrine. Videography highlighted how seeing and *being in* places afforded powerful evidence of how home was constructed, given the way homes were (re)created significantly as a way of remembering people, practices, past homes and homelands. The method meant that I could re-watch footage during the analysis to draw parallels between the chosen (or spontaneous) routes, walk-along discussions, and the in-depth interviews. Showing me the wooden cabinet, moving the sheet and explaining components of the shrine – such as the photo of Ishani's uncle – were a way for memories to be presented and preserved in the home. Understanding these practices provided evidence of how familiarity to place played out in the home.

Walking and filming Sri Lankan refugee and asylum seeker homes

Analysis of participants' movements through their homes emphasised how we, as researchers, can learn through our participants' bodies and movements (Crang, 2003; Ratnam & Drozdowski, 2018). Using visual ethnography to observe how our participants experience 'being' in place, how they interact with the material and encounter certain spaces or rooms brings to the fore constructions of the home that precipitate through more than just words. For example, as participants walked, they encountered more than just the material parts of the home; the materiality of the home provoked certain memories, feelings and senses. Feelings of anxiety and fear were also prevalent in their discussions of the 'things' they brought with them. For many, personal documents and clothes were all they could bring, however, these still served as material indicators of their identities. Neither they nor I could tangibly see or touch these elements, but their presence contributed to the creation of an atmosphere of homeliness (Sumartojo 2016).

Sumartojo (2016, p. 544) contended that atmospheres form 'part of the 'feel' and experiences of events, encounters and places' and 'rely on material and signifying representations, as well as the remembered, anticipated and experiential'. These atmospheres and impressions of feelings of/in the home may have been overlooked in a sedentary, oral-only interview, or one that was not conducted *in* place. For example, participants would discuss their cooking practices, then walk to the kitchen to show me the clay pots they used for daily cooking. As Degen and Rose (2012) have suggested, using mobile and visual ethnographic methods demonstrates how walking is crucial to 'making up' the sensory patterns of home environments. Similarly, Longhurst et al. (2008) have argued that it is not easy to imagine the field (such as the home) without recognising the importance of the body, embodied experiences and emotions as part of the process of creating spaces, including the home. Participants' memories of Sri Lanka resonated with me as we walked through their homes; they were able to draw on feelings at various moments in time as they stopped at important markers in the home—rooms, shrines, plants and photographs. As I wrote in my field notes:

We walked over to the shrine... [and] I asked a question and the participant started crying, then the husband was laughing, saying that she was soft and sensitive. I immediately felt guarded when the participant started crying; I felt guilty that I had brought up their journey and I felt like... the questions I had asked... prompted the outflow of emotions from the participant (Author's field notes, 09 June 2017).

During these interviews and the walks, I was able to broaden my understanding of the multiplicity of war experiences which helped me to understand the importance of the home, as a place where memories could be remembered, articulated, presented, and at times, suppressed.

Embedding mobility in the research highlighted how *being* and walking through these places *with* participants engendered spontaneous, unplanned and unrestrictive moments for the participants; the familiarity of home became apparent during these walks (Hage, 1997). Many participants walked between and detoured towards different rooms, objects and plants when they remembered certain feelings, memories or stories. For example, one participant Kamala detoured from her bedroom to the fish tank to talk about her memories of the fish tank she had in Sri Lanka before continuing the walk back towards the kitchen. These detours, as 'ways of walking' and remembering, became an important part of the visual ethnography to analyse (Ingold & Lee Vergunst, 2008).

Visual representations of the home offered possibilities to understand how participants used, encountered and experienced these important places. Using visual ethnography allows us to put ourselves in other people's worlds and homes (Pink, 2008). Again, drawing from Pink (2004; 2008; 2009), I contend that visual ethnography can lead us, as researchers, to understand the multi-layered, multisensorial and entangled experiences of place, and our participants' experiences in these places. Moving inside the home, then, I reflect on the importance of understanding how home was a place of such experiences. It provides a chance to experience the worlds of our participants, in this case, their homes, to their sense of place, and to write about them while being there with them in a position of (co)constructing knowledges about those places. Yet, by having agency in the direction of the walk-along interview, participants could highlight how certain parts of the home were more important (or not), than others. Making contact with rooms, objects, textures, smells and memories drew on the familiarity of home and homelands. The participants directed these movements and the videos captured such routes and routines. For example, as another participant, Padma, walked through her home, she paused to

show the interpreter and I part of the kitchen. We then followed her to the garden, which was her favourite part of the homespace on a nice day. In her research, Kusenbach (2003, p. 472) noted that ‘encountering personal landmarks during [participants’] daily routines frequently evoked feelings of identification and at-homeness’. These habitual routes and routines were developed by being ‘in the relationship of people and objects. It is something sensed often through movement and experienced in a tactile kind of way’ (Urry, 2007, p. 73). The videography provided an additional layer of ethnographic analysis for this research. While the walk-alongs were access points into participants’ homes and their daily lives, the videos captured the walks as well as the homes.

Conclusion

This paper has contributed to a body of visual ethnographic work by contending that emplaced mobile and visual approaches—including walk-alongs and videography—can produce better understandings of how migrant diasporas construct home through movement, embodiment and sensory articulations. Focussing on visual and mobile methods also drew out the complexity and importance of addressing challenges and solutions in research ethics. Ethical considerations became fundamental to the research dynamics of working with refugees and entering places of privacy and intimacy. Being emplaced in participants’ homes helped me to recognise their experiences of the place of the home; these moments were captured using videography to be re-watched, interpreted and analysed. Walking and talking in/about the home was fundamental to understand how feelings of being ‘at home’ were (re)created among Sri Lankan refugees in Sydney. The filmed walk-alongs attended to how our senses were fundamental to experiences of home. For example, home feelings and senses were (re)created by the smell of the banana tree in gardens, and visuality of shrines and the textures of the objects including the coloured powders and figurines. Walking with participants in their homes, and then “walking” through their homes again while re-watching the videos informed the writing and understanding process by way of analysing atmospheres, bodies, senses and the material in place(s).

In homes, such an ‘understanding’ was to consider how Sri Lankan refugees, despite experiences of trauma, violence and marginalisation in Sri Lanka, constructed and created home. These constructions of home in Sydney revealed that familiarity and security were prominent. Familiarity was evident by the way participants walked through their homes as they took unplanned, spontaneous routes and also detoured when their remembrances of home prompted them. The material objects displayed in the shrines, by Shalini and Ishani for example, contributed to building familiarity in the home through associations with the homeland. Security was evidenced by the way participants maintained practices including daily prayers at home, gardening and cooking. Many upheld these practices as a way to feel safe and secure in the private space of the home. Participants (re)created shrines similarly to the ones they had in past homes, they painted walls the same colours, planted the same vegetables in the gardens, for example. What foregrounded these material and sensory experiences of home was the interplay of memory and identity. Encountering and (re)creating home was important for the participants; it was a place of reminders, remembrances and identities imprinted in the everyday setting.

This research highlighted the importance of being attentive to the minute details of movement, senses and bodies *in place*. More specifically, to understand how Sri Lankan refugees settle in their homes called for visual and sensorial approaches. Coupling visual approaches with mobility (the walk-alongs), provided insights into the way settlement occurred in the privacy of these refugee homes. What became apparent in this research is that Sri Lankan refugee homes were (re)created just as materially as they were symbolically and culturally. Then non-verbal and sensory encounters and movements were just as important as the verbal that constructed the home in the context of this research. Thus, capturing these non-verbal routines and encounters using videography was an important part of the method. I have recognised interesting links about home; interwoven in home are memories of the homeland that can be studied in non-verbal ways and encounters, by walking and using visual technologies to guide this process. An increasing understanding of these emplaced, visual ethnographic methods will be of value to research that seeks to improve refugee settlement processes in host communities.

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MAPPING EVERYDAY PRACTICES OF READING THROUGH VISUAL JUXTAPOSITION

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ABSTRACT

Dominant views of reading in educational contexts tend to portray reading as a solitary event, often conducted in silence and over a sustained period of time, popularized in images of reading across different contexts and times. Yet, social perspectives of reading suggest that there are multiple ways to enact reading even within the urban adolescent schooling contexts. This article shows how visual data can reveal new ways of understanding the varied everyday micro-practices of reading that are enacted across different schools. It further argues that visual juxtaposition as critical analytic method can provide new understandings of visual data and generate insights through deliberate comparison. Using the dataset from an ethnographic study of reading in Singapore secondary schools, this paper examines the varied ways that juxtaposition can be applied to the analysis of two forms of visual data, namely documentary photography and time-lapse data to show how concepts of reading, social relations and space are expanded through this form of analysis.

KEYWORDS

Reading, documentary photography, time-lapse photography, urban schools, visual juxtaposition

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Introduction

Dominant views of reading in educational contexts tend to portray reading as a solitary event, often conducted in silence and over a sustained period of time, popularized in images of reading across different contexts and times. Yet, to see reading as a social practice is to recognize that what counts as reading is ideologically shaped, and to acknowledge that there are multiple ways of reading that count differently in different contexts. Writing about everyday practices of consumption, Michel de Certeau (1984) notes that city dwellers consume everyday life through *tactical* ways of operation that subvert dominant narratives of urban space and living. Official discourses are strategies that assume “a proper place in the prescribed order of things” whereas ‘a tactic insinuates itself into the other’s place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance’ (p. xix). Strategies are moves that are situated in “proper” places and often linked to institutional structures. On the other hand, tactics are disassociated from institutions and describe the improvisational aspect of practice. School-approved ways of reading are often singular (sustained, quiet reading) in contrast to the many flexible reading practices that adolescents may adopt that subvert official perception of what reading should look like.

This article examines how the use of visual images in school contexts of reading can raise awareness of these multiple ways of reading that are often glanced over in educational discourses of reading. While there has been a proliferation of the use of visual methods for research generally (Banks 2007; Harper 2012; Heng 2017; Pink 2012; Rose 2016), engagement within educational contexts has been limited due



to tricky issues of access and ethnics in research involving children and young adolescents. However, visual methods can yield rich insights otherwise unobtainable through typical observation and interview methods in urban educational research, providing rich visual data for illustration and analysis (Chappell, Chappell, and Margolis 2011; Nichols and Loh 2019; Prosser and Loxley 2007). For example, photographs can literally yield new ways of “seeing” by providing a visual record of what would otherwise have been a transient experience, and these visual records can be analyzed differently from other forms of data such as written observations and interviews. The repeated photography that are examined in this study (in the form of time-lapse data), provides minute-by-minute documentation of shifts in behaviours, allowing the researchers to track shifts in student behavior over a period of time. Furthermore, I argue that the deliberate use of visual juxtaposition (Metcalf 2015) offers a critical analytic method that foregrounds contrast as vital for generating new understandings.

This article draws from the dataset of the *Building a Reading Culture (BRC)* study, which examined the reading and school library culture of six secondary schools in the urban city-state of Singapore, to illustrate how visual juxtaposition can be fruitfully employed to map and glean insights about students’ everyday practices of reading. Singapore is the urban city par excellence with 5.6 million people living on an island with the land area of 721.5km, just a little smaller than New York City and half the size of the city of London. Within this urban space, a key concern of the nation is to improve students’ reading and learning for equitable learning. As an educational researcher concerned with literacy as a social practice (Collins and Blot 2003; Luke and Freebody 1997), I am deeply interested in understanding how students live and enact their everyday practices of reading within the schooling context, particularly within the space of school libraries, a space often associated with reading.

The article begins with an overview of reading and visual juxtaposition as method. Thereafter, two illustrations of using visual juxtaposition are provided as examples of how visual juxtaposition can reveal new ways of thinking about reading in urban educational contexts. Finally, I conclude by stressing the value of visual juxtaposition as a critical analytic tool.

Dominant Narratives of Reading in Schooling Contexts

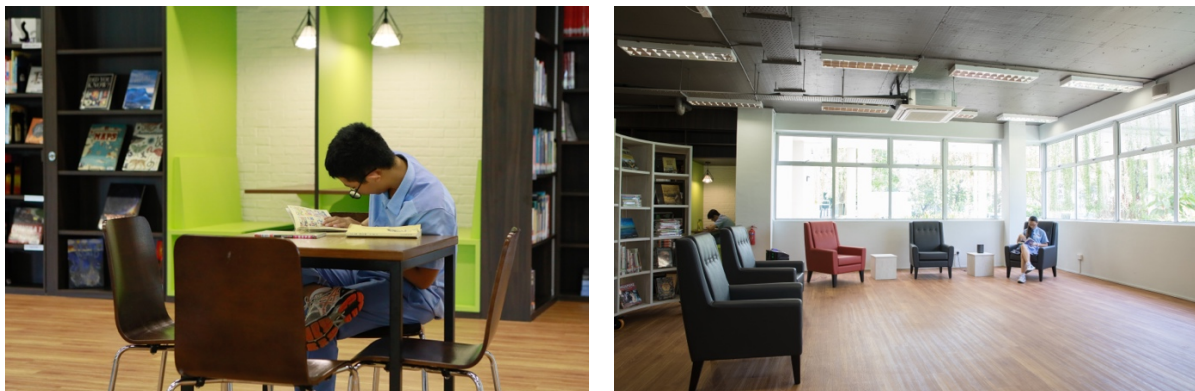


FIGURE 1: Images Complying with Dominant Narratives of Reading: Solitary and Silent Reading

The images in Figure 1 exemplify dominant concepts of reading, with a single student engaged in sustained silent reading in a comfortable armchair in the library. Company is insignificant, and it seems that the individual’s need to enter the world of the book is more important than the space in which it the book is read. Photographs documenting dominant (school-approved) view of reading was often repeated in the visual data collected in the BRC study and is indeed one common way that students often engaged in reading.

This dominant perception of what counts as reading also emerged from our interviews. The following interview excerpt from vice-principal of one of the schools captures the official view of ideal reading.

I mean the library is one of the many places that I would read. We can read at the bus stop, on the bus, anywhere as long as you have space. But I like to read at the cafeteria because I love white noise so library is not for me. So to me the library is one of the many places where students read.

For this vice-principal, the ideal reading posture is one of solitude and complete absorption where space is of little consequence. One 14-year-old girl in another school shared about the need to “completely go into the mood for reading” in order to finish her reading at one sitting, preferably on the bed. The two interview excerpts illustrate the common understanding of what a reader should look like - absorbed in sustained reading of a single book, often in solitude (Long 1992; Nichols and Loh 2019). This dominant view of reading is so widely accepted that in the recording of a publicity video (see video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKKUQB91YII>) for the project, the researcher noted that the videographer constantly tried to arrange students in solitary reading positions for his shots, until he was shown the photographs to visualise other possible ways of enacting reading.

The view of reading as a singular activity is captured in autonomous or universal perspectives of literacy, which conceives of literacy as “a uniform set of techniques and uses of language, with identifiable stages of development and clear, predictable consequences for culture and cognition” (Collins and Blot 2003: 4). The idea that the acquisition of a singular literacy enables individual, national and institutional development is prevalent in the language of literacy campaigns and official documents and is often seen as the sole model of literacy in education. However, in comparison to the linear and singular focus of autonomous models of literacy (Goody 1977; Ong 1982), the “ideological” (Collins and Blot 2003; Street 1984) model of literacy emphasizes that literacy or literacies are multiple, ideologically-saturated and situated (Collins and Blot 2003). To understand what literacy was in a particular context and how it was valued, it is necessary to see it as a social practice that has value only in its context of use. Any research with an emphasis on the social must necessarily focus on the everyday practices of literacies, as this article does.

In the same way that dominant discourse of literacy may impose a singular view of literacy, dominant notions of reading may lead to limited views of what counts as reading, particularly within schooling contexts. In Elizabeth Long’s (1992) study of women reading groups, she explores the hegemonic nature of images in postcards and paintings depicting reading as a solitary affair. She notes, however, that reading is very much a collective matter, and that social infrastructures are required to enable and support particular ways of reading within each community. Similarly, Nichols & Loh (2019) have highlighted that dominant perceptions of adolescent reading as a solitary activity have been etched into iconic clip art representations of reading and thus inscribed into official views of what counts as reading, arguing that the use of photographs taken in naturalistic settings can disrupt dominant discourses by providing images that show other ways of reading. Adolescent reading practices are in fact multiple, varied and complex and adolescents often have diverse reasons and motivations for reading, even within a single urban school or community (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer and Morris 2008). Recognising the multiplicity and complexity of adolescent reading practices opens up the possibilities for what counts as reading within specific educational contexts, expanding ways of engaging, motivating and evaluating student reading.

Using Visual Juxtaposition in Educational Research

Dominant views of reading do not necessarily reflect the everyday practices of reading lived and enacted by students, which are often unnoticed in official narratives of what counts as reading. However, visual images allow for what Caroline Knowles (2018) calls “more disciplined observation” of everyday practices, in contrast to the tendency to view the world in “scanning mode” (p. 9). Photographs, particularly, are a form of technology that can connect people and ideas across time and space, though different viewers may come to each image with their singular interpretation (Sontag 1973), and the image be a powerful tool when for advocating change (Pink 2012; Rose 2016). Susan Sontag (1973) notes that “photographs may be more memorable than moving images, because they are a neat slice of time, not a flow” (p. 17) and indeed, the stillness of the image is what allows for reflective interaction, shifting the urban educational researchers’ perspective from superficial sight to knowing sight. The photograph as data can be read at various levels – at one level, it is a visual description of a scene (telling

what is) and at another level, it can be interpreted to generate new meaning that might not immediately be obvious at first sight.

