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A critical and historical case study of experience design:
Lynchian cognitive mapping and Situationist psychogeography

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A critical and historical case study of experience design: Lynchian cognitive mapping and Situationist psychogeography

by

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A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Major: Graphic Design

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This is to certify that the master's thesis of

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has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy
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ABSTRACT

Since about the late 1990s there has been discussion in the field of graphic design regarding experience design, or what advocates of the movement describe as a refocusing of the designer’s attention on the interaction with the designed artifact, rather than the design of artifacts. Given the recent birth of this area in graphic design, it seems fitting to speculate on the past and ask what areas have contributed to, or prefigure experience design. Kevin Lynch’s cognitive mapping (developed in the 1950s) has been offered as one precedent, but if Lynch is suggested we also have to look to Guy Debord’s simultaneous invention of psychogeographic mapping as a similar, yet distinct precedent of experience design. Lynch was an urban planning professor in the U.S., while Debord was the leader of a leftist group in Paris called the Situationist International. Neither Lynch nor Debord had knowledge of the other at the time. The shared nature of mapping human experience allows Lynch and Debord’s experimental projects to form a fascinating relationship with contemporary experience design. By comparing the semiotic code in Lynch and Debord’s maps this study develops a theoretical model of designer “control” versus “construction” for designing experience. These findings inform contemporary experience design by addressing ethically and culturally sensitive questions. Future research is needed to document and clarify the specific areas of experience design that are affected by this model.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Problem statement

Meredith Davis, a graphic design professor from North Carolina State University, writes that the historic focus of graphic design education has been on objects and the skills necessary to produce them. This includes the realm of visual communications and courses such as typography, photography, and packaging design. Since about the late 1990s there has been discussion in the field of graphic design regarding experience design, or what Davis has described as a refocusing of the designer’s attention on the interaction or human experience with the designed artifact, rather than the design of artifacts. The experience here would constitute the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of interactions and the relationship of the experience to commerce, work, learning and community. Given the recent birth of this area in graphic design, it seems fitting to speculate on the past and ask what areas have contributed to, or prefigure experience design. Davis has offered cognitive or mental mapping as one source for experience design, comparing the “schema and metaphor” of Kevin Lynch’s first attempts at cognitive mapping (1960) to the design of information architecture and interface design. For Lynch, a professor of urban studies at MIT in the 1960s, cognitive mapping was referred to as the subject’s mental image of the environment, as he writes, “Every citizen has had long associations with some part of his

city, and his image is soaked in memories and meanings." But if Lynch’s cognitive mapping is suggested as a source prefiguring experience design, we also have to look to Guy Debord’s simultaneous invention of psychogeographic mapping in Paris, which he defined as, “the study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals.” Neither Lynch nor Debord had knowledge of the other at the time, and interestingly, there has not been extensive comparison of the two projects. The shared nature of mapping human experience allows the two projects to form a fascinating relationship with contemporary notions of experience design. This study intends to investigate and uncover the motivations and nature of the threefold relationship between cognitive mapping, psychogeographic mapping and experience design. It is my assumption that the nature of experience, as understood by Lynch and Debord is different, and the understanding of this difference could be important for situating contemporary experience design. The process of analysis will entail three steps: first, acquiring a thorough historical understanding of each project; second, comparing the visual representation of experience through an analysis of maps; and last, locating similarities and differences and relating them to contemporary forms of experience design.

**Purpose statement**

The purpose of this study is to explore the issue of experience in a critical and historical case study of Lynch’s cognitive mapping and Debord’s psychogeographic mapping. To structure the following study I ask the question: Why is a critical and historical

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comparison between Lynch and Debord’s mapping projects important for exploring experience design? The conjecture of this question accounts for various research questions:

1. What motivated the development of cognitive and psychogeographic mapping?
2. What are the graphical features of Lynch and Debord’s maps and how do they relate to the major similarities, differences and compromises in their projects?
3. What ideas from this comparison can inform contemporary models of experience design?

Defining key terms

The following are some key terms that will be addressed in this study and used in ways specific to this study. The intention is to help define the context of the research problem, along with creating a basis for subsequent information to build upon.

Experience will generally relate to the parameters of the subject’s condition, or how the ‘urban experience’ affects the subject sensuously, physically, socially, culturally and/or emotionally. Experience can be defined as:

The actual observation of facts or events considered as a source of knowledge.⁵

And also:

The fact of being consciously the subject of a state or condition, or of being consciously affected by an event. Also an instance of this; a state or condition viewed subjectively; an event by which one is affected.⁶

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⁶ Ibid.
Perception will be used to describe the experience between an individual and the external environment, as implicated in Lynch or Debord’s projects. Perception should be distinguished from ‘sensation’, ‘conception’, ‘imagination’, and ‘judgment’ or ‘inference’, because it relies on the external environment as a stimulus.

Experience design has broad definitions and many applications within the field of graphic design. To give a brief summary: Human Computer Interaction (HCI) tends to think of experience as both ‘user-testing’ and researching emotional experiences using new technology. The area of traditional commerce and e-commerce defines experience design based on the relationship between the consumer, interaction and product. An example within e-commerce could be a self-select Web site offering the experience of ‘consumer empowerment’ through customization. Total environment experience could be defined as a designer controlled experience, such as an amusement park or exhibition design. And lastly, psychologist Donald Norman defines emotional product design as involving three levels: the visceral, behavioral, and reflective.

For the context of this study Meredith Davis’ discussion of experience design, as defined for the academic curriculum, will be used. As mentioned, the premise of Davis’ definition focuses on the design of experiences, rather than the design of objects. This includes the synthesis of meaning: “physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of experiences;” along with the relationship of context and activity; and finally, the mediation of some form of representation other than the one which the experience originated. It should be noted that because the maps of Lynch and Debord are cognitive and

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psychological figurations of the individual’s experience they are a culmination of synthesis, relationship and mediation.

*Mapping* will loosely define a process of cognitive and psychogeographic mapping, along with the graphical application of each. Mapping will also describe various forms of traditional maps, sketch maps, and pictorial journeys. Related to mapping, the term “cartography,” is inclusive of both Lynch and Debord’s projects and can be defined as “a body of theoretical and practical knowledge that map makers employ to construct maps as a distinct mode of visual representation.”

One last definition that should be mentioned in regards to Guy Debord is his affiliated avant-garde group, the Situationist International, which I will refer to as SI or Situationists hereinafter.

![Diagram of overall study](image)

**Figure 1 Diagram of overall study**

**Delimitations and limitations**

This study is intended to focus solely on developing a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences of Lynch and Debord’s projects, and to formulate an alternative perspective to the contemporary definition of experience design. The study will not take into account all areas of contemporary experience design, or a synthesis and application of

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findings for contemporary technological use. The intention of this study is to provide a
deeper understanding of the historical contributions to experience design in a theoretical
context. The hope is that this study will provide a more enduring set of ideas that apply to
many facets of experience design.

**Significance of the proposed study**

The correlation between knowledge, vision and visuality, and the potentialities of
experience shapes the way we negotiate the world. The idea of ‘new eyes’ or knowledge
lends itself to the possibility of transforming social space through understanding our place
within it. This study positions graphic design outside traditional modes of corporate use,
while also acknowledging possibilities for social and political discourse within the corporate
domain. In forming a greater understanding of diverse forms of experience design and
cognitive mapping, individuals are better able to understand subjective experience as a form
of knowledge sharing, in addition to the use of visual representation as a tool to counter-act
environmental restrictions and oppression.

I place this research in the theoretical camp of designers looking for new ways to
understand and map conflicts in the cultural landscape. As Asura Burns writes, “Designers
and other professionals dealing with the production and modification of urban spaces,
processes, and imagery are looking for new ways to approach culture as defined by
conflicting values.” Focused on the post-war context of the late 1950s, this analysis is crucial
for understanding, on a deeper level, the issue of visual representation and individual

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67–79), 19.
experience. Through a consideration of mapping, knowledge sharing, emotion, and human interaction, this thesis can be posited as a critical and historical understanding of the potential for individual empowerment through communication of experience.

**Methodology**

The methodology of this study is structured on the question: Why is a critical and historical comparison between Lynch and Debord’s mapping projects important for exploring experience design? In exploring this question the study will be divided into four chapters. Chapter one forms the ‘general introduction’, giving the reader a sense of the problem, this is followed by a brief definition of terms that will be used, the delimitations and limitations of the study, the significance of the proposed study and finally, the methodology. Chapter two is the ‘literature review’, and addresses a more specific question: What motivated the development of cognitive and psychogeographic mapping? This chapter looks at the historical context of Kevin Lynch’s cognitive mapping and Situationist psychogeography. Chapter three is the comparative map analysis, and addresses the question: What are the graphical features of Lynch and Debord’s maps and how do they relate to the major similarities, differences and compromises in their projects? Chapter four forms the ‘conclusion’, locating and discussing future possibilities for findings in this study.
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical overview

This study compares two historical and experimental mapping projects: psychogeographic mapping, explored by the Situationist International, and cognitive mapping developed by Kevin Lynch. The conception of these mapping projects in the mid 1950s needs to be situated within the historical context; the International Style or International Modernism that dominated Western design in the 1920s was still flourishing in both the U.S. and Europe in the forties and fifties. Characteristic of the International Style was a “rational” and “machine” aesthetic, typified by the architect Le Corbusier’s “gleaming white concrete houses of the 1920s” and Mies van der Rohe’s glass skyscrapers of the 1940s and 50s.¹⁰ Neat rectilinear forms, flat roofs, lack of ornamentation, and use of new materials and technologies were frequently found in modernist design. The Bauhaus design school in Weimar, Germany, also characterized Modernism by emphasizing the “artist-worker” and the relationship between art and industry. Gropius, the head of the Bauhaus praised the formal principles of design:

Let us together desire, conceive and create the new building of the future, which will combine everything—architecture and sculpture and painting—in a single form which will one day rise towards the heavens from the hands of a million workers as the crystalline symbol of a new and coming faith.¹¹

Le Corbusier had theorized the “house is a machine for living in,” which epitomized the modern aesthetic as technocratic and obsessed with rationality, materials and

¹¹ Dempsey, 130.
minimalism. For the Situationists and other groups in Europe, like the Independent Group, it was the “spiritual and creative poverty” in the modernist aesthetic, the lack of “plain humanity” that led to the discovery of “some new truth that might replace the dishonesty of rationalism.” Both Lynch and the SI viewed modern design’s singular focus on form and lack of attention to the culture and everyday life that engages with that form as problematic. Sadler writes, “by the late fifties, indeed, interest in everyday life, space, and culture of the masses was mushrooming in British and American pop art and in French nouveau réalisme...” Modernism’s excess of functionalist and rationalist techniques brought about the need for radical changes in design. A shift from focusing on the city as void of human potential to one in which the human psyche was central, was a shift that Lynch and the SI prefigured.

The significance of Lynch and the SI’s projects emerged from an awareness of shifts occurring in the scientific world. The rising interest in cybernetics, which was defined by Norbert Weiner at MIT in 1947 as “the feedback of information as the determinant for correcting or controlling the future behavior of the system,” had a spreading influence in many fields at the time. Lynch was directly implicated with Wiener as a colleague at MIT and close friend of Gyorgy Kepes, an artist at MIT, who was also influenced by Wiener. Cybernetics extended into design practice by thinking about form, such as architecture, as a “medium,” rather than as the traditional (modernist) “art of shelter.” This allowed the design of objects to mediate between the “individual body, the social body, artificial sensations, and

12 Ibid.
14 Ibid, 11.
Marshall McLuhan, also influenced by the theory of cybernetics, wrote, “cities are an... extension of bodily organs to accommodate the needs of large groups.” This quote recalls Situationist psychogeography as the study of how physical form in the city affects human emotion. The Situationist architect Constant used psychogeography as a basis for his ‘cybernetic architecture’, focusing on “architectonics,” “climatology,” and “psychology,” into its relations with the “five senses.” Lynch’s publication of *Image of the City* in 1960 introduced the idea of cognitive mapping, or the “ways in which citizens perceive and interact with their city by first ‘imaging’ it in their minds.” In both Lynch and the SI’s appropriation of ideas in cybernetics there is the underlying desire to create techniques of shaping and rearranging the “patterns of human association and community,” Unlike the tenants of the International Style, Lynch and the SI’s mapping projects characterized an epoch concerned with the liberation of the mind and body.

In short, we can understand the context of Lynch and the SI’s mapping as both occurring in the late 1950s, reacting to spatial and social concerns in the urban environment, combining artistic and scientific techniques, and attempting two different forms of “mapping” as a way to understand human experience in the urban environment.

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16 Ibid, 148.
18 Ibid, 149.
19 Ibid, 92.
20 Ibid, 151.
Kevin Lynch and cognitive mapping

The physical fragmentation of the city is what led Kevin Lynch, a professor of urban studies and planning at M.I.T., to investigate cognitive mapping as a tool to be used by urban planners to improve the physical image of the city. Lynch describes investigations of ‘imageability’, or how to make urban space more legible. His project was intended for design analysis and evaluation of urban space.21 Lynch was interested in gathering knowledge, categorizing parts of the cityscape, and discovering a generalized ‘public image’. Peter Gould and Rodney White saw Lynch’s experiments with imageability or ‘mind mapping’ as extracting data from the way people perceive an environment; “Lynch would ask people about their feelings on prominent landmarks in urban spaces and have them draw maps conveying the major impressions of the space.”22 Robert Tally considers Lynch’s project “fundamentally phenomenological, inasmuch as it presupposes a psychological subject who can “map” the landscape of empirical data.”23 Lynch’s ‘psychological subject’ is focused on the perceptual experience of the city environment and records the effects of external elements—landmarks, nodes, paths, etc., with cognitive mapping. The issue of perception in Lynch’s work is synonymous with the ‘image’ one sees in his/her mind. As Lynch describes, “Most often our perception of the city is not sustained, but rather partial, fragmentary, mixed with other concerns. Nearly every sense is in operation, and the image is the composite of them all.”24

24 Lynch, 2. My emphasis.
cognitive Map
('figuration' not mimetic)

improve visual quality of city (legibility)

city (spatial confusion)

two-way process

mental image
(perceptual experience)

individuals

Figure 2 Diagram of Kevin Lynch’s cognitive mapping. The individual’s experience and memory traces of the city form a mental image. The physical elements that are prominent in the mental image are represented in a cognitive map.

Theoretical influence

In the acknowledgements to *Image of the City* Lynch writes that he would be at a loss to “disentangle” his ideas from those of his friend and colleague at M.I.T., Gyorgy Kepes. Kepes, who co-directed the “Image of the City” project with Lynch, was a crucial figure in the development of cognitive mapping. Throughout Kepes’ career as a professor of art and visual studies he was devoted to exploring the relationship between art and science; his efforts in *art* providing a “hold on social issues of disruption, alienation,” while his interest in *science* and *technology* provided the “constructive values of rational understanding and sensibility.” He viewed the ‘laboratory’ as a model for ways of working in “non-scientific fields,” and felt that this relationship could be understood in one coherent discipline.  

