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Introduction to David Frisby's Archives and Streetscapes of Modernity



(Cover page of G. Giannakopoulou (Ed.) *D. Frisby – Οδικά Τοπία της Νεωτερικότητας* [Streetscapes of Modernity])

Since 2010, I have been organizing David Frisby's archive; his published and unpublished papers, essays, and notes are now saved in two Archives: the David Frisby-Electronic Archive and the David Frisby-Hard Copies' Archive. The greatest part of the material for the archives was retrieved from Frisby's LSE and home offices. Many handwritten notes were later collected from several carton-boxes stored in the basement of the Adam Smith Building of the University of Glasgow where we had packed his office when he moved to LSE. There are two electronic copies of the David Frisby-Electronic Archive, one in Glasgow and the other in Athens. The Hard Copies' Archive was divided in 2010 and is now kept in two different locations, one in Glasgow and the other in Athens, each holding single copies of the original documents.

As Tanya Frisby intended, the primary aim of the Archives is to keep an organized record that will introduce new students to David Frisby's writings, as well as offer future researchers access to, and a deeper understanding of his work. I am forever grateful to Tanya Frisby, to whose memory I dedicate this paper, for her support in offering Frisby's Legacy freely to students and researchers, and, above all, for her love and friendship.

David Frisby's *Streetscapes, "Textscapes," and Sociology as Adventure* In loving memory of Tanya Frisby

The picture of dissatisfaction presented by a street, where everyone is perpetually lifting his feet to escape from the place on which he stands.

Franz Kafka

Wide streets lead from the faubourgs into the splendor of the center. But this is not the intended center. The good fortune in store for the poverty further out is reached by radii other than the exact ones. Nevertheless, the streets that lead to the center must be traveled, for its emptiness today is real.

Siegfried Kracauer

When it is necessary to depart. – From that which you want to know and assess you must depart, at least for a time. Only when you have left the town can you see how high its towers rise above the houses.

Friedrich Nietzsche

I

Since the mid-2000s, Frisby was working on various interrelated projects, including a second Greek translation of his published essays. In the early summer of 2010, he told me that he wanted the Greek book to be entitled *Streetscapes of Modernity* and that he had posted one more unfinished essay – the essay was entitled “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity.”¹ Later, during the collection of the material for the David Frisby Archive, I discovered a similar, fragmented version of the essay (three documents dated February 2008-February 2010), as well as various electronic and hand-written notes pointing to another book by the same title. In contrast to the Greek collection, the intended, English, *Streetscapes of Modernity* would include some of his published works, as well as new articles on Hermann Maerthens, Robert Musil, Pausanias and Simmel. At first glance, its title suggests that “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” is a tribute to the perfection of the social fragment in Simmel’s work; in some respects, it may indeed be for it reflects Frisby’s undisputed authority in Simmelean studies. However, the essay may also be approached as an autonomous form, as much as parallel to the intended *Streetscapes of Modernity*. Hence a return to the fragment’s constant interrelation to a complex experience of the social world wherein the social fragment, the street for instance, encapsulates the tensions of metropolitan everyday life that imprint the asphalt.

In this context, the essay and the notes for the intended book – itself a collection of essays – may be maps designed to guide us through Frisby’s studies of metropolitan modernity and the big city itself as society. But, if placed in the context of Frisby’s work, including his teaching, this practical and intellectual stroll leads us to an alley beyond Simmel, into Frisby’s own writings about the broken-to-pieces heartland of the cityscape and back to the search for “society.” On the one hand,

¹ The second Greek book with Frisby’s writings was published in 2012, in memoriam D. Frisby. See Giannakopoulou, G. (Ed. and Trs.) (2012) *David Frisby – Οδικά Τοπία της Νεωτερικότητας [David Frisby – Streetscapes of Modernity]*. Thessaloniki, Nisides. References to the essay are drawn from the typescript that Frisby posted to me.

Frisby's streetscapes anticipated, as well as contributed to the growing literature on streets.² For example, Graeme Gilloch's 2013 article dedicated to Frisby's memory in the Journal of Classical Sociology Special Issue on Georg Simmel and David Frisby focused upon an analysis of Kracauer's urban street strolls.³ On the other hand, when studied together, Frisby's "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity," his notes for the *Streetscapes of Modernity* and many, direct or indirect, references to streets, highlight an ever growing interest in modern streetscapes that escapes a restricted focus on the street.

Part of Frisby's method, implicitly described already in the 1990s, is evident across his work: we walk the city, we read the city and we read texts about the city:

The city as text presupposes a reader or readers. Although since Baudelaire the reader has often been identified with the figure of the *flâneur* (and much more rarely the *flâneuse*), it should be recognized that readership is stratified, partly on the basis of access to the text (mediated by power relations in the city), but certainly according to gender, social class, ethnicity, generation, etc. In turn, the city as text presupposes legibility in principle. This may not necessarily be at the present time but in the future (Walter Benjamin speaks of 'the coming to legibility' of the nineteenth century in our own century, for example).⁴

Later notes, dated October 2005, and entitled "Reading and Walking Streets: Some Issues," apply the same principle to the study of the street:

NOT just reading of street. Also writing of street understood as:

- Texts on streets (Flâneur as producer).
- Production of streets themselves (Straight/crooked streets debate).⁵

² See for example, Alderman, D.H. (2003) "Street Names and the Scaling of Memory: the Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr. within the African American Community." Area. 35(2):163–173, Augustins, G. (2004) "Naming, Dedicating: Street Names and Tradition." History and Anthropology. 15(3):289-299, Azaryahu, M. (1986) "Street Names and Political Identity: The Case of East Berlin." Journal of Contemporary History. 21(4):581-604, Azaryahu, M., and Kook, R. (2002) "Mapping the Nation: Street Names and Arab-Palestinian Identity: Three Case Studies." Nations and Nationalism. 8(2):195-213, Bozos, S. (2004) "National Symbols and Ordinary People's Response: London and Athens, 1850-1914." National Identities. 6(1):25-41, Çelik, Z., Farro D., and Ingersoll, R., (Eds.) (1994) *Streets – Critical Perspectives on Public Space*. Berkeley, University of California Press, Czaplicka, J. (1995) "History, Aesthetics, and Commemorative Practice in Berlin." New German Critique. 65:158-187, Foote, K.E., Tóth, A. and Árvay, A. (2000) "Hungary after 1989: Inscripting a New Past on Place." The Geographical Review. 90(3):301-334, Light, D., Nicolae, I. and Suditu, B. (2001) "Toponymy and the Communist City: Street Names in Bucharest, 1948-1965." GeoJournal.56:135-144, Milo, D. "Street Names," in Nora, P. et al (Eds.) (1997) *The Realms of Memory*. New York, Columbia University Press, pp.363-389, Massey, D. (1959) "Places and their Past." History Workshop Journal. 39:182-192, Palonen, E. (2008) "The City-Text in Post-Communist Budapest: Street Names, Memorials, and the Politics of Commemoration." GeoJournal. 73:219-230, Parkhurst-Ferguson, P. (1988) "Reading City Streets." The French Review. 61(3):386-397, Pinchevski, A., and Torgovnik E. (2002) "Signifying Passages: The Signs of Change in Israeli Street Names." Media, Culture & Society. 24:365-388.

³ Gilloch, G. (2013) "Fragments, Cityscapes, Modernity. Kracauer on the Cannebière." Journal of Classical Sociology. 13(1):20-29

⁴ Frisby, D. (1998) "The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna's 'Second Renaissance'." Renaissance and Modern Studies. 40:1.

⁵ Notes, "Reading and Walking Streets," dated 28/10/2005. From DF-Electronic Archive.

With the *flâneur*-as-producer related to a distinct kind of sociology whose foundation can be traced in Simmel's work, and with the debate between straight and crooked streets studied in the context of the hidden dialectic between traffic and *flânerie*,⁶ Frisby's essays and notes on streets may provide new pieces of the metropolitan but also, perhaps, of a sociological puzzle. An analysis of his methods illuminates how he drew material from various texts, as well as how he himself produced autonomous and yet closely conversing "textscapes."⁷

Frisby's 1981 *Sociological Impressionism*,⁸ where he first introduced Simmel as a "sociological *flâneur*," implicated Adorno and Lukács' analyses of the essay-form in the study of Simmel's "conscious essayism." A few years later, in the enlarged edition of the book, he refined the thesis that "the implication of the essay form as outlined by Lukács and Adorno is that we should seek in it the kind of conceptual precision that we find in 'organized science'."⁹ The essay may be a fragment of knowledge and its object may be a fragment of the social world and, yet, at the same time, successful essays may absorb all the knowledge, indeed the theories, "concepts and experiences,"¹⁰ that they need in order to relate their object to the social world. This "mosaiclike relationship"¹¹ with which Adorno connects a successful essay to others, may mirror the interrelationships between social phenomena. When Frisby concluded that Adorno and Lukács' analyses of the essay draw a "privileged form of interaction,"¹² therefore, he was also referring to a sociology whose subjects, methods, research and production manifest how "some fragments of our existence, and, more especially, some modes of apprehension are more capable of grasping the totality."¹³

In focusing upon such fragments, Frisby searched for the social infrastructure wherein metropolitan modernity is embedded. Here, the study of the city is drawn upon four "axes" that were, in more than one respect, the various departure points and destinations of Frisby's adventures into social theory:

City — Topography
Phenomenology

⁶ See Frisby, D. (2003) "Straight or Crooked Streets? The Contested Rational Spirit of the Modern Metropolis," in Whyte, I.B. (Ed.), *Modernism and the Spirit of the City*. London, Routledge, pp.57-84.

⁷ "Textscapes," unpublished handwritten notes from David Frisby – Hard Copies' Archive, Athens.

⁸ See Frisby, D. (1981) *Sociological Impressionism*. London, Heinemann, esp. ch. 3 "A Sociological *Flâneur*," pp.68-101 and Frisby, D. (1994a). "The *Flâneur* in Social Theory," in Tester, K. (Ed.) *The Flâneur*. New York, Routledge, pp.81-110

⁹ Frisby, D. (1992a) *Sociological Impressionism*, London, Routledge, p.71. In this context, see also Adorno, T.W. (1991) "The Essay as Form," in Tiedemann, E. (Ed.), *T.W. Adorno – Notes to Literature*. New York, Columbia University Press, pp.3-23. For an earlier publication see also Adorno, T.W. (1984) "The Essay as Form." *New German Critique*. 32:151-171. For Lukács' comments on essays see "On the Nature and Form of the Essay – A Letter to Leo Popper," in Lukács, G. (1992) *Soul and Form*. London, Merlin Press, pp.1-18.

¹⁰ See Adorno, T.W., 1991, op.cit., p.18.

¹¹ Ibid., pp.16-17.

¹² Frisby, D., 1981, op.cit., p.71.

¹³ Frisby, D. (1988a) *Fragments of Modernity*. Cambridge, Polity, p.49. *Fragments of Modernity* was first published in 1986. I am using a later edition.

The city's "Topography" points, amongst others, to the aesthetically and ideologically contested planning and building of urban spaces as well as to the processes and dynamics of the social construction of urban space. The "Phenomenology" of the city includes everyday social interactions, social types and the dialectic between its ideal and material elements. Historicism, the dialectics between the new and the old, collective memory and collective forgetting, are but a few of the ingredients of modern metropolitan "Mythology."

