Fringe Gentrification and the Critique of the Contemporary Urban Dreamworld

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Declaration: *I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.*

Abstract

Drawing from Lefebvre, Benjamin, and Lyotard, this thesis continues the critical sociological investigation into urban-experience and the urban-imaginary. It does so through illustrating a particular regime of desire -- a libidinal-economy -- that currently expresses itself through and exudes influence over concrete-space. It argues that within London, at particular moments, one finds the contemporary "Urban Dreamworld". A phantasmagoric element of the city, one that 'promises' an experience of consumption beyond that facilitated by capitalist urbanism. The thesis documents this libidinal-economy, through walking-interviews and digital-ethnography, and illustrates the particular "Theatre" through which it functions; its constitutive complexes, phantasies, and desires. Importantly, this thesis investigates the "Urban Dreamworld" through the analytical language of "Gentrification" studies. In doing so, it provides a constructive critique of the established explanatory paradigms of gentrification while questioning the ontological assumptions upon which the academic study of gentrification is grounded. Namely, the established literature fails to substantively recognise that gentrification is a latent characteristic of commodified space, one that exists in a parasitic relationship with other social phenomena; including the "Urban Dreamworld". Accordingly, alongside capturing an aspect of the phenomenological experience of contemporary London, it illustrates the fundamental relationship that exists between libidinal-economy and political-economy. In effect, it illuminates that the production of space is a mediated libidinal process.

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Preface

A project rarely has a discernable point of origin. We may be able to point to particular generative moments, yet these moments are themselves only further entwined with the experiences that led to them. Consequently, it seems almost impossible to express the 'origin' of this project without divulging an extensive (and unwarranted!) personal history. With that said, it is possible to provide a brief and imperfect sketch.

My childhood experience instilled a Marxist perspective and this orientation innervates the thesis and my academic inquiry. In particular, the juxtaposition of my lived experience, raised by a single mother reliant primarily on benefits and/or exploitative jobs, and the representation of this life. A representation dominated by a discourse of so-called "benefit scroungers" which radiated from the social world in a myriad of forms and variations. The quotidian experience of this rift, between lived experience and its representation, led to a fundamental interest in ideology, hegemony, etc. In effect, an inclination towards a Marxian understanding of perception (and the sleight of hand *within* perception necessary to justify and reproduce capitalism). To paraphrase Althusser, it is questions surrounding the imaginary relationship individuals have with their real conditions of existence which drives my academic curiosity. I hope the thesis will contribute to this essential investigation.

While this academic orientation originated from childhood, it was my MA that led me to space. Before my MA, I hadn't ever properly thought about space. Consequently, when introduced to Lefevbre and Harvey the insights felt revelatory. Instantaneously, space transitioned from something I could hardly imagine to something I felt unable to conceptualise social reality without. However, at the time, with the exception of Lefevbre, Soja, Massey, and the outstanding collection produced by Sorkin, it seemed like the critique of space paid little attention to ideology, perception, and the questions discussed above. This lack was clearest within the study of gentrification. Wherein the dominant academic frameworks seemed to abstract or simplify such questions into epiphenomena.

The project grew organically in the streets of London. The only preordained element was the initial decision to conduct a critique of gentrification with London as the primary case-site.

As the empirical 'home' of British gentrification scholarship, the most effective critique of this tradition would derive from fieldwork in the city. This led to preliminary investigations in several sites around London, including interviewing some of those who would later become key informants. These conversations and walks highlighted elements of the socio-spatial structure underpinning the contemporary urban lifeworld; the curvatures of a specific, albeit fragmented, urban milieu. One that includes, but is not limited to, the specific case sites under investigation: Shoreditch, Dalston, and Tottenham. In this way, this academic investigation into the urban has had its genetic material produced through the world it seeks to understand.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis: "Fringe Gentrification and the Critique of the Contemporary Urban Dreamworld". It lays a foundation through which its forthcoming arguments can be rendered legible.

It provides a brief historical and geographical background of London. In particular, it charts the process of how London's concrete-space, including the case-sites, has been produced in accordance with political-economy and the recomposition of "Abstract Space"; through industrialisation, de-industrialisation, and post-industrialisation. This context is essential, as it provides one with an understanding of the relationship between urban political-economy and gentrification; including, what this thesis *strategically*[1] names, "Fringe Gentrification". Namely, through articulating that gentrification, regardless of its form, is one manifestation of the contemporary urban regime of accumulation; e.g. one that centralises the secondary-circuit of capital.

Accordingly, the chapter conducts a preliminary analysis of the "Gentrification" literature. In particular, it identifies *why* the established conceptual frameworks are unable to provide a holistic explanation of "Fringe Gentrification"[2]; e.g. through the systematic failure to recognise the importance of desire in the production of space. As such, it is necessary to expand the conceptual framework through which "Gentrification" -- alongside the

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[1] This denotes that the thesis, while borrowing the conceptual language of "Gentrification", is simultaneously critical of its explanatory potential. As will be highlighted, a key argument this thesis makes is that "Gentrification" (as a means of describing the production of space) and "Gentrifiers" (as a means of describing urban actors) are 'imperialistic' concepts: i.e. they flatten social reality and the processes *within* the phenomena they attempt to describe.

[2] If we attempted to explain this "Fringe Gentrification" with the existing apparatus it would fail to yield a convincing explanation. For instance: the so-called gentry are primarily constituted by young renters and transitory consumers of space, rather than middle-aged mortgage owners. It is a process of gentrification fundamentally intertwined with consumption and, in particular, a form of consumption 'opposed' to 'consumerism' and 'orthodox' urban-experience. These characteristics are not epiphenomenal. If we wish "to understand the production of potential gentrifiers" (Hamnett, 1991:187) then it is essential that we examine the libidinal elements of the landscape within which these particular 'gentrifiers' are produced and to which they are drawn.

production of space generally -- is understood. As such, the chapter highlights the particular conceptual elements that constitute the explanatory framework of the thesis; one which draws from Lefevbre, Lyotard, and Spinoza. It provides an academic orientation that allows one to understand "Fringe Gentrification" from the perspective of desire and *centrally* it illustrates this desire from the point of its (re)production; e.g. it understands desire *structurally* through libidinal-economy and the imaginaries it interpellates within urban bodies. In doing so, it will argue that "Fringe Gentrification" is a spatial process that exists in a parasitic relationship with the "Urban Dreamworld"; the commodification of political anticipation is the libidinal fuel for the capitalistic restructuring of urban-space within London's former "Industrial Crescent".

Through briefly[3] identifying the deficiencies within the established literature and the importance of a conceptual reinvigoration, the chapter identifies the primary questions, sub-questions, and overarching objectives that will structure the thesis.

Research Questions

1) Why are these bodies drawn to the "Urban Dreamworld"?
2) Who are these bodies drawn to the "Urban Dreamworld"?

Sub-Questions

1) What is the relationship between these "Fringe" spaces within London's former "Industrial Crescent"?
2) What is the relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification"?

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[3] This line of analysis will be conducted in a more thorough manner in the literature review.

Overarching Objectives

1) What does this research illustrate about the relationship between urban Political-Economy and Libidinal-Economy?

2) How does this research develop the critical study of Gentrification?

3) What does this research tell us about "Gentrification" as an explanatory concept?

4) What insight does this research provide into "Commodity-Aesthetics"?

These questions, sub-questions, and overarching objectives, are answered through the primary research conducted within the case-sites: Dalston, Shoreditch, and Tottenham. As discussed, the thesis approaches space trialectically (Lefevbre, 1991); e.g. it recognises the co-constitutive relationship between concrete-space, representational-space, and the space of representation. The methodological framework of the thesis reflects this orientation. The first two analysis chapters, that focus upon Dalston and Shoreditch, operationalise a mixed-method of semi-structured walking interviews and urban ethnography. These chapters seek to decipher the libidinal-economy that produces and disciplines the desire for that contained *within* "Fringe Gentrification"; as will be argued, the "Urban Dreamworld". This methodological approach has been chosen as it provides an effective route through which to explore such corporeal dynamics. In relation to the broader research aims, these two chapters illustrate how urban-space is overdetermined by concrete-space and representational-space simultaneously. In contrast, the final empirical chapter, which focuses on Tottenham, is methodologically structured to investigate *digital* urban-space. The primary data is derived from a form of digital ethnography interfused with visual sociology. This approach seeks to complement the previous chapters, it shows how concrete-space is likewise overdetermined by the space of representation. In this case, the space(s) of representation that are facilitated and produced by digital urbanites on Instagram. In effect, the methodological framework of the thesis is strategically fragmented in a manner that seeks to capture the fragmented nature of both urban-space *and* the desire to consume it.

These questions lead to an illustration of the overarching structure of the thesis alongside the constitutive role played by each particular chapter. In this thesis, each empirical chapter

seeks to capture a different temporal 'moment' within "Fringe Gentrification" and the "Urban Dreamworld" it contains. It does so through three distinct empirical investigations into particular spatial locations, around London, that express these different temporal moments. In doing so, the process of "Fringe Gentrification" is understood in a more holistic manner. In addition, each chapter contributes more broadly to our understanding of the relationship between libidinal-economy and the production of space.

The first empirical chapter investigates Dalston, an area of East London in the Borough of Hackney. This chapter provides an important foundation for the thesis. Namely, as it substantively catalogues the particular libidinal-economy that facilitates the desire to consume that found *within* "Fringe Gentrification". It provides the primary argument that one should understand such concrete-spaces as contemporary "Urban-Dreamworlds"; wherein desire is disciplined through the commodification of political-anticipation. Importantly, the chapter highlights how this dynamic reveals a fundamental element within the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy; desire (and so libidinal-economy) is essential in producing the economic moment of consumption and, as such, the realisation of value. In doing so, it highlights the importance of libidinal-economy in the production of space. This chapter also outlines a significant critique of the conceptual framework surrounding "Gentrification". It highlights how the "Urban Dreamworld" is one example of how the existing explanatory frameworks fail to capture the social phenomena *within* gentrification.

While the Dalston chapter derives insights into the "Urban Dreamworld" through analysing its 'life' -- its moment of libidinal investment and saturation -- the following chapter, on Shoreditch, seeks to understand it through its libidinal ruination. It charts how the "libidinal-skin" is, for the interpellated, increasingly 'thinning'. It documents how participants increasingly experienced an uncomfortable rift between imagination and reality, between representational-space and concrete-space. One that engenders the process of libidinal disinvestment. Importantly, this analysis outlines how the same phantasies that libidinised Dalston, through facilitating the extraction of enjoyment from concrete-space, can also act as inhibitors. In effect, the chapter highlights how the relationship between

political-economy and libidinal-economy contains an important *negative* -- or centrifugal -- potential. In addition, it provides a more nuanced insight into the mechanics of the relationship between libidinal-economy and concrete-space, namely through providing insight into the *epithumogenetic* dimension to this process and wherein particular urban actors *reflexively* produce concrete-space, in a manner that is resonant with and expressive of libidinal-economy. In effect, it highlights the immaterial *work* that is conducted and ossified in space to align concrete-space with the desires of this urban imaginary.

The final chapter highlights how the de-libidinisation of concrete-space discussed above is *essential* for the wider process of "Fringe Gentrification". It is the libidinal fuel, one that ensures that new "Urban Dreamworlds" are continually sought out in London's concrete-space. Importantly, this chapter highlights how this 'resurrection' is fundamentally a process of *work*. Through focusing on Instagram, it highlights how different urban actors *work* to reconstitute Tottenham's space of representation; to better align it with the requirements of this libidinal-economy and political-economy. In particular, it highlights the unorthodox assemblage of immaterial labour that facilitates this process of valorising Tottenham, one primarily conducted through the digital transmutation of quotidian urban-experience into urban-representation.

Finally, this chapter summarises the academic fields the thesis contributes to. Firstly, it articulates the value of this conceptual reinvigoration of the Marxist approach to gentrification. It illustrates how a particular libidinal-economy[4] *produces* the desire to consume these concrete-spaces; in effect, it produces the *enjoyment* that facilitates the realisation of surplus-value and the gentrification of space. As will be discussed in the literature review, the existing Marxian approach to gentrification -- one informed by a myopic[5] understanding of 'production' -- was unable to provide ontological space to libidinal-economy, desire, etc. This abstraction engenders a hindered explanation of all forms of gentrification; but particularly those that, like "Fringe Gentrification", are

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[4] What this thesis calls the"Urban Dreamworld".

[5] The conceptualisation of "Production", utilised by the "Production School", is myopic. It abstracts consumption from ontological significance and, in the process, fails to understand production holistically. See discussions on page 87.

(re)produced primarily through acts of imagineered urban consumption. However, the conceptual implications raised by the thesis also provide a wider contribution to spatial studies and urban sociology; it articulates the importance of space as a category *overdetermined* (Althusser, 2005) by both political-economy *and* libidinal-economy. In addition, the thesis contributes to the study of gentrification in a more fundamental manner. It highlights the sociological danger of an excessive reliance on this conceptional universe and language; one that flattens social reality (and the generative phenomena it contains) into *simply* 'gentrification', 'gentrifiers', and the displaced. In effect, while recognising the value of this framework, the thesis articulates the need for a critical distance. Finally, the chapter concludes by highlighting its contribution to the field of commodity-aesthetics. It articulates how, for critical theorists, it is important to grasp aesthetics -- including *urban* aesthetics -- dialectically, to recognise a constitution of both conciliation and anticipation.

"Abstract Space" and the production of London

London has always been a staging ground of conflict and commerce, politics and economics. While the participants may have changed, from Celts, to Romans, to Saxons, to Normans, this core thematic remains. As Owen Hatherley (2020) perceived, this dialectic is expressed through London's concrete-space. The political, expressed through Westminster, is a place distinct from, yet fundamentally intertwined with, the economic of The City[6]. These two spaces -- one of political power and the other of accumulation -- are of key importance in understanding the production of London. However, a social space, by its nature[7], can only exist through it's mutative connections with other spaces and the activities contained within them (Lefebvre, 1991); a space is a social relationship, not just in the production of a particular space but in the co-constitutive role space plays in producing other spaces. It is these peripheral spaces of London, produced through the interplay of Westminster, The City, and the global scales of power and capital they facilitate, which are of primary

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[6] However, one must recognise the symbiotic relationship. It is together that the political and the economic operate; through facilitating, influencing, and moulding the other in the accumulation and reproduction of capital (Holloway, 1995).

[7] "Social space is not just an empty medium, to be floated full of things. It has a content, as it contains and dissimulates social relationships - and this despite the fact that a space is not a thing but rather a set of relationship between things (objects and products)" (Lefebvre, 1991:83)

importance for situating this thesis. In particular, I am interested London's former "Industrial Crescent", which contains the case-sites under investigation and prominent expressions of "Fringe Gentrification".

London's historic industrial zone, within which Shoreditch, Dalston, and, to a lesser extent, Tottenham are located, is organised like a cross. The arms of which follow the low ground of London's perpendicular river systems; the Thames running from west to east, the River Lea to the north and the River Wandle to the south (Wilmott and Young, 1973). Together, these rivers, drawn into instrumentalisation, formed London's "Victorian Manufacturing Belt":

> "... the great industrial crescent which runs around the north and east sides of central London, from the western edge of the City and the West End, through the southern parts of St Marylebone and St Pancras, through Islington, Finsbury, Holborn, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green and Stepney. It extends to Southwark on the south bank of the river; to the north it throws out two great projections, one north and northwest to Kentish Town and Holloway, one northeast to south Hackney and Stoke Newington . . . this crescent lies wholly within that area of London that was fully built up before 1900." (Hall 1962:226-7)

However, London's economic geography is not simply a product of a mechanistic relationship between the spatial demands of capital and a pre-ordained 'physical' geography. The Thames estuary[8] itself has been subject to continuous moulding through the construction of embankments, docklands, processing and pumping facilities, etc (Jackson, 2014). In effect, concrete-space, including the 'physical', is continually (re)produced in accordance with abstract space (Stanek, 2008). Likewise, London's 'physical' geography has been further modified through the production of canals which amplified transporative and productive capacities. Within the case-sites, a primary example is the Regent's Canal, built in the 1820s, that connected the Thames dockland in the east, via an arc around Inner London, to the Paddington Basin in the West (Butler and Hamnett, 2009)[9]. A modification of

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[8] For a detailed socio-spatial history of the Thames; see Schneer (2006).
[9] Likewise, it is important to recognise the role played by London's wider infrastructural development in its production of space. This is an important element within any moment of London's history.

concrete-space that led to the increased industrialization of the spaces it passed near, including Shoreditch and Dalston, both in terms of the bankside itself and the host boroughs in a more general sense (Smith and Rogers, 2006;Baker, 1995).

Fuelled by material imported from the British empire and the hinterlands, London's "Industrial Crescent" produced commodities for local and global markets. While always containing a multiplicity, the particular places within London's industrial space became increasingly specialised. This was a process driven by the symbiotic relationship between the concentration of particular means of production, shared labour, and the spatial integration of supply chains (Harvey, 2001). For instance, Shoreditch became increasingly dominated by different elements of the furniture industry, while the neighbouring areas of Bethnal Green and Spitalfields specialised in silk-weaving and the manufacture of clothing (Smith and Rogers, 2006).

The process of operating, and intensifying, the world's 'workshop' also required increasing volumes of human labour-time (both waged and unwaged); bodies to operate machinery, to transport goods, to feed other bodies, etc. In 1815, the population of London was around 1.4 million but by 1860 this had tripled to 3.2 million, by 1910 it was 7 million (Smith and Rogers, 2006). These bodies were 'brought' to London in different ways throughout its history -- slavery, refugee migration, 'economic migration' -- however, their function to London's political-economy was the same; they brought labour, that:

> "...commodity, whose use-value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value, whose actual consumption, therefore, is itself an embodiment of labour, and, consequently, a creation of value." (Marx, 1887:119)

Within the context of the thesis's concerns, such transport infrastructure facilitates an urban-scale "Time-Space Compression" (Harvey, 1990). Through eliminating the space *in-between* two places -- the liminal space of travel -- two distinct places become stitched together. This stitching, provided by infrastructure -- such as tube-lines, railways, and of course, roads -- makes life[#] between the two places is more feasible. A process that exerts significant influence over the production of space.

The housing orbiting the industrial workplaces was often cheap, infested, and at odds with the maintenance of human life. Within these spaces, the putrefied "sub-nature"[10] (Gissen, 2009) produced by the pursuit of value is at its clearest; insects, pollution, decay (Kaika and Swyngedouw, 2008). For example, the former suburb of the "Old Nichol" in Shoreditch; that was located off Shoreditch High Street. By the 1880s, this was referred to as London's worst slum; an unsanitary and overcrowded place infested with slum landlords:

> "The former northern suburb was now The Old Nichol, a poor area where families of eight and more were known to live, and sometimes work, in one room, and any tiny open space was used to house costermonger carts or livestock – from chickens to dairy cattle and horses." (BCL, 2010:1)[11]

These proletarian parts of the city were produced *through* London's process of industrialization. Before the early 18th century, the concrete-space upon which the "Old Nichol" was grafted was of mixed-use, like much of Middlesex. It housed artisans and semi-skilled labourers, alongside brick fields, orchards, and market gardens (Baker, 1995). However, the form shifted in accordance with the 'demand' of low-cost residential space required to facilitate London's industrial production[12]. Considering this thesis will, in part, explore the phantasies projected upon these historical moments, this reflection is useful not

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[10] "No matter how sanitized and clean, both in symbolic and literary terms, our cities have become, the 'urban trash' in the form of networks, dirt, sewerage, pipes, homeless people etc. keeps lurking underneath the city, in the corners, at the outskirts, bursting out on occasion in the form of rats, disease, homelessness, garbage piles, polluted water, floods, bursting pipes." (Kaika and Swynegedouw, 2008:136).

[11] In 1891, parliament passed the "Public Health (London) and Boundary Act", engendering the compulsory purchase of The Old Nichol. This process took two years to complete. In 1893, demolition began and in 1895 the process of redevelopment began. What was being produced, by the LCC, was Britain's first municipal council estate. Its design, four-storey, red-brick mansion blocks, built alongside wide, tree-lined, roads leading to a central circular garden -- inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement (Hatherley, 2020) -- aimed to create a quality of housing previously inaccessible for London's poor. The first residents began moving in during 1897. Today, following the introduction of the "Right to Buy", most houses within the Boundary Estate have entered into the free market. Their central location, unique architectural design, and 'authentic' history, have contributed to an average sale price of around £578,500 for flats and £1,076,000 for terraced houses (RM, 2021).

[12] And, as such, kept away from the sight and mind of the bourgeois who profited from this social arrangement, although not in as planned a fashion as Paris with the Banlieues (Winner, 1980). As with other British industrial urban-space(s), the existence of heavy rail tracks came to represent an important social as well as physical divide (Irmie and Thomas, 1999)

only to provide historical and geographical context but also to highlight the latent romanticisation of proletariat industrial experience[13].

However, as Marx (1848) articulated, "all that is solid melts into air" and London is no exception. The means by which profit is accrued is ever shifting and, as such, so too does the form taken by concrete-space. After the second world war[14] or earlier, depending upon the particular industry and concrete-space, London was subject to increasing industrial disinvestment (Hall, 1989; Sassen, 2013). As the levels of industrial capital ossified in London's concrete-space reduced, so too did the demand for industrial labour[15] (Buck *et al*, 1986); in absolute terms and relative to London's wider economy. Furthermore, the industrial capital that remained within London increasingly moved to the municipal margins, as the value of inner-city space continued to remain high (Collier, 2020). By the early 1970s, Inner London faced similar problems of unemployed and 'managed decline'[16] that beset Britain's former industrial cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow.

One can understand this process more substantively when considered within the wider political-economic context. Keynesian governmentality[17], rather than resolving the contradictions of capitalism, instead internalised them in order to facilitate the accumulation of profit (Clarke, 2011). These contradictions ruptured through as the recession of 1973-5 and the global deflation of 1981-2 (Harvey, 2004), in which a combination of shrinking markets, unemployment and, capital devaluation, brought increasing pressure for a re-composition of capital and state (Bonefeld, 1995); the state was no longer able to "pick up the slack" produced by the market. This pressure reached a critical mass at the collapse of the Bretton

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[13] This romatcisisation, beyond its contemporary utilisation as fuel for heterotopic urban imaginaries, ties into a longer tendency of romanticising the life of London's poor, "The Nostalgia for Mud" (Krauss, 1991); a term originally coined by Émile Augier. This discourse is prevalent within the underpinnings of a multitude of middle-class social reformers and literary figures; including Dickens, Hugo, etc.

[14] One should note, the rate of spatial reconstitution is also dependent upon the metrics one uses in measurement.

[15] Just as manufacturing spawned ancillary jobs and lives during the industrial period, so too did these jobs shrink following de-industrialisation; employment in transport, such as, the once central docklands, canal basins, railyards and river-side land, began to fade away (Hamnett, 2000)

[16] O'Connor (1973) argued that the decline of cities such as London and New York was terminal.

[17] This period presided over industrial London's "swan-song".

Woods system, signalling an end to post-war financial regulation as currencies entered into free trade, lubricating the flow of global capital and intensifying the same tendencies that had produced the weakening of the Keynesian state.

By reducing these barriers, it became increasingly easy for capital to flow between national boundaries (Sassen, 2013). Under the Keynesian economic assemblage, and its auxiliary forms, corporations and capital were reasonably rooted, or at the least the challenges of relocating production to another country often outweighed the potential profits. However, through the barriers to capital flows being reduced, global industrial capital increasingly shifted geographical locations to best realise abstract space (Harvey, 2001). The requirements of this are dependent on the particular form of capital in question; abstract space, the 'space' which best allows for the realization of value (Stanek, 2008), is determined by the necessary relations of production. While this simplifies the situation, the general tendency towards the disinvestment of London's industrial capital ought to be understood within this context[18]; e.g. the industrial capital which once (re)produced London's "Fringe" was increasingly invested into more profitable concrete-spaces[19].

However, when the profitability of a city's primary-circuit falls, it increases the relative profitability of investing into the built environment; e.g. the "secondary-circuit of capital" (Lefevbre, 1991)[20]. This shift within the urban composition of capital alters the production of space, so that:

> "The urban scale, once defined in terms of the locally oriented needs of social reproduction, is now shifting to a definition 'in which the investment of productive capital holds definitive precedence'" (Smith, 2002:427)

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[18] It is worth noting that other changes within technological production lowered "the magnetic grip of cities" for industry in general, and in particular London; see Fothergill *et al* (1986).

[19] The effects of this are twofold. Firstly, as capital is finite, each investment into city A results in a loss of investment into city B. Thus, the growth of A's productive capacities, by proxy, reduces the potential capacities of city B and, as such, growth. Additionally, the law of de-valorisation entails that present investments in the built environment become less valuable when brought into conflict with recent investments that compete to fulfil the same social function (Lees, 2008)

[20] "The accumulation of capital via the production of goods - the primary circuit - now concedes ground to the accumulation of capital via investment in the secondary circuit of land and property, in which windfall gains residue." (Lefevbre, 1991:142)

In London, this recomposition of urban space was intensified by the general liberalisation of financial capital facilitated by Neoliberalism[21]. This 'freed-up' capital provided the means through which investments into the secondary-circuit could be actualised: "liquid loot yearning to become concrete in space" (Merrifield, 2006:81). In particular, the 'liberation' of global financial capital -- through the aforementioned collapse of Bretton Woods -- allowed access to previously insular local markets, enabling the flow of international capital into London's concrete-space regardless of its geographic 'origin' (Sassen, 2012). In summary, these factors beget that, within "Post-Industrial" London, the primary-circuit of capital has been eclipsed by accumulation through land and property[22]. While we ought to be cautious of overstating the supremacy of the secondary-circuit (Graham and Spence, 1995), as the primary-circuit has not disappeared from London[23], the relative role it plays within the extraction of surplus-value from concrete-space has undeniably become hegemonic[24].

Gentrification is one thread within the story of London's contemporary political-economy and its secondary-circuit of capital. The existing literature provides us with a geographical history of gentrification in London; tracking how this process emerged in Inner-North London (particularly Camden and Islington) in the 1970s, then North-East into Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Walthamstow throughout the 1980s, and then began to also appear in large areas of South London from the 1990s (Munt, 1987; Hall and Ogden, 1992; Bridge, 1994; Lyons, 1996). Likewise, as will be discussed, it provides us with a theoretical and conceptual framework through which to understand this phenomenon. However, there is a danger

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[21] Neoliberalism facilitates market-led social restructuring which produces, among other things, a more general orientation of economic social policy to private sector needs (Jessop, 2002).

[22] This re-composition is a recurrent feature within most post-industrial urban economies. However, it is particularly intensified within "Global" cities such as London. For Sassen (2013), a "Global City" is demarcated through a city, in some manner, playing a key role within the facilitation of global capital flows. This life-world of high-commerce -- FIRE, law, commodity trading, etc -- is nothing new to London. Throughout modernity it has played an important facilitating role in the global economy (Summerson, 1977). However, this characteristic has been further emphasised through contemporary political-economy;namely, the mass deregulation of the City and liberalization of financial markets (Minton, 2017). This "big-bang" has produced a political economy in which London is ablaze with financial capital; "Wall Street's Guantanamo" (Gowan, 2009)

[23]This all depends upon how the primary-circuit of capital is defined For instance, how does one class black-market production operations? Or the 'craft-industries' explored in this thesis?

[24] For instance, gentrification is "frequently viewed as part of the antidote to deindustrialization" (Squires, 2011:270) by neo-liberal urban governmentality.

within the contemporary academic inquiry into gentrification, one that must be recognised to properly understand gentrification and the phenomena *within* it. In particular, the academic literature struggles to understand forms of gentrification that go beyond the established parameters of investigation[25]; such as the "Fringe Gentrification" of London's former "Industrial Crescent". Likewise, the ontological and epistemological assumptions that prevent a substantive understanding of "Fringe Gentrification" engender a broader issue; a failure to properly recognise the social relations that facilitate gentrification *in general*. The following section will outline why this is the case.

Gentrification

One should note, a more detailed analysis of the primary academic context -- the "Gentrification" literature -- will be a central focus of the forthcoming literature review. However, to introduce the parameters and intentions of the thesis, it is necessary to provide a preliminary outline. This outline will highlight the primary 'problem' within the literature; e.g. the abstraction of desire, perception, and immaterial space, from ontological significance within the production of space and the process of gentrification. This is a flaw which this thesis seeks to correct and, in doing so, contribute to a more holistic understanding of this social phenomena, its intricacies, and the wider socio-spatial phenomenon it exemplifies.

As is well known, contemporary academic research into gentrification begins in 1960s Islington. The Marxist geographer, Ruth Glass, argued that this emerging tendency in London drew into question the assumptions of orthodox urban theory. Within what Parker (2003) calls the "Empirical Tradition"[26] there was a core assumption that the production of urban space ought to be understood through an "ecological presupposition" (Parker, 2003: 34). This orthodoxy argued that the city exists as a quasi-darwinist space, wherein the 'fittest' economic actors claim prime urban locations according to their particular interests, while 'weaker' actors -- e.g. those socially disadvantaged in accordance with intersectional

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[25] "Fringe Gentrification" is conceptualised as a process fundamentally intertwined with the libidinal investment into and libidinal disinvested from contemporary urban-space. It is an area of investigation foreclosed by the existing hegemonic research ontologies surrounding "Gentrification".
[26] Parker (2003) highlights that the "ecological presupposition" of the Chicago School was inherited from earlier socio-empirical approaches to urban-life; such as Booth and Adams.

domination -- are pushed into the spatial leftovers. As a product of this conflict, the wealthy middle-class flee the city to leafy suburbs, while business and rentiers dominate a devalorised inner city space populated by the working-class.

However, Glass noticed that rather than a total exodus to London's suburbs and commuter belt (Tewdwr-Jones, 2009)[27], there was an increasing number of middle-class people choosing to buy housing and reside in Islington[28]; often, at first, those working in social professions such as teaching and social-work (Glass, 1964). This situation questions the ecological logic underpinning the Chicago School's argument. In Islington, we have "fit" middle-class economic actors *choosing* to 'take' subprime space. For these original 'gentrifiers' the leafy suburbs had waned in appeal. However, one should note, Glass's original conception of gentrification goes beyond this static picture. These ur-gentrifiers, through "sweat equity" -- a process materially enabled through a greater access to economic capital and stratified knowledge (Hamnett, 2000) -- steadily transformed the often dilapidated housing stock they acquisitioned. While economically beneficial for these 'gentrifiers' themselves[29], importantly this labour-time (in different forms) provided an economic 'corrective' to pockets of de-valorised space in Islington (Glass, 1964). Importantly, transformations such as this, in political-economy, bodies, and constituent atmosphere, worked to render Islington into a place more attractive for a wider array of middle-class stratifications. In effect, Islington's urban space began attracting more than the aforementioned original 'pioneers'. As such, Islington's space became subject to greater economic competition. A rising tide raises all rents and thus we arrive at Glass's astute, and much cited, observation:

> "One by one, many of the working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes – upper and lower. Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a

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[27] It is worth noting, there is an important history of London's spatial movement overlooked here. One that is intertwined with infrastructural development (Derbyshire, 1991), "Green-Belts", and "Garden Cities"; see Banham (1964).

[28] At the time, a *more* working-class district.

[29] One should note, this is an important contrast with the 'gentrifiers' analysed in the thesis. The labour of consumption exudes gentrification pressures upon space without economic remuneration.

district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working class occupiers are

displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed." (Glass, 1964:17)

However, if Glass's study illustrates a core essence of gentrification -- the raising of exchange-value and its inherent violence -- in isolation it provides an incomplete understanding. Importantly, "Gentrification"[30] has transformed from the exception to the norm (Smith, 2002). Arguably, once contained within the margins of urban space, the process of "Gentrification" is now a central expression of contemporary neo-liberal urban governmentality[31] (Weber, 2002). While overly simplistic: once serendipitous, gentrification is now pursued as an end in itself. One facilitated through an assemblage[32] of intertwined political-economic forces: the state (Lees, 2003; He, 2007; Visser and Kotze, 2008), on various political scales (Raco and Henderson, 2009)[33], property developers[34] (Minton, 2017), real estate investment trusts (Hackworth, 2002), multinational banks (Smith and Defilippis, 1999) etc, etc[35]. Importantly, this shift within the structure of gentrification has caused the sociological importance of 'Gentrification' to grow exponentially. To understand the contemporary city, it is essential to understand gentrification.

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[30] I'm trying to distinguish between gentrification -- the material process of capitalism expressed in space and the inherent "slow-violence" therein -- and "Gentrification" the flawed/imperialistic concept that attempts to describe it e.g. that fails to recognise the parasitic relationship gentrification has with other social phenomena, this argument is referred to as the "Midas Touch" within the thesis.

[31] This was marked by a shift to an entrepreneurism that sought to produce a 'favourable business climate' (Harvey, 1987). The physics of this process, whereby the state's spatial regulatory instruments are captured and moulded around a pro-growth governmentality are discussed by Logan (1997) and Molotoch (1987). This analysis is developed through discussing "New Urban Policy" (NUP) on pages 73-74.

[32] The use of "Assemblage" highlights the co-constitutive ontological structure of social 'things' such as State, Market, etc. See discussion on page 68.

[33] Raco and Handerson (2009) seek to rebuke the "tendency to see London as a prime example of the broader shift from local government to local governance or a context in which the power of elected local authorities has been eroded and redistributed to a range of public and private sector actors" (112). This is important, as it highlights the significance of local-state nodes within the wider political assemblages surrounding the production of space.

[34] One should note that this form of capital, like all capital, is internally divided (Lefevbre, 1991). Smith (2005) highlights three categories of property developers: "Three kinds of developers typically operate in recycling neighbourhoods: (a) professional developers who purchase property, redevelop it, and resell it for profit; (b) occupier developers who buy and redevelop property and inhabit it after completion; and (c) landlord developers who rent to tenants after rehabilitation." (69)

[35] The particular concoction of power being dependent on the particular concrete-space.

In accordance with its growing sociological significance, the academic conceptualisation of "Gentrification" has necessarily developed. However, this development is predicated on a significant ontological rupture within the literature. Namely, between viewing "Gentrification" as a phenomenon driven by "Production" -- states, land markets, in effect; by the laws of capitalism and its political/legal forms -- or "Consumption" -- consumer behaviour, culture, and the realisation of changing preferences.

Before discussing this ontological distinction in greater detail, each "School" rarely entirely abstract the considerations of the other (Slater, 2011); especially in more contemporary research (Hines, 2011). However, we ought to recognise that each approach tells us a fundamentally different story of "Gentrification", one, unavoidably, coloured by the ramifications of ontological assumptions. Importantly, each of these stories criticises the other upon its own ground[36]; e.g. the "Production School" is labelled as economistic and deterministic (Hamnett, 1991; Caulfield 1989), while the "Consumption School" is critiqued for an apparent surrender to the "Consumer Sovereignty"[37] understanding of political-economy; as championed by Marginalists and Neo-Liberal economists (Smith, 2005). While such critiques have a certain validity, the terms of the academic debate are subsequently set within the parameters of each's own story. In doing so, critique -- the act of illuminating social reality -- is reduced to a pre-arranged debate regarding the relative importance of consumption over production or production or consumption.

This thesis will explore one consequence of this failure[38]. I seek to understand how the process of gentrification is fundamentally intertwined with desire, libidinal-economy, and the urban imaginary. This conceptual failure ricochets back upon the explanatory terms of the academic discourse. For instance, through failing to understand desire and the

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[36] For an academic history of this debate, see Hamnett (1991), Smith's (1992) reply, and Hamnett's (1992) rebuke.

[37] Bourdieu on the "Consumer Sovereignty" question; "Thus the tastes actually realized depend on the state of the system of goods offered; every change in the system of goods induces a change in tastes. But conversely, every change in tastes … will tend to induce, directly or indirectly, a transformation of the field of production. There is therefore no need to resort to the hypothesis of a sovereign taste compelling the adjustment of production to needs, or the opposite hypothesis, in which taste is itself a product of production" (Bourdieu, 1984:231).

[38] As discussed in the literature review, the wider literature has highlighted the sociological need to recognise the concerns of both "Schools" simultaneously.

immaterial space(s) it intertwines with, the "Production School" fails to properly understand their primary object of inquiry; e.g. the spatial political-economy of capitalism. Likewise, whilst a secondary focus within the thesis, due to the requirements of clarity, the "Consumption School" fails to understand the social phenomenon *behind* symbolic distinction, *behind* habitus and field, etc. Accordingly this tradition relies upon an understanding of consumption as myopic as the conception of production utilised by the "Production School". In effect, the origin of these failures is shared. The dominant approaches, through artificially limiting the boundaries of inquiry and subsequently abstracting questions of desire, immaterial space, and the urban-imaginary, fail to properly understand the social relations of the phenomenon itself. The particularities of this argument will be given greater depth in the literature review.

A libidinal-economic approach to "Gentrification" and urban-space.

This preliminary assessment of the established literature outlines the academic blindspot that this thesis seeks to fill. Consequently, it is now necessary to introduce the conceptual framework utilised to address this absence. This framework, while operationalised holistically within the thesis itself, will be introduced here through subdividing it into its constituting parts; specifically, through extricating each element in terms of its ontological primacy and, in effect, through a lexical ordering in accordance with its position within the layers of social reality. One should note, this framework has been constructed through producing the thesis itself. Accordingly, the nuanced relationship between these ontological layers cannot be done justice within this preliminary discussion in isolation. As such, the 'true' relationship between these constitutive parts can only be properly expressed as the thesis develops; through the forthcoming empirical investigation into desire, immaterial space, and "Gentrification", from which this framework was generated. Regardless, a brief introduction still has value; not only to better understand the problem this thesis aims to solve, centrally it provides the reader with a rudimentary insight into the conceptual tools through which this will be done.

At its most primary, this framework is a Neo-Spinozist "Structuralism of Affects"[39]; it is the bedrock through which the latter conceptual elements are imbued. In effect, the thesis is structured by a core assumption that the body's desires, perceptions, and affects, are radically socially constituted. Lordon (2014) paraphrases Spinoza, articulating that one "catches" desires, perceptions and affect[40]:

> "...human essence, which is the power of activity – but generic and, as such, intransitive, a pure force of desire but as yet aimless – only becomes a directed activity due to the effect of a prior affection – something that happens to it and modifies it. It is the affection that points the desire in a particular direction and gives it an object for its concrete exertion. From this follows a radical reversal of the ordinary understanding of desire as the pull of a preexisting, desirable object. It is rather the push of the conatus that invests things and institutes them as objects of desire. And these investments are entirely determined by the interplay of affects."
>
> (15)

While the body has a partial agency over how it strives in accordance with that which it has caught, it has no control over that which it catches[41]. Instead, these inclinations, through social reality and that which it contains, invade the body and fashion it accordingly. Importantly, Neo-Spinozist scholarship goes beyond simply articulating this broadly structuralist position. It gives a concrete explanation of the social mechanisms[42] behind this process, primarily, through the intertwined concepts of "epithumogenesis" and "epithume" (Lordon, 2014)

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[39] E.g. a sociological analysis built upon the argument that "human beings are in the first instance moved by their passions, which in turn, in the final analysis, are determined by social structures" (Toscano, 2016:1).

[40] Within Spinoza's argument, this process is underpinned by the meta-physics of the "Conatus": "each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being" (Spinoza, 1994:6). The importance of "The Conatus" for contemporary social theory is outlined by Deleuze (1988) and, in particular, socio-psycho studies (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

[41] On an ontological level, desire involves the primacy of the *outside*: "In the words of Laurent Bove, it is a 'desire without an object.' It finds objects to pursue soon enough, but they will be indicated to it from outside." (Lordon, 2014:15)

[42] Fundamentally this is a 'sociologising' of Spinoza. Which, even if latently present as Negri (2004) and Deleuze (1988) argue, one should recognise as an instrumentalisation of a philosopher equally concerned with deism and human rationality.

Epithumogenesis describes how the body "catches" desires, perceptions, etc, through the labour of other bodies[43]. Accordingly, it is largely congruent with many existing concepts within critical theory. Epithumogenesis effectively describes a *broadly defined*[44] immaterial labour that bodies engage in to condition the desires, perceptions, etc, of other bodies (Lazzarato, 1996). To interpret the ramifications of this in an orthodox manner, one would understand epithumogenesis in a similar vein as the "Culture Industry" (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997). The social relations of production that exist within the cultural ideological structural apparatus of society: advertising (Williams, 2000), communications (Fuchs and Mosco, 2015), etc . However, it is important to recognise the broader explanatory potential of epithumogenesis beyond our current conceptualisation of "Immaterial Labour". Namely, that bodies beyond the wage-relation 'work'[45] on other bodies in a manner that *produces* desires, perceptions, and affects. Importantly, these two forms of labour influence social reality in the same manner; bodies work to facilitate other bodies "catching" desires that are then 'satisfied' through political-economy. This process is particularly overlooked within urban and social theory. Accordingly, this thesis will seek to illustrate the process of gentrification through a sensitivity to the political-economic significance of epithumogenesis; in this case, the central role this labour plays in the (re)production of space. As will be discussed, contemporary urban sociology has, to varying degrees of success, even if indirectly, recognised the importance of epithumogenesis[46]. However, it has very rarely grasped its relevance in accordance with its fundamental ancillary: the epithume.

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[43] This is defined by Lordon (2014:35) as: "a deliberate engineering of affects that is not always left to the great 'process without a subject' that constitutes the social body's self-affections, but is at times steered toward very specific ends, as testified by the active investment of the neoliberal enterprise in practices of co-linearisation."

[44] I use "broadly defined" here to denote that this thesis expands the usual concept of immaterial labour *through* epithumogenesis; immaterial labour is shown to be something more fundamental than Lazzarato (1996) recognises.

[45] One should note, this analytical trajectory -- of viewing immaterial labour as facilitating (and creating) value -- leads to a similar philosophical disagreement as that between theorists of "Value-Form" and "Social Reproductive Labour" (SRL). For a conclusive critique, one that highlights the sociological blindness of considering SRL and, by extension, immaterial labour as "non-productive" see Mezzadri (2019).

[46] Although, one should not read this decision as relegating the importance of such phenomena. Instead, the thesis operates with an assumption that the sociological relevance of such work is already recognised; see edited collection by Dinnie (2011)

In contrast to epithumogenesis, the epithume addresses how bodies "catch" desires, etc, *without* a labouring subject. One should view this concept as resonant with Raymond William's (1973) notion of the "structure of feeling"[47], wherein in particular moments, particular modes of affect are resonant with particular bodies (in accordance with social stratification, experience, etc). In effect, the epithume seeks to capture the historically mediated quality of acts of epithumogenesis,wherein, in particular moments, within particular social stratifications, there exists an established 'language'[48] of desire, perception, experience, etc, which is contained within and expressed through a 'collective' understanding of what is to be desired, how to perceive, how to experience, etc. Importantly, the epithume is entirely interdependent with epithumogenesis. This established 'language' of desire is produced through a historical sedimentation of epithumogenesis. In effect, moments of epithumogenenis build up, within cultural stratifications, and slowly ossify into a shifting epithume. However, each moment of labour draws upon the established language as its raw material and is disciplined accordingly. Consequently, these two moments are fundamentally intertwined,the result of which being the social physics of desire, perception, and experience.

With this foundation outlined, it is necessary to understand how epithume and epithumogenesis intertwine with the body itself and political-economy; without this, the thesis would be unable to properly investigate the *specific* case of "Fringe Gentrification". In effect, a Neo-Spinozist foundation in isolation lacks the sufficient nuance required to explore particular concrete phenomena. This conceptual space is filled by libidinal-economy. One should note, this thesis is not a philosophical 'defense' of Lyotard's (1993) "Libidinal-Economy" per se, nor does it seek to rebuke the valid criticism raised against some of Lyotard's arguments regarding the concept[49]. It does however, seek to provide an

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[47] The concept of "Structure of Feeling" is discussed by Williams between pages 128-135.

[48] A linguistic analogy is useful to understand this relationship. A particular moment of speech fundamentally derives its meaning from the present structure of language itself. Yet, in doing so, these particular moments contain a constitutive potential to change the semi-concrete structure of language itself.

[49] For instance, Lyotard's arguments regarding "Polymorphous Perversion" that attracted substantial critique: "the English unemployed did not become workers to survive, they -- hang on tight and spit on me -- *enjoyed* the hysterical, masochistic, whatever exhaustion it was of *hanging on* in the mines, in the boundaries, in the factories, in hell, they enjoyed it, enjoyed the mad destruction of their organic body which was indeed imposed upon them, they enjoyed the decomposition of their personal

empirical basis from which to develop the notion of libidinal-economy to highlight its *methodological* value to contemporary sociology; specifically, through utilising libidinal-economy as a productive method of analysis. The thesis operationalises Lyotard's fundamental claim: enjoyment is central to political-economy and, as such, "desire underlies capitalism too, so that in some sense the former gives the right to the latter, that it is not a libidinal nothing." (Lyotard, 1993:106). Lyotard is arguing that to understand political-economy,it is necessary to understand the desires that facilitate it;in this case, the desires that facilitate the production of space; specifically of "Fringe Gentrification". Likewise, in distinction to the aforementioned consumer sovereignty of the "Consumption School", the notion of libidinal-economy encompasses the notion that there is no "externalised region where desire would be sheltered" (Lyotard, 1993:107). Consequently, in resonance with the arguments discussed above, our desires are *produced*; through immaterial labour[50], the law of value, and the experience of capitalism itself. As such, libidinal-economy provides the thesis with an understanding of desire that desire is *simultaneously* the subterranean force underpinning political-economy while also itself being a product of the same relations it facilitates.

To understand the sociological nuance of Lyotard's conceptual framework, it is necessary to situate "Libidinal-Economy" within the intellectual terrain that engendered it and from which it diverges. This epistemological landscape is Critical Theory or, more specifically, the contours that exist between Critical Theory and Psycho-Analysis. This diverse genre[51] of academic inquiry contains a shared structural commitment to interrogating the social world through examining the intertwining characteristics of the social and psychic world; the mutually constitutive relationships that exist between social reality, psychological experience, and political-economy (Cremin, 2011). The wealth of academic investigations such parameters facilitate extend far beyond the concerns of the thesis. As such, the

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identity, the identity that the peasant tradition had constructed for them, enjoyed the dissolution of their families and villages, and enjoyed the new monstrous *anonymity* of the suburbs and the pubs in the morning and evening." (Lyotard, 1993:111)

[50] A preliminary foundation to this development is contained within Lyotard's concept of "Libidinal Education" (160). Lyotard highlights how bodies are taught which segments of the "band" from which they ought to derive *jouissance* in particular historical moments: for instance, in Athens, the *agora*.

[51] Cremin (2011), Fink (1995), Fisher (2009), along with others.

following will simply illustrate the particular thread within this discipline that unfolds into Lyotard's "Libidinal-Economy" and the methodological contribution it provides to the thesis.

One could argue that the essential problematic of this tradition, the exploration of the interpenetrating relationship that exists between the *supposedly* psychic interior and social exterior, is one deeply rooted within the history of philosophy[52]. However, leaving this line of argument firm aside, let us instead consider, albeit somewhat artificially, that the conception of the psycho-social problematic is rooted within the writings of Freud. The notion of Freud as a singular progenitor is useful for the strategic clarity it facilitates; it provides a defined image against which to highlight the distinctions of "Libidinal-Economy". Freud's fundamental intellectual contribution is the articulation that desire and social reality are interlinked categories that exist in a quasi-antagonistic relationship. The antagonism of this relationship is grounded upon the different 'interests' that underpin the constituting elements of desire itself: the "Pleasure Principle" and the "Reality Principle". For Freud, the human body and its psychic experience are defined through the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain; Freud's concept of the human, as a creature constituted by these fundamental drives, is central for the psycho-social ontology underpinning this conceptual framework. Freud's argument continues that, akin to Hobbes' "Leviathan"[53], the production and maintenance of society (or, in Freud's term, "Civilization") necessitates the subjugation of the "Pleasure Principle" to the "Reality Principle" (Freud, 2003). In effect, this necessitates that, through the mobilisation of a complex constellation of pain, social reality places limitations upon the drive of the human body; desire is forcibly provided with 'proper' parameters, particular objects and particular means, and so on, through which desire ought to be pursued. Importantly, this metabolism between the "Pleasure Principle" and "Reality Principle" does not entail the 'removal' of these impermissible desires but rather the repression of them (Elliott, 2015). The avoidance of pain may facilitate the denial of particular pleasures, yet this *libidinal* energy remains

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[52] This genre of critical inquiry is central to the "Problematic of Ideology". An academic discourse which is rooted within Classical and Modern philosophy (Rosen, 2016).

[53] These arguments share a fundamental meta-physical underpinning; an imagined moment of historical purity the repression of which is a necessary condition of progress.

rather than dissipates; it structures the conditions of the unconscious and ruptures forth through other means. Consequently, for Freud, this dialectic between the psychic and social is a complex relationship; wherein neither ontological state *per se* is dominant but rather each influences the conditions through which the other is expressed:

> "... an ego {the working mind} thus educated has become *reasonable*, it no longer lets itself be governed by the pleasure principle, but obeys the *reality principle*, which also at bottom seeks to obtain pleasure, but pleasure which is assured through taking account of reality, even it is a pleasure postponed and diminished." (Freud, 1977:357).

For Freud, the conflict between the "Pleasure Principle" and the "Reality Principle" is a *necessary* precondition for the social contract itself; as such, Freud's conception of the psycho-social dialectic is constituted with a fundamental a-historical orientation. While of intellectual importance, Freud's conceptual framework strips the object of investigation from its historical specificity. In "Eros and Civilisation", Marcuse (2012) argues against this a-historical conceptualisation. For Marcuse, the contradictions and particularities of capitalism are, through a historically specific *form* of the psycho-social dialectic, passed into individual subjectivity itself. In different ways, the individuals constituted through capitalist modernity are psychically subjugated into alignment with the reproduction of capitalist society. These historically specific forms merely *appear* as the a-historical "Reality Principle" identified by Freud; pleasure, desire, the libidinal, and so on, have been transubstantiated to reflect and reproduce the *economic* requirements of capitalism rather than simply an a-historical notion of 'society' itself. There is a distinction between the "Basic Repression" necessary for the functioning of society -- e.g. whereby individual desires are necessarily frustrated and repressed to ensure the reproduction and development of society -- and the "Surplus Repression" that is exerted upon individuals within a capitalist political-economy (Marcuse, 2012). It is the amalgamation of these two elements by Freud into a totalising "Reality Principle" that engenders the inability of his conceptual framework to sieve out those libidinal interpellations which are historically specific; e.g. those *surplus* to the repression necessary for the social contract and are rooted in historically particular

political-economy. This critical reinterpretation builds from Freud's conceptual framework, as Marcuse does not reject the notion of a somewhat *necessary* subjugation of the "Pleasure Principle". However, Marcuse outlines the uncritical reproduction of ideology latent within Freud's writing. This perspective, its value and its limitations, are usefully captured by Marcuse's writings on this psycho-social dialectic:

> "The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanism which ties the individual to his society has changed, and social control is anchored in the new needs which it has produced… This is the socio-psychological aspect of the political event that marks the contemporary period: the passing of the historical forces which, at the preceding stage of industrial society, seemed to represent the possibility of new forms of existence" (Marcuse, 2013:14).

For Marcuse, the role of the critical sociologist (of psycho-social dialectics) is to excavate the unconscious and bring forth the contradictions that reproduce the individual moulded by "Surplus Repression"; one can see an immediate resonance with this argument and the sexual liberation movement that Marcuse influenced[54] (Alderson, 2016). However, it is this garnishing of libidinal essentialism, which also lurks within the writings of other Frankfurt School theorists[55], that illustrates Lyotard's object of critique. To some extent, the psycho-social dialectic, as conceptualised by Marcuse, posits a binary clash; between, on the one hand, the purity of certain human desires and, on the other, the repressive psycho-social structure of society (in both its historical and a-historical forms).

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[54] Although one should note, this perspective perhaps does not reflect the philosophical particularly of Marcuse's notion of sexuality (Alderson, 2016).

[55] This criticism is in particular levelled at the writings of Erich Frohmm (2001): "Marx goes still further. In unalienated work man not only realises himself as an individual, but also as a species-being. For Marx, as for Hegel and many other thinkers of the enlightenment, each individual represented the species, that is to say, humanity as a whole, the universality of man: the development of man leads to the unfolding of his whole humanity…While, therefore, alienated labour takes away the object of production from man, it also takes away his species life, his real objectivity as a species-being, and changes his advantage over animals into a disadvantage in so far as his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him." (69).

Lyotard's work strives to carve out a conceptual space against this binary, in doing so Marcuse's critical impetus is redeemed of its nullifying elements:

> "... There is no external reference, even if immanent, from which the separation of what belongs to capital (or political economy) and what belongs to subversion (or libidinal economy), can always be made, and cleanly; where desire would be clearly legible, where its *proper economy* would not be scrambled. And this should be clearly understood: "scrambled" does not mean 'thwarted', tained, by a foreign, evil instance… There is as much libidinal intensity in capitalist exchange as in the alleged 'symbolic' exchange." (Lyotard, 1993:109)

The above highlights that, while desire is conceived through the disciplinary power of social reality, this relationship is more complex that a simple subjugation; in both the a-historical and historical expressions of the psycho-social dialectic. Lyotard's point is that desire, the libidinal, and so on, is *always* colonised and it is only through this colonisation that it can exist[56]; to use Marxian language, there can be no desire without fetishises. This fragmentation functions neither entirely within the realm of ideology or 'humanistic' drive. As such, desire, by its essence, is a political 'thing'. Therefore, the task of the sociologist is to understand the complex *politics of desire*, the myriad of manners in which its colonised essence serve to reproduce *and* challenge; in effect, to understand particularities of its infinitely *productive* structure[57]. Consequently, Lyotard's critique of libidinal-economy conducts an investigation into the desiring subject that parallels Marx's critique of political-economy. The *point* of critique, whether of libidinal-economy or political-economy[58], is to reveal the constituting social relations, the forms produced that are both conciliatory and antagonistic to the reproduction of those social relations (Bonefeld, 2014). The critique of libidinal-economy illustrates that the sociological impetus of the

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[56] "Fragmentation can be invested as such, and this *is not* an alienation. It is a phantasy, not simply reactionary, but constitutive of Western theatricality, to believe that there were societies where the body was not fragmented." (Lyotard, 1993:120)

[57] This is, to some extent, an aspect of Deleuze and Guattari's (2009) critique of psycho-analysis and its orthodox conceptualisation of "lack".

[58] However, one must recognise that the distinction between political-economy and libidinal-economy is itself tentative (Lyotard, 1993).

psycho-social problematic is not to illustrate and release the 'pure' desire underneath social reality, but rather to illustrate the social relations of desire; and, accordingly, highlight the conciliatory and antagonistic elements within its manifestations. This line of argument will be developed further through outlining the conceptual mechanics within the concept of Libidinal-Economy.

To analyse the concept in a more operational sense, libidinal-economy also provides the thesis with a conceptual language through which to understand the relations of production within desire. For Lyotard (1993), while not expressed as such, libidinal-economy is simultaneously general and particular. This general libidinal-economy, discussed above, of social reality as an "expression of desires and drives"[59] (Noys, 2019), exists only partially. It is, in a sense, unavoidably fragmented. The general is refracted through *particular* libidinal-economies,wherein each is organised by a constitutive "Zero"[60], a demarcation of "The Enjoyable" and "The Unenjoyable"[61]. An index is mediated and experienced by the body through the phantasies projected upon a constellation of categorised 'things'. As such, the general tendency of libidinal-economy, the drive to invest and extract enjoyment, is given particular forms.

A significant critique levelled against Lyotard is his failure to properly extricate this process; wherein the general intensities outlined ossify into particular "Theatres": e.g. constitutive "zeros" and orbiting phantasies (Noys, 2019). However, this deficiency is anticipated and corrected through its integration with a Neo-Spinozist framework; particular libidinal-economies, constitutive zeros, and orbiting phantasies, are produced and mediated through the interaction between epithume and epithumogenesis. In effect, particular libidinal-economies are (re)produced through labouring bodies and the structure of feeling with which they intertwine. This conceptual insight is essential, as this thesis seeks to understand the (re)production of the particular libidinal-economy that *primarily* facilitates the political-economy of "Fringe Gentrification". As such, the thesis ought to be understood

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[59] For Sade, the economy is fundamentally an exchange of bodies (Klossowski, 2017).

[60] "The operator of disintensification is exclusion: either this, or not this. Not both. The disjunctive bar. Every concept is therefore concomitant with negation, exteriorization." (Lyotard, 1993:19).

[61] "Enjoyment, in its political economic perversity, counts on a revenue and discounts what it advances: expenditure with the greatest profit and the least loss." (Lyotard, 1993:159).

as an investigation into the production of this "Zero", its phantasies, and the bodies which "catch" it.

However, while this integration of Neo-Spinozism and Libidinal-Economy is essential for this research, through providing the means to understand the particularities of this desire, it does so a-spatially. This deficiency requires a correction, as the thesis doesn't seek to investigate the production of desire in general but rather the production of the desire for space (and a particular form of space at that). Consequently, it is essential to synthesise this conceptual framework with an understanding of space and the particularities this category contains. For our purposes, the central point to recognise is that space is a fundamentally fragmented phenomenon (Lefebvre, 1991). It is impossible to encounter concrete space in isolation and, as such, it is impossible to desire concrete space in isolation. Whenever a body experiences space, it simultaneously experiences a surplus (one projected upon and from the concrete space in question). For instance, imagine walking within a church. What one experiences is not simply the concrete-space around you -- the aisle, the pulpit, etc -- but the *representational* quality of the concrete; the phantasies projected, both individually and collectively[62], upon it. In effect, one's experience of concrete space is fundamentally mediated through representational space. Furthermore, one experiences these qualities diffusely. For example, returning to the above, one experiences the church (both its concrete and representational elements) before one is physically within it. Namely, through the *space of representation*. From a multitude of origins, bodies consume representations of space which simultaneously contain and condition the representational. In effect, the space of representation provides a preliminary organisation of how the body perceives and experiences the space in question. Consequently, to understand space, one must recognise that which appears to be concrete is unavoidably immaterial. It is through this immaterial quality that libidinal-economy (and consequently epithume and epithumogenesis) enters into relationship with space.

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[62] One should note that this dichotomy exists only in abstraction. The two forms are, while not entirely aligned, fundamentally co-constitutive processes.

Each of these immaterial elements, both individually and collectively, 'work' upon (and through) bodies. However, this relationship between immaterial space and bodies stretches far beyond the parameters of this research[63]. For this thesis, the primary element of this relationship under investigation is between immaterial space and desire. The groundwork for understanding this relationship is laid within Lefevbre's own writings on spatial trialectics[64]. However, this thesis goes beyond Lefevbre. It asserts that to understand the production of space, one must understand the production of the desire for space; it is fundamentally a libidinal process. Through the interlocking relationship between the concrete, representational, and representation, the desire for space is produced, particular spatial libidinal-economies are disciplined, and the production of space itself is facilitated.

While it is difficult, without the empirical material, to properly grasp the relationship between these conceptual parts, it is important to recognise the necessity of this conceptual framework. The established literature surrounding gentrification (and the broader production of urban space) has suffered from a fundamental under-theorisation of desire. However, desire is a complex social phenomenon; to grasp it requires a substantive conceptual universe. Desire is produced, at its most elementary level, through epithumogenesis -- the production of desire within a body through the labour of another body -- and this process is disciplined by, and relies upon, the sedimentary 'language' of desire established within a particular structure of feeling; e.g. the epithume. However, the body, the point of reception, has its own mechanisms for transmuting epithume and epithumogenesis; libidinal-economy. The body pursues the enjoyable yet the "The Enjoyable" is mediated rather than innate. Consequently, this general tendency fractures and fragments throughout social reality into particular libidinal-economies; indexes of desire, enjoyment, and phantasies demarcated by particular "Zeros". One such particular libidinal-economy is the object of inquiry, which facilitates "Fringe Gentrification". However, the spatial nature of this phenomena entails a final mediation in accordance with the particular qualities of space as a category. Consequently, the conceptual framework requires integration with spatial reality; namely, through recognising that the production of

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[63] In particular, upon the cultural and political grounds surrounding belonging, identity, and a sense of place (Massey, 1994).

[64] See Lefevbre (1991) also Merrifield's (2006) informative analysis.

this libidinal-economy is intertwined with the production of representational space and the space of representation. In different ways, it is through these elements that this spatial libidinal-economy is simultaneously experienced and produced. In satisfying these concerns, the thesis is provided with a conceptual framework able to critique and analyse the libidinal-economy of "Fringe Gentrification"; or, as this thesis will term it, the "Urban Dreamworld".

This conceptual framework enables the thesis to 'fill' the academic gap articulated earlier. To structure this pursuit, the thesis will be organised around the following research question/s, sub-questions, and overarching objectives. These elements are significant independently and collectively. Individually, each provides insight into an important moment of analysis of the "Urban Dreamworld", its relationship with "Fringe Gentrification", and constitutive socio-spatial relations (Soja, 1980). Collectively, these moments align to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomena as a whole.

Dalston: The "Urban Dreamworld"

Each empirical chapter in the thesis focuses upon a different-case in London. In different ways, each exists within or alongside the periphery of "London's Fringe"; a demarcation of space earmarked for development by the Greater London Authority (GLA)[65], Transport for London (TfL), and the London Boroughs (LB) (GLA, 2015). The forthcoming section will provide a summary of each chapter, its findings, and its place in the thesis. However, it is worth briefly reflecting on the rationale of these sites and the holistic understanding of "Fringe Gentrification" collectively provided. Specifically, each site expresses a different moment within the life cycle of this phenomenon,in accordance with the ability for concrete space to satisfy the desires of "Urban Dreamers"; or, more accurately, the extent to which their phantasies are maintained sufficiently to facilitate their extraction of enjoyment. As this thesis will highlight, all concrete-space, including that demarcated as "Urban Dreamworld" is subject to mutation. This is process which, under particular circumstances, entails that a

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[65] For detailed analysis of the "City Fringe" planning discourse and its relationship with "Fringe Gentrification" see page 74-75.

concrete-space becomes more or less able to adhere to the demarcations of particular libidinal-economies. As such, bodies are pushed and pulled to different urban-spaces. Accordingly, each case-site reflects a different moment in this process: life, death, and resurrection.

Dalston is the first case-site explored by the thesis. It is an area found within the centre of Hackney but also, following the route of the A10 through London, at the centre of the case-sites themselves, being north of Shoreditch and south of Tottenham. Within the public imagination, once an area denigrated as "Industrial Crescent", Dalston is now one of the principal areas of unorthodox and heterotopic consumption within London; alongside places such as Peckham and Clapham. Dalston is an area increasingly filled with neo-artisanal production, alternative urban bodies and pursuits, and, accordingly, a concrete-space of increasing economic valorisation and urban development. It was precisely these qualities -- regarding both urban-experience and political-economy -- for which it was chosen as a primary case-site. It is, in effect, the established vanguard of "Fringe Gentrification" explored by the thesis. The empirical analysis itself is primarily focused upon Kingsland Road and its tributaries: Dalston Lane, Ridley Road, and Balls Pond Road. These spaces constitute the primary space(s) of consumption within Dalston and, accordingly, the fieldwork is focused upon these locations to derive insight into the allure of the urban-experience Dalston promises to consuming urban bodies.

The empirical analysis argues that, at the time of investigation, Dalston exists at a moment of saturated libidinal-investment by "Urban Dreamers". The "Urban Dreamworld" at its zenith. The primary 'work' of this chapter is an illumination of this particular libidinal-economy; the demarcation of "The Enjoyable", the desires within it, and the phantasies which justify it. This is conducted through analysing the phantasies and desires illuminated through walking interviews with Dalston's "Urban Dreamers". It organises these phantasies into three interconnected "complexes"[66]:"The Organic", "The Palimpsestic", and "The Collective". While the form may vary -- between, for example, "Artisanal Commodities" and "Places With Traces" -- the libidinal result is the same; particular objects,

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[66] For discussion of the sociological relevance of "The Complex", see Elliott (2015).

places, bodies, and practices, are demarcated as enjoyable. Importantly, this chapter goes beyond collecting these complexes. It highlights the terrain binding these seemingly disparate instruments of enjoyment together;in effect, showing them to exist within a shared libidinal-economy. Specifically, it argues these complexes are a constellation (Benjamin, 2019). Wherein, each particular manifestation, each particular complex, is a different expression of the same generative whole. Each complex and constitutive phantasies are structured around a shared "Wish-Image"[67]. This is an expression of the desire for 'authentic'[68] (urban)experience or, more specifically, for an 'unalienated' (urban)experience. Consequently, this chapter puts forth the primary claim discussed earlier: Dalston and this form of "Fringe" urban-space, that expresses itself through "Fringe Gentrification", exists as a contemporary "Urban Dreamworld". Wherein the utopian and heterotopic desires of the social collective are ossified in urban-space through commodification. This phantasmic quality is the libidinal engine of "Fringe Gentrification". In contrast to antecedent understandings (Hubbard, 2016; Cowen, 2006), this chapter argues that "Fringe Gentrification", rather than *simply* a "revanchist project" (Smith, 2005), is *in part* a by-product of radical desire expressed (and 'sated'[69]) within a capitalist urban environment.

In addition, this chapter provides a definition of the bodies drawn to this representational-space and interpellated by this libidinal-economy. As this centripetal quality facilitates the realisation of value[70], existing paradigms of understanding have defined these bodies simply as gentrifiers (Hubbard, 2016; Davenport, 2020). While such a claim isn't wrong *per se*, this chapter highlights how such an explanation obscures as much as it reveals. These consuming bodies are more complex than the compressing definition of "gentrifier"[71]. These bodies orbit a particular libidinal-economy, one identified to be

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[67] Discussed by Benjamin (1999:4) extensively within Konvolut A. Analysed by Weigel (1996:10) and Gilloch (2002:116).

[68] There is no ontologically absolute "authentic"; as a phantasmic category, it is always partial, mediated, and historical (Lacan, 2007). For this reason, analyses that seek to understand the production of space through "The Authentic" have often failed to substantially interrogate the social 'thing' under inspection (Knudsen *et al*, 2016).

[69] A desire that is only ever partially sated; the phantasmic object can be consumed but the utopian promise remains frustrated by concrete-reality.

[70] And, as such, intensifies the gentrification pressure upon concrete-space.

[71] Leaving aside, for now, what it means to "gentrify" and, as such, to be a "gentrifier". For discussion, see pages 90-94.

structured around a demarcation of "The Enjoyable" as that which provides 'unalienated' (urban)experience. It seems odd to flatten this sociological insight by drawing a perfect equivalence between these "Urban Dreamers" and other forms of gentrifying bodies[72]. Instead, this thesis considers the libidinal-economy capturing these bodies to be central to understanding these actors and defines them in accordance with this significance. It does so through contrasting this libidinal-economy, and those in its orbit, with "The Flaneur", a quasi-mythological urban figure (Frisby, 1994) who pursued a similar demarcation of "The Enjoyable" as 'authentic' urban-experience[73]. Specifically, "The Flaneur" is drawn into a productive contrast. While superficially similar -- both pursue the urban 'authentic', both are drawn to everyday life and detritus, etc -- these bodies define the enjoyable 'authentic' in radically different ways. The bodies under investigation, the "Urban Dreamers", are shown to derive enjoyment from an 'authentic' that is fundamentally commodified, democratic, and, most importantly, political in its conception of the 'unalienated'. Consequently, the chapter shows these "Urban Dreamers" to be neither "Flaneur" nor "Gentrifier", even while sharing a semblance with the former and, at times, functioning as the latter.

Shoreditch: A Dreamworld in 'Ruin'

Following the A10 south from Dalston, one arrives at Shoreditch; the second case-site explored by the thesis. This second empirical chapter continues to illuminate this libidinal-economy, alongside those interpellated by it, but through the death of an "Urban Dreamworld" rather than its life. This chapter is an investigation into libidinal disinvestment and the particular 'ruins'[74] this process creates. This analysis is made possible through the particular socio-spatial constitution of Shoreditch itself and its distinct cultural history. Wherein, like contemporary Dalston, it once existed as a principal place of heterotopic urban-experience. However, as outlined by both participants within this study and urban planning documents surrounding London's "Urban Fringe" it has since become something else; a place increasingly integrated with 'everyday' political-economy and

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[72] Which vary substantially across social stratification.

[73] The particularities of this argument; regarding the pursuit of urban-experience, "Illustrative Seeing", "The Colportage Phenomenon of Space", etc, will be developed in the Dalston chapter. See pages 176-177.

[74] A "libidinal ruin"; a place undergoing disinvestment and disintensification for particular bodies.

urban-experience of London. In the words of the participants, it has become "past it" and now increasingly serves as a spatial means for different kinds of urban bodies to extract a different kind of enjoyment. While this provides terrain for its own fruitful exploration, this chapter, in seeking to understand the "Urban Dreamworld" and its relationship with "Fringe Gentrification", focuses upon investigating this transition from the perspective of the "Urban Dreamers",the consuming bodies who, once enchanted, are now increasingly pushed to concrete-spaces more congruent with the desires and phantasies of the "Urban Dreamworld".

