Streets in Busan and Elsewhere

Part 1: Prolegomena: The Landscape of 'Dynamic Busan'

Abstract

This paper provides an introduction, and in particular a theoretical-methodological prologue or prolegomena, to a pioneering rhythmanalysis of the Korean port city of Busan based on four months of collaborative fieldwork research undertaken in autumn 2014.

Here the three key theoretical influences structuring this work (Lefebvre, Kracauer and Augé) are presented and linked to some critical reflections on 'Dynamic Busan' as Korea's ambitious and rapidly transforming second city. The key concept of 'non-places' in particular provides a useful point of entry into the everyday experience of the new Busan cityscape as 'landscape' and as 'selfie-city'.

Prologue: An Apprenticeship in Apprehension

"What am I doing here?" This fundamental question, one the English writer and traveller Bruce Chatwin took so much to heart that it became the title of an essay collection,[1] was to become an insistent and enduring refrain for me, echoing constantly throughout my stay in the South Korean port city of Busan in the autumn of 2014. Or perhaps I should rephrase this as: "what are we doing here?" because this was a joint project combining the perspectives and insights of the insider (my colleague, Professor Ryu) and of the outsider (me). In some ways, perhaps, my co-author had a much clearer purpose and considerably more to occupy him: a long-term resident of the city, he had not flown thousands of miles to be in Busan; he was busy teaching, supervising, dealing with students and colleagues, doing what academics do. Doing what I usually do. But not now. Now I was avidly watching passersby through the steamed up windows of cafes; scrutinising knots of people huddling against the chilly onshore breeze on the sparsely populated sands of Haeundae beach; randomly riding the city's subway system hither and thither, deciphering the names of stops and termini that meant nothing to me; loitering expectantly on station concourses with those with a more pressing reason to wait there, those with trains to catch, buses to board; in short, I was

hanging out here and drifting there, all the while surreptitiously photographing backstreet motel car parks, luxurious high rise apartment complexes, quirky street furniture and shop signage. Rather like a detective without a case to solve, on the trail of no-one and nothing in particular. A detective in training or just practising. Or rather, like a suspect. For assuredly, as Franz Hessel once observed of his own flaneries around Paris in the 1920s and 30s, in the busy workaday world of the modern city, the person who seems to be doing nothing in particular, the seemingly idle observer, is highly suspicious.[2] And as a westerner, an obvious stranger, I was doubly so. What are you doing here? – I had come a remarkably long way just to be both curious about others and a curiosity to others.

1. Streetwork

What were we doing there and then? Of course, there is a straightforward answer to this. We were undertaking fieldwork, or rather *streetwork*,[3] in the city of Busan.[4] Our aim was, and remains, to develop a pioneering rhythmanalysis of certain parts / features of the city, drawing principally upon the reflections of the celebrated philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1901-91). His late writings articulated the possibilities and necessities of developing a new science of rhythms at the heart of future humanities and social science research. In seeking to apply such a perspective there, we looked to triangulate Lefebvre's work with two other theorists of time and space with respect to the quotidian cityscape: the German-Jewish Critical Theorist Siegfreid Kracauer (1898-1966) and the contemporary French social anthropologist Marc Augé (b. 1935). As such, our project promised to be both highly innovative and particularly timely for a number of reasons:

a) in terms of research methodology, this would constitute one of the first attempts to deploy and develop rhythmanalysis as a distinctive interdisciplinary method in the humanities and social sciences;[5]

b) it appeared to be congruent with the renaissance of interest in notions of spatiality and mobility as key dimensions of twenty-first century modernity;

c) it emerged from, and would contribute to, the growing appreciation and recognition of subjectivity, the body and affect not as a 'problems' to be overcome in scientific enquiry, but rather as inevitable and integral aspects of contemporary reflexive methods and scholarship;

d) it might enable and culminate in a distinctive critique of contemporary metropolitan experience and notions of place-making / place-imaging in the age of neo-liberal transnationalism and global flows.

This all bodes well and sounds impressive. But 'pioneering' and 'highly innovative' also mean an absence of tried and tested research methods, a lack of definite and defining analytical models. In short: no blueprint, no yardstick. What precisely *is* rhythmanalysis? How exactly does one *do* it? Or rather, how does one conspire in its invention, in its improvisation? What were we doing there? – understood not so much as an existential question but more as a theoretical, conceptual and practical one.

A clear and coherent conception of rhythmanalysis would, of course, have made for a good starting point. *Would have*. We did not even have this. Originally outlined and elaborated as the culmination of his critical work on urban space and everyday life, Lefebvre's notion of rhythmanalysis refers to an observational and – most importantly – experiential mode for apprehending mundane experiences in relation to, and in terms of, their temporal and spatial patterns in the contemporary cityscape. Lefebvre was fascinated by how different forms and levels of human movement and activity displayed and/or were attuned to various rhythms, cycles and repetitions: corporeal, biological, natural, artificial, mechanical, and now digital. Rhythmanalysis was intended as an attempt to capture these diverse and multiple rhythmic aspects of city life through sensory immersion in, and recording of, for example, the various flows of pedestrians, vehicles and passengers through such environments.