Finally, the city's "Structural" foundation, its power-politics, representations and imaginaries may be unmasked through the study of architecture. From the study of the city as "work of art," "monument",¹⁵ "spectacle,"¹⁶ "virtue,"¹⁷ "vice",¹⁸ and the city "beyond good and evil,"¹⁹ to the material, ideal and imaginary dimensions of the metropolis,²⁰ and from there to the detailed analyses of the city as the arena of conflicts over the construction, destruction and reconstruction of dominant histories,²¹ Frisby's investigations of society, the metropolis, architecture and urban planning gradually lead us in the streets where all circulate, meet, interact and conflict. Frisby's analysis of streets calls for various readings and contexts.

II

*Never in vain. – In the mountains of truth you will never climb in vain: either you will get up higher today or you will exercise your strength so as to be able to get up higher tomorrow.*²²

Regardless of the specific focus of what Anthony Vidler defined as Frisby's "indefatigable research,"²³ and regardless of the subject of each of his writings,

¹⁴ Unpublished handwritten notes from DF- Archive.

¹⁵ Olsen, D.J. (1985) *The City as a Work of Art*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

¹⁶ Boyer, C. (1996) *The City of Collective Memory*. Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press.

¹⁷ This metaphor relates to the representation of the city as the perfect expression of civilization and was largely advocated by Voltaire, Adam Smith, and J.G Fichte. See C.E Schorske, C.E. (1963) "The Idea of the City in European Thought: Voltaire to Spengler," in Handlin, O. and Burchard, J. (Eds.), *The Historian and the City*. Massachusetts, The MIT Press of Harvard University Press, pp.95-114, and Schorske, C.E. (1998) *Thinking with History*. Princeton, Princeton University Press. The city and its relation to civilization was a main theme in Park's urban sociology. See, for example, Park, R. and Burgess, E. (1968) *The City*. Chicago, Chicago University Press.

¹⁸ This image of the city derives from the work of M. Gorky, L. Tolstoy, and W. Blake. See Schorske, C.E., 1998, op. cit., and Schorske, C.E., 1963, op. cit.

¹⁹ This last metaphor refers to the work of Nietzsche, Baudelaire, Rilke, and Benjamin. See *ibid.*

²⁰ See Donald, L. (1999) *Imagining the Modern City*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

²¹ See for example, Nora, P., et al (Eds.), (1998) *The Realms of Memory – Symbols*. Nora, P., et al (Eds.), 1997, op.cit., Nora, P., et al (Eds.) (1996) *The Realms of Memory – Conflicts and Divisions*. New York, Columbia University Press and Sonne, W. (2004) *Representing the State – Capital City Planning in the Early Twentieth Century*. London, Prestel.

²² Nietzsche, F. (1991) *Human, All Too Human*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.356.

²³ See Vidler, A. (1999) "Technologies of Space / Spaces of Technology." *Journal of Architectural Historians*. 58(3):484.

lectures and papers, Frisby remained dedicated to the study of the social world and of the ways with which we aim to understand it.²⁴ A retrospect to his work and a brief overview of references to streets across his writings exemplify first, how “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” and the intended *Streetscapes of Modernity* engaged in a long-anticipated subject, and second, that they supplement, but also replenish, the question “what is society.” His 1970s publications on “The Popper-Adorno Controversy” and *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*, focused upon the “various issues raised” in, and the equally varied scientific and socio-political implications of the “methodological controversies” in post-1960s German social sciences and their European aftermath.²⁵ A few years later, he wrote the introduction to the first English translation of Simmel’s *Philosophy of Money*,²⁶ combined with his publications in the following decade, this would prove a seminal work.

In the early 1980s, Frisby drafted a great part of the methodological and theoretical framework that would inform his later writings on streets and the modern capitalist metropolis. His PhD and subsequent publication of *The Alienated Mind* offered an in-depth analysis of the works of Karl Mannheim, Georg Lukács and Max Scheler and raised pregnant questions for the sociology of knowledge in Germany and beyond.²⁷ Frisby’s first co-authored work on *Society*, also placed emphasis on:

How society is conceived or even the terms on which it is not conceptualized crucially affects our conception of how to proceed with sociological analysis and investigation. Where sociology is not grounded on society as an object, we must necessarily raise the issue of what it is that takes its place.²⁸

The question, then, is not what can substitute the experience and realities of society as such, but what it is that can, perhaps, be studied, and therefore known, as society.

²⁴ Frisby’s postgraduate teaching record includes lectures on “Contemporary Sociological Theory,” “History of Sociological Theory” “Sociology of Knowledge” (Kent), “Problems of Methodology in Sociology (Kent and Glasgow). Similarly, his undergraduate courses included a variety of subjects ranging from “Methods of Social Research” (Glasgow), “Sociology of Knowledge” (Kent, San Diego, Glasgow, Saskatchewan), “Introduction to Critical Theory” (Edinburgh), “Soziologie der Moderne” (Heidelberg), and “Zur Soziologie der Moderne und Postmoderne” (Konstanz). For a full record of Frisby’s teaching see Giannakopoulou, G. (2013) “David Frisby’s Archives of Modernity with a Biography,” in “D.F. Biography” <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/research/sociology/frisbymemoriallectures/davidfrisby/>

²⁵ See Frisby, D. (1972) “The Popper-Adorno Controversy: the Methodological Dispute in German Sociology.” *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*. 2:105-119, and (1976) “Introduction,” to Adorno, T.W. et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*, London, Heinemann; New York, Harper & Row, pp.ix-xliv.

²⁶ See Frisby, D. (1978) “Introduction” to *Georg Simmel – The Philosophy of Money* (Translation with T.B. Bottomore), London, Routledge. The book was reprinted nine times. See G. Giannakopoulou (Ed.), (2016) D.Frisby-Publications List-Revised, Glasgow University David Frisby website.

²⁷ See <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/2062/1/1978frisby1phd.pdf> and Frisby, D. (1983) *The Alienated Mind: The Sociology of Knowledge in Germany, 1918-33*. London, Heinemann.

²⁸ See Frisby, D. and Sayer, D. (1986) *Society*. London/New York, Tavistock/Methuen Inc., p.11.

Frisby's 1980s writings²⁹ provide a number of possible answers. Above all, not excluding Émile Durkheim altogether, and always conversing with Karl Marx and Max Weber, his two monographs on Simmel of that period, *Sociological Impressionism* and *Georg Simmel*³⁰ testify to his authority and original reading of Simmlean thought: society is to be understood neither "as an object," nor in terms of social systems; rather, the search for sociological knowledge here considers, albeit without being confined to, society "as absent concept."³¹ On the other hand, his 1980s writings further emphasized the significance of a deeply-rooted knowledge of social and sociological theory, including classical and critical theory.

This search for that which can be studied and known as society drove Frisby into the various sociological interpretations of the "modern" and of "society" in Simmel, Benjamin, Ferdinand Tönnies and Weber. In moving from the disputes over the subject matters and methods of the social sciences into the delicacies of sociological knowledge and from there, to the question "what is society" in the context of the distinctive features of the "modern," Frisby focused on how the "textscapes" between Simmel, Charles Baudelaire, Friedrich Nietzsche, Siegfried Kracauer and Walter Benjamin drive us specifically to the study of metropolitan modernity. As a result, he maintained that,

though the traces and fragments of modernity are to be found everywhere in modern society – which meant, as often as not, that in their most obvious locations, their secrets remained undeciphered – there are nonetheless two locations which stand above all others: the metropolis and capitalist social relations.³²

By the late 1980s and the publication of the first critical German edition of *The Philosophy of Money*, Frisby highlighted Simmel's metropolis as the seat of modernity and the mature money economy.³³ His other 1980s writings also helped

²⁹ See, for example, Frisby, D. (1984b) "Georg Simmels Theorie der Moderne," in Rammstedt, O and Dahme, H.J. (Eds.), *Georg Simmel und die Moderne*. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, pp.9-79, (1986) "Walter Benjamins Urgeschichte der Moderne: Eine Rekonstruktion," in Honneth, A. and Wellmer, A. (Eds.), *Die Frankfurter Schule und die Folgen*. Berlin/New York, de Gruyter, pp.384-407, (1987) "The Ambiguity of Modernity: Max Weber and Georg Simmel," in Mommsen, W. and Osterhammel, J. (Eds.), *Max Weber and his Contemporaries*. London, Allen & Unwin, pp.422-433, (1988b) "Die Ambiguität der Moderne: Max Weber und Georg Simmel," in Mommsen, W. and Schwentker, W. (Eds.), *Max Weber und seine Zeitgenossen*. Göttingen/Zurich, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp.580-594, (1988c) "Simmel and Leisure," in Rojek, C. (Ed.), *Leisure for Leisure: Critical Essays*. London/Basingstoke, Macmillan; New York, Routledge, pp.75-91, (1988d) "Soziologie und Moderne: Tönnies, Simmel und Weber," in Rammstedt, O. (Ed.), *Simmel und die frühen Soziologen*. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, pp.196-221, (1989a) "Zwischen den Sphären: Siegfried Kracauer und der Detektivroman," in Kessler, M. and Levin, T.Y. (Eds.), *Siegfried Kracauer: Neue Interpretationen*. Tübingen, Stauffenburg Verlag, pp.39-58 and (1989b) "Siegfried Kracauer: 'Ein Aussenseiter Macht Sich Bemerkbar'," in Wiehn, E. (Ed.), *Juden in der Soziologie*. Konstanz, Hartung-Gorre Verlag, pp.233-247.

³⁰ See Frisby, D., 1981, op.cit., and Frisby, D. (1984a) *Georg Simmel*. London/New York, Tavistock/Methuen Inc.

³¹ See Frisby, D. and Sayer, D., 1986, op.cit., pp.54-74.

³² Frisby, D., 1988a, op.cit., p.267.

³³ See Frisby, D. and Köhnke, K.C. (Eds.), (1989) *Philosophie des Geldes*. (Gesamtausgabe, Vol.6). Frankfurt, Suhrkamp.

frame society and the metropolis as its most dialectically exuberant fragment. In 1984, for instance, he discussed “Georg Simmel and Social Psychology,”³⁴ and considered the experiences of, and responses to metropolitan life – social types soon attracted his attention. A year later, he unmasked the dialectic, in Baudelaire’s “painter of modern life,” between the individual and the crowd and maintained that “the social location of the crowd itself lies, of course, in the metropolis.”³⁵ The street is the starting point of the crowd.

In turn, by the eve of the next decade, Frisby exemplified the central role of the metropolis as society and offered us one of its most substantial definitions as the “showplace of modernity.”³⁶ From that point on, whether implied or explicitly noted, the street becomes a significant locus of the metropolitan “veils,” with street furniture, ornamentation and style complementing the “aesthetics of modern life,”³⁷ as well as challenging the social researcher to decipher the “hieroglyphics” of metropolitan everydayness.³⁸ Frisby’s 1990s writings on the metropolis and architecture elaborate the ideas explored in the earlier *Fragments of Modernity* and coincide first, with his extensive research on Kracauer and Benjamin, and second, with his increasing interest in metropolitan architecture. In combining the two in his analysis of expressionist streetscapes, his work exposes the dialectic between social change and transformation and reveals that, however possibly illusory, the shocking experience of constant newness, “the ‘unexpectedness’ of onrushing impressions” constitutes the metropolis as a social space in limbo that appears to distinguish metropolitan from rural “society.”³⁹

The study of these “*fragments of society*” is gradually reflected upon the fragmentation of society into the metropolis, architecture and urban planning, buildings and streets. In having previously focused upon the metropolis as the seat of modernity, Frisby emphasized architecture as the seat of *metropolitan modernity* (for as he maintained antiquity too, has its modernity) and examined architecture itself as text. The methods remains similar to the reading of the city – we “read” buildings and streets as well as texts about buildings and streets. Parallel to the completion, in 1998, of his *M.Arch on the Viennese works of the architect and urban planner Otto Wagner*, Frisby examined the processes with which *flânerie* may transform the idle spectator into the “collector” and the “detective”⁴⁰ who influenced his distinct methodology. His 1994 “Walter Benjamin and Detection,” for example, maintained

³⁴ Frisby, D. (1984c) “Georg Simmel and Social Psychology.” Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences. 20(2):107-27.

