

“A journey as a flow”: A personal spatio-temporal projection of the world

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Keywords: Art and cartography, conceptual schema, mental maps, cognitive geography

Abstract:

When regarding the changing world of today, both artists and cartographers attempt to map what they perceive and are increasingly compelled to go beyond static and unchangeable geometric plans which represent a constrained version of the dynamics of our lives. In so doing these skilled researchers are questioning the existing models of representation of reality, by placing a stronger accent on the way all connections are established at geopolitical, social and personal levels.

Therefore, this project aims to draw attention to this, how living consciously in the contemporary world involves rethinking our self-projection in time. What follows are ideas for an art exhibition that depicts dynamic space-time and thematic aspects of individual lives, drawing from geographic and artistic representation, conveying as well the distinction between plastic spaces and behavioral ones (Forer, 1978). In moving forward, many models could be adapted to the changing individual status of the life traveler, represented in a 3D space-time exhibition room (Hagerstrand, 1970). Within the meta-space-time we have individual lifetime space-time paths traced by spherical structures, which themselves contain a more temporally specific daily path (Fig 1a). Being inside the flow of different events is more a case of switching between interchangeable references (or multiple spherical structures - Fig 1b) instead of using behavioral patterns to pigeon-hole the traveler in only one of a number of possible lifestyles, which is the static, invariant take. Therefore, many possible destinations and routes of each individual flow (Fig 1c) on today's map are changeable too, leaving projected traces in space-time, because of differences in perception inside of the total flows within big urban metropolises.

If we attempt to re-define a journey as a way to create all the spatial connections with others by including as well a specific way of being in time, we will realize that as a consequence of our real time or virtual behavior, each day becomes a new type of a journey inside of different flows. Our self-projections are multifaceted and directly related to the way we establish connections in the world, subject to disrupting forces, such as hurricanes (an alternative representation - Fig 1d).

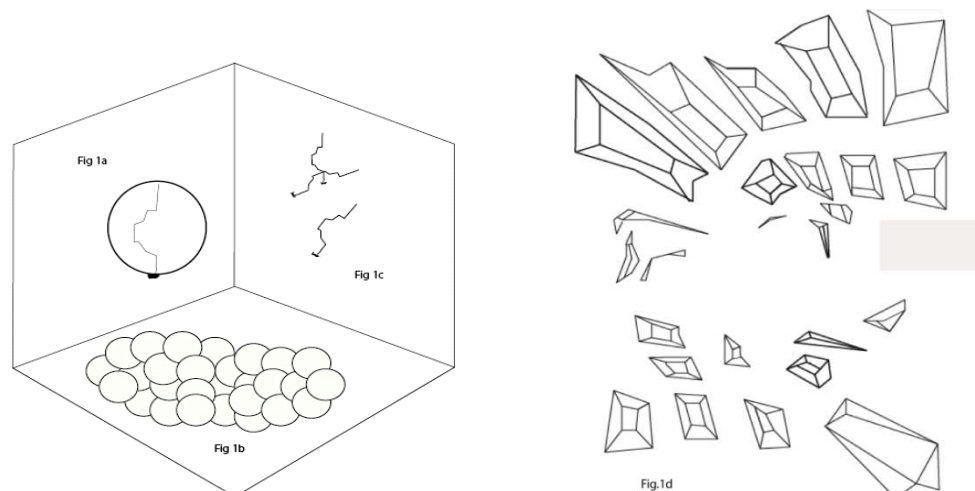


Figure 1: a) A journey as a single flow; b) Alternative aspects of an individual's path; c) Multiple paths, perceived and actual; d) An alternative “hurricane” representation destroying regular patterns of everyday activity.

Another perspective on this is to regard the balloon or cloud as a result of environmental processes to visualize different flows that are happening and in which we are participating. It is more a result of the flows than a flow in itself. It can have different color because of the intensity of the process that are operating behind the flow (expressed through cartographic means, linking color to theme or emotion, Figure 2). Because it depends on how it appears, it can have different ways to be expressed: as a result of the connections of the city flows, a result of a daily exploration of space-time in a mental sense etc. But it appears because of the flows, which are interrupting the regular, grid-like patterns, just like emotions. Thus the ‘cloud’ has a double meaning as a psychological or mental symbol.

