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## Rhythm and noise: the city, memory and the archive

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## Rhythm and noise: the city, memory and the archive

Kevin Hetherington

### The City as Archive

Archives are not static things, not only do their contents change but the aspirations on which they are premised do to. The archive, as Derrida has argued, is an inherently problematic kind of space. It cannot be otherwise. It is one which, in practice, is forever involved in the seemingly contradictory process of conserving and containing the past as a total record of what has happened for posterity to see while at the same time allowing the Otherness of an outside of that record to come within and to unsettle that record and disrupt that guiding ambition (1996). This is not simply a philosophical problem, rather, this contest with Otherness is implicated, too, in the broad social terrain of cultural memory that archives help establish. The condition of possibility for the archive, if we follow Derrida's argument, is to always exist, but to exist in a state of doubt involving both endless recovery and record, but also erasure and revision at the same time. The archive promises total recall but never fully delivers on it. From time to time a multitude of possible external forces – from hostile armies, to looters, to fire, to bad cataloguers, to changing social attitudes over what is valued, to the sheer overwhelming volume of stuff (unsorted rubbish) waiting to be accorded access, threaten to change it or on occasions to tear it apart altogether (see Goudsblom, 1992; Polastron, 2007). In terms of broad cultural imaginings, then, western society, around which the principle of cultural understanding and the archive process have always gone hand in hand, is ever thus premised on a state of mourning for the library of Alexandria and knowing that that is the fate of most archives in the longer term. As a total record, the archive in perpetuity is always a fantasy, even if a culturally compelling one (Hetherington, 2010).

There are many kinds of archive from libraries and museums to seed banks and record offices of the state. But archive speaks to a wider issue than that limited by these particular institutional forms. It is the cultural principle of the archive that I am really interested in here rather than these official forms of site-specific archive (see also Osborne, 1999). More specifically, I am interested in the relationship between this archive principle as a basis for cultural memory and the urban. Significantly Michael Sheringham has recently pointed out that cities are indeed a form of archive (2010) – one where the past is conveyed through the everyday materiality and lived practice that shapes their composition (see also Benjamin, 1999; Sinclair, 2010). Not only the architecture and the street layout, the shops and offices, cafes and bars but the names of places and their association with past events are all a part of the multiple record of the city that one encounters in a variety of ways. But this is a street level form of archive rather than one filed away. Some of this is clearly visible and well-known, other things are not; mere traces being all that is left of what once was. A collection of artefacts, signs, sedimented patterns of activity and practices embedded in the fabric of the built environment, the city lends itself to being read as an archive built up over time as a collection and a record of the past that continues to resonate in the present.

It is through such an archive principle that the past continues to inhabit the present within the urban setting. As Sheringham shows, this theme of the city-as-archive is a notable

literary trope found in both fictional and non-fictional, documentary texts (and sometimes both) on urban life. From Engels (1892) to Mayhew (1968); Benjamin (1999) to Sebald (2002); Aragon (1971) to Debord (1989), Perec (1997) to Sinclair (1997) and many more besides (see also Keiller, 1999), the city throws up its own archive effects awaiting literary exploration – sometimes revealed, sometimes hidden but available to cultural memory and its representation. In the spirit of Derrida's perspective on the archive, though, such effects also have the potential to reveal the sounding of memories (and also counter-memories) that sometimes call into question received archival understandings, place myths and place brandings within the detritus and the everyday that urban forms and processes are made from (see also Sheringham 2006).

All of these authors recognise in their different ways the paradoxical uncertainty of the city as an archive or repository for the past and its future remembrance. They recognise the need to record and allow voices that otherwise might be lost to opportunity to be heard. In our time what also comes prominently into view in this description of the city-archive is not only material remainders from earlier times and daily practice that still persists with reference to long forgotten antecedents but also the broader question of their representation as heritage. Indeed, for the last three decades the issue of heritage has been the main archival trope for engaging with understanding the past within the present in towns and cities across the world. It has become the discourse of the archive as a record of the urban (on heritage as discourse see Smith, 2006).