³⁵ See Frisby, D. (1985) “Georg Simmel: First Sociologist of Modernity.” Theory, Culture and Society, 2(3):50.

³⁶ D. Frisby (1990) “Georg Simmel and the Study of Modernity,” in Kaern, M., Phillips, B. and Cohen, R. (Eds.), *Georg Simmel and Contemporary Sociology*. Dordrecht, Kluwer, p.36.

³⁷ See Frisby, D. (1991a) “The Aesthetics of Modern Life.” Theory, Culture and Society, 8(3):73-93.

³⁸ See Frisby, D. (1991b) “Deciphering the Hieroglyphics of Weimer Berlin: Siegfried Kracauer,” in C.W. Haxthausen and H. Suhr (Eds.), *Berlin – Culture and Metropolis*. Minneapolis, Minnesota, pp.152-165.

³⁹ See Frisby, D. (1994b) “Metropolis, Social Theory and Expressionism,” in Benson, T. (Ed.), *Expressionist Utopias: Paradise, Metropolis, Architectural Fantasy*. L.A. County Museum of Art/University of Washington Press, pp.88-111.

⁴⁰ See Frisby, D., 1994a, op. cit.

the central role of architecture and urban planning in the shaping of the unique experiences of metropolitan modernity:

Delusion, mythology, and the 'new' mask reality; the crowd, architectural façades (especially historical ones), the picture puzzle of things and fashion's representation of the commodity, all function as veils.⁴¹

The deciphering of the secrets of the metropolis requires an alert reader as detective. Architecture, and especially the dialectic between historicist monumental styles and ultra-modern claims to utility, provides not only a legible syntax, but also "a hieroglyphic covered over with an underbrush of delusion and myth,"⁴² that conceal the fixed, and perhaps only apparently changing, structural realities of the big city.

Amongst others, the study of "the decipherable hieroglyphics of the façades"⁴³ unmasks power relations and social inequalities in the streetscape that is the social habitat of both the *flâneur*-detective and the crowd. In a similar context, Frisby's 1996 "Walter Benjamin's Prehistory of Modernity" and his critique of postmodern claims to newness reintroduced the question "what is society" and replied by according streets with the potential to protect and to empower a still vivid modernist call for social change that may apply to 19th-century capital cities as much as to the metropolis today:

The streets are, therefore, not merely décor for the showplace of modernity but, away from the grand boulevards, the home, even the interior of the collectivity.⁴⁴

Contemporary approaches to the "City as Crime Scene"⁴⁵ strengthen Frisby's studies of the city and architecture as texts:

Detection is the method of the flâneur, the ragpicker, the archaeologist, and the historian, who search for clues among dead data. Reading, or rather reconstructing, the traces of a shattered tradition, the tradition of the oppressed, is the redemptive activity of this alternative figure of detective, who, in David Frisby's words, seeks to bring 'insignificant details and seemingly fortuitous events into a meaningful constellation'.⁴⁶

More often than not, this "shattered tradition" is related to the ways in which the study of architecture explains how modern cityscapes have,

⁴¹ Frisby, D. (1994c) "Walter Benjamin and Detection." *German Politics and Society*. 32:92.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p.96

⁴⁴ Frisby, D. (1996) "Walter Benjamin's Prehistory of Modernity: Anticipation of Postmodernity? Some Methodological Reflections," in Fischer, G. (Ed.), *With the Sharpened Axe of Reason. Approaches to Walter Benjamin*. Oxford and Washington DC, Berg, p. 24.

⁴⁵ See Salzani, C. (2007) "The City as Crime Scene: Walter Benjamin and the Traces of the Detective." *New German Critique*. 100:165-187.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.185. Salzani cites p.99 from Frisby 1994(a), op.cit.

the potential to create spatial possibilities for memory sites for collective [...] as well as spatial possibilities for forgetting, for the destruction of collectivities and their memories.⁴⁷

The emphasis upon the transformation of the *flâneur* into the sociologist who detects the urban loci of memory and forgetting – or even amnesia – questions the city as a site of “collective memory” and unearths the dialectic between the crowd and the collectivity, indeed between the alienated individuals that make up the crowd/mass and the emancipated individual that will join the collectivity so as to create the potential for a social movement.

From his early explorations of society as “abstract concept” to his later studies of the metropolis as “absent community,” “totality,” “sociation,” “aesthetic object,” “experience and [...] everyday knowledge”⁴⁸ and from there to society as a “social problem,”⁴⁹ Frisby illuminated the conflicting dimensions of social life and paved the way for the study of streets as key to the city as a sociological riddle. From then on, he focused upon the in-depth sociological reading of architecture and urban planning in Vienna and Berlin, established the dangers in constructing generic theories of cities, searched for “exemplary instances” of metropolitan modernity, and, ultimately, explored various interpretations of, and possible answers to this riddle. In his 1999 paper presented to the International Conference at Erlangen-Nürnberg University,⁵⁰ he argued that,

the spirit of capitalist modernity that in different ways concerned Weber, Sombart, Simmel and others was associated with a spirit of metropolitan modernity. With few exceptions, the analysis of the development of capitalist modernity at the turn of the century takes as their central focus – implicitly or explicitly – *urban* modernity.⁵¹

With the emphasis placed on modern capitalist “society” and culture in Weber, Sombart and Simmel’s analyses of the effects and processes of urbanization, Frisby explained that “if the concept of modernity is problematical in social science discourse and elsewhere, then so too is the concept of the metropolis itself.”⁵² Part of this problematic derives from the ways in which socio-political, spatial and cultural phenomena (old and new, high and low culture, the mass, etc.) confuse the real and superficial dimensions of the modern cityscape and sometimes appear to confront “a conglomerate of vestiges of the past.”⁵³ A significant driving force behind the changing urban spaces of Vienna and Berlin of the late 19th and early 20th century was presented in full detail a year later, at the IFK Conference:

⁴⁷ Frisby, D. (1999a) “Culture, Memory and Metropolitan Modernity,” in Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Verkehr & IFK (Eds.), *The Study of Contemporary Culture*. Vienna, Turia+Kant, pp.102-103.

⁴⁸ Frisby (1992b) *Simmel and Since: Essays on Georg Simmel's Social Theory*. London, Routledge, p.6.

⁴⁹ Lecture Notes dated 18/8/2008.

⁵⁰ See Frisby, D. (1999b) “Modernity, Metropolis and *Amerikanismus*.”

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/research/sociology/frisbymemoriallectures/davidfrisby/>

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.1.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.8.

The *economic* foundations of urban capitalist structures are to be located in land values and ground rent. Some aspects of the value of built structures are, of course, often revealed in their facades and their level of appointment and refurbishing that are conditioned by their spatial location. However, it should not be assumed that the value of an urban site is determined merely by immediate material factors. Some sites can also possess a *symbolic* significance that commands greater *material* value.⁵⁴

By 2001, Frisby had maintained the power of urban aesthetics – and of the contestations seemingly focused on urban aesthetics – in the concealment of the material core of the metropolis. His *Cityscapes of Modernity*, opened with a quotation from Kracauer that carved his approach to metropolitan streetscapes:

One can distinguish two kinds of images of the city; those that are consciously formed, and others that reveal themselves unintentionally. The former emerge out of an artistic intention that is realised in squares, perspectives, groups of buildings which Baedeker usually illuminates with a small star. The latter, in contrast, emerge without having being previously planned.⁵⁵

Combined with the complexities of deciphering these images, overcrowded streets produce an arbitrary and chaotic image of the city. Nevertheless,

Certainly calculability and fortuitousness appear, at first sight, to be contradictory orientations. They are, however, interrelated in so far as the search for, and introduction of, calculability is a process whose aim is the eradication of fortuitousness or at least the mastery of the arbitrary and the random. Calculability and fortuitousness can also be linked together in our image of the city.⁵⁶

However arbitrary movement in the city may appear to be, the circulation sphere and people's movements around the streetscape, traffic and the market depend on daily, time co-ordinated, schedules; the goal of the social researcher as detective and *flâneur* of the *Cityscapes* is to discover the fixed social patterns behind the "chaos," to retrieve and to capture the arbitrary. In re-introducing Simmel's analysis of social space⁵⁷ and Benjamin's "labyrinthine" metropolis in the beauty contests between Berlin and Vienna as well as between "old" and "new" Berlin and "old" and "new" Vienna, Frisby further pointed to the significance of streets in the drawing of temporal and socio-spatial boundaries, and of the routes of the "built labyrinth of the city."⁵⁸ Streets become even more eloquent in the sociological reading of "the antinomy of

⁵⁴ See Frisby, D. (2000) "Old Vienna/New Vienna; Inside/Outside: Some Parameters in Resistance to Modernity," p.2.
<http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/research/sociology/frisbymemoriallectures/davidfrisby/>.

During 1997-1998, Frisby was a Research Fellow at the Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften (IFK) in Vienna. See Giannakopoulou, G., 2013, op.cit.

⁵⁵ Kracauer cited in Frisby, D. (2001) *Cityscapes of Modernity*. Cambridge, Polity, p.1.

⁵⁶ Frisby, D., *ibid.*, p.9.

⁵⁷ See Simmel, G. "Sociology of Space," in Frisby, D. and Featherstone, M. (Eds.) (1997) *Simmel on Culture*, London, Sage, pp.137-170.

⁵⁸ Frisby, D., 2001, op. cit., p.127.

commercial and cultural value,⁵⁹ of city “zoning” and of the construction of “inner” and “outer circles” that define both the “extension of city boundaries”⁶⁰ and the persistence of social borders.⁶¹ On the other hand, in maintaining that “the labyrinth of the city’s streets is therefore compounded by the labyrinth of its population,”⁶² Frisby also allowed the possibility for population movements and, above all, the individual *flâneur as reader* and, possibly, the collectivity to demarcate these city boundaries and social borders. The disputes over “society” are now filtered through the study of contested urban spaces that signalled a refreshed approach to “reading.”

In 2002, Frisby decided to republish his earlier “Metropolis as Text,”⁶³ and related “reading the city as text” with “a desire to know and to analyse that which is new in the modern metropolis.”⁶⁴ In other words, reading the city as text can partly illuminate that which can be concretely known about modern “society.” The decision to examine how “readings of the city confront one another in space and time”⁶⁵ is by no means accidental. Frisby’s work of the period is grounded on the extraordinarily wealthy research for the *Cityscapes of Modernity* and dwells into the study of metropolitan modernity and back into the question of knowledge of that which can be known “as society” in this context. Bearing in mind that “legibility in principle does not exclude erroneous readings,”⁶⁶ he suggested that “the city as text must be read in such a way as to uncover or reveal what is hidden”⁶⁷ in “this increasingly complex text” of the modern metropolis.⁶⁸ Architecture as a “veil” over reality and the puzzle of memory and forgetting in the context of the definition and redefinition of modern urban space becomes pressing. At the same time,

the destruction of the present takes the form of the accumulation of urban capital and the necessary increasing circulation of capital and commodities in the metropolis. The destruction and reconfiguration of the built environment that is implied in these processes has important implications for the constraints imposed upon metropolitan architecture, to maximize output of units and, where appropriate, to cheapen such units [...]. In turn, the commodified (and the non-commodified) built forms are also given a representative, symbolic value in material and social hieroglyphics.⁶⁹

The “new” that motivates the constant destruction and reconstruction of the cityscape leaves its traces, monuments, ruins and rubble of the past and of the present in and on the street. Frisby’s 2000s writings underline the streetscape and then the individual street as those fragments that might help avoid “erroneous readings,” and, therefore, “reveal what is hidden.” In drawing from his in-depth understanding of

⁵⁹ Frisby, D., 2000, op.cit. p.9.

