HYBRIDITY
AS AN URBAN
SPECULATION

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fig. a
Collection of urban artefacts.
Image: Ekaterina Ageeva.

«We are no longer ourselves» **Gilles Deleuze once claimed in ‹A Thousand Plateaus›. But who are we? And what is our ‹Welt›?**

We are constantly mutating and adapting to the environment. But, in parallel, we are constantly producing and modifying the environment according to our needs. This process did not start recently, but is ongoing since the beginning of time. From the very beginning to this moment we have progressed on a path of mental and physical changes just as we simultaneously have transformed the surface of the Earth. Significantly, the most feasible moments of change in the history of humanity have happened in the presence of crisis. Crisis is a painful moment for inversion and facing a whole new situation, which does not come from the future but from the past. Nowadays, we are frustrating the ‹limit of growth›, making this is an opportune moment to search for new reference points.

I believe in an optimistic scenario and want to represent it through the hypothesis of ‹Hybridity›. The conventional system of classification does no longer work, yet just by opening a boundary we can generate a huge new variety of options able to address urgent problems.

These include the problem of territory. We humans are too many in number and disproportionally distributed, attached to our nationality and motherland. At the current rate of globalisation more and more of us are becoming detached from our roots which link us to a specific country or nationality. **Open borders, massive migration and multinational are moving us towards becoming ‹multicultural hybrids› (fig. b). Conflicts between social groups and groups of different creeds are becoming inherent. But, by pressure of mutual survival we are learning to tolerate, in some case even to appreciate, minorities which include people with disabilities, other sexual orientation, gender, age, class and religion. We are becoming ‹social hybrids› (fig. c). Machines are everywhere serving us, but it is also clear that we are afraid of an apocalyptic ‹rise of the machines› scenario. We must understand that computers are extensions of ourselves, like any tool, with the capacity to change us as a specie. We are becoming ‹cyborgian hybrids›, members of a ‹human machinality› (fig. d). The reduction in labor intensive activity is opening more time for education, and the development of intellect and intuition. This extends our mystical capacity as well as the ability to shift paradigms that break cultural and behavioural patterns to produce some sort of ‹otherness›. Yet across all this iterative changes we are only looking for ourselves, becoming a hybrid of the internality and externality of ourselves (fig. e).**

These hybrids are actors. Seeking profit and pleasure, they alter their milieu, mutating their spatial environment and setting the stage for the next generation of hybrids. In an urban environment many forms of hybridisation take place simultaneously. If one of the actors becomes dominant, however, the city will be structured and organised in relation to their character and activities. How would our society, cities and urban artefacts look like if one of the four hybrids mentioned above took control?

Everyday urban artefacts (fig. a) are the small entities of a global process; they represent common activities and manifest claims for identity. They should be understood not only as physical objects in the city, but also as making up the historical, economical and political structure of the city. If we collect urban artefacts conforming to a specific classification and project them – according to the behavioural pattern of a dominant actor – into a single space this will create a certain abstract probabilistic pattern. This is analogous to quantum physics, where calculating phenomena is only possible within a probability space.

Activities, patterns, and city artefacts are collected as a cloud of indexes. They all coexist within one single comprehensive space. Different combinations of indexes are rendered into unstable images or collages. These renders cannot be controlled. The combinations are like waves, different every time. By collecting these images it is possible to read some pattern.

The chosen collages (fig. f–i) that are used here as an illustration cannot count as final ones, indeed, there cannot ever be a final one. This is my way of understanding space – by engaging with the flux of phenomena.

#1 Multicultural hybrids

no standardization or rational order; driven by the chaos of contemporary globalization, the overabundance of materials and information, cultural cacophony, mankind adapts into new forms of alienation: amoral and pragmatic multicultural hybrids, which move by instinct from individual differences toward generic similarities.

ACTOR: Salaryman, Japanese middle-management staff. Salaryman keeps a precise order by following a combination of "western" and "asian" rules, roles and traditions(fig. b).

fig.b

fractal space to guide us by:
- symbols
- spase
- activities
- action

Incomplete space to extend:
- milieu
- capacity
- body
- mind

fig.d

ACTOR: Jones, a character of a film Johnny Mnemonic(1995). A member of an anti-establishment group, Jones has decryption capabilities, which are result of innate intelligence and technological penetration. (fig. d)

#3 Cyborgian Hybrids

human "machinality" and human "animality" In both directions, we are dealing with a question of social reality and emancipation that aims at breaking up the structures of existing dualisms, binary oppositions, and their logic of domination. Hierarchy can be destroyed by actively exploring and mobilizing the blurring borders. We are not natural or artificial, neither objects nor bodies, neither mental nor physical; we are an assemblage of all these factors, among many many others.