So far, so good. But typically, Lefebvre never gave an unambiguous, unequivocal definition of rhythmanalysis as a research method. Akin to anthropological participant observation approaches in terms of seeking an experientially-grounded and qualitatively rich understanding of a local culture, rhythmanalysis is supposedly distinctive in: a) its insistence on moving beyond the merely visual in favour of a multi- or polysensory engagement; b) its emphasis upon the interpenetration and interplay of time, technologies and bodies in specific situations and settings; c) its attentiveness to that which conventionally goes *unseen*, that is to say, not only the invisible but decisive workings of money and power in shaping the city and urban experience but also other absent and/or intangible aspects such as individual and collective memory; and, d) its reflexivity as an embodied and a gendered perspective. Lefebvre writes:

"The rhythmanalyst calls on all his senses. He draws on his breathing, the circulation of his blood, the beatings of his heart and the delivery of his speech as landmarks. Without privileging any one of these sensations, raised by him in the perception of rhythms, to the detriment of any other. He thinks with his body, not in the abstract, but in lived temporality" (2013: 31).

So what were we doing?: thinking with our bodies. Wwe will return to what exactly this might involve. But why *there*? Why *Busan*?

2. 'Dynamic Busan'

Interestingly, while himself a resident of Paris, Lefebvre, ultimately did not propose a rhythmanalysis of the French capital but rather of an unspecified Mediterranean city – one of the "white cities" as Joseph Roth (2013) once described them, of the South of France – which we take to be the port of Marseilles. There are perhaps two reasons for this: firstly, the concern with scale may be important, with a preference for smaller, more compact urban environments; secondly, that the port city itself is a particularly interesting case-study in terms of traffic and flows of all kinds, Marseilles being an historic entry point to Europe with its own highly distinctive character and reputation, diverse ethnic population and transnational / international sensibility. Marseilles is, as has been suggested elsewhere (Gilloch 2013), a city of 'promiscuity' ('for mixing').

And so, as the self-proclaimed East Asian 'gateway', the port city of Busan seemed a particularly promising and appropriate choice for our experiments in rhythmanalysis. Its geography is certainly distinctive: with its mountainous topography and coastal location, the city has developed not in a typical concentric manner centred on a downtown focal point, but rather has come to constitute a latticework of districts encircling forested upland terrain, each district with its own specific character and hub providing for contrasting urban rhythms, and yet at the same time, all connected by road and subway networks.

Second tier cities, like Marseilles, are interesting moreover in that they always in a certain sense 'elsewhere' / 'eccentric' – they are not the centre of national life economically politically, culturally, or socially. Busan, like other second order cities (and my own adopted city of Manchester is in a very similar structural position), is acutely aware of the particular problems and challenges this poses: they must compete with the capital as best they can in

terms of resources and status; they must compete with each other nationally (Busan, Ulsan, Incheon); the imperative to develop distinctive identities while claiming global reach and global status. Typically, in response to these circumstances, they may brand and market themselves aggressively through gentrification and prestige architectural projects; hosting international exhibitions, conferences, festivals and mega media / sporting events (the Incheon 2014 Asian Games is typical); incubating technological hubs and creative industries; emphasising international tourism and consumption sites for global brands.

Accordingly, such cities then are often highly self-promoting and 'boosterist'. And Busan is no exception. Indeed, what could be more enticing for would-be pioneer rhythmanalysts than a city that styles itself 'Dynamic Busan'! After all, such an invocation and appellation felicitously combines the very notions of time, space, and energy that are constitutive of a rhythm, according to our guiding spirit, Lefebvre. And this is true even if, as colleagues in Seoul reliably and disdainfully inform us, this rubric is merely the tired, leftover epithet of an earlier national promotion campaign: 'Dynamic Korea'.

And it remains so even as one discovers that the two apparently identical promotional videos bearing this nomenclature viewable on the information screens near the Busan Aquarium at Haeundae beach actually date rather undynamically from 2008 and 2011. To be sure, these little films are somewhat past their sell-by-date so to speak, but they remain nevertheless highly illuminating introductions to the city for the newcomer. Envisioning Busan as an 'Asian Gateway' and as a 'City of Tomorrow', they show a sequence of images supposedly chronicling the experiences of a young east Asian woman who upon exiting the terminal building at Gimhae International Airport, is then initiated into the many delights of the city. While this does include some shots of temples and street markets with traditional foods as 'traditional culture', the focus of the film is clearly elsewhere: Haeundae's self-proclaimed "smart beach" or "world class beach" itself and the many (expensive) water-sports on offer (jet-skis etc); the upmarket marina complex; shopping at the department store (Shinsegae); dining in fine restaurants and elegant hotels; taking in the spectacle of the fireworks festival (motto: 'Busan is Blue') and the Busan International Film Festival (BIFF); the surrounds of of the Asian Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) building; the sights of Centum City with its office and residential towers and boutique shops; and, an evening in the stands watching the local baseball team, the Lotte Giants. The significance of such chosen sites – presenting and combining tourism, high end consumption, and international culture and design – will become apparent.

To sum up: our experimental rhythmanalysis of Busan was to focus on the following aspects:

Methodological:

(i) The inception and development of rhythmanalysis itself as a practical research method for the critical analysis of the contemporary cityscape and metropolitan experience.

(ii) The elaboration of forms and practices of writing and other modes of recording and representation for capturing and giving voice to urban patterns and experiences (textual constellations).

(iii) The key role of researcher reflexivity: the recognition of the particular situated and embodied experience of the analyst.

Conceptual:

(i) The exploration of rhythm as a concept for the critical illumination of patterns and repetitions of everyday activity in relation to time/space and technology.