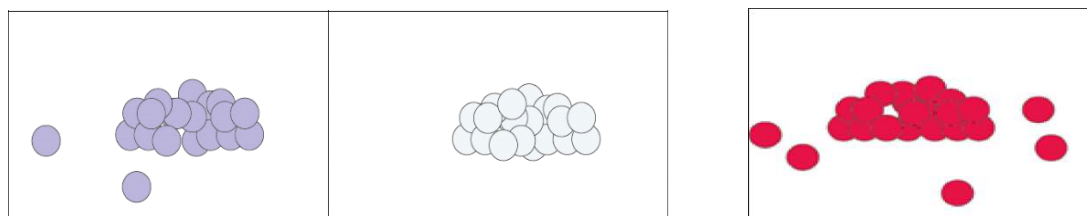


Figure 2 a& b Colors of space-time “clouds” to convey theme or emotions;

A mental schema can also express how we move from one place into another: in Figure 3a we are staying at the same point inside of imaginary space-time, which moves in itself; in Figure 3b it is more about moving like a ping-pong pattern (moving and going back to the same place during one day, with the repetition and tedium that implies).

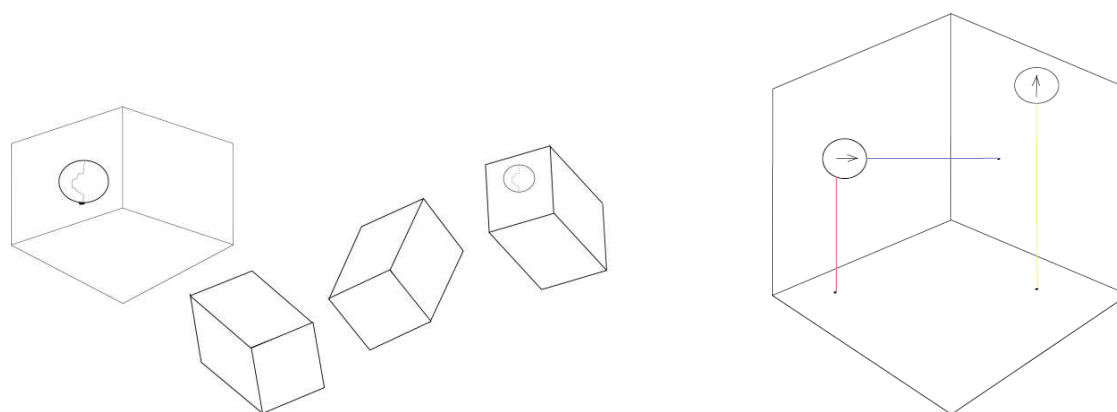


Figure 3 a) Mental space-time according to a multiple journeys activity ; b) “Ping-pong” pattern of activity

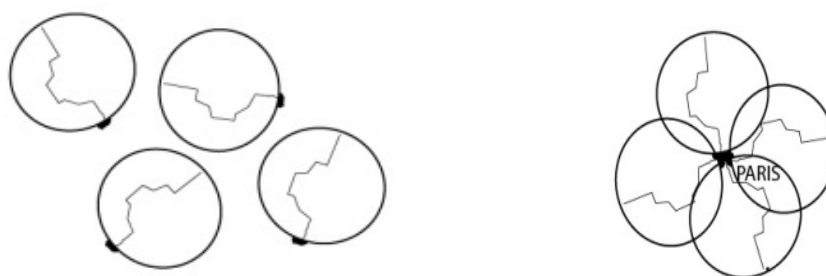


Figure 4 a) Multiple journeys in clouds; b) Assembled in space to provide the whole picture

Mental mapping in this context might consist as well of representing the physical path taken and one that comes from thoughts about clouds in the system of communication. As a result of connections and flows (Figure 4b), but not as a fixed result, a cloud can change its color, shape and can even disappear from the environment. It can be present as a potential resource, occurring within the perspective of a year, month or daily (Figure 4a) as a metaphor relating to everyday life. We define this self-projection in time as a result of these potential ever-evolving relationships and activities and we visualize them as a journey through the phenomenological qualities of the territory (e.g. Abbott, 2013). This is translated into the cartographic language of the planned 3D exhibition.