In her seminal overview of visual methodologies, Gillian Rose (2016) suggests that there are three criteria for a critical visual methodology. A critical visual methodology should take seriously the central place of images in research, consider the images in context and be reflexive in its approach. Visual juxtaposition which foregrounds deliberate comparison as an analytic method makes central the critical and reflexive to uncover insight through the sorting and comparison process. While comparison is implicit in most visual research, the deliberate use of juxtaposition as method remains relatively under-utilized. Amy Scott Metcalfe (2015) highlights the value of juxtaposition:

Inquiry through contrast, facilitated by side-by-side positioning of *two images, or images and text* ... creates opportunities for qualitative analysis that are not as readily apparent when individual images are considered (p. 152, emphasis mine)

Juxtaposition thus opens up semiotic possibilities through comparison as a deliberate analytic move. Juxtaposition disrupts familiarity by creating “opportunities for qualitative analysis not as readily apparent when individual images are considered” (Metcalfe 2015: 166). In the case of the BRC study, having a large corpus of data allowed for multiple opportunities to re-analyse a single image, and to compare them against other images. Comparisons can be done across the same place over time (past/present), of different places (here/there) and of dissonant images (this/that). In comparison to quantitative methods of content analysis (Bock, Isermann, and Knieper 2011), the aim is not so much to count and tabulate but to generate interpretative possibilities, new ways of looking and thinking. Writing about case study research, Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) note that “comparing and contrasting are essential analytic moves” (p. 7) that reveal new ways of thinking about the data. Similarly, juxtaposition of images as a method forces comparison for greater analytic rigour and possibilities.

Another application of visual juxtaposition in this study is the use of repeat photography, in the form of time-lapse photography. A repeat photograph is

a photograph specifically made to duplicate selected aspects of another, pre-existing photograph. The new image typically repeats the spatial location of the original, showing the viewer the same scene once again and inviting comparison. But other features of an existing photograph, the lighting, or the events depicted, may also be the subject of attempted duplication. (Klett 2011: 114)

Repeat photographs are useful for visualizing change, whether in the short term (e.g., over a day) or long term (e.g., over decades). The repetition allows for detailed comparisons of how the scene or subject has changed over a few minutes or a few decades. Time-lapse photography is a form of repeat photography where multiple photographs of the same location or subject are generated over a period of time. Historically, the development of time-lapse photography allowed time to be slowed down for closer examination. For example, the well-known time-lapse of “The Horse in Motion” sequence by Eadward Muybridge, Etienne-Jules Marey and Leland Stanford, slowed down movement to prove that a horse’s four feet did leave the ground at the same time when running. Time-lapse photograph thus allowed for the identification of patterns “in social situations that are longer in duration than those apparent under the constraints of our natural perception of time” (Persohn 2015). For the present study, it was felt that the slice of time presented by the time-lapse data was far less overwhelming to the senses than the moving images of video-recordings, thus facilitating close study of individual images.

Methods

The research was conducted over the course of a year in 2017, with researchers spending 15 to 17 days in each of the six secondary schools, though we focus in this article largely on the visual data from one school, Quest Secondary, in this article. Quest Secondary School provided an interesting case study as it renovated its library space and book collection just before the research started, with the objective of creating a space that would encourage independent and self-motivated reading. The medium of photography lent itself to studying the micro-practices of reading, which would have been otherwise unobtainable via other research tools. In addition to the visual images, survey, observation and interview

data were also collected and the multiple sources of data collection allowed for the creation of a “thick description” (Gilbert Ryle in Geertz 1973) of reading in the contexts being studied.

A camera in the hands of the photographer is not a neutral tool but shapes the world being seen through the different choices made (Heng 2017; Pauwels 2012; Pink 2012; Sontag 1973). In this case, the technical work of taking the photographs and setting up the Go Pro camera was done by a research assistant who was also a freelance journal photographer, but in constant discussion with all team members. The photographs and time-lapse data obtained were analyzed while research was in progress and decisions made collectively about the images to be captured. Although the images are limited in providing only one-time snapshots of a moment, field notes from observations in the school library and interview data added depth to the interpretation of the images.

All names used in this article are pseudonyms. Institutional Review Board permissions were obtained from the university and permission was obtained from the school to use the photographs for research purposes. A notice was placed outside each school library informing students of the use of photography for research purposes.

Documentary Photography

For documentary photography, the research brief for photographs was to collect as many images of reading as possible. In total, more than 7,200 photographs were taken. The initial aim of documentary photography was to record the mundane and the exceptional in daily operations, and to use the documentary data as visual evidence for observations and advocacy work. However, the detailed analysis of the micro-practices made visible through the photographs allowed us as researchers to further analyze our understandings of reading, learning and space, to examine how “abstract and contested concepts become embedded in relational, temporal and spatial dimensions” (Prosser and Loxley 2007: 57) through the images.

For the photographic data, “constant comparison” (Glaser and Strauss 1967) was employed to identify categories in the photographic data that were relevant to the central concept of “reading”. In the open coding stage, the BRC team selected images that seemed relevant to reading and compared them with each other and against our initial understandings of reading. Subsequently, during the axial coding stage, the team placed multiple images together in new ways after coding, to make connections between the different categories. Thereafter, final categories that seemed to exemplify the key concepts that had emerged from the coding were selected. This was a recursive process where the team compared images within schools and across schools.

Time-Lapse Photography

For the time-lapse images, the team set up three to five Go Pro cameras in each library for a period of five days every term. In total, at least 120 hours of data was collected from each school and 720 hours of data was collected from all six schools. The cameras were set to capture one image every minute. This was good for capturing broad student movements but could not capture minute actions such as browsing, which were often completed in less than a minute. Initial observations of each library were conducted to determine where to place the Go Pro cameras. In Term 1, the team set the cameras to capture broader frames to get a sense of the various activities and movements in the library. Later, following analysis of the first set of data and returning to the original research intent of focusing on students’ independent reading, research and collaborative behaviours, the team changed some of the initial vantage points and went for more focused cropped frames for some sections of the library.

The time-lapse data was particularly useful for understanding the relationship between space and social relations as it provided the team with a large data-set of similar spaces in different libraries for comparison across time and across different spaces. The team used two methods to analyze the data. Frame-by-frame analysis allowed the slowing down of action for analysis. The fast-forwarded images, when viewed in playback mode, showed the changes that occurred within particular spaces throughout the day. These two methods allowed us to observe and contrast how specific spaces were used for reading and learning by students. As there were multiple cameras in each library, the team was also able to document the change relationally to understand how different spaces were used over the same period. Moreover, the large volume of images across similar kinds of spaces in different schools allowed us to

pull out specific time-lapses for comparisons. Significant scenes in the time-lapse data were selected and coded for their descriptive potential.

A sample of the descriptive log used for analysis is provided in Table 1. The time-lapse data is supplemented with field notes taken by the researchers on the days of recording.

Clip Name: Reading Corner	
Duration: 6hrs 11 mins (1049 – 1720)	Date: 07 Feb 2017
Area: Westview School Library Reading Corner	
Context: Full day time-lapse data at Westview Secondary School Library. Area documented is rear of library, including the main sofa clusters.	
Timecode: 10:49hrs	Observed Behaviour: Camera started at 1049hrs, after being repositioned. Two boys can be seen seated at the corner sofas. They appear to be reading. The duo stay in the area reading/browsing for around 15 minutes before exiting the library.
11:04hrs	The two boys reading at the corner exit the library. The space remains empty for the next 12 minutes.
11:16hrs	Two students (boys) enter the frame and settle themselves down at the centre sofas. They are Upper Secondary students. They appear to be carrying a book and an orange file respectively. For the next six minutes these two boys enter in and out of the frame, perhaps in the process of settling down.

TABLE 1: Sample descriptive log of time-lapse data (analysis by Wan Zhong Hao)

Figure 2 shows two photographs taken from the time-lapse in the Quest school library between 10:04 to 11:49 am in the morning, during the recess period. The juxtaposition of the same scene showed similar and different usage of space. Fast-forwarding the entire sequence of the time-lapse showed the presence of both solitary and social reading, as well as sustained and short reading sessions where students were browsing. Repeated scenes across the 15 days in the library showed that this space was generally well-used for browsing and individual sustained silent reading.



FIGURE 2: Time-lapse of reading corner at Quest Secondary School Library

Book Browsing: The two boys towards the far left corner in Image 1 are simply browsing the books they have on hand. They leave the observation frame after 2 minutes at 10:22. The boy closer to the right hand side of the frame stays within frame for over 16 minutes, from 10:16 to 10:31, engaging in sustained reading.

Sustained Reading: The boy in the final frames stays in the observed area for 44 minutes, entering at 10:52 and exiting at 11:36, reading *Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger over a few days.

The sequence of two images you see towards the left hand side is part of a time-lapse captured in January 2017, from 10:04 hrs to 11:49 hrs, between Quest's lower and upper secondary recesses.

The time-lapse data in the study were analyzed at school level and across school levels, often by examining spaces that were meant for similar kinds of activities. The juxtaposition of various time-lapse data allowed us to understand how space shaped social relations across different schooling contexts.

The next section provides illustrations of how visual juxtaposition was used to map and expand our understandings of reading within this study. The aim is not so much to be comprehensive as to illustrate the possibilities of deliberately foregrounding visual juxtaposition in the analysis of visual data.

Extending Understandings of Everyday Practices of Reading

Juxtaposition of Documentary Photography: From a Singular View of Reading to Multiple Readings



FIGURE 3: Expanded Ways of Reading

Repeated viewings of the photographic data and constant juxtaposition of different images helped the team to see differently, to understand reading as plural, sociable and material. In comparison to the images from Figure 1 shown earlier, it can be seen that the images in Figure 3 pointed to more expansive views of reading and contributed to our understanding of how reading was enacted in the daily routines of school, particularly within the school library.

The image in the top left shows a group of girls interacting over a picture book, pointing to the materiality and sociability of reading. The girls lean forward, touching the book and interacting with the various features and with each other. The attention is divided, at least for one girl, who is also simultaneously reading her own print book. But for the moment, they are united, their gaze drawn to the features in the book. In the next image, a group of boys are reading Marvel comics around a table. The image demonstrates that reading can be social but silent. Here again, note the sociability but enacted in silence around the solidarity of reading comics. The postures of engagement are different

from the girls in the first figure as they each seem to retreat in their own world, the gaze focused on the contents of their individual book.

The bottom left figure shows a girl reading a novel on her phone, expanding our vision of reading to online reading. The materiality of the smartphone and the access to resources beyond the physical for reading is highlighted. The image reminds us that fingers too are involved in the act of scrolling, as they are in the turning of pages. That reading is not just mental engagement with words on a page but physical involvement with the material of books. The last image on the bottom right shows students browsing at the bookshelves, emphasizing that the selection of books is an important process of reading.

The images here bring to light the social structures that underlie reading and the multiple ways of operating within the space of the school library by highlighting the plurality of reading practices in one school library. The images demonstrate that sociability in reading for adolescents may be as important as solitary reading and emphasize the need to motivate different adolescents differently (Ivey and Johnston 2013; Moje, Overby, Tysvaer and Morris 2008; Nichols and Loh 2019). The necessity of collective groups that support reading practices and the importance of the community (Fuller and Sedo 2013) is made visible in the images that show behaviours and actions contrary to hegemonic understandings of reading. The images bring to the attention of the viewer the social infrastructure (Long 1992) other than school-sanctioned structures of curriculum and reading programmes that shape the ways students respond to books and to each other in the presence of books. Moreover, the images highlight the materiality of reading (Sorensen 2009) by bringing to the researchers' awareness the presence of different kinds of books, tables, chairs, shelves, mobile phones that support and shape adolescent reading. The affordances, both physical and online (Lindberg and Lyytinen 2013) make possible certain ways of reading.

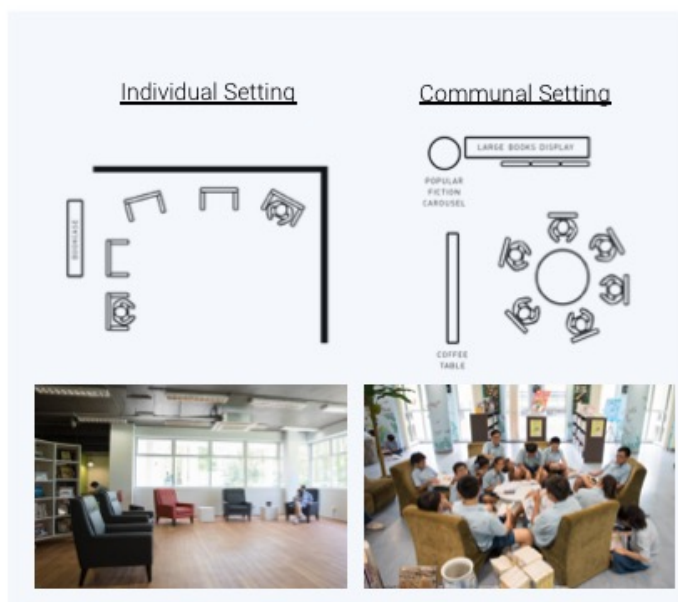
The images thus have to be read in the schooling contexts to understand the implication of each image. Juxtaposition occurring within one school and across schools can provide different insight about what counts as reading and where, when, what and how students read. The act of juxtaposition forces reflection and disrupts assumptions about space by providing contrasting images that allow viewers to question the norms.

Understanding Patterns and Deviations through Time-Lapse Photography: Students' Everyday Use of Library Spaces

A key objective of the BRC was to understand the relationship between space and social relations in the context of the school libraries. In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre (1991) explains how social relations are reproduced spatially even as space is shaped by social relations. How students read or learn within the space of the school library can thus be constrained or enabled by the space and the affordances within the space (Lindberg and Lyytinen 2013). Understanding the behavior setting or how particular spaces shape learning behaviours within the space (Cleveland 2017) can enable librarians, teachers and designers working in the library space to more purposefully design the space for learning.

From the repeated viewings and analysis (see Figure 2), the BRC team was able to generate design patterns (Nair, Fielding, and Lackney 2009) that explained how the organization of space and furniture shaped particular kinds of social relations and behaviours within the library. These design patterns could be used by librarians and teachers to improve on their "geographical literacy" (Cleveland 2016) or the "environmental literacy" (Lackney 2008). The design pattern in Figure 4 was generated through comparisons of multiple time-lapses across different schools and shows two arrangements that are typically used in school libraries – a communal and individual setting. From the time-lapse, we understood that individual settings would encourage quiet sustained reading whereas communal settings were more likely to encourage discussion and interaction. The intent of the design patterns is not so much to dictate how the library should be arranged but to provide guides for thinking about library redesign. Thus, the time-lapse data across schools can be productively used to understand patterns in library spaces in relation to social behaviours and to generate insight about the official use of space.

Reading Spaces in the School Library



Reading can occur in two different settings.

Different settings inspire different kinds of behaviours.

Individual settings encourage sustained reading or independent browsing whereas "coffee table" settings or **communal settings** encourage socialising.

Consider where the noisy spaces and where the quiet spaces should be by zoning the library space appropriately.

4

FIGURE 4: Design pattern for designing reading spaces in the school library.

On the other hand, the time-lapse data could also be read to understand students' colonization of space to come to see how social relations may be shaped in unexpected ways, *tactically*. Writing about the social space of the library, Shilling and Cousins (1990) note that understanding teachers' regulation and students' colonisation of library space, and the processes by which students associate or disassociate themselves from using the library can provide more effective insight into the work of school libraries. Colonisation refers to students' self-imposed use of space, contrary to the official perceptions of how the space should be used, in line with the norms of learning. Within the library, students may engage in behaviours (using the mobile phone, speaking loudly, occupying spaces between shelves rather than sitting on chairs) that are contrary to dominant assumptions about how that library space should be used. Elsewhere, I have also discussed how spaces of reading seek to discipline student reading but are colonized by students' desires to use the space in different ways than that originally intended (Loh, Heng, and Wan 2019).

Mak Cheng Hon, a student-researcher on the Undergraduate Research Experience on Campus (URECA) project at Nanyang Technological University, analyzed the time-lapse data of one school in the dataset to understand students' studying and collaborative behaviours within the school library (Mak and Loh, 2018). His findings showed that adolescent students colonized unregulated corners (between bookshelves and in library corners) for their own activities, which may or may not involve reading, or utilized official spaces for other forms of activity than that originally intended. He observed, through his study of the time-lapse data, how students multi-task, shifting their gazes between their mobile phones, friends and work. This continuous partial attention (CPA) behavior was spread out across the library, suggesting either distraction from the task of studying or multi-tasking as a key adolescent behavioral

trait. Mak further observed students camouflaging their actual activities (e.g., gaming or surfing on laptops) by finding suitable seats out of the supervisory range of the librarian and adopting stances that resembled students at work. The repeated frame-by-frame analysis made visible these behaviours that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. Furthermore, contrasted against time-lapse data from other schools where such camouflaging and CPA behaviours were less often observed, researchers can question how the policies and organization of space shape practices within particular spaces.

Analyzing historical images of schooling, Chappell, Chappell, & Margolis (2011) note that the ideology of schooling was enacted through “embodied repetitive practice” visible in repeated images across historical time. While our study did not span decades, the tracing of the “rituals of the habitual” (p. 61) or the routines and expectations of the school were seen to be central to our understanding of how space shaped learning. Attending to space with a critical eye, we noted that the rituals of the habitual were shaped as much by the space of school (Markus 1993) and the materials within the space (Lindberg and Lyytinen 2013). The time-lapse data offered possibilities for tracing how particular spaces and materials were used in the space of the library across the day and across the year. The repetitions within each particular space and configuration invited consideration about the ideology that governed each space and the concept of the school library within the context of Singapore urban educational system.

Discussion and Conclusion

Generating new perspectives through visual analysis allowed us to compare the images across schools to better understand how these forms of reading were encouraged (or not) in different contexts and opened up room for dialogue about what counted as reading in urban schooling contexts. In this study, the study of everyday practices of reading expanded understandings of reading as multiple, social and varied, in contrast to the dominant and singular view of reading as sustained and silent. Even as educators grapple with how to motivate students towards engaged reading and ever higher levels of literacy, it might be worth examining basic assumptions about what is valued as reading within urban educational contexts.