⁶⁰ Frisby, D., 2001, op. cit., p.94.

⁶¹ In this context see *ibid.*, esp. ch.5.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.94.

⁶³ See, Frisby, D., 1998, op.cit. and Frisby, D. (2002) “The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna’s ‘Second Renaissance’,” in Leach, N. (Ed.), *The Hieroglyphics of Space*. London, Routledge, pp.15-30.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.15.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.15.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.16.

Kracauer and Wagner's approaches to modern architecture, this also meant that the study of the various "readings" of the city should be complemented by the discussion of the equally various "writings" of the city; if "the city as text presupposes a reader or readers,"⁷⁰ it also presupposes a writer or writers as readers:

The mode in which the juxtaposition and the confrontation of old and new take place conditions the manner in which modernity is expressed in the metropolis. This is significant for, amongst others, those who wish to create a modern architecture for the modern metropolis that is appropriate to, and even mirrors, modern life.⁷¹

Architects and urban planners are some of the "writes" of the metropolis and of the "modern" in it; the writings of the city as text vary as much as its readings. In 2003 Frisby re-examined the debate between Wagner and the city planner Joseph Stübben who were discussing the advantages of straight streets and their colleagues Camillo Sitte and Karl Henrici who advocated the beauty of crooked streets and challenged "the uniform interpretation of city planning":

Far from the debate on straight or crooked streets being merely *theoretical*, it had a significant impact upon the *practices* of city planning and, for post-1890 Vienna, upon a much wider confrontation between a contested "Old" and a "New" Vienna.⁷²

In this context, Frisby's analysis exposes the dubious character of the exclusive representations and imaginaries of modern metropolises as either particularly "new" (straight streets) or emphatically "old" (crooked streets) which illustrate how "the 'formally rational' spaces could be regarded as breeding ground for 'irrational' pathological responses"⁷³ to modern urban life. These imaginaries and their corresponding "pathological responses" were further explored in his 2004 "Analysing Modernity" that discussed how "many theories of modernity can be distinguished by the way they analyse the contrast between the structuring, rationalising dimensions of modernity and the discontinuity and destruction of modern life," and challenged the "juxtaposition between traditional and modern societies, between static and dynamic socioeconomic formations."⁷⁴

That "brief overview of theories of modernity,"⁷⁵ from Baudelaire, Marx, Tönnies, Durkheim, Simmel, Nietzsche and Weber to Adorno, Benjamin, Kracauer, Habermas, Lyotard and Foucault, among others, testify to a conscious reminiscence of some key questions in his work: how can we study and know "society" – what are its locations, manifestations, processes of construction, dynamics, structures and experiences? In tirelessly attempting to investigate these questions, Frisby filtered

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.15.

⁷¹ Ibid., p.19.

⁷² Frisby, D., 2003, op.cit., pp.59-60.

⁷³ Ibid., p.59.

⁷⁴ Frisby, D. (2004a) "Analysing Modernity. Some issues," in Hvattum, M. and Hermansen, C. (Eds.), *Tracing Modernity. Manifestations of the Modern in Architecture and the City*. London, Routledge, p.5. Frisby underlined the consequent and unwelcome linear "historical periodizations" that confuse the "modern," "modernity," "modernisation," and "modernism."

⁷⁵ Ibid., p.5.

the critique of the theories that advocate a “radical break with modernity”⁷⁶ through the problems of reading the city as much as modernity itself. Modernity too, is a riddle full of “errors.”

The 2004 “Walter Benjamin’s Arcades Project – A Prehistory of Modernity,” focused upon the study of one such error in modern Parisian urban mythologies and discussed how Benjamin’s project of “awakening through remembrance of the hidden past”⁷⁷ unmasked the dialectic between modernity and antiquity that concealed “material relations under capitalism.”⁷⁸ This meant the excavation of the urban substratum below the grand boulevards:

The archaeologist of modernity was to investigate the labyrinths of modernity within the Parisian arcades (even the ‘catacombs in the arcades’) within the city itself and beneath the city in its underworld of real catacombs. The construction of a topography of the city was essential to his task of producing the dialectical image of antiquity within modernity.⁷⁹

The dialectical images of modernity, “the labyrinth of city streets, the city’s architectural monuments, the masses who populate the city, the world of commodities and its illusions, the illusory retreat from that world of the *intérieur* and the illusions of historical tradition,”⁸⁰ stress the significance of class consciousness and responsible citizenship in the city as battlefield.

Given “the potential of [Haussmann’s] grand boulevards to become a new *intérieur* for the bourgeoisie,”⁸¹ and even though the “*intérieur* did not recommend itself as a way out of the layers of the dream world that enveloped it,”⁸² the contested metropolitan street becomes both the means to, and the medium of class struggle. This presupposes the gradual transformation of the mass into a collectivity, of the collectivity into a social movement, and of the social movement into a revolutionary movement. This, argues Frisby, was the case with the Paris commune, “the ever present threat to the Parisian bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century,” when “the anonymous masses again took on a definitive form and entered the public sphere not as an anonymous mass but as a revolutionary, proletarian movement.”⁸³ As a result, “in response to this threat, the masses *intérieur*, the streets themselves, were transformed by Haussmann only to be re-transformed during the Commune into barricades.”⁸⁴ This transformation and re-transformation of urban space is one of the key dimensions of Frisby’s writings on streets in the 2000s.

The third, enlarged edition of the *Philosophy of Money*, also published in 2004, included a new preface wherein Frisby stressed the “connection between the

⁷⁶ Ibid., p.17.

⁷⁷ Frisby, D. (2004b) “Walter Benjamin’s Arcades Project – A Prehistory of Modernity,” in Hvattum, M. and Hermansen, C. (Eds.), *Tracing Modernity. Manifestations of the Modern in Architecture and the City*. London, Routledge, p.271. The essay is an edited extract from *Fragments of Modernity*.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.272.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp.272-273.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.277.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.283.

⁸² Ibid., p.285.

⁸³ Ibid., p.284.

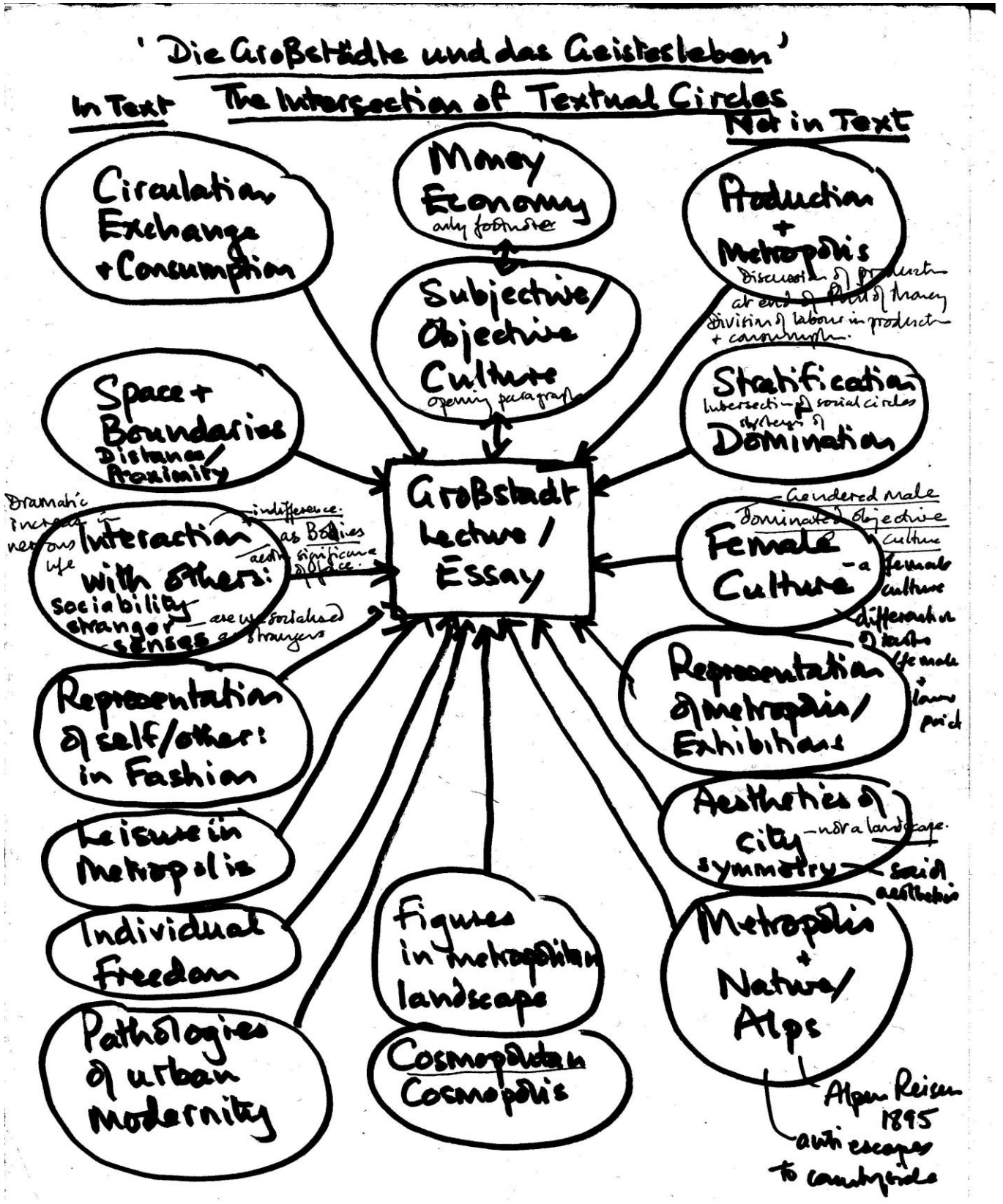
⁸⁴ Ibid.

surface phenomena and what lies beneath” as a significant Simmelean “methodological motif.”⁸⁵ This is an equally important “motif” in Frisby’s writings of that period. The focus on the “writings” of the streets, and by consequence the metropolis, complements Simmel’s “How is Society Possible”⁸⁶ with the question “who makes (‘writes’) society.” Hence the emphasis on the surface that is the street.

⁸⁵ See Frisby, D. (2004c) “New Preface” to Frisby, D. (Ed.) *Georg Simmel-The Philosophy of Money*. 3rd Enlarged Edition, London, Routledge, pp.xv-xlvi.

⁸⁶ See Simmel, G. (1971) “How is Society Possible,” in Levine, D.N. (Ed.), *Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, pp.6-22.

David Frisby "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben" – The Intersection of Textual Circles.
 From III. (David Frisby – Hard Copies' Athens Archive). Unpublished handwritten outline used in Frisby's Level 2-Sociology Glasgow lectures on Simmel's Metropolis essay/lecture and its relation to other Simmel texts.