There are heroes (a — hybrid creatures — but they remain abser certain spaces and participate in certain

no n

no architects but space providers

no create but generate

no identity but convergence

no organic but fake

no difference but similarity

no History as force but as service

no memories but Déjà-vu

no unique but universal

no air but climate control

no periphery-no center

The space is endless and frac repeats itself on all scales

no public life but public space

Labor into Robotics

Mind into Artificial Intelligence

Nature/culture into Fields of difference

Public/private into Cyborg citizenship

Community ecology into Ecosystem

Reproduction into Replication

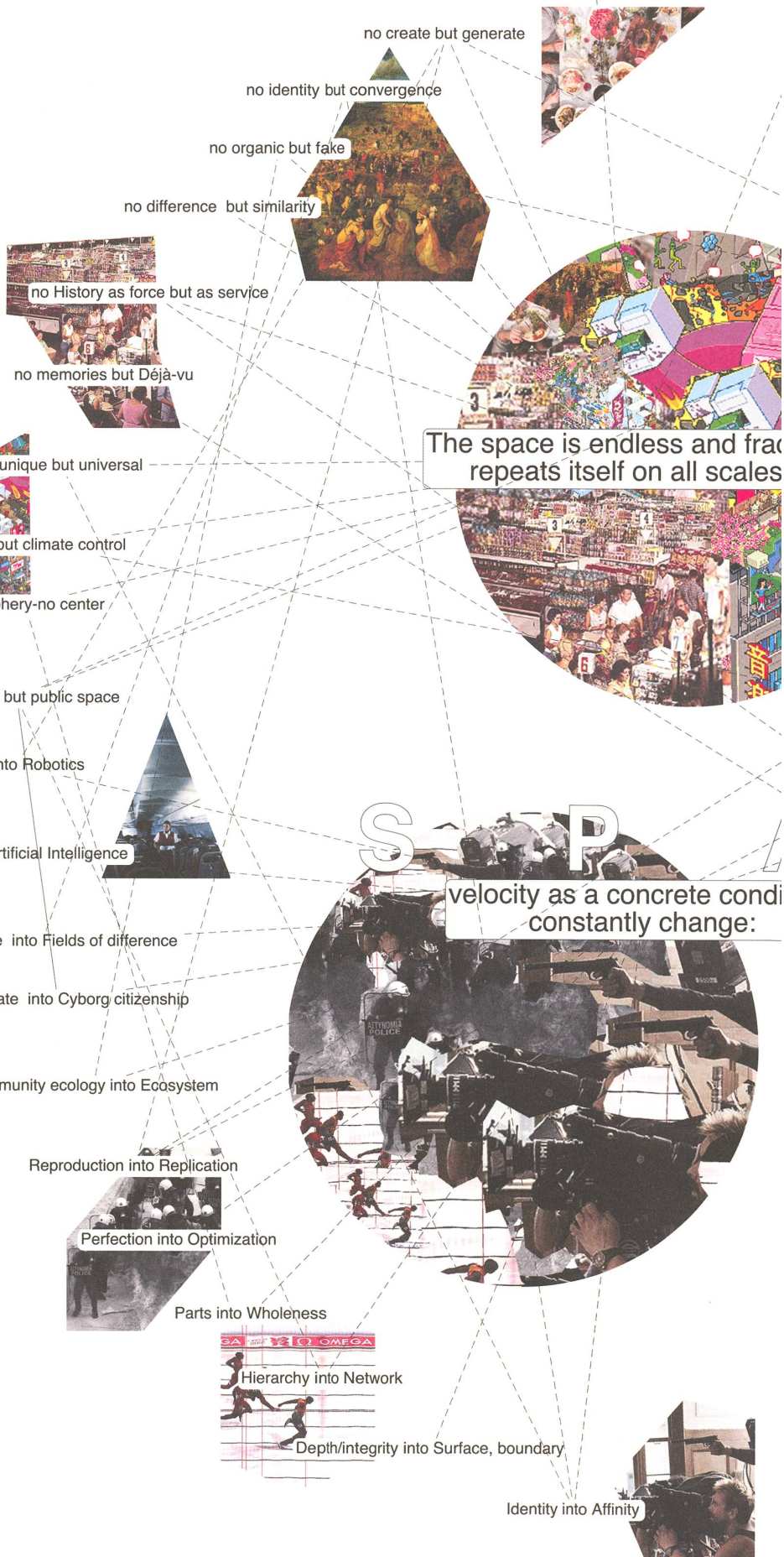Perfection into Optimization

Parts into Wholeness

Hierarchy into Network

Depth/integrity into Surface, boundary
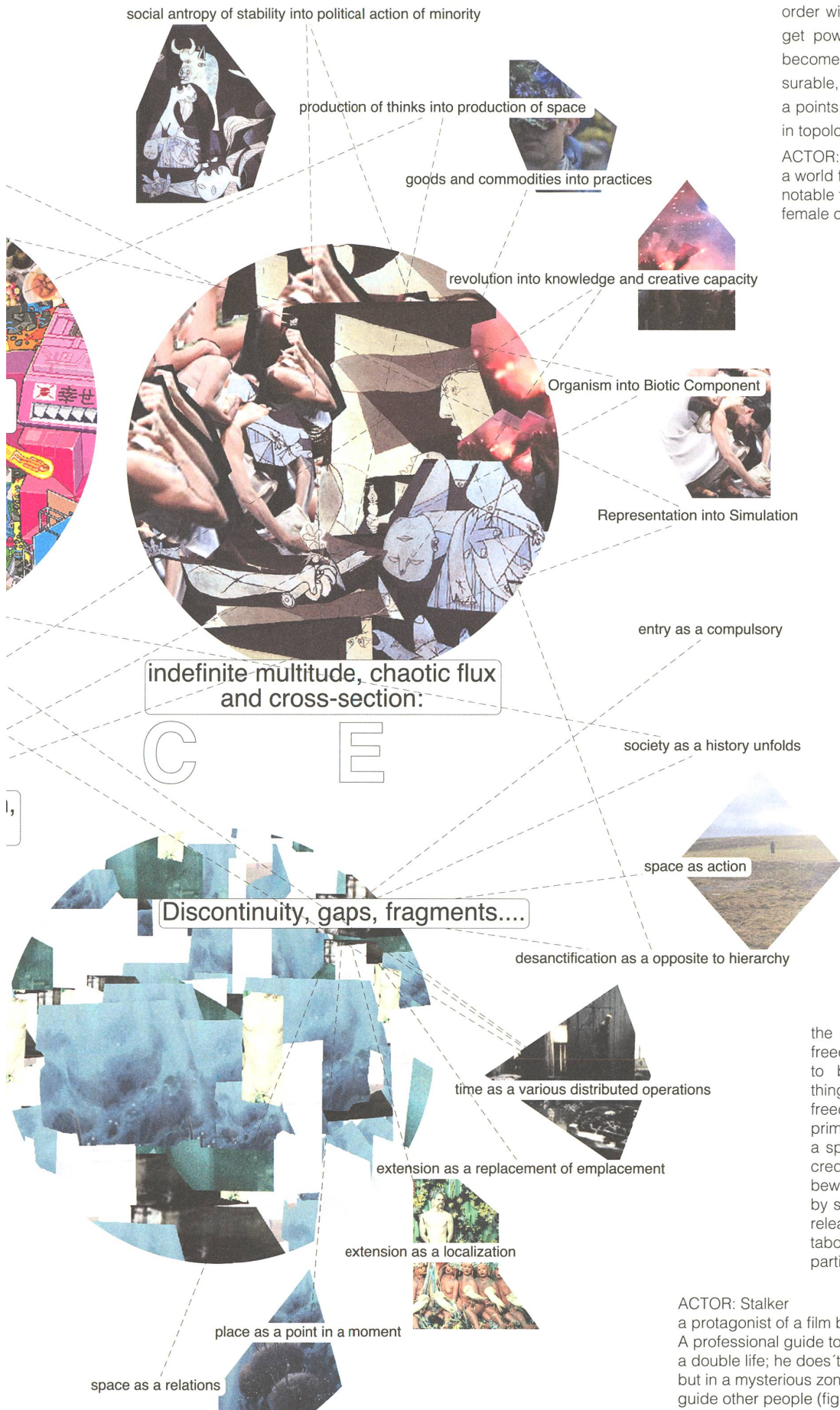
Identity into Affinity

S P

velocity as a concrete condi constantly change:

...s) in my storytelling
All I "know" about them is that they inhabit
...ctivities that take place in these spaces.
...ty but intention