The key insight this chapter provides to the thesis is into libidinal-disinvestment[75]. This chapter charts how the extraction of enjoyment from Shoreditch's concrete-space is increasingly frustrated for Urban Dreamers. There are two important dimensions to this. Firstly, these moments further illuminate this libidinal-economy through illustrating "The Unenjoyable" and constitutive phantasies. This builds upon the argument contained within the preceding chapter, that this 'negative' dimension is not exterior to this libidinal-economy but rather, like all phantasy (Fink, 1995), it is essential to its internal structuring. In part, "The Unenjoyable" is mutually generative of "The Enjoyable". Secondly, the chapter highlights how libidinal-disinvestment is fundamentally *internal* to this libidinal-economy itself. In Shoreditch, "Urban Dreamers" increasingly experienced a frustrating gap between concrete-space and representational-space. A process expressed in a multitude of manners; including the simple (re)appearance of the rejected alongside the more complex production of the homunculus (e.g. the uncanny synthesisation of "The Enjoyable" and "The Unenjoyable"). These insights illustrate how the same libidinal-economy, representational-space, and constitutive phantasies, that valorise concrete-space contain a latent tendency towards devalorisation. The "Urban Dreamworld", due to the demarcations of its "Theatre", is perpetually threatened by libidinal ruination within capitalist space; the same phantasies that facilitate the extraction of enjoyment contain the potential for its inhibition. Consequently, libidinal-disinvestment is not unique to Shoreditch per se; it is a

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[75] "There are libidinal positions, tenable or not, there are positions invested which are immediately disinvested, the energies passing onto other pieces of the great pizzle, inventing new fragments and new modalities of *jouissance*, that is to say of intensification." (Lyotard, 1993: 113).

fate that awaits Dalston, Tottenham, and all commodified[76] "Fringe" space. As such, this libidinal death of the "Urban Dreamworld" is central to understanding "Fringe Gentrification" as an overarching process, wherein bodies are drawn and directed to concrete spaces more congruent with the demarcations of "The Enjoyable", in part due to lessened threat of libidinal disruption.

However, beyond libidinal-disinvestment, this chapter lays a foundation into understanding the re/production of representational space and so libidinal-economy (a dynamic which resonates with the exploration of the re/production of the space of representation within the Tottenham chapter). In Shoreditch, the thesis introduces a new perspective on the "Urban Dreamworld" through empirical data derived from interviews with those who directly extract profit from it; namely, the owners of valorised places and sellers of valorised things. It highlights how these urban figures are conscious of the libidinal requirements of the dreamworld and reflexively organise their spaces of consumption accordingly (Böhme, 2017)[77]. This highlights a key mechanism within the (re)production of this libidinal-economy; e.g. the integration and stretching of representational-space. Wherein particular spaces of consumption, in seeking to align themselves with the demarcations of "The Enjoyable" work to ensure this kind of representational space spreads throughout concrete-space *in general*. In a similar vein, the chapter anticipates a primary concern of the Tottenham chapter; which explores how the consuming bodies of "Urban Dreamers" themselves work to reproduce this libidinal-economy. One should note, these dynamics, at the quotidian level of labour, are present throughout the case-sites rather than being restricted to Shoreditch.

Tottenham: 'Resurrection' and the Space of Representation

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[76] A phantasy of post-capitalist experience has a tenuous life in the capitalist city

[77] Importantly, Böhme (2017) highlights the importance of atmosphere within the contemporary critique of aesthetics: "The primary task of aesthetics is no longer to determine what art is and to provide means for art criticism. Rather the theme of aesthetics is now the full range of aesthetic work, which is defined generally as the production of atmospheres and thus extends from cosmetics, advertising, interior decoration, stage sets to art in the narrower sense." (37).

However, the de-libinisation of places such as Shoreditch is not "Fringe Gentrification" failing; this 'death' fuels the process. The de-libinisation of "Fringe" space ensures that new "Urban Dreamworlds" are always sought out. A dynamic which facilitates the expansion of "Fringe Gentrification" (and the extraction of surplus-value from the structurally disinvested spaces that host this libidinal-economy) into the broader urban environment[78]. In effect, the enjoyment disinvested from Shoreditch (and increasingly Dalston) is reinvested into embryonic "Dreamworlds". This process of libidinisation is explored through the final empirical chapter of the thesis which focuses on Tottenham.

Tottenham, unlike the other case-sites, is not part of Hackney. Originally a railway suburb (Hatherley, 2020) that expanded rapidly into a working-class area in the late 19th century, Tottenham became a municipal borough of London in 1934 and, following the 1963 London government act, became part of the larger Borough of Haringey. While the investigation into Tottenham is digital in orientation, the particular space(s) of representation analysed are engendered from concrete-spaces that primarily fall within its southerly limits. In particular, the irregular quadrilateral space in-between the underground and rail stations of "South Tottenham", "Seven Sisters", "Tottenham Hale", and "Bruce Grove". A space that includes the central infrastructural road of the A10, that within Dalston was named "Kingsland Road", the Tottenham Hale development zone, and the increasingly trendy high-streets of West Green Road and Philip Lane. While contemporary urban development and gentrification was once limited in Tottenham, contrasted with much of post-industrial London and "Fringe" spaces of the former "Industrial Crescent", this situation is increasingly changing. On a multitude of spatial and libidinal scales, there are significant investments into Tottenham's concrete, representational, and representations of, space.

Importantly, this chapter shows how libidinisation is more complex than "Urban Dreamers" 'discovering' a pre-assembled "Dreamworld". The process of libidinisation is one of *labour*, it *takes work* within the space of representation and representational space to enable concrete-space to satisfy (or appear to satisfy) the desire disciplined by libidinal-economies.

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[78] It is through this conceptual reinvigoration -- e.g. "The Representational Rent-Gap" -- that the notion of the "Rent-Gap" can become sociologically useful again.

This element of libidinal production is extricated throughout the thesis, which develops a core argument that consumption, through both libidinal-economy and political-economy, is productive[79]. However, this element is at the forefront of this chapter. It highlights how Tottenham, as an embryonic urban-dreamworld, alongside as a more general place demarcated for the extraction of enjoyment, is facilitated through the space of representation. Specifically, this chapter analyses how the space(s) of representation facilitated through Instagram works to reconstitute Tottenham's representational space into a form better aligned with the desires of "Urban Dreamers" and other prospective consuming bodies. It highlights how this process is conducted by a multitude of labouring bodies, which share a core tendency of working to produce desire within other bodies (albeit in varying ways and for varying purposes). Importantly, in line with the thesis's aim to highlight the multiplicity within immaterial labour, epithumogenesis is shown to be done with varying degrees of intentionality. The chapter contrasts orthodox immaterial labourers, who directly and indirectly, seek to produce desirable space(s) of representation, with quotidian immaterial labourers, whose digital labour on Instagram is derived from transmuting their own experience consuming the urban environment into an alluring representation of Tottenham itself. The chapter concludes that both forms of labour, facilitated by Instagram, work to disrupt the old hegemonic space of representation tethered to Tottenham and replace it with one more conducive to the "Urban Dreamworld", a consumable sense of place, and, by extension, to capital.

Academic Contributions

To summarise, each empirical chapter captures a distinct 'moment' within "Fringe Gentrification"; its life, death, and resurrection. Importantly, when considered together, these moments express a core argument regarding the ephemerality and recurrence of "Fringe Gentrification" and the "Urban Dreamworld" it contains. Dalston's unification of dreamworld and concrete-space is not eternal, nor has Tottenham always existed at the precipice of libidinal investment. Importantly, the thesis explains this ephemerality to be a

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[79] Within the economic, consumption facilitates the moment of value realisation. Within the libidinal, it is 'productive' in the sense of reproducing the conditions of consumption via the co-constitutive production of allure.

direct result of the theatrical 'logic' of this particular libidinal-economy. A libidinal commitment to a form of (urban)experience -- the 'unalienated' as enjoyable -- is fundamentally fragile within contemporary urban-space[80]. The complexes and constitutive phantasies, while valorising "Fringe" space and demarcating it as dreamworld, *latently* contain a potential for devalorising concrete-space and unleashing libidinal-disinvestment. As "Urban Dreamers" identify and experience a gap between the representational and concrete, which expresses itself through their frustration, disgust, and discomfort, and the inhibition of enjoyment. In such spaces, the 'promise' of the unalienated is too perceptibly a dream. This wave of de-libidinisation pushes "Urban Dreamers" to seek out space with less uptake inhibitors; spaces less conducive to the phobias and fears of this libidinal-economy. A process which, through the relationship between desire, libidinal-economy, and political-economy, facilitates the extension of "Fringe Gentrification" and the extraction of surplus-value. Consequently, one can recognise the ephemerality of the "Urban Dreamworld" to be, in part, an internal production of this libidinal-economy alongside the libidinal-engine of "Fringe Gentrification"itself.

However, while this successfully satisfies the criteria for explaining "Fringe Gentrification" and the constitutive questions regarding the relationship between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and urban space, the thesis also provides a broader academic contribution.

The most clear cut contribution is to the gentrification literature itself. Hence the decision to ground the thesis as a critical reappraisal of this field; as will be highlighted extensively in the literature review. Ostensibly this contribution is through identifying a form of gentrification largely unexplored (yet prominent) within the urban environment -- e.g. "Fringe Gentrification" -- and the subsequent explanation discussed above.

However, in highlighting and correcting the conceptual failings within the hegemonic approaches to gentrification, the thesis contributes to this literature in a more foundational

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[80]The *economic* valorisation of space brings with it particular forms of space, objects, and experiences (those which this libidinal-economy demaracates as unenjoyable). This dynamic is crucial within the Shoreditch chapter, as it highlights the process of libidinal disinvestment.

manner. In effect, the contribution of this thesis is not simply identifying a 'new form' of gentrification, as is regularly centralised in contemporary urban research[81], but rather its insight into the process of gentrification *in general*. One cannot explain "Fringe Gentrification" without the conceptual imports of this thesis; libidinal-economy, immaterial labour, trialectics, etc. However, while not denying the acquisition of substantive knowledge, without these conceptual insights the sociological understanding of gentrification *in general* is hindered. In effect, the conceptual failings of the established literature, while denying a substantive explanation of "Fringe Gentrification", simultaneously obscure a fuller understanding of all forms of gentrification. In particular, this thesis highlights the substantial importance of desire, libidinal-economy, and immaterial space, within the spatial process of gentrification. To be best metabolised, this reflection is primarily addressed within the current conceptual language of the "Rent-Gap". The thesis posits that each "Rent-Gap" is simultaneously a *representational* rent-gap, as discussed in the conclusion.

However, while the above contributes to the gentrification literature from 'within', the thesis also critiques this literature on a more fundamental level; namely, through highlighting the obfuscatory discourse surrounding 'gentrification' as a concept. This investigation of "Fringe Gentrification" takes aim at the tendency towards ontologisation within the academic study of gentrification; a quality encouraged through the totalising tendency within the concept itself. In particular, it highlights the problematic tendency to understand 'gentrifiers' as a concrete subject position (and a moralised one at that (le Grand, 2019). This perspective portrays gentrification in a neat manner, a conflict of urban good vs urban evil. However, this thesis illustrates the sociological inadequacy of this tendency. Within this study of "Fringe Gentrification", the 'gentrifiers' are recognised as an often precarious social group, albeit on varying scales, existing at the edge of London's economy (in a manner mirroring Zukin's (1995) earlier work on artists). However, it is specifically the supposed ontological quality of 'gentrifiers' this thesis critiques. It argues that 'to gentrify' is not an identity but rather a modular action; one interconnected with the raising of representational and concrete

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[81] For instance: Student Gentrification (Chatterton, 2010), Green Gentrification (Gould and Lewis, 2016), Tourist Gentrification (Minoia, 2017), Rural Gentrification (Stockdale, 2010), etc.

rent-gaps or the facilitation of their closure (through consumption and the re/production of desire). In this manner, 'to gentrify' is fundamentally endemic to contemporary urban social relations. It is an action taken by a multitude of bodies, in different ways, throughout the city[82]. It is an inescapability of a life expressed through capitalist social relations. As such, it is necessary to recognise how 'gentrification' is something more complex than a simple struggle against 'bad gentrifiers' and the political-economy that facilitates them.

Likewise, just as 'gentrifying' is simultaneously endemic and modular so too is 'gentrified space'. The language surrounding different forms of 'gentrified space' -- "Fringe Gentrification", "Green Gentrification" (Gould and Lewis, 2016), "Rural Gentrification" (Philips, 2005), etc, etc -- suggests 'gentrification' affects particular spaces like a sickness. As if, 'gentrification' is an aberration within the 'everyday' production of space. However, such language inverts the situation. Gentrification is not a unique or isolated process, it is a latent quality innate to *all* space within a capitalist political-economy; one which is merely intensified by a neo-liberal regime of accumulation. Gentrification is a word that attempts to describe the *violence* of exchange-value itself, wherein the material and immaterial 'investment'[83] into space, a process facilitated through the political, often does little to change the economic position of those currently connected to place[84] or does so in a manner akin to a Midas Touch. The result is a process of material and representational displacement (Elliott-Cooper *et al*, 2020) intertwined with an increasingly precarious experience[85]. In effect, 'gentrification' is not a discrete phenomenon at all. It is the logic of capitalism expressed in space.

Furthermore, the conceptual framework constructed for this research has value beyond 'gentrification'. Fundamentally, this thesis is a critique of the relationships that exist between bodies, space, and political-economy. This is facilitated by drawing together an innovative

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[82] The libidinal-economy that interpellates the desires of "Urban Dreamers" is only one example.

[83] "Investment" here is broadly defined; the process of intensifying rent-gaps (both concrete and representational).

[84] E.g. it benefits those who own the means of enjoyment, who own the land wherein a "Rent-Gap" is situated, etc. In effect, those who economically benefit from these dimensions of contemporary socio-spatial relations.

[85] The two phenomena exist as a feedback loop (Stein, 2015).

conceptual framework that synthesises libidinal-economy, immaterial space, and socio-spatial relations. In doing so, it provides a preliminary sketch through which to understand the production of space from the perspective of consumption and production simultaneously. As a product of capitalism, human desire, and the dialectical relationship that exists between them. Consequently, such an approach has a broader value for urban studies and sociology generally.

Critical theory has always, in different ways, connected its *political* critique to an *aesthetic* critique (Levitas, 2010). It is a critique of the aesthetic experience engendered by capitalism alongside the ideological potential of this experience. A key element within this aesthetic concern is regarding commodity-fetishism; in other words, commodity-aesthetics. This tradition is dominated by the 'School of Suspicion' (Levistas, 2010): e.g. Adorno (1994), Marcuse (2013), Haug (2006), Fromm (2013), and so on. These are theorists who, in different ways, conceptualise commodity-aesthetics as a subjugating phenomenon. In effect, this aesthetic experience is conceptualised as an ideological tool which serves to safeguard and reproduce capitalist political-economy. This thesis produces empirical insights which critiques this approach, while recognising its central point regarding the relationship between commodity-aesthetics, ideology, and political-economy. Specifically, this thesis illustrates the lived conditions of the "Hermeneutics of Anticipation", or the utopian desires and drives that lurk within the commodity-aesthetic. Importantly, this grounding anticipates Adorno's critique of such approaches to commodity-aesthetics[86]. This thesis provides the material basis of the "Hermeneutics of Anticipation" that Adorno claims is lacking. It does so through a synthesisation of Benjamin (and Bloch's) theoretical insight with an understanding of libidinal-economy (e.g. the 'Utopian' desires, drives, and urges, expressed through commodity-aesthetics, that are shown to be deeply intertwined with political-economy, immaterial-labour, and socio-spatial relations). In contrast to Benjamin's conception[87], the utopian desires of the collective are not only endlessly deferred by commodity-fetishism (Buck-Morss, 1991), they are, in a myriad of ways, put to work by it. In

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[86] Adorno (2012:497) was critical of what he considered to be the idealist underpinnings of "Wish-Images", "Dreamworlds", and "Abstract Utopias"; likening such ideas to Jungian archetypes.
[87] However the projected critique, which would delineate Benjamin's argument from the "devils work" was never completed (Gilloch, 1996:98).

response to Adorno (2012), the material basis of these expressions of abstract utopia is precisely the generative power they contain to exert influence upon the social world.

It is worth reflecting on this contribution more extensively -- e.g. the empirical illustration of the interwoven nature of the utopian and the ideological -- as doing so outlines the Benjaminian underpinnings of the thesis. In a sense, Benjamin provides a sociological disposition through which the phenomena under investigation can be explored:

"Marx lays bare the causal connection between economy and culture. For us, what matters is the thread of expression. It is not the economic origins of culture that will be presented, but the expression of the economy in its culture. At issue, in other words, is the attempt to grasp an economic process as perceptible ur-phenomena, from out of which proceed all manifestations of life in the arcades (and, accordingly in the 19th century)" (Benjamin, 1999:460)

Benjamin's foundational point is that; to understand either 'the economic' or 'the cultural', it is necessary to recognise the ontological entanglement between each element. The cultural facet of the social world, of which the "Urban Dreamworld" is one manifestation, is at its most primary an *expression* of the economic structure of society. However, it is imperative to understand the significance of the term "expression". There is a profound distinction between the Benjaminian notion of *expression* and the orthodox Marxian idea (of the cultural) as a *reflection*; the latter being the sterile sociological terrain of an economistic (and deterministic) cultural theory (Williams, 1973). The notion of expression outlines that the economic constitutes and intertwines with the *experience* of life and this *experience* is consequently expressed through culture (Buck-Morss, 1991), through commodity-aesthetics and, by extension, through libidinal-economy:

"The superstructure is the expression of the infrastructure. The economic conditions under which society exists are expressed in the superstructure precisely as, with the sleeper, an overfull stomach finds not its reflection but its expression in the content of dreams, which from a causal point of view, it may be said to 'condition'." (Benjamin, 1999:392).

The value of this insight is not simply the more complete ontology of society it illustrates. It provides us with a pragmatic insight into conducting investigations into social reality. To successfully investigate any element of political-economy, we must understand material culture. As it is within the objects and desires produced by material culture that an aspect of historical truth can be found. And, by extension, to understand material culture we must understand its genesis as an expression of political-economy and the experience of life it disciplines.

The philosophical and sociological implications of this claim extend beyond the reasonable parameters of investigation demanded by the thesis. As such, it is necessary to extract the insights of strategic relevance for the problematic at hand. Those that illuminate the intertwined relationship of the economic and the libidinal within consumption and, by extension, the production of space:

> "For Benjamin, a fundamental facet of the *culture* of the commodity is the *cult* of the commodity. The commodity is the idol of modernity. The city forms the space of 'the enthronement of the commodity and the glitter of distraction'. Commodity fetishism entails not simply the empowerment but also the deification of the industrial artefact, not only submission to and before it, but also reverent worship" (Gilloch, 1996:2119)

Benjamin recognised the sociological nuances of consumption and the acts of worship that surround and facilitate it, and these conceptual insights are integral for a holistic understanding of the "Urban Dreamworld". For Benjamin, the cult of the commodity contains the same productive contradiction that exists within a wider notion of religion[88]. It can only function as a conciliatory force through containing a utopian kernel; a desire for the "overcoming of antagonism between humanity and all the world" (Bloch, 1995:99). While this libidinal fragment exists as an "Abstract Utopia", one that serves to reproduce the status

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[88] This understanding of the social ontology of religion has deep roots within the Marxist tradition: "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions." (Marx, 1970:1)

quo (Levitas, 2010), it is underwritten by a current that is anticipatory. This approach facilitates a conceptualisation of commodity-culture (and the desires intertwined with it) *beyond* a totalising reduction to ideology[89], while recognising its intertwinement with ideology and political-economy. As discussed, it is this sociological imagination that provides a necessary corrective to orthodoxy within Critical Theory; one that undermines our ability to understand the nuances within the problematic at hand[90] and, more broadly, social reality itself. While one could analyse the "Urban Dreamworld" through the lens provided by more orthodox conceptualisations, to do so would fail to properly grasp the social relations under investigation. A Benjaminian approach provides a toolbox[91]; an array through which to understand that mass culture is both the source of the phantasmagoria and *a* the source of the desire to overcome it (Buck-Morss, 1991):

"If one wishes to destroy something, one must not only know it; if the job is to be done well, one must have felt it" (Benjamin, 1991:265)

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[89] As such, one can draw a clear parallel between Benjamin's approach to commodity-aesthetics and Lyotard's approach to desire; e.g. a dialectic of conciliation and anticipation, see pages 32-34.

[90] It is essential to recognise that libidinal-economy and the broader ontology it exists within as more than an illusionary trick. As Levitas (2010) articulates, a delicate balance exists between these two elements: "...both ideology and utopia are centrally concerned with the problems of power and authority and they can be contrasted on three levels. The function of ideology is always legitimation, the best aspect of this being an integrative function, the worst being distortion; the function of utopia is challenge, the best aspect being the exploration of the possible, the worst being unrealisable fancy bordering on madness. If the 'pathology of ideology is dissimulation … the pathology of utopia is escape." (76)

[91] In particular, see pages: 159-160 for "Traces", 166-170 for "Crowds", and 171-173 for "Atmosphere"; see pages 174-183 for "The Flaneur", "Wish-Images", and "Dreamworlds".

<u>Conclusion</u>

This chapter has provided a foundation for the thesis, through establishing and outlining the primary parameters of the forthcoming academic investigation: **"**Fringe Gentrification and the Critique of the contemporary "Urban Dreamworld". Accordingly, it provided the geographical and historical context of London. In particular, it viewed London's development from the perspective of the "Industrial Crescent", the recomposition of capital and "Abstract Space". This is essential, as this origin is shared between the case-sites of Dalston, Shoreditch, and Tottenham. This historical reflection also illustrates the growing importance of the case-sites within London's urban political-economy. Through the rising importance of the secondary-circuit of capital, these concrete-spaces now play a significant role within the story of London's "Gentrification"; in particular, surrounding, what the thesis terms, "Fringe Gentrification".

The chapter also highlighted why existing explanatory frameworks of "Gentrification" are inadequate to properly investigate this phenomenon (in a particular and general sense). As these explanations fail to recognise the importance of libidinal-economy in the production of space. As will be expanded upon, the chapter highlighted how the established literature engages with concrete-space in a myopic manner. The dominant approaches -- the "Production" and "Consumption" schools -- fail to recognise the trialectical logic of space; e.g. that the production of concrete-space is *unavoidably* intertwined with immaterial elements. Likewise, each acquiesce to the conceptual imperialism surrounding "Gentrification": e.g. the conceptual framework surrounding "Gentrification" is allowed to overwhelm social reality itself. In summary, the established literature fails to recognise the breadth of social relations that intertwine with the production of space.

As such, the academic gap is identified; to understand "Fringe Gentrification" and the production of space in a broader sense, it is necessary to understand the relationship between political-economy and libidinal-economy. In particular, the thesis seeks to understand the desire (and intertwined urban-imaginary) that facilitates "Fringe Gentrification". As the established literature is unable to answer such questions, the chapter

highlights the conceptual innovations operationalised by the thesis, one that ultimately approaches social reality and "Fringe Gentrification" through a "Structuralism of Affects". Accordingly, the chapter introduces the primary theoretical elements of this framework: the concepts of epithume/epithumogenesis, libidinal-economy, and spatial trialectics. These concepts provide a means through which to describe and understand the phenomenon and integrated phenomena. A (more) complete elucidation of the interrelationship between these concepts will develop through the empirical material. However, even without this 'work', one can recognise the prefatory claim underpinning this framework: to understand the production of space, one must understand the production of the desire *for* space and the phantasies through which it is expressed.

Furthermore, this conceptual framework provides a means to formulate a research agenda through a set of questions, sub-questions, and aims, that structure the thesis, while precisely highlighting that which has been overlooked by previous research on gentrification and the production of space:

Through the empirical insights gathered and analysed through the thesis's mixed-methods approach, the chapter has provided a rudimentary introduction to the overarching structure of the thesis; summarising the findings of each chapter and its contribution to the whole. This structure ultimately attempts to capture the temporal-libidinal dynamics of the "Urban Dreamworld" that exists *within* the "Fringe Gentrification" of the case-sites. Its 'life', 'death', and 'resurrection', are expressed by Dalston, Shoreditch, and Tottenham, respectively. Within Dalston, the fundamental impulse of this libidinal-economy, that draws bodies to the "Urban Dreamworld", is outlined; a commodified form of political-anticipation. The Shoreditch chapter, outlines the process of de-libidinisation; wherein a growing gap between phantasy and reality inhibits enjoyment. In effect, the same libidinal-economy that facilitates the *production* of the "Urban Dreamworld" simultaneously facilitates its *ruination*. Finally, the Tottenham chapter highlights how, through the space of representation, the "Urban Dreamworld" is projected upon new concrete-spaces. Of course, this introduction only provides a preliminary outline. The intricacies of each argument and its

interconnections with "Fringe Gentrification" will be developed throughout the thesis as a whole.

Finally, the chapter outlined the particular contributions this thesis makes to critical sociology. Firstly, through iterating how this study is ultimately one that seeks to understand the relationship between political-economy and libidinal-economy. It is this relationship and its absence from urban sociology and, in particular, the gentrification literature, that stands as the major contribution of the thesis. It highlights how desire is central to the production of space and how, accordingly, so too are the phenomena that condition and structure desire. However, through this academic process, further contributions are made. This thesis offers a critique of the conceptual universe that surrounds our understanding of gentrification. It takes aim at its ontologising tendency; one that reduces gentrification to a simplistic story: of clear-cut subject positions, of 'gentrification' as an aberration of liberal political-economy. Finally, the thesis also contributes to the wider field of commodity-aesthetics. This empirical investigation attempts to reinvigorate the contemporary critique of commodity-aesthetics with a hermeneutics of anticipation, to outline the manner in which the utopian desires of the collective are intertwined with (and expressed through) phantasmic commodities.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter provides a holistic examination of the literature that surrounds the study of gentrification. It builds upon the preliminary analysis of the previous chapter. It situates the thesis within this literature as this provides an important outline of the thesis's academic contributions; to both "Gentrification" studies and the wider critical theory of socio-spatial relations. Importantly, this review will highlight *why* existing approaches are inadequate to address the primary aims and research questions underpinning the thesis. As each fails, in different ways, to recognise the importance of desire, libidinal-economy, and representational-space, in producing (urban) space. Accordingly, the review begins by outlining and critiquing the dominant explanatory frameworks of "Gentrification": the "Production" and "Consumption" schools. It then critically analyses the ontological assumptions that are shared by these approaches. Finally, the implications of these epistemological issues, in inhibiting a more comprehensive understanding of the social phenomenon, are outlined. This is followed by a preliminary discussion of *how* the thesis will contribute to filling this academic gap.

The review begins by outlining the orthodox Marxian understanding of "Gentrification", as established by Ruth Glass (1964). It outlines how this original conceptualisation contributed to our understanding of urban spatial processes and the production of space generally, in particular in relation to the "Chicago School". As the previous chapter largely introduced Glass's argument[92], the discussion here is brief. Instead, it highlights the contemporary research that attempts to temporally reappraise "Gentrification"; e.g. that which outlines the contemporary forms of gentrification.

It then conducts an examination of the "Production School", which closely follows the ontological framework provided by Glass: e.g. "Gentrification" is explained primarily through political-economy. For them, the phenomenon of gentrification is engendered by

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[92] For discussion, see pages 21-23.

the intertwined relationship that exists between the social relations of capitalism and the production of space[93] (Lees *et al*, 2010). The review then outlines and analyses the explanatory framework developed by Neil Smith, whose work provides the fundamental epistemological basis of the contemporary "Production School". While highlighting the significance of Smith's contributions, it identifies the necessity of critically re-examining its ontological foundation. Through a detailed analysis of Smith's concept of the "Rent-Gap", a similar critique is provided to that Raymond Williams (2005) raised with Marx; namely, that an orthodox labour theory of value is inadequate if one wishes to understand the *representational* elements of concrete-value. As such, it is necessary to re-conceptualise Smith's concept of the "Rent-Gap", to underpin it with a more comprehensive theory of value; namely, one that recognises the importance of libidinal-economy and immaterial labour. Accordingly, it provides a preliminary discussion of "Representational Rent-Gaps", which the thesis argues are essential for understanding "Fringe Gentrification" and the contemporary production of space.

This investigation then focuses upon contemporary developments within the "Production School"; namely, the latter generation of, broadly, Marxist sociologists who developed the approach of Neil Smith (Slater, 2006), in particular through affording a greater understanding of the state's role in the process of gentrification. These scholars following "Third Wave" gentrification (Hackworth, 2000), argue that the contemporary governmentality of the state has emphasised a new dynamic of political-economy; wherein, an increasingly interventionist state, in an intertwined relationship with the private-sector and other elements of "The State" assemblage, acts to (re)produce and facilitate gentrification (Lees and Ley, 2008). As with Smith, this "Political-Wing" approach provides important insights into the production of space. In particular, the review highlights particular examples of "The State" facilitating the gentrification of space within the case-sites. The review of the "Political Wing" concludes by outlining that, while essential, the particular concerns they raise are marginalised by the thesis. The critique raised against the "Production School" earlier is still true of the "Political-Wing"; e.g. this academic

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[93] A claim which the thesis seeks to develop, through outlining how gentrification is the expression of capitalism in space.

development of Neil Smith's ideas reproduce the same failure to recognise the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy. As such, if successful in its aims, the thesis will provide a further integrative understanding of such approaches.

The other hegemonic explanatory framework is the "Consumption School". One should note, this categorisation is more divergent than the "Production School". These distinct explanations of "Gentrification" are organised around the following claim: the "Production School", in providing ontological primacy to political-economy, have abstracted away the importance of the 'Gentrifying Subject' (Butler, 2007) (Hamnett, 1992). In effect, the "Consumption School" agree that a satisfactory explanation of gentrification must contain a fully integrated understanding of "The Gentrifier":

'[I]f gentrification theory has a centrepiece it must rest on the conditions for the production of potential gentrifiers' (Hamnett, 1991:187)

The review highlights the wide range of empirical studies of "Gentrification" produced by this approach to gentrification. The school is analysed by contrasting its two constitutive and, at times, antagonistic wings; e.g. "Post-Modern" and "Post-Industrial" approaches. The fundamental distinction between these two is the cultural determinism of "Post-Modern" explanations and the dialectical approach of the "Post-Industrial" scholars. The section dedicates the majority of the discussion to "Post-Industrial" approaches, owing to the more developed explanation of the phenomenon it presents. After a preliminary discussion of David Ley's (1996) work, which functions in a similar structural manner as Neil Smith's for the "Production School", the analysis focuses on the empirical research Tim Butler and Garry Robson (2003) have conducted in London. This will illustrate the benefits but also the fundamental drawbacks of a traditional "Consumption School" approach. In summary, an excessive reliance on a Bourdieusian explanatory framework and the image of social reality it produces knowledge through entails that consumption is only understood as a function[94]: e.g. a social activity that aims to reproduce one's class position, both materially and

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[94] For a theoretical critique of Bourdieu on these grounds see Bidet (2001). Likewise, a similar line of argument is taken by proponents of Object-Orientated-Ontology through the concept of "Under-Mining" objects (Harman, 2011).

symbolically. This approach has no theoretical capacity to understand desire and the libidinal-economy that structures it. As such, its understanding of consumption is myopic and divorced from social content. In effect, the "Consumption School" replaces the abstraction of the subject[95] with an abstract subject.

After appraising the hegemonic approaches, the chapter analyses the literature that best satisfies Clark's (1992) argument that any explanation of gentrification must successfully incorporate an understanding of production and consumption. This is a standard which both "Consumption" and "Production" schools have failed to meet. The primary example of this is the work of Sharon Zukin. This explanation of gentrification successfully understands production and consumption simultaneously. However, it also provides insight into the necessity to continue exploring the relationship between these elements in the production of space. The review highlights how Zukin's (1989) work, through primarily grounding an explanation of consumption through artistic mode of production -- e.g. the epithumogenetic work conducted by an assemblage of cultural intermediaries -- that fails to grasp the breadth of immaterial labour within the production of space.

With the strands of the literature independently reviewed, the chapter identifies the *flawed* assumptions about gentrification shared between these otherwise antagonistic explanatory frameworks. Importantly, this review highlights the *ontologisation* of "Gentrification" conducted by the literature. One which restricts our understanding of the phenomenon itself and its relationship with the broader production of space.

First, the literature, even when marginalising the political-economic importance of "The Gentrifier", assumes that the process of gentrification is primarily intertwined with subject positions. To varying degrees, the literature attempts to continually rediscover the 'Gentrifying Subject' identified by Ruth Glass. This assumption is damaging as it obscures the reality: the multitude of different ways that different bodies *work* to gentrify particular spaces. The review provides a preliminary discussion of how the thesis will address these

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[95] As discussed, the "abstraction of the subject" is the primary critique of the "Production School" that members of the "Consumption School" raise. See pages 83-84.

issues. It articulates a foundation for the forthcoming argument that 'gentrifying' is a modular action; in different ways, bodies *work* to raise the exchange-value of space (through their, broadly defined, production) and *work* to realise latent value (through their consumption). Once this modular perspective is adopted, one can recognise that those who perform "Gentrifying Labour" need not be middle-class, nor home-owners, or even live within the space that they facilitate the gentrification of; e.g. it becomes possible to move beyond the mythological character of "The Gentrifier".

Second, one can recognise that Neil Smith's (2005) under-valuing of immaterial space and the representational is endemic. The established literature focuses upon the production of concrete-space and its relationship with gentrification and, in doing so, fails to recognise the central role played by representational-space and the space of representation. Importantly, this failure intertwines with that outlined above; the mythology of "The Gentrifier" abstracts away that those who *produce* immaterial space can, in particular circumstances, be recognised as performing "Gentrifying Labour". This thesis, by approaching "Fringe Gentrification" through libidinal-economy, serves as a corrective to this tendency.

Finally, one should note, the point of this literature review is not to 'disprove' these various academic frameworks. Gentrification, while not a "Chaotic" concept as Beauregard (2013) argues, is a complex concept. Gentrification is the expression of capitalist society within space and, as such, it is intertwined with an almost endless assemblage: "The State", markets (speculative[96] or otherwise), the symbolic underworkings of intersectional identities (Cole, 1985; Knopp, 1997), infrastructure (Revington, 2015), libidinal-economy, etc, etc, etc. As such, one theoretical orientation will never satisfactorily explain a particular expression of gentrification in its entirety. Instead, one must recognise that each particular epistemological framework contributes to illuminating the whole. Consequently, the critique levied against the established paradigms simply aims to push them forward; to provide an corrective illustration of what is currently lacking. For instance, a focus on immaterial space, as discussed, allows us to conceive of "Rent-Gaps" in a more nuanced manner; one that recognises how value, in part, is produced and facilitated through the immaterial. Likewise,

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[96] For an analysis of gentrification that explicitly focuses on speculation see Shin (2016).

through investigating libidinal-economy, it provides consumption theorists with an opportunity to understand the inner workings of the habitus; e.g. why do these urban bodies *enjoy*[97] what facilitates distinction?

Ruth Glass and the concept of "Gentrification"

In 1960s Islington, the Marxist geographer, Ruth Glass, noticed an emerging tendency which seemed to draw into question orthodox urban theory. Within what Parker calls the "Empirical Tradition", there was a core assumption, inherited by the "Chicago School", that the formation of the city ought to be understood through an ecological logic (Parker, 2004). Through this framework, the city was seen as a quasi-darwinist space in which the 'fittest' economic actors claimed the prime locations, according to their particular interests, while the 'weakest' -- e.g. those disadvantaged by intersectional domination -- are pushed to what is left. As a result of this conflict, the wealthy middle-class fled to leafy suburbs, while business and rentiers dominated an inner city space populated by the urban working-class . This theoretical argument is made clearer through the illustrative concentric model of urban development put forward by Burgess:

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[97] One should note, the thesis uses "enjoyment" in a Lacanian sense. It is an attempt to bridge the *gap* between the object of desire and its imagined realisation; a process driven by (and reproductive of) lack (Fink, 1995).
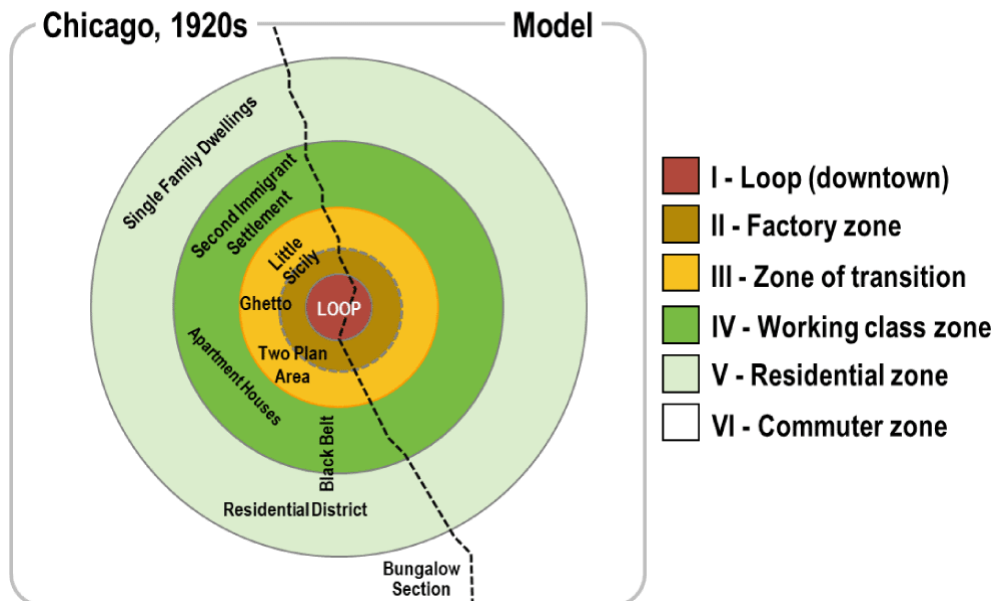
Figure 1.1: "The Concentric Model of Urban Development" (Rodrigue, 2020).

One can detect a core resonance between this understanding of the city and the wider tradition of classical political-economy and social-theory[98]. For the Chicago School, it is the "Division of Labour" that produces urban space and the social stratifications it contains. However, as Parker observed, this framework also resonantes with a more critical tradition; through the Chicago School's attempt to show how "power and class differentials are mapped onto the city in terms of land-use, tenure and access to resources" (Parker, 2004:42). Likewise, in Burgess' concentric model, that articulates the rigidity of spatial stratification, one can see echoes of Engel's (1892) observations of industrial Manchester, where the working-classes were herded together in the inner-city to facilitate the primary circuit of capital (while also being hidden from the view of Manchester's middle-class). While one ought to be suspicious of the *total* historical applicability of this Chicago School framework -- for instance, many European cities, having predated industrialization, had a middle (or upper) class 'core' around which the industrial city was grafted (Engels, 1982) -- it none-the-less seemed to provide a solid foundation for understanding many 20th century urban processes; such as suburbanisation and ghettoisation.

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[98] Adam Smith (1776), in producing wealth and geographic differentiation and Durkheim, in producing the potential for social integration and disintegration.

As has been routinely argued (Wyly, 2015; Lees *et al*, 2010; Alexander, 2012), Ruth Glass's observations of "Gentrification" in Islington disrupt the story that the Chicago School tells to explain the production of urban-space. Instead of collectively fleeing to London's suburbs -- places like Bromley, Richmond or the "Home Counties" -- there seemed to be a growing proportion of the middle-class, often those working in social professions, who began to buy property (and live) in Islington[99]. This situation complicates the ecological argument as, in 1960s Islington, we have "fit" economic actors choosing to 'take' subprime space. For these 'gentrifiers' the leafy suburbs had waned in appeal. Perhaps, to defend the ecological model, one could argue that there has been a reconfiguration, within a stratification of London's middle-class, of what constitutes 'prime' space[100]. However, such questions are beyond our immediate scope.

Instead, the chapter will continue to illuminate this phenomenon of 'Gentrification'; as defined by Glass. Importantly, this *process* goes beyond the static picture sketched above. These *initial* middle-class gentrifiers purchased properties that were often divided, abandoned, or otherwise dilapidated. Consequently, relative to their economic power, these properties were readily accessible (Hamnett and Williams, 1980). However, these properties did not remain at a low market value. The "sweat equity" undertaken by the gentrifiers -- which will be analysed later -- facilitated a shift wherein Islington became a more attractive location for the middle-class *in general.* In effect, as gentrifying households improved their holdings, it produced a reverberatory effect through concrete-space. The result was an emergence of growing pockets of gentrification within Islington. A rising tide raises all rents and thus we arrive at Glass's much cited observation:

> "One by one, many of the working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes – upper and lower. Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a

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[99] It is important to note that the socio-economic mapping of London's boroughs was already somewhat blurred. A result of the LCC's transformation of slum housing and bomb sites into tenement council estates. With the exception of Belgravia and Mayfair, each central borough contained a sizable provision of social housing (Hatherley, 2020).

[100] Through this social group's economic power, especially in relative terms to the working-classes of Islington, this a spatial preference they can assert readily.

district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed." (Glass, 1968:17)

The original gentrifiers, brought to Islington through social consciousness and easier access to (middle-class) social-reproductive workplaces -- schools, social law firms, etc -- had a midas touch. The social and economic power exuded by their bodies worked to steadily displace those they sought to assist; through the "slow-violence" of rising spatial exchange-values (Pain, 2019). As more waves of gentrifiers followed -- in accordance with the elective belonging[101] (Savage, 2008) these "Urban Pioneers" (Smith, 2005) facilitated in concrete-space -- the original quasi-socialist drive diluted and we appear to arrive back at Park and Burgess. The old working-class districts have, for an increasing proportion of the stratified middle-classes, become a new 'prime location'. While there is more to be said of Glass's arguments, especially in the establishment of several pitfalls within the academic study of gentrification -- such as the "Residential Fetish" and "The Gentrifier as Subject Position" -- these are best engaged with retroactively as the chapter progresses.

As discussed in the introduction, this research aims to provide an explanation of one *form* of gentrification but also to highlight the fetishistic and overzealous quality of the concept itself in contemporary urban sociology. However, these aims can only be achieved through drawing upon and pushing forward a myriad of interconnected and, at times, antagonistic perspectives, theoretical dispositions, and empirical engagements. By illustrating these different positions, the distinctions between them alongside the assumptions shared, we will arrive at a clear understanding of *what* is missing and *why* this is the case. These gaps in knowledge will be filled through a concrete engagement with 'Fringe' gentrification in North London and the theoretical apparatus utilised to analyse it. In effect, this thesis will explain a *form* of gentrification but, in doing so, it will turn the concept upon itself; to better understand the spatial process it attempts to describe. It seeks to derive a more extensive knowledge of the general from the particular.

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[101] This concept denotes the socio-psycho affinity (or disaffinity) between physical space(s) and bodies.

Before reviewing the literature itself, it is essential to recognise the mutagenic life of gentrification; as both a concrete phenomenon and an academic concept. There is a radical distinction between "Gentrification", as outlined by Glass, and gentrification in contemporary urban-space. In some ways, this thesis is a critique of the *failure*, by urban sociologists, to recognise the scale of this change. However, with that said, the established literature has still recognised substantive *elements* of this shift. Principally, gentrification is no longer viewed as a peculiar spatial tendency restricted to the housing markets of a few post-industrial western cities. It has been correctly identified as a global phenomenon, manifesting in cities of varying political-economic positions within the capitalist world-system (Lees *et al*, 2016). Likewise, it is no longer seen as a strictly urban phenomenon; with examples ranging from the gentrificatory pressure of second-home ownership in Cornwall (Paris, 2009) to former mill towns in northern England (Crookes, 2012). Even the old assumption regarding the renovation of old properties, central to Glass' illustration of gentrification in Islington, is no longer seen as a necessary condition[102]. Increasingly, new-build apartments, of varying levels of luxury, are taken as a symptom of an emerging gentrification frontier (Davidson and Lees, 2010; Visser and Kotze, 2008). Finally, the teleological assumption -- of ungentrified -> gentrified -> stasis -- has been increasingly questioned by recent research on "Super-Gentrification",whereby successive waves of gentrifiers, at an increasing economic scale, displace the older gentrifying cohort (Butler and Lees, 2006).

Thus, the concept of gentrification seems to have fractured; pushed in so many directions that it seems to lack a core identity (or, perhaps, as some have argued, usefulness as an explanatory concept). Consequently, one may be persuaded by the argument that gentrification has become, or always was, a "chaotic concept". While sympathetic to such criticism, this thesis maintains that gentrification does have a core essence. However, this quality has often been confused and lost in particularities. This thesis will show how the literature has failed to recognise that gentrification is capitalism's logic expressed through space. Thus, rather than gentrification being somehow 'outside' liberal political-economy, a strange by-product of residential choices and 'immoral' gentrifiers', it is baked into its

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[102] Although this point has been debated. For discussion, see Lees *et al* (2010).

operating logic. Buying a house helps the realisation of surplus-value, and may increase the value of the space around the home, but to reduce gentrification to this moment reifies the situation; the tip is mistaken for the iceberg. The nuances within this position -- importantly, regarding the relationship between immaterial labour, libidinal-economy, and value -- will be articulated through the forthcoming critique of the established paradigms through which 'gentrification' is commonly understood.

The Production School

Considering the claim made above, that gentrification is the expression of capitalism in space, one may incorrectly assume that this thesis positions itself comfortably within the "Production School" paradigm. After all, Smith's (2005) dialectical argument regarding the centrality of disinvestment and reinvestment in 'gentrifying' space has a clear relevance for London; as was articulated in the introduction. However, the "Production School" fails to grasp the importance of the relationship *between* political-economy and libidinal-economy. In doing so, its understanding of political-economy itself is rendered partial. This problem originates from the orthodox labour theory of value that underpins this paradigm and its primary theoretical explanatory tool: "The Rent-Gap". The following section will outline how the "Production School" approaches gentrification and, in doing so, provide a foundation from which to critique it. One should note, the aim is not to 'disprove' this approach but rather to reinvigorate it. In effect, through highlighting the importance of libidinal-economy, immaterial labour, and representational-space, in producing consumption, this thesis seeks to re-evaluate the Marxist approach to gentrification. In a particular sense, through showing how one cannot properly understand "Fringe Gentrification" without this theoretical development,in a general sense, through re-evaluating how the process of 'gentrification' is understood.

To understand the "Production School" -- such as Neil Smith, and later academics including Slater and Lees -- one must understand the position they seek to oppose; e.g. explanations of gentrification that rely upon a "sovereign" consumer". The notion of "Consumer Sovereignty", developed in Neo-Classical economics, argues that the market derives its form

from the needs of the consumer (Badeen, 2000). Profitability and the wider needs of capital are viewed as lexically secondary. In effect, the theory of "consumer sovereignty" implies an ontology of political-economy where all that 'exists' is consumer preferences and all that matters is the limitations placed on the realisation of these preferences. Importantly, for Smith, this assumption of consumer sovereignty can be detected within the broader framework of residential land use theory (Alonso, 1964; Muth, 1969; Mills, 1972) and the primordial explanations of gentrification derived from it:

> "According to these theories, suburbanization reflects the preference for space and the increased ability to pay for it due to the reduction of transportational and other constraints. Gentrification, then, is explained as the result of an alteration of preferences and/or a change in the constraints determining which preferences will or can be implemented." (Smith, 2005:50)

It is this position, which states that gentrification is simply an expression of changing preferences and tastes, that Smith and the wider "Production School" take aim at.

There are two important critiques that Smith develops of the 'Consumer Sovereign' position and it is *through* these critiques that his own argument is illustrated. The first of these critiques, one which will be more extensively discussed later in the chapter -- due to its pertinence to my own research agenda -- is the argument that preferences, rather than being individual, are collective (Smith, 2005)[103]. Consequently, it makes little sense to consider them 'sovereign'. The question ought to become: why have they collectively taken this form? Secondly, and more importantly for our current purposes, is Smith's argument that an explanation of gentrification "according to the gentrifier's preferences alone, while ignoring the role of builders, developers, landlords, mortgage lenders, government agencies, real

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[103] "If cultural choice and consumer preference really explain gentrification, this amounts either to the hypothesis that individual preferences change in unison not only nationally but internationally—a bleak view of human nature and cultural individuality—or that the overriding constraints are strong enough to obliterate the individuality implied in consumer preference. If the latter is the case, the concept of consumer preference is at best contradictory: a process first conceived in terms of individual consumption preference has now to be explained as resulting from cultural unidimensionality in the middle class—still rather bleak." (Smith, 2005:53).

estate agents —gentrifiers as producers— is excessively narrow." (Smith, 2005:55). In effect, any explanation which fails to properly take into account the forces of production -- alongside the wider social relations of capitalism -- can only ever understand gentrification in a myopic manner. However, while such an argument seems to suggest the necessity of a pluralistic account of gentrification that simultaneously understands consumption and production, Smith makes it clear that while "... the relationship between production and consumption is symbiotic… it is a symbiosis in which the movement of capital in search of profit predominates" (Smith, 2005:55). Consequently, for Smith, the problem with "Consumer Sovereignty" explanations of gentrification, is that they forget that capitalism, as a regime of production, does not pursue the satisfaction of desires *per se*, but rather the extraction of surplus-value. Although one should note, it is precisely the failure to recognise the *significance* of this symbiosis, between production and consumption, that leads to Smith's myopic understanding of production.

However, leaving this critique temporarily aside, the preeminent question structuring Smith's understanding is: how does the pursuit of surplus-value produce gentrified space? Smith gives us a dialectical answer to this question. Surplus-value is *first* extracted through disinvestment and *secondly* through reinvestment (e.g. gentrification). To illustrate Smith's argument let us return to Islington while thinking: what is the fundamental condition that must be satisfied for gentrification to be possible? Regardless of theoretical orientation, the fundamental prerequisite for gentrification is cheap space (or perhaps more precisely, that space is *considered* cheap in relative terms to particular social-economic actors[104]). This position leads us to the first moment in Smith's dialectic of gentrification (disinvestment). Space is not innately cheap and nor does it become cheap by chance. Instead, the value of space reflects the level of 'investment' within it. However, space, on every scale, is not invested into equally. Certain spaces, at certain moments, and for different reasons, are perceived to be 'good' investments while others are not[105]. Traditionally, working-class areas of a city, or social space in general, have been subjected to an overarching tendency toward

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[104] This caveat is important generally, but particularly in understanding "Super-Gentrification"; wherein the displaced rarely fall into the usual archetypical notion (Lees, 2003b).
[105] Uneven development is endemic to capitalism, it is a primary motor through which profit is accrued (Harvey, 2001).

disinvestment. This takes many forms: private landlords, recognising the limited 'productivity'[106] of investing in their properties, neglect the repair or reconstitution of housing (Smith, 2005), banking institutions, seeing such areas as high-risk and low-reward, engage in red-lining and other restrictions of capital investments (Merrifield, 2002; Lloyd, 2016), or local states, for a mixture of political and economic logics engage in a systematic disinvestment or transference (Watt, 2009) of public assets[107]. The result is an economic and physical de-valorisation of concrete-space. The value of individual properties, residential (and also commercial), decline and this reflexively works to reduce the value of co-constituting spaces; streets, neighbourhoods, boroughs, etc[108]. The 'winner' of this arrangement, this planned obsolescence, is capital itself; or rather, the subjects of capital who engage in disinvestment. Capital that escapes being invested into such spaces instead has the freedom to seek out more fertile ground for accumulation. Thus, systematic disinvestment itself is produced by the pursuit of surplus-value and profit.

According to Smith, the profitability of systematic disinvestment does not end there. Instead, it guarantees future profitability. Disinvestment produces the aforementioned essential prerequisite of gentrification; de-valorised space. Thus, we arrive at the second dialectical moment in Smith's argument - reinvestment. This is made possible because dilapidated housing, decaying infrastructure, and other effects of disinvestment, reduce the capitalised ground rent -- e.g. the value extracted by a space's current land-use -- but they do not decrease a space's "potential ground rent". This is the, speculative, "amount that could be capitalized under the land's "highest and best use"... or at least under a higher and better use." (Smith, 2005:60). It is the distinction between these two values -- of what *is* and what *could be* -- which constitutes the "The Rent-Gap". Gentrification, for production theorists, is the process initiated when there is an attempt to 'close' this gap, to make the speculative manifest, through processes of development, reinvestment, eviction, and destruction[109]. How

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[106] It is an investment with a likelihood of accumulation. In this case, in either raising rents or raising resale value.

[107] A process that compounds the preceding points.

[108] The value of particular concrete-spaces is dialectically constitutive of the value of the general concrete-space within which the particular is found. Likewise, the inverse is true, the value of the general bleeds into the particular.

[109] In 2002, Hackney Council held the European record for demolitions by a local authority: 17 tower blocks. Darren Palin, Former Managing Director of the Controlled Demolition Group, was quoted as

this gap is closed and who closes it reflects the particularities of the space in question. For instance, Smith highlights how a, broadly defined, state played a much larger role in closing rent-gaps within the initial waves of gentrification in US cities such as Boston and New York contrasted to European cities. While elsewhere the closure of rent-gaps was driven by particular private interests: the tourist industry in Paris's Latin Quarter (Smith, 2005:197) and a mixture of private international capital and quangos in London's Docklands (Smith, 1989). Yet, while there are always historical, geographical, and social, forces which structure the particularities of what/who closes a particular rent-gap, Smith et al argue that, in general, this is a process driven by those who profit from such closures.

One may be tempted to view Smith's arguments as incompatible with Glass's analysis of Islington. After all, in this example, isn't the consuming subject primarily 'closing' or, via sweat equity, *producing* the rent-gap? However, such an interpretation, while valuable, threatens to misunderstand Smith's fundamental point. The necessary condition for these moments to occur is that disinvestment and devalorisation have already taken place. The sweat equity would be impossible if these concrete-spaces didn't already *require* this labour. Additionally, one should keep in mind that, for Smith, even these moments of *seemingly* consumer led gentrification are the exception rather than the rule; the norm is the terrain of private developers, landlords, and the wider assemblage of capitalist land-markets:

"Gentrification is no longer about a narrow and quixotic oddity in the housing market but has become the leading *residential* edge of a much larger endeavor: the *class* remake of the central urban landscape. " (Smith, 2005:37)

Consequently, the taste of the gentrifier is viewed as secondary. What *drives* the process of gentrification is the wider structural conditions and undulations of capitalism, the law of uneven development and the rent-gaps this systematic disinvestment produces.

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saying:"We have blown down 500 structures worldwide and have worked with just about every authority in the UK - but Hackney Borough Council must be our most loyal customer." (Kerr, 2012:165).

Gentrification, for the owners of capital (land or otherwise), is a double victory; both disinvestment and reinvestment are profitable ventures.

It is important to illustrate the importance of a traditional Marxian labour theory of value (LTOV) in structuring the Smith's rent-gap model. As this orthodox understanding of value is what engenders a failure, by the "Production School", to recognise the relationship between political-economy and libidinal-economy in *producing* value and facilitating its *realisation*. The fundamental logic of the LTOV is straightforward: the value of a commodity reflects the amount of socially-necessary[110] labour-time expended on its production. This value is then translated into a price upon the marketplace, and its latent value -- imbued by labour -- is thus realised through the economic act of consumption[111]. To illustrate the mechanics of the LTOV within a production approach to gentrification, consider the following example.

Our imagined 'Gentrifiers' John and Christine have recently bought a dilapidated house in Islington. Its dilapidated form is the result of the labour-time previously imbued within it being "used up" through consumption. According to their socio-economic position, John and Christine have ready access to consumer capital. They buy the necessary reagents required for home-improvement -- tiles, paint, etc -- and then go about investing "sweat equity" into their home. When we inspect this "sweat equity", what Christine and John are fundamentally doing is imbuing their own labour-time, by fixing doors, painting, maybe some gardening, and the labour-time contained within their acquired reagents, *into* their home, *into* their land, etc. At times, their renovations may require more skilled labour than their personal sweat equity has the capacity for. Consequently, they go to the market and purchase the labour-power of another; for fixing wiring, installing sinks, and so on. Each of these moments imbues the house with labour-time and, according to the LTOV, with value itself. Accordingly, what Christine and John are doing, though this may not be their intention, is bringing concrete-space into alignment with the *potential* ground-rent; their

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[110] This is an important caveat. As it provides an understanding of value that 'gets around' the slow carpenter problem.

[111] A commodity that doesn't sell has no value, the latent value imbued by socially-necessary labour-time fails to be realised (Clarke, 1991).

labour is closing the rent-gap[112]. Fundamentally, this process echoes the logic of a gentrifying developer, even if the end intentions are somewhat distinct; buy de-valorised space, imbue it with value through labour-time (though likely not in its "sweat equity" form), and then aim to sell the property at a profit (thus realising the speculative *potential* ground-rent). It is difficult to conceive the "rent-gap" at all without a LTOV as the theoretical underpinning and Smith is open about this

> "I take as axiomatic a labor theory of value: the value of a commodity is measured by the quantity of socially necessary labor power required to produce it. Only in the marketplace is value translated into price… The house's value will also depend, therefore, on its rate of devalorization through use, versus its rate of revalorization through the addition of more value. The latter occurs when further labor is performed for maintenance, replacement, extensions, etc" (Smith, 2005:59)

The problem is not Smith's usage of a LTOV *per se* but rather the crude materialism that Smith formulates *his* LTOV with. Smith has a narrow-sighted perspective on what forms of labour create value. Consequently, his understanding of the rent-gap is fundamentally awry; it fails to recognise the complexity of value;in particular, regarding the relationship between value and the immaterial. In effect, this critique of Smith mirrors Raymond William's critique of Marx. In the Grundrisse, Marx (2005) argues that the body that makes a piano is a productive worker and that the body that distributes the piano is probably a productive worker, since this labour contributes to the realisation of surplus-value. However, for Marx, the man who plays the piano, whether to himself or others, is not a productive worker. However, Williams' correctly articulates that this conceptualisation of value "as a way of considering cultural activity, and incidentally the economics of modern cultural activity... is very clearly a dead-end." (Williams, 1977:113). It fails to understand the representational elements of concrete-value. This conceptualisation of value and the forms of labour which produce value is replicated within Neil Smith's framework. Consequently, so too is its inability to properly grasp at the relationship between the cultural and the economic,

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[112] The thesis will highlight how this process is more endemic to urban socio-spatial relations than previous research has suggested: consumption (and that which the thesis will show be intertwined with it) is fundamentally an act integrated into the logic of the "Rent-Gap".

between libidinal-economy and political-economy. At times, this theoretical deficiency ruptures into Smith's own account of gentrification. For instance, while Smith recognises the role of "The Neighbourhood" (Smith, 2005:17) and "Pioneer Aesthetics" (Smith, 2005:15) such dimensions lack a substantive integration into his explanatory model[113]. In effect, under Smith's conceptualisation of the "Rent-Gap" these cultural, aesthetic, and libidinal, dimensions to gentrification neither add value nor do they realise value; they are reduced to the status of Marx's piano player. The significance of this 'original sin', within how the process of gentrification is understood by the "Production School", cannot be overstated. It threatens to disconnect the "Rent-Gap" from concrete-reality; where the aesthetic and libidinal dimensions of space[114] are active components within the production of value (Sorkin, 1992; Baudrillard, 2019; Lazzarato, 1996) and, by extension, gentrification. This thesis will provide a corrective to this, through exploring the co-constitutive relationship between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and urban space, as will be discussed later in the chapter.

However, before moving on, it is necessary to engage with another dimension of the "Production School"; namely, the "Political-Wing". While mutually compatible, this approach explains gentrification primarily through contemporary urban policy and the neo-liberal governmentality that informs it. One should note, Smith does not abstract such considerations:

"The state, broadly conceived, constitutes a major ingredient in gentrification, acting variously as an economic, political and ideological agent." (Smith, 2005:120)

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[113] In addition, any consideration of the aesthetic or libidinal element to this process is moralistic rather than critical: "The frontier imagery is neither merely decorative nor innocent, therefore, but carries considerable ideological weight. Insofar as gentrification infects working-class communities, displaces poor households, and converts whole neighbourhoods into bourgeois enclaves, the frontier ideology rationalizes social differentiation and exclusion as natural, inevitable...As such, the frontier ideology justifies monstrous incivility in the heart of the city." (Smith, 2005:18).

[114] And all elements of commodity culture (Haug, 2006)

For instance, in his case-study of Society Hill, Smith argues that "The State" takes on a necessary interventionist role in kick-starting the closure of rent-gaps and accordingly the extraction of surplus-value:

> "...the purpose of the state was to recreate the profitability of urban real estate. Where the private market had profited by the disinvestment from Society Hill, the state was now being required to invest funds to amortize the disinvestment so that the same neighbourhood could be made profitable again for private reinvestment." (Smith, 2005:123)

In effect, "The State" shoulders the economic costs of disinvestment to secure the conditions of profitability[115];in this case, through funnelling public funds into a disinvested area until a tipping-point is reached and the concrete-space is able to attract private capital.

This state-focused analysis is developed further by the "Political-Wing"[116]. This stratum argues that the governmentality of "The State" has been drawn into alignment with the process of gentrification. In effect, a new intimacy has developed. To such an extent, they argue, that it constitutes a "Third-Wave" of the process (Hackworth, 2002),wherein the states relationship has shifted from a 'laissez-faire acceptance' to policy[117]. This analysis is informed by the broader shifts that have taken place within the governmentality of space;specifically, one wherein state spatial policy is produced from the perspective of an "entrepreneur" (Leitner, 1990); one that seeks to 'rectify' diminished exchange-values within its political-legal parameters (Weber, 2002). Following Cox (1993), the state's approach to gentrification is one manifestation of "New Urban Policy";wherein "footloose capital" (Boyle, 2001), facilitated by the state itself, engenders a situation where a *broadly defined* state

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[115] Likewise, Smith (2005) highlights the broader political-legal role played by "The State" in supporting the gentrification of space; the eviction of tenants and squatters, the suppression of protests, etc.

[116] The principal academics within this subsection are Lees and Slater. The primary contributions they have made is through the empirical casework, which has highlighted the shared operating logics and strategies between the state and market, in the production of space (Lees et al, 2010). This approach is not limited to western sociology (Visser et al, 2008).

[117] Though one should note the state's role in second-wave gentrification. In particular, the intensification of local cultural resources, including historical and artistic attractions of all varieties and the funding of arts schemes (Kearns and Philo, 1993).

seeks to channel investment into their[118] concrete-space for the extraction of surplus-value. Consequently, for the "Political-Wing", to understand gentrification from a production perspective[119], one must recognise the emphasised role played by the state in gentrifying concrete-space[120].

One could develop a fruitful analysis of "Fringe Gentrification" from the perspective of the "Political-Wing",n particular through analysing the urban development facilitated through the "City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework", which is a piece of urban policy that aimed to capitalise on the perceived growth capacity latent within the "City Fringe" (GLA, 2015)[121.] Importantly, this joint plan -- produced by the Greater London Authority (GLA), Transport for London (TfL), The City of London Corporation (CLC), alongside the London Boroughs of Hackney (LBH), Islington (LBI), and Tower Hamlets (LBTH) -- highlights the political assemblage[122] that co-constitute a broad notion of "The State". The "City Fringe" initiative sought to realise surplus-value in concrete-space through five key areas of intervention:

1) Available, Affordable, Business Stock.
2) Location and "Creative Vibe".
3) Dense, Urban, Collaborative, Environment.
4) Connectivity[123].
5) Mix of Uses.

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[118] It is worth noting the broader political-economic context of this; e.g."Place Wars" (Haider, 1992) and the intensification of the law of competition between urban economies engendered through the post-keynesian recomposition of capital.

[119] Millard-Ball (2000) argues that gap based theories and the economic/market logic they are grounded upon is inadequate when dealing with state led gentrification.

[120] One should note the important variations within this process. For instance, Gotham (2005) highlights the role of state policy in encouraging gentrification through facilitating tourist development.

[121] One should recognise that the "City Fringe" is only one such planning project with similar aims. For instance, the "Shoreditch New Deal Partnership" (Perrons and Skyers, 2004), the "EU Objective 2 business opportunity area", "City Challenge" (Pratt, 2009).

[122] An assemblage of national, regional, local, scales and the quangos that exist in relationship with private interests.

[123] One important example of this being the "East London Railway" (ELR); before the ELR, Hackney was the only Inner London Borough without an underground station (Perrons and Skyers, 2004).

It is interesting to note that the "City Fringe"[124], as highlighted by the planning document itself, is not so much a place, or series of places, rather it is a liminal categorisation into which particular areas are placed:

"The City Fringe was historically regarded as the area around the north and eastern edges of the City of London's financial district. Despite the Global Financial Crisis, the core office market has continued to expand and is now well established in these areas. As a result, much of what was considered fringe in the early 2000s is now considered core, whilst the City Fringe has moved north and east into areas such as Dalston, Hackney, Haggerston and Whitechapel. The functional relationship and strong links with the City itself remain of key importance, as does the role played by the City's markets and expertise in supporting growth in the City Fringe." (GLA, 2005:vi)

Beyond the "City Fringe" initiative, another concrete example highlighting the state's significant role in facilitating gentrification, within the case-sites, is the Colville Estate in Hackney, which sits next to the Regent's Canal in Hoxton. This estate has been subject to a series of "Master Plans" that have divided the redevelopment into a number of stages, with the overall aim of replacing the existing 438 with 925 "New Builds"[125]. Within this example, the state, beyond facilitating gentrification abstractly -- through the provision of infrastructure or indirect political-economic support -- actively utilises it's political, legal, and economic power, to drive forward the process of gentrification; e.g. to produce 'gentrified space'. This example also highlights the nuanced power relations that engenders such developments. For instance, Hackney Council justified the expansion of luxury private property through claiming that the revenue raised will fund future social housing (LBH, 2021). However, the details of Hackney Council's real, or imagined, rationale, are of lesser importance. The primary insight provided by the Colville Estate is that "The State", while

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[124] The "City Fringe" is a supplementary planning document that aims to provide greater degrees of specification within and over the various Local Plans of both the London Boroughs and the GLA. In particular, through providing additional weight in planning considerations to that which facilitates the economic policy it articulates.

[125] The division of these homes being 42% "Social Rent", 10% "Affordable", and 48% Market Sale. At the time of writing, the first three phases have been completed (Karakusevic, 2022).

intertwined with various economic actors, plays an indispensable role in facilitating gentrification within the case-sites[126]. However, while this insight is useful, it is important we do not draw conclusions from it which simplify the process of gentrification itself. Developments such as this are predicated upon, and draw their economic value from, in part, the libidinal economy that sparks the desire to consume[127] places like Hackney and the broader "City Fringe".

In effect, while "The State" is essential for understanding gentrification, this explanatory model is susceptible to the same epistemological block that hindered the previous "Production" arguments. Consumption, the moment that *realises* (and *produces*) value, including that invested (or otherwise 'facilitated' by "The State") is still fundamentally assumed and rendered epiphenomenal. This thesis seeks to investigate this overlooked interrelationship *between* political-economy and libidinal-economy; rather than simply providing another empirical account of gentrification that contains this myopic understanding of production. Consequently, while "The State" plays an essential role within the production of space, including within the case-sites, the thesis will leave questions surrounding "The State" to one side. In effect, while "The State" is a crucial co-agent within the political-economy underpinning gentrification it is not a significant force constituting libidinal-economy. The analysis developed by this thesis is one *mutually compatible* with a "Political-Wing" approach, one that, if applied holistically in future research, would provide a broader understanding of the phenomenon.

The Consumption School

With the fundamentals of "The Production School" outlined one can recognise its conceptual flaws. These critiques, raised by the "Consumption School", are interconnected to those raised above; though, as will be outlined, the particularities of the positions diverge. The primary argument raised is the following: in attempting to critique the ontology of "The

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[126] Importantly, this process is further enabled by the political-economy that surrounded the 2012 London Olympics. Wherein, the State utilised large waves of compulsory purchase orders, buying up land to be transformed into the form required/desired for "The Olympic" economy (Watt, 2013)

[127]The allure of residence is only one element of this.

Sovereign Consumer", the "Production School" has abstracted the consumer from *substantive* consideration (Hamnett, 1991). In effect, the structuralist presuppositions engender a conceptualisation of gentrification as a process without a subject (or, more precisely, as constituted exclusively by 'subjects of capital'). This is a salient point, one which facilitates a development of the thesis's critique of Smith. Without consumption the latent value of the commodity, infused by various moments of labour-time, cannot be realised (Baudrillard, 2019); a commodity that does not sell is valueless[128] (Clarke, 1991). While the particular members of the "Consumption School", upon which the following discussion will focus, may not agree with this Marxist diagnosis *per se*[129] -- in which the importance of the consuming subject is derived from consumption's essential role in realising value -- they nonetheless share the concern it implies (Ley 1986; Mills 1988; Caulfield 1989, 1994; Hamnett 1992); it is therefore necessary, if one wishes to understand gentrification, to explain "the presence of gentrifiers" (Beauregard, 2013:41).