With the war ending in the mid 1940s Kepes felt it was a ‘jubilant’ and ‘confident’ time with many

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new breakthroughs occurring in the science field. The public art he produced took advantage of the current tools in science and technology, but always with a concern for representing the social pulse of the time. He saw science and technology in public art as "a source of expanded imagery," as "a dynamic way of thinking where the basic idioms are relationships, energies, processes and structural organization," and as "models of dynamic interconnectedness and basic complementarity of disparate processes and systems." Kepes' passion for art and science came to focus on his plans for the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) at M.I.T., with the "creative use of light on a grand scale" as its goal. Under Kepes the artists working at CAVS created projects that educated the public on ecological matters, attempting to "renew a sense of happy equilibrium between man and his environment." One example of an experiment for educating the public was a kinetic sculpture generated by the water filtering process. As Kepes vividly describes,

-One can visualize immense transparent structures that give visibility to hydraulic processes, a contained but legible ballet of water racing through obstacles of filters, tinted and purified by chemicals, or moving sluggishly in intricate but legible patterns of transparent containers. Pipes, in a variety of thicknesses and forms dictated by function but modified by artistic needs within the limits of functional and structural economy, can evolve into impressive sculptural forms that have never existed before.

In the above example we observe Kepes' attentiveness to the artist's role in creating aesthetic objects out of the functional engineering feats, and this in the name of public education. The pairing of art and science seemed to always be negotiated with attention to the

26 Wechsler, 12.
27 Ibid.
30 Kepes, 170-171.
‘functional’ quality first, and followed by artistic expression. In this way Kepes’ maintains the Bauhausian adage of ‘form follows function’, but Kepes’ goals relied on a deeper social transformation than that of the Bauhaus. He found knowledge in opposing experiences to be meaningful for a better society in the public understanding of art, believing that for man to “respond with necessary anger to the pollution of our lakes and rivers, one needs a memory or an imaginative experience of the purity of a mountain brook.” Kepes theorized the visualization of such opposing experiences as the job of the artist, with the urban canvas being the space to realize them. The artists at CAVS also experimented with multimedia techniques, (film, theater and international exhibitions) and the ways that design could be used to display information about physical and social issues; “spatial sources of pollution… balance sheets of gain and loss in the use of DDT, pollution of the air by automobiles…” Kepes felt that such displays, if placed in urban spaces, could foster intense artistic activity; “creative ideas, adventures, spectacles, sky festivals, collective murals, and collective multimedia light plays.” This in turn could allow a release of “suppressed play instincts, the sense of adventure that today is forced underground and turns to violence or drugs.” But above all, such information sharing through art was thought by Kepes to offer a sense of freedom, enabling individuals to respond to a ‘responsive environment’. Kepes’ ultimate goal with urban spaces was to create a “vital participatory process,” a feedback loop, where a collective response from citizens would positively affect the surrounding urban space.

Kepes’ association with Lynch came in a study he co-directed with him from 1954 to 1958 called “Perceptual Forms of the City.” The study was funded through M.I.T.’s center

31 Ibid, 184.
32 Ibid.
for urban and regional studies and formed the foundation for Lynch's investigation of 'legibility' and mental mapping. Kepes' desire to make science less alien by integrating scientific thought and elements into urban space was part of his motivation for working with Lynch. During their walks through the city Lynch described Kepes as, "... alive to everything he saw and helped me to look." Both Lynch and Kepes saw the potential of cultural urban emblems and symbols in the city to become a form of contemporary public art. Kepes provided Lynch the theoretical basis for observing fragmentation and alienation in the physical and social city. In 1944 Kepes had observed,

To grasp spatial relations and orient oneself in the metropolis of today...requires a new way of seeing...In each age of human history man was compelled to search for a temporary equilibrium in his conflicts with nature and his relations with other men, and thus created, through an organization of visual imagery, a symbolic order of his psychological and intellectual experiences.

Kepes' understanding of the "spatial confusion" of the modern metropolis is evident in the above quote. The idea of needing to 'orient' oneself is precisely what Lynch's project attempted through a form of cognitive mapping. The concept of cognitive mapping can be traced to Kepes' contact with scientists Norbert Weiner (also at M.I.T.) and Warren McCulloch a neurophysiologist. Weiner was working with cybernetics and feedback systems, while McCulloch theorized that the "capacity to orient oneself is based on the ability of the neurological system to discern invariance in continuous transformation."

The term cybernetics is derived from the word "governor," which in historic maritime terms describes the "steering engines of a ship" as a feedback system of control and

33 Wechsler, 12.
34 Ibid, 7. (This quote is originally taken from Kepes', "Toward Civic Art," Explorations, catalogue brochure, 1970).
Cybernetics as a field of study was initially concerned with “problems of central inhibition in the nervous system,” but syntheses of the ideas of feedback in neurophysiology combined with mathematical logic and engineering led to the first ideas of artificial memory for computing machines. Wiener was cautious of the use of cybernetics for the potential to be taken up by anti-aircraft artillery during the war-time effort, as he writes, “Long before Nagasaki and the public awareness of the atomic bomb, it had occurred to me that we were here in the presence of another social potentiality of unheard-of importance for good or evil.” Opposed to the dark potentialities of cybernetics, Wiener was also influenced in the direction of sociology and communication theories; the “circular processes of a feedback nature.” In the sociological realm, Wiener discussed cybernetics in relation to the “patterns” found in the world; characterized by “the order of elements,” rather than the “intrinsic nature of elements.” Wiener describes the difference between spatial patterns of wallpaper and temporal patterns of music, relating them to the pattern of information transmitted by a telegraph: “If I am sending the letter e, it gains its meaning in part because I have not sent the letter o. If my only choice is to send the letter e, then the message is merely something that is either there or not there; and it conveys much less information.” Here we can understand that it is the choice of selecting and sending either e or o that provides greater information, if o was not available the mere action of sending is less significant. Wiener is essentially describing the idea of control, “the sending of messages

37 Wiener (1948), 22.
38 Ibid, 16.
39 Ibid, 36.
41 Wiener (1955), 4.
which effectively change the behavior of the recipient.\footnote{Ibid. 8.} He believed cybernetics could inform the study of messages and communication in society through an understanding of messages “between man and machines,” “between machine and man,” and “between machine and machine.”

Kepes adopted these ideas to describe the “real task” of art: “helping people rediscover the invariant sense of potential harmony and fulfillment beneath the transformations of life; that art can be a \textit{feedback system} of a society’s images and aspirations.”\footnote{Wechsler, 12.} Cognitive mapping can be seen to appropriate these ideas of information translation in the visual environment. We can compare Wiener’s example of a person talking on the phone with a person mapping the city: “if one talks into a telephone with a great deal of line noise, and a great deal of loss of energy of the main message, the person at the other end may miss words that have been spoken, and may have to reconstruct them on the basis of the significant information of the context.”\footnote{Wiener (1955), 7.} Similarly, Lynch and Kepes’ subject viewed the city with a great deal of “noise,” fragmenting the image and leaving out certain parts, but as the maps reveal, reconstructing the image based on the “significant” information. The image is therefore a translation that is distorted from reality; it is intertwined with subjective meaning, allowing the map to become a window on the external world.

Kepes’ influence on Lynch can be summarized in the artistic and scientific methods of rediscovering the fragmented space of the city, a space that can be objectively controlled and artistically ‘harmonized’. Cognitive mapping is both scientific and artistic and it acts as a feedback system for society’s “images and aspirations.” The concept for Lynch’s cognitive
mapping heeded Kepes’ pessimism of the “formlessness” of modern life, which Kepes divided into three aspects; first, “the economic chaos which accounts for economic insecurity, inadequate living conditions, waste of human and material resources, wars and revolutions;” second, “the human chaos, the lack of common ideas, common patterns, common purposes;” and third, “the inner chaos, the inability to live in harmony with oneself because of lack of confidence in the oneness of all human levels.”

Such processes are described in an excerpt from some early field notes (November 17, 1955) that a researcher working under Lynch created while cognitively mapping a section of Boston. (See fig. 3, and fig. 4) The researcher writes,

[The] South End . . . is the strongest in physical qualities, though I am less sure of its boundaries than for Back Bay and Beacon Hill... There is a strong differentiation in its gridiron street system: n-s streets are residential, narrow, highly traveled; e-w streets are more commercial, have fewer... apt. bldgs... and are very heavily traveled... As I walked through this area it seemed like . . . a visible symphony: a theme and constant beat, or rhythm, with a thousand variations within the theme. The stronger variations are expressed in groups of 5-15 houses... suggesting the periods and different builders involved. Other variations, like brightly painted doors, individualistic planting, etc., are expressive of the people who live in each house. To me, this is the ideal of urban neighborhoods: an imposed discipline and order, strong enough to bind together but not so strong as to blot out the individual’s self-expression.

In the field notes we witness artistic discovery, the “visible symphony,” in combination with scientific observation, “imposed discipline and order.” From the tension of such ideologies Lynch’s project of ‘imaging’ the city was conceived.


Figure 3 Sketch map (1955) from Lynch's Image of the City project (M.I.T. Archives and special Collections)
The central theme that Lynch proposed to study with cognitive mapping is legibility or the visual quality of a city in which its parts can be recognized with ease and can be “organized into a coherent pattern.” Lynch considered legibility or clarity a crucial element.
for city inhabitants, not only in the situation of being completely lost, but even in the broader sense of being in touch with one's surroundings. For this reason, the 'environmental image' was the key attribute of an individual coming to terms with the external world.\textsuperscript{48} The environmental image for Lynch was the product of both "immediate sensation" and the "memory of past experience," and is used to "interpret information and to guide action."\textsuperscript{49}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{diagram.png}
\caption{Diagram showing how legibility or an environmental image based on navigability can affect the individual experientially}
\end{figure}

The manipulation or design of the external environment was thought to directly affect an individual's environmental image, which clarifies why Lynch's project impacts both the analysis of physical space in the city, and the inhabitant's 'image' of their surroundings. We can see the influence here of Wiener's writing on the "machine" that is conditioned by its

\textsuperscript{48} See Denis Wood, "PDPaI." (Walker Art Center, 2003, pp. 4). http://gallery9.walkerart.org/bookmark.html?id=599&type=text&bookmark=1 (accessed March 4, 2006). It should be noted that Lynch never directly used the term 'cognitive mapping', but subsequent followers of Lynch and urban planners have attributed Lynch's 'environmental image' to the first notions of cognitive mapping. Many variations of 'cognitive mapping' techniques have been explored and exploited since Lynch's Image of the City. Urban planners in the U.S. have added to Lynch's techniques, to name a few; Donald Appleyard, and Lloyd Rodwin focused on the perceptual conflicts between designers and local residents; psychologist David Stea and geographer Denis Wood claimed ownership of a U.S. version of psychogeography (1971), but pursued it with the intention of 'understanding' how local residents in Mexican cities 'imaged' place, rather than using it for future development; psychologist Robert J. Beck and Wood worked on how mental maps might evolve with tourist experience in foreign cities; geographer Thomas Saarinen collected mental maps while at the University of Chicago to study environmental perception; geographer Reginald Golledge was using similar techniques to study human spatial behavior; and finally, geographer Roger Downs was using mental maps in education at Penn State.

\textsuperscript{49} Lynch, 4.
The importance for a legible environmental image was both practical and emotional, and based on this, experience could be understood in the following four approaches:

1. **Individual growth.** Not only could legibility and the environmental image help one to map direction and move about efficiently, but it could also have broader applications; as an “organizer of activity or belief or knowledge;” the possibility of choice and acquisition of information. Lynch gives the historical example of traditional resting places on a trail on the island of Tikopia where people would rest on their daily commute. These places give form (imageability) to the journey and become a personal and social experience. A second example is Pratolini’s autobiographical novel, which describes people who followed imaginary tracks through a ‘razed’ and empty section of Florence in their daily walks; the streets that were once there no longer existed. The experiences that Lynch describes seem to capture the idea of memory traces, the personal journey and the individual control of space.

2. **Social role.** If the physical space of the city is organized and legible it can lend itself to the collection of ‘symbols’ and ‘collective memories’, which are informed by and inspire social gatherings. Lynch gives the example of the “home town” being a common point of contact between soldiers during the war. Familiarity and memory again play a critical role in this experience.

3. **Emotional security.** If what one considers ‘home’ is ‘vivid’ and ‘distinctive’ there could exist a deeper comfort and harmony, which gives the individual a sense of

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50 Wiener (1955), 10.
51 Ibid.
52 Lynch, 126.
emotional security. Lynch describes this as ‘rightness’ with the patterning of the environment, a contrast to the fear of disorientation.

4. **Heightened depth of human experience.** If the city is more legible in people’s minds it could become a “powerful symbol of a complex society,” which gives it ‘expressive’ meaning, the potential heightening of daily experience.\(^5\) Lynch gives the example of Proust’s description of the church steeple in Combray, where he spent his childhood: “It was always to the steeple that one must return, always it which dominated everything else, summing up the houses with an unexpected pinnacle.”\(^5\) This heightening of daily experience seems to be a short-hand or stereotype of the environment that symbolizes a place, both for people living there and for outsiders, but not necessarily in the same way.

**Public images**

In exploring the idea of legibility and the environmental image Lynch realized the potential of the everyday individual to “play an active role” in understanding and changing his/her surroundings. Lynch asserts, “He should have the power to change that image to fit changing needs.”\(^5\)\(^5\) While understanding the potential of the individual in this process Lynch felt it was more productive for city planning to obtain a more generalized image, or “public image.” Lynch’s method of action relied on interviewing long time city inhabitants and having them sketch and talk about imaginary journeys through the city. This method produced the “existence of a consistent image which is used to describe or recollect the city

\(^{53}\) Lynch, 5.


\(^{55}\) Lynch, 6.
in the absence of the real thing." By combining these images Lynch attempted to synthesize a public image of agreement that could best be used in reasessing the city. Lynch defined the public image as, "areas of agreement which might be expected to appear in the interaction of a single physical reality, a common culture, and a basic physiological nature."

In this process Lynch deconstructed the environmental image based on three components: identity, structure and meaning. Identity relates to an individual being able to distinguish or identify objects from surrounding elements in the environment. Structure relates to the 'spatial' or 'pattern relation' of the object to the observer and to other objects. Lynch defines meaning as the practical or emotional relationship between the object and observer. Lynch also mentions that these components should be abstracted for analysis, but in reality appear together. It is also critical to note that Lynch's interest in the physical legibility of the city led him to focus only on the first two components, identity and structure. Lynch admitted that meaning is not as easily manipulated as the first two components, as he writes:

If it is our purpose to build cities for the enjoyment of vast numbers of people of widely diverse background—and cities which will also be adaptable to future purposes—we may even be wise to concentrate on the physical clarity of the image and to allow meaning to develop without our direct guidance.

