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Youth street cultures

Between online and offline circuits

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Introduction

Youth cultures, the street and digital networks are dynamic entities. The daily experience of young people is strongly defined by the presence of digital technologies, and being connected to the digital world is an increasingly common ingredient of their daily life. This state of affairs has considerable repercussions in the way in which space is used and represented by the younger segment of the population, who transform a large share of their experiences through a hybrid dynamic: the *online* and the *offline*.

The urban public space is a territory traditionally associated with an array of youth cultures and subcultures. The street has, for this reason, been widely described and detailed in youth-centred research. This is a space of sociability and creativity that is used as a stage for the development of a series of practices that unfold beyond the domain of institutions and the adult gaze. Thus, on many occasions, the street represents a space of autonomy that allows for the development of a particular set of rules outside the dominant normative models.

Another dimension frequently associated with youth concerns the media and the cultural industries that have played a crucial role in the social construction of its image. Nowadays, we would have to add to this setting digital technology, media and networks. Although the internet is reasonably transversal and widespread, many scholars point to the fact that younger generations are especially proficient when it comes to the use of digital technologies. These have been perfectly integrated within a set of youthful social dynamics that have also contributed to the creation of novel social practices.

A significant amount of research has demonstrated how cultural activities and expressions traditionally associated with the realm of the street have been transferred to the online domain. A recent example is the number of protests that have taken place in several locations around the world following the political and economic crises that occurred in the beginning of the decade. From the Arab Spring to the anti-austerity and Occupy movements, there have been several instances in which there was a merging of the street with digital networks, resulting in protests of a hybrid nature. Another example worth mentioning, refers to certain street youth cultures such as graffiti, street art or protest rap that have been the subject of my own research in the past few years.

The street as the domain of youth cultures

In the Western world, youth is commonly seen as a stage of transition, the passage from infancy into adulthood. However, far from merely defining a biological stage, youth represents, above everything, a social construct that acquires specific features according to particular historical, social and cultural contexts. Associated with this, and aside from several variations deriving from economic and socio-cultural contexts, the notion of dependence and absence of responsibility seems to prevail (Frith, 1984). Youngsters are usually under the wing of several social institutions (school, family, etc.) who share responsibility for their survival and development, a fact that wields profound influence over their existences, as well as over the type of expectations and social representations projected onto them. Subalternity and transience are, then, two central elements of their social condition. Consequently, the passage into the young adult stage implies transition towards independence, responsibility and the acquisition of attributes allowing for a greater control over everyday life and personal projects.

If there is a measure of homogeneity in the way we conceive of being young – as a shared social condition and youthful existence – we must not forget, on the other hand, the heterogeneity that is found across this age group. This heterogeneity derives from the multiple contexts in which each individual exists, the different options, lifestyles and projects they come to embrace. And it is precisely from this idea of diversity that the concept of youth cultures emerges (Feixa & Nofre, 2012).

Spatiality is a core element in the life of youngsters (Valentine, Skelton, & Chambers, 1998; Hall, Coffey, & Williamson, 1999; Robinson, 2000; Glass, 2012; Farrugia, 2015; Woodman & Leccardi, 2015; Farrugia & Wood, 2017). To the extent that research on youth has mainly focused on the urban context, it isn't surprising that the urban public space has been recurrently seen as the privileged stage for the manifestation of youth cultures. The city is the site of discovery, not only geographically but also fundamentally, in a symbolic and experiential sense. The transition from an infancy safeguarded by the family home and the educational system – bulwarks of vigilance and protection – is accompanied by an increase in the exploration of physical and symbolic geographies where young people are able, with a measure of freedom, to develop new relationships and identities. Subterranean and liminal enclaves, "non-places," nightlife or marginal territories often represent the experimental and relevant spaces as they emerge in the interstices of regulation and ordering of city life.