After heritage came to prominence as an issue through UNESCO in the 1970s and its designation of sites as heritage sites (see Harrison, forthcoming), the term seemed to fit with the neo-liberal and consumerist times that developed in the 1980s leading some at the time to speak of a heritage industry and the consumerist packaging of cultural memory. In the urban context earlier post-war ways of clearing away old, unwanted (bomb) sites and redeveloping in a spirit of modernist optimism slowly gave way as de-industrialisation set in and many newly developed urban centres went into decline. The way out of this, it was hoped at the time, was through service sector and consumer-led redevelopment, regeneration and gentrification (see Zukin, 1988; 1995). Attracting investment, facilitating economic growth and encouraging new employment opportunities became the spur for urban change and that was facilitated by the move away from corporatist and towards entrepreneurial forms of urban governance (see Harvey, 1989; Hall and Hubbard, 1998; Cronin and Hetherington, 2008). Uncluttering the archive by simply disposing of unwanted bits of the past gave way, in effect, to its recataloguing under the heading of heritage.

For the last twenty years the focus for heritage has been around culture-led regeneration of towns and cities being shaped by public-private partnerships, the designation of areas in need of regeneration as hubs or cultural quarters, investment into saving the urban and industrial infrastructure and making it attractive to tourists and other visitors, tax breaks to attract investment, encouraging the development of up-market housing, shopping and urban entertainment and increased competition between urban centres for capitalist functions. There have been some notable successes in which museums and heritage developments have been prominent in this process of urban regeneration: the transformation of a derelict power station on the south bank of the River Thames in London into Tate Modern, Britain's leading gallery for modern art, the Guggenheim museum designed by Frank Gehry in Bilbao and perhaps above all the regeneration of central Berlin

after German reunification (see Huyssen, 2003; Till, 2005). These all speak to the degree of success that some cities have had in this approach to redevelopment and economic prosperity. And the heritage/museum led approach to boosting economic growth and enhancing the brand of a city is no longer just confined to Europe and North America. From Shanghai to Rio to Abu Dhabi, through expos (Lai, 2004) to franchised models of leading western museum brands to local versions, a model of museum and heritage development as central to regeneration and prosperity now seems globally established (see Harrison, forthcoming).

But other examples of this approach of cultural redevelopment and museum or heritage branding have not fared so well. Museums such as *Urbis* in Manchester or visitor centres like *The Public* in Walsall struggled to gather local support. In other contexts one only has to walk a block or two from the centre of a cultural quarter with its museums, theatres, restaurants and cafes to find the seedier side of urban life still there alongside unregulated car parking on empty land or sites of outright dereliction, overgrown with buddleia, fenced off and subject to nightly patrols by contracted private security guards. Rubbish, the detritus of the past, including the recent past of urban regeneration accumulates in times of recession and economic uncertainty in particular (see Leslie, 2010). Yet this unrecorded outside, for that is what it is, always finds a way of returning to the archive as a principle of cultural understanding. It is, as Sinclair has put it, like a virus that infects the settled nature of urban memory (2010).

For some, though, the success or failure of such enterprise culture initiatives (as they used to be called) were never to be measured in terms of jobs, house price rises or the sale of cappuccino and theatre tickets but were always seen in some way as the ever-same of capitalist boom and bust. But leaving aside the critiques of these practices as part of neo-liberal economic strategy, broader concerns have been raised around the questions of cultural memory that this approach to heritage and museum collections raises (see Smith, 2006). The questions and criticisms that have been raised around urban heritage as a means of presenting cultural memories have been varied but have tended to focus on their consumerist stance, simplification of stories about the past, partial accounts of certain versions of heritage and recognition of the importance of the politics of recognition and identity to remembrance of the past (Huyssen, 1995; Trouillot, 1995; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998).

To be more specific the main criticisms of this strategy of using heritage as a part of urban regeneration can be grouped under three themes:

- 1) That heritage is somehow staged and packaged as part of a regeneration and branding strategy that does not allow history to be experienced except in commodified form
- 2) That heritage tells an incomplete story – one that marginalises and excludes on such grounds of identity notably around race, class and gender
- 3) That the presentation of history as heritage is part of a culture industry that rather than helping us to remember the past actually produces a form of amnesia and forgetfulness in which above all the history of practice becomes reified in monumental geographical sites.