Lynch's translation of physical attributes of the city into public images was an attempt to explore how the city could be discovered and patterned into a coherent whole.

56 Ibid, 154.
57 Ibid, 7.
58 Ibid, 8.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
The process of cognitive mapping

The cognitive mapping process that Lynch employed took place in three U.S. cities, Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles. The structure of his process involved two parts: the first, an interview of a small sample of citizens, focusing on the environmental image and second, a comparison of the interview to a systematic examination of the environmental image by trained observers in the field. The first trained observation revealed five 'elements' of the city that would be used as a hypothesis to test the environmental image of individuals. Lynch defined them as paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks.

1. Paths are the 'channels' along which a person moves; such as, 'streets', 'walkways', 'transit lines', 'canals', 'railroads'. Paths can be thought of as the primary element that many of the other elements are arranged around.

2. Edges tend to separate areas of the city; they form physical boundaries and act as organizing features, such as a shoreline or wall.

3. Districts are "medium-to-large" sections of the city that a person can enter "inside of." Lynch defines them as having an identifiable "character" once inside.

4. Nodes are junctions, crossings or convergences of paths, "moments of shift from one structure to another. Nodes can also be areas of concentration, such as a street corner.

5. Landmarks are typically external reference points in the form of physical objects; 'building', 'sign', 'store', etc. Lynch was careful to note that the five elements are helpful for fragmenting the city into parts for study, but can change in reality; for example a highway can act as a landmark.

61 I will use cognitive mapping to refer to Lynch's project as a whole.
62 Lynch, 140.
63 Lynch, 47-48. (Includes reference to all elements listed above).
for one individual, while being viewed as a path by another. Lynch also points out that none of the element types exist in isolation, many overlap and inform the other. The element types were tested and refined in the interviews, which consisted of a city resident sketching a ‘map of the city’, describing in detail an imaginary trip through the city, and a listing of parts of the city that were thought to be most vivid.\(^64\) A second interview consisted of citizens identifying and organizing pictures of the city and placing them in their ‘proper’ position on a large map. This same group was then taken out into the city and asked to take a trip, while being accompanied by an observer, with a tape recorder, asking them to point out and talk about certain elements that were familiar or evoked emotion. In order to compare the subjective ‘images’ gathered in the interview Lynch performed systematic field observations, tracing over the same trips as the interviewees, along with mapping the area and targeting the same five elements.

**Conclusion**

Lynch’s project was conceived in the postwar climate of new breakthroughs in science and the integration of artistic and scientific techniques. Two influential figures were Norbert Wiener and Gyorgy Kepes. Wiener’s work on cybernetics offered Lynch the idea of a feedback loop that became the basis for his interviewing process, which can be summarized as: the city offers visual information, the subject takes in that information cognitively and transfers it to the map, the urban planner analyzes the map and uses it to redesign the city, and the redesign changes the future behavior of the original subject. Kepes’ influence on Lynch can be seen in ideas regarding relationships between art and science, “man and

\(^{64}\) Ibid, 140.
nature,” “patterning the environment,” “equilibrium,” and “social issues.” Lynch’s cognitive mapping project was an integration of all these ideas, attempting to bring the urban environment into equilibrium with the alienated subject through a patterning of physical elements. The process of cognitive mapping attempted to construct a “public image” where city inhabitants were involved in a series of interviews, including: real and imaginary trips, aural recordings, identification of photographs, and drawings of sketch maps. All this data was then synthesized by Lynch and his team and compiled into one vision of the city. The resulting maps are spatial and project the problems of the environment, along with the mentally ‘vivid’ elements. Legibility was the key component in this process of ‘seeing’ the whole city and was proposed to foster “individual growth” (organized knowledge), “social roles” (collective memories), “emotional security” (comfort and harmony), and “heightened experience” (a powerfully symbolic environment).

Situationist psychogeography

The following section investigates the psychogeographic mapping techniques of the Situationist International (1957–1972). The question I am interested in is: What was the historical context, motivation and methods for the use of psychogeography? In answering this questions it should be noted that this study will focus on the Situationist’s early phase (1957–1962), and to an even greater degree on the years leading up to their formation. The reason for this relates to the invention of psychogeography, and related explorations in urban
space, which actually occurred from about 1952–1957; 1957 being both the year the SI formed and the birth of the psychogeographic map The Naked City.65

Figure 6 Psychogeographic mapping was created through spatializing actions or dérives. A person on a dérive experiences the city one ‘unity of atmosphere’ to another

Avant-garde influence

The Situationist International (SI) was an artistic/politico group formed in Cosio d’Arroscia, Italy in the summer of 1957. The formation was a uniting of avant-garde artists, poets, writers, critics and filmmakers devoted to both modern art and radical politics that concerned the urban environment.66 The two main groups that formed the SI were the Paris-based Letterist International (LI), (1952–1957), also led by Guy Debord, and the northern Italian International Movement for an Imaginist Bahaus (IMIB), (1954–1957), led by Asger

65 Sadler, 4-5. (It should be obvious that this places the SI’s experiments with psychogeography slightly before, but basically at the same time as Lynch’s work. This relationship will be discussed later in the comparison).
66 Dempsey, 213.
Jorn. There was also Ralph Rummey, of the “London Psychogeographical Committee”. The LI and IMIB shared the desire to reconfigure the ideological and artistic underpinnings of previous avant-garde groups, such as Surrealism, Dada, and CoBrA, and combine them into a more overt relationship between art and politics. (See fig. 7)

67 The “London Psychogeographical Association” is listed as the third “group” represented by its only known member, Ralph Rummey.
68 Dempsey, 213.
Figure 7 Avant-garde influence on SI (recreated from a similar diagram by Sadler, 1998)
The LI, led by Debord, had broken away from the original ‘Letterist’ group, led by Romanian poet and theorist Isidore Isou. The Letterist group had an obsession with language and letters, which was influenced by Surrealist and Dada techniques of word manipulation, and experiences of everyday life. A pictographic book created by Letterist Gabriel Pomerand in 1950 depicted the role of urban subcultures in forming unique forms of language. (See fig. 8) The book was called *Saint ghetto des prêts*, (English translation would be “our ghetto lendings”), and detailed the experience of living on the left bank through pictographic or social semiotic descriptions. This book is significant in its reference to forms of pre-psychogeographic exploration, along with its emphasis on subjective forms of language that resisted dominant forms of discourse of the city, such as Le Corbusier’s rationalist architecture, capitalism and modernization. (See fig. 9) The problem with Letterism was that it lacked the political agenda to transform urban space and was therefore denounced by two of its members, Gil Wolman and Guy Debord, who broke away shortly after 1950 to form the LI.

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69 Sadler, 96. (This example proposes a form of subjective experience design. The question: What does it look like to live in your life? Is offered here. The moment this question is asked it needs to be problematized in terms of a search for “reality” of experience, or a ‘figuration’ and also how it could be understood by another person. This type of experience design can be used in a pragmatic sense of manipulation (for capitalistic means), or a liberating sense, ‘understanding the other’).

The LI emphasized cultural revolution, which led to some of the first ideas regarding psychogeography, unitary urbanism and the *dérive*, all ways of manipulating the rationalized urban environment of postwar Europe. One of the LI's members, Ivan Chtcheglov (also
referred to as Gilles Ivain), was the first to propose that acts of wandering through the urban environment could be used to “realize forgotten desires” and draw relationships between the environment and human creativity. Chtcheglov’s “Formulary for a new urbanism (Formulary),” published in the LI’s journal Potlatch in 1953, expresses; “we are bored in the city, we really have to strain still to discover mysteries on the sidewalk billboards, the latest state of humor and poetry.” The ‘formulary’ inspired the need for psychogeographic exploration of the physical city; “certain shifting angles, certain receding perspectives, allow us to glimpse original conceptions of space, but this remains fragmentary,” along with the emotional, “everyone wavers between the emotionally still-alive past and the already dead future.” Chtcheglov describes the need for a combination of artistic and scientific methods to overcome the fragmentary and rationalized architectural complex of the city, as seen in the passage:

Our imaginations, haunted by the old archetypes, have remained far behind the sophistication of the machines. The various attempts to integrate modern science into new myths remain inadequate. Meanwhile abstraction has invaded all the arts, contemporary architecture in particular. Pure plasticity, inanimate, storyless, soothes the eye. Elsewhere other fragmentary beauties can be found—while the promised land of syntheses continually recedes into the distance.

Psychogeography’s offering of subjective empowerment through memory is the basis for Chtcheglov’s writing. It was the absence and presence of certain physical, emotional and

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71 Gardiner, 104.
72 The idea of Potlatch is offered in Lefebvre’s idea on festival: a trans-historical phenomenon that signaled the possibility of a life based on sharing, communal gathering, pleasure and the human desire to play, rather than a utilitarian based economic society. (Anderotti, 15).
74 Ibid.
social contradictions in the city that were experienced through memory; this idea carries resonance with Lynch’s cognitive mapping, as Chcheglov notes,

... sighting backward in time, the absence of the object becomes a presence one can feel. More precisely: although the quality of the impression generally remains indefinite, it nevertheless varies with the nature of the removed object and the importance accorded it by the visitor, ranging from serene joy to terror.75

Shortly after Chcheglov’s explorations in psychogeography came Ralph Rummey’s psychogeographic journey, “The Leaning Tower of Venice.” (See fig. 10) Rummey was the inventor and only member of the London Psychogeographical Committee to join the SI in 1957.76 His approach to psychogeography was different than Chcheglov’s because it used a ‘photo story’ technique in combination with the standard manipulation of a traditional map. The ‘fotoromanzi’ magazines, or photo stories aimed at female readers, influenced Rummey in charting Venice’s ‘labyrinthine’ nature through photographs. His plan was to create a map showing the areas where no one went, to “de-spectacularize” Venice by suggesting unknown routes through it that provoked specific emotional states and many possibilities for disorientation.77 The photos in the document were taken along a black line drawn on the map. Rummey attempted to collect ‘data’ through the photos in order to legitimatize psychogeography. By tracking the different emotional states in the zones through photos Rummey hoped to curtail the Surrealist notions of chance. Rummey compares his dérive through Venice as similar to “the tunnels mice used to make in the lawn...” and “the tracks

75 Ibid, 25.
76 Ralph Rummey, The Consul (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1999), 37.
77 Rummey, 47.
of the rabbits..."78 This is suggestive of the freedom of movement that psychogeographic exploration demanded.

Figure 10 “The Leaning Tower of Venice,” a psychogeographic map by Ralph Rummey (Blazwick, 1989)

At about the same time that the LI, Chtcheglov and Rummey were formulating ideas about psychogeography and urbanism the IMIB was performing similar experiments in ‘urban nomadism’ and cultural anthropology under the leadership of Asger Jorn, Pinot Gallizio and others. The IMIB originated from the split of the CoBrA movement, which the artist and architect Constant was a part of. As an architect Constant despised the rationalist grid instituted by Piet Mondrian and Le Corbusier; the grid was a symbol of the functionalist society where the “truly human parts of life” were sacrificed. Michel Colle, writing in the CoBrA journal noted the “machine-like” quality of Le Corbusian architecture; “…at the end

78 Ibid, 66.
of his day, man quits his factory for working in for his factory for eating and sleeping in.”

The IMIB was also opposed to the rationalist tendencies of the New Bauhaus being set up in Ulm, Germany by Max Bill. Jorn disagreed with Bill’s emphasis of formal abstraction and industrial aesthetics. To counter Bill the IMIB focused on subjectivity, experimentation, automatism and chance. Jorn searched for the artist’s place in the “machine age” and felt that machines should be used for creative purposes. His solution was to treat artistic research as identical to “human science,” emphasizing artistic collaboration with scientists. As Jorn writes, “artistic research is identical to ‘human science’, which for us means ‘concerned’ science, not purely historical science.” Jorn challenged the nature of industrial ‘automation’, or the mechanized tasks in factories that took the place of human labor. He saw two opposing perspectives regarding automation: “it deprives the individual of adding anything personal to automated production, which is a fixation of progress; and at the same time it saves human energy by massively liberating it from reproductive and uncreative activities.”

The idea of not allowing any “personal” addition to the automated task recalls Marxist dialectical materialism and can be seen as an important ideological precursor to the ‘individual’ transformation of urban space in psychogeography.

Jorn’s partner in the IMIB was Giuseppe Pinot-Gallizio, a local left-wing politician in Alba, also an artist, chemist, pharmacist, aromatologist, and archaeologist. Pinot-Gallizio invented painting machines to create “industrial paintings,” which consisted of mass-

80 Ford, 40.
83 Ford, 41.
produced paintings created from a continuous roll of canvas. The intention was to deflate the manufacturing cost and commodity value of art, thereby preparing for potlatch exchange. 84 The industrial paintings were used like wallpaper, covering the walls, floors and ceiling of the René Drouin Gallery in Paris. Pinot-Gallizio referred to this “total experience” as the “Cavern of anti-matter” and sprayed the air with perfume and had models walking around within the space. The experiential nature of Pinot-Gallizio’s environment is similar to psychogeography in forming new ways of living, new ‘situations’. The IMIB wanted the machine to be mastered and utilized “for the single, useless, anti-economical and artistic gesture through which a new society—anti-economical, poetic, magical and artistic—will come into existence.” 85 The work of Jorn and Pinot-Gallizio during the IMIB can be seen as precursors to the Situationist concepts of transforming everyday ‘situations’ and ‘unitary urbanism’.

In September of 1956 at the First World Congress of Free Artists the LI and IMIB decided to band together to officially become the Situationist International the following year. The name ‘Situationists’ defined the basic premise of the SI’s theory: “the singular enchanting situations experienced in life strictly restrain and limit this life. We must try to construct situations, i.e., collective environments, ensembles of impressions determining the quality of a moment.” 86 The post-war humanist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre gave existential meaning to the term ‘situation’ when he argued that life is a series of given situations which affect the individual’s consciousness and will, and which must in turn be negotiated by the

84 Sadler, 37.
individual. In the journal "Internationale Situationiste," no. 1, (June 1958), the concept "constructed situation" was defined as, "a moment of life concretely and deliberately constructed by the collective organization of a unitary ambiance and a game of events." Debord suggested in his introduction of the SI that urban transformation will take place if "emotionally moving situations," rather than "emotionally moving forms" are understood.

The key components for the creation of situations in urban space were also officially introduced in the first issue of "Internationale Situationiste," including: psychogéographie ("psychogeography"), dérive ("drift"), and urbanisme unitaire ("unitary urbanism").

Psychogeography was defined by the SI as, “the study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals.” If something was considered ‘psychogeographical’ it was “that which manifests the geographical environment’s direct emotional effects.” And finally, one who takes part in psychogeography was considered a ‘psychogeographer,’ “one who explores and reports on psychogeographical phenomena.” Psychogeography was mapped using collage, poem, photography or prose.