One should not view the "Consumption School" as a congruent entity. There is an important distinction in how the presence of gentrifiers is explained; a division grounded upon theorising through "post-modern" or "post-industrial" conceptual frameworks respectively. While both of these approaches centre the gentrifying subject, these ontological distinctions engender substantively different analyses of the phenomenon. The "postmodern" stratum -- categorised by the work of Caulfield (1994), Mills (1988), and Florida (2002), -- view the gentrifier primarily as an product of middle-class/post-modern culture, with little analytical room given to political-economy. For these authors, gentrification represents a "postmodern urbanism" (Caulfield, 1994); a form of political and personal agency by the 'new' middle-classes. In contrast, "post-industrial" approaches, while still centering 'the gentrifying subject', recognise that the gentrifier and by extension gentrification, can only be explained through understanding cultural *and* economic shifts simultaneously (and the process that exists between these facets of social reality). Consequently, these authors --

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[128] Even more pressingly. The value infused within it is lost; thus a failure to sell is a functional *loss* of value.

[129] For instance, Ley's justificatory argument derives from a commitment to "Humanist Geography" in which the 'subject' of global (e.g. structural) processes is studied as a significant object of inquiry. Hamnett seems to be more concerned with the determinist, or even reductionist, implications carried into the study of gentrification by the 'Production School'.

categorised by the work of Ley (1996), Butler (2007), Hamnett (2000), and Rose (1984) -- argue, albeit in different ways, that gentrifiers and gentrification are symptoms of, alongside reproductive components within, the post-industrial city. To summarise, the "Consumption School" is split regarding the relationship between culture and political-economy. The "Post-Modern" wing gives a lexical priority to culture, arguably a form of "cultural determinism" (Smith, 2004:41), while the "Post-Industrial" approach gives a greater consideration to the interplay between culture and political-economy. However, in distinction to the "Production School", each provides an account of gentrification that centres the gentrifying subject as the principal agent of this process.

While some of these "Post-Modern" explanations illustrate important reflections on contemporary urbanism and the subjectivity of the so-called "New-Middle Class"[130], the fundamental issue with this stratum is the limited sociological scope. While such research may helpfully archive and categorise particular structures of feeling (SoF) within the urban landscape, it does little to explain *where* these SoF emerge from, or *why* these SoF *seemingly* wield so much influence over urban-space. This issue arises from the philosophical individualism which structures the ontological and epistemological framework of the "Postmodern" approach. The individual is viewed as the driving entity structuring the social world, steered by cultural frameworks which seemingly appear without material basis and are free from the constraints and compulsions of political-economy (Badeen, 2000). Thus, an attempt to refocus upon the gentrifying subject has led to the rebirth of the "Sovereign Consumer" and the reductive explanations this entails. Consequently, while the "Postmodern" approach helps to illuminate the phenomenological experience, and tastes, of its (ill-defined) "New Middle Class", it has little ability to explain gentrification itself.

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[130] For Caulfield (1994), 1970s and 1980s gentrification in Toronto was a very deliberate middle-class rejection of the oppressive conformity of suburbia, modernist planning, and mass market principles. 'oriented toward reconstituting the meanings of old city neighbourhoods towards an alternative urban future' (109). There is a clear resonance here between my argument and that evoked by Caulfield. However, the distinction lies within how one understands 'The Cultural' e.g. Caulfield fails to take seriously that culture is the *expression* of the economic. In addition, Caulfield's arguments fall into the same ontologizing tendency within the literature generally, see pages 80-84.

This failure to give consideration to political-economy is not endemic to the "Consumption School" as a whole. If we, for the sake of argument, agree with the core diagnosis -- gentrification occurs due to an emergent SoF within a portion of the middle-class -- but are suspicious of the individualist orientation, then the "Post-Industrial" approach provides a corrective. This explanation of gentrification, while centering the subject, provides a firm ontological grounding of these bodies within political-economy[131] (Smith, 1992). It does so through conceptualising consumption through Daniel Bell's (1976) work on "Post-Industrial Society". Bell argued that core economies are becoming 'post-industrial'[132]. There are four key features to this, all of which are relevant to understanding this explanation of gentrification:

1) A shift from manufacturing to a service based economy.
2) The increasing economic importance of technology and scientific based industries.
3) Points 1) and 2) lead to an increase in managerial, professional, and technical occupations and a relative decline in industrial occupations.
4) The artistic avant-garde becomes an increasingly important element structuring consumer culture.

One should recognise the particular resonance between these elements and London's socio-economic development in accordance with the composition of "Abstract Space", as was discussed in the introduction.

This framework provides an important insight into the political-economy *behind* consumption. The 'Post-Industrial' approach -- first epitomised by David Ley's (1996) explanatory framework -- argues that gentrification is, in part, a result of the changing occupational structure of the post-industrial city. As the economy of cities, such as London, underwent a disinvestment of the primary circuit of capital, it follows that it loses industrial jobs. For the city itself, these jobs are 'replaced' by post-industrial sectors (FIRE industries,

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[131] "Ironically, Ley's conceptualization of culture and consumption has its roots deeply embedded in the changing structure of production which is leading to changes in employment and class structure, but this is taken as given, and Ley does not investigate this further." (Lees, 1994:141).

[132] For a critique of this argument derived from systems theory, see Nash (1995).

associated services, alongside tech and creative industries[133]). Accordingly, this post-industrial reconstitution is simultaneously one of class re-constitution. As post-industrial white-collar jobs supersede the old blue-collar, the city becomes increasingly dominated by a middle-class labour-force[134]. While there are divergences within the 'next-step' of this argument -- e.g. why *in particular* does this shift in class-constitution *produce* gentrification -- this "Post-Industrial" underpinning structures this wing of the "Consumption School". It is worth noting the resonance between production and consumption approaches this conceptualisation entails. The "Consumption School" is often unfairly represented as being blind to the supply-side dimensions of gentrification (Smith, 1992; Lees, 1994). However, it is clear that such questions are considered. Through this sensitivity to urban political-economy, this stratification of the "Consumption School" has produced a 'thin' explanation of gentrification that centres the gentrifying subject while avoiding the pitfalls of "Consumer Sovereignty" and associated individualist ontologies.

While there is agreement regarding the "thin" argument -- that gentrification, and gentrifiers, are produced through post-industrialization and the associated class reconstitution of urban-space -- there are different, often mutually complementary, explanations of how this process unfolds within concrete-space. In effect, different academics highlight the importance of different gentrifying subjects. For example, Chris Hamnett (1994, 2003) working, to some extent, *closer* to economic questions, examines the role that the professionalisation of urban labour plays in 'heating up' of housing (and leisure) markets. Rose (1989), expanding upon the work of earlier scholars, such as Markusen (1981), investigates how changing gender norms, in particular around ideas of social-reproduction, work to encourage new forms of urban consumption. Ley (1981, 1986) gives a greater consideration to the cultural and social norms of the post-industrial middle-class in which, echoing the post-modernist approach, new political and aesthetic inclinations are reflected within the changing urban landscape;namely, a greater valorisation of artists (and fetishisation of 'the artist'), progressive politics, and an emphasis on consumer

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[133] Such developments have been traced in London (Foordo, 2013) on Tech in the East End, Cultural Industries in Hoxton (Pratt, 2009; Harris, 2010).

[134] Though one should note the invisible working-class of the post-industrial city, who are often abstracted within the common-sense surrounding "post-industrialization".

leisure[135]. What binds these perspectives is the following thesis: changes in urban social (re)production have constructed new stratifications of the urban middle-class and it is through their demand that 'gentrified space' is produced.

One particularly representative fragment within this "Post-Industrial" stratum is the collaborative work done by Tim Butler & Garry Robson (2003). Their research warrants a closer examination as it provides a further theoretical elaboration of the "Post-Industrial" explanation of gentrification. Likewise, their empirical work shares geographical terrain with the thesis's case-sites[136]. While other "Consumption School" academics have operationalised a Bourdieusian approach in explaining gentrification -- for instance, Ley's (1981) work on cultural capital in Vancouver and Bridge's (2006) work on education and class enculturation -- in Butler and Robson's research this Bourdieusian framework is explicitly integrated and outlined within the methodological framework[137]. With important caveats, they argue that gentrification is the result of middle-class individuals wishing to live amongst "people like themselves" (Butler and Robson, 2006:85) within a globalised London: "a desire to build a local community within the global city that maps onto their particular set of values, backgrounds, aspirations and resources." (Butler and Robson, 2006:11). In addition, they highlight how the particularities of these values and aspirations vary between different subsections of the urban middle-class; with different 'gentrified spaces' providing different opportunities for this spatial self-realisation. For instance, Lewisham, caters for a traditional (and unfashionable) middle-class, while Islington draws in those who valorise 'the cultural'.[138] In the language of Bourdieu, gentrification unfolds through the economic capital wielded by the middle-class, but different stratums of this middle-class weigh the importance of social, symbolic, economic, and cultural, capital, in different proportions. As

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[135] Which distinguishes this social group from the philistine, conservative and miserly middle-classes of the industrial period (Butler and Robson, 2003).

[136] Butler and Robson investigate London Fields, an area within Hackney.

[137] This illustration provides a useful opportunity to perceive and critique the ontological underpinnings of such approaches.

[138] For instance, Lewisham appeals to a more 'classical' middle-class, and consequently the 'success' of its gentrifying logic requires the satisfaction of particular parameters in accordance with this. In contrast, while Brixton requires the satisfaction of completely different parameters that orientated towards the 'unorthodox' inclination of its gentrifying bodies; e.g. Lewishman continues to gentrify by being safe, stable, and providing networks for social capital, while Brixton continues to gentrify by being 'unpredictable', varied, and providing networks for hedonistic satisfaction.

such, different kinds of gentrified space attract different kinds of gentrifiers; the demand that facilitates gentrification is fractured upon these grounds.

In a partial resonance with Smith's (1982:151-152) earlier arguments:

> "In the process, many downtowns are being converted into bourgeois playgrounds replete with quaint markets, restored townhouses, boutique rows, yachting marinas, and Hyatt Regencies. These very visual alterations to the urban landscape are not at all an accidental side-effect of temporary economic disequilibrium but are as rooted in the structure of capitalist society as was the advent of suburbanization".

The key analytical insight Butler and Robson provide is that "Inner London is increasingly a middle-class 'play-zone', so much so that it is becoming increasingly differentiated" (Butler and Robson, 2006:12). This is an important observation, one that highlights how London contains multiple *forms* of gentrified space; each driven by different generative spatial logics. While the 'gentrifying path' may be distinct, the end result is the same: rising exchange-values and the slow-violence this entails. Thus, Butler and Robson provide a convincing empirical illustration of a key claim made by the thesis: that gentrification is a latent characteristic of commodified space, one that exists in a parasitic relationship with other social phenomena. Rather than a discrete space, it is a process (Rose, 1984). Enabled or frustrated in accordance with the satisfaction of the particular generative logic contained within a place.

Accordingly, to understand a *form* of gentrification one must uncover the particular 'gentrifying path' it takes[139], in terms of spatial organisation (e.g. infrastructure, transportation, political/economic influence), Bourdieusian symbolic reproduction as addressed by Butler and Robson, and questions of libidinal-economy e.g. the desires and phantasies that facilitate the production of space. In investigating London's gentrified

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[139] The thesis was methodologically inspired, in part, through the implications of this insight. However, as will be discussed, it is necessary to move beyond a Bourdieusian incarnation of the "gentrifying path" to properly understand the relations of consumption and the *libidinal* production of space.

spaces, Butler and Robson's success according to this criteria is mixed. The analyses of London's 'Traditional' middle-class spaces of gentrification -- Battersea, Docklands, Telegraph Hill, and, to a lesser-extent, Barnsbury -- provide useful and convincing explanations in which economic capital is utilised to acquire urban-space which facilitates convenience and the reproduction of social capital. In effect, they identify a libidinal-economy similar to that found in suburbs and other middle-class strongholds. However, Butler and Robson's investigation of the more 'unorthodox' spaces of gentrification -- London Fields and Brixton -- are less developed. There are some useful insights, such as the aestheticisation of 'unorthodox' consumption, but these areas are stated rather than substantially illuminated. If Butler and Robson had followed these rabbit holes further, it would have revealed the wider constellation within which these libidinal moments exist. In doing so, a fuller picture of this 'unorthodox' form of London's gentrifying process would have been revealed.

The failure to sufficiently engage with such problems arises from a heavy handed use of Bourdieu; one which encourages a 'one size fits all' conceptualisation of social reality. Where areas of critical importance are discussed, the explanation is reduced to an opaque notion of "Cultural Capital". This entails any explanation of a phenomenon can only ever be partial: Bourdieu's **"**sociology does not offer much purchase on the transformation of social systems. It is geared towards accounts of their internal operation" (Calhoun 1993:70). However, the fundamental issues with a Bourdieusian framework are more substantive than Calhoun argues here. In understanding the world primarily through the reproduction of class identity and constitutive striving to realise 'capital', it fails to grasp that symbolic reproduction exists as a by-product of action rather than simply being the 'reason' for action[140]. Consequently, this entails that a place (or an object), its allure to the subject, becomes of secondary-importance. To borrow, albeit instrumentally, the language of object-orientated-ontology, the Bourdieusian framework engenders an under-mining of social reality (Harman, 2011). The libidinal-economies that drive consumption are abstracted and replaced by a mechanical understanding of how the actions produced by desire

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[140] For a detailed argument see the excellent collection by Calhoun, LiPuma, and Postone (1993). Likewise, this point connects to a Durkheimian critique of Bourdieu; the "social fact" is seen only from one angle.

facilitate the reproduction of symbolic class identity. These questions are, of course, of profound importance. One's desire is unavoidably interlinked with a framework of class-identity. However, to focus on them exclusively, as this Bourdieusian approach to consumption encourages, entails that important clues into a social phenomenon are overlooked[141]. The desires themselves are never engaged with. Consequently, the explanation engendered is fundamentally partial; the *libidinal* logic of particular habituses is simply presumed rather than explained. This thesis seeks to correct this deficiency, through an explicit investigation into libidinal-economy; the desires and phantasies which engender the action upon which symbolic class reproduction is grafted[142].

Cultural Political-Economy

Through this critique of production and consumption approaches, the crucial gaps within our understanding of gentrification have become more perceptible. To expand our knowledge, it is necessary to focus upon libidinal-economy and its co-constitutive relationship with the gentrification of space. However, it would be useful to examine the elements of the gentrification literature that seem to orbit around similar questions. The clearest example is Sharon Zukin's (1989) research into the cultural political-economy surrounding New York and "Loft Living". There are two key elements within this work that resonate with my own approach:

1) An operating ontology that recognises the dialectical relationship between cultural and political-economy in the production of space.
2) A recognition of the importance played by libidinal economies in the consumption of space (even though this language is not explicitly used.)

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[141] For instance, Bridge (2005) limits the analysis via the argument that gentrified aesthetics are dependent on display and maintenance of cultural capital.

[142] "In a certain way, therefore, the idea of the epithumè as an identifiable regime of desire only has meaning in reference to the coherence of a set of relations and practices. It would be perhaps easier to see its features on a small scale, for example that of the universes Bourdieu describes as 'fields', sites where agents engaged in the same social 'game' converge. Bourdieu uses the term "Illusio" for the agents' interests in being caught up in the 'game'. The term epithumè applies to similar things, namely, the very forces that drive the engagement in the game, but with the distinctive advantage of indicating how much this 'interest' is in the end, and in keeping with the organic link between interest and conatus, a matter of desire, hence of affects." (Lordon, 2014:34).

To expand on these points. Zukin's dialectical approach works to effectively synthesise production and consumption approaches. It is important to note, while Zukin's focus isn't on gentrification *per se*, it draws from this literature while highlighting the relevance of her arguments for explanations of contemporary gentrification. In a sense, this ambiguous relationship with the gentrification literature is shared by the thesis. Zukin argues that the antecedent movements of political-economy set the scene -- the curvatures of "New York's industrial ecology" (1989:4) -- while recognising that these necessary conditions are interlaid within a libidinal-economy of consumption; one which transforms industrial space into attractive chic within the bourgeois imagination. Crucially, this libidinal economy is not reduced into a *simply*[143] Neo-Veblenian form[144], or a Bourdieusian reduction to distinction and symbolic class reproduction, instead it is recognised to be a discrete historical phenomenon:

> "Putting it broadly, the growth of a market in living lofts, like the growth of any modern product market, requires three conditions. These are the availability of the product or the means of producing it, the acceptability of the product to the intended consumers, and the accessibility of a model that promotes the product's use. These are, of course, the requirements of a market in a period of mass production and mass consumption. The important point is that these factors, like the commodities created by their interaction, are socially produced. They reflect the social relations and cultural values of a particular time and place." (1989:4)

For Zukin, the libidinal-economy at work within such spaces is -- partially -- a "part of a larger modern quest for authenticity." (68). One sated through relict buildings and

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[143] These elements are of course also present, as they are in any moment of consumption within a class society. However, just as a Bourdieusian framework limits the parameters of explanation, so too does a Neo-Veblenian one.

[144] The Neo-Veblenian argument is put forth by Jager. For Veblen (1991), there exists a prescient subclass within contemporary consumer society e.g. the leisure class;defined primarily by pecuniary strength (money), it feels it necessary to objectify its wealth status in manifest display. In effect, Jager (1986) regurgitates this argument and, in doing so, attempts to reduce the libidinal/aesthetic dimensions of the phenomenon to epiphenomena. It does not matter *what* is being shown, all that matters is the act of display (and that which this display obscures).

associated industrial aesthetics, which "Like Gothic ruins in the nineteenth century… now inspire nostalgia for the past." (73). By incorporating these reflections within a concrete political-economic analysis of 'how such consumption can be possible and profitable', through examinations of development subsidies (140), neo-liberal urban planning (139), speculation (149), tax-breaks such as NYC J-51 (162) and public-private partnership schemes (163). It is clear that Zukin's work best exemplifies an attempt to overcome the production vs consumption dichotomy and does so in a manner which avoids the Bourdieusian abstraction of libidinal economy outlined earlier.

This thesis seeks to build upon Zukin's insights. First, it is necessary to expand the analysis; to apply this dialectical approach to culture and political-economy to the *physics*[145] of gentrification explicitly. Secondly, while areas of the libidinal economy engendering "loft living" are resonant with London's "Urban Dreamworld", these examples are not exhaustive (the constellation of the libidinal economy at play within London is more extensive than Zukin's arguments account for). Thirdly, a greater historical reflection is required on the distinction between 'then' and 'now'. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the libidinisation of traces has, like gentrification itself, expanded and become more complex. It has become a phenomenon present in spaces of consumption throughout urban-space; rather than existing as a peculiarity in New York's housing market. Finally, Zukin (and Ley) place an extensive explanatory power upon:

> "'…a cadre of cultural intermediaries in real estate, travel, cuisine, the arts' who create and reproduce knowledge, transmit images and disseminate information about 'cool' and 'trendy' neighbourhoods… {who} do not exist in a cultural or economic vacuum, but operate through organised networks involving public relations firms, advertising and marketing corporations, festival promoters and city agencies**."** (Gotham, 2005:1110)

In effect, orthodox immaterial labourers 'teach' the middle-class's desire; this analytical framework has been repeated extensively within other contemporary investigations into the

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[145] The particular logic and mechanics of the process.

cultural political-economy of gentrification (Bridge, 2001; Jager, 1986). This approach, while useful in highlighting the role such actors play within the production (and disciplining of desire) risks simplifying the multitude of bodies which work to reproduce libidinal-economy. In effect, such explanations reduce epithumogenesis into orthodox immaterial 'teaching the field' in isolation. Consequently, while Zukin's work marks an important step in understanding the nuanced relationship that exists between political-economy and libidinal-economy, it is only a foundation; one that this thesis will expand upon.

The Ontologisation of Gentrification

When pulled together, this literature reflects a diverse toolbox. Rather than existing in total opposition, the various dichotomies discussed -- production/consumption, cultural/economic, post-modern/post-industrial, etc -- exist in a productive tension. When taken as a whole, they correct the theoretical excesses of each other[146]. This is essential, as the "the interdigitation of economic and cultural competencies and pursuits in the gentrification field makes any statement of monocausality questionable" (Ley, 2003:2541)[147]. To understand gentrification, it is necessary to grasp at production and consumption simultaneously. A failure to do so not only obscures the social phenomena under investigation. Paradoxically, it entails that one fails to properly understand the paradigm one seeks to champion. An understanding of production that fails to understand consumption, or an understanding of consumption that fails to grasp production, leads to a myopic understanding of both production and consumption. These elements are fundamentally intertwined, one cannot understand libidinal-economy (that drives consumption) without political-economy and one cannot understand political-economy (that drives production) without libidinal-economy. While the established literature often articulates the need to understand questions of

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[146] Likewise, particular concrete-spaces different approaches are more relevant (Warde, 1991).

[147] Hamnett argues "production and consumption, supply and demand, economic and cultural, and structure and agency explanations are all a part of 'the elephant of gentrification' (Hamnett, 1991). To do so, he makes an analogy where blind-men each attempt to describe different parts of an elephant -- e.g. consumption or production etc -- while failing to recognise these elements are interconnected. The thesis agrees with Hamnett's diagnosis *but* argues that the established literature failed to recognise another central element; libidinal-economy.

production and consumption simultaneously, through abstracting libidinal-economy, the mediating link, such explanations are inherently limited.

This flawed conceptualisation is, in part, produced through the literatures failure to grasp the trialectical ontology of the production of space[148]. Space, and in particular the urban space of the city, is often construed as a natural fact; the form it takes seems like an unavoidable ontological category (Lefebvre, 1991). This is a prevalent perception within the 'common sense' discussions that concern space (Merrifield, 2002); however, space has the particular quality of being a concrete universal, it is being embedded within while also constitutive of, the world of social relations; "the dialectical totality" (Stanek, 2008:64). The social world, that which it contains, and that which is produced and engaged with, unavoidably exists within space. It moulds these relationships, in particular ways, in accordance with the specificities of the space (Goodman, 2010). This entails that the very social relations that structure the form of space are structured by the entity they produce. This relationship is the socio-spatial dialectic, as the contradictions and practices within the spatial and social configure and drive the other (Soja, 1980). This is an essential insight for understanding the flaws of the gentrification literature and the lack of trialectical conceptualisation it expresses; we unavoidably 'consume' space to produce space, and what we consume, and so produce, is a product of the space in which we exist (Goodman, 2010). We are left with a complex picture, in which space is both productive of and produced by concrete social relations (Lefebvre, 1991).

This process of interaction between these constitutive moments is what engenders the myopic analyses of the established literature. The introduction provided a preliminary discussion of the heuristic device Lefevbre provides for a more holistic socio-spatial critique; through the notions of "Concrete Space", "Representational Space", and the "Space of Representation"[149]. This framework allows sociological investigation to move beyond the undue privilege placed upon certain kinds of socio-social relations discussed throughout this chapter. Instead of understanding space as a process, through recognising the symbiosis

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[148] As will be discussed, it is essential to recognise the strategic and explanatory value of the concept "Gentrification" while also recognising its flaws and ontologising tendencies.

[149] See pages 35-36.

between "Concrete Space", "Representational Space", and the "Space of Representation", the orthodox approaches to gentrification provide a lexical priority to particular 'moments' of the trialectic. The "Production School" provide substantial weight to "Concrete Space", the spatial flows of capital and labour, while "Consumption School" explanations privilege certain aspects of "Representational Space"[150]. There is a widespread failing to grasp the relations *between* these moments that concurrently constitute spatial phenomena under investigation. This leads to a failure which mirrors that discussed earlier mirrored, a fixated analytical gaze upon one spatial moment engenders a failure to properly understand even that which is focused upon; e.g. one can *only* understand "concrete-space" through understanding its representational qualities, one can *only* understand "representational-space" through understanding the representations made of it, and so on. The failure to conceptualise the problematic through a trialectical framework entails a fundamental restriction on the explanatory potential of any analysis produced.

As will be discussed throughout the methodology[151], this thesis operationalises its methods and determines its fields of investigation through the spatial insights that Lefevbre's trialectics provides. In doing so, the thesis provides not only an explanatory framework for a particular *form* of 'gentrification' -- e.g. the "Urban Dreamworld" -- but also a trialectical approach to 'gentrification' in a broader sense. While the specific sociological elements of the "Urban Dreamworld" and intertwined phenomena entail the *necessity* of a trialectical approach to produce any form of substantive knowledge[152]. This framework also provides a significant corrective for the investigation and critique for forms of 'gentrification' beyond this; for example, through a trialectical reimagining of Neil Smith's "Rent-Gap" theory that brings "Concrete Space" into dialogue with its 'immaterial' elements.

However, beyond this trialectical critique, there is another valuable insight derived from pulling these threads of the gentrification literature together. It reveals the core assumptions

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[150] For instance, through the excessive reliance on concepts such as "Habitus", "Cultural Capital", and "Symbolic Exchange".

[151] See forthcoming discussion and pages 97-99

[152] It is a social 'thing' that can only be explained by a toolbox with the spatial and psycho-social sensitivities that a trialectical approach provides; e.g. due to its intertwined with phantasy, imaginaries, and images.

made about gentrification in *general* (e.g. that are shared between these divergent paradigms). This is significant, as, in some cases, these assumptions facilitate the obscuring of the concrete phenomenon itself. The 'choice' offered by academic toolbox enables the ontologising of a *particular form* of gentrification *as* gentrification; often through a historical antecedent being mistaken as eternal. Consequently, it is necessary to critique this ontologising tendency. In doing so, the more fundamental flaws of the academic literature surrounding gentrification will be revealed. One should note that these points are generally drawn from the literature as a whole but, at times, the issues raised are particularly concentrated within specific areas.

Firstly, there is an assumption that the 'gentrifier' is a simple subject position. Within the gentrification literature, regardless of the particular theoretical orientation, analyses focus upon the labelling of "The Gentrifier". In effect, the literature is fixated upon searching out and identifying Ruth Glass's clear-cut gentrifying subject. However, this approach becomes particularly problematic as gentrification further diverges from that identified by Glass; gentrification has changed and so too must our understanding of the 'gentrifying subject'. It is necessary to widen our understanding of what "The Gentrifier" entails. This thesis will argue that urban studies ought to depart from this notion of the gentrifier as a concrete-identity and instead should focus upon *gentrifying* as an action; e.g. it is something that the subject does, rather than something the subject is. With this perspective, one can recognise how in different moments and in different ways, depending upon the particularities of the concrete-space in question, subjects are interpellated into conducting "gentrifying labour"; e.g. labour which raises the exchange-value of space or that facilitates the realisation of this value. This modular perspective of "The Gentrifier" allows urban studies to move beyond the sociologically flawed mythology of "The Gentrifier" as ontologically middle-class[153]. While such subjects may conduct gentrifying labour within particular spaces, they are not a necessary requirement. To properly understand

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[153] One should note Rose's (1984) arguments regarding "Marginal Gentrifiers" comes some way to this position, but still fundamentally assumes a clear-cut identity; albeit one that is, in some manner, marginalised while engaged in 'gentrifying'.

gentrification, one must recognise that this endemic spatial process does not require an orthodox gentry[154].

This under-theorisation of "The Gentrifier" infects the wider assemblage of knowledge surrounding gentrification; for our purposes, the most significant example being the "Residential Fetish"[155]. Through concieving of "The Gentrifier" as a middle-class subject position, the relative importance of home-ownership and residential space has been inflated. Once more, the literature struggles to recognise the historical quality of gentrification; the investigation is still routinely conducted upon the terms setup by Glass. This "Residential Fetish" is problematic as, by inflating the importance of the residential, it has reduced the relative importance of other spatial relationships. In particular, the role played by spaces of consumption and rental markets. There are two fundamental issues here:

1) A failure to appreciate the relationship *between* residential spaces and spaces of consumption[156] (both private {shops, bars, 'workplaces'} and public {streets, squares, institutions etc}).

2) This framework struggles to explain forms of gentrification in which middle-class homeownership is not the dominant circuit through which gentrification occurs; e.g. in places where the "gentrifying path" is grounded on consumption or ephemeral residence[157].

In effect, this "Residential Fetish" obscures the phenomenon of gentrification itself. This thesis will go beyond this framework. Specifically, through focusing upon the overlooked gentrifying labour latent within contemporary urban consumption.

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[154] The established literature goes searching for contemporary versions of Ruth Glass's gentrifiers, and, in doing so, fails to recognise the endemic element of 'gentrifying' within urban social relations. For instance, in Butler's study gentrifiers are home-owners, well-paid, over 50, a majority of them own stocks and shares (Butler, 2003:114). In the "unorthodox" spaces of Brixton the same holds true, albeit with a *slightly* younger sample.

[155] There are some exceptions. In particular, the "Tourist Gentrification" literature moves past such frameworks. As does, albeit uncritically, Hubbard's (2018) work on "Retail Gentrification".

[156] It is important to note that consumption is primarily commutary e.g. *disconnected* from residence.

[157] This is noticeable in Butler and Robson's understanding of Brixton and London Fields; the focus remains on mortgages and traditional understandings on 'consuming' space.

Secondly, as discussed throughout, there is a systematic understating of the role played by representational-space and the libidinal in facilitating the process of gentrification. There is a significant tendency within the literature to simplify space; to expunge it of its immaterial elements. Consequently, questions regarding desire, perception, and ideology, are rarely substantively considered[158]. This conceptualisation fails to recognise that all space, including concrete-spaces exposed to gentrificatory pressure, are simultaneously material *and* immaterial[159]. In effect, the literature centralises an abstract concrete-space at the expense of representational space; the space of ideologies, desires, phantasies, etc. Without an understanding of the desires and phantasies that mobilise a subject to consume or reject concrete-space then our understanding of why a subject engages in "gentrifying labour" is fundamentally limited[160]. This not only limits our understanding of the representational dimensions of gentrified spaces, it also reduces our understanding of the "concrete-space" that the literature currently focuses on. As discussed[161], these two categories of space exist only through being intertwined, representational space is inseparable from the concrete-space from which it exudes and upon which it is projected (Lefevbre, 1991). In effect, it is necessary to expand the understanding of space that one utilises to understand the process of gentrification.

Once we recognise the role representational-space plays in facilitating gentrification, then we can recognise that those who produce representational-space engage in "gentrifying labour". To illustrate this point, one should contrast 'material' gentrification -- a process undertaken by forces which directly produce concrete-space; property developers, state apparatuses, etc -- and 'immaterial' gentrification, a process undertaken by those who produce "Representational-Space". However, while useful for conceptualising the situation, this dichotomy simplifies the delicate relationship between the material and the immaterial, the

[158] As discussed, when the consuming body is discussed it is almost through a Bourdesian framework; one that fails to recognise the ontological significance of such phenomena in exuding influence over the process of producing space.

[159] These two categories of space exist only through being intertwined, representational space is inseparable from the concrete-space from which it exudes and upon which it is projected.

[160] In light of the aforementioned critique of Bourdieusian frameworks, it is necessary to push Butler and Robson's (2003) insights further. One must go beyond *describing* the social-symbolic expression of consumption and interrogate the different libidinal-economies that produce it and, in doing so, illuminate the 'path' of gentrification.

[161] See pages 35-36.

"concrete" and the "representational". The two are always intertwined: e.g. in attempting to capture desire, the business owner structures their concrete-space in tandem with the representational, while the representational is always produced through material action. The important point here is that the current literature on gentrification fails to grasp the significance of these concerns. It fails to grasp that 'gentrifying' is simultaneously a question of who (and what) produces the representational-space which facilitates the libidinal allure of the concrete. It is this quality, the *representational* dimension, that Neil Smith's "Rent-Gap" crucially fails to grapple with. An oversight this thesis seeks to correct by understanding the gentrification of London's fringe *through* libidinal-economy. In doing so, it will provide a "production" explanation that moves beyond a *myopic* labour theory of value; namely, through investigating the *production* of *consumption*.

The critiques of the literature raised above are of particular significance when trying to understand the "Fringe" spaces of gentrification in London. If we attempted to explain this particular form of gentrification with the existing apparatus it would fail to yield a convincing explanation. For instance: the so-called gentry are constituted by young renters rather than middle-aged mortgage owners. It is a process of gentrification fundamentally intertwined with consumption and, in particular, a form of consumption oppositional to 'consumerism'. These characteristics are not epiphenomenal. If we wish "to understand the production of potential gentrifiers" (Hamnett, 1991:187) then it is essential that we examine the libidinal elements of the landscape within which these particular 'gentrifiers' are produced.

This shall be done by incorporating the various lines of critique which have been developed throughout this review, and this *negative* reading will produce a new assortment of tools to understand the logic of *this* gentrification. However, as has been stressed throughout, this new approach -- a focus on the representational, on phantasies and desires, and simultaneously utilising a wider understanding of 'the gentrifier' -- is a necessary, but not sufficient, framework to explain *this* gentrification. It is necessary to maintain the positive insights produced by the literature, to sketch out how the existing toolboxes instruments -- on state power, rent-gaps, symbolic reproduction, class identity, post-industrialization, etc,

etc -- make possible, and interplay alongside, the new analytic instruments. While this thesis will focus upon the representational and immaterial aspects currently abstracted from consideration, it is only in tandem that one can derive a holistic insight into this social process.

Conclusion

This chapter has situated the thesis within the broader literature surrounding the study of gentrification. In doing so, it highlights what distinguishes the thesis's approach from previous critiques of gentrification alongside highlighting its fundamental academic contributions to the field. Accordingly, the chapter reviewed the hegemonic explanatory frameworks used to explain gentrification

The fundamental critique levelled against this literature is that, in different ways, the dominant approaches to gentrification abstract the importance of desire and immaterial space. In doing so, they abstract consideration of a fundamental moment within the production of space; e.g. that produced through the relationship of political-economy and libidinal-economy. While this is problematic within urban studies generally, it particularly obscures our ability to understand gentrification. The different moments of the gentrification literature express this ontological absence in distinct ways. The "Production School", through failing to recognise the representational element of value, fails to properly understand concrete-value; e.g. its conception of the "Rent-Gap" fails to understand the *economic* value of libidinal-economy. While the "Consumption School" through an excessive utilisation of Bourdeiu, fails to understand why particular moments of distinction are *desired*, why they are *enjoyable*. In doing so, the act and experience of consumption is reduced to *simply* symbolic reproduction. In effect, a Bourdieusian conceptual framework is allowed to eclipse concrete social-reality. Through focusing on libidinal-economy, this thesis will provide a corrective to this failure to grasp the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy. In doing so, it will provide an explanation of gentrification that investigates the production of consumption.

In addition, the existing literature ontologises the particular phenomenon of gentrification. Across both schools, the concept of gentrification is structured by a particular set of assumptions. In some ways, it has failed to recognise that the social process -- coined by Glass as "Gentrification" -- is endemic to capitalist society. As was discussed in the introduction, gentrification is the expression of capitalist social relations in space. The process wherein *value*, in a simultaneously concrete and representational sense, is intertwined with violence. Wherein, urban-space is (re)produced in accordance and urban bodies are either able or unable to, in a broad sense, consume it e.g. the process of displacement. Instead, the established literature too readily conceives of gentrification as being, to some extent, 'outside' liberal political-economy, a strange by-product of residential choices and 'immoral' gentrifiers. In effect, the literature is perpetually pursuing Ruth Glass's clear-cut gentrifying subject. To properly understand gentrification -- in a general and particular sense -- it is necessary to prioritise *gentrifying* as an action. With this perspective, one can see how the multiplicity of ways that bodies perform gentrifying labour; e.g. labour which, in some ways, either valorises space or facilitates the realisation of latent value. For instance, one can move beyond the "Residential Fetish" that exists in the literature. The relative importance of residential examples of gentrifying labour are inflated while abstracting other forms of gentrifying labour: such as, ephemeral residence, consumption, immaterial labour, producing representations. As discussed in the introduction, these moments will be explored throughout this thesis.

Consequently, this thesis simultaneously draws from the "Gentrification" literature while distancing itself from it. There is a linguistic and conceptual universe that surrounds the concept of "Gentrification". Namely, using this language smuggles in a conceptual framework which is, as highlighted above, fundamentally problematic. It has reified social reality into a compelling yet disconnected moralistic mythology. In different ways, the nature of the urban-experience that capitalism produces entails that urban life is, on a fundamental level, intertwined with the process of gentrification. Gentrification -- the *violence* innate to commodified space -- is parasitical, it infests action within urban-space. As such, while critiquing this quality, we must recognise that social phenomena still exist *underneath* it. Within "Fringe Gentrification", one finds a distinct libidinal-economy which is

of significance *beyond* its entwinement with gentrifying labour and the process of gentrification. Importantly, for a critical analysis, one cannot understand "Fringe Gentrification" without it. In effect, without understanding the libidinal allure of the concrete-space *expressing* "Fringe Gentrification", one cannot understand how value is realised and reproduced. The following chapter will address the methodological framework developed to investigate the libidinal-economy *beneath* "Fringe Gentrification".

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter follows and justifies the methodological decisions underpinning the thesis. It begins by outlining the ontological and epistemological foundations upon which this investigation is grounded. Following Renault (2016), the thesis understands social reality as a process; one contingent upon the relationships that exist between semi-concrete 'things'; such as political-economy and libidinal-economy. This ontological presupposition is operationalised alongside a critical epistemology; one that seeks to understand social reality, not simply to describe it, but to understand the potentialities within it. In effect, the *purpose* of illustrating the social processes underpinning social reality is grounded upon an epistemological commitment to the *potential* of social reality.

The chapter justifies why a qualitative approach is appropriate for seeking to understand the processes underpinning "Fringe Gentrification" and the "Urban Dreamworld". Following Flick (2004), the profound advantage qualitative research holds is its ability to understand lifeworlds *from the inside out*. In effect, as the thesis seeks to understand this libidinal-economy from the perspective of the interpellated, a qualitative approach is best suited. However, a "qualitative approach" is a broad commitment. As such, the chapter highlights the particular qualitative methods operationalised by the thesis. In particular, it justifies the decision to 'split' the methodological framework in half; between a particular toolset designed to interrogate physical-space and one aimed at extracting knowledge of digital-space. This provides the thesis with an important opportunity to highlight the *distinctions* between the relationship that exist between "Fringe Gentrification", libidinal-economy and the different forms of space through which this processural relationship is expressed.

As discussed, the first two empirical chapters seek to understand the relationship between representational-space and concrete-space. In effect, it seeks to understand how libidinal-economy exerts itself upon space; through phantasy, affect, etc. The methods

operationalised for these chapters are structured accordingly. These chapters operationalise semi-structured walking-interviews through the case-sites themselves. The chapter highlights the value of this approach; in facilitating relevant data regarding the relationship between the body, concrete-space, and the representational qualities that mediate this engagement. Likewise, it articulates the primary sampling decisions. In particular, it discusses how the sampling of participants was conducted in a manner that sought to consciously avoid the "Residential Fetish"[162] that has underpinned the majority of contemporary gentrification research. Namely, through accruing a sample that 'consumed' the case-sites in manner beyond residence. The chapter highlights the myriad of manners in which this was done, including: the production and distribution of an aesthetically mimetic poster, snowballing, and recruiting-on-location.

The chapter continues by discussing how the data accrued from these walking-interviews was coded and analysed. In particular, it discusses how the functional 'ontology' derived from coding this data became key to structuring the thesis as a whole. This 'ontology', that focused upon the relationship participants held with phantasmic objects, places, bodies, and practices, provided an important tool through which the analysis was structured. This rudimentary analytic approach was then developed through the psycho-social approach to the material itself, one that seeks to interlace the "Psycho-Social" tradition of Cremin (2011) and Lorenzer (1972) with the sociological insights of the narrative turn (Riessman, 1993). In effect, it approached the material to uncover the phantasies that guided the participants' libidinal investment into and disinvest from particular objects, places, bodies, and practices.

Importantly, the chapter also outlines and justifies the methodology operationalised to investigate 'digital' space and the space(s) of representation it facilitates. In doing so, it provides an additional layer of spatial nuance to the analysis above that focuses upon representational-space. As discussed in the introduction, it is only by recognising the productive force of each *in tandem* can one understand the process of producing space; in general, and within the context of the phenomena under investigation. Accordingly, while

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[162] Wherein the generative force underpinning the production (and gentrification) of space is projected exclusively upon home-ownership and residence, see page 82.

still a form of urban ethnography, this latter methodological half has been produced in accordance with the parameters of the digital. It introduces the "Digital Ethnography" of the final chapter, wherein, following a "non-digital-centric" approach, Instagram is approached sociologically. A sample of 150 Instagram accounts were followed on Instagram, which were in different ways intertwined with a particular subsection of Tottenham's digital space. Wherein, the analysis sought to investigate the site of production, the site of the image, and the site of the audience. In doing so, this methodological approach facilitated an illustration of the relations of production *behind* these space(s)of representation and, accordingly, the influence such forms exert over the production of non-digital urban-space.

Ontology and Epistemology

Any explanation of a social phenomena is unavoidably an ontological argument. All social research, through conceptualising a social phenomenon, smuggles in an image of social reality; e.g. an ontology. However, this inescapable element is often left as an unexplored assumption. Consequently, the ontological foundation of many contemporary concepts, arguments, etc, is left obscure. This section will extricate the ontological assumptions that facilitate this thesis and its investigation into the libidinal-economy of "Fringe Gentrification".

While the conceptual framework introduced earlier is symptomatic of an ontological orientation, it is worth extracting it explicitly. At its most fundamental, this thesis views social reality as an entity understood clearest through a "processual ontology" (Renault, 2016); an ontological perspective grounded in the writings of Leibniz, Hegel, Marx, and Bergson[163]. However, Dewey's claim explains this position most articulately: "the interaction of organism and environment… is the primary fact, the basic category" (Dewey, 1920:87). This articulation highlights how a "processual ontology" views the other 'foundational' ontological perspectives -- e.g. substance ontology and relational ontology (Seibt, 2021) -- as

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[163] Processual ontologies consider difference and becoming as primary features of reality, whether this is to be understood in terms of self-differentiation (in Leibniz), in terms of contradictions and sublation of contradictions (In Hegel), or in terms of a dialectic between tendencies and obstacles (in Bergson or Dewey) (Renault, 2016).

distinct moments within a singular process. It is a position that recognises the importance of both the substance of 'things' and the relationships between 'things' in constituting emergent social phenomena. However, it does so in a manner which changes how each ontological moment is conceptualised. The notion of process denotes that mutual activity -- between 'things' -- has the power to modify the properties of the 'substance' *alongside* the form of these relationships. Consequently, a 'thing's' so-called substance -- its essence, nature, or any such Aristotellian inclination -- ceases to be a timeless Platonist category; it becomes a category with the capacity for mutation. However, in distinction to relational ontologies, the change constituted by this process is *in part* conducted within a 'thing' itself. As such, this process of becoming is driven through both the internal qualities of a 'thing' and the external pressures exerted upon a 'thing' by other 'things'. Consequently, the thesis is structured by a fundamental ontological assumption that social reality is constituted by a collection of processes, driven by the reciprocal relationships between semi-concrete 'things' (Renault, 2016).

In less abstract terms, this thesis seeks to extricate the different 'things' that constitute the process of "Fringe Gentrification". Specifically, it recognises that this phenomenon itself emerges from the generativate processes that exist between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and socio-spatial relations; the internal tendencies of these social 'things' interlocked in generative relationships with each other. For example, libidinal-economy unavoidably finds expression within political-economy, political-economy finds expression within socio-spatial relations, and so on. Through these reciprocal moments, these 'things' are intertwined in an unending process of mutation. Yet, this process is not simply determined by the relationship between things but rather the development of the internal tendencies of the 'thing' itself *within* a relationship. This is a subtle but significant distinction. For example, libidinal-economy, through entering into a relationship with political-economy, changes but it does so in accordance with its own internal tendencies. It is neither entirely subsumed by the relationship, nor is it left unchanged by it. In a sense, each 'thing' can only exist through the mutagenic moments in which it is expressed. Consequently, social reality is neither defined by substance nor relationships but rather by the processes that exist between these two dialectical moments. As such, the primary aim of

an investigation into a social phenomena, including "Fringe Gentrification", is the identification and extrication of these processural moments.

This ontological foundation is invaluable considering the thesis's conceptual framework. One which strays into the terrain of seeking to understand the relationship between the material and immaterial dimensions of capitalism. These explorations -- including attempts to unify Marxism with Psycho-Analysis (Reich, 1946), Existentialism (Lawler, 1976), etc -- have often struggled due to a so-called ontological conflict. Specifically, through a faux dichotomy produced between "The Historical" and "The A-Historical". For example, as elucidated by Krier and Amidon (2013), while critical theory is adept at critiquing the *historical* symbolic structures of political-economy -- value, abstract-labour, etc -- and imaginary projections of ideology, like "murderers in classic detective fiction, critical theorists of capitalism never quite know what to do with the body." (264). In effect, the body, a thing with unavoidably *a-historical* characteristics fits problematically within the totalising relational ontology underpinning orthodox Marxism. However, a process ontology enables us to overcome this false dichotomy between the "Historical" and "A-Historical". Specifically, through recognising the inherent interdependence between these terms; there is no neat distinction between the "Historical" and "A-Historical". For example, returning to the body, while it has "A-Historical" elements -- libidinal-economy, abstract subjectification, etc -- these dimensions can only find expression historically[164]; one such manifestation being the subject matter of this thesis. Consequently, the value of a process ontology, for this thesis and critical theory generally, is its ability to provide a more rigorous ontological foundation. Specifically, one with a heightened capacity to conceptualise and investigate the relationship between the different elements of historical experience.

The epistemological commitments of this thesis will be illustrated by answering three interconnected questions: what knowledge is accessible and true? What is the point of this knowledge? What is the positionality of the knowledge produced?

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[164] As such, the historical unavoidably works within the parameters of "a-historical" terms.

Firstly then, what knowledge can we as sociologists access and on what grounding can we call it true? In effect, how can "phenomena come to be known" (Giacomini, 2010:131). In alignment with Albert *et al* (2020), it is essential that we conceptualise epistemology and ontology simultaneously without reducing one to the other[165]. In effect, the manner in which we assess knowledge is, and ought to be, co-determined by our understanding of the reality of which we seek knowledge. Consequently, this thesis asserts that true scientific knowledge is one derived dialectically from the critique of social processes. Thisform of knowledge illustrates the human relationships that constitute and disappear behind 'things' (such as political-economy, libidinal-economy, socio-spatial relations, etc). In sum, it reveals the social formation, reproduction, and mutation, of processural 'things' (Marinopoulou, 2017).As such, within the epistemological language of social science, this thesis subscribes to a form of critical realism. One which recognises that the particularities of the 'thing' under investigation necessitates particular epistemological tools to extract relevant forms of knowledge.

Accordingly, this thesis operationalises a varied epistemological and methodological approach to illuminate the libidinal-economy of "Fringe Gentrification". In the first two chapters, which focus on representational-space, it primarily engages with knowledge through a form of critical interpretivism (Baynes, 2016). One which draws upon the epistemological traditions within critical theory (with an a-priori commitment to social potential (Horkheimer, 2002) and interpretivism (through a focus on narrative, "deep-structure hermeneutics" (Leithäuser, 2013) and libidinal-economy). In distinction, the latter chapter, while still drawing from these traditions, gives more epistemological ground to a form of realism. It accesses knowledge through illustrating the material-economic relations that mediate the relationship between the digital and the 'physical'. Importantly, one should note that this shifting approach does not seek to undermine the 'truth' of either element. As discussed, different elements of social reality require different epistemological 'tools' to properly extricate it. In a sense, this process reflects the abstraction innate to research,wherein particular boundaries are drawn across social reality and demarcated as

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[165] The "epistemic fallacy" highlighted by Bhaskar (2008). Wherein knowledge of reality is confused for reality itself. The "Ontic Fallacy" wherein our understanding of reality is considered epistemologically absolute (Albert *et al*, 2020).

the object of study. While any such object is unavoidably tied into wider dynamics, it carries within it a particular element which is of prescience to it. For instance, one could approach the first two chapters with a similar approach to the latter -- an exclusively 'realist' excavation of this libidinal-economy -- however, while the findings may be useful, they would tell us little about the phantasies, affects, and desires, that function *within* this libidinal-economy. In summary, this thesis seeks to use different methodological tools, which carry with them different epistemological baggage, in a manner appropriate to the object in question and the research agenda that guides this investigation.

However, what is the point of revealing the constitution of a social process? In effect, what is the purpose of social scientific knowledge? In agreement with Habermas (1994), even if social scientific knowledge is 'true' there exists a profound distinction between "technocratic knowledge" and "critical knowledge". The former is that which transforms science -- the dialectical means of accruing knowledge of social forms (Marinopoulou, 2017) -- into an authoritarian force within society, one which utilises knowledge of social processes to offer operational solutions to social and political problems[166]. While this knowledge may be 'true' it is instrumentalised to reproduce power relations and ameliorate the results. In distinction, critical knowledge operates through a Kantian underpinning. Specifically, an a-priori commitment to the *potential* of social reality. In effect, the point of knowledge is that articulated by Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach:

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to change it."

This epistemological commitment is embedded throughout the thesis. It does not seek to understand the relationship between libidinal-economy and urban political-economy to better align the desiring body with the tendencies of the capitalist city. Instead, its findings seek to highlight the intimate relationship between urban bodies and contemporary urban-space. It will highlight how desire has a profound ability to change, disrupt, and

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[166] For instance, within contemporary urban studies, one sees this 'operational' approach embedded within much of the literature surrounding "Smart Cities"(Batty *et al*, 2012) and "Urban Development" (Tannerfeldt and Ljung, 2012).

reform urban-space;in a manner which aligns with the interests of capitalist urbanism but, in this case, driven precisely by the inhibition of enjoyment embedded within capitalist space itself. Consequently, it shows that "Fringe Gentrification" is a symptom; of the instrumentalisation of alienation *and* the socio-spatial power of desire.

With that said, it is necessary to qualify this epistemological position with a more cautious claim.That while 'true' knowledge of social processes is possible, a particular researching body can only access fragments of it. As highlighted by the Frankfurt School, the *process* of scientific inquiry is a collective endeavour (Marinopoulou, 2017). A piece of research into a process, by taking a particular perspective, only reveals particular elements of the process it seeks to investigate. Importantly, this is not a relativist argument; wherein this fragmented epistemology is taken as proof of a fragmented ontological reality. Rather, it simply articulates the inherent partiality and incomplete quality of any attempt to illustrate the totality of a social process. Likewise, one must recognise that this partiality is not arbitrary. As Sarah Harding (1993:69) argued "the power dynamics of the knowledge production process are embroiled in the same power relations as the object of study." From this perspective -- of "Standpoint Theory" -- one's social position, as a researching body, influences the forms of knowledge one desires, or is able, to accrue. Consequently, one must recognise that while this thesis aims to illustrate this process holistically, its ability to do so is fundamentally denied. Instead, this thesis seeks to provide a groundwork upon which the other fragments of this totality can be interlaid.

A qualitative approach to urban-space: excavating life-worlds through walking interviews

The methods employed in this thesis are both general and particular. In a sense, it is all urban ethnography. An attempt to understand the social relations behind the urban process of "Fringe Gentrification". Yet, to do so, it is necessary to approach this fragmented 'thing'

with a mixture of methods; those best suited to capture the different elements that constitute this overarching phenomena.

With that said, fundamental to each of these forthcoming methods is a commitment to a qualitative approach to social science. This decision is justified through the shared resonance between the research aims of the thesis and the characteristics of qualitative research. A qualitative approach seeks to understand lifeworlds "from the inside out" (Flick *et al*, 2004:3); e.g. from the point of view of those who participate within them. It does so to approach everyday life and everyday experience sociologically,o illustratethe different manners in which the social world operates and exudes itself upon bodies, relationships, and realities[167] (Honer, 2004). Consequently, such a qualitative approach is fundamentally appropriate for the thesis. A quantitative approach may certainly extract valuable insights into the libidinal-economy of "Fringe Gentrification", but it would lack the necessary precision. In contrast, a qualitative approach provides a framework through which to observe, document, and analyse, the desires and phantasies contained within this libidinal-economy. As such, it is essential to satisfying any and all of the research aims. However, underneath the umbrella of a qualitative approach exists a multitude of different potential methods, some of which being more or less relevant for the aims of the thesis. The following section will identify, explain, and justify, the decisions made when creating the methodological parameters of this research.

The first of these was the decision to operationalise semi-structured interviews as the initial empirical method; one which would provide the backbone for the first two chapters. The sociological premise of a semi-structured interview is that an interview is a social interaction in itself, there can be no hard and fast rules one can follow (Valentine, 2005). However, while in agreement with Valentine, the value of a semi-structured interview goes beyond this. The advantages it provides are less grounded upon the inability for others methods to 'handle' social reality but rather that semi-structured interviews successfully direct social reality to a productive end. For instance, while structured interviews follow a predetermined and standardised rhythm, wherein one asks the same questions, in the same manner, and in the

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[167] "Life-World Analysis", for full discussion see Honer (2004).

same order (Dunn, 2005), semi-structured interviews unfold in a manner resonant with the conversation itself (Longhurst, 2005). While the researcher still seeks to elicit information from the interviewee by asking questions, often questions intertwined with a pre-selected array of themes[168], the semi-structured organisation allows the interviewee to approach these questions with a higher degree of agency (Longhurst. 2005). In a sense, the semi-structured interview works with the flow of the interview as a social interaction in its own right. It steers this social interaction to particular ends, but in a manner that is fundamentally reflective of the particularities of the interview itself.

This has two key benefits for the thesis:

1) It allows the interviewees to become active interlocutors within the development of the research. The semi-structured approach dynamically allows for new directions to be taken, one's which can be brought into the empirical process. For instance, several concepts and areas of analysis, now central to the thesis[169], originated from the detours that semi-structured interviews allow for.

2) As semi-structured interviews provide participants with a higher degree of agency, it provides a more fertile setting for sensitive subjects to be discussed (or otherwise implicated): desires, phantasies, beliefs, etc. This contrasts with the orthodox approach of structured interviews, which operate through an artificial atmosphere that dampens elucidations of the sensitive.

Where an interview is held changes the nature of the interview (Denzin, 2009). As such, this phenomenological element influences the forms of knowledge accrued (Preston, 2003). Consequently, it was decided that semi-structured interviews would be operationalised as walking-interviews. Specifically, the interviews would be conducted while both interviewer and interviewee walked through the case-sites. This decision was grounded upon the assumption that walking through the space under investigation utilises the dialectical relationship that exists between people and places. In effect, "the human condition is a

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[168] In this case: surrounding enjoyment, identity, aesthetics, and a sense of place.
[169] This included: the libidinal appeal of crowd, atmospheres, and the urban mise en scene.

profoundly spatial, or indeed, *platial*, one" (Davidson, 2003:255) and walking interviews harness this socio-spatial character of knowledge:

> "Talking whilst walking does not perhaps function cognitively and rationally in the 'arts of memory tradition' (see Crang and Travlou, 2001). Nonetheless, it can successfully tap into the non-mechanistic framework of the mind and interconnections with place to recall episodes and meanings buried in the archaeology of knowledge...as a consequence, the knowledge produced is importantly different: atmospheres, emotions, reflections and beliefs can be accessed, as well as intellects, rationales and ideologies." (Anderson, 2004:260)

There are two fundamental advantages this methodology brings to the thesis:

Firstly, it transforms the case-sites into interlocutors. The spatial experience upon which the interview is imbued entails that the knowledge accrued is spatial in origin and inflection (Sin, 2003). In effect, the interview setting is transformed from abstract and formalised, to concrete and co-constitutive. The impact of this upon the thesis cannot be overstated. Throughout the interviews, in different ways, the space which the interviewer and interviewee passed through co-determined the interview itself. This varied, from particular buildings or places serendipitously triggering a memory -- an illegal rave in Shoreditch, the diminishing smell of kebab meat on Kingsland Road -- to the production of immediate experience; an attraction to a particular crowd, feelings of excitement, disgust, fear, etc. Fundamentally, this thesis seeks to understand the desires and affects that float through and co-produce urban-space. It is easier to access these elements, as a researcher, when the 'thing' that generates and attracts such affects is directly present; rather than simply existing through language or memory[170] (Serres, 2008).

Secondly, this research extracted value through the social element of walking-interviews. As Carpiano (2009) notes, walking-interviews have a distinct advantage of helping to build a

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[170] Although one should note important methodological advancements in regards to elicitation. For instance, Loizos (2000) highlights how one can use photographs --echoing the thesis's usage of space -- to draw out memories and stories of experience.

rapport between the interviewee and interviewer. The experience of walking together through space works to render the instrumentality of the interview encounter less perceptible. This was further emphasised by operationalising a "go-along" approach to walking interviews (Kusenbach, 2003). This consisted of allowing interviewees to determine the path walked, often one mapping onto particular routines they had within the case-site: going to work, rhythms while socialising, etc. Alongside providing additional avenues for knowledge -- namely, regarding their sense of place, boundary spaces, etc -- this "go-along" approach helps to solidify the rapport that the walking-interview facilitates. The interviewee is put at ease, comfortable in tracing their own routine in a space that is familiar to them. The interview becomes an augmentation of the norm, rather than an experience that stands radically outside of it[171]. It facilitates what O'Neill (2014) calls a "Walking Biography". A form of understanding that provides the researcher with more holistic "ways of knowing" (87); a means to excise memory and sensory knowledge from participants through the route into life that walking facilitates. In doing so, the empirical material is approached in a manner that allows the imaginative aspects of the phenomenon to be expressed.

Through transforming space into an active interlocutor and helping to develop a rapport, the benefits of the walking-interview were essential in realising the thesis' aims. It is difficult to imagine how one could access the necessary sensitivities of the self -- desires, phantasies, affects, etc -- without these dimensions. Within this field, it was clear that the stronger the rapport between interviewer and interviewee the more readily insight into libidinal-economy was given; the least productive interviews were often those that felt most formalised. Likewise, this content was arrived at within these conversations in an organic manner precisely as space itself was an active participant. One should note these advantages have roots not only in walking-interviews *per se* but specifically within semi-structured interviews conducted while walking. These two elements compliment each other, the conversational style of the semi-structured interview being further emphasised by walking through space. Additionally, the walking-interview provides a correction to one

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[171] These qualities would have been lost had the thesis operationalised a "set" approach; wherein each participant walks along a set route over the course of the interview. While this approach may have produced useful information, particularly through contrasting different participants, it jeopardises the dynamism that allows walking-interviews to be particularly informative.

disadvantage of the semi-structured interview; specifically, a tendency for interviews to lose direction[172]. However, walking through space partially resolves this. The space walked through impresses itself upon the interviewee during the process, capturing attention and steering conversation. In effect, the walking interview entailed that space itself exuded a gravitational force, one which caused conversation to orbit around discussions of space, affect, and desire.

In addition, the nature of a walking interview entailed that each interview is turned into a period of participant observation. As Luders (2004) argues, there are two ways to empirically investigate human beings, their everyday practices, and lifeworlds:

> "One can hold conversations with participants about their actions and collect appropriate documents in the hope of obtaining, in this way, rich information about the particular practice in which one is interested. Or else one looks for ways or strategies for taking part, for as long as possible, in this everyday practice and becoming familiar with it, so as to be able to observe its everyday performance" (223)

Walking interviews have the advantage of existing within both realms simultaneously. As discussed above, they facilitate an opportunity to obtain information through conversation. However, through being situated within the case-site, they also facilitate an ongoing participant-observation. There are two elements to this. Firstly, as discussed earlier, the process of the "walk-along" entails that the walking-interview is deeply interwoven with observing the participant *within* space. Secondly, the interview time compounds the non-participant observation already conducted within this fieldwork. This augmented form of non-participant observation was particularly valuable for the genesis of what became important concepts within the thesis: namely, surrounding atmosphere and crowds. The libidinal appeal of atmospheres and crowds was developed through encountering these elements within space itself; elements that influenced the direction of the interviews and subsequently provided a groundwork for further non-participant observation. In this manner, the walking interviews interlaid with non-participant observation.

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[172] One should note, this tendency is unavoidably linked to the advantages of the walking-interview.

Finally, one should note the operationalisation of this methodology could have been improved. Jones argued that while "walking interviews are an ideal technique for exploring issues around people's relationship with space… there has been a somewhat curious lack of work attempting to directly connect *what* people say with *where* they say it" (Jones *et al*, 2008: 2). When walking-interviews were originally decided upon as a fitting methodology for this thesis, the intention had been to explore the option of using GPS. This would have enabled the thesis to extensively map each of the interviews onto space. In effect, Jones's concerns that sociologists too readily separate *what* people say from *where* they say it, would be alleviated. However, this approach was decided against;primarily, due to a practical concern about methodological bloat. However, it was considered important, even if not using GPS tracking, to ensure that the layers of data and subsequent analysis provided by contextualising this spatial knowledge was not lost. As will be discussed, this thesis structures its analysis through a series of spatial moments; one's which spatially contextualise the data itself. The purpose being aligned to Jones's point; the value of walking-interviews is the ability to derive knowledge spatially, as such it is important to spatially contextualise this knowledge to enrich the analysis to its capacity.

Digital ethnography: researching Instagram and space(s) of representation.

The methods discussed above provide the empirical foundation for the first two chapters; on Shoreditch and Dalston. These methods and the chapters generated aim to understand the libidinal-economy of "Fringe Gentrification" *through* representational-space. It is a methodological toolbox operationalised to investigate the desires, phantasies, and affects, of "Urban Dreamers". In contrast, the following section illustrates the methodological foundation of the final chapter; on Tottenham. This chapter continues to investigate this libidinal-economy but *through* the space of representation. It investigates the representations of Tottenham which provide an important centripetal force through the desires they stimulate. In particular, it focuses upon Tottenham's space of representation as constituted by, and transmitted through, Instagram. While Instagram is far from the only source of Tottenham's space(s) of representation, this digital case-site provides an insight into the

underlying logic. This section will justify the methodological approaches utilised in this investigation, and the insights it provided to the thesis.

The fundamental change is the movement into a form of "Digital Ethnography". In doing so, the thesis recognises Ward's (1999) claim that contemporary social research must challenge the supposed dichotomous relationship between the physical and the virtual. In effect, to take online social forms seriously, in their own right, and through recognising the concrete embeddedness of these interactions; e.g. that the virtual exudes its presence on the concrete and the concrete facilitates the production of the virtual. Consequently, in approaching 'Digital Tottenham', the thesis seeks to contribute to what Pink *et al* (2016) call a non-digital-centric approach to the digital[173]:

> "...by keeping the place of digital media in research relational to other elements and domains of the research topic, site and methods, we are able to understand the digital as part of something wider, rather than situating it at the centre of our work. This, we propose, inevitably enriches both the ways in which we study digital media, their uses, qualities and affordances, and the ways in which these studies create insights into the digital impacts on other strands and elements that constitute everyday environments, experiences, activities and relationships."(Pink, 2006:29)

It does so through recognising that the digital production of Tottenham's space of representation is intricately intertwined with Tottenham's concrete-space and the spatial phenomena explored within the previous chapters. Through utilising this approach, the thesis is able to derive a more holistic understanding of this libidinal-economy. Namely, it can recognise that libidinal-economy exerts itself upon bodies through both concrete and digital space; just as it does so through representational space and the space of representation[174].

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[173] An idea derived from the "non-media-centric" approach to media studies (Morley, 2009).

[174] Although it should be noted this is not a dichotomy e.g. representational space(s) are unavoidably intertwined with space(s) of representation and vice versa.

While Murthy's arguments regarding digital ethnography being defined by its "data-gathering methods {that} are mediated by computer-mediated communication" (2011:15), acted as a foundation -- in effect digital fieldnotes, online participant observation, etc -- the methodological approach to a digital space is ultimately dependent on the parameters of the particular digital space. Like concrete space, digital space is fundamentally constituted by boundaries. In many ways, ones more constraining than those existing in most concrete-spaces. In the sense that the 'producer' of a digital space has immense control over how bodies navigate through (and communicate within) space. Accordingly, it is essential to augment a broad digital ethnographic approach with the requirements and facilities of Instagram.

Instagram was approached in a manner similar to Hine's (2015) approach to "Internet Ethnography". Hine attempted to visually observe as a 'user' and analyse these observations as a sociologist. As such, the first methodological step was to produce an Instagram account through which these observations could be conducted. After uploading a selection of photos[175], this account was used to identify the primary "hashtags" which bound together 'Digital Tottenham'[176]. This was necessary as without using these specific hashtags, at least before the research account was algorithmically aligned, its 'Tottenham' feed was dominated by representations of Tottenham Hotspurs. From here, the research account began following prominent accounts which interacted with these identified "Hashtags"; which initiated the process of integrating with 'Digital Tottenham'. Further details regarding this process of integration, sampling, and snowballing will be discussed in the next section.

The purpose of this integration was to provide a source through which digital texts -- ones which, in different ways, facilitated Tottenham's space of representation -- could be collected, organised, and subjected to analysis. However, one should note a key methodological concern stemmed from the variance of texts engendered by Instagram as a

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[175] The methodological rationale being that an account that looked 'real' would be more readily accepted. One should also note, the "biography" of the research account was the following: "Sociologist - Researching Digital Urban Space in/around Tottenham. Instagrammers of Tottenham - would love to hear about your work/ventures/etc!". This was followed by a HTML to my research profile on York.ac.uk.

[176] For list and discussion, see pages 234-235.

particular digital space. These texts took two distinct forms: "Posts" and "Stories". The former was relatively straightforward to approach as a researcher. These "Posts", "image-texts" constituted through the interplay of visual and written language, were accessible in two manners. Firstly, through "The Feed". This apparatus, which functions as the central digital space for users, provides the audience with a selection of recent "Posts" from accounts that they follow (or from those that Instagram suggests the user to follow). However, one should note the selective quality of this. The algorithm structuring "The Feed" populates itself with particular "posts" at the expense of others; a judgement made in accordance with the engagement with a particular post or the user's engagement with a particular account. While important in its own right, it was decided this partiality innate to "The Feed" compromised its ability to be relied upon to holistically understand this space of representation. Consequently, texts derived from "posts" were accessed more directly. Namely, through accessing the pages of each account followed. The particularities of which will likewise be discussed later.

The second form of Instagram texts -- "Stories" -- often took the form of short videos. While this proved difficult in itself[177], the primary methodological problem to be resolved emerged from the innate ephemerality of "Stories". These texts are only available, to the followers of "The Poster", for twenty-four hours after posting. After which they are deleted and become inaccessible to users[178]. In contrast to the archival quality of "posts" -- or, at least an archive under the discretion of the "poster" -- these texts fall under the category of "Ephemeral Content" (Bainotti *et al*, 2020). This ephemerality of the material necessitated a different approach, one distinct from the manual sieving through of "post" archives. In order to capture this potentially important data-source, one which might further illuminate Tottenham's space of representation and interconnected libidinal-economy, the decision was made to ossify this transient data. This was done through establishing a screen recording routine for the "Stories", allowing them to be saved and analysed at a later date. This

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[177] A key element of these "stories" is not only the static visual image, but audio and video itself. These elements have unfortunately been difficult to recreate within the thesis itself. Instead, screenshots of the recordings have been taken. While this approach is imperfect, it at least enabled less potentially informative data to disappear from the parameters of the research.
[178] One should note, this is another example of what Pasquale (2015) termed the "Black Box Society" and its impact on social research.

involved recording each story posted by each of the 150 accounts everyday, for a month, at around twelve o'clock.

It is worth highlighting the different means through which the thesis utilises visual data. There is a fundamental dichotomy between the illustrative approach in the first two empirical chapters and the generative approach within the final chapter. This distinction is reflective of the different methodological approaches contained within these two "sets" of chapters. The first empirical chapters use visual data to provide the reader with a greater understanding of the experiential elements of that which is under investigation. For instance, photography is used to 'capture', albeit in a static and detracted manner[179], a moment within a walking interview. The photograph usually directly represents that which an interviewee is discussing (or that which sets the scene for a particular discussion). In this manner, the visual data is not an object of analysis itself *per se*; instead, it represents that which is analysed. In distinction, visual data takes on a more integral analytical role in the final chapter. The Tottenham chapter uses visual data as the primary empirical material; although, Instagram posts are a more complex form of visual data than simply a photograph[180]. As such, the analytical weight of visual data increases accordingly. As the thesis moves its primary focus from representational space to the space of representation, so too does visual data shift to being the subject of analysis itself.

Like the methodology in general, split between a 'physical' investigation into representational-space and a digital investigation into the space of representation, the process of sampling for each approach was also divided. This section will identify the rationale behind sampling decisions, the challenges that appeared, alongside an evaluation of how these sampling techniques contribute to satisfying the requirements of the thesis.

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[179] See pages 283-284.
[180] See pages 123-125.