III

*Truth. – No one now dies of fatal truths: there are too many antidotes to them.*⁸⁷

Early on in “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity,” Frisby explains that, “in the exploration of Simmel’s *streetscape* and *cityscape* of modernity, we will draw upon material from across his work.”⁸⁸ As illustrated in the above lecture notes, this is a crucial element in Frisby’s teaching and studies. Whenever his analysis focused upon Simmel’s “Metropolis and Mental Life,” especially, he challenged the possible “fetishization” of the celebrated article and taught us how the parallel study of different Simmel texts may underline otherwise secret affinities between social phenomena.⁸⁹ This approach to the texts further points to Frisby’s emphasis on modernity as “the experience of the new in modern society,” and to his analysis of the only apparent ambiguity of the fragment,⁹⁰ be it a text, a social phenomenon, a social type, a snapshot experience, a momentary impression that might or might not translate into concrete experience, a city-plan, a contest for a city plan, an urban element, a building, and, of course, a street.

“Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” is one of Frisby’s most masterful essays; the metropolitan streetscape becomes the site wherein reigns a dialectical tension between the “philosophy of life” and the “philosophy of money” of the culture of things that has largely widened the gap between “objective” and “subjective culture” and has dispersed the “inner world of neurasthenia”⁹¹ into the streetscape. The street network narrates how Simmel’s analysis of metropolitan modernity is related to an analysis of its cultural and political expressions in the street. For Simmel, the “tragedy”⁹² and “crisis”⁹³ of modern capitalist metropolitan culture may have a twofold meaning:

On the one hand, life is made infinitely easy for the personality in that stimulations, interests, uses of time and consciousness are offered to it from all sides. They carry the person as if in a stream, and one needs hardly to swim for oneself. On the other hand, however, life is composed more and more of these impersonal contents and offerings which tend to displace the genuine personal colorations and incompatibilities. This results in the individual’s summoning the utmost in uniqueness and particularization, in order to preserve his most personal core.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Nietzsche, F., 1991, op.cit., p.512.

⁸⁸ Frisby, D. (2010a) “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity,” Unpublished Typescript, David Frisby – Hard Copies’ Archive, Athens, p.4.

⁸⁹ See, for example, Frisby’s “The Works,” in Frisby, D. (Ed.), (1994d) *Georg Simmel: Critical Assessments*. Vol.2, London, Routledge, pp.177-231, “Bibliographical Note on Simmel’s Work,” in Frisby, D. (Ed.), (1994e) *Georg Simmel: Critical Assessments*. Vol.3, London, Routledge, pp.384-6, Frisby, D. (1994f) “Bibliographical Note on Simmel’s Works in Translation.” *Theory, Culture and Society*. 8(3):235-241, and Frisby, D. (1994g) “Introduction to the Simmel Texts.” *Theory, Culture and Society*. 11(1):1-3.

⁹⁰ In this context see, for example, Frisby, D., 1988, op.cit.

⁹¹ Frisby, D., 1990, op.cit., p.60.

⁹² See Simmel, G. “The Concept and Tragedy of Culture,” in Frisby, D. and Featherstone, M. (Eds.), 1997, op. cit., pp.55-75.

⁹³ See Simmel, G. “The Conflict of Modern Culture,” in *ibid.*, pp.75-101.

⁹⁴ G. Simmel in *ibid.* p.184.

However a fragment of the Simmelean metropolis, the street justifies Frisby's interest in it. Similarly to his lecture notes, the essay makes references to the myriad phenomena in the Simmel texts; advanced division of labour, the production, consumption, exchange and circulation of commodities and money etch the streets on which things, traffic and people intersect, thereby dictating the varied experiences of, and responses to modern capitalist metropolitan life and culture.

The metropolis is indeed the seat of modern "society" whose streets explain how "the metropolis and the mature money economy are both sites of *circulation* of individuals, traffic, commodities, and money."⁹⁵ Frisby's outline of the phenomena explicitly ("in text") and those implicitly ("not in text") connected to Simmel's metropolis essay detail an analysis of the metropolis as a distinct modernity. "In text" references include the social construction, openness and boundaries of urban space, sociability and social interactions, the fragile line that draws the distinctions between leisure and work under capitalism, fashion, the potential and search for individual freedom and the latent possibilities for pathological egoism, the significance of the senses in the experience of the "outside world," style and aesthetics, the coordination of time and the varied pathologies of urban modernity. The "not in text," but all the more relevant phenomena outlined in "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity," include the all-pervasive "widening gulf" between "objective" and "subjective culture," female culture, class divisions, social stratification, social inequalities, power struggles for domination and the positive and negative effects of conflict in negotiating power relations and group formations, the deeply negotiable dialectic between the metropolis and nature (i.e. *gesellschaft* and *gemeinschaft*), and, finally, tensions between art and capitalist aesthetics. "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity," therefore, is an exemplary validation of the observation that, "the denser the social environment, the more there is to learn."⁹⁶ The essay's significance for Frisby's search for "society" rests in that it gives us a concrete departure point that, nonetheless, illuminates the infinitude of the dense social environment that is our metropolitan "society."

Nevertheless, even though this would also be one of the central observations of Frisby's greater project on streets, the essay successfully retains its autonomy and own "openness" and points to an even more delicate fragmentation of "society" that guides us through Frisby's metropolitan networks. This can be seen in what one might identify as a creative combination of Simmelean with Weberian methodology that discloses the individual, the human and the social in the seemingly amorphous metropolis and reveals the methodological advantages of the fragmentation of "society" into individual phenomena. Going briefly into Simmel's methodology, we read that,

the objective totality yields to the individuals that confront it from without as it were; it offers a place to their subjectively determined life processes, which thereby, in their very individuality, become necessary links in the life of the whole. It is the dual nexus which supplies the individual consciousness with a fundamental category and thus transforms it into a social element.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.4.

⁹⁶ Frisby, D., 2003, op.cit., p.76.

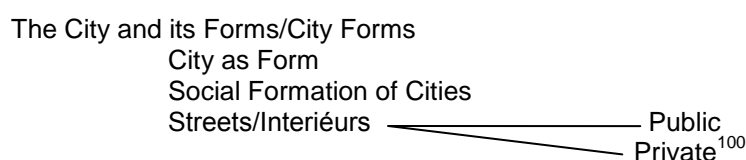
⁹⁷ G. Simmel in Levine, D.N. (Ed.), 1971, op.cit., p.22.

When studied parallel to Weber’s analysis of individual and social action,⁹⁸ this hypothesis may explain why “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” peoples the metropolis and society and underlines the actions and interactions of individual city dwellers. Whilst Frisby’s writings prior to “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” have always considered, or at least introduced, the presence of individual actors, this is the first instance where he invites *all* the individual figures hitherto presented in his work.

On the one hand, Frisby focuses upon an extraordinary range of individual actors and explores which of their actions, experiences and responses to metropolitan social life gradually make “society” in the capitalist metropolis and, on the other, he explores how the intersections of these actions make “society” in the street. Indeed, he maintains that:

The metropolis as a site of *circulation* of individuals, traffic, monetary instruments and images is also a site of *acceleration* in such interactions not merely individually but with one another.⁹⁹

In a more schematic way:



The private and the public converge in the street: “in other words, individual time logics are being undertaken that criss-cross one another in the busy spaces of the urban streetscape.”¹⁰¹ First, he detects the traces of the calculating individual, the agoraphobic, the *flâneur*, the adventurer, the stranger, the cosmopolitan, the fashion addict, the eccentric, the blasé person, the prostitute (the street walker), the consumer and the capitalist interacting with each other on a daily basis. Then, he invites us to consider how “hidden” figures, such as the worker outside the city-centre and women in the household, exemplify the dialectic between the private and the public spheres. Finally, we are challenged to understand how, in the street,

the speed of fleeting momentary interactions governed by the diverse temporal agendas of individuals and traffic systems clashes with the spatial channels and spatial streetscape through which they pass.¹⁰²

In combining the significance of Simmel’s analysis of the clock and of time in the metropolis essay with a subtle implication of Weber’s decoding of social action, “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” leads us to explore how these fleeting

⁹⁸ See Weber, M. “The Nature of Social Action,” in Runciman W.G. (Ed.) (1992) *Max Weber – Selections in Translation*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp.7-32.

⁹⁹ Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.6.

¹⁰⁰ Unpublished, undated handwritten notes, David Frisby – Hard Copies’ Archive, Athens.

¹⁰¹ Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.8.

¹⁰² Ibid.

interactions may translate into meaningful, “transient or more enduring”¹⁰³ social relations. Reminiscent of Weber’s metaphor of the cyclists,¹⁰⁴ meaningful social action takes on a unique character in the streetscape that subtly leads our way back to sociology and the search for the individuals that make up “society.” Kracauer highlighted this approach to individual actors in a great part of Simmel’s own writings:

The unity of meanings that Simmel denies to the world he accords instead to individuals. He wrests individuals from the context of the manifold and juxtaposes them with the latter as self-contained totalities that develop and pass away according to their own laws.¹⁰⁵

In a similar context, “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” emphasizes intersecting individual actions, movements and interactions that challenge zoning, city boundaries, social structures, normative prejudices and institutional “facts.” This is primarily achieved through Frisby’s study of the observers, the students, “readers” and “writers” of social life in the metropolis:

The speed and multiplicity of social and economic interactions suggest that the individual observers of this apparent chaos are themselves in motion. In other words, there is not merely a proliferation of images in the metropolis, but also the observers of such images are themselves a dynamic element (including observers themselves as part of the images of others) in the streetscape.¹⁰⁶

Social types, exemplary metropolitan figures, city dwellers “are in motion;” but when either corresponds to the student of the city, the individual plays a unique role in the “forms of sociation” that set the metropolis and society to motion. More than any of his previous writings, Frisby’s “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” is peopled by, and pays tribute to some of his fellow “readers” of the metropolis as society. These include:

- Simmel and the streetscape;
- Baudelaire and a unique relation to the crowd;
- Benjamin and the ever-present capitalist “phantasmagoria;”
- Ludwig Meidner and his apocalyptic cityscapes;
- Walther Rathenau and the “factory city” in the periphery of Berlin;
- Camillo Sitte and the beauty-oriented crooked streetscape;
- Kracauer and his critical love of the metropolis;
- Hermann Maertens and the aesthetics of urban planning;
- Andreas Killen and Berlin “electropolis;”
- Werner Sombart, the analysis of the features of the “cosmopolite” and the “contrast between hero [*Held*] and trader [*Händler*];”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Weber, M. in Runciman, W.G. (Ed.), 1992, op.cit., p.31.

¹⁰⁴ Weber argues that: “Not every kind of human contact is social in character: it is only social when one person’s behaviour is related in its *meaning* to the behaviour of other people. For example, a collision between two cyclists is a mere occurrence, like a natural event. But when they try to give way to each other, or when they engage in insults, fisticuffs, or peaceful discussion after collision, this does count as ‘social action’.” See *ibid.*, p.26.

¹⁰⁵ Kracauer, S. (1995) *The Mass Ornament*. Levin, T.Y. (Ed. and trs.), Cambridge, Harvard University Press, p.253.

¹⁰⁶ Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.8.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.15.