(ii) The utility and ubiquity of 'non places' (*non lieux* - Marc Augé) and 'in-between spaces' (*Zwischenräume* - Siegfried Kracauer) for understanding quotidian urban practices, forms of exclusion and improvisation.

(iii) The significance of exemplary or monadological 'figures' and 'practices' in the mundane city.

Theoretical:

(i) The articulation and elucidation of a critical phenomenology of the contemporary city.

(ii) The integration of rhythmanalysis (focusing on time/space and activity) with, on the one hand, the critique of power inequalities / asymmetries and, on the other, notions of memory and haunting.

(iii) The envisioning and examination of the Busan cityscape as an 'urban laboratory' for the illumination of contemporary metropolitan (micro-logical and micro-local) processes and practices

We will be publishing this work in four parts across the four 2016 editions of *Sociétés*. In this first paper, our focus is on the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the project, triangulating our work at the intersection of the works of Henri Lefebvre (rhythmanalysis);

Kracauer (improvisation; landscape; inbetween spaces); and Marc Augé (nonplaces; the 'passing stranger').

3 Henri Lefebvre and rhythmanalysis[6]

Henri Lefebvre did not live to synthesize his thoughts on the significance of rhythms for the critical exploration of everyday life, nor put them into practice as a social scientific research method. *Elements du rhythmanalyse* was first published posthumously in 1992 as the fourth and final part of his multi-volume *Critique of Everyday Life*, a project begun some thirty-five years earlier (1958/2011). But this is no weighty final tome summarizing and synthesizing the many hundreds of preceding pages. Rather, it is a remarkably slim volume composed of rather disparate essays, sketches and notes. Fragmentary in form, the texts composing *Elements du rhythmanalyse* nevertheless do seek to configure and / or bring into articulation four longstanding Lefebvrian themes: (i) various competing conceptions of temporality (our own modern notions of as linear 'progress'; traditional patternings of time in terms of cyclical recurrence and fatalistic repetition; and as Lefebvre emphasised, as exemplary and intensive 'moments' of lived experience); (ii) the geometrical/formal abstraction and production of space structuring and steering the often invisible but deeply ideological processes conditioning and patterning contemporary cityscapes; (iii) the embodied and situated experiences of alienation, reification, domination, exploitation and marginalisation which under the exigencies contemporary capitalism go by the name of everyday life; and, (iv) the prospects and potentialities, however slight, of a dialectical historical materialist critique of such circumstances, promoting their contestation, prompting their transformation.

Time, space and human activity (energy): these then are the three constitutive dimensions or 'elements' of human existence whose changing configurations and constellations as embodied and enacted in cycles of repetition – in the regular and insistent alternation of presence and absence, appearance and disappearance, action and inaction according to a particular structuring 'measure' or 'interval' – are the subject matter of Lefebvre's new and critical interdisciplinary science, 'rhythmanalysis.' This must be attentive to the manifold sources and forms of rhythms: biological, environmental, technological, social, now, perhaps, digital. First and foremost among these are, for Lefebvre, are those rhythms and cycles that imbue and animate human existence: form those diverse inner workings of regular flows and circulations of blood and oxygen, those tireless pumpings and pulses of organs, that sustain

the vital human body itself; to various forms of repeated actions constituting habits and "dressage" – the way one walks, runs, climbs stairs with a particular gait and tempo; and ultimately, of course, to the entire life course of the individual itself – birth, childhood, puberty, maturation, adulthood, old age, death – as human generations succeed one another. Secondly, there are those cycles of repetition manifested by natural forces and phenomena (diurnal, seasonal and annual, the lunar and solar) and by other living organisms and creatures, their bodies, their habits and habitats, their life cycles, their generation reproducing themselves, adapting themselves. And then there are those non-organic rhythms that emanate from the human-made realm of 'second nature', of technology in all its myriad manifestations and organisations shaping social patterns and practices: the repetitious operation and functioning of industrial machinery, the regulating signals and controlled flows of vehicular traffic, media schedules, transport timetables, lighting up times, office hours, digital systems and flows. There are even those highly fashioned and harmonious rhythms that consciously align and orchestrate to bring us aesthetic pleasure: language formed into poetry, sound composed as music. Lefebvre rightly recognises that these are rarely, if ever, experienced in isolation but rather as cross-cutting and overlapping, as intersections and interference, as arrhythmic dissonance and discord.

Lefebvre's essayistic fragments are good on rhythms as forms of regular repetition. But, not surprisingly, they are less so on rhythm*analysis*. It is one thing to identify a rhythm, or pattern of rhythms, it is quite another to explore it, articulate and evaluate its significance, to develop a thoroughgoing socio-economic and political critique from it. Not inevitably, but all too predictably, those hoping for a detailed and definitive account of rhythmanalysis as an actual method of sociological investigation, as a practice and mode of critique, will search the pages of his little book in vain. What is rhythmanalsyis? As we have suggested in an earlier paper on this theme, perhaps it would be more useful to rephrase this question and ask instead: who is the rhythmanalyst and what exactly does s/he do? In answer to this, Lefebvre's sketches are rather more promising. They seems to offer his readers at least two, reasonably complementary, models: the first is that of the Benjaminian / Hesselian figure of the metropolitan flaneur (or flaneuse), the inquisitive and insightful observer of everyday urban life strolling aimlessly but artfully amidst the hustle and bustle of the crowded cityscape, embracing its contingencies, drawn on by its distractions, succumbing to its seductions. Traversing thresholds, trespassing, such flanerie is as indifferent to academic disciplinary boundaries as it is contemptuous of the conventional injunctions and prohibitions configuring

and coercing the ordinary pedestrian.[7] But while this usually privileges the visual spectacle and optical panoramas of the city, Lefebvre's rhythmanalyst is attentive above all to acoustic and auditory phenomena, to the urban environment experienced as soundscape. The wandering eye has been transformed into the peripatetic ear:

"He is always 'listening out', but he does not only hear words, discourses, noises and sounds; he is capable of listening to a house, a street, a town as one listens to a symphony, an opera. Of course, he seeks to know how this music is composed, who plays it and for whom. He will avoid characterising a town by a single subjective trait, like some writer characterises New York by the howling of police sirens or London by the murmur of voices and the screaming of children in the squares. Attentive to time (to tempo) and consequently to repetitions and likewise to differences in time, he separates out through a mental act that which gives itself as linked to a whole: namely rhythms and their associations. He does not only observe human activities, he also hears [*entend*] (in the double sense of the word: noticing and understanding) the temporalities in which these activities unfold. On some occasions he rather resembles the physician (analyst) who examines functional disruptions in terms of malfunctions of rhythms, or of arrhythmia – on others, rather the poet who is able to say:

'O people that I know

It is enough for me to hear the noise of their footsteps

To be forever able to indicate the direction they have taken'" (2013: 87-8)

In this lyrical vision of the rhythmanalyst, it is not only the figure of the flaneur that is evoked but also others who walk in the city with keen senses and a critical purpose: such acutely attentive yet accidental and aimless perambulations resemble, for example, the key Situationist category of the *derive*, Guy Debord's attitude of 'drifting' in urban space, avoiding prescribed and violating proscribed trajectories and itineraries. And then there is the kind of urban walking which Lefebvre's own erstwhile student, Michel de Certeau, articulates in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) wherein the cityscape itself is transformed in to a text to be read, or is made to yield its stories, as a series of *legendi* or legible moments or spaces. This notion of a textual cityscape is not unfamiliar to Benjamin either: in its quotidian, ubiquitous nomenclature – streets and shop signs, toponyms and station names – the city forms a "linguistic cosmos" he claims in the *Arcades Project* (Benjamin 1999); and, as we

will see, his colleague Siegfried Kracauer was similarly concerned with the deciphering of what he terms the "spatial hieroglyphs" of the modern cityscape.

De Certeau famously opens his essay "Walking in the City" as an observer perched high up atop the towers of the World Trade Centre in New York, looking out on to the cityscape which appears from this elevation as a great panorama spread out before the observer. This view from on high, de Certeau notes, transforms the multiple and heterogeneous lived spaces of the city into a single totality, the 'Concept City', that is to say, the kind of cityscape as a place envisaged by planners, developers and architects. These urban surgeons configure and construct the cityscape as if it were a body, as T.S. Eliot once remarked, anaesthetised and laid out on the operating table, as an object of expert intervention and reinvention. This is the Olympian, the Apollonian vision of the city as orderly and controlled place, as a plastic phenomenon to be shaped and formed by the technocratic imagination, as disdainful of and divorced from the messy lived experience of the urban spaces and streets themselves.[8]

Lefebvre himself does not go to such heights: but as he makes clear in the essay *De ma fenêtre*, rhythmanalysis as a form of critique also requires a certain distance from what is experienced, a contrasting vantage point to the pavement perspective of the perambulating flaneur/flaneuse. He writes:

"In order to grasp the fleeting object, that is not exactly an object, it is therefore necessary to situate oneself simultaneously inside and outside. A balcony does the job admirably, in relation to the street, and it is to this putting into perspective (of the street) that we owe the marvellous invention of balconies, and that of the terrace from which one dominates the road and passers-by. In the absence of which you could content yourself with a window" (2013: 27-8).

Once again, Lefebvre is at pains to emphasise the importance of the rhythmanalyst as an acute *listener* rather than observer:

"Noises. Noises. Murmurs. When lives are lived and hence mixed together, they distinguish themselves badly from one another. Noise, chaotic, has no rhythm. However, the attentive ear begins to separate out to distinguish sources, to bring them back together by perceiving interactions. If we cease to listen to sounds and noises and instead listen to our bodies (the importance of which cannot be stressed too greatly), we normally grasp (hear, understand) neither the rhythms nor their associations, which nonetheless constitute us" (2013: 27).

Rhythmanalysis involves a double displacement: firstly, the faculty of hearing is privileged over that of vision. Be it streetwork, be it window-work, rhythmanalysis is an endeavour of the ear to recognise and render the cacophonous city as intelligible environment. And, secondly, our sensitivities and sensibilities are re-attuned to the temporal rather than the spatial. Or, perhaps more precisely, rhythmanalysis concerns itself with how time manifests itself within cityscape and, in turn, how the urban setting undergoes temporal transformation. The *seen* is replaced not only with the heard, but also with the *unseen*, that is to say, with *what was* but is no longer (the traces of an obliterated past) and with *what is not yet* but *which might come to be* (the portents of incipient futures). A third displacement is identifiable here: while rhythmanalysis is, in so many ways, wholly devoted to the embodied experience of the present, it nevertheless gesture both towards the past as a mode of remembrance, as a memorial practice, and towards the future as secret hope and anticipation. The present is the battleground for both, a site of contestation determining how we understand and commemorate the past and how we envisage and create the future. Or rather, the city is a haunting ground. The ghosts of what was and the shades of those who are yet to come meet in this present moment: alive to such chronological convolutions, Lefebvre insists that rhythmanalysis is at the same time "spectral analysis" in which the modern metropolis is disclosed as phantasmagoria.