<u>Sampling: a mixed approach.</u>

First, it is important to illustrate the sampling behind the 'concrete' half of the thesis; the walking-interviews in Shoreditch and Dalston. The fundamental principle behind this being the decision to sample a selection of urban bodies who, in some manner, 'consumed' the case-site. One should note, as throughout the thesis, the definition of 'consumed' used here is somewhat broader than traditionally understood. This thesis understands "consuming space" to entail orthodox understandings of recreational consumption *alongside* a broader notion. Namely, that when one works, lives, or in some manner extracts enjoyment from space, then one's body is consuming (and, by extension, producing) it. Consequently, the sample grounding this half of the thesis was built from a mixture of bodies who, in different ways, "consumed" the case-site in question. Consequently, the sample -- consisting of 25 interviews -- was made up of a mixed demographic regarding socio-economic class, race, gender, and age. Though, one should note, the sample was primarily constituted by those who were white and under the age of 35. Likewise, there was a general socio-economic tendency towards members of an "Urban Precariat".

This approach to sampling distinguishes this thesis from many contemporary studies of gentrification, as it seeks to avoid understanding gentrification through a "Residential Fetish"[181] e.g. a conception of 'gentrifying' bodies being somehow fundamentally linked to the purchasing of property. This fetish is a relic from Glass's original conceptualisation of the process; one which, as discussed, understands gentrification as a quasi-anomaly of spatial political-economy (or, at least one limited to the economic actions of the relatively privileged, rather than a conception derived from the totality of socio-spatial relations). Consequently, while some of the interviewees, in both case-sites, fall into a traditional categorisation of 'gentrifiers' -- socio-economically privileged bodies moving into (and subsequently facilitating) the 'gentrification' of space -- the majority do not. Importantly, while these more precarious bodies may not be labelled as 'gentrifiers' within the contemporary academic discourse surrounding gentrification, these bodies still contribute to

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[181] This is defined and discussed in the literature review, see page 91.

the process; through the consumption of space, the extraction of enjoyment, and the intertwined nature of these processes with political-economy.

With the decision to sample bodies who 'consumed' the case-sites and, in doing so, facilitate what one might term 'gentrification', the question of sampling became more practical. The first stage of identifying these prospective interviewees was through the production and distribution of the following poster (see Figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1, Participant Recruitment Poster (Carroll, 2019).

This poster was then distributed to a selection of locations within Shoreditch and Dalston: cafes, bars, and libraries. The reasoning for these locations was the notion that participants

who spent time in such spaces were more likely to fit the criteria identified earlier. In addition, this poster was also circulated digitally to produce a wider field from which to draw prospective interviewees. As one can see, the decision was taken to design the poster in a manner aesthetically resonant with the subject of inquiry. At the time, a minimalist design, complemented by an egg-shell colouring, was a commonplace design for menus within the cafes and restaurants of Shoreditch and Dalston. The decision to imitate these qualities was taken upon the assumption that such a design would be familiar to the prospective sample and, as such, would more successfully entice them to engage with the research. Finally, one should note that the poster did not mention gentrification. The reasoning for this was twofold:

1) Initially, the research had included a commitment to investigate the affective response to bodies implicated within the process of gentrification. However, as this is a sensitive subject, an overt focus on gentrification may have set an unproductive tone to interviews.

2) Secondly, this thesis, while about gentrification, conceptualises gentrification in a broader manner than the public common-sense that surrounds the approach. As such, it was decided that keeping 'gentrification', as a discourse, at a distance would facilitate more substantive insight into the process.

While the poster -- in its concrete and digital distribution -- accrued a substantial amount of participants, this sampling approach was augmented through recruiting on location (Krueger, 1988). Namely, through a form of snowball sampling wherein one contact helped to recruit another contact, and so on. As such, it was the intended practice to discuss, at the end of the interview, whether the interviewee knew of any participants who aligned with the sampling criteria. However, this discussion would regularly occur during the interview itself; in part, a consequence of the walking-interview format. At particular moments, participants would be reminded, by a space or a passer-by, about a particular person of interest. Likewise, this "recruiting on location" was also conducted while engaged in non-participant observation, normally that conducted in isolation from walking-interviews. In particular, through talking to owners and patrons of particular spaces of consumption;

with a proportion of these discussions expanding into formal interviews at a later date. This was particularly useful for acquiring interviews with business owners, who proved resistant to engaging with the distributed posters. The perspective granted by these interviews, while aligned with the organising principle of those who "consume" space, allowed the sample to access a wider array of bodies. Namely, those who 'produced' consumer space in a more orthodox economic sense. This was particularly beneficial for the Shoreditch chapter. Namely, as it provided an empirical backbone through which to understand how particular spaces of consumption seek to align themselves with the demarcations of libidinal-economy (and, in doing so, 'stretch' its hegemony over concrete-space).

The approach to sampling for the digital methodology was distinct. In contrast, the challenge here was to successfully sample those who engage in the production and consumption of Tottenham's space of representation (or, at least, that which is constituted by and transmitted through Instagram). A rudimentary discussion of this process was discussed earlier. The research account continued the process of "digital snowballing" until it was following 150 accounts; which varied in accordance with the relations of production, as will be discussed. This number, while broadly artificial, was decided upon due to the qualitative intentions with the data accrued[182]. With the sample of accounts collected, the decision was made to limit the extraction of texts to those made between the dates of February 2020 to February 2021. There were two primary reasons for this:

1) Considering the qualitative approach, a more limited timespan from which texts are drawn ensures the material did not become analytically overwhelming (or, more specifically, it ensures that a quantitative approach would not be more suitable).

2) It was important to try to capture this social phenomenon during and before COVID-19. This would allow the sample to more accurately portray 'everyday' urban life and experience (and, in doing so, keep this chapter temporally connected to the rest of the thesis).

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[182] However, one should note. Instagram, while an under researched social phenomenon, has also approached quantitatively to produce useful insight into Amsterdam's socio-spatial relations of consumption; see Boy and Uitermark (2017).

It should be noted that not all the accounts within this sample were active from February 2020. As such, the timespan from which posts were taken from such accounts were unavoidably more limited. While one may suggest such accounts should be removed, to ensure each fits the same timespan, this decision would fundamentally limit the analysis specifically through abstracting away accounts (and, by extension, the concrete-spaces connected to them) that have recently been produced within Tottenham. Considering the orientation of this thesis, which seeks to understand the contemporary production of space, such an approach would have been counter-intuitive.

However, there were some fundamental challenges within this sampling process. Primarily, it proved substantially more difficult to locate "Personal Accounts" contrasted to the other categories detailed below. These accounts interacted less regularly with other accounts, in part due to the political-economy of visibility already discussed, alongside the difficulties of the research account integrating with these more insular networks. The solution to this was locating "Personal Accounts" through the "Mutuals"[183] of the research account. Namely, identifying "Personal Accounts" that were following a multitude of the accounts already within the sample (alongside those who regularly interacted with these accounts[184]). This process enabled a more substantive capturing of personal accounts; one interestingly aided by the algorithmic networking logic of Instagram itself. Although, one should note, there is an inherent visibility bias at play here. As Baruah (2017) argues, different users of digital forms such as Instagram engage with it in different ways; there are some who primarily 'post', those who primarily view without perceivable interaction, those who follow a large number of accounts, those who maintain a more exclusive "feed", etc. Consequently, while this engagement solution to find "Personal Accounts" was successful, the approach chosen carries with it a tendency towards privileging accounts with higher levels of perceivable engagement with 'Digital Tottenham'.

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[183] This phrase expresses the number of shared connections between you and another account e.g. how many of their followers do you also follow, how many of their followers also follow you, etc.

[184] This pool of accounts was then expanded to include accounts that interacted with these prominent accounts; including those who did so regularly and irregularly. This decision was taken to better capture the social world within 'Digital Tottenham' holistically; in effect, it was an attempt to negate the tendency towards such network analyses to focus exclusively on the nodes privileged within the network itself (Castells, 2009). The intention of which being to better understand the varied relations of production behind this space of representation.

Coding and Analysis

The process of coding and analysing this digital sample stemmed from the approach of critical visual geography. Its core argument being that texts, such as those on Instagram, do not represent the world idly as much as they directly intervene in it and de-stabilise it (Bartram, 2005b). To understand this mutagenic quality, digital texts were analysed in three interlinked manners:

1) The site of production, where an image is made.
2) The site of the image, which is its visual content.
3) The site of the audience, where the image encounters its spectators.

As Pink (2016) argued, the technologies used to create an image determine its form, meaning, and effect. While not producing the image *per se*, Instagram exists as a technology of power over the images within it. Consequently, Instagram lends itself to a fruitful investigation as a site of production. Specifically, a text on Instagram is tethered to the particular account that created it (including both "Posts" and "Stories"). This is essential for the thesis, as exploring this dimension illuminates the relations of production behind individual texts and the space of representation they collectively constitute.

The data-set was coded with quality in mind. The ideal-types constituting this code are the following: "Marketers", "Businesses", "Influencers", "Amplifiers", "Community Pages", "Personal", and "Blurred Accounts" (e.g. those that fit into multiple categories)[185].

This framework is of particular value considering the inclinations of the thesis. Namely, to not only understand the *consumption* facilitated by this libidinal-economy, but also the moments of production -- in this case, the production of texts representing space -- that

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[185] Originally, this code had included a focus upon the regional accounts that substantially engaged with Tottenham that fit into each of these categories. However, as discussed earlier regarding convergence, while a productive source of understanding into the relations of production within Tottenham's space of representation, such an endeavour would undermine the clarity of the analysis. Consequently, the decision was made, after coding, to remove these accounts from consideration.

facilitate the expansion of this libidinal-economy into orbiting bodies. There are two major insights provided by this approach:

1) As discussed, it allows Tottenham's space of representation to be broken down into its constitutive relations. In effect, it shows the multitude of different actors intertwined in this process of representation; e.g. its relations of production.

2) It develops the arguments made throughout this thesis that libidinal investment is not simply a top-down process. In particular, it highlights how Instagram facilitates the transformation of one's urban-experience into consumable representations. In effect, like with the crowds and atmosphere of the "Dreamworld", unorthodox immaterial labour -- conducted by non-waged accounts -- is integral to this process[186].

The second stage of this analytical method was to focus upon the texts themselves. However, one must recognise that the texts analysed are more than *simply* images. On Instagram, each image exists in relationship with the written[187]. Together these two elements, the image and the written, constitute the text and guide how it is viewed. A unique quality of "Image-Texts" on Instagram is the manner in which the written elements are only partially under the control of the producer. This entails that these texts exist in an undefined state, one of constant mediation. Analytically, it also entails a necessary dexterity. Namely, the analysis focuses upon these texts as images but also social spaces in themselves. This quality will be discussed more shortly.

In approaching these texts, a second code was developed through which to organise the dataset. Namely, one focused upon that which is represented within the text's visual component. These texts, which centred either a single image, a selection of related images, or

[186] Tottenham's space of representation, and subsequent libidinal-appeal, is not *simply* a production of a coordinate top-down form of "city-imaging". Wherein, a post-industrial cities space of representation is, actively, changed. The aim of such activities being a shift within representational-space; to change the imaginaries associated with the city in order to better facilitate the extraction of surplus-value from concrete urban-space. While not entirely different from the argument made by the thesis, the chapter on Tottenham highlights how this *work* of re-imagining exists on an everyday scale.

[187] The written content itself is fragmented: the post, the peripheral data, the comments, etc.

short videos, were coded in a manner similar to the schematic developed for Shoreditch and Dalston. As such, this code separated the texts into those concerned with objects, places, bodies, and practices (see Figure 2.2):
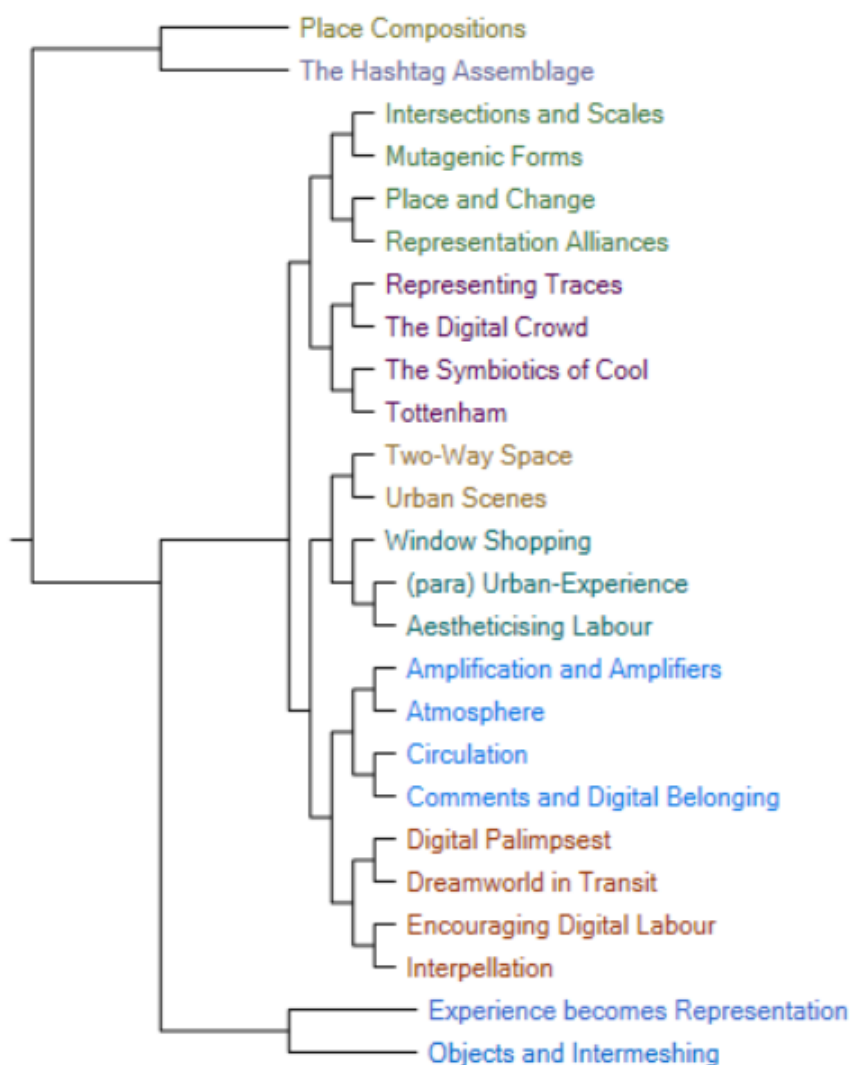
Place Compositions
The Hashtag Assemblage
Intersections and Scales
Mutagenic Forms
Place and Change
Representation Alliances
Representing Traces
The Digital Crowd
The Symbiotics of Cool
Tottenham
Two-Way Space
Urban Scenes
Window Shopping
(para) Urban-Experience
Aestheticising Labour
Amplification and Amplifiers
Atmosphere
Circulation
Comments and Digital Belonging
Digital Palimpsest
Dreamworld in Transit
Encouraging Digital Labour
Interpellation
Experience becomes Representation
Objects and Intermeshing

Figure 2.2, Preliminary Code for Digital Analysis (Carroll, 2021).

Through this code, the analysis sought to understand the aesthetic content of the text. One should note that 'aesthetic' is used in a critical sense; e.g. how does the image 'work' upon the viewer? Namely, what are its elements and what perception of a 'thing' do they attempt to imbue. Following Bartram (2005), this method encourages one to understand how a particular text relates to other cultural images, affects, and ideas. As will be argued, the shared content of these texts is an attempt to produce a representation of Tottenham that

resonates with a preconceived notion of the enjoyable "everyday urban-life", an urban "mise en scene". Specifically, a valorised form of everyday urban experience -- one grounded upon consumption and collectivity -- which exists as the broader 'cultural genre' explored throughout this thesis.

Following Sturken and Cartwright (2001), the analytical significance of images is not simply the image itself, or its site of production, but rather how it is seen by its audience. However, within the analysis, this element is not given its own section. Following the psycho-analytic inclinations highlighted earlier, this thesis has always sought to orientate itself to understand the immaterial productively (e.g. how does the immaterial influence the concrete; be that representational space or the space of representation). Accordingly, this element is not, unlike the previous two, given its own analytical section; rather, it is conducted throughout. As such, when discussing the site of production, or site of the image, it is always done through a notion of the audience; e.g. what does this producer seek from the audience? What does this image seek to instil within the viewer? How does the audience facilitate the production of texts? It is through this inclination that the thesis is able to highlight not only the space of representation itself but rather its function within the production of space; the interfacing that exists between this immaterial space, libidinal-economy, and desiring bodies.

Gillian Rose expands this conceptual framework by arguing that each particular "site", wherein "the social effects of an image or set of images are made…" (Rose, 2016:46), ought to be understood through the three modalities each share: the "Technological", "Compositional", and "Social". These different modalities are inflections, orientated through different means and towards different ends, that categorise the constitutive parts of a visual object. This modular approach provides the researcher with a more holistic approach to the visual; into the social 'work' it does and the relations through which it is both produced and received. In effect, Rose's (2016) framework complements the existing conception of "sites" in an iterative manner that further illuminates the relationship between the visual and social reality.

This modular approach captures the importance of reflecting on the materiality of each site; the significance of the material qualities that intertwine with a 'thing' through which social consequences are produced. One prominent insight is through the formative pressure that "Technology" (Rose, 2016) exudes upon each visual site. The most pressing example of this, as will be illustrated through the empirical material[188], is the algorithmic ontology that underpins the (re)production processes of Instagram's digital images (Rose, 2016). This perspective develops Kittler's (1999) argument that particular technologies that facilitate an image determine its form, meaning, and effect. This insight now burrows deeper into visual vis a vis the disciplinary effect that algorithms, as a specific technology of image-production, exude upon the visibility of the form. This "Technology" doesn't just determine the form taken, it structures whether or not a 'things' form will be presented to an audience at all. Rose's (2016) modular framework allows us to understand the mechanics of this, as this example highlights how the creative elements of "Technology" bleed from the "Site of the Image" to the "Site of the Audience". As discussed by Pasquale (2015), the algorithms that underpin Instagram, alongside other technologies with a similar underpinning ontological fabric, are intertwined with the disciplinary power of political-economy; in particular, the "Attention Economy" that was critically outlined by (Crogan and Kinsley, 2012). There is a logic within the material world, one that is expressed through the visual 'things' it creates. These insights into the materiality of images and the social processes through which they are produced provide the thesis with key areas of analysis. It grounds the investigation, through instilling an orientation that seeks to illuminate the interface that exists between these *material* elements of visual texts and the production of space.

However, there are some drawbacks to this methodology which ought to be recognised. Firstly, it is important to recognise that Tottenham's space of representation is produced through a "Convergence" (Jenkins, 2008); e.g. t does not simply originate from Instagram, but rather it flows across multiple inter-dependent channels[189]. Consequently, one must recognise that any analysis that follows from an investigation of Instagram alone seeks to extract a general from the particular. This isn't particularly problematic for this thesis. After

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[188] See pages 241-242.

[189] The visual texts on Instagram exist in a reflexive relationship with other digital and non-digital mediums that facilitate the production, circulation, and reception of visual texts.

all, this research seeks to understand the libidinal-economy of "Fringe-Gentrification" and its socio-spatial relations. Tottenham's space of representation is a useful way to tell part of this story, but it is not exhaustive. In effect, the thesis must remain disciplined even if this entails a restrictive focus on its constituting elements. Secondly, one should note that, by cultivating a specific Tottenham Instagram feed, the research account is, in some ways, subject to a 'purified' version of this digital urban-imaginary. In contrast, other accounts, while consuming this space of representation and those like it, do so in a manner while integrated into other social relations. However, this 'purified' version ought to be considered an ideal-type, one that exists in a more fragmented form within the "feeds" of digital urbanites. Consequently, it is specifically the abstraction innate to research that allows this fragment to be perceived holistically.

For the first two empirical chapters, the process was different. It, broadly, followed the articulations made by Schmidt (2004). The guiding principle of this process is:

"the interchange between material and theoretical prior knowledge… as a kind of interplay between, on the one hand, theoretical considerations in reaction to literature and theoretical traditions, and on the other hand experience and observation during exploration of the research field." (253)

Consequently, the material produced by the walking-interviews was approached simultaneously as a 'thing' in its own right and as a 'thing' that existed within a social reality of which one already has preconceived theoretical insights. However, with that said, it was important that the latter did not overwhelm the former. In particular, such a tendency leaves this process ossified in an undeveloped form that simply reflects back these preconceptions; in a manner that neither satisfyingly illustrates the phenomena in question or refines and develops the theoretical preconceptions themselves. Consequently, the material was approached as a Marxist, one with a particular interest in the ideological, but in such a manner that allowed the material itself (and, by extension, the social phenomena from which it was derived) to breathe and inform the analytical method.

The first stage of this process was the formation of tentative analytical categories. These were produced in a manner similar to reading an academic text. Namely, the transcripts were carefully read, through a lens of prior theoretical knowledge, in a manner which noted the topics and aspects -- in a broad sense -- to the context of the research questions and aims; namely, those that interacted with notions of enjoyment, space, or valorisation. Likewise, considering the open-ended nature of these interviews, an important element of this process was not only the answers themselves *per se* but rather the contextual setting surrounding these answers. Namely, how did the participants choose to interpret these questions, what the particular terms within meant to them, which elements they supplemented, diverted, or omitted. Additionally, such an approach recognises the labyrinthine quality of semi-structured interviews wherein: "In an open semi-structured interview the important text passages are not always found in the direct context of the question that was asked; the aspects that the interviewer introduces are frequently only taken up later in more explicit form, or else they turn up (again) in response to a different question within a quite different context." (Schmidt, 2004:255)

After this preliminary categorisation, a more formalised draft of categories were assembled. This collection contained a detailed description of the individual categories and a sketching of the manner in which these different categories had modular qualities; e.g. one's which changed depending on interview, setting, or other similar feature. It was at this point that the overarching[190] framework of objects, places, bodies, and practices began to form; alongside some of the particular evocations within this. This guide was then used to classify the entire collection of material. Namely, each interview would be broken down in accordance with the categories within this coding guide; with particular segments coded accordingly. This entailed the previous mass of data now followed a level of order. This was done using nvivo. This preliminary organisation of coding is below:

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[190] One will note how this functional 'ontology' structures the analysis of each empirical chapter.
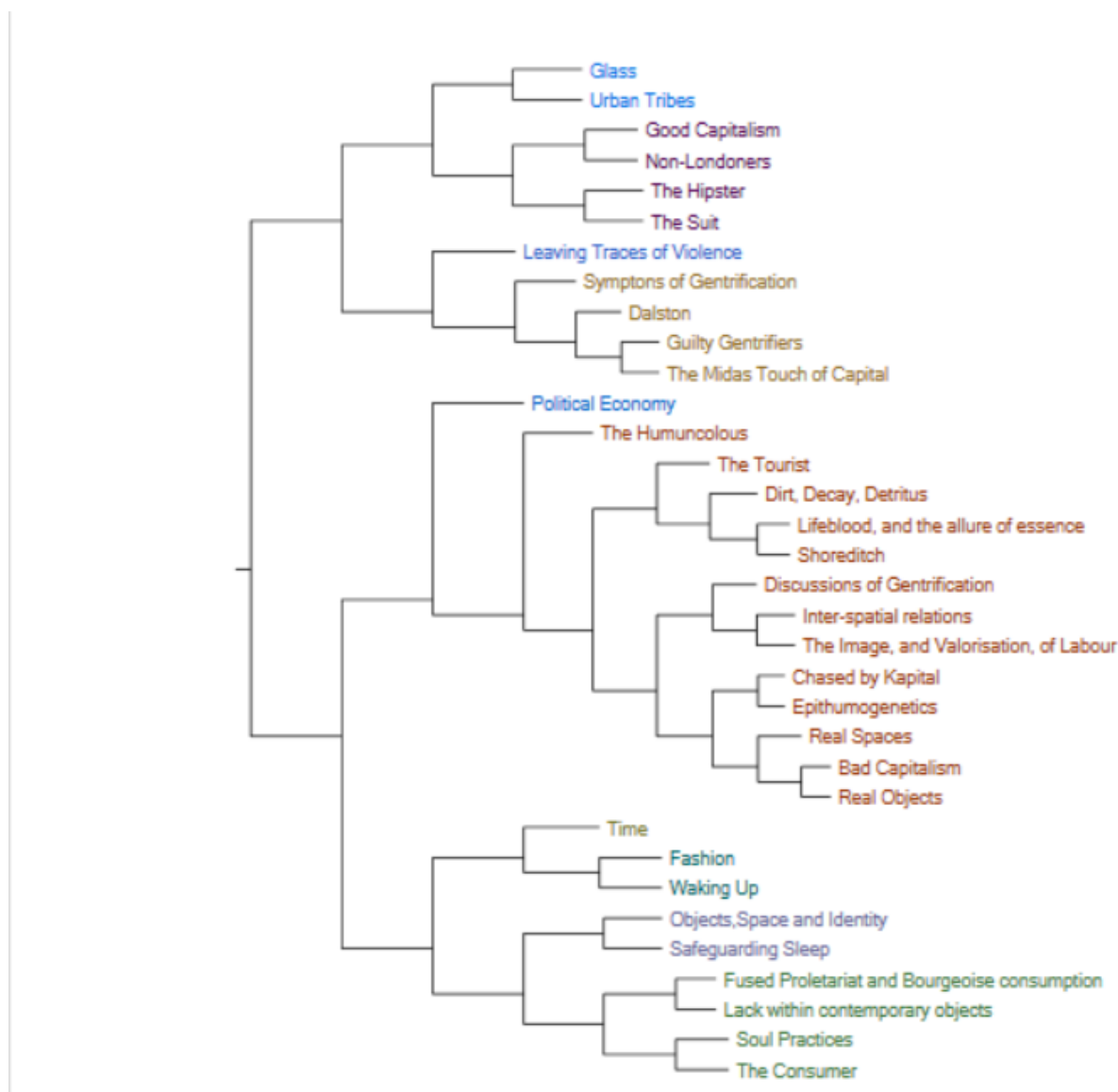
Figure: 2.3, Preliminary Code for Physical Analysis (Carroll, 2020).

With the material coded, it was then repeatedly read and interpreted with reference to the research questions, aims, and objectives (Schmidt, 2004). Accordingly the technique of interpretation was one derived from a synthesisation of narrative analysis and the psycho-social tradition within cultural-studies. The decision to utilise these approaches in tandem will be justified below. One should note, a synthesisation such as this was necessary as an explicit methodological approach within the "Psycho-Social" tradition -- which includes sociologists such as Cremin (2011), Lorenzer (1972), etc -- is somewhat lacking. These investigations are often more theoretical or clinical in nature and consequently, while insightful, provide little concrete methodological guidance.

One ought to see this analysis as one grounded upon the assumptions of the "Narrative Turn" (Bakhtin, 1981; Barthes, 1977; Ricoeur, 1981). It approached the material with the presumption that the primary way individuals make sense of experience is through rendering it into a narrative (Bruner, 1990; Gee, 1985). This self-representation is simultaneously essential for their self-identity (Goffman, 1959) and for their self-presentation. In a sense, the data of this section was approached in a manner which sought to understand the stories of consumption and the stories of space that the participants told themselves (and, by extension, the researcher).

"Narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting (think of Carpaccio's Saint Ursula), stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news items, conversations. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has there been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives . . . narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: It is simply there, like life itself…" (Barthes 1977:79)

However, this analytic perspective was simultaneously grounded on a psycho-analytic inflection. Namely, that these stories were something more than simply a representation of the self. Specifically, these narratives existed as a phantasy; e.g. a lens through which the participants perceived reality. In effect, these phantasies are one element within the triadic structure of subjectivity itself; namely, the imaginary, the forces through which the subject addresses and avoids the real (Fink, 1995). As such, these stories were approached through what Lorenzer terms "deep-structure hermeneutics". Wherein the narrative itself was not *just* the manifest expression within a text (of expectations, intentions, worries, etc), but rather a crucial subterranean narrative existed within the latent level of meaning (of wishes, dreams, fears). Together, these two elements of narrative, the latent and the manifest, are the subject of the analysis. Importantly, both of these elements align with the principles of a narrative itself; it has a logic, a flow, a valorisation of particular 'things', and the "weight

bearing walls" that hold it together (Riessman, 1993) . It is the discovery of these elements that allow the research to illuminate the phantasies[191] themselves in a substantive manner; to understand how they 'work' upon the concrete world and within themselves.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined and justified the methodological decisions undertaken to facilitate the critique of "Fringe Gentrification" and the illumination of the libidinal-economy that underpins it. At the most fundamental level, the methods discussed throughout this chapter are underpinned by a "Process Ontology". This position is essential as, unlike other hegemonic ontologies within social research -- e.g. "Substance Ontology" and "Relational Ontology" -- it allows one to understand social reality as "semi-concrete". This assumption is essential considering the research aims of the thesis. Through recognising social reality as a process, it allows the thesis to illustrate the terms of engagement that exist between the primary social categories under investigation: e.g. political-economy, libidinal-economy, social space, etc. Accordingly, these categories are given a partial essence while recognising the manner in which these particular qualities can only exist within mutagenic relationships with other categories. This nuance allows the thesis to conceptualise the fundamental ontological relationships between 'things', upon which the empirical analysis of the forthcoming chapters will build. In addition, it outlined the relationship that exists between this ontological position and the epistemological commitments to critical social science; e.g. the purpose of deriving knowledge of social processes -- such as that which exists between libidinal-economy and political-economy -- is to illustrate the *potential* within social reality and the social forms that inhibit its realisation.

The chapter also outlined the particularities of the methodology operationalised in the pursuit of illuminating the social processes under investigation. On a lexical level, the primary decision being to approach libidinal-economy from a qualitative perspective. The

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[191] Importantly, these phantasies, these stories, go beyond being a lens through which reality is perceived. They exist as a lens through which the body determines what is enjoyable; what objects ought to be pursued, what places, what bodies? Phantasy is the story that justifies (and makes possible) enjoyment and desire.

purpose of which being, as expressed by Flick (2004), to understand lifeworlds from the inside out. After justifying the merits of this, as opposed to a quantitative approach, the chapter highlighted the more specific methodological decisions taken to operationalise this commitment to a qualitative approach. The most fundamental of which being the decision to 'split' the methodological framework in half; divided between an investigation into physical and digital urban-space. This provides the thesis with an opportunity to illustrate the value of a trialectical understanding of space for *empirical* (critical)urban studies. It provides a means through which to highlight the nuances within the process that exists between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and social-space. The investigation into 'physical' urban-space prioritises deriving an understanding how social-space is produced through libidinal-economy via the relationship between concrete-space and representational-space. While the investigation into 'digital' urban-space approaches this process through the relationship between concrete-space and the space of representation. The particularities of this, as discussed throughout the chapter, will be summarised below.

The first empirical chapters, that focus on Dalston and Shoreditch, constitute the 'physical' investigation. These chapters operationalise a method designed to illuminate the manner whereby libidinal-economy exerts itself upon space through phantasy, affect, etc. As discussed, considering the spatial nature of this investigation, it was decided that semi-structured walking-interviews provided the best means of extracting relevant data. In effect, these chapters seek to understand the nuanced relationship between the body, concrete-space, and its representational qualities, and this method resonates with such intentions. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted the decisions made while sampling. In particular, following from the literature review, the sample was consciously conducted in a manner that sought to avoid the "Residential Fetish" that had hindered previous critical investigations into gentrification. Likewise, it detailed the particularities of sampling itself: producing and distributing an aesthetically mimetic poster, snowballing, and recruiting on location.

Furthermore, the chapter highlighted how the data extracted from these 'physical' methods was coded and analysed. It discussed how this preliminary process engendered the

functional 'ontology' that would continue to structure the thesis as a whole; including the 'digital' investigation. Namely, an analytical focus upon the relationship between participants and phantasmic objects, places, bodies, and practices. This foundational analytical method was developed in tandem with a psycho-social approach to the interview data itself. One developed through integrating the "Psycho-Social" tradition of Cremin (2011) and Lorenzer (1972) with the sociological insights of the narrative turn (Riessman, 1993). This approach facilitated the analytical ability to uncover the phantasies that structured the participant's libidinal investment into and disinvestment from the 'things' outlined within the functional research 'ontology' e.g. regarding objects, places, bodies, and practices.

In addition, the chapter illustrated and justified the methodology utilised within the 'digital' portion of empirical investigation. While the above sought to illustrate the relationship between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and social space, through investigating representational-space and concrete-space, the 'digital' investigation sought to illuminate this process from a different angle. Namely, through illustrating the importance of the space of representation. In doing so, it provides an important layer of nuance to the investigation e.g. it highlights the complexity of the co-constitutive process that exists between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and social (urban)space. As discussed in the introduction, it is only through grasping these moments in tandem that one can understand the process of the production of space; in general, and within the particular context of the phenomena the thesis seeks to investigate.

Accordingly, while still a form of urban ethnography, this latter methodological half has been produced in accordance with the parameters of the digital. The chapter outlined how this "Digital Ethnography" sought to operationalise a "non-digital-centric" approach to Instagram and the space(s) of representation it facilitates. In effect, it sought to continually recognise the blurred distinction between 'physical' and 'digital' space. This perspective is essential considering the overarching aims of the thesis. In more particular terms, this method sought to approach Instagram sociologically. The sample of 150 accounts and the "image-texts" through which they produced spaces(s) of representation were analysed

through the approach of "Visual Sociology". This facilitated a multi-dimensional analysis of the material that investigated the site of production, the site of the image, and the site of the audience, simultaneously. In doing so, this analytical approach facilitates an illustration of the relations of production *behind* these space(s) of representation and illuminates the influence such forms exert upon the production of non-digital urban-space through the production and discipling of desire.

Chapter 4

Dalston and the "Urban Dreamworld"

"In our day the dreams mankind cherished for ages, dreams expressed in fairy tales which seemed sheer fantasy are being translated into reality by man's own hands."

- Nikita Krushchev told a crowd in the Lenin Stadium of Moscow 28th September 1959

Thus far, the thesis has articulated that, to understand the production of space, it is necessary to understand libidinal-economy. It is libidinal-economy, through the production of desire, that facilitates the economic moment of consumption. As discussed, extensive research has been done, from a Marxist perspective, into the assemblage of political-economy that facilitates the production of London's urban-space: including the concrete-spaces undergoing "Fringe Gentrification". However, while essential, such accounts take for granted the realisation of value that consumption facilitates and the representational production this entails. This chapter will provide a corrective; a foundational insight upon which the thesis will build. The production of space (and the form of 'gentrification' this instance takes) will be explained through the production of desire[192]; the force underpinning consumption. In doing so, it will provide a preliminary framework through which to understand the broader relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy; of which the phenomenon of "Fringe Gentrification" is only one expression.

Through the empirical insights provided by walking-interviews in Dalston, this chapter will outline the "Theatre" of the libidinal-economy underpinning the production of space. Through cataloguing these different expressions, the chapter will illustrate the regime of desire that constitutes this libidinal constellation and its centripetal spatial expression of the "Urban Dreamworld"; a phantasmic representational-space constituted by "Wish-Images".

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[192] As discussed, previous attempts by the "Consumption School" addressed the "production of the subject" but from an exclusively Bourdieusian framework e.g. "production" is limited to symbolic reproduction and the 'capital' maximising drive such explanations of social reality entails.

The chapter follows a series of explorations into the complexes of this libidinal-economy. This collection of distinct, yet interconnected phantasies, act as a meta-physical injection into representational-space,one which engenders, within interpellated bodies, a valorisation of particular objects, places, bodies, and practices. The primary complexes explored by the chapter are "The Organic" and the "Palimpsestic". While distinct, these complexes are fundamentally intertwined entities; different expressions within the same "Theatre". For the participants, these complexes and constitutive phantasies *provide* access to a phantasmic form of urban-experience imagined to be *beyond* "lack"[193], or at least one less lacking,for instance, through the Morrisonian drive structuring the phantasy of "Organic-Work", wherein participants project upon Dalston's objects and bodies a 'purer' state of fulfilment; one derived from an image of an idealised past[194]. Or, through the palimpsestic phantasy of "The Trace"[195], which works to libidinises the entanglement that traces provide. In addition, this section highlights the broader spatial dynamics intertwined with this libidinal-economy: the "In-Between". This discussion will illustrate the centripetal allure of, alongside the "Immaterial Labour" within[196], Dalston's atmosphere and "Crowd".

One should note, the different elements within this urban-imaginary projected upon and through Dalston's space fulfil the same function within political-economy. These different moments imbue a centripetal libidinal-surplus into Dalston's representational-space. In doing so, the economic moment of consumption is facilitated, a process that is essential for the extraction of surplus-value and, as such, the production of space within the capitalist city. It is through this process that "Fringe Gentrification" expresses itself; e.g. this libidinal-economy facilitates libidinal-investment and, in doing so, economic 'investment' is realised and extended. This is a fundamental element within the relationship between libidinal-economy, political-economy, and the production of space, which is illustrated by this chapter.

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[193] The sense of an ontological absence, one which in this case limits the enjoyment derived.

[194] This is an imagined past; history is replaced by projection.

[195] The remnants, real or imagined, that history leaves within a 'thing', see pages 158-160.

[196] Through a critical re-interpretation of Lazzarato's (1996) concept of immaterial labour, the section will show how our consuming participants are active producers (and facilitators) of representational-space (via Crowds and Atmosphere)

Considering the above, the established literature surrounding gentrification would simply define the participants as gentrifiers. However, this definition obscures as much as it reveals. While the participants may function as gentrifiers, through consumption and immaterial labour, this definition strips away sociological nuance. As discussed[197], it fails to grasp that "gentrifying labour" is modular, it is something a body *does* rather than existing as a subject position itself.

In seeking to understand and define the urban actors under investigation, the chapter draws an analytical comparison between the participants and "The Flaneur". Importantly, the architectural similarity yet fundamental incongruence between these urban figures provides a productive tension of illumination; e.g. through highlighting distinctions with "The Flaneur", clearer insight into the participants is provided. While both seek satisfaction from a valorised notion of urban-experience, there is a profound distinction in the experience libidinally invested within and how it is pursued. In summary, the participants are enchanted by an urban-experience that is fundamentally more commodified, democratic, and political. A libidinal-economy that derives enjoyment from the consumption of "Wish-Images": "the disguised representations of genuine wants and aspirations that remain thwarted under capitalism" (Gilloch, 2002:227). Consequently, our participants are "Urban Dreamers"; bodies who seek out concrete-spaces like Dalston due to the "Urban Dreamworld" it is imagined to contain.

In effect, a form of political-anticipation -- "Wish-Images" are the desire "to overcome and to transfigure the immaturity of the social product and the inadequacies in the social organization of production." (Benjamin, 1999:4) -- is transmuted into the phantasmic, commodified, and ossified within contemporary urban space. This critical desire is then 'put to work' in reproducing (and extending) capitalist socio-spatial relations through the parasitic phenomenon of "Fringe Gentrification".

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[197] See discussion on pages 80-84.

A Brief Background of Dalston

Like most of East London before the industrial revolution, the area now considered as
Dalston's was largely rural. The wider area, the Parish of Hackney, consisted of various
villages -- including Dalston[198], Kingsland, Newington, Shacklewell, and Hackney Village --
alongside landed estates. This rural network was internally connected by some of the same
thoroughfares which this chapter will focus upon; such as Dalston Lane, Kingsland Road,
and Ball's Pond Road. Mirroring today, this transportation infrastructure played an essential
role in facilitating the area's economic activities; namely, rural and cottage industries.
Alongside internal connection, these thoroughfares, though centrally Kingsland Road,
connected villages like Dalston to The City of London, via the Parish of Shoreditch. In effect,
Dalston, alongside the wider county of Middlesex, was part of the historic "hinterlands"[199] of
The City of London (Galloway, 1999). For Dalston, The City provided a market while
Dalston's rural and cottage industries contributed to the re(production) of urban life. While
there are complexities to this relationship, as highlighted by Galloway and Murphy (1991), it
is clear that, even at conception, Dalston and The City were bound together; and this
relationship was made possible by Kingsland Road.

Figure 3.1, Brickfields in Kingsland Road (Matthews, 1830)

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[198] Probably derived, like Haggerston and Hoxton, from the Anglo-Saxon word "*tun*" meaning farm;
e.g. Derelston = Dedrlaf's farm.
[199] Cities and 'their' "Hinterlands" have always had close economic, cultural and social links (Gore
and Fothergill, 2007), owing to the convergent socio-spatial relations proximity gives.

While the content of this relationship remained over the industrial revolution, its form shifted. Dalston transformed from a Rural to Urban "Hinterland" (Jones, 1955) before becoming part of London's urban industrial space. In effect, Dalston shifted from supplying The City with agricultural commodities, via labour-power, to industrial commodities. From the late 19th century, Dalston underwent a process of rapid change, driven by an expansion of industrial and residential speculative development (Tfl/LDA, 2005). A process began through wealthy developers buying fields, and open space, to extract profit from increasing Dalston's commercial, industrial, and residential, capacity (Baker, 1995). The domination of agricultural production and the "Hinterland" gave way to more profitable uses of land and Dalston was increasingly drawn into the"Industrial Crescent" (Hall, 1962) discussed in the introduction[200]. By the late 19th century, areas like western Dalston Lane and Tyssen St were dominated by factories (Baker, 1995). While Ridley Road and Sandringham Road, took on a greater residential focus, providing housing for the labour-power required for industrial production[201]. Mirroring its historic function, The City of London still influenced the production of space in Dalston. However, Dalston's space increasingly provided The City with industrial commodities and housing for an industrial workforce, rather than grain and livestock.

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[200] See discussion on pages 13-14.

[201] Mirroring its historic function, the City of London still influenced the production of space in Dalston. However, Dalston's space increasingly provided The City with industrial commodities and housing for an industrial workforce, rather than grain and livestock.
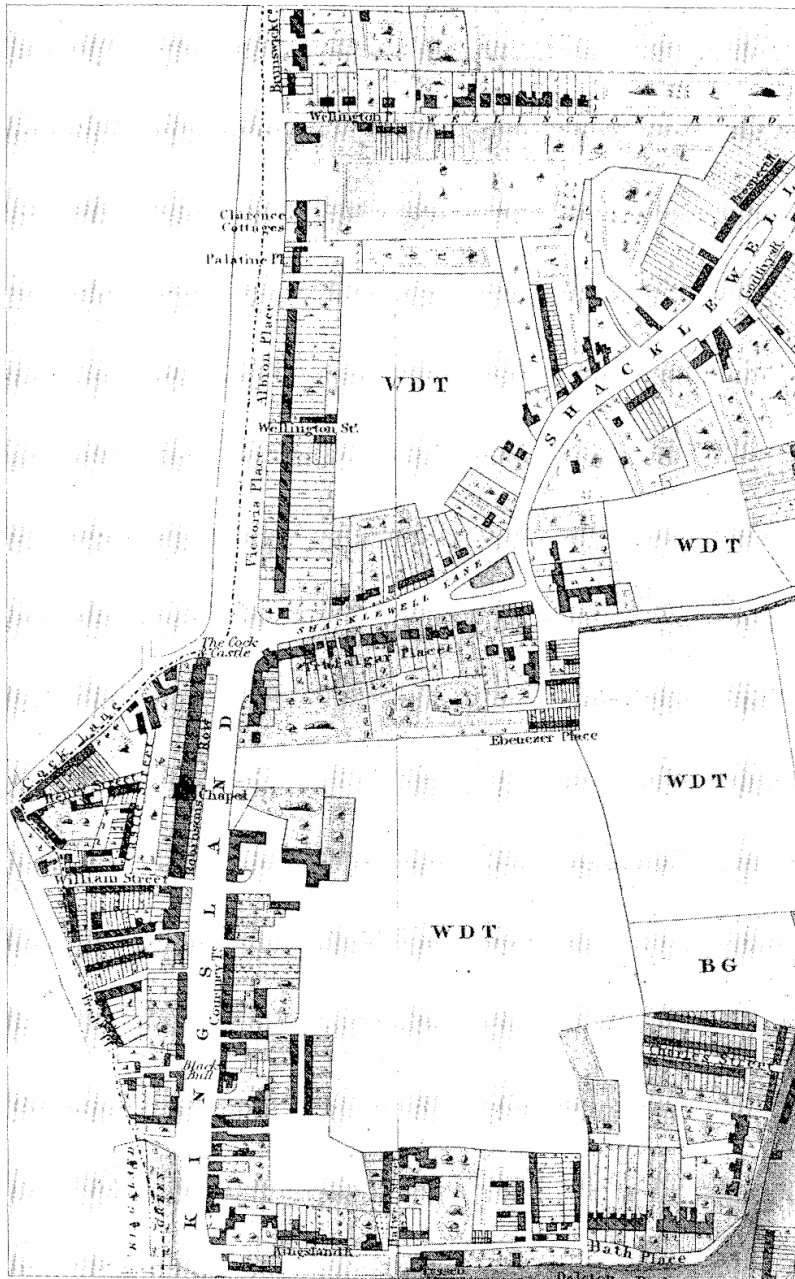
Figure 3.2, Kingsland High Street and Shacklewell in 1830 (Baker, 1995:30).

Figure 3.3, Dalston in 1870 (NLS, 1873).

While Kingsland Road played an important role in facilitating this process, a central vein connecting Dalston to The City, this function was supplemented by other forms of transportation infrastructure; which further stitched Dalston to the rest of London. In 1850, the construction of Kingsland Station -- the *first* "Kingsland Station" -- was built on Kingsland Road. A two storey station was built, with steps leading to its two platforms below, which connected to the newly established North London Railway (NLR). Originally, this line, which ran from Camden Town Station to West India Docks (see Figure 3.4), was intended for freight use only; highlighting the importance of such networks for facilitating the industrialization of places like Dalston. However, by 1850 the NLR was also operating a passenger service (Catford, 2009). In 1865, Dalston Kingsland Station was closed to passengers; as the North London Railway company desired more direct access into the city "rather than the circuitous route into Fenchurch Street" (Catford, 2009:2). To satisfy this faster connection to The City, Dalston Junction Station was opened. It was a much larger station, situated on the south side of Dalston Lane, which, passing through Haggerston and Shoreditch, connected directly to Broad St while continuing to facilitate the east-west curve of the NLR. This transportation infrastructure, in tandem with Kingsland Road, intensified

the process of industrialization and Dalston's transition from hinterland to industrial centre; North London's gate to The City (Baker, 1995).
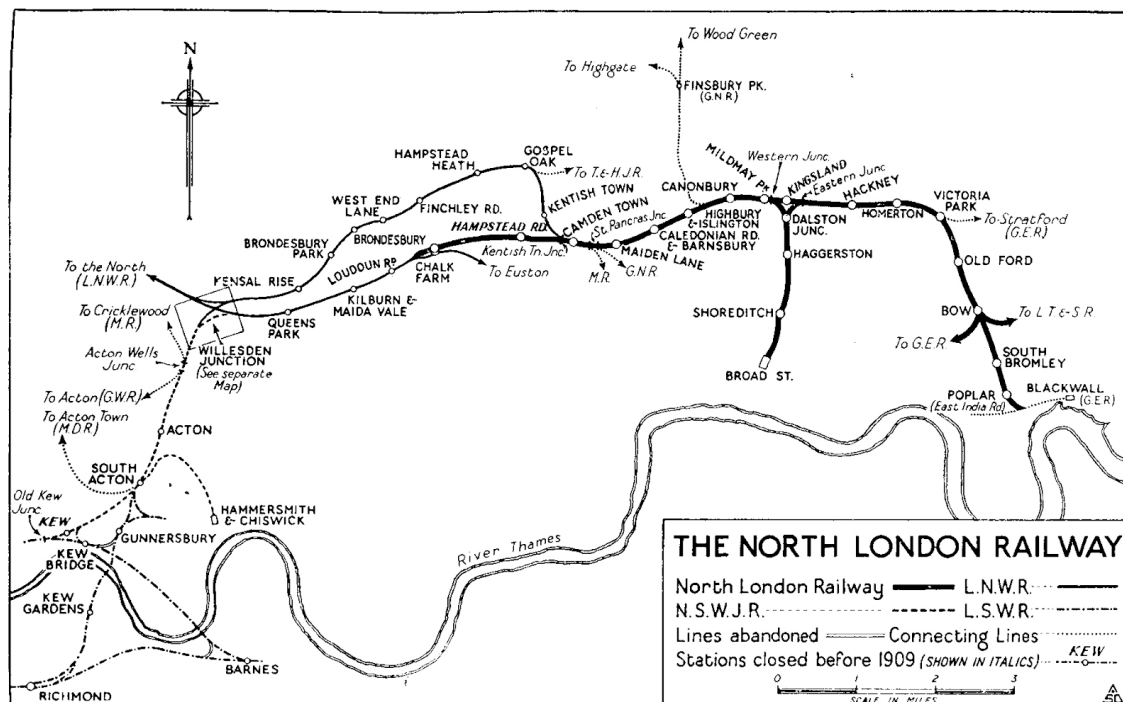

Figure 3.4, The North London Railway (NLRHS, 2021).

However, as discussed[202], this industrial Dalston would eventually be superseded by de-industrialisation[203], disinvestment, and growing poverty. It was this perception of ruination, alongside the discourse of decline which accompanies it, which sparked the interest of urban planners (Campkin, 2013). An orthodox explanation is that of the "Rent-Gap"; it was precisely the disinvestment of de-industrialised Dalston which made its redevelopment a lucrative project for the regional government, local councils and private developers involved. In 2004, the "London Plan", published by the Greater London Authority (GLA), demarcated Dalston as an "Area for Regeneration", identifying it as an area earmarked for investment and redevelopment. The overarching strategy of this plan was to "accommodate significant growth in ways that respect and improve London's diverse

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[202] See discussion on pages 17-18.

[203] This process of de-industrialization happened in tandem with an influx of migration from the Caribbean, during Britain's post-war labour shortages, followed by people from West Africa, Eastern Europe, and Turkey. This influx of people changed the cultural organisation of Dalston, alongside racializing the impoverishing effects of de-industrialisation, both of which lingered within the public imagination.

heritage while delivering the Mayor's vision for an exemplary, sustainable world city."
(GLA, 2004:37),in a manner which coordinated sub-regional urban initiatives, entailing a
close coordination between regional and sub-regional governance (i.e. between the GLA and
the local boroughs). For Dalston specifically, this facilitated the expansion of transportation
infrastructure (2004:245), via the East London Line, and increasing its commercial and
residential capacity in accordance with its "Town Centre" organisation (2004:254). These
three objectives of increasing capacity -- infrastructural, commercial, and residential --
mirror the same forces which drove Dalston's industrialization.

However, blank descriptions of "commercial capacity" fail to capture the particular process
at work regarding, what would more accurately be termed, the *changing* commercial
capacity of Dalston. Namely, there is an emerging tendency of a distinct urban-imaginary
within Dalston's concrete-space. The urban is a palimpsest and peering back, into its
antecedent layers, help us to understand the constitution of the present (Huyssen, 2003).
Doing so in Dalston, specifically between Forest Road and Dalston Junction, reveals how
space(s) of consumption have shifted and disappeared[204]:

1) The "Afro-European Barbers'' becomes the "Co-Op Pop-Up" working space.
2) The "Dalston Star Cafe", a greasy spoon which also advertised "easy english
   courses", becomes "Untitled" a cock-tail bar which rejects advertising.
3) "Faze-Two", an international currency exchange and travel agents, becomes "Bleep*"
   a temporary independent vinyl record shop.
4) The Family Welfare Association becomes "Snowball: A Desert Story".
5) The Citizens Advice Bureau becomes "Muku"; a designer hair salon which has shops
   in Shoreditch, Commercial St, and, now, Dalston.

Urban disappearances, such as the above, are a symptom. If we dig into them and explore
what these spaces became, we will better understand the contemporary production of
Dalston's space and the libidinal-economy that underpins it. To do so, it is necessary to
empirically engage with those whose consumption facilitates the realisation (and

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[204] This insight was generated through the archive function of Google maps. This tool allows one to
view a particular space across multiple points of time. It is an underutilised resource through which
to understand the changing constitution of space. The particular time these changes took place varies
but is all within the period between 2008-2020.

production) of these new urban forms; the phantasies, affects, and imaginaries, that structure their consumption and experience of Dalston.

Organic Work

The phantasy of "Organic Work", projected upon Dalston's spaces of consumption, amounts to a meta-physical injection. An imaginary that encourages the interpellated to perceive Dalston's space(s) of consumption as containing an eroticised form of labour; one that is associated with craft and the artinisal. In part, the libidinal-surplus this provides facilitates the extraction of enjoyment from Dalston's concrete-space. The 'logic' of this phantasy will be illustrated below. This insight will then be incorporated into a broader understanding of "The Organic" complex of which "Organic Work" is one manifestation.

The first interview providing insight into the phantasy of "Organic Work" is with Jay. At 18, Jay moved from Essex to London for university. After graduating he moved from Hackney to Clapham where he now worked as a shoe-seller and semi-professional musician. Jay's consumption of Dalston was primarily constituted by visiting the bars on Kingsland Road, the Rio Cinema, and attending Jazz gigs. At 23, he was the youngest participant in the study. The interview lasted two hours. We met at Dalston Junction and walked south to Acton Mews, before heading back north up Kingsland Road.

The following excerpt took place towards the end of the interview, as we walked passed "The Hackney Peddler"; an independent bicycle shop at Dalston's boundary with Stoke Newington (See Figure 3.5):

> Jay: For some reason, and I'm not sure if it's a subconscious thing, but the things that are independent, always feel there's more care. Like, this is something that someone has built up, from not very much, they're putting a lot of love and care into it. And you see that, whether it's going to, like, an independent bakery, and you see how they're getting up at 6am. They're putting so much effort in and you can see they're making stuff with love. Versus, chains… it feels like there's less love in there. It's

more just mass produced… it always comes down to the same thing which is that there's just a sense of care, love, and respect in it. Whether it's an independent record store solely selling electronic music, or just jazz; it's not just another HMV type thing. Its that, it's not just Halfords. You can see these guys getting up really early, spending ages putting bikes together. It's a craft, 100%.

Figure 3.5, The Hackney Peddler (Carroll, 2021).

This excerpt, the sentiments of which appeared frequently throughout the sample, provides a foundational insight into the phantasy of "Organic Work". This perception promises that certain spaces of consumption -- such as "The Hackney Peddler" and similar spaces in Dalston -- like the aforementioned "Snowball" and "Bleep" -- contain a libidinal-surplus. One derived from underpinning socio-economic practices (e.g. a product of 'independent' status). Specifically, this perception encourages the interpellated[205] to associate this 'independent' status with affects of love, care, and effort. Importantly, for our current purposes, Jay highlights how these affective qualities are not imagined to be a direct result *per-se* of the underpinning socio-economic practice. Instead, these attractive affects are perceived to be produced by that which this practice facilitates. Namely, participants

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[205] Those that the thesis will later term "Urban Dreamers", see pages 174-183.

imagined that spaces like "The Hackney Peddler" contained a particular form of labour. One which, in different ways, is perceived to *imbue* love, care, and effort, into the surrounding space. In effect, these spaces of consumption derive a libidinal-surplus from those who are imagined to work within them; i.e. the bodies engaged in supposedly "Organic Work". One should note, this phantasy of "Organic Work" is unavoidably intertwined with the broader constellation of this libidinal-economy[206]. As discussed, phantasy, within lived-reality, is messy and indivisible. For now, we will leave questions regarding the co-constitutive structure of phantasies to one side and focus upon this particular manifestation -- e.g. the imaginary surrounding "Organic Work" -- in isolation.

To understand "Organic Work", it is useful to recognise the libidinal terrain this phantasy shares with the Arts and Crafts movement[207]. While the former is not a simple continuation of the latter, the two share a similar foundational structure of feeling, principally, through both valorising a form of work that shares characteristics resonant with the imagined status of the unalienated craftsman. Craft is a phantasmic form of work imagined to exist before the expansion of industrial capitalism and the subsequent over-determining of work by the law of value[208] (Crawford, 1977). A mythos of "The Fall", wherein the anthropological category of work, to paraphrase Fuchs and Sevignani (2013) was transformed *into* the historical category of labour[209]; e.g. it ceased to be creative, human, and fulfilling, and instead became the alienating burden of "Useless Toil" (Morris, 1888). Morris' political writings, in a manner similar to Blake, sought to re-capture this 'lost' form. In effect, this Morrisonian impulse is a drive to return to the 'pure' state of fulfilment (Lacan, 1998) that has been projected upon work in an idealised past. The preliminary analysis of "Organic Work" above highlights how the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy shares this Morrisonian drive. For Jay, the workers of "The Hackney Peddler" exude (and imbue) the centripetal qualities of love, care, and effort, through their perceived mimesis of this imagined figure of "The Craftsman". Likewise, it is through the apparent incongruence with

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[206] Atmosphere, "The Independent", etc.

[207] of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

[208] The rationalisation of labour-time in accordance with the laws (Braverman, 1998) and drives of capitalism.

[209] It is worth noting the Aristotelian underpinnings of Marx's argument *vis a vis* the concept of "species-being", see Fromm (2013).

these qualities that "Halfords" is rendered libidinally-deficient. Importantly, this empirical insight also highlights a key distinction between the Arts and Crafts movement and our participants. In distinction to Morris' somewhat messanic prescriptions, the participants perceive concrete-spaces that facilitate this imagined form of labour to already exist. It is through this apparent congruence of space and phantasy that the libidinal-surplus is produced.

Importantly, the enjoyment facilitated by this libidinal-surplus extends beyond valorising the supposed existence of "Organic Work"; e.g. work that is imagined to exist in an unalienated and fulfilled state. For the participants, it facilitates a different experience of consumption. The phantasy of "Organic Work" is structured as much upon a desire for 'organic' consumption as it is 'organic' production. The following interview will explore this. Born in Edinburgh, Jim had lived in London for just over a year. He had moved to Dalston, from London Fields, three months before the interview in order to live closer to his partner and the "Resident Advisor" office where he worked as a Web Designer. The interview started in the early afternoon and took place over around ninety minutes. The walk started at the "Eastern Curve Garden" and consisted of several circular routes around Dalston Junction and Kingsland Road, each passing through the space in slightly different paths. The interview finished at the "H.J. Aris Emporium" (See Digure 2.3), an antiques shop, bar, and cafe on Dalston Lane.

Figure 3.6, H.J.Aris (Carroll, 2021).

The following excerpt took place as we walked through Dalston Lane:

> Jim: As things become more commercial, people react to it, and go - "no we don't want this modern, sleek society" - people want to go back to a time when things were more real and handmade". As I said before, I don't like super old stuff. I do prefer, if I can afford it, to get handmade stuff. Which kinda comes into it. Looking back, stuff was just better. Everything is so mass-produced now, and people don't want that, I don't want that.

> L: Why?

> Jim: It feels so clinical. It's not made for the right reasons. It's just people trying to make money off other people. Just making all this stuff. There is a fine line, where stuff being cheap is good, because then people's lives are improved. But then there's

a point where things become overproduced, and then you're just selling stuff for the sake of selling stuff, just to make money.

Jim's excerpt is illustrative for multiple reasons. Firstly, it introduces several moments within this "Theatre" that will be explored later in the chapter[210]; such as, the 'commercial' as an antaphrodistic and "The Palimpsestic" as an imagined refuge from a disavowed 'modernity'. Secondly, It highlights how the phantasy of "Organic Work" changes how participants *experience* consumption.

For now, we will focus on this shift within the experience of consumption. The surplus provided by "Organic Work" is not restricted to labouring bodies and the space(s) of consumption constituted. It is central in valorising the commodities perceived to be produced by "Organic Work". Jim reveals the transference underpinning this, wherein commodities absorb the qualities imagined to exist within the conditions of production. Once more, the "Theatre" itself produces this libidinal-surplus through dichotomisation. The eroticised commodities of "Organic Work" facilitate the extraction of enjoyment, in part, through being contrasted to a supposed antithetical form: the "clinical", the "mass-produced", the "artificial", etc. For the participants, these antaphrodisiac objects carry the meta-physical burden of lack that has been projected upon their conditions of production. In contrast, the phantasy of "Organic Work" provides a means through which the participants strive for an experience of consumption[211] *beyond* lack, through the extraction of enjoyment from 'redeemed' commodities.

For those interpellated by this libidinal-economy, Dalston's concrete-space(s) of consumption provide a multitude of means to pursue this augmented experience of "Organic Consumption"[212]: e.g. an experience of consumption imagined to be *beyond* lack.

[210] While this phantasy is co-constituted through other libidinal moments, the core impetus remains. The relationship between these elements will be discussed later. See discussions on 150-160.
[211] This urban-experience desired is broader than just 'consuming' in an economic sense, it is about consuming the wider atmosphere *surrounding* consumption. See pages 172-174.
[212] However, while the above highlights how this phantasy is as much about "Organic" consumption as it is about "Organic" production, one must recognise that these two elements are inseparably linked. The participants take pleasure consuming these "Organic" objects precisely as they imagine

Throughout the sample, participants outlined this libidinal-surplus within a range of commodities: from 'craft' beer and 'artisanal' bread, to less perishable objects such as 'artisan' furniture, etc. In part, the allure of Dalston is a representational-space that facilitates this element of urban-experience; the extraction of enjoyment from 'redeemed' commodities within its concrete-space. However, leaving the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy temporarily to one side, we should reflect on the fundamental link between libidinal-economy and the production of space this expresses. Wherein, the libidinal-surplus provided by phantasy, through the stimulation of desire and facilitation of enjoyment, produces consumption as an *economic activity*[213]. As discussed, such moments of consumption facilitate the realisation of value. In a particular sense, within particular space(s) of consumption, and, by extension, in a general sense, from the agglomeration of these effects. In effect, consumption, as an economic activity, facilitates the extraction of surplus-value from Dalston's concrete-space. As such, this process exudes a fundamental influence over the production of urban-space itself. As discussed in the introduction, an understanding of this dynamic is a primary aim of the thesis. This example above -- which highlights the co-constitutive relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy within the production of space -- provides us with a preliminary understanding. A foundation upon which, as the thesis develops, the concept of "Representational Rent-Gaps" will be grounded.

Leaving these broader questions to one side, let us return to excavating the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy; specifically, the phantasy of "Organic Work",a recurrent theme within which surrounded the perceptibility of the production process. This element of "Organic Work" will now be explored. Roger shared a similar biographical background to Jay, having moved to London for University and existing within the urban precariat[214]. However, in distinction, Roger was enrolled as a postgraduate student when the interview was conducted. While living in Lower Holloway, Roger would travel to consume Dalston with other students; its bars and cafes alongside Ridley Road market. The interview took around

them to be produced under particular valorised conditions. This phantasy surrounding production is essential to the structure of these desires.

[213] Additionally, one can note how it is precisely this "affect premium" *provided* by phantasy which helps to justify the additional economic expense for the consumer themselves.

[214] While studying Roger worked for Deliveroo.

two hours. We met on Forest Road and followed a route mirroring a figure of eight. First walking down Forest Road and onto Dalston Lane, through the residential area of Sandringham Road, after which we doubled back through Ridley Road and finished at the Eastern Curve Garden.

The following excerpt took place while we walked up Dalston Lane as Roger talked about a nearby bar:

> Roger: Which has its own microbrewery behind a piece of glass. All the beer is on tap. It's kind of like: 'Sick! They're made over there, and I can drink it here. That's cool, you made it, nice!'
>
> L: Why is that important to you?
>
> Roger: ... As soon as you see how its been made, you want it!

Roger valorises not only the *product* of "Organic Work", he valorises the *sight* of the work itself. The perceptibility of bodies engaged in production, of seeing objects in a state of becoming, is part of the desired urban-experience,one which, once more, expresses an inverse from the regular experience of consumption,wherein the conditions (and relations) of production are, in different ways, separated from the consuming body. A micro-brewery behind glass is only one such example of this phenomenon. In Shoreditch, one finds an upholstery workshop behind glass; which, as will be discussed, was consciously designed to satisfy this phantasy. Furthermore, this *display* of "Organic Work" is not limited to the architectural usage of glass[215]. Roger's excerpt provides a preliminary insight into this phenomena (both within phantasy and concrete-space). The phantasy of "Organic Work" is inseparable from an aestheticisation of the labouring body and the means of production itself[216]. In effect, within such space(s) of consumption, the body performs a double-work. Firstly, the body produces a particular commodity. Secondly, through facilitating phantasy,

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[215] The "Dusty Knuckles Bakery" on Dalston Lane, where one walks through the site of production to order.

[216] Likewise, this element of a commodity's aesthetic is not unknown to employers, as will be discussed in Shoreditch. See page 203-205.

they perform an immaterial labour within representational-space[217]. The body becomes a display from which the alluring character of "The Craftsman" is projected.

The following chapter will provide further depth into this aestheticisation of labour-time and its relationship to the production of space;namely, through highlighting how concrete-space is produced, in a highly particular sense, through the disciplinary aesthetic pressure of libidinal-economy and the representational-space(s) it demarcates as enjoyable. Accordingly, it highlights that while phantasy draws bodies to concrete-spaces, concrete-space is likewise produced in a manner which actively seeks to resonate with phantasy (Böhme, 2017). The relationship between phantasy and concrete-space is a co-constitutive process. The -- partial -- unification of Dalston's space and this "Theatre" is not simply the product of chance[218].

"The Organic" Complex

This chapter has so far only analysed "Organic Work". However, one should recognise this phantasy is only one facet of a broader libidinal code. Namely, the complex of "The Organic". This overarching complex -- e.g. a collection of intertwined phantasies (Eliott, 2015) -- has already emerged throughout this chapter. In the excerpts above, the libidinal-surplus provided by the phantasy of "Organic Work" spills over into the surrounding concrete-space. In a sense, libidinal-investment is sticky; through containing a valorised 'thing', a place's representational-space is enriched in a broader sense[219]. The chapter will now outline the other tributary phantasies that constitute the complex of "The Organic";namely, those surrounding heterogeneous spatial accompaniments and the 'rejection' of artificial desire. This section will finish by outlining the libidinal impulse at the root of "The Organic". Namely, that it's constitutive phantasmic elements each 'work' to

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[217] Berkeley's dictum -- *esse est percipi,* being is being seen -- is provided with new political-economic and libidinal significance.

[218] It is worth reflecting on the relationship between epithume and epithumogenesis that this example raises. The process of libidinisation is the result of both epithume and epithumogenesis, the latter is the moment of activity informed by the former.

[219] This works both ways, through space working to valorise the objects within it. This dynamic will be explored later through the discussion on atmosphere.

facilitate an urban-experience that is, in different ways, imagined to be a form of unalienated consumption (or, at least, an experience that seeks to simulate it). For the interpellated, it is such an experience that is demarcated enjoyable.

The first tributary surrounds the allure and libidinal 'work' of heterogeneous spatial accompaniments. This dynamic will be explored by returning to Roger. The following excerpt took place as we arrived at Eastern Curve Garden (ECG) (See Figure 3.7); a bar and community-garden designed to emulate a forest:

Figure 3.7, Eastern Curve Garden (Carroll, 2021).

L: What's the appeal of not being in London?

Roger: I think London is this weird mix of being totally heterogeneous, but then totally homogenous as well. If I had to put my flag into one or the other I would struggle to say which - if that makes sense… Like this right? (pointing around Eastern Curve Garden). Five years ago if you had bought a coffee for four or five

quid and had been given essentially mugs from Wilkinsons, you'd of been like where's the fucking cutlery man? Where's the china? You know what I mean?, whereas now, this is cool.

L: Why?

Roger: Because it's the kind of shit you have at home and it makes you feel homely - to me anyway. Used to be when you'd paid a lot a lot for a coffee, then I'd want it in a fucking Starbucks mug. You know what I mean?

In a manner mirroring earlier, the participant draws upon a dichotomisation. In this instance, between the ECG's "essentially mugs from Wilkinsons" and "The China… (the) fucking Starbucks mug". As before, the former is valorised through the deficit of the latter. Importantly, Roger highlights how, for him, this libidinal-surplus has shifted. To understand this, one should recognise that spatial accompaniments -- cutlery, furniture, etc -- are unavoidably rooted in economy. The standardisation characteristics of accompaniments within orthodox spaces of consumptions emerge through the rationalisation disciplined through economies of scale. In a manner echoing Ruskin's (1986) arguments[220] regarding the relationship between aesthetics and political-economy, the aesthetic homogenisation of accompaniments is an *expression* of the underpinning economic structure. However, it is precisely this homogenised aesthetic experience, engendered by economic rationalisation, that Roger withdraws from. Instead, a libidinal-surplus is perceived within the imagined opposite; the heterogeneity of spatial accompaniments found in places such as ECG[221]. For Roger, such heterogeneous arrangements augment the experience of consumption through a ciphered sense of the "Homely". This tendency is not restricted to ECG. One finds it, in different concentrations and forms, throughout Dalston and 'Fringe' consumer space.

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[220] Ruskin (1986) argues, in a manner somewhat similar to Benjamin (1999), that the relationship between culture and economy is one of *expression*. In Marxist language, the superstructure (culture) does not simply reflect the base (economy); rather, it *expresses* it. For Ruskin, the ugliness of capitalist social relations *expressed* itself within the aesthetic forms it gave life to.

[221] One should note, within the ECG (and similar space(s) of consumption), this quality is not restricted to cutlery; it extends into the accompaniments of space more broadly: bricolage interior-design, a lack of uniforms, etc.

When such arrangements were encountered during interviews, the participants described them in similar terms to Roger: casual, human, organic, etc. This dynamic -- that exists within concrete-space and the perception of it held by participants[222] -- reveals an important element of "The Organic". Within the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy, objects contained within (and productive of) space, conduct work on a myriad of scales to engender mutation within the experience of consumption.

