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NARRATING A SPACE WITH PERSONAL MEMORIES

Bilkent University 2023

NARRATING A SPACE  
WITH PERSONAL MEMORIES

A Master's Thesis

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Ankara  
April 2023



To Funda Şenova Tunalı



NARRATING A SPACE  
WITH PERSONAL MEMORIES

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Science  
of  
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
MASTER OF FINE ARTS in MEDIA AND DESIGN

THE DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNICATION AND DESIGN  
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY  
ANKARA

April 2023

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by Seba Savacı Sezen

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# ABSTRACT

## NARRATING A SPACE WITH PERSONAL MEMORIES

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This thesis seeks to answer how to narrate a space with personal memories through map art. To achieve this, I designed an art project by using the theoretical and artistic approaches of map art, space, and memory. In the course of the project, illustration is applied as a methodology to demonstrate how mapping can be used to bring depth and meaning to spaces by portraying memories through storytelling and imagination. As an outcome, the project not only stands at the crossroads between cartography and art by contributing to the field of deep map upon adopting illustrations of personal memories as data, it also allows the audience to explore a given space from the perspective of the artist her/himself.

Keywords: Space, Memory, Psycho-geography, Map Art

## ÖZET

### MEKANI KİŞİSEL ANILARLA HİKAYELEŞTİRMEK

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Nisan 2023

Bu tez, harita sanatı aracılığıyla bir mekânı kişisel anılarla nasıl anlatılacağını yanıtlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bunu gerçekleştirmek için harita sanatı, mekan ve hafızanın kuramsal ve sanatsal yaklaşımlarından yararlanarak bir sanat projesi tasarladım. Proje sürecinde illüstrasyon, anıları hikaye ve hayal gücü aracılığıyla tasvir ederek haritalamanın mekanlara derinlik ve anlam katmak ve nasıl kullanılabileceğini göstermek için bir metodoloji olarak kullanılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak proje, kişisel anıların illüstrasyonlarını veri olarak benimseyip derin harita alanına katkıda bulunarak, haritacılık ve sanatın kesiştiği noktada durmakla kalmamakta, aynı zamanda izleyiciye kendi yolunu bulmasını sağlayarak, mekânı sanatçının perspektifinden keşfetme deneyimi sunuyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mekan, Hafıza, Psikocoğrafya, Harita Sanatı

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Assist. Prof. Marek Brzozowski for pushing me forward to perfection and professionalism. I am thankful for his support, without which I would not be able to think outside the box and develop creative strategies to solve design problems.

Next, I am grateful to Assist. Prof. Funda Şenova Tunalı for her endless guidance, kindness, and motivation that shaped my studies and artistic perception.

I also would like to thank Assist. Prof. Andreas Treske, Assist. Prof. Didem Özkul and Assoc. Prof. Alev Degim Flannagan for their solid and steady feedback and advice.

My appreciations are extended to Assist. Prof. Burcu Baykan, Erhan Tunalı, and Fulten Larlar for their kind advice in the course of preparing this thesis.

As his teaching assistant, I also thank to Anıl Kurttekin for his invaluable input related to creative thinking and design.

I shall acknowledge my family for making me the person I am today, through their love, support, patience, and guidance. Last, and certainly not least, without the academic and emotional support generously rendered by my husband, Arda Sezen, this thesis would not be possible. His love and belief in me kept me positive and productive.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ÖZET .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2 – MAP ART .....	5
2.1 Map, Mapping, and Map Art .....	5
2.2 The Death of Cartography: Why Map Art?.....	5
2.3 A Brief History of Map Art .....	7
CHAPTER 3 – THEORETICAL FREAMWORK .....	14
3.1 Place and Space .....	14
3.2 Stories of Space .....	16
3.3 Narrating Space: De Certeau’s Concept of Memory.....	19
3.4 Walking as a Spatial Practice.....	23
3.5 When A Pedestrian Becomes an Illustrator: Imaginary Walking.....	25
3.6 Map as a Tool for Spatial Practices .....	26
3.7 Deep Maps .....	28
3.8 Deep Maps as a Map Art .....	31
CHAPTER 4 – ARTISTIC REVIEWS .....	35
4.1 Examples of Sensory Maps .....	36
4.2 Examples of GPS Drawing .....	40