The public space plays a crucial role for presenting a number or resources, but also for serving as an arena for public gathering, socialisation and experimentation. The quest for autonomy inevitably includes encountering other symbolic and cultural references. As noted by Woodman and Leccardi (2015, p. 713):

> Young people are often drawn to particular public space that seems less inviting, a bus shelter, for example, not only because other public spaces are "adult" spaces and hence there is nowhere else to go but also because it is unsupervised, open, and affordable.

Hence the reason why, sometimes, the youth opt for non-adult territories where they are unsupervised and that are aesthetically fashioned as juvenile settings with a range of distinctive features (graffiti, music playing, youthful bodies, juvenile clothing and visual styles, props such as skateboards, musical instruments, etc.). The public space becomes in this way a place which they can build up for themselves, contrary to family or educational settings overseen and invigilated by grown-ups and, consequently, under the wing of authority. There is, for this reason, a certain feeling of comfort generated by a sense of identification and belonging to a space that is shared among peers.

However, the public space of the street is also a problematic terrain. This space of autonomy, creativity and, frequently, deviant practices is oftentimes seen with suspicion by the overseeing institutions and authorities, always all too ready to react to that which might challenge social norms and conventions. The youth is understood as being in constant danger, a state of affairs that legitimises the ongoing monitoring

it faces from different systems (Woodman & Leccardi, 2015). This turns the public space into a field of tension and conflict where different systems of power and ways of conceiving the uses of space come into conflict.

We can systematise the part played by the public space in youth cultures by invoking a number of interwoven functions. There are four possible influences: sociability; identity construction; participation and citizenship; and experimentation and creativity.

To begin with, the public space is where youth gathering takes place, where proximity (neighbourhood, college) or affinity networks define geographical zones of autonomy, allowing for socialisation beyond sites of consumption or control by institutions (college, family). Friendship networks and membership in specific youth cultures are reinforced by social events and the enjoyment of urban public spaces outside of surveillance and norms of conduct imposed by grown-ups.

Secondly, and directly linked to the previous, we have something that is fundamental to youngsters, which is the need to belong and to create distinctive cultural identities. As Massey argues (1998), the construction of space is a crucial element in the formation of social identities. In this case in particular, this process involves not only the differentiation and autonomy of identity before the family but also between different youth groups. That is, the cultural heterogeneity typical of youth is expressed through multiple strands, with space being one of them. It is for this reason that certain tribes, subcultures or scenes cannot exist without this primordial connection to space and the occupation of specific places (Glass, 2012). And so, we often find space defined by the youth as a place of belonging around which boundaries of safety and ontological comfort are drawn. The delineation of geographical frontiers also implies functions of symbolic differentiation between groups and communities. One of the most paradigmatic examples of this form of appropriation and territorial demarcation concerns the so-called "gangs" (Ley & Cybriwsky, 1974).

Thirdly, we might speak of participation in a sense that is in some way linked to the idea of the "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1996; Harvey, 2003). As individuals defined by subalternity and dependency and under the wing of a number of social institutions imposing a range of social norms, young people inevitably find their capacity for agency and participation limited. Thus, in the urban public space they come to express ways of being citizens that don't necessarily match dominant models, and which can hardly be made to fit the labels of authority. The street is a truly democratic space. It is bursting with conflict and negotiation, insubordinate voices emerge, ideas rise that at once threaten and feed the natural order of things. There is, for this reason, a feeling of empowerment in conquest, administration and mastery over certain urban territories.

And finally, we must also mention another crucial dimension, which is experimentation and creativity. It is often the case that in the urban space, location and the available raw materials become the essential elements for the development of a number of creative practices and activities, as is the case with skateboarding, parkour or graffiti. It is no accident that several youth cultural movements and new aesthetic concepts which emerged in the 20th and early 21st centuries have taken place in an urban environment, where the public space assumes an important role in the interstices of social convention and institutional rules.

I have alluded to the relevant part represented by the street in the context of youth-typical ways of existence. However, to speak of youth cultures *on* the street is quite distinct from talking of youth cultures *of* the street. In my opinion, the latter involve youth cultures where the street plays a primordial role on two different levels: as a *physical* and as a *symbolic* space.