In a similar vein, Dalston's space(s) of consumption signify unity with "The Organic" through 'rejecting' other practices associated with orthodox consumer experience;namely, the obscuring of advertising and marketing. Originally from Greece, Tim had moved to London after finishing university. While he had lived in multiple areas of London, he now shared a flat off Dalston Lane. Tim asked if the walk could begin from his workplace -- an office block, where he worked as a business analyst, in the City of London -- and end at his flat. Consequently, we walked a substantial chunk of the A10 over a period of about two hours. The following excerpt took place after passing by "Untitled" (See Figure 2.5), a bar on Kingsland Road, while the "Obscene" bar he refers to was the "Cornershop Bar" at the A10s junction with Old Street in Shoreditch:

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[222] These spatial accompaniments also work as important "productive signifiers". Like the epithumogenetic display of "Organic Work", heterogeneous spatial accompaniments 'inform' bodies that they are consuming the 'right' kind of place: 'This is a place that is disorganised. Consequently, it is an organic space, one where I can consume organically'.

Figure 3.8, "Untitled" Carroll, 2019)

Tim: If it belongs to everyone, it is somehow less valuable. So if I can find a tidbit that I think is unique, or even if I had something which I thought was my own, and then I found out that it is actually this widely marketed product I'd like to think I wouldn't lose value of it, but I probably would.

L. So you're resistant to that?

Tim: Exactly! You want to feel as if you're making your own choices. The lack of signs on the cafes, you feel like you've found a hidden gem. People definitely say that; "hidden gems", they're drawn to that because it reflects a part of themselves, rather than a giant neon sign. Oh that's it! Why I thought that other bar was obscene, or vaguely sexual, it attributes the same reaction in you. It is so needy! I didn't ask to see that! A well known magazine, Time Out, as soon as it advertises a place it blows up. It is so ridiculously popular, but that means there's almost no point going to see it. It's like music, there's no point even listening to this album, as the impression has

already been made; it has already imprinted on you what it's going to be, so there's no space for you to add anything.

Tim is resistant to orthodox advertising and marketing due to its inhibiting effect on the enjoyment he derives from consumption. A situation engendering a desire for that which doesn't 'want' to be seen. One may interpret this through Fisher's (2013) argument regarding "The Hipster"[223]. Fisher argues that such desires are little different from the "Conspicuous Consumption" of the 19th century Bourgeois (Veblen, 1991) or the Macaronis of Vauxhall Gardens in the 18th century (Ogborn, 1997). A desire to be different is transferred into a desire to consume that which is perceived to be different; a quality lost when too many other bodies follow suit. However, while not mutually exclusive, the above highlights a corollary dynamic. Jim's desire for that which 'does not wish to be seen' is structured through its associations with agency. It provides Tim with a sense that his desire is his own. For Tim, a 'thing' that actively seeks to produce desire within you, through advertising or marketing -- through "being needy" -- is associated with an artificial desire. One produced by an exterior force rather than by 'you'. In contrast, Tim associates "Organic" desire with a sense of dialogue; one shared between consuming subject and consumed object. The practice of disavowing traditional advertising and marketing is perceptible while walking down Kingsland Road: "The Nest" and "Pamelas" are other examples highlighted by participants. However, outside the logic of phantasy, this practice is an obscuring of desire production rather than a discarding. The aesthetic of disavowal is part of the language of this libidinal-economy. The usual function of epithumogenensis, the influencing of another body, is maintained precisely through being rendered less perceptible.

The different moments within "The Organic" outlined above are far from exhaustive. One could continue to explore its constitutive phantasies in a myriad of manners; the tendency towards abstracting economic transactions (through "paying it forward"), Fordist workplace aesthetics (the marginalisation of uniforms and subsequent eclipsing of power structures), the fetishisation of the independent (in such a manner that attempts to redefine what

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[223] and other theorists who make similar arguments; Michael (2015) and Maly and Varis (2016).

'capital' entails), etc. However, an exhaustive documentation of this complex is unnecessary and impractical. The chapter has analysed enough elements to express the foundational impulse. Namely, that the complex of "The Organic" is fundamentally expressive of a desire to experience consumption in a manner divorced from a typical notion of 'consumerism'. This essential element structures "The Organic" but also, as will be argued, the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy as a whole. In effect, the complex of "The Organic" is one manifestation; one means through which this libidinal-economy augments the experience of consumption, through phantasy, into being something imagined to be beyond lack. This fundamental impulse will be subjected to further analysis later in the chapter, where it will be connected to Walter Benjamin's (1999) notion of the "Dreamworld" and the "Wish-Images" constitutive of it.

The Palimpsestic

The excavation of this "Theatre" has so far focused upon "The Organic",a complex with distinct manifestations -- the valorising of "Organic Work", "Heterogenous Accompaniments", etc -- which share a core libidinal impulse. In different ways, each facilitates a desire which extracts enjoyment through the obscuring of orthodox consumerism and the urban-experience it is imagined to engender. However, "The Organic" is only one complex within the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy; one means through which the enjoyable is demarcated and facilitated. Really, "The Organic" is akin to an attractive story which, when ciphered into representational-space, is able to capture desire. The chapter will now highlight how an additional complex -- "The Palimpsestic" -- performs a similar libidinal 'work' in facilitating the consumption of Dalston and the subsequent extraction of surplus-value from its concrete-space. Although, as will be discussed, one must recognise that these complexes are interlinked. The allure of "The Palimpsestic" is, once more, derived from an attempt to experience consumption and urban-space *beyond* lack.

Within Dalston (and 'Fringe' space(s) of consumption generally) one finds a recurrent architectural tendency,wherein vestigial industrial space is transformed from its relicit use-value to another. Usually, these changes mirror the tendencies expressed in the

post-industrial reconstitution of urban-space (Hannigan 1998; Lloyd 2010), from spaces of 'production' to those of 'consumption'[224]: the factory becomes the cafe, the warehouse becomes the bar. However, what distinguishes this phenomenon from such redevelopment practices generally is the retention of "traces". Within such spaces, the architectural break from the past is never complete. Previous academic discussions have argued the growth of this architectural form is determined by urban political-economy (Hubbard, 2016). This position argues that following the disinvestment of the primary circuit of capital from the former industrial centres, there existed a general tendency towards the production of post-industrial space (Harvey, 2001)[225]. Within cities, this tendency expressed itself through "Industrial Ruins" becoming increasingly present within urban-space (Edensor, 2005; Bardnt, 2010). These unprofitable ruins are then reconstituted to align with the new orientation of urban political-economy by undergoing the aforementioned transformation into a space of consumption[226].

Under the orthodox understanding, these vestiges of industrial architectural aesthetics are the product of a pragmatic re-commodification of industrial space (Hubbard, 2016). In effect, it is more cost-effective to maintain these fragments. However, the primary data gathered for this thesis suggests that such an explanation is only partial. While the political-economic ontological layer is central within the production of urban space, including spaces of consumption, so too is the libidinal-economy that facilitates the act of consumption itself. For instance, if these industrial aesthetics *continued*[227] to be perceived as repulsive and conducive to unenjoyable urban-experience, then libidinal-economy would impede the realisation of economic value in such spaces. In this example, traces would act as an inhibitor for places like "The Factory" (see Figure 3.9) for enjoyment and the consequent

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[224] Though, as the thesis argues, we ought to be suspicious of this clear-cut binary. As documented, there is plenty 'produced' in so-called acts of consumption. A dynamic that mirrors the 'consumption' necessary for 'production' (Marx, 2005).

[225] The significance of this for London was detailed in the introduction, see pages 18-21.

[226] One should note, the 'switch', requires a planning decision and therefore a set of actors who can combine politics with economics; an orthodox political-economy in effect. This is important to highlight the significance of political-economy *and* libidinal-economy in the production of space. I am not suggesting libidinal-economy *in isolation* determines the production of space.

[227] For instance, the Dickens-esque industrial imaginary or Blake's evocation of "Dark Satanic Mills". This is important, it stresses the experiential *shift* in how industrial aesthetics are perceived. It is, in effect, an act of libidinal reversal. One that is facilitated through historical distance.

extraction of surplus-value. Consequently, to understand this tendency, it is necessary to illustrate the libidinal-economy underpinning this process. One should note, this argument does not seek to suggest that therefore *all* that matters within the production of space is libidinal-economy. The questions of political-economy, of how space is zoned, how it is owned, etc. remain equally significant within this process. The argument is simply this; it is significant, within the production of such spaces, that historical traces are demarcated as enjoyable and thus exude centripetal effect upon bodies. Consequently, to understand the production of such spaces one must excavate the phantasy of "The Palimpsestic" that facilitates the extraction of enjoyment from them.

Figure 3.9, The Factory (Carroll, 2021).

To explore "The Palimpsestic", we will return to Jay. The following excerpt occurred when we arrived at Acton Mews (See Figure 2.6; a collection of repurposed Railway Arches -- owned and planned by the "Dream Corporation" (HGH, 2018) -- that have been transformed into various spaces of consumption, such as bars, board game cafes, and pop-up restaurants:

Figure 3.10, Acton Mews (Carroll, 2021).

J: ...I like how they're using old parts. Don't let things go to waste because it kind of keeps some of the history. You get to see how it used to be. For example, where I live used to be like, an old kinda like factory building, and all sorts. I really like that as it reminds me of how in New York, they used their warehouses to become flats and things like that. That's what I like. I just wish there could be that usage all over the UK, rather than just London.

L: Is there an appeal to living in an ex-factory rather than a high-rise?

J: Yeah, definitely. So I think younger people definitely have this attraction to living somewhere that's cool and been used. I think, I don't know what it is, but certain people I know, and myself, have an infatuation with things that have been used before. So like industrial stuff, or things that have been abandoned, like reclamation and re-usage is something that just strangely appeals, I think it's nice to have somewhere that's had a bit of history and it's honestly nice to live somewhere that's not just been knocked down and rebuilt.

This excerpt helps to illuminate the 'logic' of "The Palimpsestic". For Jay, it is the "traces" themselves -- within the reconstituted railway architecture of Acton Mews and the ex-industrial space he lives in -- that facilitate libidinal-investment. To understand this, we must dissect the "Trace" itself. For Walter Benjamin, "Living means leaving traces." (Benjamin, 1969:169). In effect, there is a fundamental archival quality to action. In different ways, life leaves behind evidence of itself. This process is significant, as traces captivate our participants' desire. In more specific terms, these traces provide such spaces of consumption with an alluring 'story' through an aura of historical-depth. To some extent, this quality is fundamental to traces:

"The trace is the appearance of a nearness, however far removed the thing that left it behind may be… . In the trace, we gain possession of the thing" (Benjamin, 1999:447).

Traces create an entanglement with that which is removed -- history, previous-use, urban-life, etc -- and draw it closer. Within this "Theatre", the core impulse of "The Palimpsestic" is the libidinisation of experiencing this closeness[228]. It is through this entanglement that the "Palimpsestic" facilitates a form of consumption *beyond* consumerism. However, in distinction to "The Organic", here the meta-physical injection into representational-space derives its libidinal-surplus from an image of history[229] rather than one of workshop utopia. This foundational insight into "The Palimpsestic" will be developed below through further empirical examples.

The projections of "The Palimpsestic" go beyond this valorisation of 'historical' traces. This complex imbues a libidinal-surplus into the traces left behind by contemporary urban-life (See Figure 3.11). This dynamic will be investigated through returning to Jim; the web-designer who lived on Dalston Lane. The following excerpt took place while walking on Kingsland Road, between Forest Road and Richmond Road**:**

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[228] There is a resonance here with the wider literature on the allure of ruins and historical detritus, see Edensor (2005).

[229] "The utopian images which accompany the emergence of the new always, at the same time, reach back to the primal past. In the dream in which each epoch entertains images of its successor, the latter appears wedded to elements of primal history" (Benjamin, 1999:894). Within this contemporary utopian impulse, the primal past has been reconstituted through the image of the industrial era.

L: When we're walking by this kind of graffiti and corrugated metal. Do you like it?

Jim: I really like it. It appeals to what's the word. I prefer grimey-er cities, Berlin is the same, it's a bit more untidy.

L: Why is that?

Jim: ...it's just the thing of - its not been taken over by big money developments. You would never get graffiti - or it would be tidied up straight away - on like a big bank building, or something. Whereas here, its where people live, people don't mind it, it's just something that happens, you know?

Figure 3.11, Everyday Traces (Carroll, 2021)

This notion, of certain urbanites being drawn to the dirtier elements of cities, is well documented. Alonso (1998) argued that particular urbanites are drawn to the democratic visage of graffiti and 'grime'. This analysis is supported by empirical insights extracted by this research[230]. However, the excerpt above indicates that the allure of 'grime' is more complex than this. For Jim, 'grime' -- a collective catch-all for graffiti, untidiness, matter-out-of-place[231], etc -- is indicative of two *interconnected* processes:

1) Grime is understood to be a by-product of 'life' being lived in urban space. In effect, grime is viewed as a trace; it's just "something that happens" in spaces "where people live".

2) The continued existence of 'grime' is viewed as symptomatic. These traces are taken as evidence that Dalston is 'still' a place produced by 'life'.

In a now familiar pattern, these traces are utilised by Jim to contrast Dalston to the imagined opposite; space perceived to be "taken over by big money developments". A phantasmic part of "London" where capital has squeezed out the traces of life and against which the 'lifeforce' of Dalston is derived[232]. One ought to note the interconnectedness between "The Organic" and "The Palimpsestic" highlighted here; a valorisation of that which is imagined to signify 'real' urban-life, both are an attempt, in different ways, to imbue consumption with 'life'[233]. The next chapter will return to "Urban Grime'. The analysis will be extended through several discussions that took place at Shoreditch High Street Station tunnel. Specifically, the libidinal role of 'grime' will be connected to Neil Smith's (2005) arguments regarding the aestheticisation of the 'dangerous'.

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[230] For instance, in Shoreditch one participant was particularly drawn to the graffiti on Sclater St for its "democratic suggestion". Likewise, similar comments were made regarding the ELR tunnel, as discussed on pages 195-196.

[231] One can see parallels between the above and a post-modern sensibility towards dirt and detritus generally: see Lagerspetz (2018) and (Campkin 2013).

[232] This is, of course, not entirely untrue. Yet, as throughout, the simplification innate to phantasy obscures reality. Dalston is, of course, precisely one of those places being "taken over by big money developments"; regardless of "urban grime".

[233] Exploring all the relationships between these complexes is beyond the scope of this research.

However, within the urban environment a "Trace" is a slippery thing[234]. The following will investigate 'artificial' traces, the role played by such forms, and the insight this provides into "The Palimpsestic". Jeremy was a barista who lived and worked in South London. Originally from Croydon, Jeremy was fairly unique within the sample as a participant raised in London[235]. We met at Dalston Kingsland and walked along Kingsland Road, much of the interview was spent looking into various spaces of consumption. In particular, Jeremy walked me to each of the gaybars he frequented; which, according to him, are the best in London. The following excerpt took place outside "The Barrel Boulangeríe", a restaurant on Kingsland Road:

L: What do you think about the aesthetic decisions there, the rusty iron?

Jeremy: Yeah I mean it's very of the time isn't it? To be honest, I like that more than the very kind of sleek kind of glass and gold, and marble kind of aesthetic you see a lot. I prefer this industrial kind of aesthetic that's happening a lot.

L: And where are these gold and marble places?

Jeremy: You get them a lot in places like Islington, there's a restaurant I worked in for a while -Wild Food Cafe - it's a very sterile and clean aesthetic. It feels kind of souless to me, I like this kind of look because it's definitely a lot more characterful. It feels like there's a lot more personality in that.

L: And why do you think that is? What gives it a more personal feel?

Jeremy: So anything with recovered materials, there's kind of a history to each object. There's a kind of permanence to it, rather than "this was manufactured, like two years ago, to fulfil a trend that's existed for five years.". You know, like, it kind of connects you further to something in the past… I think that's a big problem with

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[234] Likewise, the relationship between traces and libidinal-economies is a slippery thing. Within certain "theatres", particular traces are valorised while others are considered matter-out-of-place.
[235] There were three other "Londoners" in the sample.

London generally that all these new builds, instead of repurposing things and constantly being rebuilt - or sold off and changed - and you lose a lot of the old character.

This excerpt is valuable for two key reasons. First, it reinforces the previous analysis regarding the libidinal-surplus provided by "The Palimpsestic". Once more, "traces" provide a space of consumption with "character"; one which allows the consuming body to feel connected to an imagined past[236]. Secondly, and more importantly for our current purposes, this excerpt highlights the fluidity of "The Palimpsestic". While Acton Mews -- the repurposed Railway space discussed by Jay -- contained (and emphasised) material traces, at "The Barrel Boulangeríe" the 'traces' are instead imitations. Beyond "The Barrel Boulangeríe" one finds similar architectural forms through Dalston (and similar spaces of 'fringe' consumption); exposed wiring, faux-ruination, etc, etc. As revealed by Jeremy, such arrangements still do the libidinal 'work'. These spaces of consumption[237], lacking actual traces of history[238], instead speak the language of traces. One which, if spoken correctly, still facilitates the production of a historic aura; the libidinal-surplus analysed above is accrued through a purely aesthetic mode[239] (See Figure 3.12). To some extent, such a development is to be expected. Within "The Palimpsestic" what is important, what is alluring, is not history *per se* but rather its image; the surplus that is projected upon (and through) it[240], and the experience of consumption this engenders for the interpellated body.

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[236] Likewise, one can draw parallels here with Jay's rejection of the 'new' as sterile and homogenous

[237] One should note the relationship between "The Palimpsestic" and commodities; termed here as "Trace Objects". In a similar manner to how "Organic Practices/Labour" produced resonant objects, which sparked and absorbed the same libidinal tendencies, this process is also present with the above palimpsestic desires.

[238] Or, more accurately, it is missing the right kind of traces; unvalorised traces are ignored.

[239] Once more, this raises questions regarding the active engineering that stands behind the alignment of the concrete with the representational. The work that is conducted to discipline a space of consumption to libidinal-economy.

[240] One can see a fundamental relationship here between the imagined history of work and the imagined industrial history. Just as the imagined craftsmen is a projection upon history -- which changes how forms of work are valorised -- so too is this dynamic at the root of "The Palimpsestic".

Figure 3.12, Blue Tit (Carroll, 2019).

The outlining of the above provides three important preliminary points regarding the intertwined relationship between "The Organic" and "The Palimpsestic":

1) In regards to the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy, both of these complexes provide a representational-space containing a libidinal-surplus. These complexes provide stories, through which the body is encouraged to consume and extract enjoyment. In doing so, both complexes facilitate the extraction of surplus-value from space.

2) In a more particular sense, these complexes have resonant content. The libidinal-surplus is provided as each serve to augment the experience of consumption. In different ways, these complexes provide a means by which one can imagine a form of consumption beyond lack; e.g. a form of consumption that draws one *closer* to work, *closer* to history, *closer* to life, etc.

3) One must remember the interconnected nature of distinct complexes and phantasies. As will be discussed in the next chapter, these different elements 'inform' one

another. None of these phantasmic moments exist in isolation. Instead, they exist within the ecology of this particular libidinal-economy.

The Inbetween: On Crowds and Atmosphere

Thus far, the analysis of this "Theatre" has focused too narrowly on the parts rather than the whole. It has, largely, investigated the phantasies projected onto (and from) particular spaces of consumption and orbiting objects. In isolation, this conceptualisation threatens to provide a restricted analysis of Dalston's representational-space and its libidinal-surplus. The following section will illustrate the wider spatial dynamics intertwined with this libidinal-economy. First, it will highlight the centripetal quality of Dalston's "Crowd"; illustrating the importance of consuming bodies (both real and imagined) in facilitating desire. Secondly, it will highlight how the different libidinal moments, analysed in this chapter, work to inform and reproduce each other,specifically through the production of atmosphere. Finally, the chapter will outline the epithumogenetic dimensions to Dalston's crowds and atmosphere,specifically through a re-interpretation and expansion of Lazzarato's concept of immaterial labour; wherein one recognises that the allure of Dalston, in part, is produced (and amplified) by the *work*[241] conducted by consuming bodies.

An often unexplored urban phenomena is "The Crowd". While central to classic urban sociology, like the "Urban Imaginary", this concept has fallen into undue neglect. For both Simmel (2012) and Baudelaire[242] (1993), the experience of "The Crowd" is that which distinguishes a phenomenology of the urban. The important insight this literature provides is that "The Crowd" is not an empty 'thing' of mobility. It is significant, in its own right, for facilitating urban-experience and, as will be argued, the libidinal-surplus of space. Within Dalston, "The Crowd" -- the *material* crowd -- is found primarily along Kingsland Road. In particular, the space between Dalston Kingsland and Forest Road; with this crowd also spilling over into Dalston Lane and, during market-times[243], Ridley Road (See Figure 3.13).

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[241] It is *essential* that we recognise consumption as a form of work.

[242] The poem to "To a passer-by" captures this (Baudelaire, 1993:189). Benjamin (1997) terms this element of urban-experience as "love at last sight".

[243] The "Urban Crowd" is a temporally sensitive phenomenon. The material crowd shifts in accordance with the rhythm and rituals of how space is consumed.

Figure 3.13, Ridley Road (Carroll, 2021).

The following interview was with Jolly, a twenty-seven year old teacher in Tottenham. Originally from Lincolnshire, Jolly had recently moved to London to live with her partner and his mother in Dalston. The walk started at Dalston Junction and followed a pattern similar to a figure of eight. We left Dalston Junction and briefly headed northwards on Kingsland Road, with Jolly then leading us through Ridley Road market. After looking around the shops on Dalston Lane, we walked up Cecilia Road heading towards "The Petchey Academy", where her partner had gone to school. Afterwards, we went back to Kingsland Road and walked south towards Dalston Junction, passing once more through Ridley Road on our way back. The interview took around an hour. The following excerpt was taken as we walked along Dalston Lane:

Jolly: ...This feels like a little enclave, an escape from crazy London.

L: What do you mean by crazy London?

Jolly: Just so many people and cars. It's not so bad in Dalston. I think the reason I like Dalston, and Hackney in general, is that there's not so many people. Whereas if you go into Shoreditch, or into the centre, it's crazy. So many people.

As before, Dalston is perceived as an enclave from Central London. However, unlike previous iterations of this story, which structured this dichotomisation through phantasies within "The Organic" and "The Palimpsestic", Jolly instead focused upon Dalston's crowd. For her, this thinner and calmer crowd of Kingsland Road is a refuge:[244]

Jolly : You'll be walking down a busy road, and everyones just getting in everyone's way. Everyone's in this constant state of rushing, like huffing and puffing, and it's just annoying. People just don't take the time to walk.

This excerpt highlights how the appeal of "The Crowd" is grounded upon its rhythms (Lefebvre, 2004). The way "The Crowd" of Dalston moves is contrasted to a "constant state of rushing". Other participants progressed this theme further, the focus shifting from the rhythm itself to the imagined *intent* engendering this rhythm. The following excerpt was taken from the interview with Jim, as he contrasted the experience of Dalston Lane to Central London:

Jim: There's places where I just go into meltdown… I literally just disintegrate and become like a blob on the floor. Oh, this is rubbish. There's too many people going everywhere and everyone's there for one thing and that's to buy shit and that makes me sad - that we're all, you know, playing into this idea of buying our way into happiness.

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[244] Like the Arcades, the spaces, the roads and markets, which facilitate these crowds are neither private nor public; they contain a spatio-temporal ambiguity which threatens to dissolve such rigid demarcations (Benjamin, 1999). The appeal, in part, is that of un-foreclosed possibility (Sinclair, 2010). A possibility of drift and watching life unfold, which is limited within Oxford Street or interior private space. Spaces such as Kingsland Road and Ridley Road market, offer a potential of experiencing urban space in a way which feels *almost* non commodified; precisely because one's experience appears unwritten.

For some participants, the disinvestment from the rhythm of the city's crowd is through its associations with the pursuit of consumerism. As discussed in the following chapter, other participants outlined their aversion to this urban rhythm through connecting it with the composition of work itself[245]. Leaving this dynamic aside, one should note the distinction -- on an ontological level -- between how Jolly and Jim conceptualise "The Crowd". The focus has shifted from the *material* crowd to the *imagined* crowd. While Jolly focuses upon concrete bodies in motion, Jim's rejection is intertwined with characters. Jim's rejection of "The Crowd" is fundamentally connected to a rejection of those who are imagined to constitute it.

This was far from unique, when participants referred to "The Crowd" it was overwhelmingly in reference to this *imagined* crowd. While these material and immaterial elements are unavoidably linked, it is the latter and the iconography[246] it contains which is of principal importance. This phantasisation of "The Crowd" -- its imagined contents, bodies, and affects -- and its relationship with desire will be explored through interviewing Joe, a mature postgraduate student studying in London. Before moving to London to study, he worked in a petrol station while attending college in Liverpool. As a part-time student, he supported himself through working part-time as a barman in Tottenham. The interview began at Dalston Junction, and the route primarily consisted of walking up and down Kingsland Road. The following excerpt took place outside a Turkish cafe:

> Joe - I like to think of here as poor man's central London... If you go to central, you can just tell by the people there, because in central you've got all the suit wearers, rich people who can afford to pay two grand to book a table for a night. And I just don't want to be around that, it just seems fake, they are the sort of people who just do everything for image. Which I suppose in a way they do that here as well, but it's a more fun image; it's not just "look at all my money, look at all my money".

> L: What's the image here then?

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[245] For the participants, the phantasy of rhythm is one wherein slowness itself is perceived as a signifier of the 'correct' form of "The Crowd".

[246] The characters that populate this imaginary. Some of which have already been introduced: the craftsman, the consumer, etc

> Joe: It's a more alternative kind of thing. People are trying to be more individualistic. It's different. It's a bit like Camden, which has a very kind of Rocky-y image, which is great. But Dalston is more of a mixed bag, you kind of get a bit of everything here

Joe distinguishes Dalston -- "poor man's central London" -- through perceiving a lesser prevalence of "Suits" within its "Crowd". As with "The Consumer", this excerpt highlights the function these iconographic urban characters hold within this libidinal-economy[247]. Joe is repulsed by the character of "The Suit" and "The Crowd" he perceives them to constitute. These characters (and the bodies that resonate with this icon) are perceived to be *lacking*; in this case, through the language of 'the fake'. Likewise, Joe draws a dichotomy between this rejected crowd and that which he perceives to populate Dalston,which in contrast, is a "Crowd" imagined to be filled with bodies which signify that demarcated as enjoyable; e.g. the heterotopic, the alternative, etc, etc. In effect, for the participants, this imagined "Crowd" is perceived as a collective embodiment of space, its practices, and associated affects.

As throughout, this thesis seeks to understand phantasy from within rather than seeking to 'disprove' it. After all, the 'truth' of phantasy is its ability to move bodies and produce space; not its ability to 'reflect' reality. However, this is a useful moment to reflect on how phantasy functions through flattening the complexity of reality into digestible stories. With the crowds of Dalston and City, one finds bodies whose lived reality fractures the coherence of phantasy. For instance, those working within social-reproduction (Bhattacharya, 2017) and other forms of precarious labour, whose bodies navigate and constitute the crowd of the City (even if dressed in resonance with the devalorised iconography of "The Suit"[248]). The rift such bodies cause -- between imaginary and reality -- is of sociological significance. The following chapter will explore how, in Shoreditch, this growing gap between phantasy and reality contributes to the process of de-libidinisation[249].

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[247] Both reflect the imagined orthodox subject positions of the post-industrial City; of production and of consumption.

[248] "It should be stated at the outset that the London suit has always been a costume whose function is dedicated to the making and management of fortunes." (Breward, 2012:87).

[249] However, with that said, the significance of phantasy is not its ability to reflect reality; it is its ability to move bodies through desire. Regardless of its 'truth' the iconography of this

Each of the libidinal moments discussed in this chapter contribute to the production of Dalston's space. These intertwined phantasies -- projected upon spaces, objects, and bodies -- draw in bodies, the 'productive consumers' whose patronage fills economic capacity[250]. These libidinal fragments assist in the realisation of the economic value latent within the socio-spatial developments of Dalston: the burgeoning transport infrastructure, new-build flats and apartments, the extension of consumer space, etc. Without the desire provided by this libidinal-economy, such developments would lack the libidinal-surplus required to reproduce value *through* facilitating enjoyment. However, the "Theatre" of this constellation, as a whole, also produces an overarching phenomena within Dalston's representational-space. It produces a distinct and alluring atmosphere which, for the participants, saturates 'Dalston' as a whole:

"The elements of the environment are not only causal factors which affect human beings as organisms but they produce an impression on their feeling (Befindlichkeit). And what mediates objective factors of the environment with aesthetic feelings of a human being is what we call atmosphere. The atmosphere of a certain environment is responsible for the way we feel about ourselves in that environment. Atmosphere is what relates objective factors and constellations of the environment with my bodily feeling in that environment. This means: atmosphere is what is in between, what mediates the two sides." (Böhme, 2017:22)

To understand the relevance of Dalston's atmosphere -- which forms through the process "In-Between" the "Theatre" and the concrete-space it is projected upon (and through) -- consider the following excerpt from Jeremy which took place while walking along Kingsland Road:

L: So what other things draw you to Dalston?

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libidinal-economy, within the imagined "Crowd" as elsewhere, holds sway over how bodies consume space and, by extension, how space is produced.

[250] In corollary, it is this libidinal constellation which, in part, fuels the destruction of those spaces of consumption which, for whatever reason, fail to align themselves with this new, hegemonic, structure of feeling.

Jeremy: There's a kind of hustle and bustle to it. There's lots of shit going on…it's a space where there's lots of people doing things and you find like minded people. There's a lifeblood to the place, a kind of buzz around the place. I think that's definitely an attraction for me…There's a buzz around Dalston, a creative buzz.

L: And is that buzz different from the buzz of central London, the buzz of Liverpool street?

Jeremy: Yeah 100%, this is organic. This has been done by like, people you can see and you can recognise - someone whose like a human being, whose put on this event, or done this work of art, or created this movie; versus this massive conglomerate international company that's created hundreds of millions of pounds worth of investment in this building, making a shitload of money and not paying any tax… I think that central London is just kind of crass, it's almost like crass capitalism, it's so decadent. The place that sums it up is fucking M&M world. It's this souvenir shop for a product that has no connection to London, just money for moneys sake; it's fucking idolotry. You know "Look at this product, go to the church of this product. Where you can spend 100s of pounds on M&Ms". Who asked for this? What need is this fulfilling in society, other than continuing to buy things, to perpetuate this cycle of spending money for money's sake.

This excerpt highlights many of the libidinal fragments constituting this "Theatre": a valorisation of "Organic Work", the 'human', and an overarching rejection of orthodox consumer experience. However, while useful for reiterating these dynamics, the important element here is how the relationship *in-between* these moments produces a sense of atmosphere; one which then exudes libidinal pressure in its own right. This constellation -- of phantasy and concrete-space -- produces an atmosphere, a "buzz", a "lifeblood", which educates desire. This atmosphere ensures that phantasy -- projected onto specific spaces of consumption, a particular object, etc, -- explodes outwards. Through this atmosphere these fragments of libidinal-surplus seep into the wider surroundings.

However, the ontological interaction between "Theatre" and atmosphere is not static; it is more complex than a selection of pre-existing moments producing a discrete phenomenon. Dalston's atmosphere works back on its constituting moments; it organises meaning, lending its perceived qualities to those objects, places, bodies, and practices, within the space it captures. There is thus a fundamentally co-constitutive process at work between an atmosphere and its engendering phenomena. However, leaving the philosophical underpinnings of atmosphere aside, the significance of Dalston's atmosphere is its reinforcing relationship with the "Theatre" of libidinal-economy. An atmosphere helps to set the expectations of Dalston's consuming bodies, before entering a particular space of consumption or consuming a particular object; it is a signpost: "There's a lifeblood to the place".

If one only took the perspective of the interviewee, it would appear that Jeremy and other participants simply consume Dalston's atmosphere. As they walk down Kingsland Road, it is breathed in and this metabolism aids the constitution of desire. Likewise, the previous analysis of "Crowds" can be interpreted in a similar manner. In both cases, the participants view themselves as the consuming subject and the In-Between -- of atmosphere and crowds -- as the object of consumption. However, for the other passerbys, *they* are the crowd, *they* are the atmosphere. This quality is important as it highlights the epithumogenetic dimension to consumption. The participants function as immaterial labourers; they *work* to provide the raw libidinal-material of atmosphere and crowds (provided such bodies contain the 'correct' representational qualities, as will be explored in Shoreditch). Consequently, when considering this libidinal-economy, one must recognise this double-movement. The bodies constituting Dalston's atmosphere and "Crowd" are simultaneously subject and object, they are drawn to the very libidinal-appeal they work to reproduce. In this sense, our consumers of Dalston are, in a multitude of manners, its producers[251].

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[251] These moments of consumption mirror the wider logic of consumption itself; e.g. to consume is a productive activity, it facilitates future relations of consumption (Marx, 2005). However, in distinction, this quality is expressed through libidinal-economy. While consumption as an economic activity facilitates the realisation of value and the relations intertwined with it, this *immaterial* element to consumption is the reproduction of Dalston's atmosphere and crowds. In doing so, the libidinal appeal of Dalston is reproduced *in tandem* with the economic.

This perspective provides an important development within how one considers immaterial labour. As discussed in the literature review[252], immaterial-labour is traditionally used to explain how value is produced through non-material means within the context of contemporary forms of waged labour: marketing, advertising, etc. In addition to the more blurred forms of labour that exist within the digital-economy (Fuchs, 2014). However, the analysis above highlights how immaterial-labour, when considered in tandem with libidinal-economy, is a substantially broader concept. The bodies facilitating the production of desire are unwaged, it is closer to a form of social-reproductive labour,wherein what is reproduced are the conditions that facilitate consumption; or, rather, a contribution to the reproduction of these relationships. This dynamic will be further highlighted throughout the thesis,in particular through the digital 'work' conducted in producing Tottenham's space of representation.

Urban Dreamers and the Urban Dreamworld

Thus far, this chapter has illustrated the "Theatre" of this libidinal-economy; tracing the complexes and phantasies that facilitate the extraction of enjoyment from Dalston's concrete-space. However, to understand this "Theatre" holistically, one must reflect on these consuming bodies themselves. This is necessary for two reasons:

1) It will provide a groundwork to understand these particular urban actors; which the thesis will term "Urban Dreamers". A definitional process conducted through contrasting the participants with the urban figures of "The Gentrifier" and "The Flaneur".

2) Through this definitional analysis, it will be possible to recognise the fundamental impulse that structures this libidinal-economy. Namely, that each manifestation of this constellation orbits around a shared wish-image; e.g. a utopian desire for experience 'denied' by capitalist modernity.

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[252] See page 27.

Considering the relationship between the consumption of our participants and gentrification, one may be tempted to define these bodies simply as 'gentrifiers'. After all, this chapter has repeatedly highlighted the different manners in which their consumption facilitates the realisation (and production) of value in concrete-space. While, in contrast to the orthodox definition of 'gentrifiers' (Glass, 1964), they may not buy property, or even live in Dalston, it is through their consumption (and the immaterial labour within this consumption), that these bodies enable the process of 'gentrification'[253]. However, this definition, taken as standard within the literature (Hubbard, 2016; Cowen, 2006), obscures while purporting to reveal. It flattens sociological distinctions: "gentrifiers" vary from our, often precarious, consumers of Dalston, to the super-gentrifiers of Central London (Butler and Lees, 2006) and New York (Lees, 2003b; Atkinson, 2021), and the middle-class second-home owners of Cornwall (Paris, 2009). Consequently, while the term illustrates the political-economic ramifications upon the production of space, it fails to capture any nuance within a particular social phenomena. It flattens distinctions through overzealous conceptualisation. In the concluding chapter, this thesis will offer a different understanding of "The Gentrifier"; one grounded upon a notion of "Gentrifying Labour" -- e.g. as 'gentrifying' as a corporeal action, rather than a subject position, one that either raises rent-gaps (both material and representational) or that facilitates the realisation of value -- however, for now, such discussions will be left aside.

Instead, this chapter will prioritise providing a sociologically useful definition of our participants. To move towards this, one should contrast our participants to "The Flaneur". This "mythological" urban figure derives its name from the Old Norse verb *flana*: 'to wander with no purpose'. However, this eytmological background clouds the sociological use of the term. In resonance with our participants, the purpose of the Flaneur's 'wandering' is the search for 'true' urban-experience, a desire that drives the Flaneur to dispassionately observing, collating, and consuming, the urban world; its histories, sights, etc. In doing so, the Flaneur *attempts* to achieve satisfaction[254]:

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[253] This is explored through the empirical chapters.

[254] The psycho-social constitution of the Flaneur is one of escapism *through* urban experience, a perpetual hunt for the "Objet Petit A" presumed to be found within urban-space: "Regarding the intoxication of empathy felt by the flaneur, a great passage from Flaubert may be adduced. It could well date from the period of the composition of *Madame Bovary*: "Today, for instance, as man and

> "...the activity of the sovereign spectator going about the city in order to find the things which will occupy his gaze and thus complete his otherwise incomplete identity; satisfy his otherwise dissatisfied existence; replaced the sense of bereavement with a sense of life."
> (Tester, 1994:7).

One can immediately detect a synergy between the libidinal-investment of our participants and "The Flaneur". In the pursuit of satisfaction, both are drawn to the allure of traces; the evidence of urban-life and its histories:

> "We know that, in the course of flanerie, far-off times and places interpenetrate the landscape and the present moment. When the authentically intoxicated phase of this condition announces itself, the blood is pounding in the veins of the happy flaneur. His heart ticks like a clock, and inwardly as well as outwardly things go on…"
> (Benjamin, 1999:420)

In effect, the Flaneur's perception of space is organised in a palimpsestic manner. A space's past, real and imagined, becomes intertwined with the existing present: "That space winks at the flaneur: what do you think may have gone on here?" (Benjamin, 1999:419). This mode of perception closely mirrors the phantasy of "The Palimpsestic" within this "Theatre": the eroticisation of the craft brewery in railway arches, the inference of history in a shop window's decoration, etc. The Flaneur and our participants both seek out urban-experience within the traces of the past; their enjoyment is facilitated through the intertwining of historical aura with concrete-space.

The libidinal parallels between The Flaneur and our participants goes beyond the allure of historical saturation. These figures are both drawn to the images produced by urban scenes. This is a tendency which Tester (1994) describes as a "Pedestrian Connoisseurship'', wherein the object of consumption is the "… sights, smells, characters, and actions" (4) of the urban

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woman, both lover and mistress, I rode in a forest on an autumn afternoon under the yellow leaves, and I was also the horses, the leaves, the wind, the words my people uttered, even the red sun that made them almost close their love-drowned eyes." (Benjamin, 1999:449).

environment. To facilitate this, the Flaneur loitered around spaces of consumption and lingered within the urban crowd. The participants shared this valorisation of urban 'life'. They are drawn to Dalston for its crowd (and the traces it leaves behind) and its atmosphere, to experience a subsumption with it. It is through such fragments that the enjoyment of Dalston is, in part, facilitated.

However, The Flaneur and our participants share more than these 'positive' characteristics. The pursuit of enjoyable urban-experience is structured by an overlapping rejection. In different ways, these figures define the authentically enjoyable *against* the commercial experience offered by contemporary (urban)life. Importantly, this 'rejection' is equally contradictory for both. The Flaneur is, in a sense, 'aloof' from quotidian urban commercial life:

> "He haunts the arcades, he does not buy. He consumes the city at one remove, savouring the display without expenditure.... This illusion of disinterest, of disinvolvement with the commercial… masks the absolute dependency upon the material" (Parkhurst-Ferguson, 1994:28).

While illustrating the Flaneur's rejection of the 'Commercial', this quote captures the paradoxical relationship between the Flaneur and the 'Commercial' urban-experience demarcated as unenjoyable; a tension echoed within the libidinal-economy of our participants. The Flaneur sees their pursuit as something *beyond* consumption. While their pursuit of urban-experience leads them to linger within spaces of consumption, the experience they valorise is perceiving and documenting the carnal consumption of other urban bodies; not the 'empty' act of consumption itself. Ofcourse, this 'rejection' is not a separation. The 'commercial' element of the city is the prerequisite, the raw material, in their pursuit of urban-experience; their enjoyment is entirely dependent on that which they purport to reject (Parkhurst-Ferguson, 1994). Likewise, our participants also exist in a schizoid relationship with the capitalist city. Throughout the analysis of this "Theatre", the notion of the enjoyable, the real, the authentic, etc, is perpetually defined against it (and the urban-experience it purportedly engenders). Yet, as discussed, their pursuit of enjoyment is

fundamentally tied to the extraction of surplus-value from concrete-space (and, accordingly, the 'gentrification' of Dalston). While these points require further exploration, the key insight here is that both The Flaneur and our participants, while demarcating the enjoyable through rejecting facets of market society, remain fundamentally interlinked with its reproduction.

For Susan Buck-Morss (1986), Flanerie is a mode of perception that lingers within the society of mass-consumption. Her argument focuses upon the detached satisfaction innate to commercial society: "the merely imaginary gratification provided by advertising, illustrated journals, fashion and sex magazines, all of which go by the flaneur's principle of 'look, but don't touch'" (105). Through drawing The Flaneur into dialogue with our participants, one can see how this mode of perception perpetuates within contemporary urban culture in a more fundamental sense. However, this analytical device also reveals important distinctions between these ideal-types. Importantly, such definitional conflicts are fundamentally productive. It is through this incongruence that further insight into our participants and the libidinal-economy that interpellates them is provided.

As Buck-Morss illustrates, the Flaneur's pursuit of 'authentic' urban experience, while fundamentally linked to commodities, was not grounded in acts of consumption *per se*. Instead, the -- perpetually deferred (Bauman, 1994) -- satisfaction was generated through a distance from consumption. While this observational pleasure exists within the libidinal-economy of our participants, the extraction of enjoyment goes beyond "look but don't touch". In a fundamental sense, the phantasies guiding the pursuit of this valorised urban-experience exist *through* projection upon commodities and spaces of consumption. This is integral to understanding this libidinal-economy, the phantasmic pursuit of an augmented *experience* of consumption itself. The Flaneur's suspicion of consumption is rejected and replaced by a suspicion towards ontologically *lacking* consumption.

To understand this substantive divergence regarding commodification and consumption, one must recognise that the *means* of pursuing enjoyable urban-experience is fundamentally

connected to the material conditions of the pursuer. The Flaneur of high-modernity is, at its core, a bourgeois subject position. Consider the following description:

> "The engravings and sketches that accompany disquisitions on flanerie confirm the social distance. All the illustrations in *Physiologie du flaneur* show the *flaneur* -- top hat, frock coat, cane and/or cigar in hand -- surrounded by people very unlike himself, surrounded by women, children, shopkeepers, lawyers, sword swallowers, dog walkers… he certainly cannot be involved with such people, and, equally important, they cannot touch him…" (Parkhurst-Ferguson, 1994:31)

This class position is not serendipitous. To pursue 'authentic' urban-experience, or rather the flaneur's *imagining* of it, required particular material conditions. One must be well fed enough to walk endlessly through city streets, be sufficiently free from economic obligations to dedicate time to such 'unproductive' pursuits, and have a privileged access to knowledge[255] that allows one to identify traces and 'uncover' the corportage qualities of space. Consequently, the 'detachment' that facilitated *this* flanerie required a connection to the upper-echelons of class society[256]. This bourgeois class-composition is radically different from our participants pursuing 'authentic' urban-experience in Dalston. While the sample varied, in both economic and symbolic capital, one would struggle to define the participants as bourgeois[257]. Alongside changing how 'authenticity' is imagined[258], as will be discussed,

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[255] "The anamnestic intoxication in which the flaneur goes about the city not only feeds on the sensory data taking shape before his eyes but often possesses itself of abstract knowledge -- indeed, dead facts -- as something experienced and lived through. This felt knowledge travels from one person to another, especially by word of mouth. But in the course of the 19th century, it was also deposited in immense literature." (Benjamin, 1999:417).

[256] Likewise, through the intersectional nature of class and gender, the Flaneur is a male coded urban figure; for Balzac: "No woman, it would seem, can disconnect herself from the city and its enchantments. No woman is able to attain the aesthetic distance so crucial to the *flaneur's* superiority. She is unfit for *flanerie* because she desires the objects spread before her and acts upon that desire. The flaneur, on the other hand, desires the city as a whole, not a particular part of it.". One can note the inversion of desires relationship with consumption within our participants.

[257] As discussed, much of the sample consisted of the urban precariat (Standing, 2011) -- Deliveroo Riders, Baristas, Shoesellers -- those on lower levels of London's professional class -- Tech Workers, Business Analysts -- and those who existed in between.

[258] This is always an act of striving for an imagined 'whole'. Authenticity is historically and socially constituted. Its importance, as a social category, is to genealogically trace how particular libidinal-economies *define* "The Authentic". As will be discussed, one also finds marked differences between participants and "The Flaneur" on these grounds

this distinct class composition shifts how the 'authentic' is pursued. The participants do not have the economic capacity for endless walks, a deluge of unproductive time, etc, they are too intertwined with the political-economic rhythm of the city. Yet, while lacking the material conditions necessary to adopt the Flaneur's tempo of a "Tortoise out walking" (Benjamin, 1999:442), the enjoyment of 'authentic' urban-experience is instead sought out by *more* accessible means[259]; namely, through the consumption of phantasmic commodities and spaces.

The most significant quality engendered by this distinction in class constitution regards how the desired urban-experience is itself imagined and defined. Within the "Theatre" excavated, the enjoyable -- the 'authentic' -- is fundamentally political. This contrasts to the a-political imaginary that interpellates the orthodox Flaneur. For example, the Flaneur eroticised the palimpsestic as an epistemological surrogate; the collection of traces was an attempt to escape the interiority and sterility of bourgeois experience. In distinction, our participants derive a libidinal-surplus from traces through a hauntological drive (Fisher, 2014). The dream of a city -- of a world -- less 'tainted' by the antaphrodistic is projected upon a past imagined to be 'purer'; e.g. one imagined to be whole. Likewise, the Flaneur's "Pedestrian Connoisseurship" was one of disinterested observation; collecting images of dispossessed life in a manner akin to an urban safari. In contrast, the participants are drawn to a world they wish to be subsumed by. While both valorise 'life' -- in crowds or atmosphere -- the Flaneur wishes to catalogue it while our participants seek to vicariously live through it. It is this *political* impulse -- e.g. a desire for that which is denied -- that structures this libidinal-economy. This quality is expressed further through the evocation of the unenjoyable; the Flaneur's rejection of the 'commercial' has expanded its parameters. The desire of our participants is structured through the construction of an imagined other, a form of capitalism that is perceived as ontologically and libidinally lacking: e.g. the capitalism of alienated labour, mass-production, homogeneity, etc. These rejections are

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[259] This shift in means, to one more grounded on commodities and libidinal/aesthetic content therein, opens room for an orthodox critical reading; one derived from the "School of Suspicion". This would lead one to understand this social tendency as an *intensification* of alienation. However, as discussed on pages 48-51 and 314-316, one must engage with the commodity aesthetic in a manner that goes beyond such readings while recognising their significance. It is essential to recognise that conciliation is intertwined with anticipation; conciliation is *made possible by* anticipation.

fundamentally political claims, even if they are expressed through the aesthetic and libidinal. The libidinisation of Dalston is, in part, facilitated through the appearance of congruence between its concrete-space and this imaginary of a future arrangement of society and urban-space.

In summary, our participants cannot be neatly defined as either gentrifiers or flaneurs. They share elements with each, but distinctions and variations entail a sociological necessity to recognise them as unique actors within the urban world. They are constituted by a particular libidinal-economy that "gentrifier" fails to capture. Yet the satisfaction of their desires in urban space is central for the production of 'gentrified space'. While this libidinal-economy has superficial similarities to that of "The Flaneur", there are fundamental differences between them. Firstly, through the distinctions in class constitution between bourgeois Flaneur of high-modernity and our, often economically precarious, participants. Secondly, through the distinctions in how 'true' urban-experience is *perceived* and *pursued*, that this distinction in material conditions produces. Within Dalston, the pursuit of urban-experience (and the extraction of enjoyment from concrete-space this entails) is fundamentally more commodified, democratic, and political. Our participants seek out and consume the spaces, objects, crowds, and atmospheres that align with their political imaginary while rejecting that which appears antithetical to it. Our participants are "Urban Dreamers", the consuming bodies who are drawn to the promise of an urban-experience *beyond* orthodox capitalist consumption. Accordingly, we can recognise that this libidinal-economy is one of *wish-images*. They desire this phantasmic Dalston in an attempt "to overcome and to transfigure the immaturity of the social product and the inadequacies in the social organization of production." (Benjamin, 1999:4): "the disguised representations of genuine wants and aspirations that remain thwarted under capitalism" (Gilloch 2002:127). While the commodity distorts and twists these wish-images into the value-form it cannot abolish them, as this repressed utopian impulse[260] is crucial is stimulating the subject's desire to consume (Buck-Morss, 1991). Finally, if our participants are "Urban Dreamers", then Dalston is the

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[260] Levitas (2010) provides a broader background discussion on this dynamic. Following Bloch, Levitas argues this quality is not limited to the "Wish-Images" within commodities but rather within utopian impulses *in general*.

contemporary "Urban Dreamworld"; a concrete-space wherein bodies imagine the pursuit of *whole* urban-experience and *lackless* consumption is possible.

One should not simply dismiss the critical importance of these wish-images. In a manner resonant with Foucault's (2008) own arguments regarding heterotopias -- specifically, that such spaces unavoidably contain a disruptive potential that threatens to 'spill out' -- the enjoyment which "Urban Dreamers" derive from the "Urban Dreamworld" is intertwined precisely with this quality. Within the dreamworld, what is fundamentally commodified is political anticipation; it is encoded into the operating structure of this libidinal-economy. As Bloch argued, like any utopian impulses, these phantasies unavoidably contain ideological elements; e.g. in different ways, as has been argued[261], the utopian is utilised to reproduce the very present it seeks to negate (Bloch, 1995). However, the dreamworld is not simply conciliatory; it facilitates a space wherein, even if imperfectly, the enjoyment provided by the historical moment is critiqued. In "Red Plenty", Francis Spufford (2010) suggests that the defeat of "communism" wasn't just the disappearance of a particular ideology but rather the disappearance of Modernism's "Promethean Dream" of a total transformation of human society (Fisher, 2017). Within the "Urban Dreamworld"[262] one finds this impulse, laying 'dormant' but not extinguished, within the aesthetics of this particular form of commodity fetishism.

However, one must recognise that this libidinal-economy can only exist -- be satisfied, or intensify -- through the political-economy of space. The process of Dalston's urban transformation, driven (and facilitated) through an assemblage of Neo-Liberal state governmentality and private capital (of varying orders of magnitude), produces the conditions wherein the dreamworld becomes possible. For instance, the expansion of Dalston's infrastructural connections to the rest of London[263], the attraction of small-scale

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[261] In this case, one prominent example is the process of gentrification itself.

[262] Lilla (1995) on Benjamin's concept of the "Dreamworld": "The Arcades Project would try to show more subtly how the bourgeois nineteenth century had replaced the aura of the material world with a dream world, a "phantasmagoria" subtly reflecting and compensating for the contradictions of capitalist society. It would be a history of bourgeois delusions."

[263] In particular the ELR, that was funded through the capital unlocked by London 2012 and the legitimacy it entailed (Sinclair, 2010).

private capital to produce particular spaces of consumption[264], or the obtuse web of international capital standing behind new-build developments such as 57 East (EEH, 2021). This thesis is not an investigation into this element of Dalston's production of space. However, one must recognise the co-constitutive relationship that exists between these forces of production and the forces of consumption that this chapter has sought to explore. A dialectic exists wherein this political-economy of space -- of states, investments firms, developers, etc -- facilitates the pursuit of desires,while, simultaneously, these moments of consumption are essential for the value invested by this political-economy to be realised. Consequently, the urban-dreamworld this chapter has sought to illuminate exists in a point of critical tension. It is a libidinal subterranea of political anticipation but one that is simultaneously captured by the forces of production it seeks to reject. In part, a dream of post-capitalist[265] experience fuels the gentrification of Dalston and London's "Urban Fringe".

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has sought to illustrate the libidinal-economy underpinning "Fringe Gentrification". In particular, it has sought to understand the desires that allure those who consume the urban-experience Dalston facilitate. In accordance with the overarching research aims, the importance of understanding this libidinal-economy is due to the co-constitutive role it shares with political-economy in the production of space;amely, as this libidinal-economy, in part, facilitates the economic moment of consumption that is required for the realisation of surplus-value in Dalston's concrete-space. This exploration was essential as the established paradigms that sought to explain gentrification (and the contemporary production of urban-space generally) lack the ontological delicacy to substantively answer (and ask) questions regarding the significance of desire, immaterial labour, and representational-space. Consequently, as was argued in the literature review, the sociological investigation into this libidinal-economy has been overlooked.

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[264] These two factors, of increased transportation infrastructure and commercial capacity, ricochet off each other; the more bodies that can be moved, the more commercial capacity is pressured to increase, and this facilitates the attraction of more bodies, etc.

[265] I think there is an important distinction with anti-capitalist here. The pre-capitalist imaginary is used as a primary terrain upon which a new mode of experience is projected.

The chapter has argued that this libidinal-economy is structured through a form of commodified political-anticipation. This argument has been presented through analysing the empirical material gathered through walking-interviews around Dalston. It has explored the constellation of complexes and constitutive phantasies that are projected upon the objects, places, bodies, and practices, contained within Dalston. Importantly, it articulated that these distinct moments are manifestations of an underpinning libidinal whole. Namely, that these *wish-images* of work, history, and life, provide the phantasmic means through which enjoyment is derived from an urban-experience perceived as 'unalienated'. Consequently, the socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification" -- that the transmutation of desire into consumption facilitates -- is fuelled through a post-capitalist striving. While this desire is unavoidably drawn into the logic of capitalist urbanism; without extricating this commodification of political-anticipation, it would be impossible to understand the particularities within this production of space. As such, the thesis has argued that the allure of Dalston is the "Urban Dreamworld" it is perceived to contain.

Considering the relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification" posited by the chapter, the established literature would brand the participants of this investigation, the consumers of the "Urban Dreamworld", as 'Gentrifiers'. This analysis would not be entirely incorrect, as discussed these urban bodies and the desires that drive them, are an essential component within the "Fringe Gentrification" of Dalston. Likewise, as will be discussed below, the chapter, like the thesis generally, devotes a substantial portion of analysis to understanding the particularities in *how* these bodies facilitate the valorisation of concrete-space and the extraction of surplus-value. However, while recognising the role these bodies play in the process of gentrification, it has critiqued the notion that one should therefore define these urban actors *simply* as gentrifiers. The thesis articulates that 'to gentrify' is something *endemic* to capitalist socio-spatial relations; the *process* of gentrification is nothing more than the *expression* of capitalism within social space,wherein investment, whether economic or libidinal, is transformed into a form of slow violence. Therefore, rather than conceptualising the *agent* of gentrification as a subject position, as sociologists we ought to view *gentrifying* as an action; one conducted by a myriad of bodies in a multitude of manners. Therefore, when defining our participants, we ought to primarily understand them

through the libidinal-economy that interpellates them, that structures this *action* through the pursuit of enjoyment and satisfaction of desire. To this end, the chapter identified the participants as "Urban Dreamers",an ideal-type of urban actor with a *superficial* similarity to the mythological figure of the Flaneur. Importantly, while both pursue a valorised notion of urban-experience; that which drives "Urban Dreamers" is the pursuit of an 'authentic' urban-experience that is fundamentally more commodified, democratic, and political.

As mentioned earlier, an important contribution of this chapter has been highlighting the epithumogenetic role that "Urban Dreamers" -- e.g. those bodies interpellated by this libidinal-economy -- play within the reproduction of this regime of desire. Namely, through the immaterial labour that consuming bodies conduct in facilitating Dalston's representational-space: particularly, though not exclusively, through the production of "The Crowd" and Atmosphere. This perspective ensures that one correctly recognises the particularities of *how* these consuming "Urban Dreamers" facilitate the realisation of surplus-value within Dalston's space (and, by extension, the gentrification of space). These "Urban Dreamers" not only facilitate the production of space through consumption, but rather, through their *work* producing representational-space they provide the raw material for phantasy alongside its continued centripedal allure. This *epithumogenetic* dimension will be further explored in the following chapter on Shoreditch. Specifically, through highlighting the reflexive actions taken by owners of the "Means of Enjoyment" to produce concrete-space resonant with the representational 'demands' of the "Urban Dreamworld". In doing so, the chapter will illustrate how the impulses of libidinal-economy exert influence over the form taken by concrete-space. In effect, the relationship between libidinal-economy and space is *productive*.

This chapter has primarily explored the centripetal aspect of the relationship between libidinal-economy and the production of space. However, the following chapter will provide insight into the corollary dynamic; e.g. the *centrifugal*. The following chapter, built upon the empirical fieldwork conducted in Shoreditch, will explore how this libidinal-economy not only *pulls* bodies to consume particular spaces, it also *pushes* them away. In a sense, this centrifugal element is fundamentally underpinning the analysis provided by this chapter;

e.g. the *allure* of the "Urban Dreamworld" is produced in tandem with a libidinal rejection of apparently 'orthodox' urban-space. However, the following chapter will explore a centrifugal force distinct from this. Namely, it will explore the process through which "Urban Dreamworlds" lose libidinal-surplus, the process wherein the extraction of enjoyment from concrete-space is inhibited. The phantasmic demands of commodified political-anticipation, that this chapter argues *libidinised* Dalston, simultaneously contain a latent potential for *delibidinisation*. As will be shown, this exploration, into the lifecycle of the "Urban Dreamworld", is essential for understanding the wider socio-spatial relations of "Fringe Gentrification" it facilitates.

Chapter 5

Shoreditch: A Dreamworld in libidinal ruination.

> "The ruins of the Church and of the aristocracy, of feudalism, of the Middle Ages, are
> sublime - they fill the wide-eyed victors of today with admiration. But the ruins of
> the bourgeoisie will be an ignoble detritus of pasteboard, plaster, and colouring"
> (Balzac, 1845, as cited in Benjamin, 1990:87)

This chapter provides a logical development of the insights accrued through Dalston. It seeks to extend our understanding of the "Urban Dreamworld", the libidinal-economy that underpins it, and the "Fringe Gentrification" it intertwined with. However, while Dalston provided insight through examining the 'life' of this regime of desire, this chapter seeks to illuminate it through its 'death'. It seeks to examine the process of de-libidinisation, wherein the phantasies that *facilitated* the extraction of enjoyment in Dalston now inhibit it. In effect, it seeks to illuminate a further contour within the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy -- e.g. the centrifugal force it exudes upon the production of space -- and, in doing so, provide a more holistic account of this particular libidinal-economy and the demarcations it contains. To produce this argument, the chapter is structured upon primary material extracted from walking-interviews and urban ethnography conducted in Shoreditch.

It begins by situating the production of Shoreditch's urban-space with the broader geographical and historical context of London's development. In particular, it provides a more extensive insight into how the developments outlined in the introduction manifested within Shoreditch. As such, it outlines the unfolding of industrialization, deindustrialisation, and post-industrial development. In doing so, it provides a foundation from which to understand "Fringe Gentrification" and other socio-spatial processes that contributed to the contemporary spatial form of Shoreditch. In particular, it continues the line of argument contained throughout this thesis. Namely, to understand the production of space it is necessary to understand the production of desire *for* space, and answer a question that established paradigms have failed to substantively articulate.

The first analytical section of the chapter aims to highlight how the same libidinal-economy identified in Dalston exists within Shoreditch. It traces how the complexes of "The Organic", "The Palimpsestic", and the "In-Between", exert influence over Shoreditch is perceived by those who consume it. This section also provides an opportunity to develop several moments of analysis that began in the previous chapter. In particular, through an analysis of "Unto This Last", a glass-fronted workshop on Brick Lane, further insight is provided into "Organic Work" and the aestheticisation of labour-time. However, these sections of analysis also develop our understanding of this libidinal-economy and its relationship to the production of space in a more formative manner. Through interviews conducted with business owners, this section highlights the *epithumogenetic* work that is conducted in producing representational-space and, subsequently, in the disciplining of desire. In particular, it highlights the disciplinary pressure that libidinal-economy exudes upon the design of concrete-space; e.g. it shows how the process of aligning concrete-space with representational-space is, to some extent, a reflexive process. In addition, this analysis provides a preliminary discussion of the space of representation and its relationship with representational-space, libidinal-economy, and the broader production of space. This is a line of argument that will be centred in the forthcoming chapter on Tottenham.

The second analytical section leaves libidinal continuation to one side and instead begins cataloguing the moments of rupture; wherein the phantasies that facilitated the extraction of enjoyment in Dalston now work to *inhibit* enjoyment in Shoreditch. In effect, it highlights how the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy is not only centripetal, it is also centrifugal. It charts the *fears* that "Urban Dreamers" have for Shoreditch, the *fears* of de-libidinisation, and highlights the process through which these fears lead to the inhibition of enjoyment. In particular, it highlights the *fear* of a 're-emergence' of orthodox urban-experience; one that no longer facilitates the "Urban Dreamworld". In a similar vein, the chapter continues through highlighting how, for some "Urban Dreamers", these fears are increasingly realised within concrete-space (and its affixed immaterial elements). Namely, through charting the "March of Commercialisation", "Global Branding", and "Antaphrodisiac Bodies and Crowds". This section charts how there

is increasingly a de-libidinising gap -- between the demarcations of the enjoyable and concrete experience -- one that contributes to the inhibition of "Urban Dreamers"; the extraction of enjoyment is increasingly frustrated.

Within this tendency, the chapter particularly focuses upon "The Homunculus" and the uncanny. This concept is constructed as it allows one to understand the nuance of de-libidinisation; e.g. it is something more complex than desiring bodies simply rejecting that demarcated as unenjoyable. Within Shoreditch, the "Urban Dreamers" frequently encountered phantasmic 'things' -- objects, spaces, etc -- that existed *in-between* the enjoyable and the unenjoyable. Their rejection of such 'things' is predicated as much on the sense of deception these moments produce. Wherein, what one considered to be attractive is revealed to be precisely that which one considers repellent. The chapter discusses several examples of this, including "Urban Grime" used to promote a Coldplay album in French Place, a McDonalds that attempts to harness the allure of "Historical Traces", etc. This analysis provides a greater understanding into the particularities of disinvestment[266] but it also highlights something fundamental surrounding libidinal-economy. It highlights the multiplicity of libidinal-economies that exist in space; e.g. libidinal-economy isn't *simply* a tool to understand "Fringe Gentrification", it facilitates a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between desire and the production of space *in general*.

A Brief Background of Shoreditch

By the 18th century, the open land between Shoreditch's commercial arteries[267] had receded (Bird, 1992). This transformation lead to Shoreditch becoming a suburb of the City of London:

> "Its main thoroughfares contained shops and dwellings occupied by artisans and tradesmen serving the City and the local population. Interspersed were public

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[266] The range of affects and phantasies that engender disinvestment.
[267] Shoreditch High Street, which connects The City of London to the original parish settlement (which existed around the parish church), Curtain Road, Old Street and City Road (Baker, 1995).

houses, livery stables and timber yards, and a scattering of industrial premises such as dye houses and coach-makers workshops." (Smith and Rogers, 2006:7)
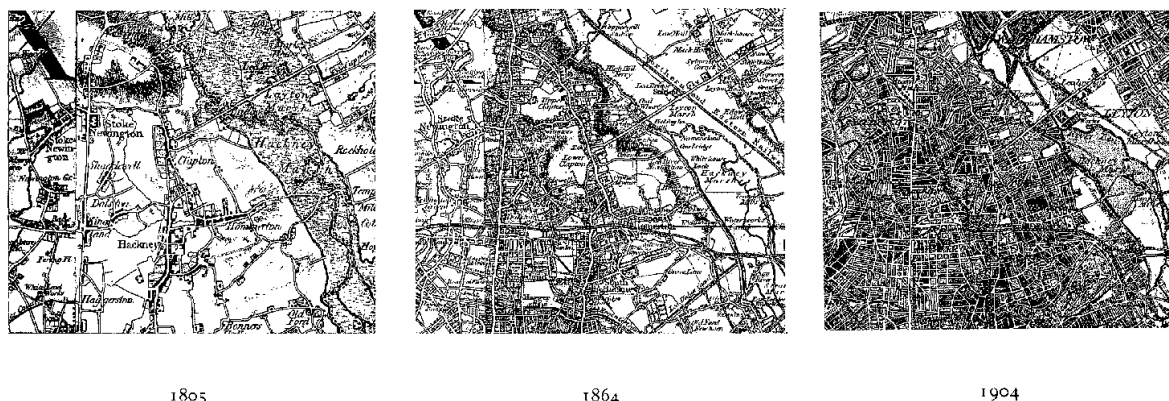

Figure 4.1, Shoreditch 1805-1904 (Summerson, 1978).

This was an urban congruence assisted by The City having a similar[268] usage of space. Both had a mixed-use of land -- a mixture of residential, commercial, and *light* industrial -- alongside a varied socio-economic demographic; leading to intensified spatial involvement (Summerson. 1978). While the political-economic and socio-geographic trajectories of Shoreditch and The City diverge, this moment of congruence shows how Shoreditch did not *simply* transition from rural parish to industrial fringe. Instead, the historic relationship between The City of London and Shoreditch is more complex; with both places weaving together and rupturing off, in different ways, throughout London's history.

This Shoreditch -- the city suburb -- faded from the early 19th century,replaced by London's expanding industrial crescent that was discussed in the introduction. Within Shoreditch, this was prominently expressed by the extensive furniture trade, its ancillary industries, alongside other elements of London's "finishing industry" (Smith and Rogers, 2006). This new orientation changed the spatial constitution of Shoreditch. An increasing number of manufacturing workshops[269] and warehouses on Luke St, Phipp St and the "Shoreditch

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[268] There are still important distinctions regarding economic function. For instance, the City of London has a greater focus on commercial markets, global connections, etc (Summerson, 1978). In effect, it exists within a command function.
[269] Alongside the workings of various ancillary industries (suppliers of materials, tools, finishers, accessories, and the machinery itself) (Smith and Rogers, 2006)

Triangle"[270] produced "an assembly line that ran through the streets" (Dwyer, 2009:26). Likewise, Shoreditch organised the exchange of this furniture -- with wholesalers, showrooms and distribution facilities gathered on Shoreditch High St. -- for local and global markets. These changes unfolded in tandem with a growing population; from 35,000 in 1801 to 69,000 in 1831; before peaking at 129,000 in 1861 (Smith and Rogers, 2006). In isolation, this statistic obscures the socio-economic transformation within the population.

This changing socio-economic demographic was expressed within concrete-space. As industrialisation unfolded, the lingering gentility -- who, in part, constituted Shoreditch the "Suburb" -- moved to less proletarian parts of London (Davies, 2012). The new, often impoverished, workforce constituting Shoreditch were economically coerced into poorly built cottages[271], back alley dwellings and tenement conversion; often rapidly constructed to provide the residential capacity demanded by the "Industrial Crescent"[272]. These changes shifted Shoreditch's relationship with the rest of London. It became: "the city of smaller industries and the lesser ingenuities.[273]" (Besant, 1911)

London's industrial decline took a unique form in Shoreditch. The process of de-industrialisation unfolded in two distinct phases. Before the post-industrial restructuring discussed in the introduction, Shoreditch began de-industrialising due to London's political-economy of space[274]. Like the East End generally, industrial land in Shoreditch was, by the early 20th century, increasingly scarce and expensive. Consequently, its principal[275] industrial areas existed within small, multi-storey, spaces of production. However, as Smith

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[270] The section in-between Old Street, Shoreditch High Street, and Great Eastern Street.

[271] See page 17 for a discussion on the "Old Nichol" and the relationship between industrialization and proletariat housing.

[272] A process which reflected and was enabled by the wider economic relations outlined; see introduction for discussions on London's infrastructure see pages 15-16.

[273] As an interesting note, William Morris was a key figure within Shoreditch's left-wing International Club (Boughton, 2018).

[274] While today it is impossible to draw a meaningful distinction between Global PE and London PE -- as highlighted by Sassen (2013) and Minton (2017) -- one could do so *more* readily during the early 20th century.

[275] There are some exceptions, notably the Truman Brewery (Lichtenstein, 2008) and the "Tea Building". One should note, the "Tea Building" was originally a bacon processing plant for Allied Foods' Lipton (DBM, 2021). When redeveloped into the "Tea Building" office complex, presumably the "Bacon Building" was considered less conducive to the desired sense of place.

and Rogers (2006) argue, these vertical spaces of production were less able to take advantage of 21st century production technologies; assembly lines, fordist organisation, etc. Consequently, it became more economically competitive to construct sprawling single-storey factories, which better utilised this technology, in areas of London with cheaper land; places like Tottenham and Finsbury Park[276]. This produced twin pressures on Shoreditch's manufacturing industry; a withholding of capital investments, alongside the market pressure of competing against more effective technologies of production. This restructuring was later intensified by the aforementioned post-war changes in global political-economy.