4. Siegfried Kracauer and the metropolitan 'landscape'

As a journalist writing for the *feuilleton* section of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* during the 1920s and 30s, the Critical Theorist Siegfried Kracauer was one of the most astute observers of the modern city, penning fragments and literary miniatures that would capture the everyday life of Frankfurt, Berlin and, on occasions, Paris and Marseilles: the constantly changing architecture of the cityscape; often wry descriptions of particular places and spaces, streets and squares; film and theatrical reviews of all kinds; anecdotes about bars and cafes and their eccentric clientele; pen portraits of typical urban figures and those living on the margins. Kracauer's writings are of two-fold significance for our rhythmanalysis of Busan.

Firstly, such ephemeral and apparently insignificant phenomena were not to be explored for their own sake but rather, Kracauer claims, because they are the vital clues to the critical interpretation of modernity itself. His 1927 essay 'The Mass Ornament' reporting on the seemingly trivial subject of a popular revue dance troupe, the Tiller Girls, opens with the

following articulation of the depth hermeneutic at work not just in this particular *feuilleton* piece but throughout his entire journalistic *oeuvre*:

> "The position that an epoch occupies in the historical process can be determined more strikingly from an analysis of its inconspicuous surface-level expressions than from that epoch's judgements about itself. Since these judgements are expressions of the tendencies of a particular era, they do not offer conclusive testimony about its overall constitution. The surface-level expressions, however, by virtue of their unconscious nature, provide unmediated access to the fundamental substance of the state of things. Conversely, knowledge of this state of things depends on the interpretation of these surface-level expressions. The fundamental substance of an epoch and its unheeded impulses illuminate each other reciprocally." (1995: 75)

In this dialectical conception of surface and depth, the study of superficial phenomena is not to be conflated with superficial study (mere journalism or reportage). Rather, these apparently banal everyday manifestations are the essential, indeed only, points of access to that which lies below, to the fundamental conditions prevailing in a society at any given time (what one might see as the proper subject matter of sociology). Such a plethora of fragments culled from the everyday city do not speak for themselves however. Rather, as the 'surface expressions' of deep-seated social processes and realities, they constitute and serve as the raw material for the critical work of (re)composition and (re)construction. They are the tesserae of Kracauer's mosaic of metropolitan modernity.

> "Reality is a construction. Certainly life must be observed for it to appear. Yet it is by no means contained in the more or less random observational results of reportage; rather it is to be found solely in the mosaic that is assembled from single observations on the basis of comprehension of their meaning. Reportage photographs life; such a mosaic would be its image". (1995: 32)

Kracauer's work is exemplary in two ways for us: firstly, in this eye for and attentiveness to the minutiae of the everyday combined with this work of (re)construction to facilitate the illumination of wider societal processes. This provides us with a model of textual practice as the accumulation and precise configuration of manifold detail.

Secondly, we are interested in Kracauer's vision of urban spaces as loci of decipherment and improvisation. His own fragment 'Seen from the Window' (*Aus dem Fenster Gesehen*'), opens with a fundamental contrast between architecture as the formal organisation and fixity of space and matter and the fleeting patterns appearing and vanishing amid the currents and eddies of metropolitan streetlife. Here Kracauer explicitly counterpoises the cityscape as artificial, ornamental construction and as unforeseeable interaction and interplay:

"One can distinguish between two types of cityscape: those which are consciously fashioned and those which come about unintentionally. The former spring from the artistic will that is realised in those squares, vistas, building ensembles and perspectives Baedecker generally sees fit to highlight with a star. In contrast, the latter come into being without prior plan. They are not, like the Pariser Platz or the Place de la Concorde, compositions owing their existence to some unifying building ethos. Rather, they are creations of chance and as such cannot be called to account. Such a cityscape, itself never the object of any particular interest, occurs wherever masses of stone and streets meet, the elements of which emerge from quite disparate interests. It is as unfashioned as Nature itself, and can be likened to a landscape in that it asserts itself unconsciously. Unconcerned about its visage, it bides its time." (1987: 40)

This key passage directs our attention to how space is configured differently in the city by means of a contrast that anticipates de Certeau's distinction between the Concept City as planned architectural totality and those indeterminate settings moved through as part of itineraries, between the designations of 'place' (named, titled) and the traversal and penetration of 'space' (uttered, spoken). Time and again Kracauer is drawn to those sites of the ebb and flow of life, to those unstarred, intentionless, disinterested urban loci which he designates as *Zwischenraeume*, in-between spaces, or simply as *anderswo*, 'elsewhere'. And Kracauer too is concerned with the legibility and reading of urban settings: for him, the city is composed of 'spatial hierglyphs' which, in a quasi-psychoanalytic twist, require the same kind of interpretive work as dreams. The city is not laid out on an operating table, but on the analyst's couch. Its secret confessions are to be listened to. Kracauer gestures to a walking-talking cure.