But is this the terrain on which we still stand? At the beginning of 2012 and several years after the 2008 credit crunch, subsequent recession across much of the western world and an expectation of more economic bad news to come for much of the rest of this decade much of this approach to regeneration may soon seem part of a different era. Since 2008 many western countries have seen significant cuts in funding to the areas of culture and arts including to museums and the heritage sector. Many of the quasi-autonomous organisations set up to manage, regulate and fund heritage initiatives have been closed, merged or seen their budgets significantly cut. And a walk around many urban centres will reveal that the vulnerable areas the culture led regeneration was, for sometimes 20 years or more, intended to regenerate are the first to see the closure of many businesses, economic blight and the emerging signs of a new round of dereliction and marginalisation.

To date, however, it remains the case that neo-liberal responses to the current economic crisis remain hegemonic. What isn't there is the money to fund new culture-led initiatives on a grand scale – at least not in Europe and North America. China and the UAE, for example, are another matter. Whether we will simply see a return to the old ways of doing things as investments start to be made and a recovery begins to be spoken about remains to be seen. Rather than rehearsing the old criticisms of the heritage industry now might be an opportune moment to speak instead of an alternative take on questions of cultural memory and seek to make an intervention that proposes new models of thinking about the past through heritage.

These thoughts about the paradoxes of the archive, I argue, can help us to do that. Rather than focus on the city as a social space that is a container for history and through which heritage becomes realised in a site, I want to adopt a model that treats space as a set of relations that are fluid and mobile and in which uncertainty is ever present behind any narrative of place. That fluidity and relationality extends to questions about the past as much as it does to current social practice.

This is not a new argument. It is one that social and cultural geographers have been debating for some time, initially through problematising issues of region and ideas of boundedness (Allen et. al., 1998), then by recognising that space is not somehow separate from practice but is made through social relations and latterly by taking a more fluid and topological approach to traditional questions of topography, including involving such questions as the non-relational, the outside and other forms of absent presence that we encounter within cities (see Thrift, 1996; Massey, 1998; 2005; Hetherington and Law, 2000; Amin and Thrift, 2002).

Two themes stand out for me when approaching these questions of spatiality. The first is what we might call voice and the second is that of mobility. By voice I do not mean simply the spoken voice or the right to be heard around questions of memories and the urban pasts in the plural though that is certainly there. Rather, these relational approaches to space are interested in how it is made through practice and that often means incorporating the non-human or the materiality of a space into our understanding of it too (see Hetherington, 1997; Murdoch, 1998).

The materiality of ruins, the haunting material traces of the past that remain part of the urban fabric and the evocative power of the past to engage active subjects, are all issues that have been raised within recent urban studies attentive to questions of cultural memory (see Jaguaribe, 1999; Hetherington, 2001; Edensor, 2005). So too has been the issue of the

sensing body and the idea of embodied spectatorship (see Pile, 1996). One does not see panoramic vistas of city life as one moves through them, sometimes at walking pace sometimes by car and sometimes via trains or other forms of public transport. One hears the city as well as sees it, smells it, can touch it and even taste it. So if we assume the materiality of the city is not a mute staging then the bodies that also help to make this space pass through it in ways that open up a range of different perspectives, understandings and memories. The moving body, then, might be considered as another outside intervention in the archival urban record.

We have seen some of this as a minor theme within discussions of heritage and cultural memory in the past. It has long been there in an interest in the evocative power of ruins (Edensor, 2005), in seeking out the uncanny and ghostly traces of the past hidden within the present of the city (Jaguaribe, 1999), in the 1960s Situationist approach to psychogeography (see Debord, 1989; Coverley, 2006), the derive or drift and other latter days forms of the Flâneur, and it is there in the Benjamin inspired approach to cities as archives of the past and dreamscapes in which surrealist inspired juxtapositions, chance encounters and shocks of recognition might produce an awakening onto a different vision of the past and what it might say to the present about the future (Breton, 1960; Aragon, 1971; Benjamin, 1985).