The act of psychogeography was almost always accompanied, or achieved by the use of dérive, “a mode of experimental behavior linked to the conditions of urban society: a technique of transient passage through varied ambiances. Also used to designate a specific period of continuous deriving.” The dérives refer to the movement required in locating the

87 Sadler, 45.
88 Blazwick, 22.
89 Guy Debord, “Toward a Situationist Internationale,” 1957 (Blazowick, 26).
90 Sadler, 11. Sadler lists in his notes the Potlatch publications from 1954–1956 in which these concepts were introduced.
91 Adam Barnard, “The legacy of the Situationist International: The production of situations of creative resistance” (Capital & Class #84, 2005), 108.
psychogeographic hubs. As Wollen explains, “the dérive referred to an experimental
technique of ‘transient passage through varied ambiances’, a kind of chance wandering from
area to area, in the hope of finding provocative interlocutors or strange and moving
encounters.”

Unitary Urbanism was the goal and combined outcome of psychogeography and the
dérive; it was defined as “the theory of the combined use of arts and techniques for the
integral construction of a milieu in dynamic relation with experiments in behavior.” The
vision was a large-scale utopian city that was unitary in multiple ways, aiming to combine
space, art, architecture, and the social body. As such the spatial ‘quarters’ or ‘ambiances’
existing in the city were proposed by Chtcheglov to be included as “states-of-mind” quarters,
producing specific emotional effects on individuals, such as the “bizarre quarter—happy
quarter—noble and tragic quarter...” Unitary urbanism aimed for art and architecture to
integrate and become a playful means of social organization. The city would not be based on
functional order, but rather on purposeful disorder. Unitary urbanism would be one organism
with distinct organs.

Constant’s “New Babylon” project—a series of drawings and models based on the
theory of unitary urbanism—conceptualized a playful cluster of architectural spaces that
would allow for inhabitants to physically manipulate spaces and participate in a perfectly
suited environment for psychogeography and the dérive. The SI conceived unitary urbanism
as a form of liberation from rational control, they intended a ‘changing of the guard’ in the

93 Blazwick, 22. Definitions for the Situationist’s experimental behavior were published in the Internationale Situationiste No 1, (June,
1958).
95 Sadler, 138.
city, where rather than government control the everyday citizen would be able to directly shape the urban environment. Constant theorized New Babylon as a “dynamic labyrinth” where spatial boundaries would seem to dissolve; activities would not be constrained by spatial form. This utopian vision, however, proved to be problematic; the dynamic labyrinth carried implicit technological determinism, celebrating the post-war reconstruction of Paris, along with the emergence of mechanized technological environments. In addition, like Lynch’s work, Constant’s work took on a mechanistic metaphor—a by-product of cybernetic culture. Constant conceived of New Babylon as a “machine working on the emotions of its inhabitants.”

In 1958 Debord and Constant coauthored the “Declaration of Amsterdam,” in an attempt to summarize the principles of unitary urbanism; with tensions already becoming clear the document was split between Constant’s hope for a “perfect spatial art,” and the coordination of “artistic and scientific means,” and Debord’s emphasis on a “new kind of collective creation,” a more socio-cultural project of city transformation. The self-critical Situationists asked:

At what point should the Situationist avant-garde disengage? When would Situationist agitation give way to anarchic free play? What really would be the relationship between the architecture of the old city and that of the Situationist city?

96 Sadler, 146-147.
97 Barnard, 109.
98 Ibid, 110.
99 Sadler, 121.
100 Ibid.
Such internal criticism caused unitary urbanism to never be realized and as such the SI’s focus shifted away from grandiose artistic and architectural ideas and towards exclusively theoretical and political ideas.

The dériva: theory and influence

The Situationist theory and politics of psychogeographic experimentation culminated in the practice of the dériva. The influence for this practice was a merging together of artistic, avant-garde, and Marxist philosophical traditions. The most evident influences can be traced to three primary sources: the Baudilarian flâneur, Surrealism’s concept of the dériva as a technique of defamiliarization, and philosopher Henry Lefebvre’s critique of everyday life. The following will discuss the significance and influence of each.

Flâneur. The French art critic and poet Charles Baudelaire first described the flâneur in the mid 19th century. Baudelaire would many times use his friend, painter and illustrator Constantin Guys, as an example of flâneuristic tendencies. As Rosemary Lloyd explains:

Guys is associated both with modernism and with the artist par excellence through the intense curiosity he reveals for the masses that throng contemporary urban existence. The crowd Baudelaire insists, is his domain: “His passion and his profession is that of espousing the crowd. For the perfect stroller, for the passionate observer, it is an immense delight to make one’s home among the masses, in the inconstant, in the fugitive and in the infinite...”

The flâneur, as Mari Laanemets describes, “was the first to think of cognising and representing the public places of a city and their atmosphere.” The idea of ‘cognising’ and

http://www.google.com/search?q=cache:F4i51wF3FeYJ:www.eki.ee/km/place/pdf-
‘representing’ a space in the city hints at the idea of transforming a space, an aspect that the dérive evolved as its primary tool of spectacular subversion. Laanemets refers to the dérive as the ‘post-modern’ flâneur, and makes the distinction of the post-modern flâneur being much more socially engaged versus the Baudelairian flâneur:

He interferes with the process and situations of production, plunges into the events of everyday life, focuses on the transfer of meanings, but also transfers focus from mystery and romanticism to the common. Also the initiative, spreading in modern art to link individuals with their local surroundings, makes a flâneur an important character (Sederholm 1998: 194–204). An artist as a tourist, a situationalist loiterer par excellence, often shifts attention from the aesthetic considerations of a work of art in favour of social reality and everyday situations.\footnote{103}

The purpose of the flâneur was to observe, but also to rattle the mechanistic and rational tendencies of the city. The flâneur saw the city as a playground that revealed new situations, but as Debord has noted in his “Theory of the Dérive”:

The dérive was not simply an updating of nineteenth-century flânerie, the Baudelairian strolling of the “man in the crowd.” This is not to say that they do not share some characteristics: both the flâneur and the person on the dérive move among the crowd without being one with it. They are both “already out of place,” neither bourgeois nor working-class. But whereas the flâneur’s ambiguous class position represents a kind of aristocratic holdover (a position that is ultimately recuperated by the bourgeoisie), the person on the dérive consciously attempts to suspend class allegiances for some time.\footnote{104}

\footnote{Laanemets, 13.}
\footnote{McDonough, 257.}
The most important distinction between the dérive and the flâneur was the masculine, controlling gaze that the flâneur assumed. McDonough writes, "It is precisely these class-and gender-specific privileges that the dérive critiques in its refusal of the controlling gaze." In short, the flâneur’s influence on the Situationist dérive can be witnessed in intense passion for observation and critique of the modern urban environment. As a modern artist the flâneur placed greater emphasis on social reality, rather than aesthetic considerations; this was highly influential on the Situationists. In addition, the SI adopted the flâneuristic enjoyment of disrupting the rational tendencies of bourgeois society. The difference was that Situationist psychogeographic observation of the city was driven by political and social transformation.

**Surrealism.** The SI’s struggle against bourgeois idealism can be traced directly to Surrealism’s synthesis of art and everyday life, and the self-actualization of creative potential of each and every human being. These influences culminated in the dérive as a technique of “defamiliarizing” everyday life in order to bring about critical awareness. The key aspect of Surrealism that can be witnessed in Situationist practices is that of overcoming the alienation of everyday life. The Surrealist dérive and the Situationist dérive sought dealienation or authentic experience through the transfiguration of everyday life. As Gardiner describes, Romanticism and Christianity identified everyday life in a rational sense, where “authentic experience” could only be grasped in the supernatural domain, outside of everyday life. The Situationist dérive attempted a transfiguration within everyday life and a quest for authentic experience by defamiliarizing capitalist space into ‘ludic’ spaces. The

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105 Ibid.
106 Gardiner, 106.
107 Gardiner, 34.
Surrealist *dérive*’s aimless wanderings and chance encounters took place in the mid 1920s. Andre Breton’s book *Nadja* describes a *dérive* in which a mental patient leads Breton on a chance discovery of Paris. The aspect of chance was a major factor of differentiation for Debord and the SI, along with aspects of Surrealism that suggested aestheticism, Freudian notions of the unconscious, mysticism, the sublime, and cult-like thinking. Surrealists were also passive, over emphasizing the ‘imaginary’; in reaction the SI wanted ‘conscious’ revolutionary transformation in urban space. As Debord commented,

> The imaginary is that which tends to become real,” wrote an author whose name, on account of his notorious intellectual degradation, I have since forgotten. The involuntary restrictiveness of such a statement could serve as a touchstone exposing various farcical literary revolutions: That which tends to remain unreal is empty babble.

The *dérive* did not completely avoid Surrealist use of chance, it was still needed as a component, but the push by Debord for a more social, scientific, and political application was evident. This ambiguous position of the *dérive* made it unique from its predecessors. The *dérive* required a letting go or bracketing of all one’s commitments to work, relationships, motivations, and leisure; allowing oneself to be drawn in by the urban terrain in an explorative manner, but at the same time dominating the “psychogeographical variations by the knowledge and calculations of their possibilities.” The Situationist’s more aggressive political agenda critiqued rationalist urban planner’s over-simplification of the environment, along with capitalist driven destruction of neighborhoods and the division of the city based

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108 Blazwick, 11.
109 McDonough, 259.
on class lines. Surrealism’s inability to parallel such a revolutionary socio-political agenda, in addition to eventual recuperation by mainstream art galleries and popular culture, allowed for the succession of the SI as a new avant-garde.

**Henry Lefebvre.** The unorthodox Marxist philosopher Henry Lefebvre shared the Situationist desire to create sociopolitical analogues of Surrealists practices. Lefebvre had originally been involved with Surrealist leader André Breton in the 1920s and owed much of his ideas on transforming everyday life to him. At the heart of Lefebvre’s theory was an image of the human subject as an “active, creative force that always seeks to transform the conditions of its very existence, to turn one’s life into a ‘work of art’.”¹¹² Lefebvre’s critique of everyday life posited the transformation from “habitualized and degraded ‘dead time’ into a space/time ripe with human potential and oriented towards self-realization.”¹¹³ The SI and Lefebvre looked forward to an urbanism that would liberate humanity from oppressive work ethics; they sought free expression of human desire through potlatch exchange, spontaneity, play and festival. Lefebvre’s “Critique of Everyday Life” had a major impact on the Situationist theories of urban space. In proposing that the rationalism of city planners and the functionalism of government caused a “technique of separation” or fragmentation, Lefebvre suggested that the individual becomes alienated from authentic existence.¹¹⁴ Lefebvre’s theory of fragmentation is linked to society’s obsession with rationality, technology, and efficiency. As Gardiner describes, “As rationality becomes increasingly specialized and focused on discrete areas of technical control, the result is a fragmentation of society, culture

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¹¹² Gardiner, 101.
¹¹³ Ibid.
and consciousness.”¹¹⁵ Authenticity could be reconciled by creating a connection in everyday life between the individual and more humanistic, festive, social and playful desires, void of capitalistic boundaries. Both Lefebvre and the Situationists strived to create the “moment” or “situation” where people would realize the constraints of government and capitalist control, and break free.¹¹⁶ For Lefebvre this would be an “eruptive moment,” where the individual would experience the release of suppressed emotions. Lefebvre’s ideas came from the utopian influences of humanist Marxism and form the basis for his theory of the “Total man” or the de-alienated subject that is able to view social life in its ‘total’ conception.¹¹⁷ Lefebvre believed the Renaissance city was “the model of an urban reality in which pleasure and beauty... counted more than profit or exchange.” Lefebvre pictured a city whose principal use was “celebration: the unproductive consumption of huge wealth and money with no other advantage except pleasure and prestige.”¹¹⁸ Lefebvre’s desire to see these theories in practice led to the Situationist exploration and mapping of the urban landscape.

The practice of the dérive

A complete understanding of the Situationist dérive reveals four integral parts: the collective nature, time duration, spatial field, and mapping. In the following a brief account of these parts and their contribution to a successful dérive will be discussed.

Collective nature. The dérive is meant to be a collective effort, one can dérive alone, but the most successful derives entail several small groups of two or three people. The reason

¹¹⁵ Gardiner, 89.
¹¹⁶ Sadler, 45.
¹¹⁷ Gardiner, 79.
¹¹⁸ Ibid, 122-123.
for this relates to the more objective/empirical aspect of psychogeography; the groups allow multiple people to reach the "same awakening of consciousness, since the cross-checking of these different group's impressions makes it possible to arrive at objective conclusions." In addition Debord notes that the "character" of the dérive can 'diminish' if there are more than five people in a group. This suggests that larger social groups might threaten the intimacy needed for spatializing actions.

**Time duration.** Debord writes that the average dérive is one day, but some have lasted as long as two months, resulting in an experience that gave "rise to new objective conditions of behavior, which bring about the disappearance of a good number of the old ones." In this quote Debord seems to suggest an altered state of mind, possibly likened to a fast, in which the participant experiences psychological change after prolonged physical stress. The use of time seems to be most important during the dérive, as Debord writes of random rendezvous points, "if the time and place have been well chosen, the subject's use of time will take an unexpected turn." The 'sum of possibilities' is suggested in Situationist fashion as of greater importance than 'productive' time.

**Spatial field.** The spatial field of the dérive is dependent on whether the dérive is "precisely delimited" or "vague" and whether the goal is "studying the terrain" or "emotional disorientation." Debord mentions that the above options many times overlap, making them impossible to separate into a "pure state." However, taking a 'cab' versus walking in a specific area offers differentiation between the 'cab' as a form of 'emotional disorientation' (a trip outside one's normal surroundings) and 'walking' as a form of 'studying the terrain'.

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121 Ibid, 52.
(primarily a method of psychogeography). In addition, the spatial field was determined by the area to be studied: a whole city or a "static-dérive," such as a whole day in a single train station. Once the spatial field has been determined the last step would be calculating "directions of penetration," which requires the counseling of maps. The study of ordinary, 'ecological', and psychogeographical maps is required, along with making changes and improvements to them. Debord gives examples of past dérives: "slipping by night into houses undergoing demolition, hitchhiking nonstop and without destination through Paris during a transportation strike in the name of adding to the confusion, wandering in subterranean catacombs forbidden to the public..."

Mapping. The remapping of an area was the central goal of the dérive, and even more important than the discovery of "unities of ambiance, of their main components and their spatial localization..." was perceiving their "principal axes of passage, their exits and their defenses." However, descriptions of derives were thought to severely undercut the actual experience of an actual dérive. Even with this caveat, the use of maps was essential for determining the intricate patterning of emotional connection and social arrangement of the city. The maps allowed for visual suppression and destruction of borders dividing up the social spaces of the city. Maps had traditionally been made by those wishing to impose order upon the city, therefore Debord considered the ability for any individual to (re) map the city to be empowering. The first of these maps were likened to ancient itineraries:

With the aid of old maps, aerial photographs and experimental derives, one can draw up hitherto lacking maps of influences, maps whose inevitable imprecision at this
early stage is no worse than that of the first navigational charts; the only difference is that it is a matter no longer of precisely delineating stable continents, but of changing architecture and urbanism.  