4.3 Analog Approaches .....	45
CHAPTER 5 – THE PROJECT .....	50
5.1 Purpose of the Project .....	50
5.2 Overview .....	51
5.3 Theoretical Conceptualization .....	52
5.4 Ideation .....	56
5.5 Illustration as Methodology .....	61
5.6 Method of Documentation: The Sketchbook .....	65
5.7 Technical Process: The Map of Manhattan .....	68
5.8 Handcraft: The Brooklyn Apartment .....	70
5.9 Exhibition .....	72
CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSION .....	77
6.1 Relevance and Research Outcomes .....	78
6.2 Limitations and Further Research .....	79
REFERENCES .....	81
APPENDICES .....	86
APPENDIX A – ARTIST STATEMENT .....	86
APPENDIX B – ARTIST BIOGRAPHY .....	87

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1, Gervase of Ebstorf (1234), Medieval European Map of the World.....	8
Figure 2, Garcia, J.T. (1943). América Invertida..	9
Figure 3, Debord, G. (1957). The Naked City.....	11
Figure 4, Bureau d'études (2013). The World Government. ....	13
Figure 5, McLean, K. (2017). Summer Streets. ....	36
Figure 6, Recursive Arts (2023). Sonic Maps. ....	39
Figure 7, Polak, E. (2002). Amsterdam RealTime. ....	41
Figure 8, Wood, J. (2002). IF. ....	43
Figure 9, Multiple Artists. (2013). Memory Palace [Exhibition], Victoria and Albert Museum, London.....	46
Figure 10, Kozloff, J. (2015). The Tempest. ....	47
Figure 11: Savacı Sezen, S. (2021). Yukarı Ayrancı. ....	57
Figure 12, Design Canvas.....	58
Figure 13: Prototype I.....	59
Figure 14: Prototype II .....	60
Figure 15: Prototype III .....	61
Figure 16, Savacı Sezen, S. (2022). Here and There: Manhattan Memories. ....	65
Figure 17, Draft. Here and There: Manhattan Memories. ....	66
Figure 18, Prototype. Hell's Kitchen,.....	67
Figure 19, Technical Process I .....	69
Figure 20, Technical Process II .....	69
Figure 21, Savacı Sezen, S. (2022). Here and There: Manhattan Memories. ....	70
Figure 22, Prototype. The Brooklyn Apartment.....	71
Figure 23, The Brooklyn Apartment .....	72
Figure 24, Exhibition I .....	73
Figure 25, Exhibition II .....	74
Figure 26, Exhibition IV.....	74

Figure 27, Exhibition V ..... 75  
Figure 28, Exhibition VI..... 75  
Figure 29, Exhibition VII ..... 76  
Figure 30, Exhibition VIII..... 76



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Accompanied by a praxis named *Here and There*, this thesis is a project-based research which asks an exploratory research question: *how to narrate a space with personal memories*. It is constructed on the concept of space and how it is created by personal memories. In this sense, this thesis argues that a space can evoke the feelings of integration or disintegration; reconciliation or alienation; tranquility or anxiety once it intersects with personal memories. This leads to spatial experience attached to the place where it creates a metaphorical imagery about the space itself.

The main objective of this research is to create a map of the Manhattan district in New York City, U.S.A., based on my personal memories as data illustrated on a sketchbook as the method of documentation. To answer the research question, the project attempts to demonstrate a space narrated by personal memories through combining the artistic approaches of map art along with the theoretical approaches on space, walking rhetoric, memory, and psycho-geography (de Certeau, 1988; Debord, 1981; Yates, 1996). The purpose is to determine how map-making can be used to bring depth and meaning to places by portraying personal memories through storytelling and imagination. The adoption of illustration by means of the drawing technique as a methodology merges map-making with creative strategies to examine the relationship between space and memory.

Upon adopting map art, the main motivation of this study is to reveal what is hidden about a space in terms of personal memory. In this respect, a form of narrative cartography, personal geography as a method in map-making fueled by storytelling is preferred in the project to celebrate the unification of memory, space, and map-making (Caquard & Cartwright, 2014, p. 101-102). In addition to this, illustration, applied as a methodology and medium, is not only one of the prominent visual communication art forms in mapmaking, but also can be a subjective and idiosyncratic form of storytelling; thus, its inclusion in the present work.

The outcome and benefit of the project is both to contribute to the field of map art, which stands at the crossroads between cartography and art, and to challenge the audience to explore an alternative space based on others' perspectives. The intended audience of this project are individuals interested in map art and seeking to experience creative personal geographies. With a three-meter-wide map art as the main artwork accompanied by other substitute elements, the audience experience the personal geography with an immersive installation where they attempt to find their way, explore, and see the space from the perspective of the artist.

This research is constructed upon the theoretical and artistic approaches pertaining to the concepts of space, memory, and map art. Structurally, the next chapter starts with the question asking why map-making has become a field of distinct art, and how the development of variable examples of map art in history and the approaches in the emerging field of deep map challenge the classic cartography.