Like in Dalston, this ex-industrial space was the primordial ooze for post-industrial Shoreditch. However, the *widespread* process of (re)development occurred earlier here (In part, due, to the geographical proximity[277] and socio-spatial overlapping with The City). Starting from the early 1990s (with the 1992 "City Challenge"[278] fund worth £37.2 million)) Shoreditch and Hoxton[279] have been the target of considerable waves of redevelopment capital (Pratt, 2009)[280]. While the *broad* governmental 'aim' of such (re)development has been discussed[281], it unfolds through distinct means within Shoreditch. To unify Shoreditch with "The City", a task achieved according to GLA urban planners (GLA, 2015), space was 'disciplined' in accordance with the following objectives:

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[276] One prominent example of this being Harris Lebus's Finsbury Works in Tottenham, which was constructed in 1901.

[277] A 'closeness' facilitated through key thoroughfares connecting Shoreditch to The City: Shoreditch High Street, which leads into Bishopsgate, and Greater Eastern Street which, after cutting diagonally through Shoreditch, links Commercial Street with Old Street.

[278] Which, anticipating the later "Fringe" discourse, "aimed to create a "Dalston Corridor" of redevelopment, from the "Gateway" of Old Street, through Hackney, to Dalston" (Pratt, 2009:1050)

[279] One should note the historically blurred boundaries between Shoreditch and Hoxton. In the contemporary discourse of estate agents, "The area commonly referred to as Hoxton is technically Shoreditch; Hoxton proper, with its famous market, lies north of Hoxton Square, which is itself north of Old Street." (Pratt, 2009:1045).

[280] These political-economic developments existed in symbiosis with a myriad of cultural developments. In effect, Shoreditch and, to a lesser extent Hoxton, once existed as *the* 'gentrified' space of the urban imaginary. A spatial expression of "Cool Britannia" and the iconography of hipsters and "Hoxton Fins".

[281] See page 73.

1) Capturing City Office Spillover.

2) Reinforcing the "New Economy" and Arts Industry.

3) Increasing Residential Capacity

4) Developing 'Connectivity'

These aims map onto the orthodox story, regarding the (re)development of London's Fringe (and, consequently, Shoreditch) which was discussed within the introduction. Consequently, the critique levelled against viewing such forces as the engine of urban change applies; namely, that this story pays little attention to those who *consume* Shoreditch. As in Dalston, those who, through consumption, actively produce these spaces ; both materially, through patronage, and immaterially, through atmosphere and a sense of place[282].However, this chapter, in contrast to the last, aims to explore urban *disenchantment*. It seeks to illustrate why, for a certain stratum of "Urban Dreamers", Shoreditch has lost, or is losing, its libidinal appeal. This is a process of libidinal-disinvestment that encourages "Urban Dreamers" to seek out and consume other concrete-spaces in London, ones that better align with the "Urban Dreamworld".

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[282] The urban subjects who are drawn to the urban experience these spaces promise.

A Shared Libidinal-Skin

Figure 3.2, Brick Lane Bridge (Carroll, 2021).

The previous chapter excavated the "Theatre"[283] of the *phantasmagoric*[284] Dalston's libidinal-economy. This chapter begins by illustrating how the "libidinal skin", the spatial expression of this libidinal-economy, stretches from 'Dalston'[285] to, in part, cover Shoreditch[286]. In effect, a *similar* libidinal-economy -- a similar regime of enjoyment -- exists in both Shoreditch and Dalston. Highlighting this will also provide an opportunity to gain greater insight into this libidinal-economy. Firstly, through providing greater clarity to previously illustrated phantasies. Secondly, by highlighting novel contours. However, in accordance with the chapters primary aim -- to show how tensions, between the demarcations of *this* libidinal-economy and the concrete-space of Shoreditch, inhibit the

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[283] As defined on page 34.

[284] The Dalston as experienced by the "Urban Dreamers. One should note, this is not the only 'Dalston'.

[285] The imagery above, of a libidinal skin stretching from Dalston, like an umbrella, over Shoreditch, is perhaps misleading. As hinted at, through the teleology of Shoreditch's urban development, Shoreditch went through this process of transformation and libidinal investment first; having then 'spread' north, along the A10, to Dalston. A quality captured by many participants remarking that "Shoreditch" had *moved* to Dalston.

[286] Haggerston and Hoxton (or, at least along the A10).

enjoyment "Urban Dreamers" derive from its urban experience -- this section, on the continuous skin, will be shorter than the data allows for.

"It's this need for people to define themself against what's over there (points towards the Gherkin). Which is this absolute, arguably, soulless corportist world. You could argue it's that kind of fighting back. I'm not saying it's effectively doing that, but it's an attempt. All the untidiness feels like a fuck you to what's over there. Well if not a fuck you, just a clear statement that you're not over there anymore."

- Will. A City worker; an excerpt taken while walking down Brick Lane.

Primary data material accrued from walking interviews in Shoreditch will be used to highlight the 'stretched skin'. Becky was a social-influencer working for a company based in Shoreditch. After finishing school, she moved to London, from Blackpool, to pursue a music career. Now 29, she had since lived in several locations around north and south London. The interview started on Elder St, off Commercial St, at the boundary of Shoreditch. It proceeded under the Braithwaite St tunnel and into Shoreditch itself and followed Shoreditch High St towards Hoxton. After turning onto Calvert Avenue, which leads to the Boundary Estate, the walk slowed while looking inside various shops and cafes. Becky then decided to visit "Shoreditch House"[287] (of which she was a member) on Ebor St. After 20 minutes here, the interview continued south down Brick Lane before finishing at Whitechapel High St. The interview lasted around 80 minutes. The following excerpt took place while walking down Calvert Avenue:

Becky: Everyone here is trying to forge an identity for themselves. Everything, everyone, wants to be quite unique around here. These kinds of places sell a lot of things that you wouldn't find on the high street. People here are taking a more alternative mindset to life and the world.

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[287] "Shoreditch House" is an exclusive members only club. It contains various restaurants, bars, and a swimming pool. It also doubles up as a hotel. Interestingly, photography is banned within "Shoreditch House"; Becky told me this was due to celebrities who frequented it. A photography booth is provided on the second-floor for those wishing to document their experience.

L: And what do you think draws people with that sensibility to Shoreditch?

Becky: ... it's very visually against the norm. Especially if you go to places like, say, Kensington, and everything is really polished and pristine. You know, you can see graffiti everywhere; which wouldn't be able to happen in those places.…And the people as well when you walk around, right now not so much, you can see people who look quite cool, a bit quirky, look like they've got something going on. You know people like that flock to people who are like themselves.

This excerpt reiterates several moments within this libidinal-economy which were outlined in the Dalston chapter and reinforced by interviews[288] conducted within Shoreditch:

1) The notion that consuming Shoreditch contains a desirable surplus which sets it apart from 'regular' urban consumption.

2) The notion that those consuming Shoreditch contain a desirable surplus which sets them apart from 'regular' urban consumers.

3) That this surplus *in part*[289] is derived from the phantasy of "Urban Grime", which differentiates Shoreditch from the imagined opposite.

4) Interconnected with (2): The subject is drawn to Shoreditch, *in part*, by the libidinal appeal of "The Crowd" through self-identification.

The excerpt also raises distinctions to be investigated later in the chapter and thesis. Firstly, and, for this chapters aims, most importantly, a moment of doubt regarding "The Crowds" libidinal constitution: "And the people as well when you walk around, *right now not so much*, you can see people who look quite cool, a bit quirky, look like they've got something going on.". Momentarily, Becky articulates a rift between her expectation of Shoreditch and the

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[288] Particularly through participants who remained entirely, or partially, enchanted by the urban-experience provided by Shoreditch.

[289] "Urban Grime" is one libidinal moment that feeds into (1) and (2). In other interviews, this 'work' was done through traces, "Organic Work", atmosphere, rhythm. In one illustrative excerpt from Hannah: "...there is a certain calmness to this whole area I find, especially when you go through central and everyone is fucking rushing everywhere, everyone's got a place to be 10 mins ago, and you come here and everyone's just milling about. It's like that urgency is gone, people don't seem to be worried about being late in the same way".

reality of its lived space. Secondly, as a social-influencer, Becky's subject position is rooted within the "New Economy" advocated by the aforementioned assemblage of urban development. It is important to recognise the blurred distinctions between "Urban Dreamers" and other subject positions which bodies play within London's urban ecology.

Key to understanding this 'stretching', albeit from an inverted perspective, were insights gained by interviewing those who owned, or managed, *valorised* spaces of consumption within Shoreditch[290]. These interviews illustrated how this extension of libidinal-economy (and, consequently, urban experience) was partly produced by reflexive[291] actions,particularly regarding where to establish a space of consumption and how to ensure a particular space speaks the 'language' required to 'fit' within Shoreditch. Derek managed the shop "Siam Botanicals" on Cheshire St, just off Brick Lane. The street itself is a particularly potent element of what interviewees (and locals) refer to as the 'hipster' side of Brick Lane -- usually defined as north of Brick Lane Bridge -- with Derek's shop situated between "La Fauxmagerie", a dairy-free cheesemonger, and "Strap and Scraper" (See Figure 3.1), a "Time Honoured" barbers where "every item inside our doors has a story to tell as they have been passed down to us by family, friends and clients." (Strap & Scraper, 2021). Having spent ten years living in Thailand, Derek had moved back to London -- previously having owned a shop in Camden -- to open "Siam Botanicals". In November 2018, when this interview was conducted, the shop had only recently opened. After visiting again, in 2019, the shop had accrued its own "Urban Grime". The interview lasted 30 minutes:

L: What made you decide Shoreditch was the place to open up?

Derek: Well it's trendy, it has trendy elements, and the thing about Shoreditch, particularly Brick Lane, when I remember it was almost Bangladeshi fabric shops and markets. I'm a Londoner, but I've been living in Thailand for 15 years, but I came back and saw it being quite transformed. Filled with nice independent shops, not chains...The majority of shops here, on this street, and Brick Lane, are independent

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[290] Those who, *in part*, produce that which "Urban Dreamers" consume.
[291] These urban actors were aware of the importance of libidinal-economy and its aesthetic demarcations and reflexively changed their behaviour accordingly.

shops. This is something that is attractive, and the kind of products we've got here fits with that.

L: So talking about the shopfloor, what were your design decisions?

Derek: Well, in terms of furniture, we don't want an Ikea shop. All these pieces are individual, they are all vintage/antique, when I say vintage I mean G-plan, 50s vintage. We just like the wood effect, and yeah, the vintage side of it, the reuse of furniture which looks nice, but is also individual, it isn't mass produced...they don't match but it works. This is an old apothecary chest, from the turn of the century, and it fits really well and works.

Figure 4.3, Strap and Scraper (Carroll, 2021)

Derek, alongside the other business owners interviewed, were drawn to Shoreditch's libidinal-skin: "Filled with nice independent shops, not chains. The majority of shops here, on this street, and Brick Lane, are independent shops. This is something that's attractive, and the kind of products we've got here fits with that". However, unlike the "Urban Dreamers", Derek's reflexive attraction to this libidinal-economy was guided by economic logic. Specifically, a form of "agglomeration economics" (Glaeser, 2010) -- accrued by being 'under

the skin' -- wherein "Urban Dreamers" view (and patronise) "Siam Botanicals" as a fragment of Shoreditch's alluring 'heterotopic' urban experience. However, mirroring Dalston, to integrate with the skin, a space of consumption must 'talk the language'. In this example, this disciplinary pressure manifests through Derek's attempt to engineer an interior antithetical to "Ikea"[292]; through the acquisition and exhibition of valorised spatial accompaniments. Specifically, through "Trace Objects": 50s G-Plan[293] and a Victorian apothecary cabinet, similar to the "Time Honoured" objects within the barbers next door. Alongside illustrating the reflexive underpinning of this stretching libidinal-skin, Derek's actions illuminate a microscopic level of reproduction. One can note how, by Derek imitating the 'language' for his own purposes, the skin itself is expanded further over space (while the 'language' of this libidinal-economy is further codified).

However, this active engineering (or coordinating) of desire is the rule rather than the exception. These moments reveal the action behind the production of Shoreditch's representational space. While each individual instance is miniscule, each of these *seemingly* inconsequential moments, mirroring the production of Dalston's atmosphere, multiply off each other in producing representational space (and, by extension, place). However, this micro/macro production of representational space -- through cultivating the libidinal-skin, as above -- is only one scale. Shoreditch's libidinal-*economies*[294], are amplified, curated, and directed through a complex web of immaterial labourers contributing to a prismic space of representation. This network ranges from Shoreditch specific digital lifestyle magazines[295], to, in a less focused manner, London's 'general' lifestyle magazines[296]. Each performs a similar function: e.g. 'setting', through representation, the urban experience consumers

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[292] A synonym for the imagined 'rejected' spaces of consumption and the aesthetic such places engender.

[293] Usefully, Derek's discussion of 50s G-Plan highlights the blurred distinction between de-valorised mass manufactured goods and valuable antiques.

[294] A multitude of libidinal-economies exert influence over any particular concrete-space, that which interpellates "Urban Dreamers" is one only, albeit prescient, tendency.

[295] A prominent example being "Made in Shoreditch", which aims "to tell the story about Shoreditch… one of the most vibrant and innovative districts in the world, which is loved by people for its alternative arts & culture, buzzing startups scene, unique fashion, independent shops and the crazy party culture." through interviewing local businesses, artists and other "Shoreditch Pioneers" (MiS, 2021)

[296] Publications, such as "Londonist", "Secret London" and "Independent London".

expect to find in Shoreditch. Likewise, production of this space of representation has been increasingly 'casualised' under the attention economy of communicative capitalism (Dean, 2005; Crogan, 2012). While more particularly focused, the work performed by marketing managers at Shoreditch's spaces of consumption feed into representational space addressed above. However, there are two essential points when considering this:

1) The relationship between libidinal-economies and their representation is complex. As highlighted in the previous chapter, it is entwined with both "Epithume" and "Epithumogenesis".

2) The libidinal-economy of "Urban Dreamers" is not the only libidinal-economy in Shoreditch. Consequently, the representational space of Shoreditch is itself fundamentally fractured e.g. it points to different regimes of enjoyment, which while separate, intertwine with each other. As discussed in the conclusion, a substantive investigation into the relationship *between* these libidinal-economies is beyond the immediate scope of the thesis.

However, these conditions do not abstract the importance of representational space in stretching the skin of this libidinal-economy across Shoreditch; just as in Dalston[297]. The core essence remains; such moments, for a myriad of social actors -- including the urban consumers under investigation, alongside property developers, urban planners, tourists, alongside other actors within the urban ecology -- produce a representation of Shoreditch[298] which informs their imagination of the experience purportedly found within and consequently guides their desires, actions and libidinal investments. This dimension of the "Urban Dreamworld" will be the central focus of the following chapter; through an investigation into the space(s) of representation facilitated by Instagram.

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[297] Although exploration of the *labour* behind spaces of representation and its role within the broader relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy see chapter six.

[298] One must recognise the libidinal exchange between cipher and source. The 'alluring' user of representational space, in part, gives this quality to the place just as the place gives this quality to the user. Each cipher, by drawing from the established representational space, reinforces the image *through* the space of representation.

<u>Illuminations of the "Urban Dreamworld"</u>

Echoing Neil Smith's research on "Urban Pioneers", the Shoreditch interviews highlighted the relationship between phantasies of "Urban Grime" and the 'dangerous'. Several participants chose to walk under the Braithwaite St tunnel (See Figure 4.4) which, passing the entrance of Shoreditch High St Station, connects Quaker St to Bethnal Green Road. Almost all of the interviewees reflected on how the experience of the tunnel fit fluidly with their expectation of Shoreditch.

Figure 4.4, Braithwaite Street (Carroll, 2021).

This excerpts captures the perspective concisely:

Becky: This tunnel we're in here, is, well a bit scary.

L: How come?

Becky: I dunno, it's just a bit like. It's a bit intimidating, there's always people sleeping under here.

L: Do you think this still counts as Shoreditch?

Becky: Even more so to be honest. I think to me Shoreditch still has that element of being a little bit rough.

Braithwaite St tunnel[299] is a key thoroughfare between Shoreditch, The City, and Spitalfields; with Brick Lane running parallel about 300 metres to the east. Discussions while passing through the tunnel were often sparked by its graffiti -- a combination of commissioned 'street art', spontaneous design, and advertisements for spaces of consumption -- in a manner resonant with the findings regarding "Urban Grime"[300] and the appeal of "Postmodern Dirt". However, in accordance with its spatial particularities, this discussion was often supplemented with reflections regarding the feeling of danger provided by the tunnel. For Neil Smith, such aesthetic dispositions are intertwined with a notion of a "Pioneer" mindset. However, the empirical insights accrued by the thesis complicate this story (while not contradicting it *per se*). To elucidate this further, consider the following excerpt taken from Braithwaite St Tunnel:

Roe: This kind of cool and hip area, like Shoreditch, one key aspect is it being raw. Raw being part of being authentic, something which is not controlled or planned; it's hard to describe. Even though I sometimes feel not so safe, or not so clean, this is another important aspect of what this place is.

A feeling of not being entirely safe, like not being entirely clean, is what signifies that a place as "not controlled or planned"; imbuing it with the potential of an 'authentic', rather than curated, urban experience. A productive parallel can be drawn here with the literature surrounding "Dark Tourism"[301]. For those pursuing such experiences, the "Package Holiday" contains a similar ontological lack that "Urban Dreamers" perceived within orthodox urban-experience. A phantasy that the perceived potential of danger entails that one truly consumes and experiences a place; rather than a curated simulacrum. As such, the

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[299] This bridge goes under the ELR.
[300] See pages 161-162.
[301] This concept highlights the growing market of tourism in 'Dangerous' locations: war zones, disaster areas, and so on; see Streetone (2013) for a thorough review.

situation, while not radically distinct from Smith's argument, is more nuanced. The allure is not the danger *per se* -- e.g. the experience of being a "pioneer" -- but rather the notion that danger is antithetical to the curated.

Beyond "Urban Grime", the Shoreditch material provided further insights into the phantasy of "Organic Work" and the aestheticisation of labour-time. Celeste had moved to London six years ago from Huddersfield to start an apprenticeship as a tattoo artist. Based in Camden, she regularly travelled to Shoreditch for recreational consumption. The interview started at "Boxpark", along Sclater St, and proceeded down Brick Lane. After visiting "Spitalfields Farm", the interview continued back up Brick Lane to visit "Unto This Last"; a glass-fronted workshop on Brick Lane (See Figure 4.5). The following took place while walking past "Unto This Last":

> L: What's the appeal of being able to see in?

> Celeste: Well a lot of places, say, you can't see your food being made. And so you don't know what's going on with it. But with this you can see every stage of the procession, you can see the ball to the buck. The things there, standing up and not having anything done to them. And then the woman standing something in the front, and a full cupboard in front of that… It feels really personal, somebody could have made all of it.

> L: So you say the same person could have made all of it? Does that have an appeal?

> Celeste: When you buy, even from the higher names like Chanel and stuff, you don't get this. It's that kind of idea that you have one person, who knows what they're doing and has done something specifically for you... It's not what I'd expect from a high street but it is what I expect from the types of people who come here <Shoreditch>.

Figure 4.5, Unto This Last (Carroll, 2021)

Here one finds a reiteration of the "Organic Work" phantasy. For Celeste, there is an enjoyment derived from seeing a body, behind glass, labouring[302]. An imagined intimacy which transforms the commodity into something closer to a gift. However, rather than repeating earlier analyses, "Unto this Last" can further illuminate the agency utilised to engineer satisfaction.

The following is taken from an interview with the owner of "Unto this Last":

> Philp: We are like Ikea, from that point of view, the Ikea aesthetic is made by the economy of Ikea. All that we are saying is that there could be a different economy, and therefore a different aesthetic, as they are linked; if you start from different premises. The premise we start from here is that it is possible, and cheaper in fact, to make things one by one in the centre of the city....But the question is, how can we replace mass produced items from abroad with items created here because, and the reason we do that, is that we know the public is interested in this kind of logic and,

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[302] Mirroring the logic of a red-light district e.g. glass is used to facilitate the display of 'appealing' bodies. This mirrors Benjamin's recognition of the psycho-social function of glass and its modulating effects on ways of seeing (Benjamin, 1999).

we argue, the aesthetic, which is, I insist, a direct reflection…. We take bits of the consumer society, to create something that is not the consumer society, but depends on it, and the aesthetic is the direct response of that. The fact is that the aesthetic of the workshop itself is part of the product, we know that our clients want to buy into an economy that they like and they like the look of the workshop.

There are several important points here. Firstly, the glass-fronted workshop, which facilitates the display of "Organic Work", is a conscious decision; "the fact is that the aesthetic of the workshop itself is part of the product…". This, like with Derek's apothecary[303], further fortifies the reflexivity between those who produce spaces of consumption and the libidinal-economy itself. However, Philp also shows the variance within this reflexivity. In contrast to "Siam Botanicals", Philp is drawn to the promise of the libidinal-economy itself, rather than simply the economic potential of this libidinal-economy. He, like the "Urban Dreamers" are drawn to the promise of a different world[304]; the prospect of which is signified through the spatial libidinal-skin. Consequently, "Unto this Last" illustrates how the reflexive engineering of the libidinal-skin can, at times, be motivated by the same desires as the libidinal-economy (rather than cynical instrumentalisation, a point which will become clearer later in the chapter when we return to "Siam Botanicals").

Thus far, the chapter has highlighted how a similar libidinal-skin 'stretches' from Dalston over Shoreditch, specifically how enjoyment is structured around similar phantasies (which converge around an anticipatory desire for an urban experience *beyond* the imagined norm). Additionally, it has illustrated how this libidinal-skin is produced through a reflexive relationship between the underpinning libidinal-economy and various economic actors; who co-produced the lived and/or representational space of Shoreditch. The chapter will now focus on its primary aim; i.e. to show the rupturing of this libidinal-skin. For the "Urban Dreamers", the extraction of enjoyment from Shoreditch has become increasingly frustrated; the libidinal-skin has become increasingly 'thin'. Specifically, it has become increasingly difficult for the "Urban Dreamworld" -- of Shoreditch offering an anticipatory/heterotopic

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[303] Albeit in a more substantive manner than Derek's utilisation of traces.

[304] One should note how this is a dialectical vision of producing something new *from* consumer society; not simply a naive rejection of it.

urban experience -- to be maintained. Importantly, Shoreditch is not, and nor will it soon become, a ghost-town. Different libidinal-economies function in drawing in different kinds of urban bodies[305]. However, the "Urban Dreamers", who once more routinely populated the crowds, shops, and 'mise en scène' are increasingly dissatisfied with the urban experience Shoreditch provides[306] and thus begin to derive enjoyment from other places within London. The following will highlight why, for the participants, it has become increasingly difficult to dream in Shoreditch.

> John: "Shoreditch has been designated as the cool part of London, by people who aren't from London and who aren't cool. It comes down to money. It's the place where you can make the most money, people have decided they can squeeze the most juice out of this place."

Libidinal fears and the inhibition of enjoyment

To understand the disruption of enjoyment, one must understand the fears that linger over Shoreditch. However, not, as argued by Pile (2005), in showing how -- like dreams and desires -- fear is expressed *materially* through its ossification in the urban environment. Rather, the *immaterial* fears that "Urban Dreamers" hold *for* Shoreditch. The fears they hold for what Shoreditch may become or what it might already be. Fears which, if realised, would inhibit their extraction of enjoyment. The following was taken while walking along the northern side of Brick Lane with Hannah. Hannah was a motivational speaker, living in South London, who often travelled to consume Shoreditch with friends and colleagues, which took place over two hours. The walk began on Redchurch St, then, heading down Ebor St to Boxpark. After a coffee here, we walked up Shoreditch High Street and around the old furniture district; the parameters of which were highlighted earlier.

> L: ...What doesn't belong here?

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[305] As will be shown, it is this quality that, in part, threatens libidinal disinvestment; in effect, the rise and fall of libidinal spatial expressions are fundamentally linked.

[306] For the "Urban Dreamers", Shoreditch is increasingly a libidinal ruin.

Hannah: Business, high-end business. Take the insurance sector of London, everyone in suits rushing around to do their work, if that sort of thing came in here it would change the whole area. Even seeing those offices of, what are they called, property renters, estate agents - even that feels, to me, quite forced.

L: In what way?

Hannah: It doesn't fit in with the culture of the area to have high-end business there. To me a lot of the businesses around cultural stuff, or places to eat and drink, feel like the more, I don't know how to describe it, high-end business trade; it easily could come in and plant itself everywhere, but it takes away from that element that I know.

Hannah's fear is temporal. An imagined future wherein "High-end business… plants itself everywhere" within Shoreditch and corrupts the place she knows. In effect, she fears that the 'ordinary' urban experience which Shoreditch -- alongside Dalston and other places of "Fringe Consumption" -- is defined *against* expresses itself within this perceived heterotopia. While about the future, this illustration is integrated into a teleology of the present[307]. For Hannah, the feared future, at times, seems closer to the present and at times further away. Other participants, when discussing similar themes, held less ambiguous perspectives. Some viewed the present as the last days of Shoreditch. Others maintained that *their* Shoreditch -- for a multitude of reasons -- would be resilient to the feared future; that it would continue to enable a satisfying urban experience. Regardless, what is significant is that the *fear* itself -- of a "thinning" libidinal-skin, through a re-emergence of 'ordinary' urban experience -- was shared amongst nearly all participants.

These elements of this libidinal-economy -- its fears and phobias -- were also captured in Dalston. However, in their articulations, the participants routinely clarified the *reality* of their fears by reflecting on Shoreditch. Their fear was, partly, informed by a perception that the rejected future had already arrived in Shoreditch:

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[307] In this way, these spatial fears reflect a primary impulse within Science-Fiction literature .

Jeremy: … that's my problem with what they've done in Shoreditch. Shoreditch has reached this apex of commercialisation… lots of brands have a big store in Shoreditch, like a Carhartt store. These big brands set up in Shoreditch because it's this cool place. So you get a lot of people who are involved in that world as well.

L: And would you say Shoreditch is cool?

Jeremy: It's 'cool' but not cool. For the audio record, I just did this kind of air asterix.

Paralleling the fears of Hannah, for Ant, the "high-end business trade" has eroded the libidinal-surplus of Shoreditch. However, this libidinal disinvestment -- a process of falling out of love -- is more complex than *simply* the arrival of brands; just as the process of libidinal investment was more complex than the purported lack of them. The following will explore these dynamics,which, for the "Urban Dreamers", are transforming (or have already transformed) Shoreditch from cool to 'cool'.

Frustration and disappointment

Considering the above, the analysis will begin through illustrating the affective response to the perceived encroachment of "brands", "chains" and other synonyms for the homogenous orthodox[308] urban experience rejected by "Urban Dreamers":

L: If you were to describe the quintessential Shoreditch person, what would they look like?

Roe: Maybe a bit hipster like. But actually, when I first came to Shoreditch six years ago I heard it was a very cool and hip place, but actually I didn't find it that cool. It didn't seem as vibrant and as artsy as I expected. Maybe it's because I didn't know everything about Shoreditch, but also because I thought gentrification was just

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[308] E.g. the urban experience *this* libidinal-economy demarcates as unenjoyable. As discussed in the previous chapter.

starting… Even though there are still cool shops, I think this coolness has moved from Shoreditch.

L: So if the spirit of cool has left, what's it been replaced by?

Roe: Money! And tourists!

L: Are these shops not cool?

Roe: It is cool… Not only about cool but I want something very authentic, very unique, not something I can't easily find… the brands, are everywhere. Most of the brands are something I can expect to find anywhere.

In the above, one can see that the same phantasies that allured "Urban Dreamers" to Dalston and the urban experience it afforded -- "Organic" spaces of production, a rejection of orthodox consumption experience, etc -- produce increasing disappointment and dissatisfaction towards Shoreditch. The increased perceptibility of the urban forms demarcated, by the "zero" of this libidinal-economy, as unenjoyable frustrates the ability to satisfy phantasy; it inhibits the extraction of enjoyment from concrete-space. In effect, there is an increasing gap experienced between the "Urban Dreamworld" and the urban-experience provided by Shoreditch.

Enjoyment is not only inhibited by the 'return' of devalorised urban experience. "Urban Dreamers" were increasingly frustrated at the prevalence of Shoreditch's 'quirky' homogeneity,wherein the 'heterogenous' was perceived to be part of an established language. In effect, creating a 'new' form of homogenised urban experience. The following extract was taken at "Box Park" (See Figure 4.6); where Roe's colleague Yasmin joined the interview:

Roe: I think they copied boxpark, as there is one in Seoul which is similar.

Yasmin: Yeah the container box stores.

Roe: But my impression would have been very different 10 years ago. But now, this idea of what Brick Lane is has been spread to the world.

Yasmin: The Korean one was made maybe 3 or 4 years ago.

Roe: It was funded by a large corporation. There is another such container building in Germany too. I don't know if that's the original or not. But I thought the shops in there aren't that great…

L: What about the people in here. Do they fit into the image of Shoreditch?

Roe: Not really. They are tourists here. Mostly like visitors, or people who work in the city. I think of Shoreditch as more hipsters and those who are more fashionable. Nowadays these things have become more popular for everyone.

Figure 4.6, Box Park (Carroll, 2021).

Roe and her colleague Yasmin were frustrated at the prevalence of this new brand of homogenous urban experience. The enjoyment, derived from a valorisation of the heterogenous, is stifled by the reproduced quality of urban forms[309]. In this case, "Boxpark" and similar spaces of consumption. This crystallises around Roe's claim that "this idea of what Brick Lane is has been spread to the world.". One should note, this is not a vice of Shoreditch *per se* but a dissatisfaction built into the logic of fashion, novelty and its ancillary of boredom,particularly when the novel is drawn into the logic of the popular and thus the profitable (Benjamin, 1999). However, this wider aesthetic tendency is particularly problematic for this libidinal-economy; one which structures enjoyment specifically around rejecting the homogenous. For now, the generation of the unsatisfying is less important than the affective response of dissatisfaction itself; the cause of libidinal disinvestment. Namely, the disappointing gap between the heterogeneity valorised by this libidinal-economy and promised by the libidinal-skin and the reality of a reinvented homogeneity:

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[309] Additionally, one should note how these urban forms accrue new meanings; specifically by becoming totemic of *violence* of gentrification. As expressed by John: Like Croydon is very much mid-gentrification, there's definitely a big push for it. They've got a fucking boxpark there. They've got craft beer pubs. I used to fucking work in a bougie coffee shop there. It's such a tears you apart kind of thing, not wanting this to happen to your area, but also actively contributing to it because you want to make money and make a living… it's turning into Shoreditch. Sorry, what was the question?"

Jack: I think Shoreditch High Street is peak gentrification, and it gets to this point of self-parody. Every single place is like a craft beer hub workspace pizza place. You go there and it's like what's the fucking point? Why even go there if it's so soulless.

This frustrating 'gap' -- between the demarcations of the libidinal-economy and the reality of Shoreditch -- is also produced within representational space *through* the space of representation. Will, a City worker commuted to London[310] daily and would consume Shoreditch recreationally; both through "after-work" activities and socially with friends. The interview started from his office at Moorgate and continued along the A10 into Shoreditch. Down Redchurch St, through Brick Lane and Dray Walk, before heading back up the A10 to Curtain Road. The took place on Redchurch St; the dialogue being sparked by a sign reading "We Love Shoreditch":

L: "We love Shoreditch"; do you love Shoreditch?

Will: I don't love that sign.

L: Why?

Will: Well it's getting in on the whole "I love NY" thing. It's very cliche, a piece of corporate crap. Its come straight from America.

In a follow-up interview, I walked through Shoreditch with Will again and asked him to reflect further on his affective response to this signpost:

L: Did it change how you felt about Shoreditch?

Will: it made me feel like it was somewhere that's trying to fit into a bigger global brand that may or may not have been true to any sense of real, local identity. And I

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[310] From Hertfordshire.

think there's a sadness to that. That simply to be its own idiosyncratic self should not be enough. That it has to fit in and conform to something bigger.

For Will, this signpost, "a piece of corporate crap", by lacking any concrete connection to the idiosyncratic Shoreditch he valorised, produced a feeling of sadness. While sparked by the signpost, the sadness, this inhibition of enjoyment, is produced through the fragmentation of phantasy. Will's phantasy, his expectation of Shoreditch -- "its idiosyncratic self" -- is disrupted by reality; once more, the libidinal disinvestment is produced by a gap between one *expects* to find and what one finds[311]. However, this is more complex than *simply* a gap between concrete-space and the space of representation. The signpost disrupts Will's phantasy through its attempt to integrate the *representational* space of Shoreditch with a "global brand" of representational space. In effect, Will's frustration is at this 'ordinary' representational space, projected from representation, undermining his *imagined* Shoreditch; i.e. as a place where such forms of representational space neither belong nor 'exist'. Frustrations with a similar root were captured by other interviews around Shoreditch. A recurring example was the frustration felt by participants at the "Black Wall" (See Figure 4.7) positioned opposite Shoreditch House[312], on Ebor St, which displayed a different weekly advertisement; featuring, during the walks, House of Fraser, Maybelline and Levis[313].

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[311] This quality, of momentary interruptions to dreaming and the possibility of a "flash of recognition" (Buck-Morss, 1991), alters libidinal investments.

[312] Likely in an attempt to capture the attention of its patrons.

[313] While similar, there are distinctions which point to the cross-pollination within phantasy. For instance, this example likely connects to the earlier discussed rejection of *overt* advertising.
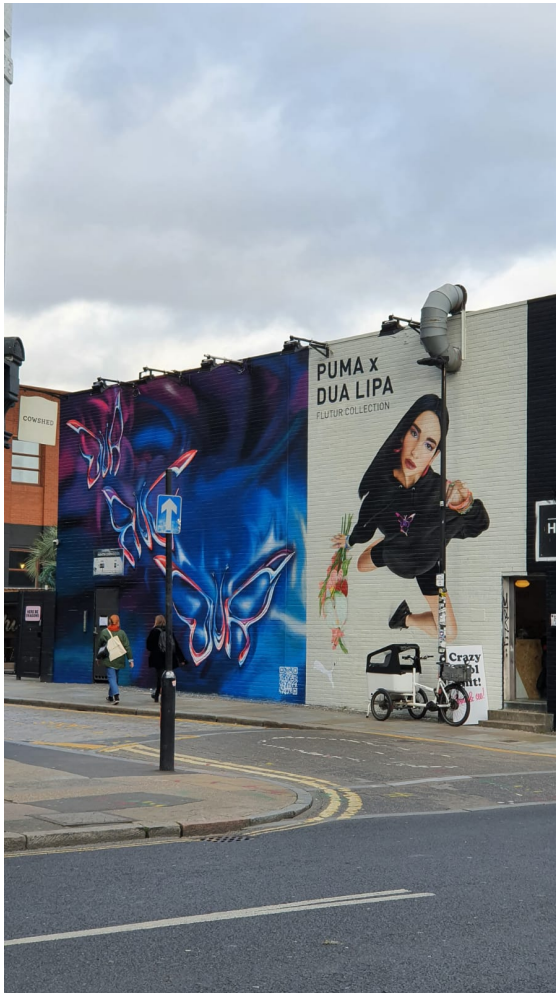
Figure 4.7, The Black Wall (Carroll, 2021).

Centrifugal Crowds and Atmosphere

As representational space is produced by wider social phenomena than simply 'orthodox' immaterial labour, so too is the de-libidinising 'gap'. As discussed, *this* libidinal-economy valorises particular urban bodies, crowds, and atmospheres. In part, through a de-valorisation of appeared iconographic opposites: --"suits", "tourists", "consumers", etc -- and the crowds and atmosphere they are *perceived* to produce. Before continuing, it is worth reflecting on how this quality populated Hannah's earlier fears. Alongside the appearance of "big-business", she feared these quotidian immaterial labourers; specifically, their effect on Shoreditch's atmosphere, rhythms, and, consequently, urban experience:

Hannah: "everyone in suits, rushing around to do their work. If that sort of thing came in here it would change the whole area."

Even among the participants most enchanted with Shoreditch, this tension between particular bodies and the production of 'unattractive' atmospheres was significant. The following excerpt, with Becky the social influencer, took place towards the end of the interview, after leaving Shoreditch House and walking down Old Nichol St:

L: So are there any moments, when you're walking through Shoreditch, when something happens and it feels like it breaks the spell.

Becky: The line between city and east I think. So when I come to work I can either get off at old Street, which is very Shoreditch, or moorgate which is very city. So you get off there and there's all these fucking suits getting off the train and it's a bit like wanky, they've got, you know, glass bars. Whereas you come here and it's all a bit more old fashioned and rustic. Where the to two meet is weird as well, so you're wearing your polkadot jumpsuit, or whatever, and there's this guy with a full on suit next to you, and it's weird, you know, the blend.

For Becky, there is a discomfort at the combining of what, for her, are two distinct urban atmospheres; Shoreditch and the City. Like in Dalston, the markers of these distinctions are drawn from the established iconography of this urban imaginary. The bodies producing an undesirable atmosphere are demarcated through the "sticky"[314] object of the suit and the spaces these bodies are presumed to secrete; e.g. "wanky… glass bars". While further solidifying the "The Suit" within the imaginary of this libidinal-economy, Becky's focus here is more on the boundary spaces of Shoreditch. She perceives a rigid separation between these two worlds; the attractive world of Shoreditch and the onanistic world of suits and glass. The negative associations of the devalorised bodies are neatly separated from

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[314] An object of phantasy radiates out into the surrounding 'things', mirroring the production of atmosphere; see pages 171-174.

Shoreditch, thus maintaining an interrupted enjoyment of Shoreditch itself; once one passes through such boundary spaces.

However, other participants felt these de-libidinising forces were less contained; having spilled over the boundary spaces and into Shoreditch itself. Thomas worked at "Lucky Fret", a guitar shop on Redchurch St. The interview began outside Lucky Fret and we took a circuitous route around Shoreditch and Whitechapel, the interview ended at Aldgate East from where Thomas travelled home. The interview took place over around an hour, the following extract occurred at Redchurch St (See Figure 3.8):

Figure 4.8, Barber & Parlour (Carroll, 2019).

L: "So, how come you're in Shoreditch?"

Thomas: "I went to university in Mile End, I started in 2014. I lived there on campus but then moved to a flat on Oldfield Road by Victoria Park. Then I just moved out of a flat over there and moved into this area. Working at Lucky Fret I had to travel everyday for work, so I've gradually moved this way from further East."

L: "What do you feel about Shoreditch then?"

Thomas: "Having lived here, its mainly negative. You know, Shoreditch for a while has been attracting a different crowd. A lot of city boys and essex influence is creeping in... Liverpool Street is really close by and so a lot of people who work in those kind of industries, who used to go out in SoHo, now come to Shoreditch because it's considered cool and with good bars… Lots of staff parties and work parties, Brewdog which is next to the shop is always full of people in Santa hats and fancy dress."

In contrast to Becky, Thomas and most of the participants considered the boundaries increasingly crossed; the worlds increasing blurred[315]. Thomas captures this sentiment well through; his critical perception of Shoreditch being derived from the supposedly denser concentration of anaphroditic bodies. Later, he further clarified his libidinal disinvestment, through a reference to Peckham; specifically, that Shoreditch is no longer attracting "a crowd that is looking for something different". Contrasting Thomas and Becky, one can note how the negative affective response has increasingly 'bled' into a sense of Shoreditch. Beyond a momentary discomfort at boundary spaces, the presence of these bodies increasingly sparked a process of libidinal disinvestment from Shoreditch as a whole.

One should remember the interconnected nature of distinct phantasies and complexes (and, as such disruptions) within a particular libidinal-economy. To illustrate this point, consider the following. At this point, Celeste was discussing the perceived direction of Shoreditch as we walked up Brick Lane:

Celeste: "...people with the suits coming in and putting their paperwork where they shouldn't be putting it. You know, trying to take over a place. Trying to see a value in a place, that it's worth money, that it can make them money and jumping on the bandwagon… it's all Top-Shop and H&M and, stuff you can get everywhere else in London. I don't need a second Oxford Street, I'd rather have something where I can go and experience something different."

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[315] It is worth reflecting the mythic history at work here; an imagined 'pure' Shoreditch of the past that is increasingly threatened.

This excerpt condenses several of the themes identified[316] into a single moment: Commercialisation, "Suits", loss of heterogeneous urban experience. Importantly, these different elements 'inform' each other; (e.g. for Celeste, the suit leads to commercialisation, commercialisation leads to a loss of heterogeneity). Consequently, each of the negative affects analysed above is part of a wider ontology produced by this libidinal-economy. None of these moments exist in isolation.

The uncanny experience of "The Homunculus"

The word "Homunculus" comes from the latin for "little man". Today, it has become a concept which describes how the brain's neurological system makes sense of itself within space[317] (Saladin and Porth, 2007). However, this concept also has an earlier history in alchemy; specifically, it was the 'thing' produced by attempts to create 'artificial' human life. While the techniques used to produce homunculi vary across cultural, geographic and temporal, articulations -- from the utilisation of cows milk combined with human sperm (Jung, 1983), to combining clay, mud, or dust, within Jewish folklore[318] (Idel, 1990) -- the fundamentals remain the same: humanity producing life, in its own image, beyond sexual procreation. This concept helps to understand the libidinal disinvestment from Shoreditch, because producing a homunculus results in a simulacrum rather than a simulation. The process of producing life in the *image* of humanity is imperfect, it produces something new. Like the methods for its creation, the differences between the homunculus and the human body vary: dwarfism, clairvoyance, flight (Campbell, 2010). However, because the homunculus is simultaneously an *imag*e of human life it is neither entirely familiar nor entirely mysterious. The experience of confronting such a 'thing' is thus one of the uncanny; it is unsettling precisely due to this familiar 'thing' -- the human form -- being encountered in an awry manner. Within Shoreditch, a moment which frustrates enjoyment and encourages disinvestment, is experiencing such a homunculus. However, Shoreditch's homunculi, rather than an uncanny simulacrum produced by an imperfect simulation of

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[316] Within this section but also the chapter and thesis as a whole.
[317] The "Cortical Homunculus".
[318] The term "Golem" is used.

human bodies, are a simulacrum produced through *failed*[319] attempts to simulate the "Urban Dreamworld"[320]. Interlinked with the affects analysed above, experiencing the homunculus produces, within the ""Urban Dreamers, feelings of disgust and ridicule. Affects which, by disrupting the integrity of phantasy, *further* contribute to disenchantment.

A prominent example is the tendency towards simulacrums of "Urban Grime". The most illuminative expression of confronting this homunculus and the affective experience generated is below. The following excerpt, taken from the interview Hannah, took place on Redchurch St; although the area discussed is the alley -- "French Pl" -- which connects Shoreditch High St to Bateman's Row:

> Hannah: So the thing with this space being an artisty area is that there's a lot of street art. But I have qualms with it because it's not organic, its commissioned art that people want on their public space… here business wants to show they are down with the kids, and cool with graffiti, so they'll commision an artist like it was graffiti. On my way over I saw this brick wall, just down an alleyway, and there's this interesting piece on the wall, and I was like "what's this", and as I got closer I could see all these street art ways of doing art: things stuck over each other, as if it was done in a quick way, like "oh this was illegal so we needed to be in and out", but the closer I got I saw wording on it: it said "Coldplay's new album you can buy it soon". It's disgusting that, pretending you're like this illegal form of art whereas really you're just an advert for Coldplay - which isn't really a graffiti sort of art, its really the opposite… So someone had sold that place on the wall for Coldplay to come and pretend it's this organic form of art. … whoever put that up was a marketing dick who was like "street art is really cool and in these days, why don't we make Coldplay's advertising street art to resonate with the young people"

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[319] From the perspective of "Urban Dreamers", an experience that is not universal. .
[320] There are several different iterations of this, parodying different fragments within the libidinal-economy highlighted throughout this research.

As highlighted, Graffiti, part of "Urban Grime", plays an important role within this libidinal-economy[321]. Hannah's excerpt here shows how the integrity of this phantasy is disrupted within Shoreditch; through the mutagenic relationship between "Urban Grime", immaterial labour, and the political-economy of space. The realisation that the graffiti she was approaching -- assumed to be 'organic' "Urban Grime" -- was, in reality, an advert for Coldplay generated a feeling of disgust. Specifically, a feeling of disgust *through* the uncanny. One can imagine, had Hannah seen an LED billboard promoting "Coldplay" on Liverpool St it wouldn't have generated such a strong affective response. In such places, one expects such forms of space. The uncanny and correlated disgust is produced by her realisation that what she assumed was of the libidinal-skin was in fact its imagined opposite. The "Coldplay" graffiti is a homunculus, an imposter who is disgusting precisely due to its ability to momentarily mislead; the aphrodisistic revealed to be anaphroditic. Importantly, Hannah's affective response is guided by an assumed knowledge of origin. The homunculus is disgusting not only for its deception *per se* but also for the intent behind this deception. This 'knowledge' informs Hannah that the relations of production *behind* the homunculus are those which are demarcated as unenjoyable; the 'inorganic' practice of advertising -- and associations discussed in the previous chapter -- covering itself with the skin of 'organic' "Urban Grime".

This tendency, of that denoted by this libidinal economy as unenjoyable attempting to 'sneak in' under Shoreditch's skin is replicated on a wider scale:

L: ....what could happen now that would break the spell of Shoreditch?

Thomas: Nuclear warfare. No, in a more mundane manner, I can only really think of corporate takeover. It really would destroy the culture that is here. What is offputting is that corporate is around but they hide themselves and pretend they are not. I saw this round the corner, veggie pret… It's still a pret, don't pretend you're an up and

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[321] One element within"Urban Grime"; that expresses a rejection of 'sanitised' (and 'disciplined') space, etc

coming vegan restaurant. So you see a lot of that shit all around London, where they take these old buildings and just plonk a McDonalds in there...

L: Why do you think they don't just bulldoze it down?

Thomas: ...It's because they're disguising themselves as part of this area and pretending they're not really corporate: "We're a trendy McDonalds, we're not like the regular McDonalds". They change the architecture a bit, and play up to these features its got, but you go inside and it's still a disgusting McDonalds. Its got all their marketing and their crappy tables.

This excerpt resonates with the earlier discussion regarding the 'fears' for Shoreditch; e.g. "corporate takeover", chainification, loss of heterotopian aura, etc. However, paralleling the homunculus of "Urban Grime", the manner in which these fears, in part, manifests into reality is more complex than *simply* the overt presence of 'commercialisation'. Thomas discusses attempts by "Veggie-Pret"-- on Great Eastern Street -- and McDonalds to "disguise themselves as part of this area" by "pretending they're not really corporate". Again, the concept of the homunculus is crucial for understanding this. Beyond "Urban Grime", 'ordinary' capitalist consumption -- the spaces, practices, and objects, demarcated as unenjoyable by this libidinal-economy -- attempts to secretly capture satisfaction through imitation. In this case, through attempting to simulate -- through aestheticising historical traces and, as best possible, obscuring the anaphorditic traits -- the libidinal-skin which covers Shoreditch. However, one can note how this deception is, at least in part, perceived by the "Urban Dreamers". The integrity of the disguise is undermined; the discovery of subterfuge produces a feeling of disgust

This quality of "disgusting" imitation penetrates deeper into the libidinal-skin; specifically, through the attempted simulation of 'independent' aesthetics. Kate worked as an administrator at Goldsmiths University. Having moved from Wales to London when she was eighteen[322] for university, she had decided to remain after graduating. The interview

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[322] At the time of the interview, this was seven years ago.

started from her home on Bethnal Green Road, and proceeded through Brick Lane to Spitalfields Markets. The following excerpt took place upon arriving at Spitalfields Market[323]:

> Kate: ...Up until last year, if you came here while there was no market on it would just be empty. But since then they've built semi-permanent stalls, so it feels more like an arts and crafts supermarket rather than a normal market. Since it used to be that there would be different things each day, you know one day vinyl the next day antiques, or old clothes, but now it just seems to be pretty much the same retailers everyday...some of these retailers want to give the impression of being pop-up stores or independent. You know like this Gucci.

Established after the Great Fire of London, Spitalfields was one of several markets operating beyond the city gates. While the relationship between Spitalfields Market and the gentrification of the East End is important (Lees, 2000), it is the simulacrum within which is important for our current purposes. Kate's affective response isn't as intense as Hannah or Thomas[324]; however, it still highlights two important dimensions. For Kate, the latest wave of regeneration has caused the market to lose the temporal rhythm and serendipity[325] which, in part, drew her here. Consequently, for Kate, Spitalfields Market feels "more like an arts and crafts supermarket". While resonating with the libidinal disinvestment caused by commercialisation, there are other elements to extract. There is an illuminatory distinction between Kate's response to Spitalfields Market and Roger's towards Ridley Road in Dalston. For Roger, Ridley Road contained the rhythm, serendipity, and consequent aleatory quality which produced the allure of (or, rather, potential for) 'unalienated' urban experience. Precisely the qualities Kate claims have been lost; replaced by a controlled and coordinated

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[323] One should note, mirroring the earlier discussion of a blurred Hoxton and Shoreditch, how parts of Spitalfields are also drawn into this notion of "Shoreditch".

[324] Connected to earlier; one interviewee, Ellie, reflected on her disappointment at finding brands and chain shops within what she thought would be an organic market space. "I don't find stuff here so attractive to me, I don't think these things are really that unique or high quality. Secondly, these shops, surrounding the independent market, these shops, like I mentioned, are so global and luxury. You can tell this is a place for tourists... I notice bobby brown etc in Spitalfields it loses some of its charm and spirit."

[325] A fact favourably cited on the "E1 Spitalfields" website "... no longer considered *just* a Sunday destination." (Spitalfields, 2021).

experience. The implications of particular places 'retaining' (or generating) the libidinal moments which other places have lost will be key to the next chapter; which aims to understand the implications of the libidio being disinvested from one place to be invested elsewhere.

While this libidinal disinvestment is produced by a sense of loss, it is intensified by that which replaces the enjoyable. The attractive qualities of Spitalfields Market have been replaced by a homunculus[326]. In a manner resonant with Thomas's discussion of "Historical Traces", here Kate articulates how this process is repeated in the market through mimicking other moments within the libidinal-skin. Specifically, through an aesthetic coordination to project the *image* -- by de-valorised spaces of consumption -- of being independent spaces of consumption. Once more, a reflexive attempt to speak 'the language'

This tendency extends well beyond "Spitalfields Market"; for instance, in "Dray Walk" (See Figure 4.9) -- the thoroughfare, through the old Truman Brewery, which connects Brick Lane to Hanbury St -- participants routinely criticised how established retailers 'snuck in' while adorned with the aesthetic of 'independent' spaces of consumption; with one interviewee disparagingly referring to it as "a commercial lane this one. It's not that organic" as we walked through it[327]. However, with this said, it is important to recognise the multiplicity of libidinal-economies. One could, righly, ask whether these faux-independent spaces are not more connected to a watered-down version of this libidinal-economy; such questions will be discussed in the conclusion.

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[326] However this process of disinvestment is simultaneously connected to re-homogenisation and 'bad bodies'.

[327] Akin to the cross-pollination of phantasies, it is worth highlighting the splicing between these different forms of Homunculi within Shoreditch. On Sclater Street (The primary connection between Shoreditch High Street Station and Brick Lane), one participant took me to the wall of graffiti which lines the southern side. As we walked, they outlined their uncomfort with finding a Gucci advert -- "do it yourself" -- interlaced with the street art.

Figure 4.9, Dray Walk (Carroll, 2019).

As discussed, the desire produced through this libidinal-economy contains a fundamentally political impulse (one injected into the experience of consumption). The previous chapter chartered how the enjoyment "Urban Dreamers" extract from concrete-space is predicated on this quality. However, within Shoreditch, this impulse is rendered into the logic of the homunculus. This quality is captured best by the hairdressers -- "Not Another Salon" -- on Brick Lane:

Kate: Look at this "We don't really sell hairstyles, we sell liberation".

L: When you read that, what comes out to you?

Kate: I wouldn't trust their hairstyles. "Liberation" as a commodity sold by hairdressers. "The opportunity to invent yourself time and time again", to become

"the person you want to be and be respected for who you are". It's strange that it acknowledges this, and that it's fine with claiming it's for sale. Let's take a small detour.

The commodification of utopian impulses (e.g. of political anticipation), is encoded into the operating structure of this libidinal-economy throughout both Shoreditch and Dalston. However, here, at "Not Another Salon" and places similar to it, this same quality is met with decomposition; by Kate, through mockery[328], by others, repulsion. One may view this as a continuation of rejecting orthodox advertising[329]. However, for the participants, the dissociative quality of experiencing places like "Not Another Salon" is more specific. A negative affect is engendered through perceiving the utopian *promise* of such advertising. This marks a shift from orthodox advertising, as highlighted by Williams (2000), as the individualistic orientation has been replaced by the social language of *this* libidinal-economy. While this instrumentalisation generates a negative affective response, it is not because of the commodification of political anticipation *per se*. Rather, as such spaces of consumption reveal the innate commodification of anticipation too candidly; e.g. through the fundamental logic of this libidinal-economy being said 'out loud'.

Thus far, the analysis paints a simplistic relationship between the libidinal-economy and homunculi. It suggests a simple contrast between a 'pure' libidinal-skin -- of 'real' spaces of consumption, of experiences, etc -- and 'disgusting' homunculi (e.g. the failed simulacrums produced by anaphroditic spaces of consumption and social relations attempting to simulate the desireable). However, the reality of Shoreditch complicates this dichotomy. At times, these simulations -- by the 'rejected' -- don't fail; the language is spoken well enough to circumvent an uncanny experience and correlated disgust. This chapter has already outlined one example; "Siam Botanicals", an established major brand in Thailand that was attempting

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[328] Homunculi don't necessarily cause libidinal disinvestment *exclusively* through disgust; the process can also rupture the skin through transforming a space of consumption into an object of ridicule.
[329] For Williams (2000), the orthodox form of advertising functions by utilising (and/or construction) your desire for an improved self. A self that the commodity promises to manifest through consumption.

to enter the British market[330]. The key point is that epithumogenetic attempts to reproduce the libidinal-skin don't always produce a failure; correctly speaking the 'language' is more important than the speaker.

The phenomenological process of experiencing a homunculus -- the Coldplay 'graffiti', the 'timeworn' McDonalds, the 'independent' Gucci -- can be understood through Plato's theory of mimesis, as outlined by Böhme. Wherein *eikastike techne* is producing a 'thing' through replicating 'original' parameters while *phantastike techne* "takes account of the viewpoint of the observer, and seeks to manifest what it represents in such a way that the observer perceives it "correctly" (Böhme, 2017: 74). For "Urban Dreamers", the homunculus is revealed and the negative affects produced when 'cracks', within the *phantatastike techne*, illuminate the performance of the appearance. This is akin to seeing a sculpture laying on the floor, wherein one perceives the disproportionately large head -- that maintained the 'correct' perspective while it was upright -- as out of place. A momentary glance at the Coldplay 'graffiti' would have entailed one registered it as attractive "urban grime" and passed on, the same with the 'independent' Gucci. It is upon closer inspection that the viewpoint changes, the simulacrum reveals itself and the experience becomes uncanny and, often, disgusting;thus, frustrating the ability to enjoy the urban experience of Shoreditch through the disruption of phantasy caused by revelation.

Conclusion

The previous sections have catalogued the disruptions and ruptures experienced by "Urban Dreamers" in Shoreditch. This is a process captured through charting the various negative affective responses of participants; ranging from, at the mildest, disappointment to more extreme feelings of ridicule and disgust. While the various manifestations of these affects are distinct, they are simultaneously unified. Each is produced through a gap between the imagined and the actual. Specifically, the distinction between the satisfactions promised by the libidinal-skin and the urban experience that Shoreditch provides. This rupture is not

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[330] Although what *is* an "independent" business? A start-up funded by old-money? Like "The Local", "The Independent" exists only as a fetish.

totalising -- even the consumers of Shoreditch most critical of its present iteration did not condemn its urban-experience entirely -- and the degree to which enjoyment was compromised varied across participants. Likewise, in certain places within Shoreditch like "Unto This Last", it seems this urban dream is particularly potent. However, the existence of these distinctions stands alongside the general tendencies outlined; rather than discrediting them, these variations only point to the innate multiplicity within urban space,within which a particularly potent thread is the growing affective wreckage contained within Shoreditch,which, for the "Urban Dreamers" depending on their specificities, is either growing alongside the enjoyable or has superseded it.

As this affective wreckage grows, the phantasies that drew these bodies to Shoreditch begin causing "Urban Dreamers" to disavow it. The *perceived* growing presence of the spaces of consumption demarcated as unenjoyable -- the corporate, the homogenous, etc -- and the urban figures, crowds, and atmospheres which "Urban Dreamers" associate with them, increasingly 'thins' the libidinal skin. For them, the urban experience ceases to be heteropian (and utopian) and instead becomes a parody of itself; an unattractive cocktail of that which "Urban Dreamers" desire and that which they reject. In turn, they are increasingly drawn to the places within London with less affective wreckage impeding their enjoyment; places which better reflect an ossification of the desire demarcated by their libidinal-economy. One such example, as this research has shown, is Dalston. However, within the interviews several other locations around London were cited: Peckham, Tottenham, etc -- e.g. the new, or future, boundaries of the London Fringe. In effect, these "Urban Dreamers" disinvest their libido, their consumption, from Shoreditch so as to reinvest it elsewhere; they are not satisfied with an urban experience they perceive as deflated and instead seek out places where dreaming is less disrupted. This provides an important insight into the ephrerality of the "Urban Dreamworld" but it also highlights the *centrifugal* potential of libidinal-economy. The same complexes and phantasies that valorised Dalston and allured bodies *simultaneously* facilitate devalorisation and spatial repulsion.

This chapter has also provided more insight into the epithumogenetic element of the relationship between libidinal-economy and the production of space. In particular, it has

highlighted the *disciplinary* pressure that the representational exudes upon architectural decisions,wherein the owners of particular spaces of consumption actively design concrete-space in a manner which resonates with the demarcations of this libidinal-economy. For instance, Philp's decision to display the workshop of "Unto This Last" through the usage of glass, or Derek's desire to ensure that "Siam Botanicals" is decorated with the 'correct' objects: "Well, in terms of furniture, we don't want an Ikea shop. All these pieces are individual, they are all vintage/antique". Importantly, these moments highlight the *reflexive* agency standing *behind* the 'stretching' of the libidinal-skin over concrete-space There is an active attempt to produce concrete-spaces that, in different manners, *resonate* with the representational and, in doing so, allure consuming bodies. This dynamic builds upon the foundation laid in the previous chapter, that highlighted the epithumogenetic work of "Urban Dreamers" in reproducing the allure of the "Urban Dreamworld". Likewise, this epithumogenetic dimension of the process will be a central focus in the forthcoming chapter; wherein the transmutation of urban-experience into urban-representation facilitates a stretching of the libidinal skin over Tottenham.

However, while Shoreditch is, or is increasingly becoming, a ruin for "Urban Dreamers" -- although, perhaps not for all of them -- this wreckage is a productive wellspring for other libidinal-economies. While beyond the immediate scope of this research, just like the "Urban Dreamers", other ideal types within the urban environment are interpellated by distinct libidinal-economies; ones which may demarcate enjoyment and lack in a manner distinct from "Urban Dreamers". Specifically, the very figures whose presence contribute, for the dreamers, to the frustration of enjoyment in Shoreditch: 'tourists', 'suits', 'consumers', and 'bodies' of the new economy and tech-city. However, while lacking the necessary space to investigate this dynamic properly here, it is important to recognise that, within this urban imaginary, such figures exist as "ideal types". Within reality, as was captured by the primary research, the situation is more complex than a 'pure' Shoreditch of "Urban Dreamers" being tainted by such 'villains' and thus causing an exodus of libidinal investment. Shoreditch, like all spaces, contains simultaneously a multitude of libidinal-economies; likewise, these libidinal-economies themselves cross-pollinate, intermesh and intertwine. Mirroring the blurred distinction within the *phantasy* dichotomy

between such figures and the "Urban Dreamers". This research has highlighted how these subject positions are blurred throughout, drawing from an array of figures drawn to this libidinal-economy; including those positions seemingly opposed. Dreamers who came first as tourists, dreamers who work in The City, or as bodies from the aforementioned 'new economy'. While such ideal types structure both phantasy and analysis, it is important to remember the unavoidably skewed picture of the social world such explanatory abstractions paint.

Finally, with the 'ruins' of *this* Shoreditch articulated, through revealing the affective wreckage which produces it, it is worth returning to the primary material; specifically, to highlight how, albeit on a smaller scale, the same wreckage is building in Dalston. In Dalston, the "Urban Dreamers" would highlight how, intermixed with experiencing enjoyment, they would experience anxiety; fears produced by encountering the processes outlined in this chapter, seeing them as signifiers (or, rather, harbingers) of the libidinal end-times. Likewise, there is awareness, amongst the "Urban Dreamers", that the present enjoyment of Dalston is fundamentally ephemeral; that, as a place, it is walking the same road as Shoreditch. Not just in an abstract sense, but rather as if the fate of Shoreditch was fundamentally connected to Dalston's future; the relationship between the two being described with language such as Dalston being Shoreditch's "Little Sister" or how Dalston was in the "middle period" whereas Shoreditch had "been lost". For this reason, these 'ruins' of Shoreditch -- the death of desire -- reflect back on Dalston to understand the process[331]; both in the sense of its libidinal appeal -- through further clarifying the urban experience they seek to avoid -- but also, perhaps, its trajectory.

It is essential to gain insight into the final elementary form of this libidinal-economy; its (re)conception. Such a process can no longer be properly undertaken in Dalston, as here -- as articulated by Jay, we are in the "middle" -- the processes of libidinal investment, and that which is ciphered within it, is already well established. Instead, the following chapter will

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[331] One should note, by aligning the analytical structure of the thesis to the 'logic' of this libidinal-economy so closely, it serves to reproduce elements of this phantasmagoria itself. The notion of a place being "up-and-coming" {Alive} or "passed it" {Dead}. It is for this reason Dalston can be "alive" and, at the same time, it can have "died" a decade ago. The historical *by necessity* is replaced by constantly re-lived experience.

move further up the A10; specifically to Tottenham,aiming to capture how *this* libidinal-economy moves to consecrate new spaces of urban experience desired by the "Urban Dreamers". Likewise, such a perspective will provide us with the final 'moment' required to reflect on this process of libidinal investment, disinvestment, and political-economy, within London as a whole.

Chapter 6

Tottenham: Resurrection, Instagram and the Space of Representation

"Paris became more legible after the Impressionists had painted it, and for this generation the scrap metal of a junkyard is no longer shapeless. Dickens helped to create the London we experience as surely as its actual builders did."

(Lynch, 1964: 150)

Tottenham -- a name of disputed origin, derived from the Anglo-Saxon words of Totte and Ham meaning tuft/corner and town/dwelling respectively (Swain, 2017) -- has a history closely intertwined with the history of Middlesex. As such, many of the key historical socio-spatial processes that constituted Tottenham -- infrastructural expansion, urbanisation, industrialization, etc -- have already been discussed in the introduction. However, owing to its size, especially relative to Shoreditch and Dalston, it is important to note the uneven development of these processes. Contemporary Tottenham contains the antecedent settlements of "Tottenham High Cross[332]" and "Hale", alongside a number of smaller habitations historically situated around a number of greens[333] and commons. Until the 18th Century, the settlements along the High Road attracted the majority of development; mostly inns and taverns servicing travellers between London and Norwich, alongside a number of country manor houses. In contrast, Hale and areas such as West Green remained more insular. The encroaching urbanisation, discussed earlier, entailed that these areas slowly coalesced[334]. Likewise, as infrastructure -- particularly the Great Eastern Railway -- turned Tottenham into an early "Railway Suburb" (Hatherley, 2020) the closer relationship to The City entailed Tottenham fell into London's political gravity; being made an urban district in 1894 and, in 1934, it merged with Wood Green and Hornsey to form the London Borough of Haringey.

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[332] A name derived from the mediaeval wayside cross on High Road; once associated with the funeral cortege of Eleanor of Castile but later found to have no connection (Swain, 2017).

[333] "West Green", first mentioned in 1384, being one prominent modern ancestor.

[334] For a detailed history see volume five of Baker's "History of the County of Middlesex" (1995).

The process of de-industrialisation, alongside its contingent after-effects[335], were the same in Tottenham as in the rest of London's former industrial areasThe majority of industrial capital once rooted within Tottenham has since fled to more profitable locations[336] However, like all places, such processes produce unique effects. The lowered land-value in Tottenham allowed for an influx of international labour, which contributed to the "Tottenham Babylon"; wherein fifty-percent of Haringey's population are from an ethnic background and over two-hundred languages are spoken. While defining the cultural fabric of the area, this diversity has resulted in a racialised discourse to surround the district. This dialectic of mounting tension was caused by everyday racist policing, particular flashpoints such as the death of Cynthia Jarrett (in 1985, leading to the "Broadwater Farm Riot") and Mark Duggan (in 2011, catalyst for the London Riots which subsequently spread to a number of English towns and cities), and other social grievances. These conflicts have subsequently been framed as a failure of community character by political and media representations[337], rather than as a social reaction against various forms of systemic violence. Tottenham, like Brixton, has been subject to a process of discursive scapegoating, wherein a racial-class imaginary, constituted by ideas of black and working-class bodies as dangerous and unruly, has been weaponized to alleviate the responsibility of capitalist political-economy in producing urban injustice (Atkinson & Parker, 2020).

The above has led to the dominance of a "Tottenham Gothic" within the contemporary urban-imaginary; a racist (and classist) *faux*-legacy of riots, gangs, crime and violence, demarcating it, for these urban subjects, as a place to be avoided rather than a place to be. This imaginary, for those seeking to extract higher levels of surplus-value from Tottenham's space, is a hindrance. It discourages urban consumption and investment[338]; thus, leaving Tottenham's rent-gaps minimal and, often, unclosed. Mirroring the dilemmas that many

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[335] E.g. primarily increased insecurity, poverty, and lowered land-value for working-class areas. Contrasted to the rising fortunes of those intertwined with the new organic composition of post-industrial capital.

[336] The introduction contained a thorough explanation of this process, see pages 18-20.

[337] "It took a riot" and "It took another riot" (Lipton, 2012), countless media representations.

[338] Or at least, it only enables the biggest players to invest. As discussed by Panton and Walters (2018) in reference to Tottenham FC.

post-industrial cities faced, following de-industrialisation and the emergence of "footloose capital", Tottenham had a problematic imaginary that impeded the extraction of value from concrete space. The solution, for post-industrial cities, such as Atlanta (Ruthheiser, 1996), New York (Bendel, 2011) and Glasgow (Boyle and Hughes, 1994), was a concentrated strategy of re-imagining; e.g. of purposefully disrupting the antecedent (unprofitable) imagining of place with one more conducive to capital accumulation. In recent years, a similar process has been conducted in Tottenham by a multitude of agents including: combinations of local and regional state intervention[339], estate agents , property developers business owners and assemblages of each[340]. Such a re-imagining is profitable as it enables Tottenham to be perceived as a playground for those[341] searching to extract enjoyment from urban space (and a profitable investment for those whose capital facilitates this extraction). In effect, Tottenham's old imaginary once acted as a representational impediment for gentrification and, through a concentrated re-imagining, it is increasingly eroded.

This chapter aims to closely examine this process of re-imagining, the process of an old urban imaginary being disrupted and replaced by one more conducive to the accumulation of capital. In part, this is done within the concrete space of Tottenham itself -- in a process mirroring those outlined in Dalston -- through the increasing prevalence of valorised urban objects, places, and bodies. Such "things" shift the representational quality of Tottenham's lived space. Tottenham as a burgeoning "Urban Dreamworld", exuded through the concrete constellation explored in previous chapters, slowly challenges the hegemony of the "Tottenham Gothic".

However, the concrete space of Tottenham, which exudes this representational quality into the urban imagination, exists in a productive relationship with the "space of representation". In effect, one cannot properly understand the disruption of Tottenham's 'old' imaginary without illustrating the manner in which this 'new' imaginary is represented and presented to the urban audience. As explained in the introduction, concrete space, the representational

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[339] Recent Haringey Council scheme of aestheticization, via painting shutters campaign. This strategy was discussed in the 2014 planning manifesto (PFT).
[340] A good example of this is the "Tottenham Pavilion" within the Harringay Warehouse District.
[341] Including those who are no longer satisfied by Hackney due to rising rents and de-libidinisation

qualities it is perceived to contain, and the space in which both these elements are represented, exist in a trialectical relationship (Lefevbre, 1991); each moment over-determining the other and, in this process, itself. In effect, each element of Tottenham's space -- the lived, representational, and of representation -- intertwine with each other to produce Tottenham's urban space. While previous chapters within this thesis focused *primarily* on the relationship between the representational and the lived, this chapter will explore the relationship between the lived and the space of representation. Of course, just as the previous chapters unavoidably encountered the space of representation, so too will this chapter continue to understand space trialectically; as such, the representational will still be subject to analysis. Nonetheless, the chapter will primarily focus on the space of representation. In doing so, it will provide an insight into the production of Tottenham's urban space, while illuminating the importance of the space of representation for the thesis as a whole.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, while Tottenham's space of representation is actively produced through a variety of social phenomena, Instagram provides access to a wider ecology. It is not an isolated article or a single publication, rather it is a concentrated digital space; containing a multitude of social actors, which collectively constitute this space of representation's relations of production. This first section will illustrate the fundamental logic behind the space of representation; alongside its elementary relationship to concrete space and urban libidinal-economy. Simultaneously, it will introduce the different ideal-types constituting this digital space, the distinctions one can draw between the different producers of the space of representation[342]: "Spaces of Consumption"[343], "Place Marketers"[344], "Personal Accounts"[345], "Urban Reviewers"[346], "Urban Lifestylers"[347], "Social

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[342] In effect, the space of representations division of labour.