- Ludwig Wittgenstein and the city as language;¹⁰⁸
- Weber and the “contrast between systematic capitalism and adventure capitalism.”¹⁰⁹

Frisby’s Simmelean metropolis “grants to the individual a kind and amount of personal freedom’ not available elsewhere.”¹¹⁰ More often than not, Frisby’s Simmel writings apply this freedom of action to the metropolitan figures of the stranger and the cosmopolitan; both stand in a constant, and usually positive, interaction with the “outside world.” Whilst this is the case here too, “Streetscapes of Modernity” also discusses freedom in relation to a distinct figure that is unrestrained by socially constructed urban temporal or spatial boundaries, and who may have a special affinity with Frisby’s distinct sociology. Here, Frisby welcomes Weber’s commentary on Simmel’s analysis of the mature money economy:

When Max Weber read [Simmel’s] *Philosophy of Money* for insights into the spirit of capitalism and when he subsequently defended his central arguments on the Protestant Ethic, he did draw a contrast between systematic capitalism and adventure capitalism. In the course of these discussions, he praised Simmel’s essay on the adventure, which he saw as outlining a figure *not* concerned with “systematic bourgeois capitalism.” The possibilities for individual freedom in the metropolis extended to the adventure as a mode of experience torn out of everyday life.¹¹¹

Such freedom and such an adventurous approach to the study of society is one of the privileges of the sociologist as flâneur:

So just as the adventurer is the hidden counterpart figure to the rational capitalist actor in Weber’s substantive study, the figure of the *flâneur*/adventurer may be the hidden figure in Simmel’s methodological orientation. The adventurer is significant for Simmel, not least because he identifies the philosopher with the adventurer to the extent that he identifies the philosopher as the adventurer of the mind.¹¹²

Even though the adventure appears as radically cut off from the standardization of time that is tuned according to the temporal rules of the advanced division of labour of the mature money economy that drives the modern metropolis, it nonetheless, “encapsulates both the experience of modernity as immediate presentness and the promise, however momentary, of an ‘eternal’ presentness.”¹¹³ In pointing to yet another transformation of the *flâneur-as-stranger* – and we should not forget that he had already enriched Lewis Coser’s definition of Simmel as a “stranger in the academy” to identify Simmel, Benjamin and Kracauer as “outsiders” and “strangers” – Frisby highlights the role of the adventure for sociology itself. The adventure in the streetscape of modernity guides us through the study of the social word and may itself be a response to adventure capitalism. Indeed, notwithstanding the,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., endnote 16, p.17.

¹⁰⁹ These are but a few writers invited in the text.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p.12.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p.13. In this context see also: Frisby, D. (1994h) “The Ambiguity of Modernity: Max Weber and Georg Simmel,” in Frisby, D. (Ed.), *Georg Simmel: Critical Assessments*. (Vol.1) London, Routledge, pp.221-33, Frisby, D., 1987, op.cit., and Frisby, D., 1988b, op.cit.

¹¹² Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.14.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.15.

many ambiguities in the experience of the adventure – fertile as the concept is – for it to fully accord with the activities of *flânerie*, [...] its analysis does begin to address the issue as to how we can investigate the mundane everyday world.¹¹⁴

One obvious methodological tool here is Simmel's "sociation." Another, less obvious, albeit significant question is Weber's notion of the "disenchantment" of the social world. What could the sociologist as adventurer deduce from his studies of the relations between social institutions and the everyday interactions that help shape the contested urban universe? Frisby explains:

It would be possible to add other figures in the metropolis, for example, through a contrast between the blasé person and the fashion addict and eccentric (retaining their resistance to the dull grey hue of the money economy and the metropolis). We could also ask whether the inner consequences of the metropolis and its networks of interactions are instances of pathologies or are forms of alienated existence into which we are socialized, as in the reification of social relations in monetary transactions and the creation of a world of "otherness" through the mediation of abstractions, the functionalization of social relations and the tendency for the culture of human beings becoming a culture of things.¹¹⁵

In having explored how the metropolis may be studied as society, "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity" suggests that the street becomes the field wherein eloquent fragments of society *can* be known. More than that, when we look at his last notes, Frisby introduces the street as an exemplary cognitive locus of the metropolis as well as of social space at large: the street, too, is where society is "made," and can be, therefore, studied as society. Combined with "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity," Frisby's published essays and last notes on streets invite a conversation with other "readers" of the city. In this context, the Greek *Οδικά Τοπία της Νεωτερικότητας* [Streetscapes of Modernity] and the notes for his unfinished English *Streetscapes of Modernity* introduce older and new fellow travellers and can be studied as yet another sociological "escape from the everyday into the everyday."¹¹⁶

IV

*What I see is the day in all its absurdity and triviality.*¹¹⁷

The Greek collection entitled *David Frisby, Streetscapes of Modernity – Selected Writings*¹¹⁸ included a new introduction, and essays, such as "Modernité" from the *Fragments of Modernity*, that were not obviously related to streets. However, in this way, the Greek collection illustrates the hypothesis that Frisby's studies of streets are focused upon the question "what is Society." His unpublished notes and public lectures on the other hand, point to the significance of cross-

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.16.

¹¹⁶ The expression is the product of Frisby's inspiration during one of our supervisory meetings for my 2002 MPhil.

¹¹⁷ Roth, J. (2003) *What I Saw*. London, Granta, 2003, p.23.

¹¹⁸ See Giannakopoulou, G. (Ed.), 2012, op.cit. We were preparing the book since 2009 but the editing process and publication was halted until 2012. Frisby decided the title of the book in October 2010.

referencing his work in the same way that he cross-references Simmel's writings. Frisby's unpublished notes, for example, contain a two-page document entitled "Bibliography" and dated 21/6/2009 that outlines the contents of the intended English *Streetscapes of Modernity*.¹¹⁹ The book would begin with a collection of previously published writings on streets and then continue with new material. The published work would include:

- "Walter Benjamin and Detection."
- "Siegfried Kracauer and the Detective Novel."
- "The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna's 'Second Renaissance'."
- "Straight or Crooked Streets? The Contested Rational Spirit of the Modern Metropolis."
- "The Significance and Impact of Vienna's *Ringstrasse*."
- "Vienna: Simmel's Other Metropolis."¹²⁰

In turn, the unpublished material would introduce:

- "Simmel's Berlin streets" (renamed "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity.")
- "Robert Musil's Streets of Vienna."
- "The Optimal Observer: Hermann Maertens Views City-Architecture."
- "The Earliest Flâneur: Pausanias amid the Ruins of Greek Cities."

The rationale behind the choice of the material is more clearly studied in the second page of the document which provides a more detailed outline for the contents of the intended book:

Streetscapes of Modernity

- **Openings**
- **Old and New**
 1. "The Earliest Flâneur: Pausanias amid Ancient City Streets and Ruins."
 2. "The Optimal Street Observer: Hermann Maertens Views City Architecture."
 3. "Turnover Time on the Streets."
- **Hidden Views**
 4. "Vienna: Simmel's Other Metropolis" [published].
 5. "Siegfried Kracauer and the Detective Novel," [published].
 6. "Walter Benjamin and Detection," [published].
- **Reading Streets**
 7. "Straight or Crooked Streets? The Contested Rational Spirit of the Modern Metropolis," [published].
 8. "The Significance and Impact of Vienna's *Ringstrasse*," [published].
 9. "The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna's 'Second Renaissance'," [published].
 10. "Simmel's Berlin Streets" [published in Greek as "Simmel's Streetscape of Modernity"].
 11. "Argentinerstrasse – and Then in the Street": The Street and the Everyday in Wittgenstein's philosophy.
- **Closings**

In spite of the eloquence of these unpublished notes, no one can assume what Frisby *would have* written. What we can do, however, is to contextualize the above,

¹¹⁹ From David Frisby-Electronic Archive.

¹²⁰ For full publication details see Giannakopoulou G. (Ed.), 2016, op.cit.

and to study the unpublished notes parallel to “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity,” lecture notes and the published contents of the intended book.

Frisby’s 2003 “Straight or Crooked Streets? The Contested Rational Spirit of the Modern Metropolis,”¹²¹ re-evaluated a number of phenomena hitherto explored in his work. These, included the influence of monumental architecture and historicism in the juxtaposition between a focus on city-observers as a “dynamic element [...] in the streetscape” and the focus on architecture from “a static position.”¹²² The reference to amnesia and neurasthenia, in particular, as some of the “pathological responses” generated by “contested urban spaces,”¹²³ such as the 1890s “new” Vienna and Berlin, re-introduced the question of the re-definition of the past and of collective forgetting in the context of urban regeneration. The 1890s debates over the Viennese and Berliner streetscape were further explored in a 2005 unpublished typescript on streets and city imaginaries which distilled the hidden socio-political dynamics of the beauty-contests between the “new” and the “old.”

This debate on straight or crooked streets in the 1890s raised issues associated with the power of capital, the circulation of commodities and individuals, traffic configurations, the aesthetics of the street, historical memory, modernity and antimodernity, street infrastructure, pathologies of urban life, and many others.¹²⁴

In having already examined the significance of reading and experiencing the city in Simmel’s modern metropolis, another 2005 unpublished Typescript dated 9/2/2005 and entitled “Locating Simmel’s Metropolis”¹²⁵ emphasized the “theme of representation of the modern city.”¹²⁶ There too, the aesthetical dimension of the debates over planning and architecture highlight the significance of urban infrastructure, including the arrangement and layout of the streetscape, for the metropolis as the seat of the mature money economy:

Rather, the aesthetics of modern life in the metropolis may well reside in the preponderance of the sublime, the symmetry of relationships (including street networks) and the aestheticization of reality, all of which in different context also accord with our experience of the capitalist money economy.¹²⁷

Consequently, “the process of commodification” promoted by the spatial organization and aesthetical representations of the mature money economy, “can be extended to all human products and experiences.”¹²⁸ Three years later, the revised published version of the former typescript studied “the sociopolitical and cultural contexts of the

¹²¹ Frisby, D., 2003, op.cit.

¹²² Ibid., p.59.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Frisby D. (2005a) “Vienna is not Berlin: Streets, Imaginaries and Modernity.” Unpublished Typescript, David Frisby – Hard Copies’ Archive, Athens, p.3.

¹²⁵ Frisby, D. (2005b) “Locating Simmel’s Metropolis.” Unpublished Typescript, David Frisby – Hard Copies’ Archive, Athens.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p.9

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.10.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p.11.

production of urban spaces generated by city planners and architects¹²⁹ and revealed the real and illusory dimensions of a debate that was focused on aesthetics as a “veil” over the functional role of streets in the production and political control of urban spaces. Two observations stand out in this analysis: first, the dialectic, in the capitalist metropolis, between modernity and tradition, and second, the search for the “absent other”,¹³⁰ the working classes that are excluded from the “aesthetics of the street” of central metropolitan areas.

The identification and unlayering of the “hidden views” of the metropolis invited the figure, and more specifically, the practices of the sociologist-as-detective in the method of studying the city as a text. This is perhaps, one of the reasons why Frisby included his 1998 “The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna’s ‘Second Renaissance’”¹³¹ in the same volume as his “Walter Benjamin and Detection.”¹³² But more than that, with the latter holding a special place in the intended volume, Frisby returned to a fragment from his long, and also never realized, project on detection. His “Siegfried Kracauer and the Detective Novel,” published in 1992 as “Between the Spheres: Siegfried Kracauer and the Detective Novel”¹³³ echoes the search for “society.” When exploring Kracauer’s interest in detective novels, for example, he maintains that,

in October 1923, [Kracauer] informs Leo Löwenthal of this project [...]: I am at the moment writing my “Metaphysics of the Detective Novel,” a deliberately quite precise small monograph, that has still not advanced beyond the first few pages. It may serve as an example of a sociological theory of projection.¹³⁴

Here too, the “disenchantment” of the world echoes loudly. According to Frisby, this would be “a *sociological* theory of the spheres of reality,”¹³⁵ in the context of a “world dominated by formal rationality.”¹³⁶ This search for a distinct sociology, he notes, is one of the reasons why “Kracauer’s investigation of the presentation of the world of convention, of the world robbed of meaning, is focused upon the ‘trivial’ genre of the detective novel.”¹³⁷ The methodological and philosophical emphasis upon the street as a mysterious “trivial” fragment of urban society is further explored in Frisby’s meticulous analysis of “The Significance and Impact of Vienna’s *Ringstrasse*.”¹³⁸ From the start, the essay considers the construction of the various “spheres of reality”:

¹²⁹ See Frisby, D. (2008) “Streets, Imaginaries and Modernity: Vienna is not Berlin,” in Prakash, G. and Kruse, K.M. (Eds.), *The Spaces of the Modern City*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, p.21.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p.41.