Within Singapore, urban educational research has tended towards conservatism, using photography as complementary data rather than key data. In this study, we utilized documentary and time-lapse photography as key data with the potential to generate new understandings through visual juxtaposition. The documentary data affirmed dominant images of silent and solitary sustained reading but also expanded understandings of reading as plural, social and material. Knowles (2018) stresses the existence of creative tensions for visual researchers who have to engage in “social conventions of seeing in a particular (conventional) way” and to “search for new ways of seeing, ways that challenge and re-arrange social conventions”. Visual juxtaposition forced constant rethinking of the meaning ascribed to a single photograph, raising questions about how to read each image against a new image, inviting the researcher to reflect on the patterns and the deviations from these patterns.

The time-lapse data revealed patterns or conventions that shaped spaces for reading but also provided examples of how students both adhered to the disciplines of space and but also negotiated the use of space according to their own desires. The analysis of micro-patterns, of understanding the enactment of policy through everyday practice was enabled by the constant reference to the visual (Prosser and Loxley 2007), and deliberate attempts to juxtapose the visual data within and across schools. The minute rituals of the everyday is captured by frame-to-frame comparisons within a scene, and across scenes to generate new insights about schooling, spaces and behaviours. These frames do not only capture official, sanctioned behaviours but unofficial, informal use of space that reveal more about the adolescent student and their social relations to each other and to the space of schooling. Re-viewing each image offers new opportunities for engagement, analysis and insight.

The naturalistic context under which the photographs were taken contributed to the authenticity of the events and action captured in the images (Nichols and Loh 2019). However, it should not be assumed that these images are completely representative for every image is shaped by the photographer’s framing of the shot and attention to particular details (Heng 2017; Pauwels 2012; Pink 2012; Sontag 1973). Moreover, there are different ways of viewing/ reading the images. All too often, it is assumed there is one way of seeing, which limits the potential interpretations and contributions of the data. A key limitation of this paper is in choosing to focus only on the visual, to the exclusion of other forms of data

such as the field notes and interviews. Yet, the isolation of the visual in this data reveals more sharply the unique contribution of visual data to urban educational research.

Visual data provides new insights, and visual juxtaposition as a deliberate analytic method is a way to build reflexivity and insight into the process of analysis. The use of visual juxtaposition in urban educational research is one way to generate new understandings of a field. For this study, the focus on the visual has expanded the ways that everyday practices of reading are enacted within specific and across different contexts that might not have been possible through other forms of data. Despite greater difficulty with obtaining ethnical clearance for working in schools with children and adults, turning to the visual may indeed provide a new way of seeing and learning.

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SPATIAL TACTICS OF HONG KONG STREET HAWKERS: A CASE STUDY OF FA YUEN STREET

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ABSTRACT

Conflicts around street space are an everyday occurrence in Hong Kong, a prominent example of which would be the constant strife between street hawkers and Hawker Control Teams. The Hong Kong government has been regulating hawker activity through limiting licenses and restricting fixed-pitched stall sizes. Under strict surveillance from the Hawker Control Teams, hawkers employ a variety of spatial tactics to avoid prosecution and at the same time maximize their display areas in order to attract customers. The study aims to understand the ways in which hawkers manage and accumulate spatial resources, within the standard boundaries of narrow 3 by 4 ft. stalls. It analyzes the types of spatial tactics applied in stalls, which are the hawkers' response to tightening regulation, and provides a glimpse into the spatial negotiation and manipulation in the relationships between hawkers and Hawker Control Teams.

KEYWORDS

Hong Kong, Spatial tactics, Strategy, Street hawkers, Street stalls

BIO

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Background

The British colonial government had long regarded Hong Kong's street hawkers as a nuisance, a source of threats in hygiene, noise, public order and more. Governmental attempts made to solve the 'problem' of hawkers, burdened with excessive bureaucracy and failure of coordination between departments, had proven to be inadequate to this day. As McGee pointed out (McGee 1973: 38), multiple social problems had emerged in Hong Kong during the 1970s, and the British policy of prioritizing graver issues meant that street hawkers were largely neglected in general. Nevertheless, three main strategies had been adopted by the government in attempts to alleviate problems relating to hawking, namely establishing policies to 1) move or eliminate existing hawkers; 2) implement price control and issuance of permits; and 3) encourage legal vending through education. Such policies shared the long-term objective to displace hawkers' economic activities on the street level.

Governmental policies directed at hawkers throughout Hong Kong history had been built upon the assumption that hawking practice could only be detrimental to the city, posing constant threats to public hygiene, traffic and general city image, and was to be eradicated in the long run. In fact, with the establishment of the Hong Kong Urban Council (later the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, or FEHD) in 1936, Chairman R. R. Todd put forward in a Council report that all hawking on the streets should be prohibited and eliminated (McGee 1973: 38). A 1947 report on Hong Kong hawkers by the Megarry Committee declared that it was a long-term goal of the government to ban hawking entirely (The report of the Megarry Committee on hawking 1947: 1, in McGee 1973). The

Hong Kong colonial government at the time was emphatically against street hawking, and believed that any kind of vending activity which could cause congestion on the streets, or in traffic, must not be allowed (McGee 1973: 32).

Street hawking in its many forms has stayed on as a part of the city to this day, and moreover — from the government's perspective — a social problem yet to be solved, which is why the concept of working towards eradicating all hawker activity is still in existence (Smart 1989: 35). While the government's hawker policies have always put an emphasis on controlling hawking through a system of permission, their ultimate goal is clear — to drive hawkers off the streets and eliminate the practice as a whole.

According to the HKSAR Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD 2017), the number of local licensed street hawkers has dropped from 20,000 from the late 1980s to about 5,911 today¹. There are currently about 5,496 fixed-pitch hawker licenses, 5,278 of which are situated on streets, and could be called *pai dongs*. They are concentrated on 43 streets across the Central, Wan Chai, Eastern, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po and Kowloon City Districts. The remaining are stalls in Hawker Bazaars, or cooked food/snack stalls.

Among the 5,278 *pai dongs* across Hong Kong, about 233 were located on Fa Yuen Street of Mongkok during 2012-14, the period in which observation took place, each exactly 3 by 4 ft. in area. This size requirement had originated from the 1970s, when the overpopulation of itinerant hawkers raised concern over orderliness and hygiene on the streets, prompting the government to establish policies regulating hawkers' activities. The subsequent laws require hawkers to keep their trading areas in 3 by 4 ft. grids pre-painted on the streets (called at the time '*Waak Wai*' (劃位, or allocated spaces), or otherwise risk legal consequences.

While acutely aware of their limitations in space, hawkers have invariably come to find the need to display goods in advantageous (often meaning high-traffic) positions overpowering. They are often faced with little choice but to take up space that they do not own, if only to help their business survive on the busy market street. Meanwhile, the Hawker Control Team is obligated to take action on any spatial transgressions beyond the allocated area. Such are the circumstances which have compelled hawkers to come up with spatial tactics aimed at both the purposeful organization of goods within the stalls, and the conscious appropriation of space without — all to maximize business potential and minimize risk of prosecution.

Such spatial transgressions are sometimes sources of complaint. In one of the interviews conducted during the research process, Mr. Ho, who had joined in the Hawker Control Team in the 1980's, explained that he frequently dealt with or prosecuted hawkers. As Mr. Ho emphasized, 'If every hawker pushed their goods forwards or even obstructed the streets for more stall space, they would certainly inconvenient other pedestrians. If you ask them to move things back a little, they comply to your face. Once you walk away, though, they revert to their old ways, causing constant issues and complaints. That's why hawkers must be managed to maintain orderly streets.' Mr. Ho also believed that the rights of other users of the streets should be considered, including in particular vehicles such as ambulances and fire trucks, which require sufficient space. In light of these needs, the design of streets must be compliant with fire safety regulations.

As a result of the government's efforts at building a clean and modern city throughout the years, the Hawker Control Team and street hawkers have always found themselves at odds with each other, in a conflicting relationship strained with constant strifes and tension. On the one hand, while society has largely shifted from physical labor to an information economy, undereducated hawkers with low skill levels are pushed by circumstances to make a humble living on the streets so as to support themselves and their families; the streets for them are a refuge — a space to live within the cracks. On the other hand, law enforcers bear the responsibility of balancing the rights and interests of all users of the streets; they must operate, through effective management, under the principles of promoting safer and more hygienic street environments for pedestrians and residents — meaning that the regulation of hawking space must be strictly enforced.

¹ Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.
http://www.fehd.gov.hk/english/pleasant_environment/hawker/overview.html

The formation of social space

In his spatial theory, Lefebvre (1991) described the conceptual triad that comes together to construct social space — namely spatial practice, representations of space, and representational space.

Lefebvre believed that the formation of social space is the process of people consistently practicing living and participating in specific spaces, typical examples of which include going to work regularly and buying groceries at the wet market. Specific types of social space are constructed unintentionally through such practices of daily life. Some of Hong Kong's earliest and more colourful streets or markets were not products of government planning; instead, they were formed by large numbers of mainland Chinese refugees who had fled the political turmoil in the mainland and taken up temporary residence on Hong Kong's hillsides. Many unskilled and less educated refugees ended up as street hawkers. One of the hawkers interviewed — Mr. Chan, who had illegally immigrated from Huizhou — has been working on Fa Yuen Street for over 30 years. He said he had worked on construction sites, in the textile industry, and as a tailor: "I've done everything! I was even a coolie, but you could only do that till you were 40 or 50. So I could only become a hawker."

Miss Lam, a fellow Fa Yuen Street hawker with over 40 years' experience, described the area's hawking scene in the 1960's as follows: "Making a living was really tough at the time, and we had to try our luck everywhere. Hawking was the quickest and easiest way. Fa Yuen Street at the time wasn't much different from other streets; there weren't many hawkers, only a dozen or so stalls on the ground. Everyone put their wares on wooden pushcarts, boxes, or canvas, and as they occupied the same spots every day, these spots were later used for fixed *pai dongs*." In fact, most of the early Fa Yuen Street hawkers shared similar backgrounds or experiences, and found it easy to support each other on the street. The interviews revealed that many hawkers on Fa Yuen Street, especially more senior ones, had illegally immigrated from the mainland. Carrying a diverse load of history and personal experiences, they left their places of origin for the same reason, met and connected with each other on Fa Yuen Street, and found a new home there. Endless stories could be told about the people in the Fa Yuen Street community or on any one of Hong Kong's historic streets; they are living testaments to a generation's experiences, struggles, and values, as well as contributors to the histories of Fa Yuen Street and Hong Kong hawkers.

In the mid-1980's, as a branch office of the Immigration Department moved to Fa Yuen Street, the area underwent a significant transformation. The period saw a great increase in visitors who would apply for the Home Return Permit at the Immigration Department and then purchase large amounts of clothing items and daily essentials on Fa Yuen Street, before taking the train to the mainland at the nearby Mong Kok Train Station. Since resources were still extremely limited in the mainland during this period, it was common for Hong Kongers to bring local goods across the border to relatives. Since then, Fa Yuen Street gradually evolved from a wet market to a hub for daily essentials and fashion items. The formation of this street market was a slow process of autonomous public participation, in which ordinary citizens involved in the practice of living built up social space on the street. Thusly, streets like Fa Yuen Street, Women's Street and Ap Liu Street each has its own character; the meaning of space within these streets has been actualized through bottom-up spatial practice.

Strategies and tactics

Strategies and tactics differ in the ways in which space is utilized by groups of either dominant or weak positions. There is a complicated relationship between the two, which are simultaneously conflicting and interconnected. As established by de Certeau (de Certeau 1984: 35), strategy involves "the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships", realized by a party "with will and power". De Certeau notes:

"It postulates a place that can be delimited as its own and serves as the base from which relations with an exteriority composed of targets or threats...can be managed." (de Certeau 1984: 35)

Such a space appropriated by the dominant, or 'its own space', has been separated from a general 'environment', as a means to achieve strategic management. Strategy is often deployed with the top-

down approach; those in power define and restrict uses of 'their own space', through means such as legislation, planning, calculation, management and manipulation. For instance, customers in a shopping mall are not allowed to make excessive noise or run around; library users are often forbidden to talk on their phones. Schools, business districts, hospitals and military bases, etc. are all spaces strategically dominated by the powerful. On the other hand, the tactic involves the 'space of the other', and is only deployed and realized "with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power" (de Certeau 1984: 37), meaning that the tactic must be preceded by strategic intervention and subsequent conflict of power. As de Certeau put it, "a tactic is an art of the weak" (de Certeau 1984: 37). Unbound by regular methods, the weak actively navigates the spaces of the powerful, searching out for their own benefit windows of opportunity, which are unstable, temporary, and requires high levels of creativity. What kinds of tricks are devised for such tactics? And how is the possibility of subverting power created to the advantage of the disadvantaged?

Good things come in small packages: spatial tactics

An old saying in Cantonese goes, "*Policy from above is always met by opposing tactics from below.*" This can firstly be interpreted as a comment on policy-makers' ignorance of real issues, as well as the rigidity of bureaucracy. Secondly, the saying highlights a kind of contention that can be described as 'bottom-up'; the disadvantaged majority finds themselves in a position of being exploited and oppressed, only able to struggle for sustenance with self-devised tactics. Therefore, such tactics are characterized by their flexibility and directness, without the need for complex technique; however, their informality in use of space also limits the achievable results. As de Certeau established (de Certeau 1984: 37), tactics are different from strategies in the sense that they lack a distinguishing locus, resulting in them being constantly in flux. The disadvantaged are thusly motivated to grasp opportunities and use all means of 'making do', creating temporary spaces for their own benefit by seeking out profitable gaps and loopholes within the rules laid down by those in power. Such cleverness in making do can be found in Hong Kong slang as '*gu waak*' (蠱惑, meaning mischievous), '*sik nou*' (食腦, meaning crafty), or '*zeng lek*' (精叻, meaning ingenious), or '*sing muk*' (醒目, meaning quick on their feet), etc., whereas de Certeau (de Certeau 1984: 29) used the expression 'sly as a fox and twice as quick', and described this type of tactics to be a form of trickery as noted by Clausewitz (Clausewitz 1955: 212-213 in de Certeau 1984: 29), which are applied as acts, instead of mere ideas. Tactics create spaces for surprise through action from within the regulations and manipulations of the powerful (de Certeau 1984: 37).

The use of spatial tactics as a form of trickery can be commonly observed in the city, where people in weaker positions are quite adept at creating profitable opportunities by pulling minor tricks. For example, the elderly often take advantage of shopping mall services by sitting in open areas without engaging in consumer activity. Some young people prefer staying in MacDonald's for activities like studying, game-play and napping, all of which are not supposed to happen in a restaurant. By making a minimal purchase (such as one beverage), they bargain for an entire day's use of restaurant space. Street hawkers understand this principle on a deep level. It is necessary for them to employ tactics on a daily basis to flexibly appropriate space owned by others; hawkers must find and occupy the most eye-catching display spots for their goods while at the same time be alert enough to avoid prosecution from the Hawker Control Team. As a result, they have developed spatial tactics that allow them to make a living from within the cracks of the city.

One of the ingenious spatial tactics devised by hawkers can be found in the designs of their own carts, as the extreme spatial limitations of *pai dong*s create a desire to expand outwards as much as possible. Keeping their wares in a mobile state can be very beneficial for hawkers, as they are able to temporarily move things forward or backward with considerable flexibility. As seen during the observations, for example, Mr. Chan's pushcart was designed in a modular manner, in which different parts could be conveniently installed and extended, as well as removed for easy storage within his stall. Cleverly modified pushcarts such as this are unique objects that can directly reflect, respond to, and solve spatial problems on the streets by breaking through the latter's limitations — the carts can be described as concrete products of hawkers' '*sik nou*' (食腦), '*zeng lek*' (精叻), or '*sing muk*' (醒目), in response to *pai dong*

space. Their designs provide a significant level of flexibility and coordination for both street space and hawkers' activity space.

Methodology

To facilitate a comprehensive understanding of Fa Yuen Street, the researcher conducted extensive field studies and interacted closely with the people involved. Multiple visits were made to Fa Yuen Street from 2012 to 2014, allowing observation of pedestrians/visitors, street hawkers and law enforcement officers, as well as an in-depth study of differences in the usage of stall space. The researcher also engaged in unobtrusive observation of the stalls' opening and closing processes, in order to gain insight into the spatial strategies hawkers have developed. This method enabled an understanding of the decision-making process involved in arranging goods according to size, type and stall feature. Through categorization and analysis of data from 233 individual hawker stalls on the street, the researcher presents their unique spatial characteristics and differences from each other. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 male and 4 female hawkers aged between mid-30's to 90. Topics explored in the interviews included personal experiences, how the interviewees became hawkers, Fa Yuen Street's history, spatial appropriation and tactics, changes in visitor types and consumption patterns, the reasons behind interviewees' selection of goods, as well as hawker policy and management.