Moreover, Kracauer's architectural dichotomy identifies and privileges a radical, critical and playful experiential and aesthetic mode amidst the alienation and disenchantment of the modern metropolitan life-world: "improvisation" (1995: 327). Curiously, though, it is when and where the cityscape permits itself to be "likened to" a natural landscape that the

unforeseen becomes manifest, permits itself to be seen, imagined, envisaged. The paradoxical notion of a 'Berlin landscape' connotes the fortuitous and momentary, the living, restless and transient patterns and figures of nature as a vital realm of spontaneity, profusion and confusion: the rustle of leaves in the wind, the sparkling of sunlight on water, the beating of wings. Chance configurations of light, of traffic and of crowds in motion, fleeting constellations and conjunctures, the physical fabric of the cityscape in perpetual transformation – these spatial-temporal, 'rhythmic' aspects of modernity fascinated Kracauer. And just as they become the very measure of the city for him so they provide us with our own motto: Kracauer states provocatively: "The worth of cities is determined by the number of places in them devoted to improvisation." In echoing this sentiment, we are concerned with a 'Busan landscape'.

And so, while Lefebvre provides the key analytical category of rhythm, Kracauer supplements our research with other important conceptual instruments: the significance of surface expressions; mosaic as a form of textual configuration; spatial hieroglyphs (space as something to be *read*) and the in-between/elsewhere; and, perhaps most significantly, improvisation as spatial and social practices in urban settings. Indeed, Kracauer provides us with so much of the very nomenclature of our project: his own *feuilleton* collection from fifty years ago, *Strassen in Berlin und anderswo* (*Streets of Berlin and Elsewhere,* 1964) suggests our own working title (*Streets of Busan and Elsewhere*) and with it an organisational nomenclature: to Kracauer's four sections (under the generic rubrics: Streets, Locales, People, Objects) we will add two more: Lines (on the Busan subway system) and Screens (on media and social media usage). The next three issues of *Sociétés* will publish our reflections collected and composed under a pair of these designations.

5. Marc Augé's supermodern city of non-places

The writings of Marc Augé complete our trilogy of theoretical sources and offer us an alternative epigram and starting point when he writes:

"The world of supermodernity [*surmodernité*] does not exactly match the one in which we believe we live, for we live in a world that we have not yet learned to look at. We have to relearn to think about space" (1995: 35-6).

Our suggestion is that rhythmanalysis might constitute a key part of this spatial relearning process and practice. And indeed, Augé is not inattentive to rhythms as he turns his anthropological, ethnological attention to the experiences of his home city, swapping West African fieldwork for Parisian streetwork. In his "introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity," Augé opens his chapter on the key concept of contemporary non-places (*non lieux*) with a quotation from Jean Starobinski:

"'the possibility of a polyphony in which the virtually infinite interlacing of destinies, actions, thoughts and reminiscences would rest on a bass line that chimed the hours of the terrestrial day, and marked the position that used to be (and could still be) occupied there by ancient ritual'" (1995: 75).

For us, however, the key contribution of Augé's work is the eponymous concept of non-place, by means of which he seeks to capture the transformed character and experience of time and space at the turn of the century. His argument in brief is that life in supermodernity is increasingly being spent in settings that are bereft of those meanings and memories that have hitherto imbued and defined our habitat and environment. Traditional anthropological notions of place, Augé points out, refer to a locus which is recognisable to both the indigenous people and to the anthropologist as possessing three characteristics: "places of identity, of social and interpersonal relations, and of history" (1995: 52). Non-places are, logically, the very antithesis of such places: airports, shopping malls and supermarkets, motorway service stations and multi-storey car parks, identikit international hotel chains, fast food and coffee shop franchises – these are spaces with which there is no identification or sense of attachment but only a formal, contractual recognition of the individual permitted access (attested by passports, id cards, credit cards, tickets); there is no social connection or sense of solidarity with others but only an overwhelming sense of solitude, even amidst the anonymous crowds who fill, queue, park and wait in them; and they are spaces of a powerful and perpetual presentness, to be passed through or passed by as quickly and efficiently as possible, to which no memories – collective or individual – pertain or adhere, wherein there is no accumulation of knowledge. These spaces are bereft of even of ghosts. Loneliness, narcissism, and boredom born of empty time are the corollaries and characteristics of life spent in non-places.

Augé rightly recognises that these should be understood as tendencies rather than as absolute categories:

“Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten. But non-places are the real measure of our time; one that could be quantified … by totalling all the air, rail and motorway routes, the mobile cabins called “means of transport” (aircraft, trains and road vehicles), the airports and railway stations, hotel chains and leisure parks, large retail outlets and finally the complex skein of cable and wireless networks that mobilize extraterrestrial space for the purpose of a communication so peculiar that it often puts the individual in contact only with another image of himself” (1995: 79).

For our purposes, three interesting aspects emerge from Augé’s notion of non-places. Firstly, the importance of the “invasion of space by text” (1995: 99): non-places are sites marked by a superabundance of signs and information of all kinds: prohibitions, injunctions, regulations, recommendations, cautions, instructions, warnings, advertising and so forth which interpellate the individual as ‘average person’ and induct him / her into a set of compliant actions and responses. Walk this way, stand here, do not exit there, way in - way out, do not do this, refrain from that, x is strictly forbidden, xyz will be prosecuted, buy this now, visit this site … such insistent information overload is, though Augé does not use such Foucauldian terminology himself, essential to the micrological forms of bio-power or systemic bodily governance operating in such environments. To be efficient, to be effective, non-places require the complicity of ‘docile bodies’. In this context, to be a rhythmanalyst then, might be to become an untamed body, a wild body.