Social Hybrids

is the opposite wild edge of society, which undermines a whole schema of totality, the conditions where norms of behave will be ignored, hierarchical order will break down, minorities will get power, and question of volition become a crucial. Space is immeasurable, but it is possible to capture a points of extremes and map space in topological terms

ACTOR: Andrej Pejic,
a world famous androgynous model, notable for modelling both male and female clothing (fig. c).

fig. c

social antropy of stability into political action of minority

production of thinks into production of space

goods and commodities into practices

revolution into knowledge and creative capacity

Organism into Biotic Component

Representation into Simulation

indefinite multitude, chaotic flux and cross-section:

C E

entry as a compulsory

society as a history unfolds

space as action

desanctification as a opposite to hierarchy

Discontinuity, gaps, fragments....

topological space to break up
subordination-
anonymity-
homeliness-
alienation-

heterogeneous
space to desacralize:
observance-
time-
actuality-
hierarchy-

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time as a various distributed operations

extension as a replacement of emplacement

extension as a localization

place as a point in a moment

space as a relations

fig. e

#4 OTHERNESS

the external condition that give freedom to qualities that appear to belong intrinsically to one thing or another. This liberating freedom is born in a space of primary perception and dreams, a space of otherness, some sacred and forbidden zone. Yet beware — this zone is inhabited by stalkers, by the ones that are released from commonality and taboo, but who come back and participate in everyday routines

ACTOR: Stalker
a protagonist of a film by Andrei Tarkovsky(1979). A professional guide to the forbidden zone. He has a double life; he does´t feel accepted by society, but in a mysterious zone feels his purpose and can guide other people (fig. e).
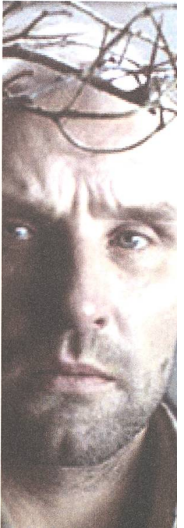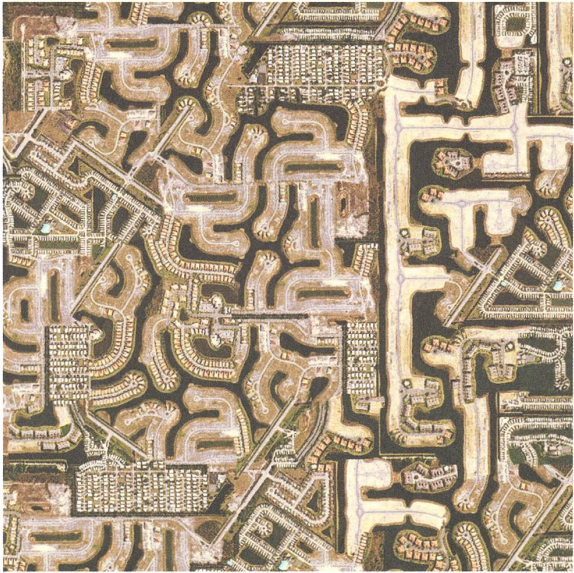
fig. f
‹Multicultural›, also embodied by Singapore.
Image: Ekaterina Ageeva.

fig. g
‹Social›, also embodied by Venice.
Image: Ekaterina Ageeva.

fig. h
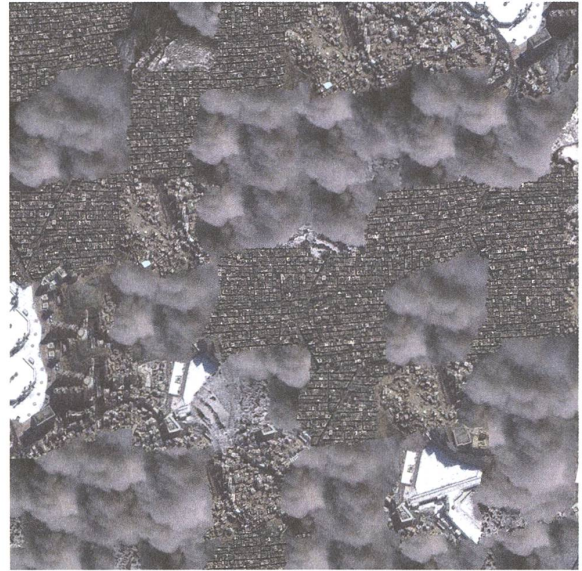‹Cyborgian›, also embodied by virtual network communities.
Image: Ekaterina Ageeva.

fig. i
‹Otherness›, also embodied by Jerusalem.
Image: Ekaterina Ageeva.

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