I want to say a little about some of these issues in what is to follow both in terms of the opportunities they suggest for approaching heritage as well as some of the problems that they generate too. My focus is on issues of materiality and movement as a way of interrogating how cultural memories are established and how this might speak to debates about heritage in a moment of crisis when things are up for grabs. The following two sections on cultural memory look at philosophical approaches to these questions, notably in the work of Henri Lefebvre and Michel Serres. I use the theme of rhythm in my title to capture something of this set of approaches, a term that also comes from leading spatial theorist Henri Lefebvre's final book: *Rhythmanalysis* (2004). This also raises questions of noise out of which rhythmic patterns emerge. I discuss Serres' work on this theme (1995) to supplement and extend some of Lefebvre's thinking around Rhythm. Rhythm suggests two types of pattern: patterns of sound and patterns of movement so what I want to do is draw some of that out in identifying a set of ways of thinking about heritage that might in time become a counter-argument to neo-liberal approaches to the issue without reverting back to a fetishism/reification/alienation model that typically lies at the centre of many of the readings of the urban that I identified in my list above. The final two sections that deal with questions of heritage do this around the themes of voice and footprint to capture both the sonorous and mobile characters of rhythm. I return to the issue of archive in the conclusion where I elaborate further on these as issues of outside disruptions and their possibilities.

### **Cultural Memory and Rhythm**

In his last work on the city, Henri Lefebvre suggested we should become sensitive to its rhythms in order to develop our understanding of what cities are. In many respects he was referring to the everyday patterns of the city shaped by the ways people moved around within it. Informed by a capitalist economic process, this largely developed around the working day, week, month and year. The flows of people, traffic, the ways in which the city is used differently during rush hour or on a Friday evening after work all highlight the rhythms and patterns that one witnesses within cities as shaped by their capitalist

economies. They are made up, he suggests, not only of the built environment and infrastructures through which people move but through repetitions of activity that also produced ripples of difference that mean that any one time in the city is never quite the same as another.

Rhythm involves movement but for Lefebvre it is not simply the same as movement, mobile bodies and materialities help to establish rhythms but his real interest is in how pattern comes to be established out of the noise of a city which on first appearance might appear to be just a cacophony of singular acts without any relationship to each other. For Lefebvre, the dominant force in establishing such rhythm is capital. Not only does it establish working patterns and their associated flows through the city but it is engaged in a range of modes of ordering across a range of different time scales, some linear, some cyclical, some discontinuous or disrupted, many of which have patterns of overlap or interference between them. It is through these, he suggests, that we come to understand the make-up of an urban centre as a lived reality. From the rhythms associated with economic growth and decline, to the forms of measure associated with such things as clock time, to the rhythms associated with the uses of money in its various forms and speeds of transfer (see Pryke, 2011), to the rhythms of production and destruction, these all in some measure impact on the character of a city and leave behind traces as well as initiating new patterns of activity.

Lefebvre's main point is to suggest that attention to the rhythms of the built environment is one that challenges a Cartesian outlook on its spatiality as something fixed and plan/grid-like and alongside with this to call into question overly dominant understandings of time as something linear and chronological. Rhythm makes space appear topological rather than topographical; a crumpled geography of social-material relations that cannot be accounted for in Euclidean terms such as scale, transitivity, singular location, discrete regions and so on. Such representational practices are themselves, Lefebvre believes, a product of capitalism's urban rhythms which function as an ideology of space and time (1991; 2004). Making rhythm visible and studying its multiple patterns of difference and repetition suggest a more complex understanding of space and time within an urban society.

Lefebvre does not have anything of real note to say in this work on how history, or indeed heritage and cultural memory, is folded into this analysis but it is certainly there. It is part of the noise out of which the rhythms of urban life emerge. Noise, for Lefebvre, is the background out of which rhythmic patterns of life and activity emerge. It has no rhythm in itself but is the substance from which rhythms are established. At one point he suggests we see history as part of the noise – something that influences and shapes the rhythms of the present but in ways that are not easily apparent. What I propose we take from this is a sense that cultural memories are established where rhythms become emergent from noise. How they resonate in the archive of the urban is something we need to consider too.

Cultural memory I see as something emergent and social, or at least as grouped in pattered ways, from individual memories – but not either reducible to them nor simply a sum on their total taken together – is what emerges from noise (see Halbwachs, 1992). It is realised both through practice and through the materiality with which that practice is entangled. Famously in another one of his books *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre once described social space as being like a mille feuille pastry – a thousand fragile layers of space that could crumble and mingle across their apparently stratified ordering (1991). In other words, he imagines a social space like a town or city as a palimpsest of different spaces caught up with

different times all found together in a complex and seemingly patterned whole in which dominant representations of space provide an interest-driven understanding of its patterns and forms.