Distribution of fixed-pitch stalls on Fa Yuen Street

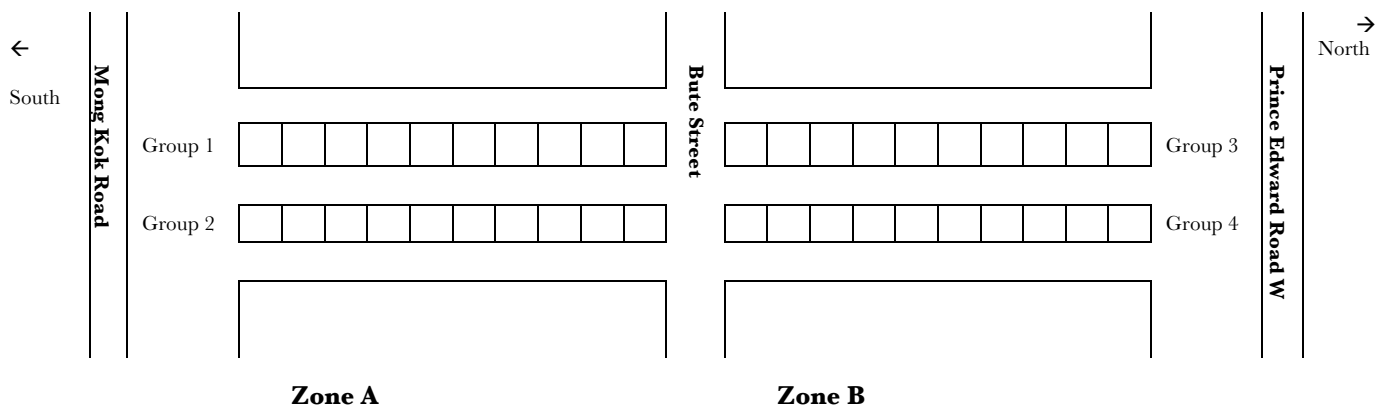


FIGURE 1: Distribution of fixed-pitched stalls on Fa Yuen Street

Fa Yuen Street in its totality is about 1,200 meters long, divided into south and north sections, intersecting with 13 streets². This study is focused on one particular segment of Fa Yuen Street that is home to 233 small fixed-pitch hawker stalls, also known as '*pai dong*s' (排檔). To understand Fa Yuen Street hawkers' usage of trading space, one could closely observe the types of goods sold and their distribution, which provides insight into the flexibility and power dynamics involved in the spatial tactics.

The researcher began the observation process first in Zone A (north of Mong Kok Road to Bute Street), and then moved on to Zone B (north of Bute Street to Prince Edward Road West). Zone A of Fa Yuen Street included 82 *pai dong*s distributed on both sides (see *fig. 1*), each 3 by 4 ft. in area. Each unit consisted of two stalls, with about 5 ft. space between them as passageway. In Zone A, most stalls sold middle-age women's clothing. The rest sold other daily necessities such as pajamas, underwear, purses and gym clothes. Zone B contained as many as 151 stalls, with 65 of them selling female-centric

² Including Boundary Street, Playing Field Road, Nullah Road, Bute Street, Fife Street, Argyle Street, Nelson Street, Shantung Street, Soy Street, Yin Chong Street and Dundas Street. This study is focused on the segment spanning from Mong Kok Road to Prince Edward Road West, as a concentration of 233 *pai dong*s were found in the range. The researcher refers to the segment as the Fa Yuen Street *pai dong* area, or the Fa Yuen Street Market.

products such as footwear and accessories. 28 stalls provided children's clothing, and 31 sold household goods. *Fig.2* shows a comprehensive summary of products sold in the studied area.

Zone A Categories	Group 1	Group 2	Total
Fashion (women)	7	11	18
Fruit/Juice	10	7	17
Fashion (children)	6	6	12
Unknown*	5	6	11
Household goods	4	5	9
Fashion (head/footwear)	3	0	3
Handbags (women)	1	2	3
Accessories (women)	1	1	2
Toys (children)	1	1	2
Bedding	2	0	2
Cell phone related	0	1	1
Fashion (men)	1	0	1
Backpacks (men)	1	0	1
	42	40	82

Zone B Categories	Group 3	Group 4	Total
Fashion (women)	15	17	32
Fashion (children)	11	17	28
Household goods	8	6	14
Handbags (women)	7	5	12
Unknown*	4	8	12
Fashion (men)	4	6	10
Accessories (women)	5	5	10
Fruit/Juice	6	2	8
Fashion (men/women)	4	3	7
Fashion (head/footwear)	1	3	4
Cell phone related	4	0	4
Backpacks (men)	3	1	4
Food	3	0	3
Curtains/fabrics	2	0	2
Toys (children)	0	1	1
	77	74	151

*Stall closed or under renovation on day of observation

FIGURE 2: Stall categories found in observed area

Six types of spatial usage in *pai dong*s

In Hong Kong, land is an extraordinarily valuable resource. According to data from Midland Holdings, as of October 2018, the average price per feet for Hong Kong's private properties is HK\$13,269 — 48.2% of the median monthly household income of HK\$27,500 (Census and Statistics Department 2018), which speaks to the extreme value of space in the city. Needless to say, the mere 3x4 ft. available in *pai dong* space is immensely precious to street hawkers.

This section focuses on analyzing the use of space within fixed-pitch hawker stalls (*pai dong*s), in other words, how hawkers, or stall owners, display goods with a spatial awareness directly connected to the categories of goods sold. Working with homogeneous 3 by 4 ft. stalls, owners are faced with the need to maximize display potential, as well as deal with a heightened risk of prosecution brought about by such expansion — or at times transgression — of space, both factors that had resulted in a variety of creative solutions involving spatial usage. The thinking behind such methods must be directly connected with the specific types of goods being sold; that is, hawkers have been observed to develop distinctive ways to organize stalls, according to the particular physical characteristics of their chosen products.

One notably popular type of product sold in *pai dong*s in recent years has been the smartphone case, which had entered youth culture as an essential accessory, and comes in myriads of shapes and styles. With the goal of showcasing a diverse selection of smartphone cases as effectively as possible, hawkers must take into consideration the physical features and sizes involved, which in turn inform specific spatial arrangements in the *pai dong*. As stalls adapt to their products, product characteristics eventually shape the appearances of stalls, at the same influencing the degree of aggressiveness with which hawking space is expanded. A casual observer could therefore easily note that the *pai dong*s selling smartphone cases differ spatially from those selling, say, fresh fruit. The former would make as much space out of exterior walls on both sides as possible, using the extended vertical surfaces to display phone cases; this ensures that each individual case is highly visible and tangible to customers. This type of *pai dong* also prefers an open layout, with which visitors are welcome to enter the stall and interact with items freely, creating a buzzing and visually inviting atmosphere. In the case of the fresh fruit stall, on the other hand, hawkers show an entirely different approach to considering space; a selection of fruit is displayed across the stall front to catch the eye of the passing pedestrian. The hawker sits in the middle of the stall, which allows a full view of the goods and easy interaction with customers from all sides. Details such as these, found

across the Fa Yuen Street *pai dong* layouts and documented extensively, offer an illuminating glimpse into the hawkers' use of spatial tactics or different forms of spatial transgressions.

The emergence of spatial transgression as 'tactics' reflect the fact that street hawkers are grassroots citizens with lean resources, who can only marginally expand their living and vending space in the restricted *pai dongs* by being 'sik nou' (食腦), 'zeng lek' (精叻), or 'sing muk' (醒目). Through grappling with public space every day in small ways, they make do between transgression and uncompromising regulation. Therefore, it can be said that hawkers consciously perform acts of resistance against the limitations of *pai dong* space, but they are restricted to applying 'zeng lek' (精叻) or 'sing muk' (醒目) tactics to secure spatial interests in a passive role. This is an opportunity of reflection for the commonly held belief that hawkers are helpless with regards to space and power. The studied examples of hawker spatial transgression suggest that hawkers have the ability of turning the tables on the system; though they lack deciding power and are in a weaker position regarding spatial rights, they are nevertheless able to procure more temporary power through spatial transgression and spatial tactics.

Data collected from the observation of 233 *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street suggests that spatial tactics used in *pai dongs* can generally be sorted into six main categories. Categories are determined by the popularity and repetitiveness of certain usage features, meaning that stalls selling a particular type of good tend to prefer particular arrangement methods. A few stalls here and there feature spaces organized differently from the six main categories; usually temporary sales outlets, these operate without much consideration for spatial efficiency. Moreover, there appears not to be clear boundaries between the six categories; some stalls might use a mix of one or two types of goods arrangement. It may be said that the meaning behind hawkers' use of different spatial tactics is constantly shifting based on interactions among people, objects and spaces. Below is an analysis of each of the six major types of spatial tactics observed in *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street.

1. U-shaped spatial tactic 馬蹄式

With items displayed on the front-facing three sides surrounding a stall, this type of spatial arrangement resembles a horseshoe (see *fig. 3*), and is favored by *pai dongs* connected in pairs, as the doubled space offers the much sought-after opportunity to expand into pedestrian area on both sides. On Fa Yuen Street, most double stalls are owned by fruitmongers, whose produce is placed facing pedestrians as much as possible. Display tables are constructed with varying levels of height, allowing stall owners to arrange a variety of fruit according to size and color range for increased visual impact. In terms of spatial management, the U-shaped layout facilitates convenient service, as the stall owner — seated in the center — can be simultaneously able to keep an eye on all products and serve multiple customers with minimum need for movement.

Such a layout is ingenious in its use of pedestrian passageway on both sides of the stall, which creates sales advantage; on the other hand, by expanding into public space, stall owners could be subject to fines and prosecution from the Hawker Control Team. Therefore spontaneous tactics are often deployed; by placing fruit on foldable and portable chairs or desks, owners could remove both product and display surface in an instant, thus avoiding any charges. The way in which the U-shaped *pai dong* is laid out not only facilitates three-sided expansion, but also provides the owner with the ability to flexibly retract displayed items.

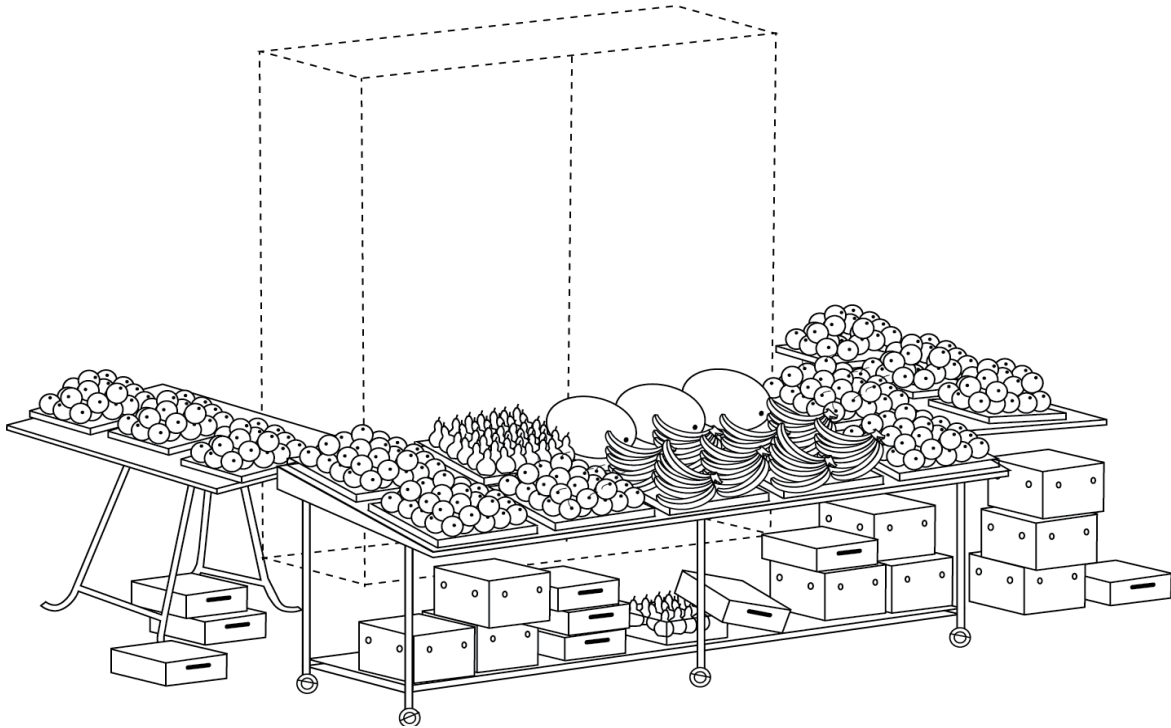


FIGURE 3: A U-shaped stall. The owner of a fruit stall makes use of space on three sides for a varied presentation.

2. Open-space spatial tactic 開放式

The word ‘open’ here alludes to the way in which a *pai dong* is accessible to customers from both ends, front and back (see *fig. 4*). This type of layout extends display area via clever use of exterior walls, and creates as many vertical surfaces as necessary to showcase smaller products such as phone accessories

and jewelry. The compact and diverse nature of these items calls for close inspection, a major reason as to why hawkers selling them tend to designate a relatively wide space within the stalls for customers to browse through, often keeping the front and back of the stalls clear. While this approach might appear counterintuitive, considering the need to maximize spatial resources, it allows each individual item a higher visibility and tangibility. An open *pai dong* with a passageway also sends an inviting signal that can both attract shoppers in the street and pedestrians further away. Furthermore, stall spaces filled with people often generate a cheerful, communal atmosphere positive for business.

The ingenuity of the open *pai dong* layout lies in its use of connective display frames, which are flat metal grid structures that can be attached to each other. Small items are conveniently adhered to such frames which, when connected, would form entire walls of merchandise — also creating temporarily expanded space for the hawkers to attract more customers. Remarkably versatile, these display frames can be extended out of *pai dong* boundaries in response to changing circumstances, or promptly taken down and put away when the street is being patrolled, thus avoiding any charges.

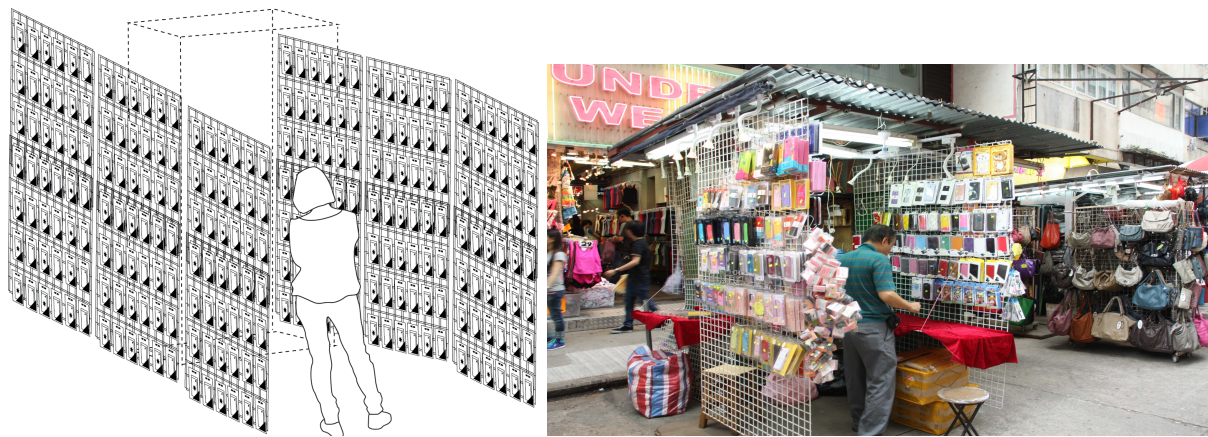


FIGURE 4: An open-space stall. The stall owner extends display space for phone accessories using original exterior walls and additional frames.

3. Full-packed spatial tactic 密集式

Contrasting greatly with the previous layout, this type of *pai dong* space may be described as fully packed, or saturated, with merchandise (see *fig. 5*). Stall owners put to use every inch available; by arranging items to be placed throughout the stall in every direction, they put an emphasis on showcasing as varied and numerous a range of products as possible. In some cases, even personal resting areas could be sacrificed in exchange for more display space — owners of these stalls often prefer to sit out front instead, or otherwise spend their time attending to customers. The items sold in full-packed *pai dong*s are typically diverse. Examples include miscellaneous home goods, jewelry and accessories, as well as children's toys, school bags and stationery.

Space within the full-packed *pai dong* is organized according to the owner's meticulous calculations. Filled to the brim with items both inside and out, these stalls are so efficient that their owners don't find it necessary to commit spatial 'transgression' as often as others might do; this may partly be explained by careful planning negating the need for expansion, but could also have to do with the fragile nature of certain products, such as tableware and glasses, for which static arrangements are desirable. As these items are heavier and less durable than other goods sold in *pai dong*s, there is a higher risk of damage when they are being moved on a regular basis. Also, the appropriate organization (or reorganization) of such numerous and varied products is in itself a time-consuming task, therefore owners of full-packed *pai dong*s tend not to make spatial changes for the most part. Whenever the Hawker Control Team patrols the street, these stall owners only need to move certain items slightly inward to comply with the boundaries. Compared to other spatial tactics, the full-packed *pai dong* could be described as relatively

conservative and safe, as it tends to maximize resources from within the assigned space instead of without.



FIGURE 5: A full-packed stall. Not an inch goes to waste when items are tightly placed on every side of the stall.

4. Half-filled spatial tactic 半密集式

The *pai dong* layout most prevalent on Fa Yuen Street features stall space filled up with items only at the top and the bottom, and could be considered as a sort of spatial compromise. As the majority of half-filled *pai dongs* appear to specialize in clothing (see *fig. 6*), it is possible that such a layout might have been influenced by the product-specific need to display entire garments, allowing a clear view of patterns and styles. Owners hang newly arrived fashion items at the top of the stall for immediate attention even from

a greater distance. Such positioning also helps differentiate their products from other stalls. Bottom spaces in half-filled stalls are usually reserved for one to three modified pushcarts, which had been altered to support display surfaces, and are quite popular among the community. Foldable and comprised of detachable parts, these personalized pushcarts lend great convenience to hawkers as they can be moved easily either to take up street area during operating hours, or to facilitate closing at a day's end.

Before Fa Yuen Street was affected by tragic fire accidents in 2010 and 2011³, local hawkers had been accustomed to leaving their pushcarts (along with goods) at the stall fronts after dark, for the sake of a quicker start in the mornings. The government prohibited this type of practice after the fires for safety reasons. In the same spirit, the Hawker Control Team added yellow guidelines in front of each *pai dong*, marking the furthest point a pushcart is allowed to reach. More often than not, such attempts at control are met with disregard and defiance; hawkers simply respond by withdrawing their already out-of-bounds pushcarts whenever the street is being patrolled. Such is a prime example of spatial tactics being wielded to create more and better opportunities in the hawkers' day-to-day hustle.



