



López, O. Vivas, P. Rojas, J. Farré, L. Santoro, V. y Vidal, T. (2006)
Paseando por la cibercidad: tecnología y nuevos espacios urbanos. Barcelona: Editorial UOC.
ISBN: 8497885317

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The book is written by some URBSIC research group members (Cities in the society of the Information and the Knowledge), this book include many researches which object of study are the urban and the technological from a multidisciplinary approach in social sciences.

The book deals with many social sciences current problematics, but it focuses in the report of researches on the Cybercity such as living and building it, always with the objective of visioning it in a completely different manner, with an unexpected perspective. As the authors define it say, the book is an exciting and enthusiastic exercise to approach the reader at those thousand faces that the contemporary large city has.

This book's collective author is a polymorphic personage: ages, gender, origins, personal histories, various abilities, styles and different ways to see the urban space. I personally know this "collective author", some have been my masters in the style to live the city, or rather, in practicing it, and this book seems to be the result of all this experience the group has carried throughout these years.

In the five chapters, plus the excellent prologue of Martin Mora, all these practices on the Cybercity are concentrated. And they do it from the Environmental Psychology and Social Psychology to Social and Cultural Anthropology, passing through Philosophy and Sociology, with the clear attempt not to mark the limits between these different disciplines, but to construct a common space, influenced from these different perspectives.

It is a route in book in which to find, as Martin Mora indicates, "new urban typologies (Internet-city, Cyber-city, SimCity, city-chip, e-topia, technopolis, etc.);

narrations about social practices and their characteristics in the Cyber-city (identity, communication, distance, memory, collectivity, resistance, etc.); forms of research in the tradition of Foucault, De Certeau, the ethnographies and the stroll artists (Dadaists and situationists); hetero technology spaces like areas of transitory sociability, and whose best description are the images and the personages cited before; as well as studies in perspective on planning shapes and government that allow some videogames like SimCity".

The research about the urban, according to Martin Mora, is not a sad task of experts, but a live experience for all the people, being so easy as to take a walk in the streets of the *urbe*, our Cyber-city, to see the fortunate confluence of technology with the human. From here arises the importance of

strolling, the first fundamental practice for a correct study of the Cyber-city, as Oscar Lopez and Pep Vivas specify in the first chapter. A trip into the places produced by the post modernity, the non-places, spaces where we pass large part of our life, like freeways, mobiles cockpits and their physical and architectonic structures, great Hotel chains, thematic parks, and supermarkets among others.

The language creates, recreates and renders the fabrication of this post-modern space possible, even that that had not been thought. This is what Jesus Rojas and Valeria Santoro pose in the second chapter, distinguishing the concepts of e-topia and distopia. The first one, the e-topia, is that position that supports the development of "a new social order" around to the post-modern space, and the second one is the critic to the exponential advance of the cyberspace.

In the book, there are many citations from Wikipedia, and many other virtual sources, to be able to develop and specify the new social practice of the Cybercity. This is what we found in the third chapter written by Oscar Lopez. It is the definition of "I" that is brought into discussion, mainly this constructed "I" in the different Cybercity contexts, like to be able to speak of our "I"s that are put into play in our daily life, and which end up (re)constructing the way we are by interpreting our roles in the social reality. A virtual ethnography is also proposed to explain this production of "I"s in some on-line realities, like the Second Life world.

Pep Vivas and Tomeu Vidal in the fourth chapter, central core of the work, analyze and construct new forms of research for the Cybercity. The most important, citing De Certeau (1980, pp.109-110), is to remember always that: "the action of walking is to the urban system what the enunciation (speech act) is to the language or to the made statements (...)". So we construct and reconstruct the network in each instant, at every moment through our incursion in it. I completely agree with the authors when they say that whenever we practice this action, the words performative effect is even more evident, since the virtual urban context is designed from the words.

To write, to record, to listen, to ask, to go. This set of verbs are words that will help us to see the Cybercity in its totality, these are words that may be useful to practice an ethnography of the urban or, if preferred, of the present urban culture. A fundamental part of the book, which arises in me an special affection is the "drift" of the city (this may be conditioned by my personal experience, since I have participated in one of these "drifts" in the city of Barcelona, organized by some of this book's authors).

It proposes advice, and fundamental points for the success of the test. The authors give seven instructions for that reader who wants to dress of cyberflaneur in the Cybercity (p.126):

1. Make of walking in the Cybercity, your way of life.
2. Walk slowly and placidly in the society that surrounds us.
3. Cross the city without norms neither pre-established times.
4. Vague, ramble, wander.
5. Try to develop to the maximum your sight sense. Observe with detail the large city.
6. Get distance from the urban mass that accompanies you to observe the Cybercity with other lenses.
7. Benefit from the spectacle that the contemporaneous metropolis offers.

I have participated in these drifts the authors have organized in more than an occasion, remaining enchanted while discovering a completely new city, and in this case the authors introduce a revision of these seven instructions to also be able to derive in the Cybercity as well. In this case the instructions rise up to 10 points, and the figure of the cyberflaneur comes incarnated by Gadget Inspector, an urban ethnographer that goes from a side to another of the Cybercity instantaneously, loaded of different gadgets that allow him to comprehend what happens in the metropolis. In the Cybercity, the "person-words" become the nodes that tie the "urban text-contexts".

In the last chapter, Oscar López and Lluvi Farré complete the analyses that have been offered in the previous sections, with an example in which they plan a concrete work around the relations between the politician, the new technologies, the simulation and the urban thing through the analysis of the computer science simulator SimCity, and the simulator for Linux, LinCity. An analysis of some elements that surround this videogame and that are related with the form in which these relations in different contexts, in various aspects, are crossed by power relations.

Definitively, it is a book that continuously invites us to the stroll in the Cybercity. A Cybercity built by De Certeau and the *iPod*, Foucault and the *Palm*, Simmel and the skateboard, Lynch and the *Gps*. An urban space mediated by the new technology and the new deriving practices. A continuous particular vision of technópolis, the city-chip, the Bit City, the Old City and the SimCity, city of the *simulacrum* and the simulated city, and at last, the Internet city.

Formato de citación

Belli, Simone (2007). López, O. y otros "Paseando por la ciudad: Tecnología y nuevos espacios". *Athenea Digital*, 11, 236-238. Disponible en <http://psicologiasocial.uab.es/athenea/index.php/atheneaDigital/article/view/386/339>.



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