Regarding physical space, this can be understood as the territory where certain cultural practices are developed by taking advantage of a number of *resources* and *opportunities* available in the particular context. The resources are dependent on a number of elements linked to specific features of the territory, to *materiality* and *mobility*, which may be appropriated and used in the development of a specific variety of activities. In turn, the specifics of urban space and the street offer a range of opportunities for the development of activities that could not occur in a different setting. The youth cultures linked to the practice of parkour, skateboarding, graffiti, street art or guerrilla gardening could only have emerged in contexts where the

street is the crucial resource for a dynamic that can only be expressed in such physical space and which is in direct dialogue with its features.

My approach implies a broader definition of street culture, such as that understood by Ross (2018) who mentions the existence of a *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977) involving a certain cosmovision, a way of being and acting in these urban territories. And Ross also adds an element that seems crucial in this respect: the fact that street cultures are not limited to the circumscribed space of the street as territory, that they involve an immaterial and symbolic dimension and function as space-transcending cultural signs. As such, street cultures function as a source of inspiration for artistic movements and lifestyles, and are "a source of ideas for cultural commodities that are bought, sold, listened to, viewed, etc. (e.g. music, food dance, music, literature, etc.)" (Ross, 2018, p. 8). Thus, street cultures also include this symbolic dimension that usually exerts influence on an ideological and discursive level sustaining a set of values, representations and modes of conduct.

And yet, there is a dimension which has grown increasingly more relevant for the study of street cultures but that has mostly been ignored in this discussion. In a world increasingly interconnected and filled with resources allowing physical or virtual mobility, the appropriation of urban space by the youth and other social strata implies reflecting not only on locations, but also on mobilities (Farrugia, 2015; Woodman & Leccardi, 2015). For this reason, it isn't possible to think about the geography and cultural and social dimension of many of the individual and collective activities in which we are involved without an analysis of the capacity to overcome time and space that is provided by technology, is found in public transport, in social networks, etc.

Therefore, although territorial limits may be more or less rigid, they are also traversed, overlain and redefined. Mobility is a capital that interferes with the constitution of street cultures and with the features they assume. In skateboarding culture, youngsters move towards skate parks or other places linked to this practice. As for youth who engage in graffiti and street art, they roam through the city alone or in groups searching for the best spots and inscribing the city with their tags, drawings, etc.

Hybrid youth cultures

The ubiquity of the internet and digital devices has had clear implications for the way in which young people relate to the world. As has been shown by a growing number of studies, this has a clear impact at the level of socialisation and forms of communication (Buckingham, 2006; Livingstone, 2011; Lüders, 2011; boyd, 2014), cultural production and consumption (Jenkins, 2006; Ito et al., 2008; Burgess & Green, 2009), civic and political participation (Dahlgren, 2007; Loader, Vromen, & Xenos, 2014; Kahne, Middaugh, & Allen 2015) or the development of personal and cultural identities (Bennett, 2004, 2015a, 2015b).

We stand before a deeply connected youthful universe where technologies are increasingly used for the creation and dissemination of a wide range of contents (Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, & Smith, 2007; Hargittai & Walejko, 2008). Considering the importance of the internet entails taking into account the actual devices on which it is used, as these are crucial to usage models. That is, it is completely different to speak of the internet when it depended exclusively on a PC with a landline connection and, as is the case these days, when it is used on ubiquitously found mobile devices with access to wireless networks. One of the most significant transformations at this level concerns, precisely, the pervasiveness of mobile access devices. This becomes patently clear when speaking of street cultures, since the places originally associated to internet usage were closed spaces, either public or private (home, school, office, library, etc.). The fact that the internet has become accessible within the urban public space, particularly in situations of mobility, completely alters our experience as users, opening up the way to a range of new social practices.