FIGURE 6: A half-filled stall. Items are arranged at the top and bottom of the stall. The majority of stalls in the area adopt this layout.

5. Scattered spatial tactic 分散式

The full-packed or half-filled *pai dongs* both involve a spatial arrangement largely focused inwards. An interesting contrast could be found in the scattered *pai dong*, in which groups of items are organized to face outwards from multiple directions (see fig. 7). Owners of this type of stall often choose to use an assemblage of standalone, mobile clothing racks to display garments. A common fixture in boutiques and department stores, these racks are also embraced by hawkers, though they are associated with certain inadequacies accentuated by the compact *pai dong* space — the fact, for instance, that clothes must overlap each other, rendering much of the patterns or styles obscured —, many hawkers find the racks helpful as they keep the setup organized and highly transportable. Each individual rack is equipped with wheels, which maximizes mobility and provides hawkers with a greater flexibility in their positioning of goods. More importantly, such racks are key to appropriating public street space. Through an ingenious application of spatial trickery, which involves simply moving or rotating the racks in different directions, the hawkers can create extended vending space as they see fit. Not only does the extra space appear more welcoming, racks could also be stretched outwards to take up a larger area when the number of customers goes up. As we have seen so far, faced with the limitations of a standard 3 by 4 ft. *pai dong* area, hawkers show no shortage of creative tactics devised to give themselves an edge in the scramble for more space, and consequently, more business. In such intensive competition for

³ In 2010 and 2011 respectively, *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street suffered a third-alarm and fourth-alarm fire, the combination of which caused 41 injuries and 9 deaths.

space, however, the scattered layout is particularly remarkable, as most of its display tools could be freely moved according to the hawkers' needs, resulting in an exceptionally adaptable *pai dong* that could also dodge prosecution with ease.



FIGURE 7: A scattered stall. Display space is expanded by the use of multiple clothing racks with wheels attached.

6. Partitioned spatial tactic 分割式

Some *pai dong* owners divide their stalls into different sections, which are then rented out to other users (mostly unlicensed hawkers or those holding assistant licenses). The researcher describes this phenomenon as '*tong dong*' (當檔, literally a sliced stall), or '*pai dong* subletting' (see *fig. 8*). Subletting is a commonplace occurrence on Fa Yuen Street, though most pedestrians would not be able to distinguish a divided *pai dong* from its regular counterpart. A tell-tale sign is when a stall appears to sell two different types of goods from the front end and the back end. A major reason behind the emergence of subletting is that as the older generation of hawkers age, some find themselves unable to continue running their businesses due to health issues, and are forced to abandon the stalls. At the same time, legally permitted hawking space has long been in great demand for a large number of unlicensed hawkers, who are often willing to 'co-own' stalls alongside the original owners by way of subletting. Such practice is an offence against Hawker Regulation laws, since each *pai dong* license can only be held by a single hawker in one stall. In order to deflect suspicion, stall owners and subletters (at the front and the back of a *pai dong*) would usually work with each other to create the illusion of a consistent business being run by one family, if only to keep up appearances before the Hawker Control Team.

The partitioned *pai dong* generally limits its spatial distinction to installing simple shelves in the back as the subletter's area. These compact spaces allow little more than small items to be sold; commonly found among them are accessories, cosmetics and watches. Well aware of the businesses' illegal nature, subletters are often particularly cautious about spatial usage, and seldom take up more space than that at the back of the standard stall. Every now and then a subletter might extend connective display frames out into the street in hopes to draw in more people, despite conceivable risk.

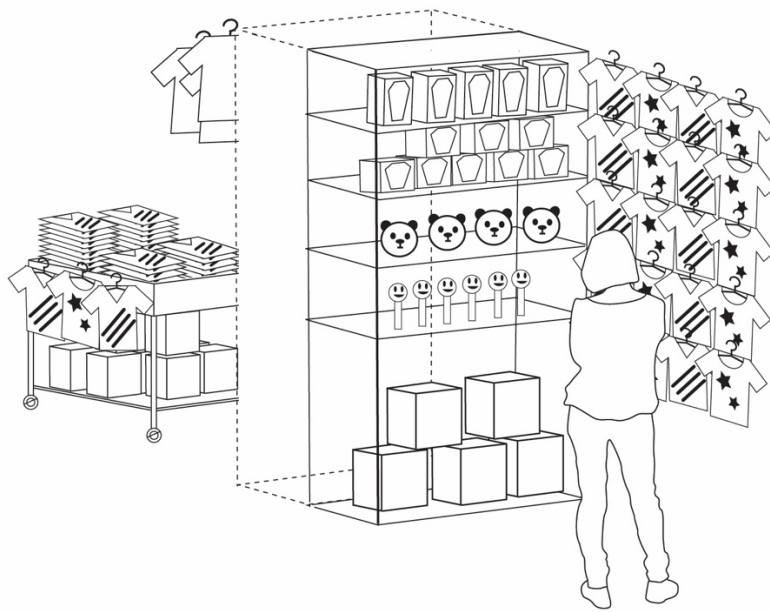


FIGURE 8: A partitioned stall. Stall space is shown partitioned into two smaller front and back stores. The former sells women's clothing, while the latter sells combs.

The use of tools as means for spatial extension

Through participatory observation in the daily operation of various *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street, the researcher discovered that hawkers are quite adept at using simple tools in the stalls as means for spatial extension. These range from small household gadgets to more elaborate, assembled sets of repurposed materials, and are indispensable assets in the hawkers' constant battle for more space. The tools are generally small and lightweight, and could be easily dismantled and stored. Made out of robust material capable of supporting heavy items, such tools can often be manually extended or compressed, sometimes even combined with one another. Each individual tool may serve multiple purposes in a *pai dong*, changing its function depending on the stall owner's shifting needs. The three main types of tools appropriated by hawkers for spatial extension are as following:

1) Hooks

A vast array of small, sturdy hooks can be found across all *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street, as their simplicity in function guarantees effective display for different kinds of merchandise. For instance, fruitmongers commonly use hooks to hang a collection of baskets in colorful arrangement; sellers of handbags are also known to hang their products in a neat line with hooks. Apart from it being an organizational tool aiding merchandise arrangement, hooks can come in quite handy for the expansion of usable stall space.



FIGURE 9: Easily removable. S-shaped hooks are most popular.



FIGURE 10: The combination of hooks and metal rings create distinct product categories (e.g. sizes).



FIGURE 11: Hooks can be paired with household laundry tools (with clips) as a display option.

2) Surface extensions

Another widely observed tool is the connective display frame, each a metal grid of about 1 by 1 ft.. Hawkers create entire 'walls' — or extra surface area — by overlaying and linking such frames together, either within or without the assigned stall space; small products could then be hung in the grids, forming tightly arranged, intensive displays. Such walls could even be enhanced with hooks to support larger items. Surface extension can additionally be achieved through the use of foldable chairs and desks, which provide hawkers with flexible (and temporary) display surfaces on the sidewalk.



FIGURE 12: A 'wall' created by connected display frames.



FIGURE 13: Additional surfaces created by foldable desks.



FIGURE 14: High wooden stools used as extra display surfaces.

3) Mobile equipment

Keeping extra display surfaces as mobile and portable as possible is a major concern for hawkers, who can only take up pedestrian space on a temporary basis, and must be able to swiftly retract extended items whenever necessary. Many stall owners therefore prefer metal carriers with wheels, which facilitate flexible spatial arrangement as they complement the standard *pai dong* area. The carriers have transformed noticeably over the years; in earlier times, hawkers used to modify readymade wooden pushcarts by adding detachable and extendable beams, which can support wider display surfaces (such as a piece of wooden board) on top of the carts. Nowadays, such carriers have become available with an increased array of options, offering materials that are not only lightweight, sturdy and easily dismantled, but also visually pleasing to customers.



FIGURE 15: A metal carrier with aesthetic decorations. Foldable carriers are especially popular.



FIGURE 16: A modified pushcart. Carriers can function both as storage units and display surfaces.



FIGURE 17: Movable tripod stands encourage customers to interact with the items, and allow stall owners to freely arrange display space.

As of 2017, the Fa Yuen Street Hawker Control Team regularly patrols the area three times per day at a minimum, and performs spot patrols at irregular intervals. Faced with strict limitations in storage and vending space, most hawkers have little choice but to place some of their merchandise out of bounds on the street, in order to bring in more revenue. As such expansions could result in legal consequences, hawkers have resourcefully come up with uses of various tools to facilitate the organization and extension of store items. Such tactics are a clear demonstration of how the weak or disadvantaged can generate opportunities and fight for their survival, within limited space and attempts at control by law enforcement.

Conclusion

Fa Yuen Street is but a run-of-the-mill street among the great many streets of Hong Kong, though its very ordinariness has preserved common qualities of streets in old local districts, and has its own representative meaning. Such human richness can only be the culmination of common life lived day to day. Fa Yuen Street has been a meeting place for hawkers and residents since the 1950's, providing the community with affordable basic essentials. The street has grown beyond its original function as a passageway, and become a point of contact for the people — it really is a small community on its own, in which people collect information and form meaningful neighborly connections.

This study aimed to understand, from various perspectives, the development and evolution of *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street, in view of changes in street ecology and spatial power dynamics. The observations showed that though powerful parties (e.g. developers) have the advantage of abundant building resources to change crowd flow, which they use to efficiently drive pedestrians, capital, and commodities to specific locations for maximal profit, they are not definitively triumphant. The top-down management policies of the powerful are often challenged by ingenious bottom-up tactics of the weak; the decades-long battle of wits between street hawkers and the Hawker Control Team is a clear example of this type of spatial conflict at work. Such constant strife concerning space and power happens every single day in the city; in the organic environment known as the streets, it is nonetheless undeniable that hawkers are key stakeholders who have much to offer to the healthy development of community and urban living.

The standardization of stalls and more recently tightened governmental regulations in hawking space have led to hawkers needing to devise tactics that could help them maximize revenue — sometimes via temporary appropriation of public space — and minimize any risk of being prosecuted due to spatial transgressions. Through detailed observation and analysis of 233 *pai dongs* on Fa Yuen Street, the researcher has found and illustrated six major types of spatial usage in the *pai dongs*, namely the U-shaped, open-space, full-packed, semi-filled, scattered and partitioned, each catering to specific needs relating to types of goods sold in the stalls. Through analyzing these forms of spatial usage, much insight can be gained regarding the everyday activities and living habits of different hawkers.

The analysis reveals that hawkers are highly aware of the relationship between their stalls and street space; the fact that they routinely open and close up their stalls every day has resulted in a need to utilize space as effectively as possible, in order for them to move around easily and maximize display potential. To procure an advantageous position in street commerce, hawkers reference and learn from each other's spatial tactics, and consciously design their stall spaces to showcase their different types of goods. Through observing and analyzing the opening and closing procedures of different *pai dongs*, the researcher has also found flexible and ingenious uses of tools devised by hawkers as means for effective spatial extension and organization, including for example hooks, extendable beams, connective display frames, and the essential pushcarts, all of which contribute to the hawkers' daily effort in making as much as possible out of their narrowly confined stalls.

All the bottom-up spatial tactics examined in the study point to the hawkers' resourcefulness in the face of domination by the government's top-down strategies. Despite being a disadvantaged group working in often sub-optimal environments, marginalized by policy, the hawkers can be described as spatial opportunists. They are able to proactively search for windows of profit through sensitive appropriation of space from within the bounds of strategy, and are aided by the very fleetingness and fluidity of their tactics.

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PRECARIOUS SPACES: VISUALISING UNOFFICIAL SACREDNESS

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ABSTRACT

“Official” religious space in Singapore is highly regulated – organisations of recognised religions compete and bid for parcels of land on which they create houses of worship. Against this bureaucratic backdrop are countless other “unofficial” places of worship - operating out of industrial units, social housing and liminal spaces. From vernacular shrines to living rooms, individuals engage in a constant appropriation and re-appropriation of both private and public spaces. Using visual case studies from Chinese religion, particularly spirit medium worship, I will show how individuals navigate a complex relationship with their everyday lives, state regulations and the needs of their Gods.

KEYWORDS

Chinese Religion, Visual Ethnography, Sacred Space, Place-making, Singapore

BIO

Terence Heng is a lecturer in Sociology at the University of Liverpool, where he is also an associate with the Centre for Architecture and the Visual Arts. He is the author of *Visual Methods in the Field: Photography for the Social Sciences* (Routledge 2016), and his work has been featured in *Area*, *The Sociological Review*, *Geographical Review* and *Cultural Geographies*. His research interests cover the intersection of Sociology, Cultural Geography and Creative Practice, and include sacred space, photography as a research method and the materiality of deathscapes. He is the winner of the inaugural International Visual Sociology Association’s Prosser Award for Outstanding Visual Methodologies, and the 2015 Sociological Review Prize for Outstanding Scholarship.

Note

Versions of this visual essay were presented as exhibitions at the 2017 International Sociological Association’s Sociology of Risk and Uncertainty Thematic Group GO4 Symposium and 2017 International Visual Methods Conference.

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Introduction



FIGURE 1: Hao's 1-Room Flat and the Altar of Five Treasures

I visited the Altar of Five Treasures in mid 2017, during the seasonal Hungry Ghost Festival. My contact, Mrs Sim, had arranged for me to visit, observe and document this spirit altar's celebrations and walkabout. Located in the West of Singapore, the Altar of Five Treasures was housed in a 1-room, or studio flat – a form of state-subsidised housing that tends to be leased, rather than sold to its occupants, who typically comprise individuals positioned low on the economic spectrum. As I gingerly stepped over the threshold, I was struck by the degree of sacred clutter appropriating mundane living spaces. The altar housing *kim sin* (statues of deities) was not a typical rosewood multi-tier affair, instead industrial shelves stood as proxy. In Figure 1, a thin curtain is all that separates the altar from a mattress, desk and television.

The occupant, Hao, is a cleaner by day and a *tang-ki* by night. Many *tang-ki* in Singapore also lead their own *sin tua* (spirit altar), a collective of 5-10 individuals who see the *tang-ki* as the cornerstone of their spiritual and religious life. As such, *Tang-ki* are spiritual leaders in Chinese Religion who enter into deep trances in the belief that their souls are replaced by deities, and in effect become a deity (Heng 2016) for taumaturgical purposes (DeBernardi 2012). Chinese Religion is a scholarly term used to denote the collective and myriad forms of religious practices originating from China. Although the term is not used by adherents, it is a common keyword amongst anthropologists and other social researchers (see DeBernardi 2012). In my own fieldwork site, Singapore, adherents refer to themselves as Taoists, reflecting the *Zhengyi* sect of Taoism (Adler 2007, Tan 2018), which combines Taoist principles with folk religion beliefs. Taoism and its various sects was the predominant religion amongst ethnic Chinese individuals in the 1960s (see Clammer 1983, 1991 and Chong and Hui 2013) but has since receded in favour of other faiths as well as rising secularism. However, this does not mean that the faith is gone, as can be seen from the elaborate rituals still carried out by adherents such as Hao.

This visual essay seeks to examine the everyday negotiations that individuals like Hao and others make in order to practice their faith whilst limited by regulations set by the state. It is not in the purview

of this essay to deal with the details and nuances of such negotiations, which I have analysed in other articles (Heng 2015, 2016). However, I will briefly summarise the current relationship between religion, space and the state so as to better contextualise my photographs. As others (Kong 1993, Woods 2018) have noted, physical space is highly regulated and planned by the state in Singapore, which through the use of a master plan has demarcated and denoted specific spaces for specific uses (commercial, residential, religious, etc). With religious space, organisations often have to bid through an auction process in order to acquire new parcels of land on which to build their structures. Each parcel of land is not just demarcated for religious purposes, but also for particular religions. Hence, religious groups would compete amongst themselves, and not other religions, for state-sanctioned, or “official” sacred space (Kong 1993).

Whilst regulating space is nothing new in urban planning, the degree to which the state exercises control over such purposes is significant, especially for the nature of groups like *sin tua*. As DeBernardi (2012) notes of *tang-ki* and *sin tua*, their organisational structures are often entrepreneurial – single individuals or pairs leading smaller, informal set-ups of a core group of members (7-10) as opposed to more formal and defined structures such as temples (more on this later). These groups often do not have the financial resources to compete in auction bids for land, and when they do, often create joint bids to form a ‘combined temple’ of three separate altars in one building.

Other *sin tua* make use of whatever space that they can, which is often either their own homes, or a unit in an industrial estate. When activities or rituals call for more individuals than their ‘regular’ spaces will handle, groups will temporarily appropriate space in ebbs and flows. Both regular and temporal appropriation carry risks. Residential spaces, especially state-subsidised housing (known colloquially as Housing Development Board or HDB flats) have multiple caveats for ownership and use. Old laws from the 1960s still apply as to *how* such spaces are used – and in this case commercial and religious activities are at best restricted and in some cases prohibited. Public spaces are similarly regulated, with processions, festivals and celebrations all requiring prior approval from relevant authorities.

There is thus no guarantee that *tang-ki* and their followers will always have permission to do what they want to do. Interviews with my informants have revealed how some *tang-ki* have had their HDB flats confiscated by the state because of complaints from neighbours over noise levels. Most take extra care not to create a disturbance, but the risk is always there. Similarly, risks abound in other spaces, whether environmental (as their processions on busy roads are largely informal), regulatory (permission from authorities in one year does not guarantee permission in the next) or even spiritual (the presence of ghosts or evil spirits are always around, meaning to do harm).