That is a useful starting point in thinking about the past in relation to rhythm. Palimpsest, fragment and trace are not just complex orderings of space where we encounter elements, materialities of different times together in one space, they also have their own rhythmic effect within the city.

For examples:

- Derelict sites are not simply derelict and then become regenerated as the planners and developers would like to hope. They can move in and out of use and disuse over different durations of time generating their own forms and shaping the potential for different types of practice and altering values associated with them – cultural as much as economic (see Thompson, 1979)
- The remains of the past takes the form of a material trace that invite or afford forms of encounter that can alter the way that we experience the built environment and shift the patterns of repetition into that of difference

### **Cultural Memory and Noise**

A supplementary understanding of noise, more detailed than that provided by Lefebvre, can be found in the philosopher Michel Serres' work, notably his book *Genesis* which is concerned with developing an understanding of the making of order and the birth of forms that does not rely on a reductionist or foundationalist notion of origins or ground (1995). Some will be familiar with Serres work though his influence on actor-network theory, including the work of Bruno Latour and others (see Serres and Latour, 1995). Interested in questions of multiplicity and heterogeneity that challenge foundationalist understandings and the privileging of human agents as the loci for action, Serres work recognises agency as something distributed across multiplicities that are heterogeneous in character. Agency, for Serres, is an effect of this distribution within a network of elements rather than the intentional act of conscious beings alone. Noise is one of his main categories for thinking through this approach. It is, for Serres, a recognition that things are always multiple and cacophonous in character, not easy to disentangle or sound-out. From this starting point (which is never in fact a point – one of Serres chief metaphors is that of travelling up-stream to find the source of a river. When we do so, he suggests instead of finding a single origin from which the water springs we find a multiplicity of sites from which the water seeps out of the ground) Serres suggests that our task in recognising the multiple is not to render it visible through analysis as something singular (to black box it) but to retain its multiple character.

Noise is a term used to think through these issues because it suggests a different sense to that of vision – hearing. In order to appreciate elements of urban social life as something multiple our analysis should not be about trying to see it, especially as a simple whole which is what the western perspectival tradition typically promotes but rather to hear it as if we were listening to a complex piece of music. A recognition of the noise of the social, and in our case it would be the town or city, is to be open to it as a series of possibilities out of



which a multiple understanding might come to be recognised of its multiple forms. In this philosophical approach possibilities replace origins or foundations and forms (rhythms in Lefebvre's terms) are born from noise as carriers of multiplicity and heterogeneity. To hear them rather than to see them, for Serres, is a major principle for how we should approach them.

### **Heritage and Voice**

Having spent some time outlining these philosophical approaches to rhythm and noise in the work of these two writers I want to spend the rest of this paper trying to show how this might be of use in addressing questions of urban heritage that follow on from some of the main principles that I have outlined. These principles include:

- Recognising that city spaces have rhythms that produce patterns of repetition and difference that shape the ways in which those cities are lived
- Recognising that rhythm is not a simple temporal matter captured by the rhythms of the calendar imposed upon city life but that it incorporates elements from past times together in a way that is folded and complex
- Acknowledging that rhythms incorporate not only human subjects but also the broad range of materials that make up the urban infrastructure and its cultural and economic uses
- Seeing rhythm as emergent from the multiplicity of noise that is itself without pattern and without foundation. That process is one that occurs as a series of almost endless iterations as patterns get formed out of patterns and interference and feedback continue to challenge and make problematic settled understandings of place.
- That to make sense of the relationship between rhythm and noise requires that we listen to its soundings

In the context of heritage I want to use the metaphor of voice to try and capture this approach. We can already find that in a simplified form in some of the early debates around heritage – for example in Raphael Samuel's critique (1994) of writers like David Lowenthal (1985), Patrick Wright (1985) and Robert Hewison (1987). They, he suggests, see heritage as an imposed official discourse that reflects dominant interests and forms of economic and political power (at the time Thatcherism). They treat heritage as if it were part of a dominant ideology that somehow dupes people into seeing what true history is about. Samuel's counter position is a populist one that argues that there are many valid versions of heritage based on different identity positions and the memories they generate that sometimes runs counter to those of a heritage industry.