Access to mobile technologies has become generalised, with some countries experiencing a usage rate of close to 100% among adolescents (Vanden Abeele, 2016). This explains why, since the early days of research on mobile communication, a special attention has been given to this age group (Goggin, 2013;

Mihailidis, 2014; Vanden Abeele, 2016). Research shows a clear mobile phone dependency; independent of location, youngsters use these devices to keep in permanent contact with their networks. It is a resource that is in permanent use, from the moment they wake up to when they go to bed. There is for this reason the common assumption of something distinctive in the way in which young people use their mobile devices, which allows us to speak of a 'mobile youth culture.'

In the early days of the current century, mobile phones morphed into multifunctional media devices, not only facilitating connection and communication but also the production and consumption of content (image, sound, text). It is a digital multimedia ecosystem where distinct devices operate in a network. Our youth seems to have realised the potential of these technologies for their expressive activities, incorporating them in their daily lives but also inventing new ways of communicating and generating content. This has had a direct impact in the way in which we currently understand youth cultures. As Bennett notes, "youth cultures may be seen increasingly as cultures of 'shared ideas,' whose interactions take place not in physical spaces such as the street, club or festival but in the virtual spaces facilitated by the internet" (Bennett, 2004, p. 163).

The relationship between the street, digital technologies and the internet can be understood on two levels. The first level involves digital devices and the internet being used as resources that directly interfere with space or the way we use it. There is research showing, for example, the relationship between mobile phones and the exploration of the city and its territory (Leyshon, DiGiovanna, & Holcomb, 2013). Not only do mobile phones allow a safer environment for exploring the city because they can establish an enhanced connection with family and friends, but they also provide a range of tools facilitating a controlled navigation across the urban environment (e.g., GPS, Google Maps, etc.). These tools make it easy to trace a number of distinct elements (people and a wide variety of urban resources). On the other hand, making use of the range of platforms and apps available on the web is essential to the exploration and discovery of cities – and the plethora of available resources on offer (restaurants, bars, showrooms, stadiums, transport network, etc.) – allowing for the strategic management over mobility and the different types of urban activities. In the words of Leyshon et al. (2013, p. 601):

> One reading of our research may suggest that *terra incognita* is now only an imaginary concept. With a mobile phone, exploring places becomes simply a function of being able to access data, including how to travel to and from a destination and sites of interest. This would appear to suggest that everything we need to know about places already exists.

And still within this context, we must not forget the unusual, informal and wide-ranging influence that the digital media holds over people's mobilisation and the creation of new initiatives in the public space. This gives rise to phenomena such as 'flash mobs' that make patently visible the extent of intersection and interaction between the physical space and digital communication technologies (Molnar, 2014). As for other recent examples showing the impact that these media can have over space and its transformation through the mass mobilisation of people with a common goal, we can point to the most troubled political period of the so-called 'Arab Spring,' the Occupy Movement, or the demonstrations against austerity politics in some European countries. As numerous studies have shown (Juris, 2012; Fernandez-Planells, Figueras-Maz, & Feixa, 2014; Penney & Dadas, 2014; Campos, Simões, & Pereira, 2018; Treré, Jeppesen, & Mattoni, 2017), digital technologies have helped drive the creation of truly viral phenomena with an impact on street protests and political mobilisation in several cities.

On a second level, this relation may be conceived in a different way, such as when digital devices facilitate the creation of a parallel digital reality. That is, when a variety of content (images, texts, etc.) is generated in cyberspace which, in some way, refers to actions, events, landscapes, etc. taking place in the urban space. The spatiotemporal detachment made possible by digital media reconfigures the urban experience and is used to produce a range of different imaginaries and narratives about the city. Some authors have

commented on the importance of geolocation devices associated with digital social networks at the level of socialisation and the construction of individual and collective identities (Sutko & De Souza e Silva, 2011; Schwartz & Halegoua, 2015). In this context, and placing emphasis on the spatial dimension, Schwartz and Halegoua (2015, p. 1644) propose the concept of 'spatial-self' as "a variety of instances (both online and offline) where individuals document, archive and display their experience and/or mobility within space and place in order to represent or perform aspects of their identity to others." What we see happening, in this case, is the individual agency and the performative ability being mobilised in the sharing of fragments of reality lived in a particular place, working towards the construction of a particular version of the Self. In this context, the physical space assumes relevance as a symbol conveying a range of connotations. Thus, we can conceive the existence of a kind of cybernetic and image-based city which is reproduced and circulates digitally and is collectively produced by multiple individuals constantly feeding the network and who, in their turn, use of the information therein available as a resource.