[343] The Instagram accounts of particular spaces of consumption; e.g. cafes, bars, and so on.

[344] The Instagram accounts that exist, to different levels of 'professionalism', to produce positive representation of 'things' within Tottenham.

[345] The Instagram accounts of individuals who produce, engage with, or observe, this space of representation.

[346] The Instagram accounts that provide reviews of 'things' within Tottenham.

[347] A hybridisation of "Personal Accounts" and "Urban Reviewers", who represent general mise-en-scenes with Tottenham.

Influencers"[348], and "Amplifiers"[349]. Alongside outlining the particular "strategies of circulation" utilised by these ideal-types to bring a representation to an audience.

With this foundational understanding, the analysis will be divided into four sections; which broadly align with the analytical structure established in previous chapters. Firstly, an analysis of the role played by "Urban Objects" within the space of representation; with a particular focus on the instrumentalisation of urban bodies in stimulating the desire to produce value. Secondly, an analysis of "Urban Places",which following the previous framework, argues that the representational quality of places -- such as specific spaces of consumption -- are represented in a manner that stretches the libidinal-skin from city to screen. Thirdly, a focus on the role played by "The Crowd" and the gaze of the digital passer-by in further facilitating the conversion of para-(urban)experience into concrete experience. This section closes by reflecting on how each of the particular texts, while representing a primary phenomenon, often simultaneously contain all those discussed. The result is the representation of the "Urban Atmosphere"; in particular, a generalised notion of the "Urban Mise en Scene", which provides digital Tottenham with an atmospheric skin of urban bodies extracting enjoyment from Tottenham's concrete space.

Finally, the preceding sections of analysis will be drawn together; to derive the dialectical relationship between the space of representation and libidinal-economy which, in part, produces concrete space. It will argue that this relationship is categorised by two centripetal forces. Firstly, through the "pulling" of concrete space into the digital space of representation,wherein the concrete phenomena within Tottenham's lived space, and the experiences that transpire within it, are ossified into a text. Through Instagram, these "pulled" spaces are brought to an audience and consumed by them as a space in itself. In effect, this flow is from the city to the audience, through representation. Secondly, these spaces of representation, in different ways, then 'work' on the audience through libidinal-economy. Desires are produced which "pull" bodies to the concrete spaces represented while simultaneously discipling their perception of space,a process that enables

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[348] The professional Instagram accounts who exist in between the other categories.

[349] The Instagram accounts which produce no original visual texts and instead simply aim to increase the circulation of other visual texts.

the extraction of value through the 'satisfaction' of desire. Through these dialectical flows, Tottenham's lived space, its representational qualities, and the digital space of representation are in an ever reinforcing, yet mutagenic, relationship. This is true on multiple scales. At the minute, alluring bodies to a concrete space is a prerequisite of representation: e.g. in part, the crowds of the past, as representations, allure the crowds of the future. At the macro, each space of representation contributes to Tottenham's overarching imaginary. A process that disrupts the hegemony of the "Tottenham Gothic"; which, as has been highlighted, has profound ramifications for the production of Tottenham's lived space.

The chapter will end on the *political* implications of this, or more precisely the *political* quality of the, often neglected, non-concrete qualities of space. As discussed in the literature review, the orthodox Marxian understanding of gentrification fails to substantively integrate its explanations of gentrification with the space of representation and representational space; both are reduced to epiphenomena. However, this thesis has shown, at least in specific contexts, the centrality of these spatial moments. In previous chapters, it was argued that the space of fantasy -- of *representational space* -- plays a nuanced role within the libidinisation and de-libidinisation of gentrified spaces. While this chapter will highlight the importance of the space of representation; in itself and through its ability to represent the representational. Consequently, it is necessary to augment the conceptual framework,specifically by understanding gentrification as a process intertwined with "Representational Rent-Gaps". A thorough exploration of this concept is within the conclusion[350].

Rudimentary Representation, Ideal Types, and Strategies of Circulation.

This section is a preliminary investigation. It will provide a framework through which to understand the production of Instagram's digital spaces of representation *in general*. From this foundation, the chapter will illustrate the production of Tottenham's space of representation *in particular*. Consequently, questions regarding the nuances within Tottenham's specific spaces of representation -- alongside the more complex elements of the

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[350] See pages 288-289.

representations themselves -- will, for now, be left aside. Instead, this section will seek to illuminate the rudimentary elements of representation, the ideal-types which produce these representations, and the "strategies of circulation" utilised in this process[351].

The text[352] below was produced by "@tentoonebar" -- the Instagram account of the cocktail bar and restaurant situated on Philip Lane -- which opened in September 2020[353]. It is a "Place With a Trace", specifically through inhabiting an old "William Hill" betting shop. A quality indicated linguistically and, through retaining the covered windows of the book-makers, aesthetically[354]. However, these libidinal qualities of *representational space*, having been explored in earlier chapters, are no longer of primary concern. Instead, this chapter aims to illuminate how digital texts, such as that below, produce a place's *space of representation*:

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[351] As particular representations are necessary to illustrate ideal-types, at times the analysis may leap ahead of itself e.g. it is impossible to discuss the ideal-types which produce representations without simultaneously discussing the representations they produce. In the interests of clarity, I have tried to keep these leaps internally coherent.

[352] As will be analysed, the space of representation is more than just the image; it also includes the wider "text" around the image; "Image-Text" as discussed in methodology, see page 121.

[353] A process which was documented digitally on the account, A recurrent tendency which will be explored later.

[354] While, following the 2005 "Gambling Act", it was no longer illegal to display people gambling, most bookmakers retained the design. There is an interesting connection here, albeit negatively, to discussions of the crowd.
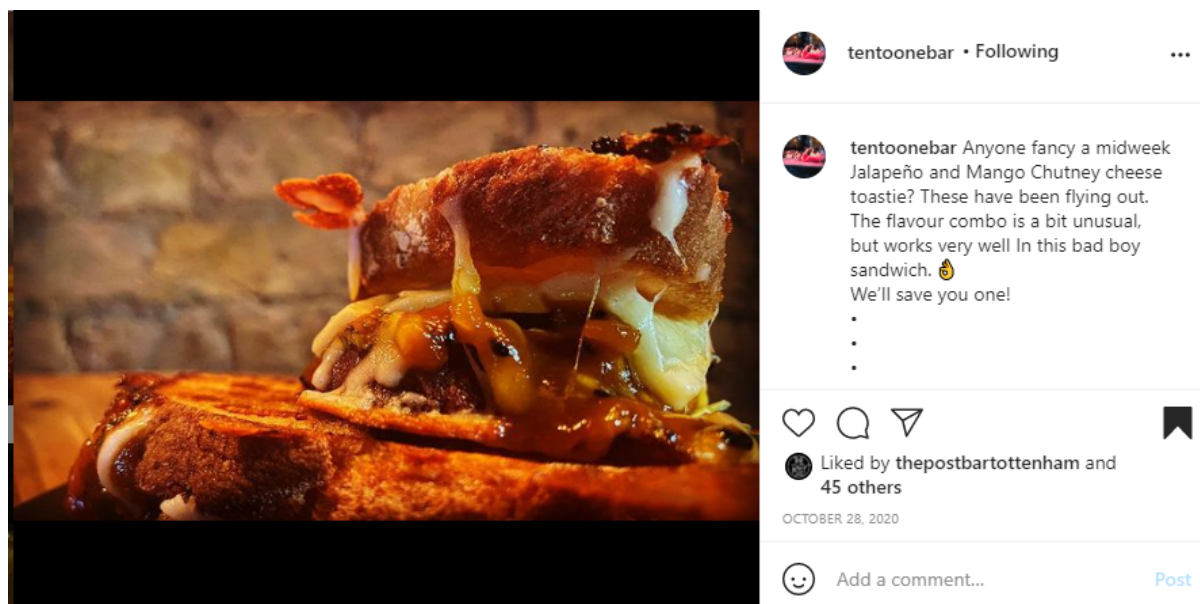
Figure 5.1, Ten to One (Carroll, 2021).

Such a text is ubiquitous within Instagram's digital space; in Tottenham, London, and elsewhere. A commodity is displayed alongside a written incitement to consume. Consequently, it provides elementary insight into *how* this space of representation, one facilitated by Instagram, functions. At a fundamental level, the space of representation is akin to advertising[355]. It "shows" the viewer a glimpse -- of an object, a place, an experience, etc -- and this colours their expectations, disciplines their perceptions and 'produces' desires within them. This dynamic will be explored and complicated throughout the chapter. However, for now, it is more practical to address *how* a space of representation is produced; rather than prematurely focusing on the libidinal and ideological effects upon those who consume it.

The text exists through the transformation of a commodity -- in this case, a gourmet sandwich -- into an image. This image is then complicated through integration with the other components which constitute Instagram's texts: the accompanying 'post', meta-data[356], and user interactive elements[357]. Upon construction, the text, by being "posted", is circulated

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[355] The situation is profoundly more complex than this. Really, advertising *is* the space of representation; or, rather, an activity that operates almost exclusively through it (while simultaneously discipling the representational within it). But, with that said, I'd rather keep this philosophical box firmly closed.

[356] Hashtags, 'tagging' of users.

[357] Comments, reposts, 'likes'.

through Instagram's digital space; in a simultaneously planned and unplanned manner. It moves, from the poster to, the Instagram "feed"[358] of those who follow the creators account[359]. The purpose of such texts is to capture the attention of the audience who consume them. However, the text does not seek to *exclusively* represent the commodity in question. Instead, it represents the space of consumption wherein the commodity is displayed. For instance, the aim[360] of this text isn't simply to direct the audience's attention -- and, as will be shown, desire -- towards the sandwich in isolation. The digital representative -- the Instagram account "@tentoone" -- is simultaneously representing its concrete original e.g. the text seeks to instil, within the audience, a desire to consume the bar which exists in Tottenham's lived space. Consequently, the basic mechanism at work is that the commodity (and surrounding lived space) -- through being transformed into a text -- becomes a vessel through which to produce the space of representation. If 'successful' this will capture and direct desire towards lived space; thus, through the transference of desire into consumption, it will accumulate[361] value.

This relationship, between space(s) of representation and value, highlights the centrality of circulation; a process connected to the wider components of Instagram's texts. The 'success' of a representation is derived from its ability to, in different ways, extract value through stimulating desire, thus it is essential that a text is distributed to an audience of amenable bodies (and enough of them). Consequently, its "work" is fruitful in accordance with the extent to which a text is able to integrate with, and circulate through, the broader digital space of Tottenham. In effect, a text which is viewed by no-one is unable to produce desire as it fails to influence the established space(s) of representation. This criteria, while innate to all such forms of representation -- such as a property developers 'area guide', magazine articles or traditional advertising -- is particularly prominent on Instagram[362]. As will be

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[358] Phenomenology of "The Feed" discussed later e.g. "Window Society".

[359] There is more than this but these more detailed "strategies of circulation" will be uncovered throughout the chapter.

[360] "Aim"/"Intent" is slippy here. It may be, but also this quality is innate -- objects must exist in space and consequently it too must exist within the representation of objects.

[361] More value than would normally have been extracted from the sandwich (although one that is harder to measure).

[362] What I'm getting at here is: an advert will always be seen by someone, a magazine article will always be read, there is a circulation *built into* such forms. In contrast, an Instagram text posted by an account with no followers, no hashtags, etc, effectively *does not exist* within the space of

shown, each of the ideal-types constituting digital Tottenham engage in varied and interlinking "strategies of circulation" to ensure a text is able to produce an effective space of representation. These distinct "strategies of circulation" will be outlined throughout the chapter.
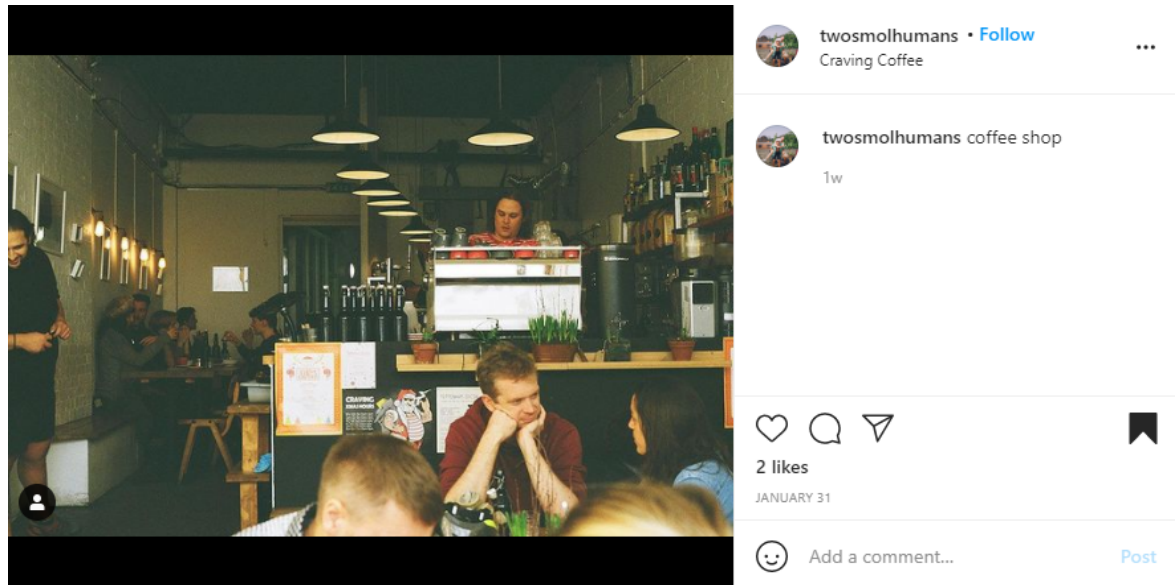

Figure 5.2, "Circulation Failure" (Carroll, 2021).

representation. While the text below contains many of the themes this chapter will explore, through failing to circulate it has a marginal impact on the space of representation of "Craving Coffee" and, by extension, Tottenham as a whole. (See Figure 5.2). Although with this said, such texts exist in a primary circuit within the "Blackbox Society" -- as will be discussed, thus, we shouldnt entirley equate "likes" to "audience".

Before continuing, it is important to recognise the *networked* nature of this circulation:

Figure 5.3, Collective Amplification (Carroll, 2021).

The text above highlights that, rather than being isolated, the various ideal-types work *collectively*; to produce and amplify space(s) of representation. Within the above, "@wildescheese" has produced a representation of "With Milk" -- a coffee shop on Philp Lane -- in celebration of their 'anniversary'. Likewise, "@withmilkldn" subsequently engages with the text through the comments. However, the important point here isn't in the specificity of the representation. Instead, it is because this text shows how Tottenham's digital world is a social space of interaction *between* different nodal points. Consequently, it enables a form of "back-scratching" between accounts, wherein a particular account furthers the representations of another. The above is an extreme example of this -- a text produced by one "Space of Consumption" about another -- however, it also exists more routinely on a foundational level: through the 'tagging' of other accounts, the liking (or reposting) of texts, etc. The purpose is to provide each other with algorithmic visibility through their

interaction; in effect, the 'liking' of a text increases its potential circulation. However, there is another important point to derive from the above. Through intensifying these *particular* texts, the *general* imaginary they contain is, by extension, intensified. This is a process each of the ideal-types have an interest in. A greater perceptibility of this imaginary, as it will be argued, is, in different ways, beneficial for those who operate within its parameters.

Tottenham's space(s) of representation is not only produced by the Instagram accounts of "Spaces of Consumption". They are also produced by "Place Marketers". Such accounts, rather than representing an individual space of consumption, provide this immaterial labour to specific clients. An illustrative selections of texts is below:

Figure 5.4, Meet Soto #1 (Carroll, 2021).

Figure 5.5, Meet Soto #2 (Carroll, 2021).

This account "@meetsoto", is the Instagram wing of the "Meet SoTo" marketing agency[363]. The name itself -- "SoTo" an abbreviation of South Tottenham -- draws from a longer tradition within place-branding; such as "SoSho" (South Shoreditch) and "SoHo" (South Houston Street). As discussed by Anholt (2010), this process of 'naming' -- "Portmanteau Branding" -- acts as a demarcation; a way of constructing a sense of place which can then be sold. While the text's form is similar to earlier texts[364], it illustrates the interfacing between "Place Marketers" and "Spaces of Consumption''. As indicated in the 'post', alongside their website, "Meet SoTo" provides a paid service to Tottenham's spaces of consumption. It offers a training program[365] on setting the right "tone of voice" for developing an online presence, "Community Management", and other tactical assistance for producing an appealing space of representation. Such qualities, being difficult to actively perceive, other than when directly incriminated as above, make it difficult to separate out the forces which, in different ways, stand behind particular spaces of representation. For instance, in the text produced by "@tottenhamhalehome" (See Figure 5.6) it seems likely that only one actively involved with the development would have the necessary access to represent the "Interior

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[363] This account also maintains a broader digital presence on Facebook and Twitter.

[364] Such accounts act as a presence in their own right but this will be discussed more later.

[365] A more direct form than is provided by more regional "Place Marketers" such as "@Hellonorthlondon" which provides a paid Instagram advertising service,spaces of consumption can pay between £3.50 to £6 for personalised immaterial labour.

Journey" of the "Hale Works New Build". However, the specificities of this -- e.g. is this account run by the property developer? A "Place Marketer" hired by the developer? -- are difficult to ascertain. This issue will be touched upon throughout the chapter,especially in reference to the unclear relationships between "Place Marketers" and "Urban Lifestylers"; such as "@tottenhamaintbad"[366].

Figure 5.6, Tottenham Hale (Carroll, 2021).

However, Tottenham's space of representation isn't exclusively a product of employed labour; e.g. by labour-time which is, in different ways, waged[367] to represent space. As a social network, Instagram primarily contains "Personal Accounts". Such accounts exist in this digital space to mediate social relationships (Zhao *et al*, 2013) and digital identity (Lyu, 2016) rather than for the explicit purpose of producing value. However, as will be seen, these "Personal Accounts" do, to varying degrees of effectiveness, contribute to specific spaces of representation. Consequently, they produce value through proxy.

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[366] While bordering on the conspiratorial. This particular "Urban Lifestyler", while having no overt connection to "Meet SoTo", stopped producing texts simultaneously (in August 2018). My point here isn't to "get to the truth" but rather highlight the impossibility -- without interviewing those involved -- of knowing the precise nature of such relationships; the blurred lines within the marketing assemblage and the digital space Instagram facilitates.

[367] For instance, employees within spaces of consumption producing proxy-marketing or by professional "place marketing".

Figure 5.7, Wildes Cheese (Carroll, 2021).

The text above is centred around an image of cheese produced by "Wildes Cheese"; a fromager based in the Selby Centre on Queen St. One can see how the packaging of the commodity itself seeks to represent space: "Proudly made in Tottenham". However, this quality of specific objects becoming conduits for Tottenham's space of representation will be discussed later. For now, it would be more useful to highlight the text itself. This text -- from "@donnasn17" which has 704 followers -- is produced through the user photo-documenting their life and urban experience; in this case, the purchase of a commodity. Through the meta-data -- the tagging of "@wildescheese" -- user interactions -- the dialogue between consumer and producer -- and the re-presented packaging of the commodity itself, the audience is informed of the commodity's origin in concrete space. Consequently, this "Personal Account" is interpellated into a labourer. The "work" performed here, by "@donnasn17" and the earlier example of "@tentoone" is almost identical[368]. Both transform the commodity into a text which, through being circulated through Instagram's digital space, contributes towards the space of representation connected to a specific space of

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[368] Slightly more personified e.g. more, albeit not all, focus on the experience surrounding consumption. This dynamic illustrates itself more clearly with later examples.

consumption. Consequently, both are conducting a form of immaterial labour in which the "object" produced is not simply the text but rather the perception of those who consume the text. However, while similar in form and function, key distinctions exist between these two ideal types -- "Personal Accounts" and "Specific Spaces of Consumption" -- namely:

1) The "work" performed by "Personal Accounts" -- such as "@donnasn17" -- is, presumably, entirely *economically*[369] unremunerated[370]. The value of their "work" is extracted by other social forces; those who own the represented space of consumption (or, as will be shown, those who own the overarching land where such spaces of consumption exist e.g. the landlords and property developers of Tottenham).

2) The "Personal Account" produces value, in part, through the instrumentalisation of their own social relations. The primary audience of circulation is not patrons -- as for "Specific Spaces of Consumption" -- but rather the friends, colleagues, and family, who follow the "Personal Account": e.g. those to whom's attention the space of representation is brought[371].

So far, the framework seems to rest on a fundamental dichotomy between remunerated and unremunerated labour. Those who perform immaterial labour -- through contributing to the space(s) of representation -- as employment and those who do not. However, between these two poles exists a middle ground,accounts which, while unremunerated for their work in producing Tottenham's spaces of representation, are suitably distinct from "Personal Accounts" to warrant separation. The chapter will now introduce these other ideal-types, alongside further highlighting prominent "strategies of circulation".

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[369] One could argue that, in the process of mediating the digital self, the user 'gets' recognition and validation; which is signified through engagement with a text e.g. likes and follows. Consequently, there is an interesting relationship here wherein, the capital relation instils itself on the production of identity.

[370] There is an analytical thread one could pursue here. Specifically regarding exploitation. If one agrees with the point, that such labour produces value. Then is this body exploited? After all, they received no *economic* remuneration for their work. Perhaps, less economistically, what is exploited following Hardt, Negri and Bifo (2011) is the lifeworld itself.

[371] "This dynamic, perhaps latent within social media, has been already discussed in reference to Facebook (Cote and Pybus, 2011). However, such frameworks have not previously been applied to Instagram or about its relationship to concrete space and wider non-digital assemblages.

The following text illustrates a typical post from an "Urban Reviewer",wherein the text represents the various commodities available for consumption in Tottenham; through evaluating their experience of consumption[372]:

Figure 5.8, The Urban Reviewer (Carroll, 2021).

"N0sh.17", which describes itself as representing a "tasting tour of a much loved Tottenham from a life-long N17er"[373], has posted 96 texts between August 2020 and February 2021. The majority of these texts follow the structure above. Like "Personal Accounts", the "Urban Reviewer" transmutes urban experience into a text for circulation within digital space However, the work performed by "n0sh.17" -- alongside other "Urban Reviewers" -- goes beyond this. The "Personal Account" conducts this transmutation in a seemingly serendipitous manner, producing a space of representation is almost[374] a by-product of them

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[372] As throughout, the experience of consumption goes *beyond* the object consumed and interlaces with the *atmosphere* of consumption. However, for the sake of clarity, this element will largely be left aside until the later discussion regarding the representation of atmosphere.

[373] N17 is the postcode for Tottenham.

[374] More complex than this, as will be highlighted later e.g. representing themselves in desirable spaces is part of mediating a desirable digital self.

mediating a digital self (Marwick and Boyd, 2011). In distinction, the "Urban Reviewer" produces the space of representation *with intention*. Experience, within the urban environment, is encountered with the *intention* of transforming it into a digital representation[375]. Through this directed cataloguing of experience[376], "Urban Reviewers" represent Tottenham's urban space as a series of "destinations"; its objects as a selection of "urban delights". Furthermore, the mechanism of *how* the space of representation they produce cultivates desire is distinct from "Personal Accounts". While the efficaciousness varies, the "Urban Reviewer" confers upon their representations a degree of symbolic capital; like "Reviewers" generally (Holbrook, 1999). This symbolic capital -- the resource provided, in part, by the recognition of 'insight' (Bourdieu, 1987) -- enables the "Urban Reviewer" to be perceived as a legitimate digital cartographer; outlining, through the representations they create, which of Tottenham's concrete spaces of consumption should be visited and consumed[377].

Previous research has already outlined the role played by "Urban Reviewers" -- albeit within different forms[378] -- and the symbolic capital they wield in producing urban space (Zukin *et al*, 2017). However, it is important to retain a *political* understanding of this process. This is done by extricating the relationship between symbolic capital and value. For instance, while "@Donnasn17" and "@n0sh.17" both contribute to spaces of representation through a similar form of immaterial 'work', the value of this work is varied. Through their symbolic capital, within the network of digital Tottenham, "Urban Reviewers" are given a heightened ability to direct the urban libidio than *most*[379] "Personal Accounts". In effect, the *value* of their immaterial labour is not equal; symbolic capital provides the "Urban Reviewer" with greater

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[375] Consequently, while the "Personal Account" and the "Urban Reviewer" share similarities of being unpaid, the priority of experience and representation is inverted. E.g. The personal account represents space as a by-product of the desire to experience, the reviewer experiences as a necessary precondition to represent. Though perhaps the analysis is too simplified here, further research is needed on "doing it for the Gram" as a historical libidinal drive.

[376] 830 followers.

[377] The reviewer's symbolic capital is exchanged into economic capital for the reviewed via the consumption their labour encourages.

[378] Zukin *et al* (2017) on food reviews etc.

[379] As will be discussed later, it seems probable that as a "Personal Account" blurs the boundaries of the later "Social Influencer", this position becomes more complex.

efficacy in producing perception. Consequently, the texts produced by "Urban Reviewers" constitute more assertive spaces of representation.

Figure 5.9, Afterlife (Carroll, 2021).

In the example above, we see the "afterlife" of an urban review as it circulates through digital Tottenham. In this case, "Marlis Kitchen" -- a vegan pop-up restaurant at "Tottenham Social" on Markfield Road -- has re-posted a text produced by "N0sh.17. This example illustrates two key points:

1) The symbolic capital exuded by the digital texts of "Urban Reviewers" increases the efficacy of other texts; e.g. A review is an asset, which allows a space of consumption to integrate the ossified symbolic capital into their own efforts at representation.

2) Within digital Tottenham, there exists a complex exchange of representations, between different ideal-types, occurring, in part, through the re-circulation of texts.

The "Urban Reviewer" also exists in a different form, beyond the quasi-formal review of consumer experience. This derivative catalogues, in more general terms, *their* urban

experience of Tottenham. While connected to each other through orientation, it is important to distinguish these "Urban Lifestylers" from "Urban Reviewersas each produces different spaces of representation and do so in different ways:

Figure 5.10, Urban Lifestyler (Carroll, 2021).

A key distinction one can draw between the "Urban Reviewer" and the "Urban Lifestyler" is contained in the text above. While "Urban Reviewers" represent Tottenham as a collection of destinations -- which the viewer can readily reproduce; e.g. by patronising a represented space -- the "Urban Lifestylers" represent Tottenham as a series of attractive but, perhaps, irreproducible moments. For instance, a representation of an ephemeral display as seen above. Rather than 'reviewing' Tottenham, "Urban Lifestylers" circulate snapshots of life -- walking for gourmet bread, seeing street art, etc. -- which *they* consider to be *expressive* of Tottenham's urban experience. In effect, they represent *their*[380] Tottenham's "Sights, Sounds

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[380] Specifically, as will be later discussed in reference to hegemony, an *idealised* urban life in Tottenham; snapshots from a *primarily* white, middle-class, urban experience.

and, Tastes of Life"[381] in digital space. However, due to the irreproducibility of such moments, such spaces of representation produce a narrative of Tottenham as a place wherein *such things may happen*; in distinction to the more clear cut *this is what you can (and should) consume* instilled by the "Urban Reviewer". As will be discussed more extensively later, within the multiplicity of accounts and texts analysed there are unavoidable blurrings between distinctions. At certain moments and in certain texts, particular accounts move between ideal-types[382]. This is particularly true of the "Urban Reviewers" and "Urban Lifestylers", hence the decision to recognise these forms as separate yet intertwined. However, regardless of this occasional blurring[383], there is still a productive distinction on the basis above; each type represents space in a similar yet discreet way with a likewise similar yet distinct result.

As Tottenham develops a more desirable urban imaginary -- within concrete space and the space of representation -- it increasingly becomes an attractive place for "Social Influencers"[384]. Mirroring the analysis of Shoreditch's concrete space, such urban figures are drawn by the prospect of siphoning out some of Tottenham's libidinal aura into their own. While, in exchange, these figures further sanctify Tottenham's concrete space through the representations they make of it:

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[381] This is the handle from "@turnpikelaneliving".

[382] A truth within all the ideal types, to be discussed later.

[383] While having similarities to "personal accounts", this ideal type is, usually, de-personalised; a representation of life in Tottenham *in general* rather than the individual's life.

[384] In many ways, the core process of the "Social influencer" -- transmuting experience into a digital text and, in doing so, performing various forms of immaterial labour -- has been shared by each of the ideal-types. As will be discussed, the technological prerequisites of Instagram cause nearly all subject positions to gravitate towards the "Social Influencer".

Figure 5.11, Social Influencer (Carroll, 2021).

The text above, produced by the prominent Instagram influencer "@leabkatharina"[385], exemplifies this process. Within the representations produced by "Urban Reviewers" and "Urban Lifestylers", the objects (and surrounding places) were central. In effect, the *represented* was privileged over the *representer*. However, the "Social Influencer" inverts this. Their representations primarily seek to represent a desirable life (Gillin, 2017); in which the objects (and surrounding places) are only an element. One can see this within the *wider* text above. The description provided with the image is focused on her own life, rather than the space itself; only the text's meta-data (specifically, the geo-location) informs the audience they are consuming a representation of Tottenham. In effect, "Blighty Tottenham" -- a pastiche "Commonwealth Nations" cafe on Tottenham High Road -- and the commodities it contains, are the stage-set and props rather than the focus. The *form* of experience which is transmuted into a representation has shifted. In effect, "Social Influencers" produce a parasocial relationship between the influencer and the influenced; in which "desirable" locations, such as "Blighty Tottenham" or valorised travel locations (Barauah, 2017), act as the stage; one the viewer is encouraged to associate with a desirable urban life or 'way of

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[385] 7886 followers. Much larger than all but certain "Spaces of Consumption" accounts, but with an audience less integrated into concrete Tottenham.

life'. Consequently, while the "Social Influencer" primarily represents their 'life'; this process, for the influenced, valorises the spaces and objects which appear to enable it[386].

Through circulation, each of the aforementioned ideal types amplifies Tottenham's space(s) of representation. However, this process also exists in a concentrated form: "The Amplifier". This ideal-type, in distinction to others, *generally* produces no original texts. Instead, they contribute to Tottenham's space(s) of representation through reposting texts which are relevant to the specific orientations of an account. A typical post by an "Amplifier" is below:
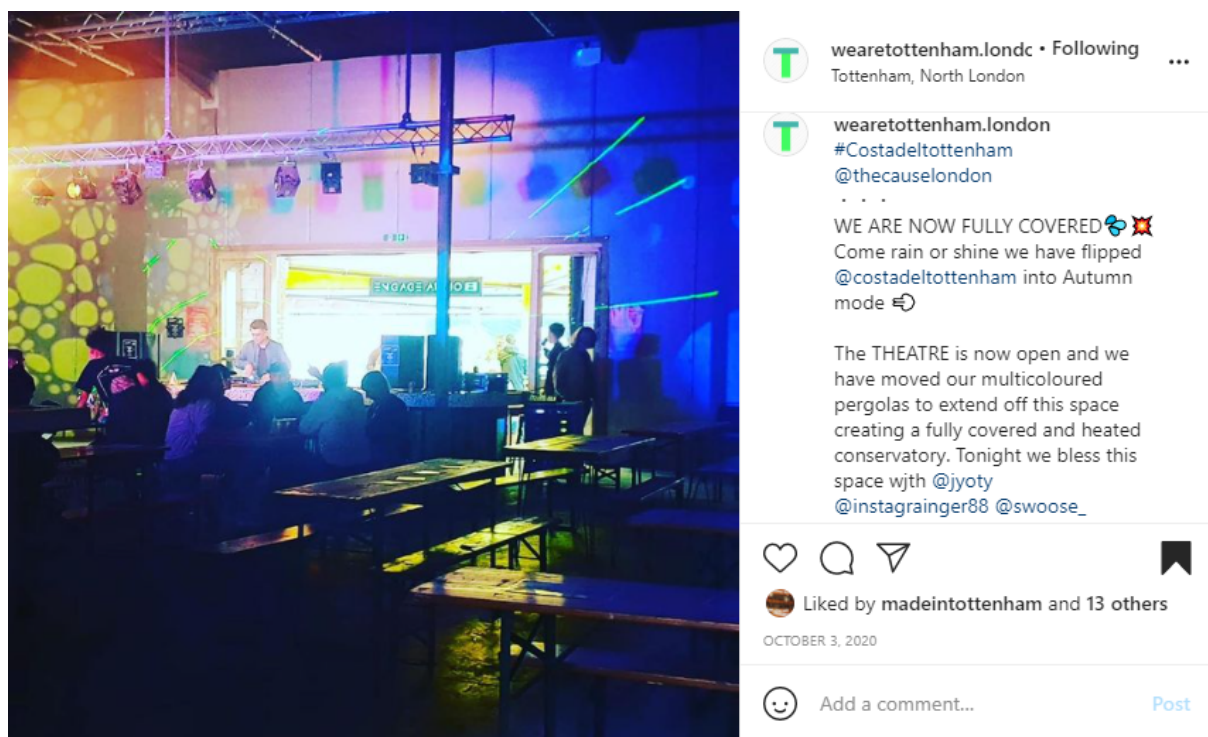
Figure 5.12, We Are Tottenham (Carroll, 2021).

"@Wearetottenham.london" -- which has 1,213 followers -- is one of several "Amplifiers" operating within Tottenham's digital space[387]. "Amplifiers" play an important networking role within Instagram. Namely, by bringing a specific text to a wider audience through the circulation provided by the "Amplifier" re-posting texts. For instance, we can see how the

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[386] One should note, this is, to a lesser extent, a continuing feature within all these texts.

[387] "Made by Tottenham", 1996 followers. Re-posts "local talent and creative business"

"The Bruce Grove Bugle", 619 followers. Re-posts consumption experiences in Bruce Grove.

"Sevensisterlondon", 2039 followers. Re-posts photos and experiences in Seven Sisters.

"Tottenhamlifen15n17", 723 followers. Re-posts which use the hashtag "#teamtottenham"

content, in the text above, was originally made by "@costadeltottenham" -- a bar within "The Cause" nightclub on Ashley Road -- with the intention of representing its space (and commodities) within digital Tottenham. However, once produced it has been circulated further by the "Amplifier". Its content has been deemed to align with the operating agenda of "@wearetottenham.london" which, according to its handle, aims to show that Tottenham is "not just football and riots"[388]. Consequently, it has been re-circulated to expand the audience to which the text is presented. There are two important analytical conclusions to be drawn here:

1) Through "Amplification" the efficacy of the text, in representing the original space, is increased, e.g. a text is further integrated into Tottenham's digital space and its audience. Consequently, one should view "Amplifiers" as providing an auxiliary labour that complements that contained within the original text[389].

2) The "Amplifiers" intention -- to not only represent *a* space of consumption but rather to represent Tottenham's *space as a whole* -- highlights how each individual space of representation is, simultaneously, contributing to a broader space of representation. This key insight will be unpacked when uncovering the relationship between particular representations and Tottenham's overarching urban imaginary.

This quality -- of "Amplification" -- is built into the engineering of Instagram (and Social Media more broadly) through the function provided by "hashtags". While this innate amplification process has been present throughout the previous texts, a particularly illustrative example is below:

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[388] The image and discourse of "Riots" are a element of the "Tottenham Gothic"

[389] This is a form of layering; the urban palimpsest in the digital. The "After-life" of a text is instrumentalised as a layer; a layer to be uncovered and brought back to the surface.

Figure 5.13, Hashtag Circulation (Carroll, 2021).

By incorporating "hashtags" into a text, the producer is able to curate the circuits of circulation a particular representation will travel through within the digital urban imaginary. In effect, the choice of hashtags plays a crucial role in bringing a representation to a wider audience[390]. Specifically, by enabling a text to bringthe bodies the producer *assumes* to be integrated with a particular hashtag; the "imagined audience"[391] (Litt and Hargittai, 2016). Consequently, hashtags are key moments of labour; the 'correct' choices are pivotal to accumulating value through *directed* circulation via amplification[392]. Within the texts analysed, "hashtags" can be divided into two broad categories. Firstly, non-place hashtags. These hashtags, while the most common, integrate a text into the *general* digital urban imaginary; e.g. one which is not particularly connected to any specific place. In the

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[390] Without hashtags, a post only goes to followers; likewise, they play a role in algorithmic selection.

[391] Litt and Hargittai (2016) point out that the creator of a post, while aiming towards an audience, has an incomplete knowledge of what that audience might be. In effect, the ideological presuppositions of the imagined audience guide the production.

[392] "Context Collapse"(Davis and Jurgenson, 2014) is important to this. This point will be raised later.

above, examples of this are #coffeeshop, #deli, #small business". Secondly, place-specific hashtags. For our purpose, these are more important in understanding the production of Tottenham's space of representation,as while interconnected with the non-place category, these hashtags connect Tottenham's various concrete spaces of consumption into streamlined networks. Within the above, examples of place-specific hashtags include: "#sevensisters", #tottenhamfoodie",#tottenham"[393], etc. However, beyond those contained within the text above, there are also several other prominent Tottenham place-specific "hashtags" within the texts analysed: such as "#n17", "#tottenhamhalevillage", "#teamtottenham", and "#tottenhamhale".

For concrete spaces, the use of hashtags allows for quick integration into digital Tottenham; Instagram users can follow these place-specific hashtags as if they were accounts in their own right. This allows a concrete space, by establishing itself within the representation, to be demarcated as "part" of Tottenham; both digitally and concretely. This strategy of circulation is particularly noticeable amongst the accounts of Tottenham's less established spaces of consumption; which, in general, tend to rely more extensively on place-specific hashtags. Likely as these accounts have fewer followers compared to more established concrete spaces, making them more reliant on the *imagined* audience a hashtag provides to a text. Furthermore, one should note the intimacies between this strategy of circulation and "Amplifiers". For instance, the "Amplifier" -- "tottenhamlifeen15n17" -- chooses texts to amplify primarily from the circulation circuit which surrounds "#teamtottenham" (See Figure 5.14).

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[393] This example highlights the 'problems' contained within particular hashtags e.g. #Tottenham dominated by Tottenham Hotspurs texts on match days.

Figure 5.14, Amplifiers (Carroll, 2021).

In summary, this section has outlined the ideal types which, collectively, produce Tottenham's space of representation; alongside *some* of the strategies of circulation employed to do this. These are:

1) Specific Spaces of Consumption.
2) Place Marketers
3) Personal Accounts
4) Urban Reviewers
5) Urban Lifestylers
6) Social Influencers
7) Amplifiers

While this ideal type framework helps to illustrate the variance between the accounts which produce Tottenham's space(s) of representation, the existing situation within digital space is more complex. Particular accounts, alongside a particular text, at particular moments blur the boundaries. A "Personal Account" may repost another's text, the labourer running the Instagram of a "Specific Space of Consumption" may capture and post a serendipitous urban moment they see. In effect, specific accounts, while gravitating to an ideal-type, also

shift and momentarily occupy other positions. Likewise, *between* the core characteristics of ideal-types, one can find links, or questions, which make the categories themselves merge with one another upon close examination. For instance, at what point does a "Personal Account", become popular enough to be considered a "Social Influencer"? To what extent, by representing *through* Tottenham's space, do many of the ideal-types work to represent a "Tottenham Lifestyle"? While this latter question will become central -- when discussing how each specific space of representation (whether of objects, places, moments, or atmospheres) each contributes towards Tottenham's space of representation *as a totality*[394] -- these other issues, innate to the ideal-types framework, should be acknowledged but left aside. The value of this framework -- rather than providing a foolproof model -- is its ability, through abstraction, to provide a flexible insight into the distinction between those producing Tottenham's space(s) of representation; its relations of production. This is an essential, albeit fundamentally fractured, foundation to understand the production of spatial representation.

Bodies as Urban Objects

A by-product of the previous chapter -- which aimed to provide a rudimentary understanding of how spaces of representation are produced and to illustrate the ideal-types behind this production -- has been an aleatory analysis of urban objects. Specifically, it highlighted how commodities are utilised to produce particular spaces of representation. However, it is necessary to compliment this insight within a more nuanced framework; to recognise commodities are only an element of the objects intertwined with representation. Therefore, the following section seeks to expand our understanding of "Urban Objects", specifically by investigating the relationship between bodies and Tottenham's space of representation.

Beyond commodities, human bodies are turned into generative 'objects' to produce Tottenham's space of representation. The text below, taken from "@truecrafttottenham", illustrates this process of objectification and instrumentalisation:

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[394] Albeit a partial one; a hegemonic space of representation.

Figure 5.15, Urban Bodies (Carroll, 2021).

A key element of Instagram's texts is how -- like photography generally -- it enables the rendering of human bodies into objects. Specifically, the body is turned into an image-object. An example of this process is contained within the text above. In concrete urban space, two bodies travelled to consume a space of consumption; its commodities and the experience it facilitates. However, this moment is ossified once it is captured as a photograph. While, in concrete space, this moment passes within digital space it remains transfixed in time. Additionally, through circulation, it, alongside the text it constitutes, begins to live a second-life. Specifically, this image-object -- the frozen moment of consuming bodies in concrete space -- is put to work. Like the commodities discussed earlier, this 'object' is used to produce a space of representation -- in this case, for "True Craft Tottenham" -- and, consequently, becomes a conduit for desire. In effect, through their moment of consumption being captured, transformed into a text, and circulated, these bodies have been interpellated

into immaterial labourers[395]. However, one should note the delicate relationship here between the representational and the space of representation. As discussed in the Dalston chapter, regarding 'desirable' bodies and crowds, only certain consuming bodies are selected to 'do the work'. This is a question of value[396]. Bodies that contain the 'correct' representational qualities are those which, if ossified into image-objects and used to represent space, will successfully stimulate desire and economic remuneration for the concrete space seeking to represent itself.

This process of "pulling"[397] -- of concrete bodies being transformed into object-images to represent space -- is not limited to the activities of "Spaces of Consumption". It is extensively conducted by "Personal Accounts". Take for instance the example below:
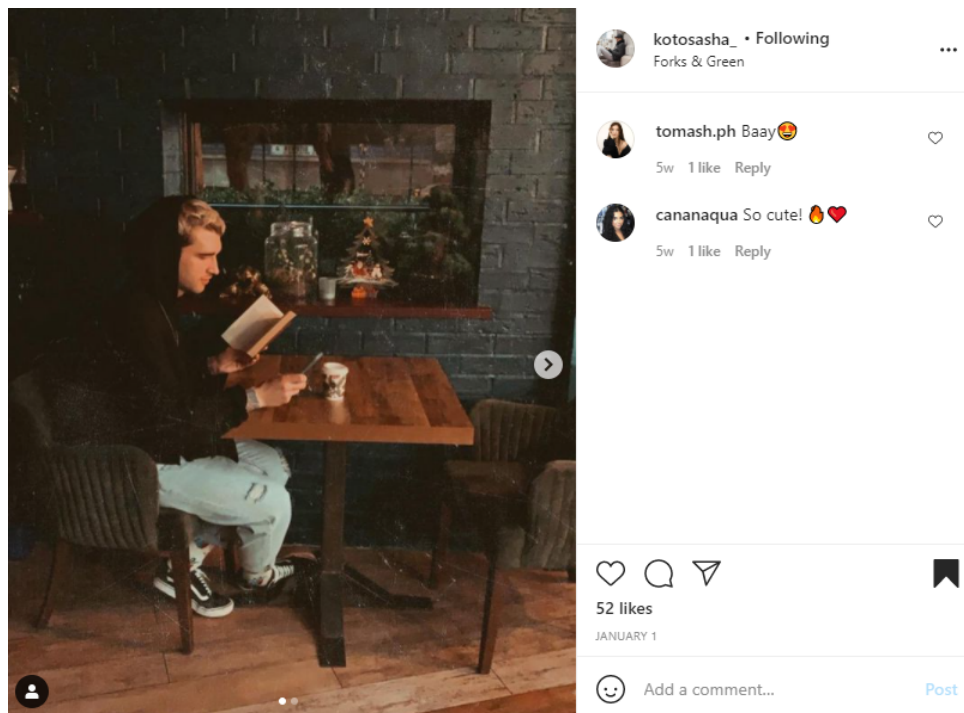
Figure 4.17, Pulling (Carroll, 2021).

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[395] If a body produces an image which exudes a space of representation, what is 'working' on the audience; original or derivative? Likely an assemblage around the entire moment.

[396] Bourdieu is useful here; in explaining the symbiotic cultural-capital relationship between "Cool" bodies and places. A critique, regarding the flattening of the representational -- e.g. the "Cool" or "Desirable" in itself -- is still outstanding; as discussed in the literature review, see pages 83-84.

[397] As will be highlighted in the conclusion, this is a key dynamic to the space of representation in all manifestations.

In distinction to the post by "True Craft Tottenham" -- wherein a space of consumption transforms the body into an image-object -- this process is a self-transmutation. The desires which drive this self-transformation are varied. Outstanding literature points to the enjoyment derived from play (Pink, 2016) and the construction of a "digital self" for one's social networks. It is this latter dimension that is of key importance. The construction of a "digital-self", echoing the "Social Influencer", is, primarily, an activity aimed at representing oneself as having a desirable life. Consequently, what is required are desirable spaces to utilise as an effective stage-set for this 'life'. In the text above, the cafe "Forks & Green" -- on Philip Lane -- has been chosen as an effective tool for representing oneself. In effect, the perceived desirable qualities of the space are ciphered into the user's represented life; through the image-object produced being circulated within one's digital social space. However, regardless of this distinction regarding intention, the result is the same. The consuming urban body[398] -- through the text created -- is interpellated into producing a space of representation for the space of consumption they choose as a stage. While it is not their primary aim, by instrumentalising their body's urban experience and representing themselves to their social networks[399], they *turn themselves* into conduits of desire.

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[398] One should note the distinction to earlier. When introducing "Personal Accounts", the analysis focused on how such accounts *represent commodities*, here they represent their *consuming body*.

[399] Although one should note, how just as important is the audience they 'bring' e.g. an image-object produced by "Forks & Green" only reaches their followers -- and the hashtag networks they choose to utilise -- while the "Personal Account" allows a space of representation to access the users personal social network; bringing the space of consumption to a wider attention pool.

The process of a consumer interpellation, beyond *simply* being facilitated by spaces of consumption, is, at times, actively encouraged:

Figure 5.17, Physical Digital Infrastructure (Carroll, 2021).

While the text above -- created by "Prestige Patisserie", an artisan bakery on Enterprise Row, in South Tottenham's industrial park -- is primarily aimed at encouraging the audience to investigate a holiday aestheticization, it also reveals a means through which spaces of consumption encourage interpellation. In the background of the text, we see that the concrete space of "Prestige Patisserie"[400] contains a blackboard accompaniment which states "Snap & Share". There are two important dynamics illuminated here:

1) It encourages the consumer to participate in the process of interpellation which was identified above.
2) It instructs them to insert the hashtag "#BakeryGarden" into the texts they produce.

This second point is particularly illustrative. By not only encouraging the production of digital texts but also 'educating' the body in how to circulate them, it aims to secure a

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[400] It is interesting to note that "Prestige Patisserie" was one of Tottenham's SoC which were revealed to have been trained by "Meet SoTo" earlier on.

maximisation of value from the labour they conduct. Firstly, through maximising the circulation of the texts produced, through the amplification provided by hashtags. Secondly, by disciplining these texts into a single 'coherent' space of representation. In effect, the labour performed becomes more directed at creating a singular representation of "Prestige Patisserie" through integrating the unremunerated labour of consumers with each other and the representations "@prestigepatiss" themselves produce.

Alongside consumers, the bodies of those who work within particular spaces of consumption also go through this transformation,in effect becoming producers of concrete space alongside its space of representation. One example of this is below, taken from the previously discussed "@tentoonebar":

Figure 5.18, Labouring Bodies (Carroll, 2021).

Here, the 'craft' labouring body -- an increasingly endemic element of the urban fabric, as highlighted in previous chapters and border literature (Ocejo, 2017) -- is transformed into an image-object. This process contains the same dynamics already explored above. However,

this example provides an important opportunity to reflect on the importance of the *representational space* contained *within* the space of representation. In previous chapters, this research highlighted how the burgeoning libidinal-economy of "Urban Dreamers" valorised a particular form of aestheticised labour,a dynamic which was tied to fantasies of this exuberant form of labour having, in different ways, 'transcended' alienation; a quality which was invested into the objects such labourers produced. These *representational* qualities distinguished these bodies and objects from those of 'everyday' capitalism. This fantasy provided an appealing story to entice consumption. The text above shows how Instagram enables these *representational* qualities to be exuded through the space of representation. Through the image, the craftsman body is displayed, and through the 'post', their authentic exuberance for their craft is cemented[401]. In effect, Instagram, by representing the representational, allows these qualities to be 'worked' harder, to stimulate desire beyond the street.

Before moving on, it is important to recognise the blurred distinctions between these different 'objects' within Tottenham's space of representation. A text often utilises images of commodities and objectified bodies in tandem to produce a space of representation. Returning to "@forksandgreen" we find an illustrative example:

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[401] Perhaps in a manner which provides a greater depth than is allowed for in concrete space itself. Such information, if written overtly within the space of consumption, would flirt with the uncanny -- "Hello, my name is Seth"...

Figure 5.19, Libidinal Ciphers (Carroll, 2021).

This image, while posted by "@forksandgreen", is of London-based social influencer "@lotanlaidbare", an account with 64,000 followers. This reveals, once more, the complex interrelationship between different ideal-types and the space(s) of representation. However, let us focus on the 'work' being done by the text's components. It contains a convergence of several, previously identified, tendencies. However, one should note how these elements -- the transmutation of commodities and bodies -- reinforce the 'work' of each other, a similar relationship as that between 'desirable' bodies and places which was discussed in earlier chapters. The desirable body sanctifies the object, while the object works to guarantee the body. This symbolic exchange is made possible through the moment in concrete space being captured as an image and circulated; it is from this exchange *being seen by others* that makes its work possible. In part, it is this demarcation, as a moment *worth seeing (or worth showing)*, which guarantees the desirability of both body and object within the perception of the audience. The final component is "Forks and Green" itself. By providing the concrete space of consumption -- the restaurant -- in which this exchange takes place, alongside the digital representation of this exchange, "Forks and Green" siphons off a surplus of the libidinal appeal generated from this fusion to itself.

Urban Places

Within the above, this chapter has highlighted how different "Urban Objects" -- varying from commodities to consuming bodies -- work, through Instagram, to produce space(s) of representation. While these representations often take place within "Urban Places", the places themselves have existed primarily as the background of the text; as a stage-set or a prerequisite to an object. As has been seen, such *partial* representations do still represent (and stimulate desire for) "Urban Places"; as articulated through "Forks and Green" above. However, within digital Tottenham these partial representations are complemented with a category of texts which centralise the representation of "Urban Places". The following section will analyse this phenomenon. As before, the analysis will begin with the fundamental and layer towards the complex; a process which will illuminate the role such texts play in constituting Tottenham's space of representation.

The text below shows the representation of "Urban Places" at its most quotidian. Wherein, in a manner similar to representing commodities, a place is projected into digital Tottenham:

Figure 5.20, Urban Places (Carroll, 2021).

Texts which create a space of representation for "Urban Places" are, like "Urban Objects", facilitated through the transformation of a particular place into an image; in the text above, the cafe "Perkyn's" on West Green Road. This place-image is, as before, then complicated through the constituting elements of an Instagram text: the "post", "meta-data", ""geo-location", etc. However, while these formal characteristics may remain the same, the text above helps to illustrate a routine distinction between texts representing "Urban Places" and "Urban Objects". Texts representing "Urban Objects" *tended* to focus primarily on 'introducing' a particular commodity -- a new sandwich, a consumer's favourite coffee -- to the audience,a task achieved through the unification of image and post; e.g. a "post" provided a linguistic accompaniment to the object (or experience) represented. However, this tendency towards unison is often *somewhat*[402] 'severed' within texts representing "Urban Places"; revealing a shift in how Tottenham's space of representation is produced (and, in the form it takes). In the text above, rather than in unison, there is a *productive* faux-separation between the text's constituting elements. The *image* of an "Urban Place" is drawn into a relationship with the *post* but, importantly, only through the audience being informed of the commodities the represented place contains. There are two ways to read this:

1) Desire is stimulated for a place *through* the linguistic representation of the commodities it contains.
2) Desire is stimulated *through* the visual representation of "Urban Places".

In reality, both elements are likely acting simultaneously upon the audience. However, it is the latter point that is more important for understanding the trialectical qualities of Tottenham's space of representation. Namely, that a text -- in representing "Urban Places" -- draws upon the representational qualities of the concrete place it represents; the space of representation instrumentalises representational space to produce desire; *regardless* of whether this is for the "Urban Place" itself, the commodities it contains, or Tottenham more broadly. The concrete place itself, through representation, becomes a resource to attract

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[402] This is not always true, particularly when a space of consumption has recently opened.

distant bodies; e.g. through the space of representation, Tottenham's "libidinal-skin" is able to stretch.

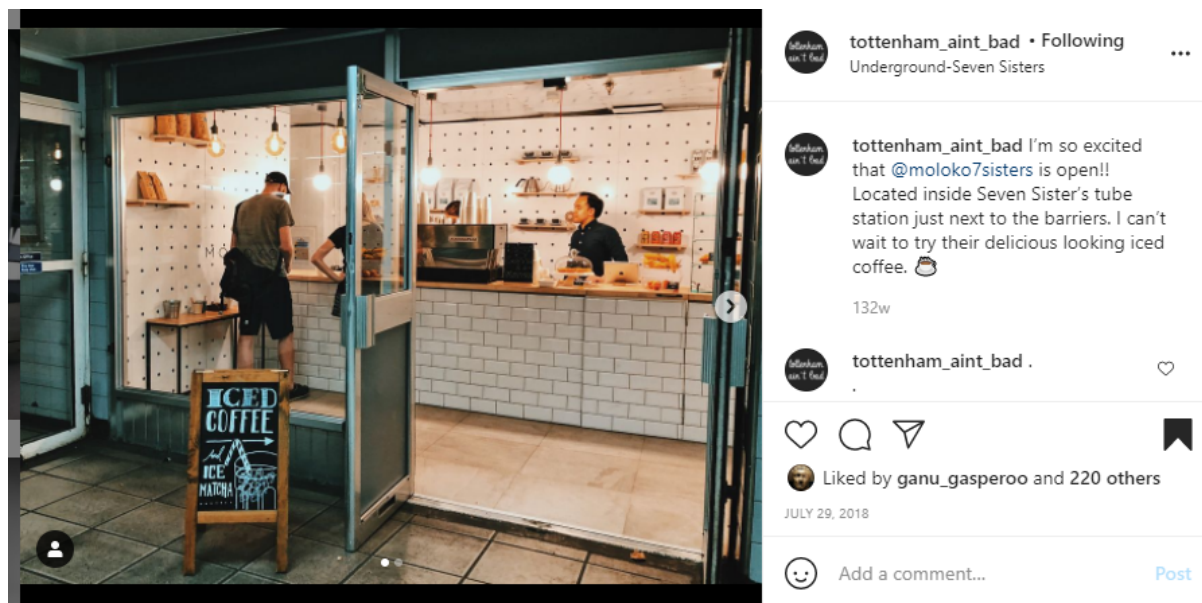Figure 5.21, Stretching the Skin #1 (Carroll, 2021).

Figure 5.22, Stretching the Skin #2 (Carroll, 2021).

While the texts above continue to align with the previous analysis, in series they also provide further insight into how representations of "Urban Place" 'work' on the audience. Namely, through maintaining the perspective of the "Passer-by". Through constituting the image, this gaze from the street structures the manner in which the audience receives the representation. The text below, by "@n0sh.17", inadvertently articulates this quality.

Figure 5.23, The Digital Passerby" (Carroll, 2021).

As before, this "Urban Reviewer" produces a text which represents urban experience through evaluation. However, the important element is how "@n0sh.17", while taking on qualities of an "Urban Lifestyler", discusses the serendipitous discovery of the "The Deli Co" while walking through Tottenham. This, inadvertently, draws attention to the significance of these texts being constituted with the gaze of "The Passerby". A gaze that encourages two distinct, yet interrelated, phenomenological experiences with the audience. Firstly, by representing "Urban Places" from the street, it encourages an affective response within the audience similar to "Window Shopping"; which Campbell (1997) argues to be akin to "looking into the glass cases at the museum" (13). Secondly, such representations of space provide the audience with the digital equivalent of the experience described by

"@n0sh.17". Tottenham's digital space, through being densely populated by texts structured with this gaze, transforms the audience's Instagram "feed" into a *partial*[403] street in itself. It provides these digital urbanites with a para-experience of Tottenham's streets; wherein the act of strolling is replaced by scrolling. Particular "Urban Places" -- such as the texts above -- serendipitously arrive in one's view, in a manner akin to walking through concrete space. While distinct, these two phenomenological experiences -- of window shopping and urban scrolling -- capture the affective depth, and multiplicity, that space(s) of representation can instil within the audience. In effect, para-(urban)experience is not a flat affectivity; the libidinal pathways that move bodies are heterogeneous.

The dynamic of "Urban Scrolling" is another example of how individual representations, while generative in their own right, in accordance with the text's particularities, simultaneously constitute a broader space of representation that 'lives' separately from its constituting fragments. Moving forward, this quality will be investigated in itself. For now, there is more to unpack regarding the representation of "Urban Places"; namely, the manner in which these texts are able to aestheticise urban change through producing attractive narratives. This was briefly touched on earlier when discussing the account "@Tottenhamhalehome"; which chartered the "Interior Journey" of the Hale Works newbuild. However, this dynamic is widespread enough to warrant closer investigation:

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[403] A partiality that stems from its status as a hegemonic representation. This digital street is pruned and controlled in a manner beyond that which can be exuded on the concrete.
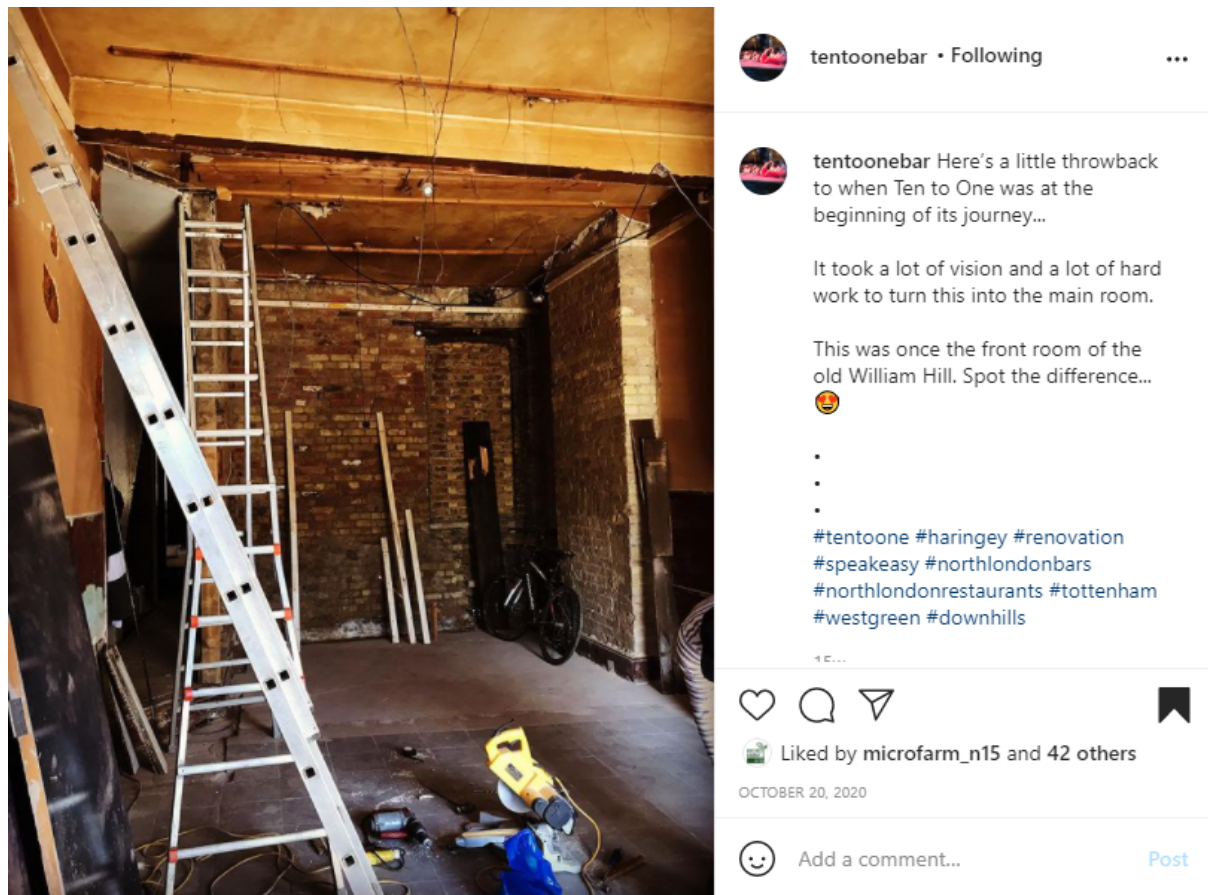
Figure 5.24, The 'Filling' of Space" (Carroll, 2021).

While these two texts represent different "Urban Places" -- the aforementioned "Ten to One" and "The Cause" nightclub on Ashley Road -- there is a shared narrative within the representations. The image is of an empty space, or a space still in construction, and the post narrates, in different ways, the process through which this space became 'filled'; e.g. how it transitioned from 'nothing' to 'something'. In effect, representing urban spaces in this manner expresses a process of becoming. This is Tottenham's space of representation at its most temporal. While the texts analysed throughout this chapter provided the audience with a representation of urban space in the present, these texts provide a representation of how things were. However, the purpose of this isn't to *simply* represent the urban past. These images of the past are, through the wider components of the text, interlaced with the present; through the 'post' which provides a history alongside the wider texts that exist in relation through the account's activity. Consequently, representations such as this narrate transition and, in doing so, provide an "Urban Place" with a story. The allure of this representational quality has already been highlighted in previous chapters, however

Instagram and the space of representation it enables provides an additional outlet. These temporal posts -- of a place's becoming -- provide an "Urban Place" with a creation myth e.g. a story of how 'something' was produced from 'nothing'[404].

However, one should not view this as a static -- retroactive -- process. These texts, through accruing value for concrete spaces, help to encourage a particular future *through* the representation of a particular past. This quality is rendered most explicit in the series of texts below:
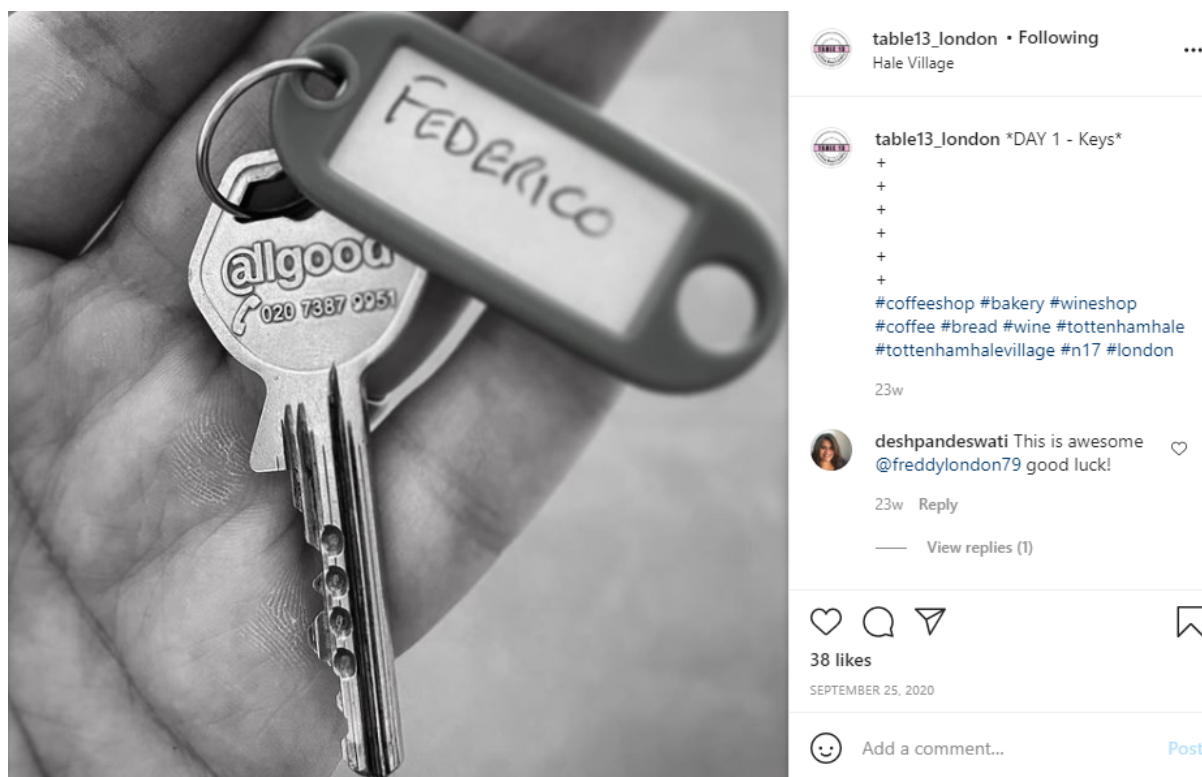
Figure 5.25, Retroactive Reflection #1 (Carroll, 2021).

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[404] One should note the political quality in defining 'nothing'.

table13_london • Following
Hale Village

table13_london *DAY 2 - A lots of cleaning & sanding walls with a big helper today*
+
+
+
+
+
+
#coffeeshop #bakery #wineshop #coffee #bread #wine #tottenhamhale #tottenhamhalevillage #n17 #london

23w

vrabion "Each tiny effort builds on the next, so that brick by brick, magnificent things can be created "
Robin Sharma

45 likes
SEPTEMBER 26, 2020

Add a comment...   Post

Figure 5.26, Retroactive Reflection #2 (Carroll, 2021).

table13_london • Following
table13_london

table13_london *DAY 13 - *Few trials today before opening tomorrow, finally last day in black & white*
This week we are open Thursday to Saturday 09:30-17:00 Take-away to start*
+
+
+
+
+
+
#opening #takeaway #coffeeshop #bakery #wineshop #coffee #bread #wine #tottenhamhale #tottenhamhalevillage #n17 #london

21w

nandaiusk

76 likes
OCTOBER 7, 2020

Add a comment...   Post

Figure 5.27, Retroactive Reflection #3 (Carroll, 2021).

johnstongem1989 Can't wait to
visit next week 👍

21w   1 like   Reply

perygaa so exciting!! can't wait to
visit ❤️

21w   1 like   Reply

rusualiona Can't wait to visit!👌

21w   Reply

kitchenno7 Hooray. ✊🏾

21w   1 like   Reply

redfox_jodie 💛
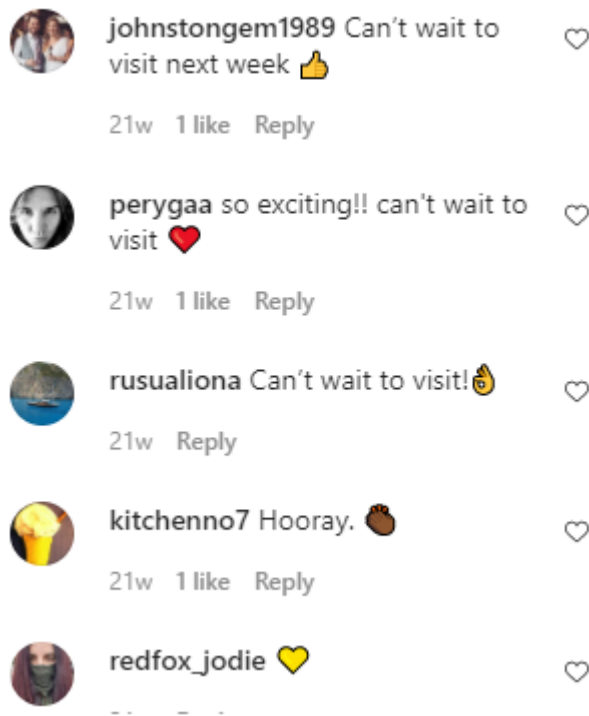
Figure 5.28, Retroactive Reflection #4 (Carroll, 2021).