People have their own life stories and memories of the places they live in and quite clearly they are able to articulate or give voice to them and communicate them to others without the aid of a museum or local authority heritage policy. Nearly twenty years on from these early heritage debates, the institutions that form part of this heritage industry have not left that unrecognised and it now often forms an important part of the ways in which people are

engaged in participate in the narration and display of that past through the various heritage and museum displays that exist. In the past decade heritage has been less about consuming the past and more about producing the conditions of social inclusion. From the incorporation of people's stories, people's collections and recollections within heritage presentations to outreach work around such events as the Second World War with people who lived through it or local community developments, those engaged in heritage now typically recognise its multiple and heteroglot character.

Voice is more than this though. We should not reduce it simply to the stories that people are able to enunciate about their neighbourhoods and memories of the places they inhabit. The materiality also speaks, or can be given voice. This is a theme that we can also find in some of the recent work on urban ruins, phantasmagorias, ghosts and traces (Gordon, 1997; Jaguaribe, 1999; Hetherington, 2001; Edensor, 2005; Pile, 2005). Through a mixture of text and image, photographic image in particular, it is common to find those working in this field seeking to give voice to the materiality of the past so that it can not only speak to the present but provide an opportunity for a form of awakening to multiple possibilities (see Cadeva, 1997; 2001).

Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project (1999) is perhaps the first place, and a major influence, where such an approach to the material detritus of the past was first given the opportunity to speak. In that unfinished work, Benjamin remained within a visual rather than aural register when developing his argument believing that taking the detritus from the past out of its forgotten locations and making it visible as such would create an odd juxtaposition with its surroundings that defamiliarised them and whose shock would create an awakening from an acceptance of the ideological construction of how we see the past in relation to the present. Others, however, have taken these fragments and traces of the past and through visual depiction sought not only to make them visible but also to give them voice. Much of the work on waste on ruins and on traces is as much interested in the poetics of those remains as it is their politics or ethics. Tim Edensor, for example, in his work on industrial ruins (2005), or Melanie Van Der Hoorn in her work on unwanted buildings (2005) as well as a number of others who see the remains of the past through a spectral poetics of the ghostly and the haunted, seek to give voice to these traces by emphasising their evocative – evoking – character (see also Jaguaribe, 1999; De Silvey, 2006). To evoke is to give voice through images rather than just make things visible (see Barthes, 1993). The belief behind this is often that evocation will help to reveal forms of counter-memory, hidden and sometimes inarticulate voices that are just as much a part of our past as the stories of regeneration and development told by those with an (in)vested interest. The assumed problem with heritage here is often that it is tied in with singular, capitalist practices of urban branding, image making and selling a sense of place through a selected reference to key elements of its past so that it might be culturally and economically developed. Allowing those voices to speak for their own sake, out of the archive and not on behalf of it, is what is typically at stake here.

This question of voice and sounding is about giving articulacy to noise. It is about hearing within that noise discernable voices either in spoken form or in material traces that would otherwise risk going unrecognised. It acknowledges, to a degree, that the composition of a city within space and time is multiple and suggests a heritage model that is about drawing out elements from that noise, often forgotten or unrecognised elements, so that they might be sounded as cultural memories that reveal a different pattern than would be the case if

they went unrecognised. It acknowledges that our sense of the past is itself multiple and that there are a multitude of possible patterns – ways of understanding the past that might come to be recognised. In effect, it is about recognising the punctum, or the disruptions that ripple through an urban archive and unsettle its sense of certainty around any notion of a singular cultural memory.