Secondly, perhaps because they contain all the instructions for use within themselves, such non-places are navigable and negotiable with a minimum of prior experience. That is to say, because non-places are detached from the contexts in which they are found, resembling each other more than they resemble their surroundings, one need not be familiar with the actual city itself to be familiar with them. Augé insightfully writes of an experience to which I, as the outsider in Busan, can attest:

“A paradox of non-place: a foreigner lost in a country he does not know (a ‘passing stranger’) can feel at home there only in the anonymity of motorways, service stations, big stores or hotel chains” (1995: 106).

The ‘passing stranger’ – me for example – feels ‘at home’ precisely where the indigenous person does not: amidst the proliferation of familiar signs in English though as Augé rightly

notes, “What is significant is the need for this generalised vocabulary, not the fact that it uses English” (1995: 110). Notwithstanding this observation, I would claim that the presence of a non-place is best indicated by the abundance of signs in English.

Thirdly, in the light of the above, the urban subway system would seem to provide an exemplary instance of a non-place. That this is *not* the case for Augé is both surprising and instructive. On the one hand, his account of the figure of anthropological space is profoundly indebted to an underground cartographic imagination. He writes:

“If we linger for a moment on the definition of anthropological space we will see, first, that it is geometric. It can be mapped in terms of three simple spatial forms, which apply to different institutional arrangements and in a sense are the elementary forms of social space. In geometric terms these are the line, the intersection of lines, and the point of intersection. Concretely, in the everyday geography more familiar to us, they correspond to routes, axes or paths that lead from one place to another and have been traced by people; to crossroads and open spaces where people pass, meet and gather, and which sometimes (in the case of marketplaces, for example) are made very large to satisfy the needs of economic exchange; and lastly, to centres of more or less monumental type, religious or political, constructed by certain men and therefore defining a space and frontiers beyond which other men are defined as others, in relation with other centres and other spaces” (1995: 56-7).

Here the metro map itself, with its many lines, intersections (transfers) and nodal points (stations), becomes a kind of paradigmatic instance of the dimensions of anthropological place.

And on the other, as Augé is at pains to point out in his two studies of his beloved Parisian metro system from 1986/2002 (*In the Metro*) and 2011 (*The Metro Revisited*), the lines and stations which comprise it are imbued with memories both individual (as sites of his own experiences) and collective (as place-names which evoke a shared national history). Indeed, Augé makes much of the embodied memory, what we might term habitus, of the Parisian metro user who, in the absence of signage, learns through experience where to stand on the platform so as to be nearest the opening train doors, how to find and create space for oneself in the overcrowded carriage, which exit and which escalator to use for different connecting lines.

In the light of this, it is perhaps not hard to understand why, for Augé, the Paris metro system is explicitly *not* a non-place and at the same time why for me, lacking all such memories, guided by the multiplicity of signs, the exquisitely named Hümetro system in Busan, a perfect neologistic invocation of cyborgism, might constitute a definite *non-lieu*. But this is not so.

With such a superabundance of instructions and information that it is impossible even for me to get lost in the subterranean Hümetro system, and shorn of all sentiment and nostalgia, the disciplinary logic of the Busan subway inevitably takes centre stage. As a 'passing stranger' I am stuck by simple things which are discordant: in my home city of London, travelling on the underground system (the 'tube'), when there is a slight mismatch between platform and train passengers are famously advised by the announcer: 'Mind the gap!' Our attention is thereby drawn to an architectural or technological failing, a spatial discrepancy (indeed, felicitously, to an in-between space, a diminutive *Zwischenraum* in Kracauer's terms). In Busan one hears: 'Watch your step!' This is rather different: responsibility is now with the passenger to adjust his /her body properly to take account of a situation, to be alert. One is interpellated and instructed to heed one's own bodily movement, not to attend to a systemic flaw. And so while Augé's memories of the metro system return him to his own Parisian childhood, the unfamiliarity of the Busan subway does make for amnesia or the absence of memories: rather it invokes by way of contrast those other systems with which I am or with which I once was familiar: London, Berlin, Frankfurt.

Indeed, on closer reflection, as I become ever more acquainted with it, accumulate various experiences both in it and in the places it serves, the Busan subway system itself becomes imbued with associations and memories for me of a particular kind. It becomes, for example, the site of an elementary auto-didacticism as, since stations names are conveniently juxtaposed in Korean and Latin alphabets, I use the time to decipher the Korean syllabic signs which continue to confound me. And so, far from being a non-place, the Hümetro is my adopted mobile classroom, my linguistic training ground. And so it is neither a *place* in the full sense that the Paris metro for Augé, nor a *non place*; it is in-between the two, a *Zwischenraum* itself, or perhaps more accurately, a place-in-making, a construction site of experiences, encounters and memories.

6. 'Dynamic Busan' Revisited

Our concern with developing a Lefebvrian rhythmanalysis of Busan leads us to examine the everyday embodied performance of practical activity attuned to and configured in accordance with the spatio-temporal structures of the city as a media- and technoscape, as a series of spatial hieroglyphs. With Kracauer's inbetween spaces and Augé's 'non-places' in mind, our work focused on a number of specific loci in Busan:

(i) Spaces of flows: sites of traffic and pedestrian movement and circulation (crossings, road junctions, the subway system);
(ii) Sites of transition: Kracauer's *Zwischenraeume*: in-between sites of waiting and transfer (liminal and marginal spaces, bus station waiting area, train station, platforms, car parks, smoking haunts, overlooked squares, bridges);
(iii) Media spaces (city of screens, communication, smart beach, advertising, social media)
(iv) Mega-spaces (Shinsegae department store, BEXCO and Centum City, Marine City). Proclaimed from just about every hoarding and screen in the city, this is the vision of Busan as Concept City which is the very essence of 'Dynamic Busan': as business development and exclusive hubs: luxury high rise, media and consumption spaces. The use of English nomenclature is a tell-tale sign.
(v) Marginal spaces (outskirts, backstreets, low-rise sprawl, service stations);
(vi) Sites of spectacle (vistas and vantage points, sites of looking / panoramic views, photographic points, tourist gaze, rooms with and without views, aquaria).
(vii) Sites of transformation (exhibitions of planned developments, building sites, roadworks. These are never depicted as such in boosterist literature and /or posters, but rather only the end product is to be seen. This may be understood as a kind of urban architectural fetishism, in which the actual labour of construction work is forgotten.
(viii) Sites of improvisation and bricolage (use and re-use of time-spaces by actors in informal, illegitimate, unsanctioned, proscribed ways). We look at the daily work of a number of marginal figures as part of the informal economy of the city. These are the ones who conduct their work in public space: street vendors, street cleaners, ragpickers, delivery drivers, street entertainers. On the one hand, as skilled practitioner of improvisation, they are adept exponents of the colonization and utilization of mundane public spaces and temporal constraints. On the other, the repetitious and routine enactments of these complex micro-calculations present themselves as exemplary instances of rhythmic actions. And this is not all. Indeed, not only do such actions exhibit rhythmic features, the figures themselves

are, in their precisely calibrated economies of time, space and motion, everyday amateur rhythmanalysts. We suggest we have much to learn from them.

(ix) Memorial spaces / lieux de memoire, as the historian Pierre Nora famously terms them: official sites of commemoration (museums, memorials and monuments, cemeteries) and unofficial setting where the past persists (ruin-spaces, haunted / spectral spaces)

And we consider: How are the different temporalities of the last three of these – the past, present (extempore) and the future of the city – tied into a coherent narrative by the boosterists? Indeed, how might they be reshaped by informal practices and subversive activities?

Of course, these are not so much separate spaces as different dimensions or discursive constructions of the same of spaces. Spaces are polyvalent, polymorphous, promiscuous, polytopoi.

Augé provides us with both a key way of thinking about the places and non-places of the city and with a fundamental paradox regarding the self-conception and self-representation of 'Dynamic Busan'. For me, the visual itinerary presented in the two promotional videos – consumption and touristic sites, media events and spectacles, hotels and high rises – encompasses and depicts a city of non-places. Perhaps the makers are right: this does indeed imagine Busan as the City of Tomorrow.

Indeed, these little films are but fragments of a whole vast array and complex of images of Busan which proliferate and become all pervasive in the cityscape itself. What strikes this 'passing stranger' above all is how seemingly every hoarding, every bus-stop, every advertising space, every subway car interior, every screen in this city provides a surface to be adorned by the image of Busan present and, above all, Busan future. Busan pictures itself, imagines itself, envisions itself everywhere. Persistently, insistently, this is a city preoccupied with its image and with images of itself. *It is in this sense that Busan is a selfie-city*.

Finally, if 'Dynamic Busan' refers to the development of the city's international profile and attraction for global investment, events, and brands, then this is surely a strategy for the proliferation of precisely those prestigious, cosmopolitan structures with their *faux* English names (Marina City, Bay Life City, Trump World Center, Zenith, Benecity, Jade, Ocean Tower, Golden Tower, Poseidon, Lotte Castle), sites and chains (fast food, coffee shops,

bakeries) that Augé astutely designates as non-places. And so perhaps the more I, as Augé's 'passing stranger', feel at home in Busan, the less will its everyday inhabitants.

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Jiseok Ryu and Graeme Gilloch, November 2015

1 See Chatwin 1998. This collecton was first published posthumously in 1989, the year of Chatwin's death.

2 Hessel opens his1929 study *Spazieren in Berlin* with a section entitled 'Der Verdächtige' ('The Suspect'). Reissued under a new title Hessel (1984). As a flaneur in his native city he recalls the "mistrustful glances" (1984: 7) of the bustling crowd as he adopts "the suspicious role of the observer!" (1984: 8).

3 Surely a more appropriate designation for such urban ethnography than the rurality of 'fieldwork'.

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5 While Lefebvre did not live to implement his own proposed rhythmanalysis of what he termed 'solar cities' in the south of France, most notably the port city of Marseilles, a number of current scholars working in urban sociology, cultural geography and architectural theory have undertaken projects inspired by his vision of a new way of exploring the momentary and micrological phenomena of quotidian urban existence (see, for example, Ben Highmore [2005]; Tim Edensor ed. [2010]; and, our previous contribution in *Sociétés* based on the 2010 visit to Busan [No. 119, 2013/1]).

6 An earlier version of this section appeared as the introduction to our earlier paper see Ryu and Gilloch (2013).

7 Lefebvre writes: "More sensitive to times than to spaces, to moods than to images, to the atmosphere than to particular events, he is strictly speaking neither psychologist, nor sociologist, nor anthropologist, nor economist; however he borders on each of these fields in turn and is able to draw on the instruments that the specialists use. He therefore adopts a transdisciplinary approach in relation to these different sciences" (2013: 87).

8 As a kind of homage to de Certeau, our exploration of Busan will take the panoramic view of the city from the Busan Tower in Yongdusan Park as its point of departure.