Images and audiovisual content are perhaps the most typical items produced in this field, as they are representative of our mundane existences.[1] The internet has opened the way to the proliferation of networks of dissemination of images at an unimaginable pace. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, etc., have become alternative channels to the traditional networks of production and consumption of images. YouTube is paradigmatic of this recent development in which, according to Muller (2008, p. 102), the audiovisual production has become private while dissemination went global. These are extremely significant resources for the development of the 'vernacular creativity' (Burgess & Green, 2009) and the 'participatory culture' (Jenkins, 2006). We find ourselves, therefore, in a new world where the limits between audiovisual amateurs and professionals have become increasingly blurred and ambivalent. And street cultures are not, then, indifferent to this new capacity for visualisation, as argued by Dibazar and Naeff (2018, p. 10):

> digital visual materials have become embedded in the embodied experience of the contemporary street, as one walks through it equipped with smart devices . . . while walking through the city with smartphones in hand, we simultaneously spatialize virtual data flows by visualizing them on physical phone screens, and visualize space by creating different forms of images – such as photographs, maps and videos – and disseminating them online through various apps.

New expressions of youth street culture: between online and offline

Once we acknowledge that the urban space is prime territory for youth socialisation and the expression of youth culture, it follows that the widespread availability of the internet and mobile devices has had an impact on the way space these days is lived and represented. Those researching youth cultures and subcultures have not been blind to the relevance of the internet, as is evidenced by the literature produced in the last two decades (Hodkinson, 2004; Bennett, 2004, 2015b; Wilson & Atkinson, 2005; Williams, 2006; Robards & Bennett, 2011). There seems to be a consensus regarding the fact that not only has the internet given rise to new online communities, but it also altered the practices and existences of youth cultures. As an example, I shall mention two cases in the Portuguese context that have been the focus of my own research for around a decade and which may be defined as youth (sub) cultures with a strong prevalence on the street. These are (illegal) graffiti and underground rap[2] (Campos & Simões, 2014; Simões & Campos, 2017).

I am speaking of street cultures in the sense that the practices sustaining those environments are manifested in the urban space and are, for this reason, essentially informal and underestimated by most of society and the institutions that represent it. I would also add that, in symbolic terms, the street also plays a central role in the definition of cultural identity and in providing ideological justification for the existence of these cultures. It is in the street, and through the street, that networks of solidarity are established and reinforced,

where cultural expressions become alive and, therefore, where recognition and prestige among peers is earned.

This becomes particularly evident in graffiti. The practice of graffiti takes place on the street, in the public space which is used as a resource for a social game premised on the appropriation of territory through the dissemination of a brand (the tag). Recognition in this environment is obtained, precisely, in proportion to the visual impact that a graffiti writer's work achieves in any given city. In this competitive milieu, it is on the street that these symbolic battles involving individual and collective prestige are settled. The territorial dimension of graffiti has, in any case, been widely explored in the specialist literature (Ley & Cybriwsky, 1974; Castleman, 1982; Ferrell & Weide, 2010; Campos, 2013).

The symbolic process of establishing a hierarchy, which prior to the dissemination of the internet occurred in informal street settings, within narrower social circles, plays out today in a similar fashion on digital platforms. For this reason, although it is important to develop strategies for the dissemination of works across the social circuits in which young people move and the assortment of stages where they act, it is also essential to use online platforms to communicate with certain types of audience (thus extending their social base). To a large extent, this implies a greater deterritorialisation and globalisation of graffiti through the internet which, to use a term made popular by MacLuhan (1964), turns cities and neighbourhoods into 'global villages.' We thus witness the extension of social contact networks, which not only facilitate the exposure of graffiti-writers from different continents, but also help establishing communication and collaborative links between them.