### **Heritage as Footprint**

Evoking and sounding the fragments that make up the multiplicity is about taking something from the noise by folding the aural into the visual. It is all about recognising that the past is multiple and ready to be made through the soundings that are taken. The idea of how we might physically move through a city is one that engages more directly with questions of its rhythms of mobility. As well as through an interest in mobility in general (see Sheller and Urry, 2006; Cresswell, 2006), we also find this something Lefebvre was attentive to in his analysis (2004). But he was also associated with a tradition of moving through the city that also might form a basis of its critique or recognition of different realities to that presented by the rhythms of capitalism. Many will be familiar with Michel de Certeau's essay *Walking the City* which encapsulates this approach (1984). There, de Certeau counterposed the idea of the grand strategies of power that take a rather static approach to the city with mobile forms of resistance encapsulated by the tactics of walking. From this perspective, the God-Eye of the planner looking down from a position of stasis and authority produced strategies for urban understanding that conform to the dominant rhythms of the city and their archive principle of understanding a relationship between past and present: development/progress or regeneration/progress. Walking, in contrast, is about movement through space in a more fluid and dynamic way allowing little stories, neighbourhood stories to emerge and creating a series of tactics of resistance (on the history of walking see Solnit, 2001).

De Certeau was not the first to believe that walking through a space allowed it to be experienced differently from any representation that might be made of it, especially as an historicist record for the archive of how our urban lives now fit with the past. In the 1950s and 60s the avant-garde artists and political radical the Situationists developed a theory of psychogeography that was premised on the idea of the *derive* or drifting through which one could develop a feeling for the ambience of the city as well as reveal forgotten elements from the city's past that offered an alternative perspective on its history based around counter-memories of practice and revolt (see Debord, 1989; Coverley, 2006). Such a psychogeography continues today with small groups of people seeking to open up the city through drifting in an unplanned way through it. More than a trace of it is there in literary form in the novels and essays of Iain Sinclair (1997) and in the series of Robinson films by Patrick Keiller (1999). Both of these works are in that psychogeographical tradition trying to show how an intimate attention to the details of place and the chance encounters as one moves through somewhere allow new perspectives on it to be opened up that challenge or disrupt narrated and representational orthodoxies through which place myths and place branding are typically constructed.

One can, of course, go back further in time to Surrealists like Andre Breton (1960) and Louis Aragon (1971) who in their writings from the early part of the twentieth century sought chance encounters with the ghostly and forgotten past in the arcades, parks and flea

markets of Paris. Through that, they thought a dream-like understanding might emerge and an altogether different understanding of reality might be established. In their turn they stand in a tradition of poets and writers like Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Poe (see Ross, 1988), indeed right back to Rousseau for whom this Flâneur tradition of the leisurely, male stroller was a way of uncovering something hidden within the everyday and new revelations and new visions that might be made visible to the mobile subject (for general discussions on the history of the Flâneur and its critiques notably on the issue of its gendered assumptions see Wolff, 1990; Wilson, 1992; Friedberg, 1993; Tester, 1994; Parsons, 2000).

What this approach tacitly acknowledges is that there are different rhythms to the cities past-present composition than that found in the routine rhythms of daily urban life that are constructed around the process of work and organised and commodified leisure. Being mobile in such a way is intended not only to produce a different experience of the spaces of the city but more significantly of its time-space configuration of the relationship that the present has with the past(s). An attention to the ambience of the city as random rather than organised and rhythmic collection of signs is intended to make the seemingly inattentive walker more attentive to the possibility of other rhythms in which traces or fragments of the past show themselves in ways that would be missed if one was simply following and accepting the rhythms of any dominant spatial practice imposed on them by the capitalist workings of that city. Heritage in this sense is not so much something evoked as encountered, if not completely by chance, then at least through a susceptibility to the hidden rhythms that can be found in the historical traces of the past that are always left behind in a city. The disposal of the past – a capitalist imperative – is always incomplete. The trace and the fragment can always be found and their revenant charms revealed to the casual walker attentive to their possibility.

### **Voice, Footprint and the Archive – concluding comments.**

From the perspectives reviewed here rhythm promotes encounter and noise offers up the opportunity for evocation and sounding through which heritage as a multiple set of possibilities is established as a series of provisional patterns through which we might come to know a place. And yet can we fully account for this version of heritage through the trope of counter-memory and critique, notably of official forms of heritage that are seemingly imposed as a part of a commodified place imaging and place branding? In many ways these alternative versions of heritage are just as reliant on an archiving principle in understanding a place as those more official forms of heritage and museum practice. To evoke and to give voice through text or image often requires a degree of expertise and familiarity around advance knowledge of the history of the place one is traversing as it does simply allowing the materiality and the people one encounters to reveals to us what is hidden.