Psychogeography and social geography

Within the practice of the dérive there is a tendency toward scientific study, such as seen in social geography. The psychogeographer viewed social interaction as integral to the production of city space, and in this context shared many characteristics with social geography, as opposed to academic geography. As Sadler writes, “against academic geography’s ‘scientific’ taxonomy of the physical factors that supposedly determine the character of a space, social geography theorized space as the product of society.”  

Debord felt that social geography could provide psychogeography with “abundant data,” although he cautioned the “narrow social space” with which ecological science limits itself. Debord even went as far as to validate psychogeography as a legitimate form of scientific investigation, hoping that it would attain the same recognition in the scientific realm as social geography or ‘ecological science’. In 1958 Debord wrote:

The ecological analysis of the absolute or relative character of fissures in the urban network, of the role of microclimates, of the distinct, self-contained character of administrative districts, and above all of the dominating action of centers of attraction, must be utilized and completed by psychogeographical methods. The objective passional terrain of the dérive must be defined in accordance both with its own logic and with its relations with social morphology.

127 Sadler, 92. Sadler gives credit to Kristin Ross’s, The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune (1988), pp. 85, for this passage.
128 Debord (1958). Knabb, 52. Also quoted in Sadler, 84.
129 Ibid. Also quoted in Sadler, p.50.
Social geographer Paul-Henry Chombart de Lauwe’s publishing of a map from the early 1950s titled “plotting all the trajectories effected in a year by a student inhabiting the 16th Arrondissement” (See fig. 11) became a major influence on the Situationist theory of space and restricted movement. The map tracks the routes of movement of a single student in a year, making a triangle that at each apex, designating home, piano lessons and school.130 Debord’s fascination with this map came out of the “narrowness of the real Paris in which each individual lives;” he saw the student’s path as a symbol of limited exposure to the possibility of new situations and experiences. Such an observation exemplifies the Situationist focus on restrictions of the human body and the rationalization of design.131 As Debord writes:

Such data—examples of a modern poetry capable of provoking sharp emotional reactions (in this case, indignation at the fact that there are people who live like that)—or even Burgess’s theory of Chicago’s social activities as being distributed in distinct concentric zones, will undoubtedly prove useful in developing derives.132

The “abundant data,” as Debord referred to the explorations and mapping of Chombart de Lauwe, became ‘proof’ for the SI that traditional planning had indeed reduced the intricacy of the city to a false sense of simplicity. The Situationists and others, such as Peter and Allison Smithson, reacted by analyzing the emotional effects of the oppressive city

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130 Wollen, 35.
131 A similar comparison is made within an issue of “Internationale Situationiste” (1961) where Henry Dreyfuss’s ergonomic and anthropometric studies diagram, “Maximum and normal horizontal work surfaces,” was displayed as an epitome of rationalist design research. (Sadler, 6).
through maps of their own. The proposal of the *dérive* was a way to break the strictly followed path and experience the subversive aspects of the city. The inspiration for unrestricted movement and a "sum of possibilities" was found in the Paris metro maps. (See fig. 12) One can see in these maps the frenzied resemblance to the arrows in The Naked City.

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Figure 11 Chombart de Lauwe's triangle of a student's movement (Saddler, 1998)

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133 Sadler, 20. "Peter Smithson, Cluster City, 1952, reprinted in Uppercase 3 (1961), Alison and Peter Smithson regarded the cluster model as empathetic to the complex indigenous lifestyles of the city. Its pattern was like an echo of the *Situationist* "drift" through the city, and it anticipated the plan of New Babylon, the *Situationist* city designed by Constant."

134 Ibid, 35.
Social geography not only provided the Situationists with an understanding of restrictive movement in urban space, but also with a scientific basis for the ‘quartier’, a ‘unit of ambiance’, or psychogeographic hub. In Debord’s “Theory of the Dérive” he references a second map of De Lauwe’s, “The residential units of the sector” (1952). (See fig. 13) Debord quoted De Lauwe’s notion of the quartier: “an urban neighborhood is determined not only by geographical and economic factors, but also by the image that its inhabitants and those of other neighborhoods have of it.”135 This map, both visually and conceptually, exposed

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Debord to the ‘quartier’; a “residential unit,” or neighborhood in Paris that’s’ existence could be ‘proven’. However, Chombart de Lauwe’s idea of a quartier is only the same as Debord’s psychogeographic hub as a fragment of the city, but different in that De Lauwe attempted to discover the quartier, while the SI constructed the quartier or psychogeographic hub.136 Debord attempted an illogical fragmenting of city space through psyghogeography, versus keeping the quartiers in tact.

Lefebvre’s ideas on ‘districts’ of the city were much closer to Debord’s than De Lauwe’s. Lefebvre, like Debord, was interested in the “tendencies of the urban units, their inertia, their explosion, their reorganization, in a word, the practice of ‘inhabiting’, rather than the ecology of the habitat.”137 The situationists were interested in the contradictions between emotional and physical space in the city, how the different fragments connect up in the form of ‘psychogeographic hubs’ or ‘units of emotional space’. As Lefebvre recounts:

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136 McDonough, 252.
137 Ibid, 252-253. This quote was originally taken from Henry Lefebvre, “Quartier et vie de quartier, Paris,” Cahiers de l’IAURP7 (1967).
The experiment [psychogeography] consisted of rendering different aspects or fragments of the city simultaneously, fragments that can only be seen successively, in the same way that there exist people who have never seen certain parts of the city. By using walkie-talkies the Situationists were able to form a narrative of the synchronic history of the city, to unify what has a certain unity, but a lost unity, a disappearing unity.\textsuperscript{138}

In the end, Situationist psychogeography resisted the scientific rigor of social geography; the Situationists were not interested in “proper social geography and psychology,” including that of Lynch’s academic affiliated cognitive mapping.\textsuperscript{139} The Situationists had broader interests and goals for psychogeography than merely a scientific tool of study, the SI viewed it as an activity for political and proactive citizenship. The psychogeographer distanced his/herself by opting for both subjective and objective forms of investigation. As Sadler writes, “the self cannot be divorced from the urban environment; on the other hand, it had to pertain to more than just the psyche of the individual if it was to be useful in the collective rethinking of the city.”\textsuperscript{140} This ambiguous position of combining the subjective with the objective, art with science and politics, posited psychogeography as a series of juxtapositions: an “inexact science,” dealing with “imprecise data,” “organized spontaneity” meant to suggest scientific research and data gathering, but at the same time celebrate the inability and undesirability for empirical results. As Debord writes,

The progress of psychogeography depends to a great extent on the statistical extension of its methods of observation, but above all on experimentation by means of concrete interventions in urbanism. Before this state is attained we cannot be certain of the objective truth of the first psychogeographical findings. But even if

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid, 280.
\textsuperscript{139} Sadler, 92-93.
\textsuperscript{140} Sadler, 77.
these findings should turn out to be false, they would still be false solutions to what is certainly a real problem. 141

Rather than an exacting science psychogeography and the dérive could be considered a “therapy,” a “fetishization of those parts of the city that could still rescue drifters from the clutches of functionalism, exciting the senses and the body.” 142 This was akin to an erotic tendency, a “sense of violent emotive possession over the streets,” or a militaristic tendency, “a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus.” 143 Therefore, even with striking similarities, the political and militaristic contestation of urban space made Situationist psychogeography altogether different from social geography.

**Conclusion**

The Situationist International’s psychogeographic mapping was created in opposition to rationalist city planning through a mixture of post-war avant-garde groups, humanist Marxist philosophy, social geography, and the SI’s own cultural revolutionary practices. It can be characterized through: class struggle, the quest for equilibrium, and the sovereign “decision” of the individual. 144 Debord situated the problems of the city historically, Hausmanization in Paris had gutted the city for the efficient movement of troops and artillery through the streets (in case of insurrections), and in the 1940s and 1950s urban planners were rearranging the city for the smooth flow of automobile traffic. The understanding of the city through psychogeography would allow the individual to experience an awakening of creative

142 Sadler, 80.
143 Ibid, 81.
144 Ibid, 92.
potential beyond the restrictive boundaries of capitalist space. Debord saw the city as restricting the conditions for individual control, play and emotional connection, and psychogeography attempted to place the city back in the individual’s control.

Lynch was less inclined towards individual control, as he writes in the accompanying ‘field notes’, “To me, this is the ideal of urban neighborhoods: an imposed discipline and order, strong enough to bind together but not so strong as to blot out the individual’s self-expression.”

Lynch attempts the ambiguous position of establishing collective order, while also allowing for individual voice. In the concept for a unitary urbanism the SI also assumed an equally ambiguous position, proposing to construct and impose an architecture that would work on the individual’s emotions. However, the SI self-critically proclaimed that there would need to come a time when the “control” was shifted to the masses. In Lynch’s program the control would stay in the hands of the designer, a more pragmatic solution for maintaining order, which is also reflective of the academic/professional stance of Lynch versus the radical/political stance of Debord. The difference is that while Debord understood that collective thought was needed he did not assume a utilitarian stance in attempting unification, but rather, he chose to maintain heterogeneity and celebrate the diversity of the environment in a “sum of possibilities.”


CHAPTER 3. COMPARATIVE MAP ANALYSIS

Introduction

This section addresses the question: What are the visual qualities of Lynch and Debord's maps? Along with a related question: How does the visual quality reflect and explain the major similarities, differences and compromises in their projects? The artistic and cultural strategies suggestive of experience design can be found in the map, as Peter Wollen has remarked, "maps, after all, are a form of graphic art, one which is particularly complex but inevitably carries with it a certain perspective on the world around us."\(^{147}\) This analysis will attempt to extract the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural dimensions of experience that relate to the visual composition of the map.\(^{148}\)

We can begin looking at Lynch and Debord's projects by familiarizing ourselves with the character of each project. In Lynch's sketch maps the author is Lynch, with assistance from Kepes, research assistants and city inhabitants; the subject is the city (Boston, Jersey City, or Los Angeles); and the theme is the mental image of the city, as imaged by inhabitants. In *The Naked City* Debord and Jorn are the authors; the subject is Paris; and the theme is psychogeographic mapping. In addition we can define the 'goal' of each map. The goal of Lynch's map was an understanding of the cognitive makeup of legibility; a legible environment would enable equilibrium between the individual and environment. In attempting to achieve this goal the maps were overwhelmingly used in the context of an *investigative process* into the mental image of inhabitants. Lynch's methodology can be

147 Wollen, 29.
thought of as *structural* because it categorizes disparate ‘parts’ of the environment and attempts to put them together into a *coherent, unified whole*, based on the mental image of the subject. This process was *pragmatic* because it helped the designer to discover the fragmented city as an environment not suitable for individual *comfort* and *orientation*. The individual in this new environment would benefit from multiple novel experiences, such as: knowledge of spatial location (the social benefit of being able to share stories about a place), emotional security (brought about by the vividness of the environment), and a sense of place (brought about by a symbolic environment).

In contrast to Lynch’s goal, the SI used maps overwhelmingly as a *revolutionary-political critique* of post-war forms of city planning. The city planning at the time was predominantly rationalist and functionalist in approach, *fragmenting*, or “dividing the city into functional zones and demolishing whole neighbourhoods in order to construct ‘modernized’ but socially and psychologically destructive new traffic systems.”149 The SI’s mapping was a *social construction* of non-utilitarian spaces in opposition to the rational control of the city. The SI’s principal methods, the *dérive* and psychogeography were investigative, but in a more introverted way; the SI did not recruit city inhabitants to practice psychogeography. Similar to Lynch, Debord shared an ultimate goal of *urban transformation*, but rather than legibility of physical form, the SI emphasized individual construction of *situations*, or moments of experience suggestive of human desire. The SI’s conception of art and design involved revolutionary socio-cultural activity, rather than aesthetic considerations. In short, Lynch’s mapping can be viewed as *investigative* and an ordering of disparate elements into a coherent whole, while the individual experiences the

149 Wollen, 30.
city as a visible, readable phenomena. Debord’s mapping is a critique of society and an intensification of difference in the fragments of urban space, while the individual experiences and constructs the city temporally, socially, and emotionally.

The following analysis will work both from the main points discussed above and with a set of semiotic codes in order to deconstruct the nature of visual representation surrounding the meaning and experience of Lynch and Debord’s maps. In this process I hope to reveal the different uses of the map as a window for tracking human experience.

**Cartographic codes**

Denis Wood has distinguished ten semiotic codes that are applicable to maps in general, adding that this is a minimum and not a concrete assertion. The codes that operate ‘within’ the map, as ‘language’, he refers to as intrasignification, while the codes operating ‘outside’ the map, at the ‘level of myth’, are referred to as extrasignification. Within intrasignification there are five codes (at least) that Wood points to: the iconic, linguistic, tectonic, temporal and presentational. The iconic refers to the events or ‘things’ the map represents; it is the “map’s analogy to objects, places, relations, and events.” Examples could be streets, towns, subways, rivers, etc. The linguistic is the typography found on the map, the code of the names, the verbal comments; the linguistic identifies, names and assigns. The tectonic is the relation of the graphic space (iconic and linguistic) to the space

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151 Wood, 111. Peter Wollen has referred to Wood’s five codes of intrasignification in a brief comparison of The Naked City to maps of conceptual artists. (See Wollen, 2004, p. 150).
152 Ibid, 111, 117.
153 Ibid, 111, 122.
represented, or the way in which information is signified, symbolized and represented, such as a bird’s eye view. The temporal is the maps relation to time; what the ‘tense’ of a map is, such as ‘when’ the subject matter took place, the past, present or future. The temporal code also describes how the subject matter in a map changes over time, or how the ‘duration’ of the subject matter is represented. If the above codes relate to the content of the ‘map image’, the presentational code can be defined as the ‘bringing together’, or graphical organization of the above code. The presentational is the discursive ‘tone’ of the map; ‘soft/loud’, ‘even/dynamic,’ ‘complacent/agitated’, ‘polite/aggressive’, ‘soothing/abrasive’. The presentational code takes into account the physical and sensual materiality of the map; the craft, color, material, folding ability, thickness, etc.