The photographs in this essay thus seek to visualise this precarity - whether that manifests itself in the environment, in relation to the state, through the social networks generated and disrupted, or with perceptions of the spiritual realm – that individuals encounter as they try to form and shape their own sacred spaces. Kong (1993) has noted that these are “unofficial” sacred spaces – those that are political in that they resist state classification, but such transience and lack of political recognition also comes with inherent instability (see Woods 2013). I have created these photographs over a period of 6 years, starting with a visual ethnography of cemeteries (Heng and Hui 2015), then moving on to the unofficial sacred spaces manifested in homes, offices, factory units, public areas, parks and along the street (Heng 2014, 2015, 2016). As I have discussed elsewhere (Heng 2016), my photographs are realist in style but attempt to provide additional ethnographic layers to observations made, while at the same time democratising the field for readers. Such democratisation occurs through weaving a narrative of (sometimes non-chronological) events that leaves open different pathways of interpretation. Doing this allows for a crafting of a visual essay through themes, rather than just ‘what there is to visualise’.

Spirituality and Industry

Prior to modernisation efforts in the 1960s and 70s, many practitioners of Chinese religion operated from three-storey shophouses, with Amoy Street in the Central Business District being a distinct concentration.

The Land Planning Act of 1960 forbade the use of industrial spaces for religious purposes until 2012, but this did not stop groups of individuals from appropriating such spaces. This vignette deals with the leftover spatial arrangements of hiddenness and unofficial sacredness.



FIGURE 2: In a flat-factory unit, sacredness is demarcated between public-facing and private-worship through storage cabinets. Gods remain hidden from public view, and known only to devotees.



FIGURE 3: In previous work (Heng 2016), I have noted how unofficial sacred spaces can work with Chinese Religion practitioners because when in a trance, the tang-ki's body acts as an anchor to temporal sacred space. In becoming a deity, the tang-ki also becomes the locus around which sacred space revolves.



FIGURE 4: *Sa Ya Pek*, or Third Uncle, appears from behind the wall to greet devotees as part of the Sin Tua's Hungry Ghost Festival celebrations. An enforcer of the underworld, *Sa Ya Pek* is said to have been deified for his filial devotion to his mother, for whom he cried himself to death for.

Spirits at Home

The home is a paradoxical place of precarity for *Tang-ki* – whilst many own their flats, they must also abide by the rules set out by the state, but conversely are compelled to serve and shelter their Gods, installing large altars in the living room (see also Kong and Tong 2006). As shown in Hao's flat in Figure 1, such devotion often leads to the objects themselves appropriating more mundane living space.



FIGURE 5: Many *Tang-ki* operate from their homes, and echo of the old spirit altars in shophouses. The next three photographs show a “pop-up” Sin Tua – one that only appears once a year for the extended family. Jeffrey inherited the mantle from his late mother, whose vestments still hang in the family home.



FIGURE 6: The extended family pay respects to the Jade Emperor, whose altar is temporarily located in the common corridor of these Housing Development Board (HDB) flats.



FIGURE 7: Like many *Tang-ki*, Jeffrey had little say in serving his Gods. Once chosen, many mediums say they are compelled to serve by setting up a spirit altar, sometimes after many years of resistance and failed secular ventures. Permitted or otherwise in social housing, their Gods require a home.

Spiritual Risks

Chinese Religion devotees do not simply deal with risk in the physical and legal world, but also with the spiritual realm. To exist in this world is to exist in a fluid space between physical and spiritual – man, God and ghost. There are always spirits around, some benign, others meaning to do one harm. Chinese Religion rituals are thus not just about piety or prosperity, but also about gaining protection and appeasing the unseen.



FIGURE 8: Taoist priests on East Coast Parkway beach summon souls lost at sea to preach to during the Hungry Ghost Festival.



FIGURE 9: Devotees on a pitch-black beach prepare to walk towards the sea to invite souls in, also during the Hungry Ghost Festival. Without their *Tang-ki* as *Di Ya Pek* (or Second Uncle, another netherworld deity), the beach is dangerous, rife with spirits meaning to do one harm.



FIGURE 10: Individuals performing spiritual charity for souls in Bukit Brown Cemetery. Despite the cemetery being seen as a spiritually unclean area, it is also a site for reverence and filial piety. Individuals and groups see it as their duty to engage in this kind of spiritual risk by visiting such sites to make offerings.

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REPURPOSING LIVERPOOL'S WATERFRONT AS A LIMINAL 'MILITARY LANDSCAPE': A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

This photo essay documents via analytic autoethnographic observations the experience of being a 'show-goer' at a public civil-military event in the UK. Hosted by the city of Liverpool during 2017, Armed Forces Day witnessed transient civic-spaces across the city's waterfront be transformed into what is defined here as a 'liminal military landscape'. Following established research within human geography studying British military airshows, this photo essay makes use of visual methods and fieldnotes as forms of data collection and analysis. Used in concert to provide analytic autoethnographic observations, these methods help articulate Armed Forces Day as a nuanced experience that served more purposes than generating military recruitment. Instead, it is suggested that this civil-military event repurposed the civic space of Liverpool's waterfront to promote 'liberal militarism' as a cultural product, through which the military promoted its own imagined heteronormative institutional identity to the public via various recruitment activities, objects and props.

KEYWORDS

Critical military studies, analytic autoethnography, military landscapes, Armed Forces Day

BIO

Ross McGarry is Senior Lecturer within the Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at the University of Liverpool. His research interests are situated in the field of critical military studies, working at intersections of sociology, criminology and ethnographic and visual methods. These interests are critical of the experience of military institutionalisation and the harmful presence of militarism within civic life and upon civilian landscapes. His research is invested in exploring the harms caused by military institutions, contexts and personnel without being constrained by the research imperatives, funding or directives of the defence establishment, its institutions or its governing bodies.

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Armed Forces Day 2017: "No politics needed"?

Armed Forces Day is a national public event in the United Kingdom. Formerly established as Veterans' Day during 2006, Armed Forces Day has taken place annually since June 2009 within various locations across the country with the stated purpose of being "the lead action-oriented day to honour and celebrate the work of the Armed Forces" (Armed Forces Day, 2016: 5). During 2017, the flagship event for Armed Forces Day was hosted by the city of Liverpool (Culture Liverpool, 2017) with the intention to "take over the city centre and waterfront, and be a huge celebration of the work of the Armed Forces and their families" (Armed Forces Day, 2017, online). The specified 'take over' of such locations is indicated by the map in Fig. 1.1 using hand-drawn shading to demarcate civic spaces repurposed as 'securitised' (blue), 'militarised' (green) and 'prohibited' (black). As the main concerns of this essay, the mass presence of former and current military personnel - plus their accoutrement, equipment and vehicles - within the two latter of these spaces temporarily transformed the civic identity of select localities across Liverpool's waterfront (and city centre) during the 24th and 25th June 2017. On the first day of this event (24th June 2017) Liverpool Mayor Joe Anderson (2017) proclaimed on social media that there were "No Politics needed on this important day." This statement received mixed rebuttals from the public ranging from ardent support for British 'troops' to a misunderstanding of the

‘celebratory’ intentions of the event with those practiced annually in the UK as ‘remembrance’ to commemorate the Armistice. Much political protest was also directed at the presence of a Conservative British Prime Minister (Teresa May) attending Armed Forces Day in a city well known for its opposition to the Tory Party and its politics. However, what was foregrounded during Armed Forces Day 2017 yet evaded such levels of public scrutiny were the perpetuation of “liberal beliefs in freedom, and in certain modes of political economy that are assumed to deliver it, [that] have normalized the maintenance of military power and its expansionist, interventionist uses” (Basham, 2018: 33, my insert). Understood in these terms, on a day where the ‘political’ was proclaimed unnecessary the (geo)politics of ‘liberal militarism’ were set to be perpetuated, performed and consumed as cultural products during Armed Forces Day 2017 within the civic spaces across Liverpool’s waterfront.

Liverpool’s waterfront: a liminal ‘military landscape’



FIGURE 1.1: Artefact/keepsake/‘sinew’: photocopied and annotated map illustration of Armed Forces Day 2017 detailing Liverpool’s waterfront.

Guided by the hand annotated map illustration of Liverpool’s waterfront in Fig. 1.1, this photographic essay documents my experience to “emulate the show-goer” (Rech and Williams, 2016: 279) at this one-off public event by visualising the transformation of Liverpool’s waterfront as a liminal, rather than permanent or lasting, ‘military landscape’ (qua Woodward, 2000). This is evidenced in the photographs I present by many objects, props and activities which temporarily fixed and situated the British military’s imagined identity of itself (qua Basham, 2013) within a popular civic space and tourist hotspot in Liverpool. My focus in this photographic essay is not on the activities and events of the day specifically, but instead the ‘transient elements’ (Heng, forthcoming) along Liverpool’s waterfront,

occupied by three branches of the British Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Royal Air Force) to communicate and reproduce military economies, identities and materialities with and to different publics. Taking the view of Basham (2018: 33), as we will come to learn through a reading of the perceptual fields captured within these photographs, “[t]he facilitation of liberal militarism – that is, the commitment by liberal democratic states and societies to maintain and use military force – is therefore necessarily diffuse”.

Making analytic autoethnographic observations of securitised and (de)militarised spaces

The photographs presented here were gathered via ‘analytic autoethnographic’ observations (Anderson, 2006) undertaken one day prior to Armed Forces Day 2017, and during the subsequent two days of its main events and activities. These observations were comprised of and informed by my own ‘opportunistic’ biography (Anderson, 2006) as a former member of the British military, now sociologist and resident of Liverpool. Used in concert with fieldnotes (presented throughout as photographic captions), the collection of this visual data observed IVSA ethical principles whereby “confidentiality is not required with respect to observations in public places, activities conducted in public, or other settings where no rules of privacy are provided by law or custom” (Papademas and IVSA, 2009: 254).

Whilst walking the parade route partially seen in Fig. 1.1 (depicted by a dotted line running from James Street to Princes Dock), I became “explicitly visible” (Atkinson, 2015: 162) within the fieldwork. Taken the day prior to Armed Forces Day, within Fig. 1.2 I observe a personal (de)militarised space which dually articulates the disembodiment of my previous military identity, and serves as recognition of my ‘analytic autoethnographic’ positionality within the fieldwork that followed (including the photographs taken and fieldnotes produced).



FIGURE 1.2: Derby Square, 23rd June 2017

“I notice that in the building opposite the monument is where I had initially signed up to join the military in 1999. This is no longer an AFCO (Armed Forces Careers Office) ... [t]he AFCO is no longer there, and so it is that a military identity is no longer with me” (Fieldnotes, 23rd June 2017).

Stood nearby Derby Square during the following day, the presence of the ‘military veterans’ visible in Fig. 1.3, and other current and ex-military personnel ‘on parade’ during Armed Forces Day’s opening sequence of events, served to establish and perform the military’s imagination of its own hegemonic masculine identity (qua Basham 2013) across Liverpool’s waterfront. Surrounded by those with whom I shared a common experience of military institutionalisation I became aware of my own “stake in the

beliefs, values, and actions of other setting members” (Anderson, 2006: 383) who were in attendance. None of the (liberal) militarised identities, rituals, symbolism, accoutrement or activities being presented, engaged in, and performed within Fig. 1.3 and throughout the subsequent days’ events held any personal resonance.



FIGURE 1.3: Castle Street, 24th June 2017

“... a tall, well-built man bumped into me without noticing. He was wearing black civilian clothing ... As he made contact with me, the feeling was familiar, ‘that’s a pistol’ I thought to myself ... [t]his man appeared to be a plain clothes officer of some description, indicating to me that – coupled with the visible police presence here – there are layers of security at work to which the public are completely unaware of” (Fieldnotes, 24th June 2017).

Seeing these transient civic spaces in this way framed my analytic positioning during the events that followed. They also help orientate the geography of where Armed Forces Day 2017 primarily took place (Fig. 1.1) and through which the following photographs can be situated and understood. Making use of photography, visual methods, and fieldnotes as forms of data collection and analysis (Rose, 2016; Heng, 2016; 2017), this study followed established approaches from research at British military Airshows (see Rech, 2015) to “think about how representation as a set of practices helps us understand the spatialities of militarism” (Rech et al, 2015: 53). Such spatialities were found across Liverpool’s waterfront within three ‘military villages’: Army, RAF and Navy. Exploring these militarised spaces via analytic autoethnographic observation (Anderson, 2006) the construction, communication and reproduction of military economies, identities and materialities were found in abundance.

Military economies and disembodied harm

It has been previously suggested by Danilova (2015: 92) that “ethnographic observation of Armed Forces Day in Nottingham in 2010” evidenced a twofold purpose of the event: first as a general military recruitment initiative, and second as a vehicle to raise awareness of, and generate fundraising for, military veteran charities. Both purposes were consistent during Armed Forces Day 2017. Indeed, following Basham (2016: 261), the recruitment initiatives to which Danilova (2015) referred served to

“normalize the military and its violence in everyday life” by sharing military values, objects and technologies as a “social good”, orchestrated via staged military recruitment activities, objects and props.



FIGURE 1.4: RAF village, 24th June 2017

“what is clearly evident is that Armed Forces Day is used as a modality for military recruitment of all ages ... I overheard in passing many military personnel discussing matters of joining the military with young people ... this was most noticeable in the RAF village, but had a clear presence throughout the events” (Fieldnotes, 24th June 2017).

As Fig. 1.4 depicts, the promotion of ‘liberal militarism’ was an overt and evident feature throughout each military village across Liverpool’s waterfront, embodied via recruitment activities through the use of military vehicles, technologies and equipment. Similar to the civic space formerly occupied by an Armed Forces recruiting office in Fig. 1.2, these recruitment activities are distinct from the ‘economic military geographies’ observed by Woodward (2000). Instead, stationing recruitment activities and props in each ‘village’ along Liverpool’s waterfront contributed to transforming this civic space into a liminal ‘military landscape’ during Armed Forces Day (see also Fig. 1.6 and 1.7); offering Woodward’s (2000) ‘economic military geographies’ some conceptual reconfiguration so they no longer rely solely on the permanence of military installations or settlements.



FIGURE 1.5: Canada Boulevard, 24th June 2017

“... [a]ll of these stalls, in one way or another, coveted the realities and consequences of military service ... No children and parents seem to be queuing up to speak to those attending to these stalls, despite these being of critical importance to more completely understanding the potential consequences of joining the military” (Fieldnotes, 24th June 2017).

Juxtaposed with these ongoing military recruitment activities, the pervasive consequences of successful military economies were found at Canada Boulevard; a transient space connecting military villages across Liverpool’s waterfront. Situated opposite mobile bars and food outlets, an assemblage of military veteran charities - as also observed by Danilova (2015) - can be seen in the blue and white tented stalls depicted in Fig. 1.5. Throughout this transient space, the social and structural consequences caused by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) successfully ‘raising an army’ of working-class boys and men, and girls and women, became sharply evident (qua Basham, 2016). This transient space is where the disembodied corporeality of military harm could be found, harm caused as a direct result of military service. However, the offerings from these stalls of information leaflets and brochures to address military induced harms were more banal and less appealing to the publics passing by. These stalls were without the allure of any recruitment props - such as weapon systems - which were key attractions throughout each military village.

Women at ‘play’, men at ‘work’: identity politics and ‘transient aesthetic markers’

As Woodward (200) points out, ‘military landscapes’ such as those hosting military bases and training areas give affordance to the construction of masculine military identities via either the industrialism or rurality of space. But, as noted, such landscapes are usually dependent upon the geographic fixity of military objects and installations. The urban landscape of Armed Forces Day 2017 removed these strictures to reproduce the imagined normative identity of the military (qua Basham, 2013) throughout liminal civic spaces. This was not only promoted and promulgated via the recruitment practices and activities that were taking place each day (Fig. 1.4 and Fig. 1.5), but facilitated further by gendered props and scripts depicting feminine and masculine caricatures.



FIGURE 1.6: Army village, 24th June 2017

“... there was an overriding gendered emphasis to Armed Forces Day, manifest in the paternal, masculine and heteronormative identity of the military institution, none of which was attempted to be diversified when interacting with the public” (Fieldnotes, 25th June 2017).

The perceptual narrative of a feminine script being constructed in the female mannequins in Fig. 1.6 for example are achieved via dashes of eye colour, ill-fitting webbing, combat uniform and civilian-like clothing, and the adornment of Union Flags and sports equipment instead of weapons. The various representations of women soldiers in this image depict the other passive and maternal ‘uses’ that women’s bodies are imagined possessing as relational non-combative subjects at ‘play’ in the military, performed dually as pacified *and* civilianised actors with lower status to those of male soldiers (Basham, 2013). The male mannequin in Fig. 1.7, adorned with netted combat helmet and tightly packed parachute regalia, situated next to a weapon system, camouflage netting, and male soldiers provides a different perceptual narrative for the masculine script of soldiering as ‘men’s work’ (Basham, 2013). This equating of “the military to the masculine in such a way as to render that relationship natural” and ‘naturalised’ (Woodward and Winter 2007: 103) contrasts with the feminised scripting of the female soldier in Fig. 1.6.



FIGURE 1.7: Army village, 24th June 2017

“These observations act as a visual reminder of the particular ‘whiteness’ of the British Armed Forces, an identity which Basham (2013) has noted as being prioritised and prevailing; leaving other racial, ethnic and religious identities subjugated, ‘tolerated’ but not embraced within its paternal logic” (Fieldnotes, 25th June 2017).