For my own part I once tried to apply this approach to the city to a section of Manchester around the shopping area associated with Deansgate and its cultural quarter surrounding a hub museum Urbis (Hetherington, 2005). That stroll took me not only through the burgeoning sites of regeneration and shopping in a once declining industrial city, it also took me through the traces left behind of the housing of Engels' Irish slum dwellers he revealed in his *Conditions of the Working Class in England* (1892), past a forgotten nineteenth century arcade, past the site of the worlds' first department store Kendalls (one that actually pre-dates the Bon Marche in Paris) and on to the site of an anonymous business district

crossroads that was marked as the site of the notorious 1819 Peterloo Massacre where workers protesting for their rights were cut down by sabre wielding soldiers that is seen by many as a key moment in the emergence of radical socialist politics in Britain.

Did I find this counter-memory in the material surroundings and rhythms of that walk? Yes I did. There was a degree of chance encounter that was not anticipated in advance. Unexpected connections were indeed made. Certainly that stroll provided me with a different sense of the cultural memory expressed in the city than I would have found in a museum display or on an organised and signposted heritage trail. But I also found elements of those rhythms and patterns of memory because I already had a working knowledge of the historical archive of such a place and the significance of these fragments and traces even if I could not tie it into location exactly in advance. I had seen some of the pictures, read some of the books and visited some of the museums and official heritage sites too.

The issue is not as some might like to believe that there is a simple dichotomy between stasis, historicism, memory-as-amnesia and archive on the one hand and movement, discontinuity, memory as lived practice and unofficial recording on the other. Both memory and counter-memory rely on an archive principle. The difference is how they engage with its outsiderly Otherness. The juxtaposition of many of these interventions of Otherness and counter-memory around voice and footprint in the modern archive's apparent static and silent realism of facts and historicism of account does play with issue of movement and noise. Within the record of the official plan that marks out the space of representation of the modern city (Lefebvre, 1991), there are, it is true forgotten corners, hidden voices (Wilson, 1992), hidden vistas, forgotten traces, broken fragments that afford the possibility of another perspective – notably a perspective that focuses eyes away from the intentions of the visible plan (on issues of stasis and movement in urban understanding see Amin and Thrift, 2002). With good reason did Walter Benjamin chose the motif of the arcade, at one time the height of nineteenth century urban modernity but by the early twentieth century something of a forgotten remnant in which the dusty past lay all around uncatalogued, as his way of exploring such archive practices and their troubled certainties. And in such places, it was often hoped, one would encounter the past in a more affective, arresting guise: the spectral (Gordon, 1997), the phantasmagoric (Benjamin, 1999; Pile, 2005) and the uncanny (Freud, 1958) these have also been ways in which to give a name, and a voice, to this encounter with the outside found within the city-archive and its phantasm agora.

But this is not a tradition antithetical to the archive as heritage per se. Rather it is about ways in which the archive, challenged from without, also incorporates those challenges within its understanding opening up the notion of heritage to sound and movement. Around such an uncertain archival terrain – heterogeneous, unbounded, unfinished - the past comes to life as a contested promise of an honoured debt (see Derrida, 1994): the debt of History recognised against the grain of historicism in particular, that often goes hand in hand with the acknowledged, dominant ideological representation of urban space (Lefebvre, 1991). But it does so in ways that still needs an archive principle in its engagement with the idea of the urban but more in an endless play of uncertainty and disruption rather than order and classification. In this perspective the archive itself becomes a space of noise rather than a container of accounts out of which rhythms emerge.

One can suggest at this juncture, at a time when funding for official heritage is being withdrawn, investment is in short supply and culture led regeneration is not as keenly

available as it was just a few years ago, that approaches to heritage that recognise this element of uncertainty could be opened up within this space of doubt in such a way as to at least call into question some of the more singular and dominant narrative linked to place branding than might have been possible before. The archive always remains open to the outside, that outside as Derrida points out is disruptive but it is not altogether destructive. The issue is to recognise that as an opportunity rather than a problem. Outside and inside, city and archive, historicism and history are always folded into one another in unexpected ways. That is the basis for urban rhythm. The archive is a noisy place and out of that noise rhythms of cultural memory emerge and their soundings resonate both with and against notions of heritage.

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