There are also five codes of extrasignification: the thematic, topic, historical, rhetorical, and utilitarian. Wood notes that all the codes of extrasignification operate at the level of ‘myth’, because, unlike the above codes of intrasignification, they are subjective and based on the way the map is appropriated, subverted, and distorted by the viewer. In other words, the extrasignifying codes in the map can help explain how the intrasignificant codes are used. The thematic code refers to the ‘domain’ of the map; Wood explains this in two types of questions: “On what shall the map discourse?” Or “What shall it argue?” The thematic code is latent within the iconic or presentational codes, only needing contextual perspective to pull it out. The topic code (pronounced with a long ‘o’) deals with issues of space, transforming the tectonic meaning of space to place, which ‘gives the map its

154 Ibid. 111, 124.
155 Ibid. 125-130.
156 Ibid. 130-132.
157 Ibid. 113.
158 Ibid.
subject'. The historical code is similar to the topic code in establishing a subject, but does it based off of the temporal code, establishing the map in a certain time period. Within the historical code is the idea of naming the map in a 'vision of history'. Wood gives the example of an archeological map of Central America acquiring the title, “Before 1500/Pre-Columbian Glory;” in reality there is no precise time period, or any for that matter, that truly captures ‘Pre-Columbian Glory’, but the context of the map produces this understanding. The rhetorical code sets the ‘tone’ of the map; it ‘orients’ the map in its ‘culture’ and ‘values’. Wood explains the rhetoric in the act of pointing:

...pointing in the very act of pointing somewhere else (to the globe) to itself, to its...author, to the society that produced it, to the place and time omphalos of that society—the more dramatically as the aspect of the globe toward which it points is alien, is exotic, i.e., can have its title set in a typeface that mimics...bamboo.

The map’s existence as a map of something is a sign of the rhetorical code and the culture that produced it—even the attempt at denial or subversion of rhetoric (science) merely exposes the rhetorical stance. The utilitarian code is the use of the map, the agenda, whatever ‘pragmatic’ purpose the myth might serve. As Wood comments, if maps are anything, they are not the “gesture of disinterested curiosity.” The utilitarian code of maps can range from the possession of conquered land to the seemingly benign legitimizing of opinion. As Wood shrewdly observes, “These are the uses of maps as certainly as it is the

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159 Ibid.
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid, 114.
162 Ibid, 115.
most important function of maps in geographic journals to certify the geographic legitimacy of the articles they decorate."^{163}

In summary, Wood has posited the map as a ‘focusing device’ between two domains of extra- and intrasignification, where the map provides (graphically) the codes of intrasignification, while the codes of extrasignification rely on the less obvious ‘goals’, intentions, and ‘use’ of the map.^{164} Intrasignification in maps forms a *language*, a ‘visual analogue of phenomena’, that provides the viewer with signs to be used and acted upon. Extrasignification acts as a *myth* that refers to itself and its makers, and transforms the seemingly ‘objective’ intentions of the intrasignificant codes into more subjective ones. In this framework a map is a complex semiotic system with many possible frames of reference (political, medical, meteorological, demographic, military, etc.), individual perceptions and purposes.^{165} The following will form an analysis of Lynch and Debord’s maps based on the codes of intrasignification. The codes are interrelated, but for the clarity of this analysis I will separate them as headings, and the extrasignificant codes will be mentioned as they relate to the intrasignificant.

**Map analysis**

*Iconic code*

The iconic code of the map forms a specific vision of the world, a window to view the cultural landscape—“the production of space and human patterns impressed upon the

163 Ibid.
164 Ibid, 116. It should also be noted that extrasignification is what initially specifies the codes of intrasignification.
165 Wollen, 30.
contours of the natural environment." The iconic codes speak to the viewer through symbolic principles: lines demarcate intersections of planes and boundaries between solid and void in the mental image of the inhabitant. The iconic code, or the maps analogy to reality, is revealed in Lynch’s map (See fig. 14) as fragments of city space, determined by the five elements; paths, nodes, edges, landmarks and districts. Each map is represented in the same scale and set of symbols, in addition to value changes in the symbols to designate the percentage of recognition. If we recall Weiner’s feedback loop we see that the iconic codes are an attempt to visualize the significant information that can be filtered through the “noise” of the visual city. In Lynch’s words, the maps convey the “highlights of a city—its visual essence.” Lynch’s sketch map can be thought of as a window on reality, displaying a fragmented and distorted view of the city. Part of the distorted view can be linked to the process of sketch mapping, as Lynch writes, “Perhaps the difficulties of drawing and fitting everything together simultaneously make the sketch maps unduly fragmented and distorted. They are not a good index of the known connective structure.” The extrasignificant codes of topic (subject: Boston) and thematic (theme: mental mapping) are intertwined with the iconic, and together project the map’s rhetorical code as important physical elements in Boston. This may seem arbitrary, but it positions the physical aspects of the city above all the other details (social, cultural, political, or economic, etc.). This is important if we take into consideration one of the experiences that Lynch intended legibility to provide: a “heightened depth of human experience.” In this experience the city would become more legible to the

166 Wood, 117.
167 Ibid, 118.
168 Lynch, 145.
169 Ibid, 144-145.
inhabitant, potentially characterizing the vision as a “powerful symbol of a complex city.”

This underlying goal of Lynch’s, while intended for the betterment of collective experience, seems to carry with it a less desirable goal of visual symbolic dominance. In the postwar confidence the vision of America and its cities was important. Lynch and Kepes may have intended a heightened experience of pride for Americans, but we could speculate that along with this the overall project was aimed at a heightened image of superiority in the face of foreign nations.

Figure 14 Lynch’s Sketch map of Boston (Lynch, 1960). The red box displays a sample of the iconic code found in the map

The iconic code is different in The Naked City (See fig. 15); the fragments are not sketched figurations of individual cognition, as with Lynch, but rather nineteen, irregular cutout pieces from a street atlas of Paris, the “Guide Taride de Paris” (1951). (See fig. 16) The graphical appearance of the map is a chaotic fragmentation connected by red directional

170 Ibid, 5.
arrows. The bizarre appearance of this map is the culmination of the SI’s psychogeographic explorations, which began in the years prior to the formation of the SI. The SI invented a technique called détournement to take parts of the street map and reconfigure them into a schizophrenic state. Détournement is a form of appropriation and transformation, used to defamiliarize preexisting objects in order to create critical awareness of everyday objects—a creation of new meaning in the form of a political statement.\(^\text{171}\) By détourning preexisting maps (“a renovated cartography”) the SI was able to clarify their movements through the city, not as “subordination to randomness but complete insubordination to habitual influences.”\(^\text{172}\) The dérive détourned the city’s buildings the same way that The Naked City détourned the standard street map. The fragments cover a small portion of the center of Paris and are symbolic of the psychogeographic hubs that were constructed during the dérive. The use of détournement is bound by both the thematic and topic codes, which projects the map as a psychogeographic rendering of Paris. The viewer, however, might experience this map as a highly distorted, illogical representation of Paris. The rhetorical code orients The Naked City as a propagandistic metaphor of leftist politics and avant-gardism in post-war Paris. The act of détourning a standard street map explodes with rhetorical “punk,”\(^\text{173}\) with subversion of the hegemonic order, with sound, fury, and frustration at the current situation. The dramatic (re) positioning of the fragments and arrows is equally rhetorical in propagating the myth of the Situationist goals.

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\(^\text{171}\) A psychogeographic retrospective of Paris called Mémoires from 1959 was created through the Situationist technique of détournement: the appropriation and transformation of meaning in images, illustration, texts, maps and collaged pieces of popular imagery. Griel Marcus compares the meandering of painted image and text in Mémoires to the “routes and passages” of the dérive in the city. (McDonough, 203).

\(^\text{172}\) Debord, “Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography” (Les Lèvres Nues #6, September 1955). Knabb, 7.

Figure 15 The Naked City (1957), a psychogeographic map created by Guy Debord and Asger Jorn (Anderotti, 1996). The red box displays the iconic code.

Figure 16 Guide Taride de Paris (1951), the original street map that was used to construct The Naked City (Sadler, 1998).
The linguistic code is the typography, the language of the map that works with the iconic codes in the legend, title, and overall image. In The Naked City the linguistic code is divided between lettering from a preexisting street atlas, as mentioned above, and original lettering in the title, subtitle, back of map, and author’s signature. In the first case, the conventional lettering from the street atlas forms a cluster of Parisian street names signifying the appropriation from an existing map. The near illegibility and fragmentary nature of the type subverts the homogenous and canonical street atlas; the street names from the original map are suppressed and transformed into rhetorical symbols, stripped of their original meaning in a fine display of détournement, and refashioned in support of the leftist political stance of the SI.

The second aspect of the linguistic code is the title, “THE NAKED CITY,” which is rendered in bright red capital letters in a sans serif font and placed in the lower left corner of the composition. The title is curious, bringing to mind the structure of the city exposed to the voyeuristic tendencies of the dérive. The linguistic code analogizes the function of the map to stripping the city of its rational nature and exposing the underlying social body of human experience, emotion, and desire. But this title also needs to be problematized for its overtly sexual connotations—the influence of the flâneur and Surrealist dérive are directly implicated here. The SI was a dominantly male group in the 1950s, this combined with male-gendered artistic and revolutionary practices at the time, provided ample fodder for misogynistic representation. This was not the only act of female degradation; the SI, in regards to psychogeography, had declared, “We will play upon topophobia and create a
topophilia,” a suggestion of the landscape as a female body.\textsuperscript{174} Debord, in poor taste, had suggested that the drifter could “rape the night streets of London’s East End,” and in the SI’s journal there were numerous depictions of female nudity.\textsuperscript{175} However, Michèle Bernstein, Debord’s wife and Abdelhafid Khatib were both female Situationists who played prominent roles in the group’s efforts. It has even been suggested that Bernstein was an influence on Debord.

Less obvious, the title is also suggestive of psychogeography’s investigative process; as McDonough describes, “an appropriation, taken from the name of an American film noir of 1948: The Naked City, a detective story set in New York and noted for its documentary style.”\textsuperscript{176} The significance of this title in the movie reflects the city as an “obstacle,” while at the same time providing “clues” to the detective that are important for solving the crime. In psychogeographic investigation the architectural symbols of the city are détourned, not to solve a crime, but to understand the city as a “sum of possibilities.”\textsuperscript{177}

To direct the user on how to navigate and experience the city in psychogeographic style the subtitle underneath the title reads, “ILLUSTRATION DE L’HYPOTHÈSE DES PLAQUES TOURNANTEES EN PSYCHOGEOGRAPHIQUE,” (“illustration of the hypothesis of psychogeographical turntables.”) The linguistic code here directly implicates the map as “psychogeographical,” but also as an “illustration”—a sketch, drawing, diagram, representation, example? (evidently not a map). Also within the title the word “hypothesis” is offered, this could suggest the map as tentative, explanatory, a basis for further investigation.

\textsuperscript{175} Sadler, 81.
\textsuperscript{176} McDonough, 245.
\textsuperscript{177} McDonough, 246.
Lastly, the word “turntables” refers to a locomotive turntable, describing the movement, turns, divisions and negotiations of space that a train makes. As with train tracks the individual in the city is restricted to “standard” paths, but can move freely by selecting different directions and discovering unknown paths.\textsuperscript{178} The metaphor of the ‘turntable’ also suggests the transitional nature of the area the SI inhabited, such as the Les Halles district, where not only commercial exchange, but also cultural exchange took place: “social deterioration, acculturation, [and a] mixing of populations which is the favorable environment for cultural exchanges.”\textsuperscript{179} On the back side of The Naked City (not visible in most images) there is an explanation for the use of the map: “The arrows represent the slopes that naturally link the different unities of ambiance; that’s to say the spontaneous tendencies for orientation of a subject who traverses that milieu without regard for practical considerations.”\textsuperscript{180} This passage suggests the utilitarian code of the map and describes the urban navigational system that operated independently of Paris’s standard transportation offerings. Therefore, the linguistic code of The Naked City both subverts the homogenous and canonical knowledge/power of standard mapping, while at the same time describing the theory and techniques of the SI’s psychogeographic critique of urban space.

The linguistic code of Lynch’s sketch maps might best be observed in his original sketch map. (See fig. 17) Lynch’s map is distinct from The Naked City’s loud, and rhetorically subversive typography. Hand-rendered with black ink or pencil (difficult to determine based on the scan) the ‘title’ of Lynch’s map reads, “1° Prelim. Test in

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid, 243.
\textsuperscript{179} Sadler, 89. (Quoted by Khatib, “Essai de description psychographique de Halles,” pp. 17).
\textsuperscript{180} Guy-Ernst Debord and Asger Jorn, The Naked City, 1957, verso bound into Jorn, Pour la forme. (Quoted in Sadler, 88).
Orientation—Area & Center Structure—DAC 10 Min.,” along with a date, Nov. 17, 1955.181 This map is the first field observation of the Boston area made by Lynch and his research assistants. The word “preliminary” indicates the early or developmental nature of the observation. This is comparable to The Naked City’s “hypothesis” of psychogeographic investigation, the difference being that “preliminary” suggests a preparing for future actions, while “hypothesis” suggests a perspective that may be proven incorrect. The word “Test,” possibly referring to the ‘testing’ of cognitive mapping, is more concrete and scientific, making it distinct from Debord’s “Illustration” of psychogeography. The word, “orientation,” assumes the position, direction, arrangement, or movement of the individual and places the map in a subjective relationship between the mapmaker and environment. But the map also offers rhetoric of control in describing the “orientation” of the individual to the city. Both Lynch and Debord’s maps describe the struggle of the alienated individual attempting to navigate and understand the environment, the difference is that Lynch’s individual understands orientation only as a static image, a way of seeing and knowing, while Debord’s individual understands disorientation as a struggle a way of moving and transforming.

Figure 17 Comparison of the linguistic code in The Naked City (left), versus Lynch’s original sketch map (right)

Tectonic code

The tectonic code constructs the way that geographic space will be seen in the map, such as the perspective, or angle. In both Lynch and Debord’s maps the view is from above, the graphic symbols ‘float’ on the picture plane with the tectonic code affecting the topological transformation from walking in the city, to a two-dimensional plane of districts as islands bathed in a sea of white. Because the tectonic code “traffics” the spatial meanings we can use it to understand the fragmented nature of both maps. The tectonic manipulation is achieved through synecdoche and asyndeton, a fracturing of the omnipresent bird’s eye view of city space. Synecdoche takes fragments from the whole, while asyndeton disconnects the fragments by eliminating the connective pieces.182 In Lynch’s map the inhabitant’s memory controls the process through selective ‘imaging’; one part of the city has significant meaning, it can be visualized in memory, and is pulled forward into representation from the void; the

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182 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1984), 101. De Certeau gives a linguistic example of synecdoche: “Thus ‘sail’ is taken for ‘ship’ in the expression ‘a fleet of fifty sails’; in the same way, a brick shelter or a hill is taken for the park in the narration of a trajectory.
parts that lack meaning and fail to appear in memory remain unseen. Chtcheglov had made a similar observation during psychogeographic exploration of the absence and presence in one’s memory of the city. The late geographer J. B. Harley defined the “absences” as silence in maps, a deliberate withholding of information, where “‘x’ has certain properties that render it unsuitable for inclusion in this map.”\textsuperscript{183} A similar idea is witnessed in Michel de Certeau’s theory of the “pedestrian speech act,” in which he theorizes the appropriation and transformation of the city by the actions of urban walkers. De Certeau writes, “he [the walker] condemns certain places to inertia or disappearance and composes with others spatial “turns of phrase” that are “rare,” “accidental” or illegitimate. But that already leads into a rhetoric of walking.”\textsuperscript{184} Similarly, in The Naked City the individual on the dérive experiences an emotional connection to a part of the city and transforms that part into a two-dimensional fragment, however, the white space between fragments is not a void, as in Lynch’s map, but a space for the singular use of movement. Parts of the city that remain blank or never appear in The Naked City’s composition are not (necessarily) forgotten in the psychogeographer’s memory, but are rather consciously removed. In The Naked City the positive fragments represent areas of “ambience,” while the negative spaces (the absence) lacks ‘atmospheric intensity’\textsuperscript{185}

As we have seen above, both Lynch and Debord enable a visual transformation of existing urban space based on the sovereign decision of the individual. The tectonic code allows the individual to mold the map based on his/her preconceptions about that space.\textsuperscript{186}

\textsuperscript{183} Harley, 14.
\textsuperscript{184} De Certeau, 99. My emphasis.
\textsuperscript{186} Wood, 125.
this way both maps are unlike standard maps, such as a road map of the U.S., where the user sees the entire city laid out before his or her eyes, “fully offered in full view.” As McDonough describes, “rather than presenting the city from a totalizing point of view as a traditional map would, it [the psychogeographic map] organizes movements metaphorically around psychogeographic hubs.” The difference is that Debord’s map consciously avoids a logical and homogenous (re) joining of the parts, while the spatial meaning of The Naked City is illogical, the directions and distances do not conform to actual space, but rather to emotion. The Naked City is an image of collectivity and individuality; the arrows both unify the fragments and separate them, making the fragments both interdependent and independent.