By virtue of specific interests and practices, young people participate in virtual communities which contribute toward the collective construction of meanings, content and networks, thus promoting a particular image of the city and its streets. And so the *graffiti virtual city* is assembled from distinct images and imaginary fragments that are complexly linked to the territory. An interesting fact, in the case of graffiti, is how they provide access and visibility to what is a subterranean, and often invisible, city. These urban invisibilities (Campos, 2017) are in this way transferred to a digital public sphere. The thousands of videos available on YouTube regarding illegal graffiti missions on trains, for example, open up access to a reality which is dangerous and not widely known. In other words, there is a reality in the city that is seldom observed but which becomes an element of this created virtual graffiti city (Figure 5.1). The impact of the information

Figure 5.1 Instagram image of "sintra wallz" depicting a painted train carriage.

on the internet obeys a completely different logic from that of the real world offline. We can then assume that the centrality and image of places depends on specific dissemination criteria and strategies corresponding to a particular symbolic hierarchy of places which is fed by tweets, shares, comments, likes, etc.

In the case of protest rap, the street assumed a double function (Campos & Simões, 2014). On the one hand, a lot of what constitutes the more original and rudimental dynamic of rap takes place in the informal settings of the street or neighbourhood (beatbox, rhyming, jams, etc.). On the other hand, in a more metaphorical sense, the street (and the neighbourhood) bring us to the horizon of lived experiences narrated in this type of rap lyrics (Forman, 2002). In the Portuguese case, the contexts which were analysed involved territorially and symbolically marginalised urban settings with a strong ethnic component linked to African migrants and their descendants. Consequently, the term 'street' comes to represent a symbolic space delimited by the harsh quotidian reality (poverty, police violence, residential peripheralism, ethnic exclusion, etc.) of the stigmatised neighbourhoods where many of these youths live. As a symbolic banner, the street can also be regarded as a staying-away from the mainstream: "refusing to identify with a pop marketing and insisting that staying 'real' necessitates rawness, authenticity, and a continued connection with the streets" (Keyes, 2002, p. 122).

And here we have likewise confirmed the central role of the internet in the extension of a social communication and interaction stage between rappers and their audience. The strengthening of social networks works by breaking down a set of spatiotemporal constraints thus facilitating, for example, the creation of a translocal community associated with the production of rap in the migrant diaspora (Campos & Simões, 2014). We have witnessed many of these amateur rappers strategically using the multiple platforms existing on the internet to guarantee the dissemination of their work, but also as a way of breaking through the barrier of obscurity behind which they are pushed by part of the mainstream media and cultural industries. But we have also noticed that through the content produced, given the prominently political nature of their posture and discourse, they develop counter-hegemonic narratives that go against the dominant viewpoint disseminated by the mainstream media. For this reason, the digital media becomes a valuable resource for the production of different images of their lives and neighbourhoods. A significant example of these new capabilities is the amateur (and semi-amateur) production of rap videos which has in the meantime become popular.