The third chapter links the practice of map art and deep map with the concept of space, memory, and storytelling. By adopting different approaches on space, walking rhetoric, memory, psycho-geography, this section develops the theoretical background of the argument that deep maps can serve as a tool of communication, where subjective stories made by memories can be used as data in map-making to reveal what can be considered as hidden about a space (de Certeau, 1988; Debord, 1981; Yates, 1996). The importance of these personal geographies stands as resistance against the limits and the orders imposed by the universal maps. In terms of this subjectivity, an artist stands as *subject as witness* through her/his artistic expressions. In a de Certeauian sense, an illustrator adopts the practice of everyday life through illustration as a tactic, in the same manner a pedestrian does with ephemeral walking in a city. This tactic is a spatial act which not only demonstrates a sense of interiorization of the streets, but also reconstructs an alternative way of urbanism (de Ferdinand, 2019, p. 129; de Certeau, 1988, pp. 117, 148).

The fourth chapter includes a selection of artists who focus on memory, space, map, and storytelling through different media ranging from digital to analog approaches. In this sense, examples from locative media arts, such as sensory maps, GPS drawings, and projects that have a more traditional leaning are analyzed and compared with the thesis project.

The fifth chapter shows the analysis of the theoretical conceptualization of the project including its ideation process, documentation, methodology, and technical process.

Additionally, the exhibition process is added as a required part of the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) project. In this section, the goal and outcomes of the project, and how the ideas come into practice in the ideation process are demonstrated. This section further accommodates a major part for displaying the sketchbook as the method of documentation employed here, by demonstrating its importance in depicting memories as visual data for mapping. Lastly, the exhibition process is discussed along with the related observations.

Through this research, the role of personal geography is emphasized in terms of depicting the context of space and memory through map art. The project *Here and There* not only stands at the crossroads between cartography and art, and contributes to the field of deep map by adopting illustrations of personal memories as data, but also provides the audience with the opportunity to explore, find their way, and immerse within the space from the perspective of the artist.

## CHAPTER 2

### MAP ART

#### 2.1 Map, Mapping, and Map Art

The terms ‘map’ and ‘mapping’ are different: a *map* is the projection of spatial information to a two-dimensional surface; whereas, *mapping* is the process of applying information to the spatial information which is transferred to the surface. A map is a visual representation, while mapping is a process (Acar, 2019, p. 19). In this sense, map art is an art field where maps are created using specific techniques along with artistic practices.

#### 2.2 The Death of Cartography: Why Map Art?

Map art is an artistic practice which erases the line that cartographers have drawn between their traditional form of graphic communication (maps) and other forms, such as drawing and painting; thus, taking map art to a different level. In this way, map art has grown as a form of communication promoting “democratization of mapmaking capabilities” with the help of a computer and the Internet (Wood, 2006, pp. 5, 11). Put differently, map art ends the notion that map-making is a distinctive practice inherent to cartographers (Wood, 2006, pp. 5, 11).

Although 'map art' is dominantly used as a terminology for the artistic production of map-making, alternative terminologies also exist in the literature. To name a few, Wystan Curnow prefers to use "map-based art," Ruth Watson adopts "artistic mapping practices," and "map-enthused art" is used by Katherine Harmon (Curnow, 1999, p. 255; Watson, 2009, p. 297; Harmon, 2004, p. 10, as cited in Ferdinand, 2019, p. 6).

Katherina Harmon argues in her book on map art, *You Are Here: Personal Geographies and Maps of the Imagination*, that the desire for map-making is a part of being human, "humans have an urge to map and that this mapping instinct, like our opposable thumbs, is part of what makes us human. I map therefore I am." (Harmon, 2004, pp. 10-11). Based on this anthropocentric view, map art is not only a representation of artistic expression on cartographic practices, but also a "celebration of a shared human mapping impulse." (Ferdinand, 2019, p. 7). Therefore, she calls her artistic cartographic practices as "my own personal proof of the mapping instinct" (Harmon, 2004, p. 11). She highlights the importance of imagination by differentiating map art from classic cartography; mainly, that a map does not need to include scientific elements such as continents or oceans, and that it can also represent beyond the boundaries of geography. In other words, maps from the perspective of the mapmaker, including her experience and feelings (Harmon, 2004, p. 11). In artistic practices related to cartography, the map-maker tries to understand the world around her

and her place in it by venturing beyond the boundaries (Taylor et. al., 2019 p. 26).