While the earlier texts provided a retroactive reflection -- wherein a creation myth is generated 'after' the 'success' of an "Urban Place within Tottenham -- here the origin story is produced in conjunction with producing concrete space. Specifically, images of earlier forms of urban space become an active instrument in shaping contemporary concrete space. This quality has already been recognised within Urban Studies, albeit in a more discursive manner (Campkin, 2013). However, while similar, this process of instrumentalising takes a unique form within the space(s) of representation facilitated by Instagram. These particularities are highlighted through the comments section of the final text. The representation of becoming entails that the space of representation provides a concrete space with value *before* the concrete space 'exists'. For instance, the only engagement between the audience and "Table 13" is consuming the representation of its becoming. However, this space of representation still disciplines the audience's libidio, it still stimulates their desire, etc. This highlights the significance of a representation. If successfully circulated, the space of representation has the power to direct the libidinal-economy of the city before the object it seeks to represent can be consumed. One should note, this isn't a quality unique to the city.

However, what is unique[405] is that this process of anticipatory representation exudes a tangible effect, through desire, on concrete urban space; through building a reserve of patronage. As such, what appears to be a representation of becoming is itself an active component within this process (See Figure 5.29).

Figure 5.29, Retroactive Reflection #5 (Carroll, 2021).

Within Digital Tottenham, the quality of representing "Urban Places" in the process of becoming is not limited to spaces of consumption. It is also prominent within the representation of a *particular strata* of residential space. The most clear-cut examples of this can be found within the emergent subsection of Digital Tottenham: "Renovation Instagram". A few exemplary texts are below.

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[405] A greater degree of significance is more accurate. All consumption leaves traces on future production in some manner, albeit often in a way that is imperceptible.

Figure 5.30, Renovation Instagram #1 (Carroll, 2021).

Figure 5.31, Renovation Instagram #2 (Carroll, 2021).

Figure 5.32: Renovation Instagram #3 (Carroll, 2021).

The basic premise, which falls somewhere between an "Urban Lifestyle" and "Personal Account", is that the account represents the process of renovating a home in Tottenham. The accounts usually start with pictures of the dilapidated old form, which the audience can steadily watch be transformed. The accounts highlight their plans and the problems they've faced and thus these accounts blur, at points, into a guidebook. This impetus is thus almost identical to earlier. Both utilise "Urban Places" to weave a narrative of 'nothing' -- ruined space -- becoming 'something', wherein the old unwanted space is disciplined into an object of desire. Fundamentally, both forms feed into a wider representation of Tottenham. Wherein, Tottenham -- like the renovated homes or 'filled' spaces of consumption -- is changing; transitioning from a place that is considered, by the privileged, to be 'nothing' into 'something'. While, as will be discussed, each of the representations analysed throughout this chapter feed into this shifting way of seeing Tottenham, the above examples render it most explicit.

Crowds, Atmosphere and the Urban Mise en Scene

In previous chapters, this thesis highlighted the importance of the "Urban Crowd" --
alongside the atmosphere, it, in part, facilitates -- in capturing and disciplining desire.
Within Dalston, the notion of an alluring crowd, filled with bodies subject to positive
fantasization, drew the "Urban Dreamers". Meanwhile, the *so-called* 'Orthodox' crowd within
Shoreditch increasingly pushed them away; driving them to search out 'unspoiled' places
such as Tottenham. Within the space of representation,"The Crowd" continues to exude a
centripetal force upon urban bodies:

Figure 5.33, The Digital Crowd #1 (Carroll, 2021).

The text above illustrates a quotidian representation of the "Urban Crowd". These texts are
anchored through an image of collective urban consumption; in this case, at "The Cause".
Within such representations, the crowd functions as an important signifier for the audience.
Specifically, the crowd enables a condensed representation of urban enjoyment itself. The
crowd as a phenomenon, when represented from within, encourages a perspective that is a
variation on the "The Passerby". Namely, in a more intimate form, the way of seeing exuded

by the text is one where the audience views the crowd as if they were part of it. This is an experience which has, within previous chapters, been highlighted as part of the libidinal appeal of the city. Thus, such texts, in a manner similar to before, provide a para-experience of being part of Tottenham's urban fabric; of socialising, consuming, etc. A para-(urban) experience which functions upon the audience as an instruction to join, a suggestion to consume that which "The Crowd" consumes; e.g. to partake in the concrete urban experience it represents. One should note how the, likely unconscious, recognition of the centrifugal potential of this para-(urban)experience is illuminated by the structure of the text above. The representation of "The Crowd" is rarely aligned with the intent of the text. For instance, the 'post' above is focused on advertising an upcoming event. The crowd is the image provided to encourage the audience to attend; the crowd, with its expression of urban collective consumption and enjoyment, is the raw material in directing the urban libidinal-economy.

While this illustrates the *form*, it is necessary to unravel the *content* of the represented "Urban Crowd". Specifically, the 'work' behind such representations and the relationship to concrete space:

Figure 5.34, The Digital Crowd #2 (Carroll, 2021).

This can be understood by combining two previous moments of analysis. Firstly, in the Dalston chapter, I argued that to constitute "The Crowd" is 'work': each body, by participating in "The Crowd", 'works' to facilitate its libidinal appeal onto other bodies. A member of "The Crowd" is an immaterial labourer. This dynamic remains when considering the representation of "The Crowd"; without this original labour, one would have nothing to represent. However, within the space of representation, this moment of labour is ossified into an image; as has been discussed throughout. Through this process, the bodies constituting "The Crowd", alongside their labour, are, once more, trapped in time; e.g. the moment in concrete space dissipates while the representation remains. In effect, the concrete crowd is transformed into an "urban scene"; specifically, an image of the collective extraction of enjoyment from urban space. Through the centripetal force of this representation, the effective value of the 'work' performed by the crowd's bodies is increased. This a double-work; wherein these bodies first produce the libidinal appeal of the crowd and then the libidinal appeal of the representation. Both moments of labour, in different ways, work to attract consuming bodies through stimulating desire and thus accrue economic value for various stakeholders within concrete urban space. As will be discussed, the crowds of the past work to, in part, allure "The Crowd" of the future[406].

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[406] Rose (2004:281): "[s]ince the image of the 'liveable city' has become a key aspect of a city's ability to compete in a globalized, knowledge-based economy, post-industrial cities have a growing interest in marketing themselves as being built on a foundation of 'inclusive' neighbourhoods capable of harmoniously supporting a blend of incomes, cultures, age groups and lifestyles."

Figure 5.35, Digital Urban Atmosphere #1 (Carroll, 2021).

Figure 5.36, Digital Urban Atmosphere #2 (Carroll, 2021).

Figure 5.37, Digital Urban Atmosphere #3 (Carroll, 2021).

Texts, such as those above and those throughout this chapter, rarely contain a singular analytical moment. Consider the above, it primarily represents an "Urban Crowd", but one which is *unavoidably* intertwined with "Urban Places" and "Urban Objects"[407]. Together these objective elements form into a constellation. The result is the image itself; a space of representation that expresses a particular moment in concrete space. However, this transformation -- of singular fragments into a totality -- brings with it an entirely new phenomenon: atmosphere. Mirroring material space, the *in-between* moments within an image entail that a space of representation is *somewhat* able to represent atmosphere. As will be discussed, it is not a simple replication.

Previous chapters highlighted the ontological status of "Atmosphere" -- in recognising how, rather than a private mood, it is an affective quality which spreads out over a concrete

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[407] There is, to some extent, an artificiality produced by my analytical framework itself. In concrete urban space, the various moments have always been intertwined. It is the analytical perspective which seeks to impose an ordered notion of distinctions. This is a necessary abstraction to understand the complexity, but one should keep in mind this process has ramifications.

space[408], e.g. an element of representational space -- alongside highlighting the role particular "Atmospheres" play within the libidinisation and de-libidinisation of "Urban Dreamworlds"s[409]. Similarly, the texts above can illustrate how atmosphere contributes to the production of space(s) of representation. Prior to this, one should note that urban representation *in general* often intertwines with the representation of urban atmospheres. Reflecting on the "Tottenham Gothic", itself a historical prolongation of an earlier discourse -- the city as a "petrified nightmare" (Mitscherlich, 1968:29) exuded from writers such as Dickens -- one sees the *atmospheric* qualities within the representation. The "Tottenham Gothic" as a representation, encourages *some* urban subjects to imagine that to experience Tottenham is to experience an atmosphere of fear, tension, horror, etc. In distinction, the texts analysed by this chapter express a very different atmosphere; one antithetical to the "Tottenham Gothic". The atmosphere represented is closer to that analysed in Dalston; a jovial affect of 'heterodox' urban consumption. This quality isn't limited to the three texts above. Each text discussed has performed similar work. In different ways, each represents *alongside a primary content* a certain atmosphere which forms *in-between* the objective factors of the text (Böhme, 2017); an attractive and dreamlike Urban Mise en Scene. However, the notion of a space's atmosphere exuding itself through an image seems odd, considering the embodied prerequisites implicit within the concept. In effect, can an audience experience a space's atmosphere exclusively through a representation?

While answering such a question thoroughly is beyond our scope, asking it sheds light on the relationship between atmosphere and the space which represents it. The space of representation's audience, the consumers of digital Tottenham, do not experience Tottenham's atmosphere(s) through these texts *but rather a representation of it*. Following Böhme, this technicality creates a form of atmosphere wherein the "aesthetic work" of an atmosphere -- e.g. the extent to which particular atmospheres are, in ways we may or may

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[408] Spinozist underpinnings: "my" feeling is not something I have but rather something that "possesses" me. The atmospheric qualities of the space invade the subject. This is the primary line of the atmospheric school (Böhme, 2017). However, there are some questions regarding totality which highlight how the feeling is not as exterior as they suggest e.g. does each body feel the same atmosphere in the same place? I suspect not.

[409] An atmosphere, like a crowd, according to its particularities, pushes and pulls different kinds of urban bodies.

not recognise, planned -- is raised to a newly concentrated level. While there may be a degree of intentionality, in a similar manner to how a stage is arranged, to many atmospheres, within the space of representation, this 'planning' is entirely dominant. The producer of the text, by choosing the moment to represent, alongside the conditioning factors which set the tone, has control over the 'atmospheric' which goes beyond the forms of tinkering discussed by Böhme. For this reason, one can see analogies to the texts above and the role of the "postcard" discussed by Scanlan (2019). The atmosphere of a concrete space is unavoidably lost after undergoing the process of representation. Consider the texts above, wherein a space's *particular* atmosphere is replaced by a *general* atmosphere; the Urban Mise en Scene discussed above. The constitutive phenomenal accompaniments which in part distinguish the atmosphere of one place from another, as was discussed in the previous chapter, cannot be translated through a still image. However, this transformation doesn't stop the urban Mise en Scene 'working' upon the audience. This *general* Urban Mise en Scene atmospheric is still attractive, it still directs how the audience perceives Tottenham, it still generates para-(urban)experience. Within the space of representation, the concrete atmosphere may be unrepresentable but the simulacrum produced by this failure of representation still disciplines the desires of the audience. Through the space of representation, Digital Tottenham is provided with a burgeoning atmospheric "skin" which is suggestive of an appealing urban-experience.

The Dialectics of Spatial Representation and Libidinal-Economy

This chapter has collected a constellation of moments constituting Tottenham's space of representation. As fragments, each particular moment can only partially help us understand the fundamental question: what is the relationship between the space of representation, concrete space, and libidinal-economy? However, when taken as a whole, these fragments reveal the two dialectical tendencies underpinning the space of representation, which provide a preliminary answer to the question. This section will illustrate these tendencies. Firstly, the process of a concrete space being "pulled" into the space of representation. Secondly, the process wherein such representations "pull" bodies to concrete space. After highlighting the interconnection between these two dialectical poles, I will show that this

dialectic unfolds in such a manner that the old urban imaginary of Tottenham -- "The Tottenham Gothic" -- is being steadily displaced; replaced by the imaginary expressed through Instagram's space of representation. Finally, I will, in a preliminary manner, highlight how this *political* quality, of an ascendant urban imaginary, cannot be coherently grasped by the existing gentrification conceptual framework. It is necessary to properly introduce the "Representational Rent-Gap" to understand the relationship between the space of representation excavated in this chapter and gentrification. However, a thorough exploration of this concept, wherein it is understood trialectically with representational space, will be left for the conclusion.

The first dialectical flow is the "pulling" of concrete space into a representation. Through the labour of representation, a spatial derivative is created which exists within a different scale of space e.g. the space of representation. As shown throughout, when concrete space is "pulled" so too are the interconnected phenomena that are simultaneously contained within and constitutive of concrete space (Soja, 1996): commodities, bodies, places, crowds, atmospheres, etc. Concrete space is "pulled" in the pursuit of, for various reasons[410], representing these elements. The original moment in concrete space unavoidably passes in time, while the "pulled" derivatives remain temporally fixed. Perpetually circulating within a totalizing space *for* representations; the "Digital Tottenham" which exists within the audience's Instagram "feed". While the various relations of production -- the ideal-types and strategies of circulation utilised -- vary between representations, alongside the intent and specificities of particular texts, this core dialectical tendency of "pulling" is universal: it is inscribed into the generative logic of this space of representation. In effect, this tendency is a movement from the city, through the screen, to the audience. It is, in itself, a quasi-spatial logic. The space *between* the concrete city and the urban subject is *seemingly* decimated.

The second dialectical flow is the above inverted,wherein the space of representation *works* on those who consume it; pulling these consuming bodies to the concrete space(s) represented. Throughout the chapter, an awareness of this quality -- of a representation

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[410] Some have been analysed in the chapter, though I doubt this is an exhaustive illumination of the phenomenon, as will be justified below.

being able to 'pull' a body -- has recurrently appeared. Pursued either consciously, through labour producing alluring representations for particular spaces of consumption, or unconsciously, through the collateral immaterial labour of "Personal Accounts". The space of representation has this ability because the audience -- those who *consume* this representation of Tottenham -- are not static bodies. As such, these representations *have the potential*[411] to capture the libidio: to stimulate their desires, shape their perceptions and to modify the imagined affects they associate with Tottenham (e.g. a movement from fear to intrigue, from repulsion to excitement). Consequently, while the first dialectical flow "pulled" the city to the audience, now the second flow "pulls" -- through a complex web of immaterial labour with varying levels of immediacy[412] -- the audience to the city.

Furthermore, these distinct moments are *not* two tangents,wherein the processes briefly meet at the two points of "Pulling". Rather, these two tendencies are endlessly intertwined. For example, consider the particular moment of "The Crowd". The audience consumes a representation of "The Crowd" which, in part, pulls them to concrete space. Consequently, as discussed earlier, the para-(urban)experience of Tottenham generates a desire for the concrete urban experience of Tottenham. However, the important point here is that this process safeguards the space of representation itself. The bodies attracted through para-(urban)experience, upon arriving within concrete space, become the concrete crowd. As such, these bodies become the raw material for representation: a crowd, an atmosphere, etc, to be pulled from city to screen. Representations which will once more begin to exude a centrifugal force upon the digital audience. Consequently, the dialectics within the space of representation are a delicate interplay between different *temporal* moments of concrete space. The urban experience of the past, ossified into images, reproduces the present through accruing the prerequisite raw materials of representation and, in doing so, disciplines the form taken by urban space in the future.

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[411] This is often in accordance with particular *representational* qualities of the representation.

[412] What I mean by this is: a single representation isn't some love potion. It is the network of representations that *gradually* exudes influence -- *in combination with various other dynamics*. Likewise, the manner in which exude influence varies. Perhaps a picture of the crowd at "The Cause" makes one a curious about Tottenham, a little less fearful (Look! There are people like me there!) but it likely would not cause a wholesale flash of recognition.

However, while the above highlights the spatial logic, in isolation it fails to properly grasp the political content of this dialectic unfolding in *Tottenham*. This political quality is understood by reflecting further on the significance of Digital Tottenham as a constellation; e.g. the various representations within "The Feed" are not *simply* a series of disconnected fragments. Instead, these fragments coalesce, *contributing* to a totalising representation of Tottenham itself. This totalising representation is that of a desirable Tottenham, an urban space from which to derive enjoyment. This representation is inherently political. This burgeoning representation of Tottenham -- which, it should be noted, is simultaneously constituted by phenomena beyond Instagram -- steadily displaces the ebbing urban imaginary. The "Tottenham Gothic", which represents Tottenham as a place to fear, a place to be avoided, is increasingly diluted. As discussed, while the "Tottenham Gothic" was an impediment to capital and the extraction of *substantial*[413] surplus-value, this new imaginary -- this new totalising representation of place -- is highly conducive. In short, its political nature is a product of its ability to facilitate the extraction of value; through displacing representational obstacles and exuding its own particular prescription to enjoy. One must not be sentimental about the "Tottenham Gothic"; a racist imaginary intermixed with the hegemonic fear of the urban working-class. However, within the contradiction of capitalist urbanism, such an imaginary, through slowing the flow of global capital, has *partially* sheltered Tottenham from the violent displacement of gentrification which most of London has been subjected to. Consequently, with this new imaginary comes a different kind of violence.

This *political* quality innate to the space of representation, alongside representational space, is neglected within the contemporary study of gentrification. As discussed within the literature review, these 'immaterial' qualities have been marginalised by the orthodox Marxist conceptual framework[414]. The "Rent-Gap" is hindered by a fundamental under-theorisation, generated through placing an ontological primacy on a flattened understanding of value. This chapter has shown the intimate relationship between the space

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[413] Particular forms of surplus-value are easier to extract from impoverished areas, slumlords might be one example. However, the scale of this capital is distinct.

[414] To some extent, it is de-politicised by Non-Marxian approaches vis a vis an excessive Bourdieusian toolkit.

of representation and the extraction of surplus-value from urban space. Consequently, it has provided an empirical case highlighting the intertwined relationship between the space of representation and the gentrification of the city. As previous chapters highlighted the relationship between representational space and gentrification. Therefore, it is necessary to re-conceptualise the "Rent-Gap"; to centralise these immaterial dynamics which lead to its production -- through the representation of valorised concrete space -- and its closure -- through the disciplining of desiring bodies. In effect, we must correct the under-theorisation within contemporary Marxian understandings of gentrification through further developing an understanding of a "Representational Rent-Gap",one which explains gentrification *through* the trialectical character of space, rather than abstracting it.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Instagram, through the space(s) of representation it facilitates, exudes a significant force upon the production of Tottenham's concrete space. This force is made possible through the "pulling" of concrete space, and specific temporal moments, into representations. Once ossified, this space of representation 'works' upon the audience through libidinal-economy; desires are disciplined, anticipation structured, and consumption encouraged. This chapter has followed the various forms taken by this process. However, regardless of the distinctions between these manifestations, the core relationship articulated above remains in place. Fundamentally, the space of representation is intimately tied to concrete space *through* libidinal-economy; these representations encourage the body to extract enjoyment from space and, like a prospector, demarcate where enjoyment could be extracted from. This process is important in any urban space. However, for Tottenham, the layering of these representations upon each other is of particular significance. These fragments steadily constitute a new imaginary; of Tottenham as a place for heterodox urban-experience. Through its ascendance, the "Tottenham Gothic" is forgotten and erased; while briefly re-emerging at points of crisis. Consequently, the relationship this chapter has explored, between concrete Tottenham and its representation, is fundamentally political. The shift in imaginary enables a new relationship between Tottenham and capital; this new totalising representation facilitates the extraction of surplus-value while the old inhibited it.

It is through this 'growth', an unavoidable game of winners and losers, that the space of representation gains its inescapably political character.

While formally focused on the space of representation, this analysis has unavoidably rested upon an account of *representational space*; the phantasies and projections which are trialectically linked to the space of representation and concrete space. In varying intensities, the representational has been present throughout, The space of representation studied is one connected, largely, to the fetshisation of a particular form of urban enjoyment. The chapter has sought to articulate this intimacy at key moments while maintaining an analytic focus on the space of representation. However, this approach, while necessary, carries with it a danger of implying the representational occupies a lesser ontological position within the spatial trialectic. Consequently, it is important to reiterate that, in part, the space of representation can only 'work' through *representing the representational*. The space of representation is not a 'neutral' representation; it is, unavoidably, filled with particular representational qualities. These elements are fundamentally intertwined and can only be *seemingly* separated through the strategic abstraction of analysis[415]. My point is not to criticise the decision, but rather to reiterate space's trialectical character. The final chapter will bring these threads together and, in doing so, provide the necessary theoretical prerequisites to articulate the concept of the "Representational Rent-Gap".

One should note that this chapter has only partially excavated the space of representation that Instagram facilitates for Tottenham. Primarily, this is a question of methodology. The approach of a digital ethnography, which focused upon the production and reception of texts, while illustrative, would be greatly enriched through key actor interviews. This would, on the side of producers, enable us to grasp the reflexivity present within the various analytical moments; within Shoreditch, the thesis argued that particular shop keepers displayed an awareness of how to best adapt the representational to the libidinal-economy of the dreamworld. Within the audience, interviews would grant the analysis more nuance; particularly in providing a more intricate illustration of the affective experience of Digital

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[415] Likewise, within the previous chapter, which focused on representational space, we saw the significance of the space of representation.

Tottenham. Likewise, this explanatory inhibiting through methodology extends further. A greater sensitivity to the technological elements of Instagram -- the algorithmic, the saturation of posts, etc -- would profoundly strengthen the analysis. However, as argued by Pasquale, Instagram and phenomena like it, have an economic interest in keeping this kind of information internal. Consequently, a methodological approach more focused on these elements should not be conceived of as a panacea. Future research, with such considerations in mind, will allow for Instagram -- as a resource for understanding the production of space-- to be more fully utilised

Likewise, Tottenham's space of representation is neither as unified nor as singular in origin (e.g. Instagram), as this analysis suggests. This chapter aimed to highlight the relationship between the space of representation, concrete space, and libidinal economy; and Instagram, as a case study, enabled a satisfying answer to be produced. However, as mentioned in this chapter, Tottenham's space of representation is also produced beyond Instagram[416]. As such, the particularities of representation, alongside the representational qualities it represents, will inevitably vary. For instance, take the example below:

Figure 5.38, Wake Up To London" (Carroll, 2021).

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[416] The Magazines, Blogs, etc: e.g., "Discover Tottenham", "Discovering Tottenham", "Our Tottenham".

Here Tottenham's representation is tilted towards an aestheticised habitation; alongside being connected to other scales of space e.g. "The City". As one may expect, considering this space of representation is facilitated by those attempting to sell homes within Tottenham Hale's "Lock 17" development; the image is taken from the brochure. One can see the distinction between this representation and those explored in this chapter. However, such variations, while worthy of independent study, do not undermine this chapter's core argument; if anything, they strengthen it. These examples highlight the nuanced mechanisms through which the space of representation is able to arouse different desires, structure different perceptions. Yet the core relationship, of the space of representation over-determining concrete space *through* libidinal-economy, and vice-versa, remains intact. Likewise, these different forms of representation are often still intertwined with those discussed in this chapter; see below:

Figure 5.39, Keep It Local (Carroll, 2021).

However, there are elements of this phenomenon left unsatisfyingly developed by this chapter. In particular, surrounding questions of race. The chapter began with an exploration of the "Tottenham Gothic"; an imaginary constituted by a racist and classist ideology. Likewise, it argued that the slow-violence unleashed by *the loss* of this imaginary will disproportionately affect the ethnic working-class of Tottenham. However, it has had little to

say on the racial content of the incoming imaginary itself. It is significant that Digital Tottenham and the space(s) of representation orbiting are overwhelmingly white. The ability to satisfyingly pursue this claim is beyond the investigation of this chapter. However, from the texts analysed, it seems clear that the new imaginary ciphered into Tottenham isn't simply of bodies extracting heterodox enjoyment and experience from urban space;it of white bodies doing so. Future research is needed to better explore this. This chapter, while helping to understand this urban-imaginary, has produced an understanding that, regarding race, is fundamentally on the imaginary's own terms.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

"Just as the desires and wishes of the individual are frustrated and repressed in waking life only to reappear in disguised form in dreams during sleep, so the cityscape and artefacts found therein are dream-like creations of the dormant collectivity"

(Gilloch, 1996:104)

This conclusion will reiterate the analysis provided by the thesis. It will do so through evaluating the thesis's core arguments in accordance with the foundational research agenda outlined in the introduction; e.g. the research questions, sub-questions, and overarching aims. It will discuss how these academic objectives were achieved in a particular sense and the broader position these moments of analysis hold within the thesis overall. In addition, it will reiterate the origin of this research agenda: i.e. *why* had previous investigations into gentrification and/or urban political-economy been unable to satisfactorily answer (or generate) the academic questions underpinning the thesis[417].

The primary research questions pursue an ostensible explanation of the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification"; why is it consumed, who consumes it, and what are the implications? The sub-questions seek to illustrate the socio-spatial dynamics underlying the phenomena extricated by the primary questions. It should be noted, this is not an uni-dimensional relationship. These sets of 'things' over-determine each other, rather than one holding ontological primacy over the other; e.g. the relationship between them is one expression of the socio-spatial dialectic (Soja, 1980). In effect, these questions begin by explaining the quotidian before developing outwards to better understand the whole; e.g. from the molecular social level of the process to the broader socio-spatial system these molecules are contained with (and constitutive of).

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[417] Although, one should note, a more extensive analysis of this is outlined throughout the literature review.

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From the answers provided to these research questions, one is able to derive the broader academic contribution *beyond* the particular phenomena under empirical investigation; e.g. the overarching academic objectives. These have been satisfied as, through providing insight into the ostensible via the empirical, the thesis has derived a more general insight into the social processes underlying these discrete phenomena. Firstly, through illustrating elements of the *general* relationship between libidinal-economy and (urban)political-economy; of which the relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification" is only one expression. Secondly, through illustrating the deficiencies within existing research ontologies of gentrification. Thirdly, through highlighting the imperialistic tendencies within "Gentrification" as an academic concept. Finally, through providing an empirical contribution to the study of ideology and commodity-aesthetics; particularly through a Benjaminian approach to contemporary urban consumption.

However, before outlining the above, the chapter will critically examine the thesis itself and the ideological framework through which its explanations have been generated. This allows for a greater awareness of the inherent incompleteness of social research. The social world ceaselessly folds into itself; each social 'thing' contains the totality and as such absolute insight is impossible. To quote E.P Thompson (1970): "Like any other relationship, it is a fluency which evades analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomize its structure. The finest meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen… any more than it can give us one of deference or of love" (8). As researchers, we are forced to establish boundaries in order to imprint a semblance of order upon analysis. Yet, the choices of *where* these essential parameters are drawn changes the perspective given and, crucially, it does so in an ideological manner. These choices reflect our place within social processes, our social history, and the structural frameworks within which our researching body is situated. Within the thesis, particular 'lines' are drawn surrounding "The Political", Intersectionality (in particular regarding race), and libidinal-porosity. While other such 'lines' have

unavoidably been drawn, ones of equal significance, it would be impossible and impractical to provide each with a substantive discussion.

Critical Reflections: The State, Libidinal Multitudes, and Intersectionality

A fundamental contradiction exists between the clarity demanded by academic inquiry and the fractal quality of social phenomena. This thesis is no exception. It has provided *an* account of the "Urban Dreamworld"; the bodies that orbit it, the socio-spatial and political-libidinal structures into which it is enmeshed. It is an account which, while illuminating, must be recognised to be incomplete. Otherwise, the explanatory power of the analysis itself is undermined. One could 'pivot' the analytic inclination of the thesis in a number of directions and each would provide fruitful insight into social reality and the social phenomena under investigation. However, while valid academic excursions, to incorporate each of these insights congruently within this thesis would be to its detriment. Academic research often ought to tightly define its exploratory boundaries; to allow the insights generated to then engage in dialogue with other bounded fragments of knowledge. This allows the nuance within each to be fully explored. This overarching process steadily contributes to an insight into a discrete social thing; its different elements refracted through distinct research agendas and inclinations. With that said, it would be useful to briefly reflect on a handful of such perspectives. This process will illustrate points of future academic inquiry *while* also providing an opportunity to express what this thesis is (through reiterating what it is not).

A primary example of this surrounds questions of "The State" and the thesis's definition of "The Political". This thesis views "The Political" at the quotidian. "Politics", the process of power, is conceived at the point of the body; the body is considered as a political object. It is the raw material upon which and through which libidinal-economy 'works'. The Spinozist notion of the "catching of desires" is pivotal to the demarcations of "The Political" operationalised by the thesis. The central example highlighted by the thesis being the relationship between "Urban Dreamers" and the "Gentrifying Labour" their satisfaction

enables; through facilitating the realisation of surplus-value. However, there is a subtler dimension to examining politics *through* corporeal enjoyment. The thesis has highlighted the political-economic *work* within enjoyment; e.g. through exploring how the 'satisfaction' of desires is repeatedly connected to (re)producing the conditions of consumption (Cremin, 2011). The thesis has raised a fundamental political point; the "catching" of desires is political as extracting enjoyment exudes influence over the production of space (and, as such, social life itself) in a multitude of manners.

However, in concrete-space(s) this *everyday* form of politics exists in a perpetual entanglement with more orthodox forms of "The Political": e.g. "The State". As was discussed in the literature review[418] London's "Political-Assemblage" is constituted by national government, local states, mixed bodies, advisory boards, etc. This assemblage exerts a hegemonic influence over the production of urban-space. For instance, through the demarcations of zoning conducted by urban planning policy; such as the "City Fringe" development programme (GLA, 2015) or "A Plan for Tottenham" (LBH, 2012). This Political-Legal assemblage, the political force it exudes, and the regime of Neo-Liberal governmentality that disciplines it, are integral to understanding contemporary urban space and the social phenomena it contains. However, while this definition of "The Political" is integral to understanding the production of space, the thesis is not an investigation into this scale of politics. On an ontological level, the arguments made by this thesis recognise the insight provided by academics such as Lees (2003), Slater (2011), and Hackworth (2000), in illustrating the relationship between "The State" and gentrification. However, the thesis contributes to this discussion without simply reproducing a further empirical clarification of this perspective; e.g. by highlighting how, for instance, Hackney Council also facilitates "Fringe Gentrification" through its development of the "Colville Estate" and residential capacity. The value of such insights are not denied. However, the thesis has approached the production of urban space *through* libidinal-economy to provide a greater understanding of this socio-spatial process as a whole (e.g. it has provided an understanding of bodies and the political-economy of enjoyment, an epistemological position that can be readily integrated within more 'state-centric' approaches).

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[418] See pages 23 and 56.

Secondly, one must recognise that this focus on consuming bodies (and the libidinal-economies that move them) is not as universal as the analysis suggests. As discussed in the methodology, those interviewed for this thesis were primarily white. Likewise, my own positionality, in terms of race and gender, will have unavoidably further marginalised intersectional concerns within the data underpinning the thesis. As such, it is unsurprising that the analysis engendered has provided little substantial analysis of race or gender; in isolation or regarding the integrative relationship between these social categories and the social phenomena investigated. In the Tottenham chapter, it was touched upon that the "Urban Dreamworld" was often an imaginary populated by *white* bodies. These threads of analysis are worth pursuing and would provide a valuable critical appraisal of the thesis.

Finally, one should note that this thesis has fundamentally explored the relationship between a *particular* libidinal-economy and the production of space. Of course, outside of academic abstraction, a particular concrete-space is overdetermined through a multitude of libidinal-economies; to varying degrees in accordance with the space in question. The "Urban Dreamers" do not have a monopoly on libidinal-economy. Throughout the empirical chapters, these different libidinal-economies briefly erupted into the analysis;for instance, in Spitalfields Market where Shoreditch bleeds into "The City" or the space(s) of broader representations produced through Tottenham's digital influencers. Fundamentally, the thesis has little to say concerning the relationship *between* these distinct libidinal-economies in the production of discrete spaces. However, the thesis has provided a conceptual and methodological framework through which to pursue such questions.

The chapter will now evaluate the thesis's satisfaction of the foundational research agenda; e.g. the answers provided to the research questions, sub-questions, and overarching aims.

Why are these bodies drawn to the "Urban Dreamworld"?

This question is a monad; one which contains the entire thesis. This research began by asking "What makes people enjoy gentrified space?". As it matured, through a reflexive

engagement with concrete reality and theoretical development, this original question developed into the above. However, the core impetus of that original question remains: What is alluring about "The Fringe" spaces of London's former "Industrial Crescent" for those that consume it? What makes it *enjoyable* for those who consume it? These questions, in primordial and contemporary form, are absent from the established literature. As discussed extensively in the literature review, this absence is engendered by the flawed ontological assumptions underpinning the hegemonic approaches to "Gentrification". Desire, urban-imaginaries, and the immaterial spaces with which they intertwine, are systematically relegated to epiphenomena. Generative power is placed exclusively within the parameters of orthodox (critical) political-economy and social-symbolic reproduction. Consequently, questions regarding *why* particular urban bodies are drawn to such spaces, and why they enjoy the experience provided by such spaces, have been left unasked (or, asked only in accordance with the orthodox parameters of investigation). In contrast, the thesis places such questions, regarding desire, urban-imaginaries, and immaterial space, at the centre. This is what provides this research question with its monadological quality. The thesis, its research agenda and conceptual framework, have unfolded from this 'original' commitment to investigate the relationship between desire and the production of space. In doing so, it seeks to utilise the sociological insights of Lyotard, Benjamin, and Lefevbre, to reinvigorate the study of gentrification and contemporary urban-space.

In different ways, each chapter has developed the answer provided to this question. Often, as will be discussed, in accordance with the particularities of each case-site. However, leaving these nuances temporarily aside, the thesis has provided a more general answer. In brief, a particular ideal-type of urban bodies -- later identified as "Urban Dreamers" -- are drawn to these spaces through an overarching desire for a particular form of urban-experience (and, by extension, for the particular form of enjoyment this experience is perceived to facilitate).

The first empirical chapter, which investigated Dalston, provided the thesis with a foundational answer to this research question. It argued the allure is produced through phantasy. Specifically, through a set of phantasies contained within three overarching and

interlinked "complexes": "The Organic", "The Palimpsestic", and "The Collective". While the libidinal *form* of these "complexes" varied, each functioned in the same manner; each facilitated the valorisation of 'things'; the objects, places, bodies, and practices, found within the case-sites. In effect, while the phantasmic *justification* varied between, for example "Organic Work" or "Places with Traces", the result is the same; the demarcation of the enjoyable.

Importantly, the Dalston chapter not only collected these "Complexes". It highlighted the terrain binding these seemingly discrete phenomena. It argued these interlinking elements ought to be conceptualised as a "constellation"; wherein each particular manifestation is a different expression of a generative whole (Benjamin, 2019). Each "Complex", and constitutive phantasies, are structured around a shared "Wish-Image" (Benjamin, 1999). An expression of the desire for 'unalienated' (urban)experience. The allure is the ability to 'satisfy' a striving for a different way of consuming the city. Dalston -- and this form of "Fringe" urban-space -- exists as a contemporary "Urban Dreamworld",wherein the utopian desires of the social collective are ossified in urban-space through commodification (and pursued accordingly). This "Urban Dreamworld" is the libidinal engine of "Fringe Gentrification". As such, rather than *simply* a revanchist project, "Fringe Gentrification" is a socio-spatial by-product of radical desires' expression and ossification within a capitalist urban environment. It is precisely this insight, that "Fringe Gentrification" is the socio-spatial *by-product*, while the phantasmic "Urban Dreamworld" is the 'thing' itself, the object of desire, that facilitated the forthcoming ontological critique of "Gentrification".

Who are these bodies drawn to the "Urban Dreamworld"?

Existing paradigms explaining gentrification would answer this question definitively: "These consumers are gentrifiers!". While such a claim is not entirely wrong, this explanation obscures as much of social reality as it reveals. The thesis has shown how these urban figures are more complex than the definition "gentrifiers" allows for. These bodies orbit a particular libidinal-economy, one identified to be structured by a specific demarcation of "The Enjoyable", "The Unenjoyable", etc. Wherein, "The Enjoyable" is that

which provides 'unalienated' (urban)experience. While existing paradigms would consider this to be superfluous, and would instead focus upon the gentrification their 'satisfaction' entails, this thesis has critiqued such conceptualisations. It has sought to define these bodies in accordance with the libidinal-economy that enchants them and disciplines their desire (Lyotard, 1993). In effect, their function, within urban political-economy as 'gentrifiers' is seen *somewhat* as secondary; a more exhaustive justification of which will be provided later in the chapter.

As discussed, each chapter provides different insights into this libidinal-economy. As such, the definitional inflection of these bodies is partially contingent upon the concrete-space analysed. Likewise, as justified in the methodology, any universal definition that attempts to reduce the complexity of social-life to a singular category is epistemologically doomed. Instead, one should view the forthcoming definition as an ideal-type. Like any ideal-type, all this definition seeks to express is a social tendency; in this case, a tendency of particular urban bodies towards a particular form of enchantment. With these sociological qualifications in mind, the primary answer to this research question was provided by the Dalston chapter. This chapter contrasted the "Urban Dreamworld", and those in its orbit, with "The Flaneur". The historic 'urban figure' who, Walter Benjamin argued, similarly pursued satisfaction through urban-experience (Tester, 1994). Importantly, "The Flaneur", and its orientations, were drawn into a productive contrast with the participants. These two ideal-types are superficially similar; both pursue a notion of the 'urban authentic', both are drawn to everyday urban life and detritus (Buck-Morss, 1991) etc. However, despite these apparent similarities, these two categories define "enjoyable" (or "authentic") urban-experience in radically different ways and, likewise, pursue this urban-experience through radically different means. The consumers of the "Urban Dreamworld" found within the case-sites derive enjoyment from an 'authentic' urban-experience that is more commodified, democratic, and fundamentally political. As such, the "Urban Dreamer", the urban figure who chases post-capitalist wish-images, is neither "Flaneur" nor "Gentrifier", even though it shares a libidinal semblance with the former and, at times and in different ways, functions as the latter.

Through answering these primary research questions -- "Why are these bodies drawn to the Urban Dreamworld?" and "Who are these bodies drawn to the "Urban Dreamworld" -- the thesis has provided a preliminary explanation of the phenomena under investigation. However, this insight, to properly understand the relationships between these phenomena, must be augmented with the answers provided to the sub-questions. In doing so, the chapter will reiterate the underlying socio-spatial relations through which the above is expressed.

<u>What is the relationship between these different 'Fringe' spaces and libidinal-economy?</u>

Instead of existing in isolation, each particular case-site exists in relation with one another *within* the overarching socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification". One should note, these case-sites, like all concrete-spaces in London, have innumerable points of connection; ranging on scales from urban infrastructure, social networks, historical associations, and so on. This thesis has sought to limit the parameters of investigation to "Fringe Gentrification" and the "Urban Dreamworld" that facilitates it. In effect, the relationship under investigation regards how these different places are incorporated *within* "Fringe Gentrification" and the different roles they play within this socio-spatial process.

This relationship between these distinct spaces is defined by the theatrical 'logic' of this libidinal-economy. As discussed, this libidinal-economy operates through a particular demarcation; e.g. "The Enjoyable" is that which aligns with a notion of 'unalienated' urban-experience[419]. This libidinal-economy produces[420] an ideal form of representational-space; against which particular concrete-spaces are measured. In this process of measurement, the different spaces are viewed differently; in accordance with the congruence (or incongruence) between the representational and the concrete. In Dalston, there exists, for "Urban Dreamers", a broad unification. In Shoreditch, "Urban Dreamers" increasingly experienced a "frustrating gap" between the representational and the concrete. Shoreditch was increasingly unable to consistently provide 'unalienated' urban-experience (or, more specifically, the phantasy of this provision was more routinely interrupted). In

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[419] Conversely, "The Unenjoyable" is defined in accordance with the 'alienated'.

[420] It is a way of seeing inscribed into the orbiting bodies.

Tottenham, the thesis illustrated the *labour* behind generating the appearance of congruence. Consequently, each case-site reflected a different moment within the life-cycle of the "Urban Dreamworld" and the socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification" it facilitates; its life, death, and rebirth.

Importantly, these spatial moments are ephemeral. Dalston's unification of "Urban Dreamworld" and concrete-space is not eternal, nor has Tottenham always faced imminent libidinal investment. Through empirical investigation, the thesis has highlighted how this ephermerality is not the product of chance. The libidinal commitment to *this* form of urban-experience -- the 'unalienated' as enjoyable -- is fundamentally tenuous within contemporary urban-space. As such, the constitutive complexes and phantasies of this libidinal-economy, while enabling the libidinal (and, by extension, economic) valorisation of concrete-space also, simultaneously, contain a latent potential to drive libidinal disinvestment. In Shoreditch, the thesis traced this process of disinvestment; the 'gap' that "Urban Dreamers" increasingly experienced between the representational and the concrete. The empirical investigation captured several expressions of this process:

1) The *perceived* (re)emergence of the devalorised 'things' -- objects, places, bodies, and practices -- of "Everyday Capitalism".
2) An increasingly porous boundary between the attractive and the repulsive; constituted through "Dreamworld" homunculi[421]: the Coldplay "Urban Grime", the "Time-Worn" McDonalds, etc.
3) An atmosphere of *fear* regarding a future of concrete-space dominated by the above.

In effect, the Shoreditch chapter argued that the changes above, within concrete (and immaterial) space, engendered a situation wherein "Urban Dreamers" were increasingly unable to 'satisfy' their desire for 'unalienated' urban-experience. The "libidinal baggage" within Shoreditch increasingly inhibited the extraction of enjoyment from space. As such, "Urban Dreamers" were increasingly driven, through the pursuit of enjoyment, to "Fringe"

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[421] Wherein, the dreamworld becomes an uncanny parody of itself, caught between the valorised and the de-valorised; the attractive and the repulsive.

spaces with less uptake inhibitors; spaces more congruent with the "Urban Dreamworld". Through this insight, the chapter articulates that the ephemerality of these spatial moments is, in part, an internal production of the underpinning libidinal engine.

However, the Tottenham chapter developed this insight into the relationship between the case-sites further. It articulated that the de-libidinisation of "Urban Dreamworlds" is central to the socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification". For this political-economy, disinvestment is not a failure *per se* but rather a form of fuel; it is the precursor to libidinal (and, by extension, economic) investment. As such, the relationship between *libidinal* investment and disinvestment develops the arguments made by Smith (2005) regarding the *necessity* of economic disinvestment to facilitate future investment and gentrification. In this case, the process of de-libinidinisation ensures that new "Urban Dreamworlds" are always sought out; facilitating the expansion of "Fringe Gentrification" (and the extraction of surplus-value it is defined by) into the broader urban environment[422]. The chapter on Tottenham explored this dynamic; whereby the enjoyment disinvested from ruined "Dreamworlds" was reinvested into embryonic space. Importantly, the chapter showed how the process of libidinisation is more complex than "Urban Dreamers" 'discovering' a pre-assembled "Urban Dreamworld". Through an empirical analysis of Instagram and the space(s) of representation it facilitates, the chapter argued that the process of libidinisation is defined by *labour*. It *takes work* to enable space to satisfy (or appear to satisfy) desire; within Tottenham's concrete-space, representational-space and space(s) of representation. In doing so, these moments of labour, such as those conducted through Instagram, align space with libidinal-economy and, by extension, lay the foundation for economic valorisation and the extraction of surplus-value.

If one took the abstraction innate to academic analysis too directly, there is a danger that the social process it aims to represent would be distorted. The framework above posits an overly simplistic story. One where Shoreditch is dead, Dalston is living on borrowed time, and Tottenham is the imminent resurrection. This framework illustrates the temporal

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[422] It is for this reason that Smith's concept of the "Rent-Gap", once reinvigorated through libidinal-economy, becomes useful again.

relationship between these 'moments' of "Fringe Gentrification"; the libidinisation and de-libidinisation of "Urban Dreamworlds". However, the social reality is more blurred. The poles of de-libidinisation and libidinisation occur simultaneously, at varying paces, and, for different bodies, to different intensities. The fieldwork conducted in each case-site attested to this. In Shoreditch, the analysis highlighted how while some "Urban Dreamers" considered Shoreditch to be dead, for others it was dying, for others merely disrupted. Likewise, through the fieldwork, Tottenham was sometimes viewed as a new dawn, for others it was an unknown entity. Within the complexity of concrete social reality, such variation is inescapable. Likewise, these distinctions do not undermine the integral point made by the thesis. Namely, that one can derive a general tendency within the relationship between these different 'moments' of "The Fringe". As the constitution of space changes, it becomes more or less resonant with the representational content of this libidinal-economy. As such, bodies are pushed and pulled round urban-space; in search of blooming "Urban Dreamworlds" through which to 'satisfy' their desire to extract 'unalienated' enjoyment and urban-experience. Importantly, it is *through* this relationship, the life-cycle of the "Urban Dreamworld", that "Fringe Gentrification" can be understood; libidinal-investment and libidinal-disinvestment are intricately intertwined with economic investment and the "Fringe Gentrification" this entails.

What is the relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification"?

In many ways, the preceding discussions have laid the foundation for answering this question. This thesis has argued that a complex relationship exists between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification". At its most rudimentary, the "Urban Dreamworld" is the spatial form *produced* by the libidinal-economy that interpellates "Urban Dreamers"; it is the *ossification* of these desires. However, at the same time, the space through which the "Urban Dreamworld" is expressed is simultaneously productive in its own right; it *allures* "Urban Dreamers" to it through the 'unalienated' urban-experience it promises. In contrast, "Fringe Gentrification" is the socio-spatial process unleashed through the interrelationship between libidinal-economy (such as that facilitating the "Urban Dreamworld") and political-economy. Within capitalist-space, desire, including the

commodified form of political-anticipation that characterises the "Urban Dreamworld", is unavoidably transformed into an economic activity (Cremin, 2011). The "Urban Dreamworld" not only facilitates the 'satisfaction' of this libidinal-economy, it also facilitates (and requires) economic investment and the extraction of surplus-value from the concrete-space that hosts it. In effect, the relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification" is one of symbiosis; one concrete expression of the wider symbiosis that Lyotard (1993) argues exists between libidinal-economy and political-economy. The "Urban Dreamworld" is produced by libidinal-economy and, akin to a midas touch, this process, like almost all urban 'things', facilitates gentrification; e.g. the raising of exchange-values, the facilitation of their realisation, and the slow-violence this entails (Pain, 2019). As such, the thesis has developed the Lefebvrian (1991) understanding; the production of space, as a social process, is unavoidably a *libidinal* process interlaid within the political-economic. This dimension will be further illustrated when discussing the critical reappraisal of "Gentrification" as an explanatory concept.

While this articulates the basic relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification" it is necessary to expand the analysis; namely, through reflecting more closely on the mechanisms *within* libidinal-economy. At its most fundamental, libidinal-economy produces space through 'pushing' and 'pulling' consuming bodies; driving them to the concrete spaces demarcated as 'enjoyable' *through* desire. Through this provision of bodies, libidinal-economy provides the spark required for surplus-value to be realised and extracted from space. As such, libidinal-economy exudes generative pressure upon social space. However, the empirical fieldwork and subsequent analysis highlighted the *nuance* within this generative role played by libidinal-economy in the production of space. As the mediating link *between* the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification" is libidinal-economy, this shifting function within libidinal-economy engenders a reflective shift within the relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification". While the elementary relationship derived by the thesis doesn't change *per se*, it does tilt. To illustrate this, it is necessary to briefly re-articulate the mechanisms *within* libidinal-economy that, in different ways, produce and discipline desire.

Through a Spinozist ontology of desire, a structuralism of affects (Lordon, 2013), one can recognise two fundamental mechanisms within libidinal-economy: epithume and epithumogenesis (Lordon, 2014). While these concepts have guided the thesis, it is worth re-articulating them:

1) Epithumogenesis -- The production of desire through labour.
2) Epithume -- The production of desire 'without' a subject.

While appearing independent, these two elements are mutually constitutive. The former draws upon the latter for its raw material; e.g. each act of immaterial labour draws upon, utilises, etc, the established regime contained within the epithume. Meanwhile, such acts of epithumogenesis provide the epithume with sediment; and, as such, provide resources for future moments of epithumogenesis. While the desire for concrete-space is *unavoidably* the product of both phenomena, the dominance of each shifts relative to the temporal 'moment' within the life-cycle that exists between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification".

In established "Urban Dreamworlds", libidinal-economy facilitates the attraction (or repulsion) of bodies primarily through the epithume; the *established* representational space. These spaces entice the desire of "Urban Dreamers" through recognition within an established urban-imaginary. It is through this quality that the extraction of surplus-value from concrete-space is maintained and/or intensified; thus, the epithume primarily facilitates the socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification"[423]. In contrast, within the embryonic "Urban Dreamworlds" this epithume is less hegemonic. There is a greater need for epithumogenesis; in this case, immaterial labour that *produces* this representational quality. The thesis explored one example of this; the immaterial labour that, through the space(s) of representation produced, *worked* to reconstitute Tottenham's place within the urban-imaginary. It is a labour that, through facilitating libidinal-investment, simultaneously provides a foundation for the extraction of greater degrees of surplus-value

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[423] In effect, the epithumogenetic work, required to generate such a position, has already been conducted.

from concrete-space[424]. As such, there is a multiplicity of social relations *within* the relationship that exists between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification"; different expressions of the same fundamental process addressed above.

Through satisfying these interconnected research questions and sub-questions, the thesis has outlined the process of "Fringe Gentrification". It has argued this process is driven, in different ways, by libidinal-economy. Specifically, a libidinal-economy that valorises (and facilitates) the "Urban Dreamworld". A form of phantasmic space where the interpellated pursue an urban-experience they perceive as *beyond* that engendered by contemporary political-economy. As this libidinal-investment facilitates the *economic* valorisation (and realisation) of space, it brings with it the socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification". In effect, the socio-spatial process of "Fringe Gentrification" within London's former "Industrial Crescent" is fueled by a form of commodified political-anticipation.

<u>What does this research illustrate about the relationship between urban Political-Economy and Libidinal-Economy?</u>

The relationship between the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification" is one manifestation of a more fundamental relationship;namely, that which exists between libidinal-economy and urban political-economy (Lyotard, 1993). This is an area of academic inquiry underexplored within urban studies and critical theory. Through empirical engagement revealing one manifestation of this relationship, the thesis has also extracted a rudimentary insight into this broader process. Namely, through arguing that a dialectic exists between the production of surplus-value and, through libidinal-economy, the extraction of enjoyment. The convergence of these elements are central in the production of space.

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[424] One should note, while the above highlights the general tendency, both epithume and epithumomogenesis produce desire within the case-stes. Immaterial labourers still produce spaces of representation, which amplify or curate Shoreditch's representational-space (albeit, as discussed, often in accordance with broader libidinal-economies simultaneously). While Tottenham, through the layering provided by immaterial labour, is increasingly generative of self-sufficient representational-space.

As explored throughout each chapter of the thesis, libidinal-economy, in different ways, facilitates the realisation of surplus-value through the transference of desire into consumption. Through the attraction of bodies, libidinal-economy enables the *prospective* value imbued within the urban environment to be extracted; to the benefit of those who own the "Means of Enjoyment" and ancillary spaces. Reflecting back on the urban development surrounding the "Urban Fringe", the various extensions of consumption capacity -- establishing valorised spaces of consumption, convergent resident spaces, etc (GLA, 2015) -- are valueless *until* consuming bodies are accrued (Clarke, 1991). Furthermore, this acquisition is facilitated through other forms of capital investment; for instance, the extension of infrastructure which facilitates the movement of consuming bodies (Revington, 2015). This tendency has been uncovered throughout this research, in particular regarding the realisation of value within commercial capacity[425]. Consequently, with the extraction of surplus-value as a key determinant within the production of space (Lefevbre, 1991; Harvey, 2001); we can recognise that libidinal-economy, owing to its centrality in this process (Lyotard, 1993), is likewise of pivotal significance. To understand the production of space, it is necessary to grasp the production of desire and the constitutive mechanisms that over-determine this process.

Secondly, and more subtly, is the manner in which libidinal-economy interpellates bodies into facilitating political-economy. One may argue the above is one example of this; within capitalist social relations to consume is a form of work. However, through pursuing 'satisfaction', bodies are also *put to work* in more concrete ways; e.g. bodies not only facilitate the realisation of value, they also *produce* value. This thesis explored several concrete manifestations of this dynamic including:

1) Walking within a crowd.
2) 'Filling' a space of consumption with an alluring atmosphere.

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[425] This argument, while not empirically explored within this thesis, can be granted heightened explanatory power through focusing on the residential,which while fundamentally connected to the commercial -- e.g. of bodies wishing to live within places from which they can extract enjoyment, or living in places infrastructurally connected to such places -- exists as a phenomenon worthy of investigation in its own right.

3) Transmuting urban-experience into urban-representation[426].

While distinct, a fundamental logic is shared between these moments; bodies are momentarily interpellated into immaterial labourers. These bodies, as a by-product of satisfying their desires, valorise concrete-space through imbuing (or concentrating) either representational-space or the space of representation. In effect, these bodies, allured to concrete-space, work to ensure its continued centripetal force upon other bodies. As such, the consuming body is simultaneously a producing body; work is conducted that reproduces the conditions of consumption. The notion of "Gentrifying Labour", explored throughout the thesis, is one pivotal example of this.

In summary, through empirical investigation the thesis has articulated that the relationship between libidinal-economy and urban political-economy, while varied, is one of labour. Libidinal-economy *works* on bodies, through discipling their desires for, perceptions of, and movement through, urban-space. Yet, in doing so, these bodies are 'put to work'. Firstly, through the labour of consumption. The body's energy expended through consumption to realise surplus-value for the owners of the "Means of Enjoyment" (and the connective broader spaces). Secondly, through the reproduction of libidinal-economy. It is this element of labour, of *reproducing* libidinal-economy, that provides a development to Lyotard's concept of "Libidinal-Economy". The empirical analysis identified how quotidian immaterial labourers, in different ways, facilitate the generative force of libidinal-economy; through imbuing (and reproducing) the representational qualities of concrete-spaces. In effect, the same centripetal forces which drew these bodies, they themselves now, in part, reproduce. Consequently, libidinal-economy is co-constitutive of its own reproduction while simultaneously producing political-economy; a process enabled, in part, through labouring bodies. As such, the binary originally posited by this question -- the relationship between libidinal-economy and political-economy -- should, following the findings of this thesis, be treated with suspicion. The bindings between libidinal-economy and political-economy, like that binding consumption to production (Marx, 2005), are so tight it is more accurate to see

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[426] The Tottenham chapter also highlighted the interconnection between these moments of labour e.g. the transmutation into representation amplifies the labour of other moments, such as walking in in a crowd.

the two as fundamentally integrated (Lyotard, 1991). Libidinal-economy is central to political-economy, the capitalist city cannot exist without the demands of enjoyment. Political-economy is fundamental to libidinal-economy; there is no neutral enjoyment, it *becomes* political through its entwinement with value (Cremin, 2011). As such, the relationship between libidinal-economy and urban political-economy are two expressions of the same totality; the dominance of capitalist social-relations over the consumption and production of urban space.

How does this research develop the critical study of Gentrification?

This thesis has shown that it is essential to recognise the importance of libidinal-economy in the production of space; the desire, phantasies, and fears, which discipline (a broadly defined) consumption. Without libidinal-economy, one cannot understand the *production* of consumption. Likewise, to grasp libidinal-economy in a spatial context, it is necessary to conceptualise space trialectically (Lefevbre, 1991). This conceptual framework provides a language to uncover the fragmented relationship between the immateriality of space and desire. The existing explanatory paradigms lacked the ontological delicacy to substantially engage with this relationship and the phenomena that manifest through it. This is of importance beyond "Fringe Gentrification" and the "Urban Dreamwold". The Lefevbrian/Lyotardian framework developed by this thesis provides a fundamental challenge to the study of gentrification more broadly. Through working between paradigms -- through focusing on the *production of consumption* (through investigating the forces which disciplines desires) and the *labour of consumption* (through investigating the manner in which consumption is itself generative of its own necessary conditions) -- existing conceptual frameworks have been drawn into a critical examination.

Firstly, the findings of this thesis have highlighted the necessity of reconceptualising the "Rent Gap" (Smith, 2005). This research has shown how each "Rent Gap" is fundamentally intertwined with the representational (and representation thereof). This immaterial element of space is integral -- as highlighted by the Tottenham chapter -- in the widening of "Rent Gaps" and the facilitation of their closure. In the literature review, the failure of orthodox

conceptionalistions of the "Rent-Gap" was traced to the classical labour theory of value underpinning Neil Smith's original formulation. A flaw akin to Marx's inability to understand the *representational* elements of value and its relationship to *concrete* labour (Williams, 1973)[427]. This is a constitutive flaw uncritically reproduced within contemporary research that draws upon this explanatory framework. In distinction, this thesis has understood the production of space through a more nuanced conception of value (and labour). Within each chapter, the value of concrete-space has been highlighted to be intertwined with *representational* value. Consequently, like gentrification itself, the "Rent-Gap" is a process fundamentally intertwined with immaterial space, immaterial labour, and libidinal-economy. At points, the established literature had almost acknowledged this insight; prominent examples being Smith's (2005) own reflections on the "Frontier Aesthetic" and Zukin's (1989) work on cultural intermediaries and place-makers. However, the fundamental theoretical insight -- into the production of immaterial space and "Representational Rent-Gaps" -- has, until now, been neglected.

Secondly, the thesis highlighted the *production* of the habitus. While a secondary concern, with the primary theoretical intervention aimed at reconciling the "Rent-Gap" with immaterial labour and libidinal-economy, the questions are sufficiently tangled to recognise the proxy provision of groundwork. As discussed, a primary deficiency within Bourdieusian explanations is that they take their own terms as fixed (Calhoun, 1993). For instance, the question of *how* -- through labour and power -- the habitus and its arteries are formed is abstracted (and artificially placed beyond the parameters of sociological investigation). As such, the explanatory power of such arguments is fundamentally limited to symbolic reproduction (Butler and Robson, 2003). For instance, the allure of the phantasmic 'things' constituting the "Urban Dreamworld" would be reduced to understanding how such 'things' facilitate the reproduction of one's symbolic class position. In effect, such perspectives fail to reveal the social constitution of the phenomena. This thesis, through documenting the generative potential of immaterial labour (and articulating why such labour resonates with historical bodies) provides a tentative corrective. It has shown the *historical* contingency of the habitus, the moments of labour which generate it, and the forces

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[427] See full critique on pages 71-72 .

with the capacity to change its orientation. Ironically, for a theoretical position created to explain the social world *through* a model, rather than using the social world to explain a model, the Bourdieusian framework has allowed its theoretical preoccupations to cloud insight into social reality[428]. Consequently, through the empirical material collected and analysed by this thesis, one can derive the groundwork for a substantive theoretical corrective to Bourdieusian explanatory frameworks of gentrification (and social reality generally). The methodological and conceptual framework operationalised by the thesis provides a means through which to understand *why* the 'things' that facilitate social distinction are desired and *enjoyed*. In doing so, it provides a greater insight into the libidinal underpinnings of habitus and field.

<u>What does this research tell us about "Gentrification" as an explanatory concept?</u>

Alongside this critical intervention into the study of gentrification, this thesis has also shed critical light on "Gentrification" as an explanatory concept. Through investigating "Fringe Gentrification", the discursive language surrounding gentrification has been revealed as inadequate. "Gentrification" is an imperialistic concept; a discourse filled with pre-established characters, assumptions, and preconceived notions. These explanatory 'rules' of "Gentrification" flatten the distinction between complex socio-spatial phenomena. For instance, "Fringe Gentrification" -- a process driven by the valorisation of 'unalienated' urban-experience and various appendages of intertwined immaterial labourers -- is lumped in with a myriad of substantially divergent phenomena. Likewise, the 'Gentrifiers' themselves are radically varied; in terms of economic position, desires, perception, etc. For this imperialistic discourse, the stock owning bourgeoisie studied by Butler et al and the, often precarious, consumers of "The Fringe'' are considered synonymous.

'Gentrified Space' and 'Gentrifier' are misnomers. Too often, these categories are conceptualised as ontological absolutes. These categories *do* have value, but only if we

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[428] Separately, it has provided a critical appraisal of the economic determinism implicit within Bourdieusian arguments. While undoubtedly cultural capital -- and its expression of 'taste' -- is intertwined with economic position, the picture is more complex than these scholars of gentrification have allowed for. Within concrete-space it is clear that those phenomena, considered the exclusive terrain of a middle-class habitus, refuse to remain within such strict boundaries.

recognise them to be modular; they are qualities of a space or a body. 'Gentrification' is not a unique process, which affects particular spaces like a sickness[429], it is a latent quality innate to *all* space within capitalist society[430]; a quality further emphasised within a neo-liberal regime of accumulation. Gentrification is the logic of capitalism expressed in space; a word used to describe the *violence* of exchange-value. Wherein, the material and immaterial 'investment' into space, a process facilitated through the political, does little to change the economic position of those currently connected to place (with what benefits it does bring being distributed through one's intersectional subject position). The result being a process of material, or representational, displacement; or, an increasingly precarious everyday life. Like 'Gentrification', 'Gentrifier' is also modular. It is not a subject position, as imagined by the established literature, but rather something a body does. At different moments, through different actions, some of which have been explored by this thesis, bodies contribute to the 'Gentrification' of space; they conduct "Gentrifying Labour". Specifically, through providing forms of labour which either increase the value of space or facilitate its realisation; as discussed regarding the relationship between libidinal-economy and urban political-economy. In effect, to 'gentrify' is something endemic to socio-spatial relations; rather than being the exclusive realm of urban villains and nefarious deeds.

Consequently, while explaining a form of gentrification, the thesis has highlighted the problematic discursive landscape that the concept of "Gentrification" (and its derivatives, including "Fringe Gentrification") exists in. It is essential to recognise the value of this concept alongside its limitations. In doing so, we ensure that our understanding of social reality isn't hindered by the conceptual tools we have created to investigate it. However, with that said, this thesis has highlighted that -- while imperfect -- this conceptual landscape also provides an important language of explanation; a framework through which, if critically utilised, enables an insight into particular socio-spatial relations, power differentials, and the broader phenomena into which they are integrated[431].

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[429] For example: "Urban Gentrification", "Fringe Gentrification", "Rural Gentrification"; see page 47 for discussion.

[430] This includes, but is not limited to, the phantasmic "Urban Dreamworld" explored by the thesis.

[431] In particular, the conceptual framework surrounding "Gentrification" allows us to illustrate the power differentials that are expressed through space.

What insight does this research provide into "Commodity-Aesthetics"?

This thesis has also contributed to academic inquiry beyond the production of space (and its manifestation of 'Gentrification'). Specifically, it provides an important insight into the Marxist critique of commodity-aesthetics. Critical Theory has always, in different ways, connected its *political* critique to an *aesthetic* critique. It offers a critique of the aesthetic experience engendered by capitalism alongside the ideological potential of this experience. Within this tradition, the primary thread is derived from an orthodox "hermeneutics of suspicion" (Ricoeur, 1970). In different ways, the arguments made by theorists such as Adorno, Marcuse, Haug, and Fromm, conceptualise commodity-aesthetics as a derivative of commodity fetishism[432]. In effect, commodity-aesthetics are viewed *simply* as a subjugating phenomena; an illusion which, in different ways, safeguard the reproduction of capitalist political-economy. This thesis has produced empirical insights which question this approach. Specifically, while recognising the essential conceptualisation provided by the "School of Suspicion", regarding the relationship between commodity-aesthetics, ideology and political-economy. However, this approach -- in isolation -- is unable to grasp the aesthetic nuance within contemporary commodity culture,wherein there is an increasing eroticisisation of that which purports to transcend capitalist regimes of consumption.

However, within critical theory there exists another strand of thought; one which attempts to understand commodity-aesthetics through the "hermeneutics of suspicion" and "hermeneutics of anticipation" simultaneously (Bloch, 1959). It is to this tradition that this thesis contributes; both empirically -- through the provision of grounded investigation -- and theoretically. This thesis has provided an empirical validation of Walter Benjamin's notion of the "Wish-Image" and its spatial expression of the "Urban Dreamworld". For Benjamin, the "Wish-Image" is the evocation of the dormant utopian desires of the social collective; which

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[432] The hermeneutics of suspicion reproduce a binary of high and low art, wherein immaterial labour is defined and split artificially. As such, the utopian desires are excluded from commodity-aesthetics and placed exclusively within the parameters of art. The notion of the wish-image challenges this, it seeks to uncover the ossified radical desire within material commodity culture; the libidinal resources that, while reproducing capitalism through the transference of desire into consumption, operated through a longing for the unalienated. This maintains another important insight. These resources don't simply appear, they are a process that is continually produced (and, in the act, modified). The regime of desire is not simply a product of epithume but also epithumogensis.

finds itself expressed through, and intertwined with, commodity-aesthetics. When viewed this way, the commodity aesthetic provides an important insight into material reality; specifically, through "Wish-Images" expressing curvature within our "structure of feeling" (Williams, 2005). Through an investigation into the desires, phantasies, and perceptions, of "Urban Dreamers" and the ossification of this libidinal constellation within the space of "Fringe Gentrification", the thesis has provided the "hermeneutics of anticipation" with concrete grounding. The urban world has been shown to be filled with, and fueled by, traces of radical desire; promises for that which is currently denied by material reality.

In particular, this thesis has shown the lived conditions of the "Hermeneutics of Anticipation"; the everyday production and social relations within which it is situated. Importantly, this conceptualisation anticipates Adorno's critique of Benjamin's work on commodity-aesthetics (Adorno and Scholem, 2012). Adorno was critical of what he considered to be the idealist underpinnings of "Wish-Images", "Dreamworlds", and "Abstract Utopias"; likening such ideas to Jungian archetypes[433]. However, this thesis has provided a material explanation; a synthesisation of Benjamin (and Bloch's) theoretical insight with libidinal-economy (e.g. the 'Utopian' desires, drives, and urges, are shown to be deeply intertwined, for both production and reproduction, with political-economy, immaterial labour, and socio-spatial relations). This perspective allows us to understand the material conditions *underpinning* such commodity-aesthetics. When viewed this way, in contrast to Benjamin[434], "Wish-Images" are not only *simply* left unfulfilled due to commodity-fetishism. Instead, this thesis has shown how "Wish-Images" are active forces *within* political-economy. The utopian desires of the collective are not only endlessly deferred by commodity-fetishism, they are, in a myriad of ways, put to work by it. In response to Adorno, the material basis of these expressions of abstract utopia is precisely the generative power they hold.

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[433] For Adorno, the concept of the collective implicit within Benjamin's theorising obscures the reality of class conflict and class division (Adorno and Scholem, 2012).

[434] The projected critique of the "devil's work", which would delineate the two (Adorno and Scholem, 2012:544) was never completed.

Consequently, commodity-aesthetics are not *simply* a negative illusion, as the orthodox strand of critical interpretation suggests. The thesis has argued that the aesthetic of the commodity -- or, at least, that found within "Fringe Gentrification" -- is a dialectical moment; a conjuncture of conciliation and anticipation. This insight is particularly important within our historical moment. As Walter Benjamin argued, the superstructure of society does not mechanically reflect its constitutive base, but rather it expresses it (Benjamin, 1997)[435]. The reignition of critical appetite within the social body is expressed -- not only through politics and thought -- but also through material culture; the increasing prevalence and pertinence of "Wish-Images" within commodity-aesthetics. As critical theorists, it is essential that we recognise how these manifestations are something more complex than simply an illusion. It is necessary to approach commodity-aesthetics in a manner similar to how this thesis has approached the "Urban Dreamworld"; one neither 'gives in' to its claims of utopia nor hand-waves the emancipatory desires such claims are generated by. This, I feel, is an important road to walk within Marxist cultural theory, one with value far beyond the "Urban Dreamworld" and "Fringe Gentrification".

Concluding Remarks

These insights into contemporary urban-experience and its intertwined relationship with the political-economy of space have been made possible through extending the frontiers of urban research itself. This thesis is a testament to the sociological value of a prismic approach to urban space, one that attempts to understand it, simultaneously, at its most concrete and most abstract. In doing so, it has reiterated a methodological blueprint (Benjamin, 1999),wherein the fragmented quality of urban space, alongside the fragmented quality of our experience of it, is not considered an obstacle to be overcome. Instead, one must academically investigate urban space *through* these qualities, *through* the kaleidoscopic;in this case, through a mixture of walking-interviews, urban ethnography and digital methods. In different ways, the knowledge accrued through such fragments provide moments of illumination. It is only by collecting these refractions, of the past, present, and

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[435] See pages 49-51.

future of the city, an intertwined assemblage of becoming and loss, that any urban space, including the phantasmic "Urban Dreamworld" of London's Fringe, can come to be known.

"The tables covered in beer

Showbiz whines, minute detail

Hand on the shoulder in Leicester Square

It's vaudeville pub back room dusty pictures of

White frocked girls and music teachers

The beds too clean

Water's poisonous for the system

And you know in your brain

Leave the capitol!

Exit this Roman Shell!"

(Smith, 1981)

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