Through making such observations related to gender it became apparent that the myriad objects on display within the liminal space of each military village dually served to “perform an individual’s or collective’s ethnic identities” (Heng, 2015: 60). As depicted in Fig. 1.3, Fig. 1.6 and Fig. 1.7, it can be observed that throughout each ‘village’ during Armed Forces Day 2017 the military had successfully reproduced its own imagined monocultural, Caucasian and Imperialistic identity (Basham, 2013); achieved via various ‘transient aesthetic markers’ such as military standards, insignias, uniforms, military equipment and clothing (Heng, 2015). In addition to such symbolism and further representational indicators relating to class, paternalism, heteronormativity and masculinity on display as markers of the normative identity of the British military, there was also a distinct lack of diversity with regards to ‘race’, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and disability throughout Armed Forces Day 2017. And so, despite the recent British Army recruiting campaign ‘This is Belonging’ championing a more diverse identity of its soldiers (see Karmarama, 2018), it became noticeable throughout Armed Forces Day 2017 that there was a lack of any sustained attempt by the military (more broadly defined) to observe and promote the intersectional identities of its personnel via their recruitment activities.

‘Sinews’, anchoring and prohibited space

As found at British military Airshows, there were numerous ‘sinews’ (Rech and Williams, 2016) which attempted to connect members of the public to this imagined military identity during Armed Forces Day 2017. Some of which included take-away material artefacts such as maps and Union flags that were intended to be acquired and taken away from the liminal ‘military landscape’ established across Liverpool’s waterfront (Fig. 1.1, Fig. 1.6). Similar to objects found to be distributed at British military Airshows, these take-away artefacts allow show-goers to retain the depoliticised narratives of liberal militarism as keepsakes or mementoes, and remain connected to the values and scripts of a heteronormative military identity within their own private spaces (Rech and Williams, 2016). Other

'sinews' that also made these connections via touch and feel, and were by far the most attractive to show-goers, included the encouraged material and sensory interaction with military weapon systems.



FIGURE 1.8: Army village, 24th June 2017

"The public seemed to be fully engaged in the materiality of military weapons and vehicles during both days, seemingly unaware or unknowing of the rarity and peculiarity of such violent weaponry being out of place in civic space" (Fieldnotes, 24th June 2017).

As depicted in Fig. 1.8, the most pronounced interface with such objects throughout each military village was via the handling of rifles and other hand-held weapons. Serving as 'material anchors' (Heng, 2014) to signify how the military operates in its everyday practices (i.e. with logicity, functionality, discipline and repetition), these were objects not intended to be retained as personal mementoes. They were to be returned as military property and their material form constrained and held in place at recruitment stalls throughout the liminal 'military landscape' of Armed Forces Day 2017 (Fig. 1.8). Such exchanges as seen in Fig. 1.8 encouraged touch, feel, and interaction (i.e. arming and firing) with material artefacts that are unfamiliar in civic spaces; engagements which drew intrigue and surprise at the weight and feel of handling these regular military objects with unacquainted civilian hands. These objects were for interaction with, but not removal by, the publics encouraged to engage with them and the 'sinews' they intended to create were deliberately temporal rather than artefactual. But not all weapon systems were present for the purposes of material and human interface. Having boarded the HMS Iron Duke docked in the River Mersey (Fig. 1.1, Fig. 1.9), I found myself moving from the liminal 'military landscape' co-opting Liverpool's civic space, into a highly-constricted working military installation. Both these militarised and prohibited spaces were contiguous settings serving the activities espousing liberal militarism during Armed Forces Day 2017. However, it is here that the liminal 'military landscape' of Liverpool's waterfront came to an end. The HMS Iron Duke was instead a prohibited MoD space literally - rather than 'materially' - anchored in the River Mersey, overlooking Liverpool's civic waterfront as a steely military sentinel.



FIGURE 1.9: HMS Iron Duke, 25th June 2017

“My movement has been restricted by entering MoD property and thereby being subject to a different set of rules and practices, indicated by the search of my bag, threat notification and armed sentries patrolling with loaded weapons; these weapons were, however, not for the public to interact with or be entertained by” (Fieldnotes, 25th June 2017).

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COMMEMORATING THE SANTA CRUZ MASSACRE IN DILI, TIMOR-LESTE

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ABSTRACT

This photo-essay is a tale of the commemorations of the Santa Cruz massacre in Dili, the national capital of Timor-Leste. By documenting the symbolic side of this city, this short essay sheds light on this public holiday as a national ritual and, at the same time, highlights the role of the major actors involved. In particular, the commemorations of this massacre hold a special meaning for the recognition of the role played by clandestine youth groups to the struggle for independence – a contribution still partly neglected in the post-independence nation-building process.

KEYWORDS

Santa Cruz Massacre, 12 November, National Youth Holiday, Urban Symbolism, Dili, East Timor

BIO

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Dili, 12 November 1991

Almost twenty years after the occupation of Portuguese Timor by Indonesia, this eastern part of Timor island was still characterized by a violent conflict between pro-independence resistance and the Indonesian Army. On the day now remembered as Santa Cruz massacre thousands of people congregated at the Church de Santo António de Motaél in order to attend a memorial service for Sebastião Gomes, a young activist killed by the army just in front of the church on 28 October 1991. The crowd, then, followed a procession – and peaceful demonstration – towards Santa Cruz Cemetery for the burial ceremony. It was in this graveyard that the Indonesian troops opened fire and killed more than two hundred people; others were missing in the same number, and hundreds were arrested in the aftermath (see CAVR 2005). The massacre was witnessed by foreign journalists. The footage smuggled into Australia by British journalist Max Stahl, in particular, brought this event to world attention.

This “Bloody Tuesday” is today considered a turning point in the struggle for independence. Through global visibility, the images generated solidarity campaigns worldwide and the direct diplomatic involvement of other countries – a long process that led to the end of the Indonesian occupation and the *United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor* (UNTAET) in 1999, until the de-facto independence in 2002. This short visually grounded ethnographic essay revisits the annual commemorations of this massacre as a public holiday – and nation-building ritual – shaping urban space in Dili. This “imagetext” (as it would be called by William J. T. Mitchell 1994) is based upon data collected for a broader project on the use of urban symbols to strengthen social cohesion (see Nas and De Giosa 2011) in the two major cities of the island of Timor, namely Kupang (in the western part, which belongs to Indonesia) and Dili (national capital of East Timor, or Timor-Leste). I have carried

out an ethnographic fieldwork in these two cities between August 2010 and January 2011. Thus the commemorations of the Santa Cruz massacre, that I am going to present here, were held on 12 November 2010. These commemorations are particularly important for the recognition of the role played by young clandestine activists in the struggle for liberation. In this photo-essay I offer a lens to explore the major symbols and visual expressions of this solemn act of remembrance, and to make sense of the main actors involved.

A Background: The Remnants of a Turbulent Past

Although the Portuguese had been in the region since the sixteenth century, they established the colony of Portuguese Timor only in 1702. Dili became its capital in 1769, for long time nothing more than a forgotten colonial settlement at the periphery of the Portuguese empire. Following the Portuguese Carnation Revolution, FRETILIN (the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) declared independence in 1975. Fearing the raise of a communist state, the Indonesian Army invaded East Timor under the auspices of anti-communist countries. Resistance to the Indonesian occupation was reorganized through the years into three main wings: the armed front FALINTIL (the Armed Forces for the Liberation of East Timor), the diaspora from abroad forming a diplomatic front, and the youth civilian clandestine groups. Dili has gone, since then, through a turbulent history of conflict and destruction between pro-independence organizations and pro-integration forces, especially the pro-Indonesia militias and youth gangs allied with the army.

Paradoxically, the Indonesian administration under President Suharto employed the kind of politics of the so-called “gifts”. While, on the one hand, Jakarta was fighting the resistance movement, on the other hand it engaged into a process for the development of Dili through pro-integration campaigns through the construction of infrastructures and monuments such as, for example, the Integration Statue – a Timorese warrior in traditional dress breaking the chains of colonialism, implicitly the Portuguese colonization. Catholic structures figure among the most acclaimed “gifts” of Suharto such as for example the *Cristo Rei* and the Cathedral built in the eighties, supposed to be the biggest Roman Catholic church in Southeast Asia. However, as we will see, the relationship between Jakarta and the East Timorese Catholic Church was a difficult one. Today East Timorese are proud of these Catholic symbols, although they still remember the Indonesian occupation, I was told by Mr. Francisco (the custodian of Dili’s Cathedral).

When in 1999, under the pressure of the international community, Indonesia allowed a referendum offering a choice between an autonomy plan or independence, the majority of East Timorese voted for the second option. Although the referendum was carried out under the control of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), through a series of systematic attacks the Indonesian Army and pro-integration paramilitary groups razed a great number of buildings in the country (with Dili as main target) – actually a planned scorched-earth strategy to destroy anything useful for the enemy, and symbolically to take back the so-called Indonesian “gifts”. It emerged then, from the ashes of Dili, a townscape of “difficult memories” (Leach 2009) made of places of imprisonment and torture such as the jail Comarca Balide.

Since the independence the so-called “Generation of ’75” who grew up during the Portuguese era, and that proclaimed independence in 1975, has gained the most powerful positions in the new independent nation: mostly people connected to the first two wings of the resistance mentioned above such as Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão (former first commander of FALINTIL), José Manuel Ramos-Horta (long-term exiled spokesman of the resistance), or Mari Alkatiri (one of the founders of, and still serving, FRETILIN). Thus it is not unsurprising that in the reconstruction and nation-building process they have privileged a sort of “Luso-Timorese” heritage as a re-imagination of a new nation-state with a special connection to the Portuguese past. After declaring Portuguese national language (an idiom spoken by a minority in the country by then), they have focused the initial efforts of symbolic reconstruction on the remnants of the Portuguese monuments and buildings (see Prista 2006).



FIGURE 1: *Cristo Rei*. Standing on a globe on the top of a hill in Fatucama Cape (six kilometers from downtown Dili), the statue is 27 meters high in line with the Indonesian nationalist symbolism, as East Timor (*Timor Timur* in Indonesian language) was the 27th Province of the Republic. Built five years after the massacre, it was a Suharto's "gift" for the twentieth anniversary of the integration. Ironically, this monument was inaugurated four days after the East Timorese Ramos-Horta and Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo have been awarded with the Nobel Peace Prize. Attending the unveiling of the statue together with Suharto, Bishop Belo expressed his perplexity with these words: "What's the point of building a statue of Jesus if the people are not going to be treated according to the gospel? It would be better to improve the situation rather than build statues" (cited in Gunn, 2000: 233).

When I arrived in Dili in late 2010 the national capital of this young country was still a "wounded city" (see Susser and Schneider 2003) facing the challenges of reconstruction, in terms of built

environment, infrastructures, as well as public life and security. In its first decade as capital of a sovereign country, Dili still suffered from more recent civil unrest and insecurity that unveiled further challenges on the way to a fully pacified country. Several outbreaks of violence and factional fighting (involving the military, police force, and street gangs) resulted in the 2006 crisis and the attempted assassinations of the then President of the Republic Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão in 2008. The United Nations peacekeeping mission left the country only in 2012. Amidst the ruins of Indonesian destruction and the regeneration of Portuguese heritage, several murals were calling for peace and unity.



FIGURE 2: A mural with doves of peace saying: *Mai ita ba Sidade Dili*. It literally means “Let us go to Dili City” in Tetum, the language that has been declared as official language together with Portuguese after independence.



FIGURE 3: A mural reading “peace” (*dame*) at Dili’s municipal stadium. On the one hand, the nationalist narrative of the officialdom emphasizes the five centuries of “struggle” (*fumi*) against foreign oppression, and public discourses on the past revolves around the experience of “suffering” (*terus*) (see Adams 2019; Gunn 1999; da Silva 2008). On the other hand, street art after independence forwards a message – and hope – for a new era of peace.

Remembering on 12 Novembru

The month of November holds a special meaning for the relationship between the dead and the living. In Timor-Leste the night between 1 and 2 November (the All Saints Day and All Souls Day respectively) is emotionally celebrated by people as opening of the “Day of the Souls of the Dead”, *Loron Matebian* or *Finadu*. At night thousands of candles light up the darkness of Dili’s streets. Families gather together at midnight in order to pray and remember the souls of deceased relatives. At midnight the ancestors are supposed to come to their relatives’ table. After prayers everybody can enjoy food, ancestors included. If this day symbolically connects the worlds of the living and the dead, the commemorations held on 12 November (*Selebrasaun Loron 12 Novembru*) connects the freedom’s martyrs to the East Timorese future generations.

The memory of 12 *Novembru* is especially important for a group of resistance victims and survivors, those filling the numerous groups making up the youth and civilian resistance front who played a major role in demonstrations such as the one held on 12 November 1991: RENETIL (the National Resistance of Students of East Timor), OJECTIL (the Organisation of Catholic East Timorese Youth and Students) which became later on OJETIL (the Organisation of East Timorese Youth and Students), OPJLATIL (the Popular Organisation of Timorese Youth Lorikeet Warriors), and FITUN (the Always United Front of Timor), just to mention a few. Given the dominant position of the old generation and the veterans in the leadership of the country, the so-called *Geração Foun* (the new generation) – who grew up during the Indonesian occupation, and with no fluency in Portuguese – has been neglected in the official nationalist narrative for years after independence. While the role of selected veterans and resistance leaders connected to FALINTIL has been glorified through official memorialization and selective pension schemes, the role of youth civil society groups has been overlooked (see Arthur 2019; Leach 2017). In 2011 indeed, when “the twentieth anniversary of the Santa Cruz demonstration approached, the secretary of state for veterans’ affairs explained the 1991 organisers could only count their involvement as one day of service” (International Crisis Group 2011: 8).

It is in this context, that former members of the youth resistance groups and relatives of victims of the Santa Cruz massacre have pushed the government to a fair recognition of those who have fallen in the struggle for liberation, although not officially part of major forces such as FALINTIL or FRETILIN. After independence a special committee for 12 November, Komite 12 Novembru, has been established by some of the survivors, including its chairman Gregorio Saldanha – who was among former OJETIL activists who organized the demonstration of 1991, himself shot and detained after the aftermath. Komite 12 Novembru is especially active in lobbying for a full recognition of the youth clandestine resistance contribution to independence by turning the Santa Cruz Cemetery into a memorial site. It also continues to urge the Indonesian and East Timorese governments to search for mass graves used after the massacre in order to give to the victims a proper burial.

The government of Timor-Leste has gradually moved towards the recognition of this important youth resistance. In fact, since 2005 the 12 November anniversary is a public holiday, the National Youth Day (*Loron Nasional Juventude*). The commemorations of November 2010 are significant in this context. In fact, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão finally announced the prize to the best design for the project of a monument in memory of the Santa Cruz massacre. Yet, the construction of a monument commemorating the massacre in 2012 did not solve the friction between the Komite 12 Novembru and the government. The latter, in fact, built a memorial – reproducing a young man helping his injured friend as in the footage taken by Max Stahl – that does not have any inscription referring to the committee or the victims’ names. Furthermore it built this monument in front of Motael Church instead of the Santa Cruz Cemetery where the committee is continuing to push for the construction of a memorial site (see also Arthur 2019; Kent 2015; Leach 2017). Since then, the committee deliberately bypass the monument in front of Motael Church during the commemorations (see Kent 2015: 10-11). The transformation of Santa Cruz Cemetery into a memorial site continue to be a source of dissatisfaction. In 2017 Gregorio Saldanha said that the committee has provided a plan, but they were still waiting the government to fund it.

Besides the *Geração Foun* and East Timorese leaders, the Catholic Church plays a crucial role due to its support to civilian resistance in the past. During the Indonesian occupation “participation in the numerous religious activities of the Catholic Church” seemed to be “the only way of associating freely and publicly in large numbers” (Aditjondro, 1994: 69). Churches in Dili were functioning as a place of

refuge and security for East Timorese. They have been for pro-independence youth activists what the mountains have been for FALINTIL during the guerrilla war against the Indonesian Army. This is the case especially for Motael Church where Sebastião Gomes was killed in 1991. Indonesian Army knew it well as shown by the words of General Syafei: “The Church, said Syafei, used “humanity, democracy, human rights and freedom” as a cover for illicit activities” (Human Rights Watch, 1993: 25). During the Indonesian years, catholic symbols became a target for pro-integration militias. Many Virgin Mary *grottos* were destroyed, and other desecrations or proper “violations” took place in Dili around churches or statues such as for example when a dead snake was found around the neck of the Virgin Mary statue in front of the bishop’s residence (Aditjondro, 1994: 72).



FIGURE 4: *The march starts at Motael Church. This is the oldest Roman Catholic church in the country.*



FIGURE 5: *Students carrying a cross with the colors of Timor-Leste's national flag.* The cross is brought in procession to the Santa Cruz Cemetery. The march starts after a Mass.



FIGURE 6: *A young girl waiting the procession with the national flag.* This flag was adopted for the first time in 1975 when the country declared independence from Portugal. After few days the Indonesian Army occupied East Timor. It continued to be an important symbol of struggle until when, on Independence Day in 2002, it was re-adopted as official national flag. The flag “was associated with the people as a whole and evoked the ideal unity of the nation” (Traube 2011: 131). According to the Constitution, the colors represents in order “the traces of colonialism” (yellow), “the obscurantism that needs to be overcome” (black), “the struggle for national liberation” (red), and “peace” (white), while the star is “the light that guides” (Timor-Leste 2002) (for other discussions about the flag see Arthur 2019).



FIGURE 7: *The Crocodile's Drum-Band of São Pedro-Comoro.* According to a Timorese folktale originally the island of Timor was a crocodile. After independence the crocodile has been regenerated as national symbol for the unity of the country.



FIGURE 8: *Thousands of people walk through the streets of Dili where remnants of destruction still recounts tales of a turbulent past.*



FIGURE 9-10: This banner reads “Our deaths, your lives. Our sacrifice, our independence” (*Ami nia mate, imi nia moris. Ami nia sacrificio, ita nia independencia*). *Viva Juventude Lorico Assuain* is a direct reference to the youth and students in general, and the *loriku asua’in* (literally the “lorikeet warriors”, the name under which those who participated in the demonstration of 12 November 2012 reorganized the new generation resistance) in particular: a call for the recognition of the contribution of clandestine youth groups to the struggle for independence during the Indonesian occupation.