¹³¹ See, Frisby, D., 1998, op. cit.

¹³² See Frisby, D., 1994c, op.cit.

¹³³ Frisby, D. (1992c) “Between the Spheres: Siegfried Kracauer and the Detective Novel.” *Theory Culture & Society*, 9:1-22.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p.4.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.5.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p.7.

¹³⁸ The article was published as Frisby, D. (2010b) “The Significance and Impact of Vienna’s *Ringstrasse*,” in Hermansen, C. (Ed.), *Manifestoes and Transformations in the Early Modernist City*. Farnham, Ashgate, pp.229-253. I am also using earlier versions from the David Frisby – Electronic Archive, dated 2006.

The increase of commercial traffic that accompanied the development of capitalism became progressively hindered by the limited and ever more congested communication between the urban centre and the suburbs that was filtered through the gates within the fortifications.

The removal of the fortifications opened up the possibility not merely for urban development where the fortifications stood (in Vienna, the area around the fortification was known as the *glacis*) but also the development of the land either side of the city walls and battlements. In other words, the project also gave an opportunity to appropriate and regulate sections of the inner city adjacent to the fortifications.¹³⁹

Once more, the city challenges the social researcher to identify and to penetrate its seen and unseen borders that may often transcend the city itself and, rather, extend beyond the concrete and imaginary borders between cities as societies. Intellectually, this can be attempted through the study of the routes of various texts and of the paths where various “textscapes” and their authors meet. In searching for the traces of Simmel’s thought in late nineteenth- and early twenty-century intellectual and cultural Viennese circles Frisby’s 2009 “Vienna: Simmel’s Other Metropolis”¹⁴⁰ did exactly that. In this respect, the intended *Streetscapes of Modernity*, also approached the powerful metaphorical meanings of “streets” as routes of intellectual interactions.

On the other hand, in practice, the metropolis ultimately challenges the sociologist-as-*flâneur* to expose the “veils” that hide its reality. “Simmel’s Streetscape of Modernity” also examined the hidden social stratification behind the varied uses and abuses of aesthetics in the market that is the modern capitalist metropolis¹⁴¹ and discussed three urban “loci” that intersect in the streetscape: commodities, fashion and – permanent or temporal – architectural forms. For instance, when discussing Simmel’s analysis of “The Berlin Trade Exhibition” of 1896, he explains that,

Such exhibitions serve as a distraction from the sphere of production and complex division of labour in favour of consumption of various impressions. This world of consumption of commodity representations has generated its own temporary architectural structures and forms.¹⁴²

In turn, when it comes to fashion, the fashion addict, and the contested character of subjectivity and individuality in mass consumption that claims “originality,” “the aesthetic veil of newness clothes both ourselves and the commodities that we desire.”¹⁴³ This may also apply to the “clothing” of modern metropolitan society.

Frisby’s last lecture notes for his 2009 LSE course on the “Foundations of Urban Studies”¹⁴⁴ are directly related to the material for his intended *Streetscapes of*

¹³⁹ Frisby, D. (2006) “The Impact of Vienna’s Ringstrasse.” Unpublished Typescript, David Frisby – Electronic Archive.

¹⁴⁰ Frisby, D. (2009) “Vienna: Simmel’s Other Metropolis,” in Barbagli, M. and Ferguson, H. (Eds.), *La Teoria Sociologica e lo Stato Moderno*. Bologna, il Mulino, pp.81-99.

¹⁴¹ A great part of Frisby’s work is dedicated to the exploration of aesthetics in the study of the modern capitalist metropolis. See for example, Frisby, D., 1991a, op.cit.

¹⁴² Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.10.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ I am grateful to Dr. Savvas Verdis from LSE for sending me the lectures.

Modernity and point to the street itself is a riddle that may provide some directions, if not some answers, to society as a veiled puzzle.

V

*The most important, the less important, and the unimportant only appear to be important, less important, unimportant.*¹⁴⁵

The introductory lecture to the modern metropolis, delivered on the 6th of October 2009, emphasized the significance of “reading” the streetscape:

One crucial space to be examined is that of *streets*, commencing with the implications of *Hausmann’s Paris* and the straight line of the boulevard.

- Urban capital and the transformation of urban experience;
- Socio-spatial transformation of the city.

[...]

Taking up from Simmel’s discussion of the social boundary, the significance of urban *boundaries, borders and barriers* is explored:

- Right to the city
- Empty borders
- Community

The city and memory. Memory sites as resistance to forgetting/historical erasure:

- Forgetting and hidden from history
- Implications of the transition from society as panorama to city as spectacle (Boyer).¹⁴⁶

In following his lectures on subjects such as “From Flânerie to Urban Ethnography,” “Cities, Spaces and Texts,” and “Urban Spaces: from Simmel to Lefebvre” delivered on October 13th, 20th and 27th 2009 respectively, the last six lectures were equally divided and dedicated to metropolitan streets and architecture. The former introduced the varied dynamics of the construction of the central street network of three nineteenth-century European metropolises: Paris, Vienna and Berlin.

The lecture on “Streets: Straight (Paris),” delivered on the 3rd of November 2009 deciphered the hidden implications of Hausmann’s grand boulevards in the “socio-spatial transformation” of Paris as a city of modernity:

Boulevards

- As spectacles (opened as monuments). Monumentalisation of public sphere in unified facades.
- But also as surgical, hygienic cutting out of urban pathologies and creation of light and new spaces.
- And as means of strategic communication- breadth of boulevards against barricades, link of boulevards with rail stations for troop movements.
- Infrastructure of gutter/sewer/water/gas systems and gas street lighting.
- Separation of users: strollers, slow and fast vehicles.
- Levelling of streets and macadam surfacing for traffic and broad sidewalks (*trottoirs*).

¹⁴⁵ Roth, J., 2003, op.cit., p.25.

¹⁴⁶ Lecture Notes dated 20/6/2008.

- Significance of *point de vue* and new boulevards - vista to culminate in axis and monument. Visual focus on facades and uniform building lines. Alignment of boulevard in accord with axes.
- New open spaces (e.g. Place de Republique, Opera).
- Green open spaces (contrast Park Monceau and Buttes Chaumont).
- Street vegetation systems, including tree-lined boulevards for shade in summer.
- Street furniture- bench, lamp, [...], kiosk, tree iron guard.
- Boulevard (regulated, policed) as new *interieur* for bourgeoisie.
- Integration of department store into boulevard from 1860s (a unity of commerce, consumption and dwelling).
- Aesthetic of the boulevard: “by beautiful perspectives, by the disengaging of ancient monuments and the isolation of new ones; by the opening of planted avenues, vast promenades, parks and public gardens, filling the eyes with a luxury of greenery and flowers without parallel.” (Hausmann)¹⁴⁷

The following lecture on “Streets: Crooked (Vienna),” delivered a week later, studied the construction of the central ring-road of the Austrian capital and suggested the key role of the streetscape in detecting the differences between the construction of a new Paris and a new Vienna in the nineteenth century:

RINGSTRASSE DEVELOPMENT

- First major restructuring of city, removal of fortifications after 1857, building of Ringstrasse and accompanying zone.
- Significant destruction of “old Vienna” in First District (not merely removal of fortifications), and stratification of the new zone.
- This “first renaissance of city with development of Ringstrasse largely completed by 1890 (except *Stubenviertel*). Aristocratic/ haute bourgeois development with individual monumental works.
- “Second Renaissance” from 1890 (extending to 1914) and expansion of city boundaries. Initial “liberal democratic development” with whole building complexes as monumental – Wagner’s city railway 1894-1901.
- Vienna model for coping with removal of old fortifications adopted in many other cities in central Europe.

Ringstrasse compared with Haussmann:

- Emerged out of architectural competitions.
- Horse-shoe shaped, full ring never completed.
- No single perspective, sections of Ringstrasse with different perspectives and different publics.
- Assemblage of monuments in open spaces.

On Ringstrasse, all major buildings except stock exchange connected directly/indirectly with state:

- Variety of Historicist styles for each monumental building.
- Building types typical of modernity not present on Ringstrasse; railway stations, department stores.
- By 1910 only building in “modern style” on Ringstrasse was Wagner’s Post Office Savings Bank, but was set back from Ringstrasse and faced Ludwig Baumann’s neo-baroque Ministry of War.
- Hardly constituted a total work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*).

¹⁴⁷ Lecture Notes dated 28/8/2008.

- In Ringstrasse zone, substantial urban capital accumulation (original investors paid no tax for first 30 years).
- Dominant building types apartment blocks and dwelling and commercial blocks (Wohn-und Geschaeftshaus). Apartment blocks against English houses.
- Visual impact of Ringstrasse – huge impact of massively new-within zone buildings “screened in the decent draperies of preindustrial styles” (Schorske).
- But created new separation of inside/outside with monuments often facing inwards. Even when not the case, monumental buildings oriented towards street and open spaces.¹⁴⁸

The last lecture on streets, entitled “Circulation, Streets and Commodities (Berlin)” and delivered on the 17th of November 2009 concentrated the phenomena surrounding the transformations of metropolitan modernity from 1850s Paris to 1890s Vienna and then to the speeding Berliner metropolis of the early twentieth century. New technologies and infrastructure transform the surface level into the “asphalt culture” of an urban modernity that focuses first, upon the production, circulation, reification and consumption of commodities and, second, to the gradual commodification of the city and urban life at large:

CIRCULATION

In the cycle of capitalist production (production, distribution, circulation, exchange and consumption), the sphere of *circulation* is crucial for *mediation*, for the *dissociation*, and *dislocation* of things (Novalis: “the theatre of commodities”; Marx: circulation as the sphere of total alienation)

Circulation as the life-form of movement/motion:

- a) Movement of the *commodity*: railways, newspaper, telegraph.
- b) Movement in the *metropolis* – boulevards for free circulation of commodities and individuals; new experience of space, plurality and speed of contacts; new modes of vision in relation to means of transport.
- c) Movement of *images*, all creating new experience of images:
 - Panoramas as spectacular images.
 - Photography-developed from camera obscura (a “mechanical eye”), through magic lantern to photography (see Crary “Techniques of the Observer”).
 - Film.
 - World exhibitions as spectacles.
- d) New mediators of images could be used for surveillance (Foucault) as well as spectacle (Debord, Baudrillard).
- e) Benjamin – as feature of modernity “massive proliferation of images.”
- f) All emphasized primacy of vision and separation of sight from other senses.

At same time attempts to capture the *moment* as well as movement:

- Momentary effect of light as object in painting (impressionism).
- Photography “the camera gave the moment a temporary shock” (Benjamin).
- New immediacy of new electronic media.

¹⁴⁸ Lecture Notes dated 28/8/2008.

SOME INSTANCES

Transformation of urban spaces

1. Traffic

- Traffic (*Verkehr*) and its ambiguities.
- Traffic in context of socially divided /segmented city (e.g. workmen's "penny special").
- Intersections (and refuges) – another dimension of debate on straight/crooked street.
- Separation of spaces of traffic and dwelling.

2. *Time- space transformations*. Telegraph, pneumatic post, telephone, money circulation

3. Examples of rail travel

[...]

4. Lighting – *transformation of metropolitan exteriors and interiors (and mental space of sunshine and shadow in city)*

[...]