Lynch’s map, while also fragmenting the city, allows the pieces to remain in a logical and homogenous spatial relationship, matching that of geographic reality. This structuring emphasizes Lynch’s purpose: to visualize the city as a whole—legible and organized. Lynch merely (re) patterns the physical elements and makes connections between known structures, forming a cognitive interconnectedness with the individual. Debord’s project, in stark contrast, is a political and social experiment in understanding the city in a new way and a radical transformation of space based on individual manipulation through desire. In short, the tectonic code allows the maps to be viewed as the space occupied and experienced by the individual; for Lynch this is a logical view, unconsciously fragmented through memory, but ordered into a patterned whole based on geographic reality, whereas for Debord it is a

188 Ibid.
189 Sadler, 120.
consciously fragmented view, ordered into illogical “elective affinities”\textsuperscript{190} based on emotional connection.

Lynch—memory transforms space \quad \Rightarrow \quad Map rejoins space based on geographical reality

Debord—emotion transforms space \quad \Rightarrow \quad Map rejoins space based on revolutionary vision

\textbf{Figure 18 Diagram of tectonic code based on Lynch and Debord’s maps}

\textit{Temporal code}

There are two aspects or sub groups of the temporal code that need to be discussed in relation to Lynch and Debord’s maps: the first is the \textit{tense} and the second is the \textit{durative}. The tense of the temporal code is the direction the map points: past, present, or future.\textsuperscript{191} In Lynch’s sketch maps the tense would be present, the city is mentally conceived based on the \textit{current} relationship between an individual and their surroundings; the shaded sections of the map resemble parts of the city that are \textit{currently} vivid, and the ‘blank’ spots are \textit{currently} problem areas. In Debord’s map the tense is a little more ambiguous; The Naked City was conceived with three possible intentions: an elegiac quality for the old Paris, a critique of the immediate urban space, and a demonstration of the future directions of the SI.\textsuperscript{192} The first intention, the elegiac quality, can be likened to a narrative or love letter written to the special parts of Paris that the Situationists had inhabited and were now being destroyed. The second intention, the critique of immediate urban space, is shared with contemporaries of the SI, such as the maps by the Smithson’s and social geographer Chombard de Lauwe. The last

\textsuperscript{190} Wollen, 33.
\textsuperscript{191} Wood, 126.
\textsuperscript{192} Sadler, 60.
intention, Unitary urbanism, was the goal of psychogeographic exploration and can be compared to the maps created by Constant for New Babylon in the following years.

The durative code describes the “thickness” of the map in time; such as spatial scale describes the “space of the map” to the “space of the world,” the durative represents the “time embodied in the map” to the “time embodied in the world.” On a road atlas the durative might be combined with the spatial, as in a spatial interval (255 miles) and a temporal interval (5 hours and 20 minutes). The durative code is important in The Naked City, which is predicated on the dérive: a model of moving known as “spatializing actions,” where urban space is experienced in fragmented time by erratic, but free movement. The moving individual is substituted for red directional arrows of different size, width, and length connecting the fragments and acting as symbols for the movement of the individual on the dérive. The use of color only in the arrows emphasizes movement, versus the static conception of space that we see in Lynch’s map. The arrows seen as movement call forth the temporal quality of the map, not as a static vision, but as a construction. The individual, by allowing subsequent spaces to emerge, constructs a relationship between time and space. Following such arrows one might find it troubling to negotiate the blank spaces, especially since the fragments in reality were not sequential, but disorientation could also provoke new hubs to emerge.

The “spatializing actions” of the psychogeographic map can be thought of as a “spatial narrative;” the idea of constructing a sense of place, or representing what a place felt like. In an article from “Internationale situationniste” (1959) The Naked City is compared to

193 Wood, 127.
194 Ibid, 129.
195 Sadler, 90.
a map created by Madeleine de Scudéry in 1653 called “Carte du Tendre,” or the “Map of the Land of Feeling.” (See fig. 19) The article describes the Carte as a “metaphor of the spatial journey to trace possible histories of a love affair.” Similar to The Naked City the Carte attempted to create a “spatial narrative,” instead of ‘universal knowledge’, through an attachment of emotion to physical form: “key geographic features, through pathetic fallacy, mark significant moments or emotions… (e.g., the ‘lac d’indifférence’).” Both the Carte and The Naked City are not based on traditional ‘descriptions’ of directionality, as seen in a standard street map, but rather on a ‘performance’ between many possibilities. The Naked City forms a spatial narrative, constructing “tendencies of the urban units, their inertia, their explosion, their reorganization, in a word, the practice of ‘inhabiting,’ rather than the ecology of the habitat.” The fragments or districts are not static conceptions that can be revealed, as in Lynch’s elemental districts.

196 Ibid, 64.
197 McDonough, 243.
Lynch’s purpose of legibility required the city to be imaged as a whole; parts needed to relate spatially, utilizing rhythm and repetition in order to be vivid in memory. His interviewing technique of asking the individual to take an ‘imaginary’ journey through parts of the city recalls a charting of movement, however, the final rendering of the map appears spatially based—a survey map—lacking a durative component. This perspective posits Lynch’s map as ‘descriptive’ and in this way is similar to more standard maps, “predicated on a model of seeing that constitutes an exhibition of the knowledge of an order of places.”199 In this way Lynch’s project fits De Certeau’s distinction of a “map,” a way of seeing (knowledge), versus Debord’s project as a “tour,” a way of going (spatializing actions).200 Lynch’s map presents: “there are paths that lead to districts that link to nodes…,” while

199 Ibid, 246.
200 De Certeau, 119.
Debord’s operates movements: “you enter the area of Les Halles..., you go across, you turn...;” Lynch’s is a “plane projection totalizing observations,” and Debord’s is “a discursive series of operations.” Lynch and Debord’s “maps” can be grouped under the title “narrative actions,” the difference is in the final outcome of each map. Lynch’s emphasis on cognition points to a way of knowing, it assumes an authority and fixedness and in this way establishes a place for the individual; “the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence.” Debord’s emphasis on psychogeography forms a method of experience that is open to interpretation, in this way it creates a space; the consideration of “vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables,” and the composition of “…intersections of mobile elements,” “space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it...” The durative code is the primary structuring element in The Naked City, thereby empowering the user of the map to transform and construct by manipulating both time and space. Lynch’s map does not afford the user as much sovereignty, thereby sacrificing the position of the viewer for a coherent image of place. This difference can be emphasized in that Debord’s individual is an active participant in the construction of space, giving the map a “feeling” of space. Lynch’s individual is a window for Lynch to view the city through.

201 Ibid, 119.
202 Ibid, 117.
203 Ibid.
Table 1 The differences between Lynch and Debord's use of the temporal code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lynch</th>
<th>Debord</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map</td>
<td>Tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>Spatializing action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual as window</td>
<td>Individual as constructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeing</td>
<td>Going</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td>Organizing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totalizing observation</td>
<td>Discursive series of operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing</td>
<td>Open to interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Subversive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fixedness</td>
<td>Vectors, velocity, movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordered</td>
<td>Chaotic</td>
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</tbody>
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Presentational code

The presentational code combines the iconic, linguistic, tectonic and temporal codes into a single, tangible whole; it forms the look and feel of the map. To understand the presentational qualities of Lynch's maps we can look at both the first sketch map created by a research associate in 1955 and the composite maps. (See fig. 21) There are a series of
questions that need to be addressed when looking at these maps, such as: What does a typical mental map look like? What differentiates this map from a standard map of Boston? What is the significance of the map looking like a mental map? The first question can be addressed immediately, since Lynch was the first to perform a cognitive mapping experiment he set the standard for the look of cognitive maps. This particular sketch map is on simple white paper, hand-rendered with black ink or dark graphite. The presentation of the map could be described as “rough,” “tentative,” “quick (10 min?),” but also “functional,” “practical,” and “sensible.” There is nothing frivolous in the sketch map; it is not that different from hand-rendered driving directions. This simplicity seems a fitting presentation for the first documentation of explorations into cognitive mapping. It would seem odd to professionally ‘design’ the images, relationships and patterns of individual thought. The original sketch map does not look that different from the sketch maps presented in Image of the City. This might be a clue to the myth of Lynch’s presentational code; the ‘quickly fashioned’ presentation affords a masking of the fact that the sketch map we are looking at is not the singular cognition of a city inhabitant. The iconic codes analogize a ‘figuration’ of urban space, not a mimetic representation, or mirror image of the subject’s existence. This figuration of the individual’s experience—the ‘struggle’ of navigating through the city—is synthesized with other inhabitant’s mental images in order to form one generalized figuration. The map that we are viewing is therefore removed multiple times from reality: first, as an individual’s memory of a place (sketch); second, as a synthesis of multiple sketches (public image); and third, as a labeling of categories and redrawing by Lynch. The ‘myth’ of the cognitive map as a presentation of individual creation is therefore problematized, but as a figuration and suggestion of a general consensus it can be somewhat validated. However, the exclusion of
certain groups and inclusion of others again problematizes even the general consensus. Therefore, it seems that part of the presentational code of the sketch map ‘naturalizes’ the idea of cognitive mapping, not in resembling a standard map, but by establishing how the figuration of human cognition should appear. The myth of this visual representation convinces the viewer of the legitimacy of cognitive mapping. The other aspect of the presentational code takes into consideration the question of difference between a standard map of Boson and the sketch maps. If we think about Kepes’ “knowledge of opposing experiences,” where the appearance of two conflicting images has the potential to produce a moment of ‘awakening’ for the individual, we can better understand the relation of the sketch map to a standard map. The sketch map is not a mimetic representation of geographic space, but rather an observational rendering of the problems in the environment. Therefore, the presentational code acts as a warning signal to the viewer; a metaphor for the social and spatial problems in the environment.

If we think of mapping in the standard sense of a “scientific epistemology”—a mathematical accuracy of reality through knowledge and cognition—neither Lynch’s sketch

Figure 21 The presentational code of Lynch’s original sketch map (left), compared to his composite sketch map (right)
map nor The Naked City fit the profile. But as mentioned above, even while avoiding the mathematical rigor of standard mapping Lynch’s sketch map fits a particular discourse of empirical study that characterizes scientific mapping. But even from this discourse the presentation of The Naked City is something wholly different: The arrows and fragments immediately call to mind more of an art or aesthetic piece, something cosmetically constructed, artistically manipulated, blatantly rhetorical, maybe even obnoxious. Cartographers searching for truth and mimetic representation of the external world would easily dismiss The Naked City as “not serious,” but such a dismissal would be a display of “scientific chauvinism.” The Naked City does not pretend to be an objective source, but it does describe an important experience between the individual and an oppressive environment. The presentational code of The Naked City questions the “language of exclusion,” it challenges the idea that maps can be judged simply by natural opposites: “True and false,” “objective and subjective,” or “literal and symbolic.”

It provides an example of how the sense or experience of alienation and struggle can be mapped, and in doing this it is different than Lynch’s cognitive map.

Conclusion

The map analysis provided a deconstruction of visual representation in an attempt to understand how the ideas, theory and experiences of Lynch and Debord were encoded into map form. If the map is taken as a complex research tool in the discipline of experience design the above analysis provides some insight into how the semiotic language can be encoded and decoded, revealing specific ideas, experiences, desires, goals, ways of seeing

204 Harley, 155.
and forms of memory. Some of the analysis is admittedly speculative, but the nature of semiotic coding is an attempt to locate “myth,” which Barthes has defined as a type of “speech” better defined by its intention than its literal sense.205 The myth of Lynch’s map is more elusive than Debord’s because of the seemingly ‘neutral’ representation it portrays. In contrast, Debord’s map is filled with rhetorical meaning derived from the SI’s radical political stance. Lynch’s project seemed to be driven by a control over the visual, spatial and behavioral, which was based on the need for orientation. The conditional experience for orientation can be traced to Kepes’ writing on spatial relations in the modern metropolis and the need to orient oneself in order to see the problems that presently exist. Kepes felt that the “organization of visual imagery” could provide a “symbolic order” of one’s “psychological and intellectual experiences.” The neurophysiology of McCulloch provided the behavioral understanding that invariance in the visual field allowed for orientation in the subject’s mental map. Therefore, visual experience for Lynch and Kepes centered on being able to see a harmony of disparate elements, like a symphony of music; “a theme and constant beat, or rhythm.”206 In this description the process of orientation and control can be compared to traditional maps that imposed order upon the city, such as seen as far back as Louis XIV’s engineer who in 1652 proposed the new “scientific” survey of Paris and asked the question: “Without extraordinary assistance, how do you think that a private person could have emerged from this labyrinth?”207 The system of orientation and control as developed by Lynch suggests an imposing nature that carries with it a tendency for unified thought and

207 Anon, “Ne travaillez jamais” Internationale Situationiste, no. 8 (Paris, January 1963), 42. (Quoted in Sudler, 82).
disregard for individual self-expression. Orientation forms one of the essential differences between Lynch and Debord. With this in mind, a summary of the codes can illuminate this difference.

The iconic codes of Lynch’s sketch maps can be interpreted as a projection of the larger scope of his project and found to be supportive of the U.S., revealing the symbols of a complex city. This is in contrast to Debord’s iconic codes, which project a détournement or subversion of the city of Paris. If we take Foucault’s description of the map as a tool of the state that can be used for “measurement, enquiry, examination, and coercion,” we can view Lynch’s map as a knowledge source linked to power. Debord’s map shares Foucault’s ideas of subverting power structures. The comparison of the iconic codes in Lynch and Debord’s maps reveals fundamental differences: Lynch’s project is based on studying cognitive models for the singular purpose of (re) patterning city space, while Debord utilizes art, politics, and quasi-science to study the social and physical landscape to expose oppressive tendencies.