FIGURE 11: *Relatives of the victims marching from Motael Church to Santa Cruz Cemetery.*



FIGURE 12: *Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão (left) giving a speech at the entrance of Santa Cruz Cemetery. There were other politicians attending the ceremony at Santa Cruz Cemetery, including Alkatiri and the then President of the Republic of Timor-Leste Ramos-Horta. The presence of politicians from the old generation followed recent trends such as “clandestine” medals to the victims, and survivors, of the massacre (see Leach 2017: 191).*



FIGURE 13: *The tomb of Sebastião Gomes is the point of convergence of the commemorations where people lay flowers, light candles, and pray. Only recently government has upgraded the gravestone with a bust and an epitaph. This picture, taken in 2010, thus shows the former concrete cross headstone. On 12 November 2010, Alkatiri and Xanana Gusmão paid homage to Sebastião Gomes as well. The presence of politicians that time was a turning point for the recognition of the contribution of the youth to the struggle for independence. Sebastião Gomes has become the symbol of all the youth victims and martyrs for the independence, but also the union of all East Timorese fostering a spirit of national cohesion.*



FIGURE 14: *A relative of a victim sitting at the Santa Cruz Cemetery.*



FIGURE 15: *People gathering at the Santa Cruz Cemetery.*



FIGURE 16: *People conclude the commemoration with the traditional tebe-tebe dance.*



FIGURE 17: *A mural reading Dili Cidade da Paz. The “Dili – City of Peace” concept was adopted by former President Ramos-Horta in 2009. This new label is celebrated through international sport events such as Dili’s annual marathon and the Tour de Timor.*

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OUR LADY OF SQUATTERS: HOUSING AND RELIGION

Emiliano Esposito, *Gran Sasso Science Institute*

ABSTRACT

This photo essay documents the religious celebration of *Madonna dell'Arco* —one of the many representations of Virgin Mary in south Italy— during the Easter Triduum. Celebrations involve dancing and singing performances that devotees put in place in order to expiate their sins. This project comprises a series of color photographs taken in the De Gasperi neighbourhood, eastern periphery of Naples, aiming to unveil the peculiar meaning that the rituals of *Madonna dell'Arco* assumes in the area. The district is a public housing complex where almost half of inhabitants illegally occupy the house where they live. It is a case of squatting that takes place outside any political framework. In the De Gasperi neighbourhood, *Madonna dell'Arco* has become the most important religious icon for squatters that long for being recognized as the legal recipient of their houses. The project contributes to the international debate on squatting: it highlights the immaterial meaning of squatting through focusing on the religious dimension of squatters' everyday life.

KEYWORDS

Squatting, rituals, public housing, housing informality, ethnography

BIO

I am an urban ethnographer and a PhD candidate in Urban Studies at Gran Sasso Science Institute (Italy). My doctoral thesis focuses on urban informality related to individualistic informal strategies to access to housing in Naples (south Italy). The investigation conceptualizes housing informality as a structural element of Mediterranean housing welfare systems among which we can considerate the Italian one.

My work bases on qualitative methods of research among which I use photographic camera. On the one hand, it allows me to create a trust-based relationships with the 'subjects/objects' of my research. On the other hand, photography can highlight the set of feelings and emotions that characterize the everyday experience of individualistic squatting.

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During the Easter Triduum, in Naples (Italy) inhabitants celebrate *Madonna dell'Arco*, one of the many representations that Virgin Mary takes in Italy. Myth describes her as a vindictive Virgin Mary. She punished a blasphemer who had lost a bocce match causing him huge pain. Nowadays celebrations remember the myth: teams of devotees (*fujenti*, literally meaning fleeing men) dance carrying on their shoulders heavy floats upon which Virgin Mary's statue stands. Physical sufferance is the way through which devotees expiate their sins. Every district of Naples has its own team.

In the eastern part of Naples, in De Gasperi' neighborhood this celebration has a peculiar meaning. The district is a public housing complex where almost half of inhabitants illegally occupy the house where they live. 'Individualistic' squatting is a deeply rooted phenomenon in the area and it bases on several mechanism of squatting, such as traditional occupation through breaking the door of empty flats and informal inheritance of public housing units. Illegal occupation in De Gasperi district takes place outside any political or countercultural framework. It does not aim to build an alternative lifestyle or claim political ideals. Rather individualistic squatting can be considered as a 'familistic' way to access to housing within which 'extended families' (made of relatives and friends) provide housing solutions for their members. De Gasperi district's team is mostly made of squatters due to their relevant presence.

Public debate usually focuses on the economic dimension of squatting highlighting its function of tool to access to housing for weaker inhabitants. However, squatting has an immaterial dimension. Affiliation, aggregation, affectivity and sense of belonging contribute to define everyday life of squatters. Religious rituals constitute are important elements in the everyday life of De Gasperi neighborhood's

inhabitants. Especially, ceremony of *Madonna dell'Arco* plays an important role feeding inhabitants' sense of belonging to the district. This work highlights the immaterial meaning of squatting through focusing on the religious dimension of squatters' everyday life.



FIGURE 1: The shrine of *Madonna dell'Arco* is a roman Catholic shrine in Sant'Anastasia, a town about ten km from Naples. Thousands of devotees go on pilgrimage to the shrine of *Madonna dell'Arco* to pray Virgin Mary's statue. Some devotees tell that a state of trance comes over their body at entering in the shrine.



FIGURE 2: A very common ritual is to wave holy flags representing saints or Virgin Mary. Richer families finance flags that will be used during celebrations in order to guarantee blessing for their members.



FIGURE 3: Every team has his own uniform. Red, blue and white are the usual colors of rituals. Uniforms' sale contributes to finance the organization of celebrations.



FIGURE 4: Ground floors of district's residential buildings are used as spaces where devotees can rest. Those inhabitants that do not take part to the rituals contribute serving food and drinks for *fujenti*.



FIGURE 5: Usually men carry the floats. However, in De Gasperi neighborhood women have a central role. It is up to them to arrange the holy statue of Virgin Mary upon the float.



FIGURE 6: A child is praying one of the many Virgin Mary's portraits that decorate the district.



FIGURE 7: A devotee smoking a cigarette while the holy float is carrying through the city.



FIGURE 8: Sometimes team's women carry the holy float during the road to the shrine.



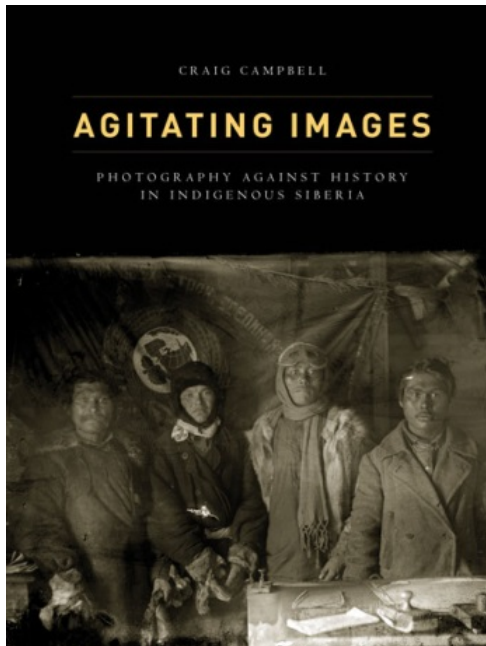
FIGURE 9: Many devotees decide to walk until the shrine. Some of them prefer to go barefoot as symbol of penance.



FIGURE 10: A young boy standing with holy flag close to one of the many De Gasperi district's closed public housing units.



FIGURE 11: A nun handing a child to the altar within *Madonna dell'Arco*'s shrine.



Craig Campbell

Agitating Images. Photography against History in Indigenous Siberia

University of Minnesota Press, 2014

<https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/agitating-images>

In *Agitating Images*, Craig Campbell draws a rich and unsettling cultural portrait of the encounter between indigenous Siberians and Russian communists and reveals how photographs from this period complicate our understanding of this history. Ultimately, this book demonstrates how photographs go against accepted premises of Soviet Siberia and dissects our very understanding of the production of historical knowledge.



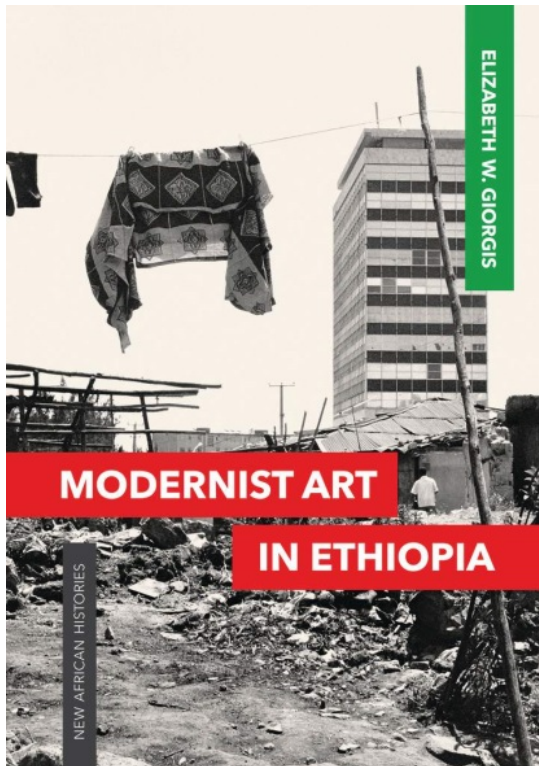
Patricia M. Locke and Rachel McCann (eds)
Merleau-Ponty Space, Place, Architecture

Ohio University Press, 2016

<https://www.ohioswallow.com/book/Merleau-Ponty>

Phenomenology has played a decisive role in the emergence of the discourse of place, now indispensable to many disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, and the contribution of Merleau-Ponty's thought to architectural theory and practice is well established. *Merleau-Ponty: Space, Place, Architecture* is a vibrant collection of original essays by twelve eminent philosophers who mine Merleau-Ponty's work to consider how we live and create as profoundly spatial beings. The resulting collection is essential to philosophers and creative artists as well as those concerned with the pressing ethical issues of our time.

Each contributor presents a different facet of space, place, or architecture. These essays carve paths from Merleau-Ponty to other thinkers such as Irigaray, Deleuze, Ettinger, and Piaget. As the first collection devoted specifically to developing Merleau-Ponty's contribution to our understanding of place and architecture, this book will speak to philosophers interested in the problem of space, architectural theorists, and a wide range of others in the arts and design community.



Elizabeth W. Giorgis
Modernist Art in Ethiopia

Ohio University Press, 2019

<https://www.ohioswallow.com/book/Modernist+Art+in+Ethiopia>

If modernism initially came to Africa through colonial contact, what does Ethiopia's inimitable historical condition—its independence save for five years under Italian occupation—mean for its own modernist tradition? In *Modernist Art in Ethiopia*—the first book-length study of the topic—Elizabeth W. Giorgis recognizes that her home country's supposed singularity, particularly as it pertains to its history from 1900 to the present, cannot be conceived outside the broader colonial legacy. She uses the evolution of modernist art in Ethiopia to open up the intellectual, cultural, and political histories of it in a pan-African context.

Giorgis explores the varied precedents of the country's political and intellectual history to understand the ways in which the import and range of visual narratives were mediated across different moments, and to reveal the conditions that account for the extraordinary dynamism of the visual arts in Ethiopia. In locating its arguments at the intersection of visual culture and literary and performance studies, *Modernist Art in Ethiopia* details how innovations in visual art intersected with shifts in philosophical and ideological narratives of modernity. The result is profoundly innovative work—a bold intellectual, cultural, and political history of Ethiopia, with art as its centerpiece.



Giovanni Curtis e Giacomo Daniele Fragapane (a cura)
*Davanti a una fotografia. Immagini, metodi d'analisi,
 interpretazioni*

Roma, Bonanno Editore, 2019

http://www.gebonanno.com/it/scheda_libro.php?id=2498

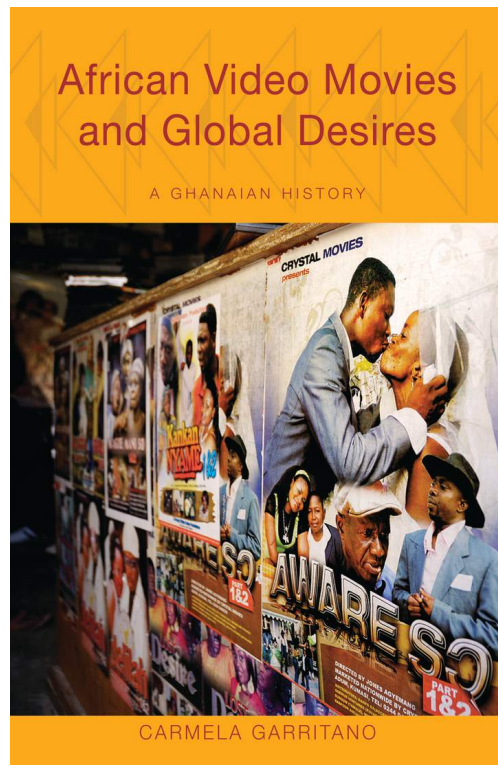
L'immagine fotografica, come del resto tutte le forme testuali, si presta a sistemi d'analisi di varia natura ed è quindi fonte di molteplici interpretazioni, ognuna potenzialmente valida. Questo volume raccoglie una serie di contributi costituiti da analisi di singole immagini fotografiche, con specifici riferimenti, caso per caso, alle attuali metodologie utilizzate nell'ambito degli studi visuali. Si tratta di saggi concepiti in funzione di differenti idee di fotografia e in relazione a diversi ambiti di studio: estetico, semiotico, storico, psicologico, antropologico, mediologico ecc. Ciò che li accomuna, e che consente di percepire tra le righe un dialogo sotterraneo, è il nesso di ordine metodologico che essi pongono tra una singola fotografia particolarmente significativa e un campo più vasto di temi e problemi, che quasi sempre, necessariamente, implica il riferimento ad altre immagini, a precedenti sintesi di natura storiografica, a paradigmi e categorie di ordine teorico. Ne scaturisce un quadro comparativo, multidisciplinare e talvolta interdisciplinare. Lo scopo è quello di evidenziare la pluralità delle voci e potenziali interpretazioni che una fotografia può innescare in chi la analizza, fornendo allo studioso, allo studente e al comune lettore, uno strumento sintetico concepito in maniera accessibile. Contributi di Valeria Biasi, Dario Cecchi, Giovanni Curtis, Alberto Di Cintio, Giacomo Daniele Fragapane, Francesco Marano, Adolfo Mignemi, Lucia Miodini, Anna Maria Monteverdi.



Federico Bilò
Le indagini etnografiche di Pagano

Siracusa, Lettera Ventidue Edizioni, 2019

A partire dal 1935, Giuseppe Pagano effettua un lavoro sul campo, esplorando il territorio nazionale in cerca dei più significativi esempi di architettura rurale: che fotografa magistralmente. Con questa ricerca, l'architetto istriano espande il perimetro dell'architettura, includendovi il costruito minore; e questo ampliamento è stato e rimane un prolifico tentativo di rompere la monoliticità disciplinare. Un tentativo nel quale possiamo leggere, oggi, il ruolo decisivo dell'antropologia: disciplina che si dà carico di osservare, comprendere e interpretare la complessa articolazione dell'ambiente fisico e sociale; disciplina indispensabile per l'individuazione dei materiali necessari a un cambiamento radicale nella pratica dell'architettura.



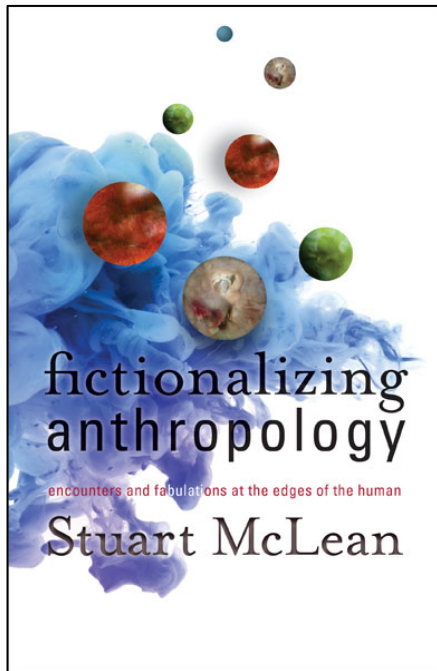
Carmela Garritano

African Video Movies and Global Desires. A Ghanaian History

Ohio University Press, 2013

African Video Movies and Global Desires is the first full-length scholarly study of Ghana's commercial video industry, an industry that has produced thousands of movies over the last twenty years and has grown into an influential source of cultural production. Produced and consumed under circumstances of dire shortage and scarcity, African video movies narrate the desires and anxieties created by Africa's incorporation into the global cultural economy.

Drawing on archival and ethnographic research conducted in Ghana over a ten-year period, as well as close readings of a number of individual movies, this book brings the insights of historical context as well as literary and film analysis to bear on a range of movies and the industry as a whole. Garritano makes a significant contribution to the examination of gender norms and the ideologies these movies produce. *African Video Movies and Global Desires* is a historically and theoretically informed cultural history of an African visual genre that will only continue to grow in size and influence.



Stuart McLean
*Fictionalizing Anthropology. Encounters and Fabulations at the
 Edges of the Human*

University of Minnesota Press, 2017

<https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/fictionalizing-anthropology>

Stuart McLean claims that anthropology stands to learn most from art and literature. He insists that experiments with language and form are a performative means of exploring alternative possibilities of collective existence, new ways of being human and other than human, and that such experiments must therefore be indispensable to anthropology's engagement with the contemporary world.