

Pattern of Locative Urban Knowledge

Nowadays every digital object or every person using or carrying an ICT device can be tracked, tagged and mapped. Do we want to map everything? Or better what exactly do we want to map? Locativity is not only about knowing geographical location but also about how much geographical location matters (for example as context, interpretational framework). Recent research on mobile communication suggests that, while networked ICT devices make community formation and the flow of knowledge independent from geographical space, the knowledge of a *primarily practical nature* mediated by mobile communication remains location-sensitive. The latter can be referred to as *locative knowledge*. However, very little is known about how we can determine the grade of locativity of a given piece of information. I argue that the measure of location-sensitivity can be detected with the help of dynamic visual pattern of practical urban knowledge emerging (in the scientific sense of *emergence*) on spatial annotation system's maps.

Once used extensively, urban maps of spatial annotation systems reveal tacit (undetachable from urban life but yet not articulated) urban knowledge. But with the difficulty to understand the nature of locative knowledge comes the difficulty to build really effective and userfriendly spatial annotation maps. There is a circularity in that issue: to learn more about locative knowledge, we have to look at specific maps, but to build the specific maps that are used extensively to annotate space we have to know very the nature of locative knowledge.

To get a grip on that iterative process in the current situation (where spatial annotation with mobile devices is still in its early days), we have to rely on the first experiences with current spatial annotation systems (by September first results from the new system by the Emergent City Action Group Budapest will be available) as well as reflect on the visual medium - the map - itself. To do justice to the latter aspect, I outline the role of the *expert eye* and *structural intuition* for discovery and interpretation of emerging patterns. At the same time reflect on the inherently visual nature of examining complex self-organizing systems. This will shed light on interactive urban maps as a medium shaped by both, the possibilities of the state-of-the-art technology and the conventions and mechanisms of human vision and communication.

If examined in the suggested way, urban maps of spatial annotation in the short term become tools for determining the nature of locative knowledge and help identify domains of urban life in which geographical location does matter regarding services and information.

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Short bio



2003 I graduated in Philosophy at the University Vienna. Since 2005 I am PhD student at the Doctor School for Philosophy, University of Pécs. From 2003 to 2006 I was junior researcher at the Institute for Philosophical Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In my research I focus on philosophical issues of mobile communication and visual tools of human thinking. In my PhD-project „Maps as tools of our thinking“ I examine strategies for visualising patterns of practical knowledge with an emphasis on spatial annotation systems. I am taking part in Communications in the 21st Century, a project by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and T-Mobile Hungary. I am member of the Emergent City Action Group which conducts practical and theoretical research on the locativity of urban knowledge and member of the Emergence Research Institute in Budapest. Currently I am a fellow of the project World as a picture at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences.

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