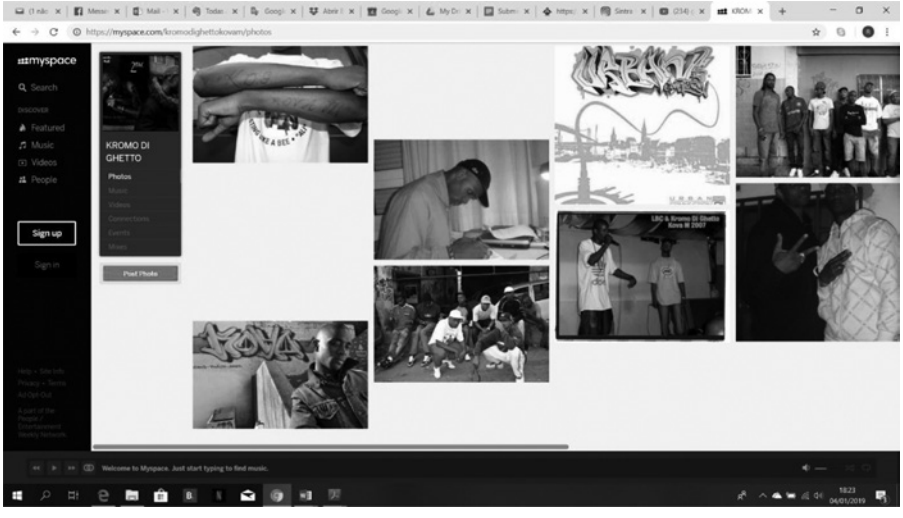

Figure 5.2 Myspace profile of rapper Kromo di Ghetto containing images taken in his neighbourhood.

Research has shown a set of functions safeguarded by the internet and the digital technologies (Campos & Simões, 2014; Simões & Campos, 2017). Firstly, these are *technologies of memory*. They make possible the creation of long-lasting records, in digital format, that go beyond preserving particular moments of quotidian life to include the work and careers of writers, crews or rappers. Secondly, these are *technologies of communication*. They are systems fundamentally adapted to the exchange of information and sharing of content between individuals. Thirdly, these are *technologies of representation*, in the sense that they provide opportunities for young people to expose themselves in a number of ways, by stressing certain individual and collective traits which, essentially, are used for their representation in a particular public space. We are not only speaking of instances of individual representation but, also, of collective representation. Finally, and directly associated with the previous functions, we can identify these resources as *technologies of narration*. By representing themselves, these youths use a vast aggregate of contents that, regardless of how much they are presented as fragmented in space and time, function as a narrative about the past, the present or the future.

Conclusion

The ubiquitous presence of the internet and digital devices means that we are constantly connected, making it senseless to speak of a split between the offline and online worlds. In fact, we live in an increasingly hybrid condition where bodies and technologies intermingle, where the physical world is merged with the virtual world. So, to speak these days of social practices that occur in a determined physical space implies dealing with the concrete experience of immersion in the territory, but also with another reality which gains expression on the wide range of networks and digital screens and which interferes directly with the way in which we experience physical space.

Youngsters are, as we have seen, particularly proficient and creative in the use of the different technologies and the production of digital content. This is an essential element for the construction of personal and cultural identities, for the communication and expression of young people, individually or in group. And so, the youth are in the vanguard when it comes to devising new uses for digital technologies, in their adaptation to the lived contexts and in the creation of new forms of expression. It is they who record on video the risky graffiti missions on undergrounds and trains, who organise flash mobs in the street, or produce videoclips in the peripheric neighbourhoods of cities. This is why youth street cultures, nowadays, feel the need to integrate something which might already be considered as a technological extension of our selves: the smartphone. This technology condenses a multitude of functions and it can be used as a paradigmatic example of the range of potential unleashed by the internet.

This current condition inevitably has consequences in the way we represent ourselves and appropriate space. The physical city is used as a source of inspiration for the construction of a digital city made up of fragments, the product of a collection of content produced and introduced onto the network by an incommensurable number of users. But the digital city also represents an extension of social and territorial solidarities, thus functioning as yet another resource for the development of a range of social practices. The fact that the internet and social networks exist and facilitate the construction of these streets, neighbourhoods and digital cities does not mean that they exist without links to the offline world and the real territory. What exists is, precisely, a toggling between the online and the offline, a hybrid and complex system of reciprocal feedback. What is viewed and consumed via the internet has a direct impact on the street and on street cultures. It influences a number of representations, dispositions, practices and social networks. These, in turn, give rise to new digital content, communications and messages. And so, the main conclusion I would like to stress here is that thinking about youth street cultures in the 21st century necessarily implies thinking about digital devices and the way in which they interfere with their dynamics.

Acknowledgements

This research was financed by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, project IF/01592/2015.

Notes

1 In this respect, the *selfie* might be the representative paradigm of this new condition.
2 Which in this context might also be referred as "black" or "protest" rap, as it is defined by its own practitioners and has been understood in the academic studies focusing on the Portuguese case (Campos & Simões, 2014; Campos, Nunes, & Simões, 2016).

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