5. Production – circulation in production process itself as continuous process, Fordism and post-Fordism, the rhythms of production (Hessel on AEG).¹⁴⁹

The empowered socioeconomic foundations of the modern metropolis as the seat of materialistic culture lay behind a spatial narrative regarding time as money. Moreover, the intersection, on the asphalt, between competing urban imaginaries, further highlight the pathologies within singular representations of cities in the context of adherence or resistance to capitalist modernization: "The city as imaginary can refer to a single city and its contested modern development (as in case of Vienna as Old / New Vienna later) as well as contrast between two imaginaries of two cities as in Berlin and Vienna."¹⁵⁰ The schematic illustration of this observation can be discovered in one of Frisby's dialectical outlines:

THE CITY AS IMAGINARY¹⁵¹ BERLIN- VIENNA IMAGINARIES

<u>BERLIN</u>	<u>VIENNA</u>
MODERN	HISTORICAL
AMERICA	EUROPE
CIVILIZATION	CULTURE
LACK OF CULTURE	EXCESSIVE CULTURE
MALE	FEMALE
ARTIFICIAL/MECHANICAL BEINGS	NATURAL HUMAN BEINGS
'INDISTINGUISHABLE' UNSURVEYABLE MASS	DIFFERENTIATED INDIVIDUALS
ASPHALT CULTURE	URBAN COMMUNITY IDYLL
PARVENUE CULTURE	OLD CULTURE
PRUSSIAN-AMERICAN STYLENESS	MAKART CULTURE
MODERN, NEW, SURFACE	ROOTED OLD CITY
SPIRIT (GEIST)	SOUL (SEELE)
AMERICANISM	'GERMAN' CULTURE AS BULWARK AGAINST AMERICANISM

¹⁴⁹ Lecture Notes dated 13/11/2008.

¹⁵⁰ Document dated 17/10/2008. From David Frisby – Electronic Archive.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

With these representations themselves constructed in a labyrinthine manner, the streetscape becomes the battlefield where reality and imagination each reclaim the urban spaces that sustain the economic and socio-political underworld of modern social life. In attempting to shed light to this question, and in having already discussed the significance of the constantly circulating, intersecting and exchanged elements of the streetscape, Frisby turned his penetrating look to streets as eloquent instances of the dialectic between home and monument. His lecture on “Dwelling – Apartment Blocks and Houses,”¹⁵² delivered on the 24th of November 2009 combined critical modernist, post-structuralist and phenomenological interpretations of this dialectic and of the place of individual social actors and groups in the ever contested built metropolitan environment. Once again, in having highlighted their dual character as “interior” and “exterior,” Frisby notes how streets sustain, as well as challenge, the built character of urban charting:

General

- Dwelling as primary spatial form (Bachelard, Heidegger and phenomenological description).
- Dwelling as space of reproduction of labour – family.
- Dwelling as interior – away from circulation, production, but space of consumption (Weber on significance of separation of work from household).
- Dwelling and gendered space
- Dwelling as retreat – bourgeois interior. Benjamin on interiors of 19th century.
- Casing for everything (also dwelling itself as casing).
- Historicist interior.
- Dwelling and memory – contrast interpretations of Bachelard and Benjamin.
- Counter-instance of street as interior for some subordinate social groups.

[...]

Apartment block

However, considerable variations in this building type.

- From grand apartments on Paris Boulevards (1860s onwards).
- Or in Vienna Ringstrasse zone, or best avenues in New York, etc.
- Dwelling and apartment block prevalent in Austria Hungary, Germany and elsewhere.
- A flexible mixed type that contained elements of dwelling apartment block, office and, on ground floor, a shop (and hence 3 types of rental returns possible).
- But not common in Haussmann’s practice – shops as independent entities (as department stores) and separation of office/commercial spaces from residential neighbourhoods.
- To single rooms on corridor with communal facilities.
- And rental barracks in Berlin (including cellar dwellings).¹⁵³

The outcome is “a questionable moral space,” a “possible reversal of city (streets as interior) and home (as theatre) relationships.”¹⁵⁴ In following a more detailed analysis

¹⁵² Lecture Notes dated 23/11/2008.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

of “Divisions, Boundaries and Barriers,”¹⁵⁵ Frisby’s last lectures focused upon “Monuments and Memory”¹⁵⁶ and ultimately returned to that fundamental question: “how do, or, do cities retain memory in [the] public sphere?”¹⁵⁷ What is the place of knowledge in a universe of amnesia, negative fragmentation and dispersion of individual and collective identities?

But should not ignore the strength of the forces of *forgetting*. As theme in social theory and theories of modernity:

- Marx’s identification of modernity with everlasting change and motion and the destruction of the past and the present. What remains of this destructive processes are traces of the past (introduction to *Grundrisse*).
- Simmel on the process of exchange and our “rendezvous” with commodities there maintains that our experience of the phenomenal life of commodities is devoid of historical and social context (also Marx on commodity fetishism).
- Implicit issue in straight/crooked streets debate – straight streets and identity of blocks conducive to forgetting; enclosed space of squares as locus of memory.¹⁵⁸

How can we, then, understand and know society amidst the forces of memory and amnesia in the metropolis as society?

THE CITY AS TEXT

Diverse relation between language and reading the city; some examples:

1. Wittgenstein on language as city, in which the complex is related to the everyday. Relevance of theory of meaning in which the meaning of a term is the use to which it is put.
2. Possibility of an urban semiotics discussed by Barthes: “human space in general... has always been a signifying space.” Closest instance of urban semiology in Lynch (*Image of the City*), addressing readability of city and discrete units (pathways, barriers, etc.)
3. Application of Chomsky’s interpretation of distinction between syntax and semantics:
 - The syntax or “deep grammar” of the city (its structures/ordering of street systems).
 - The semantics of the city (meanings attached to its signifiers).¹⁵⁹

A decade after the first publication of his ideas concerning the “city as text,” Frisby returned to the core of his social theory; faithful to the modernist tradition of his intellectual family, he made yet another call for the search for meaning. And for that which can be known as society.

¹⁵⁵ Lecture delivered on the 1st of December 2009.

¹⁵⁶ Lecture delivered on the 8th of December 2009.

¹⁵⁷ Lecture Notes dated 3/12/2008.

¹⁵⁸ Lecture Notes dated 3/12/2008.

¹⁵⁹ Lecture Notes dated 28/8/2008.

VI

*Man as something known, is made by nature and history; but man, as knower, makes nature and history.*¹⁶⁰

Frisby's "The Flâneur and Social Theory" was, partly, a search for a tradition of "sociological *flâneurs*" – Simmel, Benjamin, Franz Hessel and Kracauer – in the outskirts of the academic world of the late 1800s and early-to-mid 1900s. But there, too, he was the first to underline Benjamin's aim to avoid the "euphemistic whisperings of sociology" and maintained that *flânerie* may have concrete affinities with distinct kinds of a critical and reflective sociology that studies itself in the cityscapes of what appears to be the demystified calculative universe of the modern capitalist metropolis:

The question as to how knowledge of the social world is made possible may be explored in ways other than recourse to such self-referential abstractions as are generated today in rational choice theory or micro-macro debates and paradigms borrowed parasitically from another 'dismal' social science's century-old paradigms, in the hope of gaining some of the latter's presumed but illusory scientific status and grandeur.¹⁶¹

The answer to the question "what is society" ultimately rests upon "who we are," and upon the kinds of science we produce. Above all, Frisby was an exemplary teacher and a dedicated researcher.

On the 18th of February, 2003, he delivered a lecture on archival research to the three MPhil students of the University of Glasgow. There, he talked about the different kinds of archives (State, Library, University, Private, etc.), their original control functions and the fundamental problems of accessing, processing, reorganizing and interpreting archival material. Reorganization of the material seemed crucial. Archives mirror the metropolis much as the metropolis mirrors a labyrinth of archives. Through streets, we first step into both and collect the material that we are called to understand. And then we wander in, and continue to wonder with our social world. And, maybe, we can learn something about one of its myriad fragments that, for that moment, will illuminate society. Consistent with all his work, Frisby's reading of the metropolis as society in the "Streetscapes of Modernity" considers Simmel's "philosophy as adventure"¹⁶² and culminates in his own legacy of sociology as an adventure.

¹⁶⁰ Simmel, G. in Levine, D.N., 1971, op.cit., p.4.

¹⁶¹ Frisby, D., 1994a, op.cit., 84.

¹⁶² Frisby, D., 2010a, op.cit., p.15.

Streetscapes notes

Berlin 1896
Metrop. 1903
Groß Berlin 1910
Mädler 1920
Krac
Hessel
Madin Wagner

← Berlin/Wien
Berlin/Berl. Krac/Hessel/
Benj.

To start with representat- of city - 1896
Directed wandering around exhibitat

Hessel an Architektur des Zufalls.

representat- of commodity

- undirected strolling / contrast wandering

- contrast / compare

Benj
+ Krac - An den Feinheiten
suchen

- learning - with Madin Wagner

To start with momentbilder sub specie
aeternitatis

- in Simmel

- in Wittgenstein.

Rel to modernity's - sub specie momenti.

Simmel - phil. historic

Bo 4

Sombart - ideol.

with connection
to arch.

Krac - arch.

Simmel - Andub

Hershel -

Krac - arch

Hershel -

Both Krac + Hershel

Zufall

Wagnel

compare Berlin / Paris

Possible starts

de Certeau

City as text

Everyday knowledge

Sub specie aeternitatis

or all 4 + return to them at end.

Plamenic

Planerie + products.

Need know

- Hessel
- Benj. on Hessel
- Ha prices already know.

Other key ones

- Aus dem Fenster gesche

compare Hessel on other Berlin / - Pr.D. Schnellbahn

Hessel in detail on planerie.

-> Zufall

->



View of what for planerie - Benj.
One Way Street

Hessel compare with Schepfer.

Hessel

III Hessel + Mathin Wagner - Ich lerne. 12-15

272 Das andere Berlin
everything emergent

306 Paris

340. Architekturen des Augenblicks.

Architekturen des Zufalls.

Hessel Volume.

101 Plaineur

103 Eye to eye with things

105 The street is a kind of reading material

107 Mathin Wagner &
new Berlin

113-5 Krac Beij

117. Architekturen des Augenblicks

↳ Zufall

119. Cigarette ad.

Modernity / Tradition
Berlin Vienna

} but also tradition
in Berlin -

attach to
freeliving society
above church state

Hessel II p434f. Die Kunst spazieren zu gehen
von V better

Could take up de Certeau + contrast Hessel +
Wagner

Tour of city - Hessel's words, Martin Wagner's
text

Zufall - affinity of Hessel with Kracauer.

Hessel's description of Krac.

Das andre Berlin III 272f

Architektur des Augenblicks III 340-1

Berlin 1896 - representation of city

1903 Dresden rep. of modern metrop.

1907 Berlin/Vienna Sombart -
diagram rep of cities

1910/1911 Exhibitions

This rep leads on to
Other American in
1920s

New Berlin

New planerie - The Return of the Planerie.

For Hessel not elitist - open to anyone

Female planerie - Berlin crawl.

Architektur des Zufalls
des Augenblicks.

Planerie / Wanderer
(himml.)

Hessel gives concrete instances in Berlin

learning about new Berlin

Expanded version of Straight & Crooked Streets.

Return at end to de Certeau -

ignores danger of view from below

Hessel - Verdächtig / ^{Sinnlos}
a strange

Hessel both flavent and learning

Abot Jan Fabre in Wayne's car but
this kn. is of future of city that aids
understanding of present.

- . ^{with} opposition which de Certeau
operates to be challenged by
20th champion of flavent
for male & female

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