The linguistic code in Debord’s map speaks of the sexual aggression, investigation, and movement involved in psychogeography. The sexual levels may be reflective of the boredom experienced in the city, and position psychogeography as an outlet for pent up sexual aggression. The language of the map also speaks of the cultural experiences of the city where psychogeographic research took place. The language of Lynch’s map appears as scientific rhetoric of early sketch maps and speaks of the individual’s experience of “seeing and knowing” the city. This comparison again gives a clear view of the differences of

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208 Harley, 87.
psychogeography and cognitive mapping, where psychogeography seems to be the subconscious desires of cognitive mapping.

The tectonic codes of both Lynch and Debord's maps utilize a technique of "synecdoche" and "asyndeton" that allows reality to become a fragmented two-dimensional projection. This code reveals the position of the individual experiencing the city. In Debord's map the individual consciously, emotionally, and temporally fragments the space and then rejoins the parts illogically, based on individual sovereignty. In Lynch's map the individual, through memory, fragments the space and ultimately rejoins the parts logically based on geographic reality. The tectonic code in Lynch's map speaks of the individual being able to view the city as a 'whole', while in Debord's map the individual's view engages in the subversive and emotional qualities of the city.

The temporal code, divided into the tense and durative, presents Lynch's map in the present tense, while Debord's is more conceptually based, being able to be viewed in the past, present and future tense. The durative code is important in Debord's map and positions the individual on a model of "spatializing actions," where the city is viewed as a tour, a series of time/space constructions. The individual in Debord's map is an active constructor of space and allows the map to be open to interpretation. Lynch's map lacks a durative component and is therefore, based on a model of description, a way of seeing and knowing. The individual could be described as a 'window' that sees and observes the static space from a fixed position.

The last code is the presentational, which clarifies Lynch and Debord's maps as different from a standard map. Lynch's map can be interpreted as naturalizing the idea of cognitive mapping by convincing the viewer that the image is a true representation of mental
cognition. In Debord’s map the presentational code provides a powerful image of the
Situationist’s artistic and political activity. Similar to the SI’s radical philosophy, the map
does not pretend to be a standard or scientific map, but rather focuses on the rhetoric of
*détournement*. 
CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION

An important facet of this study in relation to understanding contemporary experience design is derived from the historical shift in thought that Lynch and Debord’s projects are situated: in the late 1940s the shift from modernism’s form and functionalism to more human-centered design caused designers to focus on how the human body is affected, both cognitively and physically by design. Areas of social science and cybernetics extended into design practice as a way of thinking about design as a “medium” engaged in a relationship between the external environment and the human body. Today we are seeing a similar shift in design, typified by the pioneering of the discipline experience design. In three meetings from 1998–2000, interaction designers under the leadership of AIGA concluded that design is “increasingly less about creating objects and more about creating conditions that support user experiences.” Based on this, the question can be revisited: What was the essential difference between Lynch and Debord’s focus on conditions that support user experience? As we have seen Lynch and Debord went from thinking about the design of urban form to thinking about conditions of human interaction with that form. The eventual goal of both projects was a physical (re) design of urban space, but the motivation and research process involved tracking and mapping human experience. The maps they produced mediate between the individual and environment, thereby providing a window through which to view subjective experience. The values of Lynch and Debord’s projects prefigure and inform several aspects of contemporary experience design and will be discussed below.

Controlling and constructing

Based on the visual deconstruction of the codes in the maps we can abstract both projects to their basic value structure, revealing that Lynch’s project was based primarily on controlling experience, while Debord’s was based on constructing experience. This is a fundamental, but important distinction, since the shift toward “user-centered” design today is typically assumed to be a liberating experience for the user. Lynch’s project seems to suggest a level of imposed order. This may suggest a second question: Does experience design today aim for control or liberated individuality?

A central theme in Lynch and Debord’s projects that addresses this idea of controlling or constructing experience is equilibrium. In both projects the underlying goal was the equilibrium or harmony between the individual and the environment. Oppressive tendencies, such as poor living conditions and fragmentation of the urban environment, held the individual back from a comfortable, harmonized existence. Equilibrium for Lynch was achieved through the orientation of spatial relations, which required a new way of seeing and organizing of visual imagery in order to create a symbolic order for the psychological and intellectual subject. In contrast, equilibrium for Debord was based on the construction of situations or moments of life that affect the individual emotionally and behaviorally in an anti-utilitarian and collective way. In short, the difference is that Lynch approached equilibrium in the control of visual / spatial / behavioral information, while Debord approached equilibrium in the construction of social / temporal / emotional experience.

Controlling, as I am defining here, involves the designer crafting an experience for an individual, while constructing involves the individual representing personal experience.

210 In contemporary times equilibrium could suggest new relationships, such as man and information structures, etc.
Controlling experience today might be witnessed in the design of an amusement park or exhibit design, where the spatial configuration and visual display are considered in affecting the behavior of the individual. In contrast, Construction of experience could be self-authored projections of experience, or the work of artist-designers, commonly seen in proactive urban and personal experience mapping. This is a crucial point of difference for understanding how Lynch and Debord viewed human experience and its implications for contemporary experience design. The following introduces some possible projections/suggestions based on this observation. It should be noted that the ethical positions introduced below are not grounded in Lynch or Debord’s work, but are rather my reactionary opinion to their projects.

Ethical questions of experience design

The Situationist’s self-critical question regarding unitary urbanism seems fitting at this point: “At what point should the Situationist avant-garde disengage?” This question could be reconfigured as: At what point should the experience designer disengage from controlling experience? The points indicated here could be suggestive of thoughts regarding ethical matters in experience design. For example, Lynch’s model, if abstracted, could describe similarities to the environment of a self-select e-commerce site, where a series of pre-fabricated choices and questionnaires are offered in order to give the false experience of consumer empowerment. The following example is of a women’s beauty product site called Reflect.com:

The designer’s role is transformed because of the newly empowered consumer. As designers, we create a menu of options and the consumer selects. After creating a customized shampoo formula, the consumer chooses bottle shapes and dispensing options (pump, flip-top, or screw-top). She then decorates the bottle from a series of choices that reflect her aesthetic expression. The design choices presented to her for
consideration are based on information about her provided in the question-and-answer section of the Website. Along with product formulation empowerment comes a customized, self-selected expression. The experience is wholly actualized by the consumer. The designer enables choices, but does not control the final composition. Reflect.com is finding that the customized expression component of their business model is a powerful tool. As designers in this model, we have to redefine our role from one of leadership to facilitation. Many brands in many consumer goods categories could adopt this business model.211

As in Lynch’s process of cognitive mapping there is a quiet, yet definite element of control, the feedback system is in place where information taken from the individual is then fed back to them in the form of a harmonized, but controlled experience. Do the choices really reflect her aesthetic expression? This brings up the issue of “personal expression” and empowerment. Creation of personal identity or personal expression is a popular form of experience design today, but as Nathan Shedroff observes:

Personal expression is something experience designers often fear, as they can never be sure exactly what might be expressed. Compounding this, many traditional media companies and pundits look upon personal expression with disdain and deride the attempts people make at expressing themselves simply because of a lack of professional quality.212

The above passage reflects not only the lack of professional quality, but also a loss of designer control over experiences. The productivity of e-commerce sites and other venues where experience design and commerce intersect require a level of control and professionalism. These points also position experience design as a practice implicated in a larger context than the immediate application of technology. The consequence of “designing”

211 Jerry Kathman, “Brand Identity Development in the New Economy.” (Design Issues, Volume 18, Number 1 Winter 2002, Massachusetts Institute of Technology), 34.
human experience is a dilemma that needs to be assessed for issues of intentionality, authenticity, generality, manipulation, hidden agendas, and authorial power/knowledge.

**Cultural dimensions of experience design**

The ethical dimension above suggests *how* the user or audience is implicated in the design of experiences, but there is also the question of *who* is implicated in the experience. This brings up the cultural dimension of experience design—class, gender, age and ethnicity, in addition to any group that the designer is outside of. The limitations of Lynch and Debord’s mapping models, in regard to cultural consideration, are revealed in the narrow focus: Lynch was concerned mostly with physical space, while Debord was overly concerned with class struggle. Many voices were left out of the resulting maps. The Situationist campaign against the rationalization of urban planning and the struggle over class conflict generalized the urban working class, thereby failing to recognize specifically oppressed groups, such as women and ethnic minorities during their revolutionary agenda for social transformation. In addition, the SI could be considered proactive artist-designers that were constructing maps based on personal experiences of urban life, rather than implicating others in controlled experiences. This does not mean that the SI, or contemporary artist-designers are exempt from cultural consideration, but the issue seems more relevant in Lynch’s case where there is a level of control over certain subjects.

In Lynch’s model, as I have outlined, the user’s position is not simply ‘good’ or ‘bad’, but assumes first and foremost the designer’s thoughts and values as intertwined in the process of creating and disseminating an experience. If experience is mapped or analyzed

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213 Gardiner, 125.
based on a “single view of reality” it would obviously be problematic from a multi-cultural standpoint. In Lynch’s case, the map, as a form of mediation, reflects, simulates, and transforms reality into a “consistent image,” which is used to describe the city in the “absence of the real thing.” Such a map gives a false sense of “public image,” the map attempts to synthesize many voices and opinions into one vision, one way of seeing, and one collective experience.

The impossibility, yet real fact that the map appears as one coherent vision, while being created by multiple individuals, is what defines the ambiguity of Lynch’s project. The “composite image” has since been criticized in the adage, “not all Bostonians see Boston the same way.” Lynch and others have subsequently addressed this problem in specifically social and cultural mapping projects. Imagine, for instance if Debord were interviewed by Lynch in regards to the legibility of Paris; would the map appear as Lynch’s composite maps? Debord’s map would most likely be cast aside as an anomaly, a silenced voice not allowed in the process of urban transformation.

Learning from the issues presented here, it is crucial that experience designers take cultural consideration into their work: the “subtle, hard-to-describe, but critical issues surrounding the identity and behavior of any particular group.” But even the nature of this awareness is problematic, as Arjun Appadurai writes, “cultural issues can be so innate, so assumed, that even when they are articulated, one may fail to grasp their uniqueness. So any attempt to design for another set of cultural assumptions and values needs to begin with self-
The experience designer can never leave behind his/her world-view, language skills, expectations, and opinions. This means that the articulation of one’s point of view is ultimately required in negotiating the issues of “technological mediation,” which Meredith Davis has defined as, “representation of perceptions, experiences and ideas in some medium other than the one in which they originated.” This idea recalls Debord’s model of construction and is maybe a more suitable model for exploring contemporary issues of personal experience mapping.

Collaboration and experience design

The collaborative aspects of both Lynch and Debord’s projects with a diverse assortment of artists, scientists, architects, and poets, seemed to provide a key element for an array of rich experiences. In Lynch’s project the experimental mind of Kepes brought about the idea of opposing experiences, where public art displays might inform pollution issues in the city through visualizing “spatial sources of pollution.” The connections that both Kepes and Lynch made, from thinking about spatial issues and metaphors in the environment to the social connections and use of cybernetics and neurophysiology, were quite extraordinary. It seems to be the combinations—art and science, or art and sociology, or psychology and architecture—that fuelled both Lynch and Debord’s push for collaboration and impact on everyday human experience. The SI was undoubtedly equally as prolific when it came to putting multiple minds together in collaborative processes. From the explorations of urban space recalling the flâneur’s intense observations of urban life, to the total experience in the

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218 Appadurnai, 9.
“Cavern of anti-matter” that Pinot Gallizio created, to Constant’s psychogeographical
architecture, collaboration was essential.

Today, in Human Computer Interaction (HCI) we are seeing similar projects in
collaborative processes, especially the exploration of urban spaces with new technology. One
such project is “Urban Probes: Encountering Our Emerging Urban Atmospheres,” led by
Intel computer scientist Eric Paulos, and interaction designer Tom Jenkins, along with help
from various social scientists.\(^{220}\) Utilizing Situationist techniques and values Paulos and
Jenkins developed “urban probes” to “disrupt the ordinary and normal in order to jolt people
out of their customary ways of thinking and acting.” This allowed for the discovery of
“critical underlying forces and trends” in the urban environment. The ‘probes’ begin with
odd intervention techniques and observations, such as rearranging public chairs into new
patterns, or “placing flowers atop parking meters.”\(^{221}\) Maps are created, diagramming the
movement and reactions of people through the area, along with taking pictures and collecting
data using “lost postcard” techniques. These processes recall Lynch’s investigative methods
of interviewing, sketching, documenting, recording, etc. The Situationist techniques of \(dérive\)
and \(déroulement\) are combined with a more investigative role, which seems to bring Lynch
and Debord’s projects together, yet the SI would most surely disagree with such empirical
techniques. The culmination of these collaborative technologies and investigative techniques
were fundamental in developing an “augmented trashcan,” which was based on the question,
“what representations and potential interactions with discarded human traces will intrigue,
excite, disgust, and inspire, urban dwellers into a new awareness and participation in this part

\(^{221}\) Ibid.
of the city’s physicality and in their daily lives?” The outcome of the project enabled visualizations of patterns, flows, and prompted further reflection on urban trash, its value and usage. The outcome of Paulos and Jenkins project directly implicates Kepes’ use of cybernetics as a form of public art in shaping and rearranging the patterns of social life.

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*Figure 22 Diagram comparing aspects of contemporary experience design, Lynch’s cognitive mapping and Debord’s psychogeographic mapping*
Future projections

The reassessment of Lynch and Debord’s projects with consideration to new forms of technology—wireless and handheld devices—could offer a new perspective on mapping local culture, urban spaces, and other contemporary processes. Designers, public artists, public historians, and environmental activists have collaborated on exploring the narratives of urban areas, especially the ‘silenced’ narratives that have yet to be told. Artist-designers working with local groups have used experimental forms of mapping to construct visual presence and a sense of place. Maps today are enabled by technology to move out of the strictly visual sense and capture experiential/sensorial characteristics of a place, such as the temporal, linguistic, and tectonic, combined with aural, and new forms of spatial narratives. The Internet and wireless handheld devices allow for experiences to be shared with diverse groups. A similar analysis to the one used in this study could explore contemporary forms of experience mapping. Questions need to be raised as how best to make visible the processes of contemporary culture: What types of maps today reflect culture and technology? What are the ethical and cultural implications? How can an understanding of the semiotic language be used to decode and reveal the experiences of contemporary life? This study has formed a basis for the projection of such questions. The positioning of Lynch and Debord’s psychological subject, surrounded by the diverse experiences and struggles of the modern metropolis, resonates with the contemporary subject’s position in the information age. Mapping, as a complex form of design and communication, is needed to understand, represent, and share experience.
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