In this research, I argue that a mapping impulse brings imagination and storytelling into map-making practice. For the map project, I used my experience and memories of Manhattan in the city of New York as the reason behind the impulse which directed me to create an imaginative map of that district. I recreated a personal version of Manhattan to show what was seen from my perspective. Artistic practices in cartography create alternative realities of space because map art challenges “self-evidence of space as it is perceived, represented, and inhabited” (Ferdinand, 2019, p. 6). When the art-maker presents her own perspective of what is seen or unseen, a viewer then will see the different reflections of the map-maker’s own perspective to the spatial reality. The world inside her mind, in this way, can be described as a medium which opens a door to another evidence of reality.

### 2.3 A Brief History of Map Art

As shown in the Figure 1, thematic depictions on map-making have been around since the 13<sup>th</sup> century. There are many examples of both western and non-western medieval maps, which navigated between art and cartography by the adoption of astronomy and geometry (Brotton, 2014). The purpose of these maps was to communicate religious and cosmic beliefs depicted with ancient symbols (Zumthor, 1993, as cited in Riberio & Caquard, 2018, p. 3).

During the Renaissance era, the nature of map-making started to change after the emergence of nation-state formation and the accelerating process of colonization (Wood, 2010a, pp. 27-30). The practice of ancient symbolism was left in favor of functionality with the adoption of new tools and technology (Zumthor, 1993, as cited in Riberio & Caquard, 2018: 3). With this scientific turn, the map-making process was able to find its way into Renaissance paintings. This led to the birth of modern map-making (Monsaingeon, 2013, p. 34, as cited in Riberio & Caquard, 2018, p. 3).



Figure 1, Gervase of Ebstorf (1234), *Medieval European Map of the World*.

The line between art and cartography remained clear until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, via the movements of avant-garde, Dadaism, and surrealism, new creative approaches made the uneven marriage of cartography and art possible, and the term *map art* started to be used among artists. The purpose of the artistic production had unconventional means, especially political (Wood, 2010a, pp. 8-9). The critical notion was that maps are not mere images, but a production of a cultural and political construction (Cosgrove, 2005, p. 39). For example, the world map “Le monde au temps des Surrealistes” shows how countries can be represented in terms of their cultural impact (Ginioux, 2004, p. 11, as cited in Riberio & Caquard, 2018, p. 6).

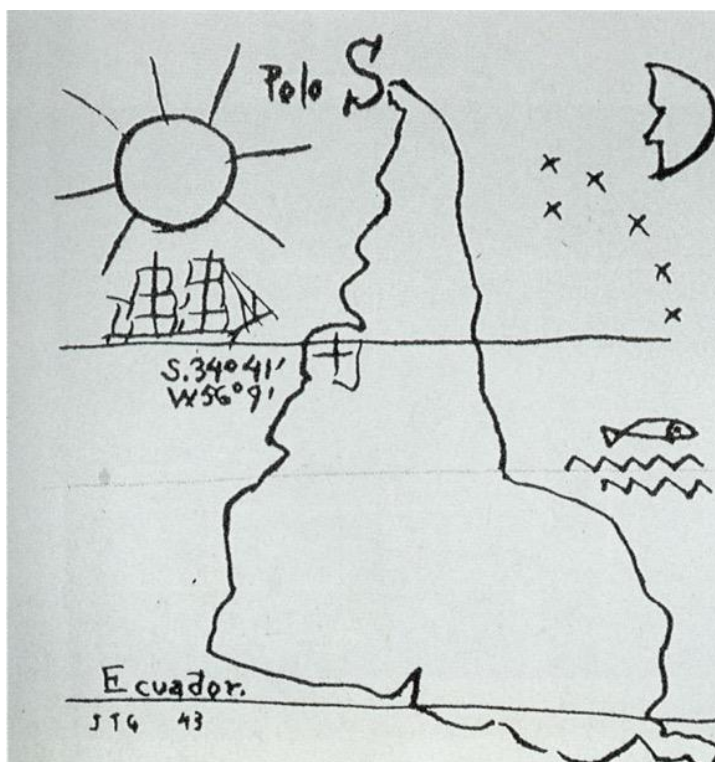


Figure 2, Garcia, J.T. (1943). *América Invertida..*

Around the end of this era, artistic practices started to be used as data in cartography. This development brought about the notion that stories can be mapped through artistic expression (Caquard & Cartwright, 2014). In the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, map art became a field where it transcended literary studies and other fields of humanities attempting to understand the relationship between places and people.

This deep connection with a place was often questioned through the depiction of narratives in maps, a practice that seeks personal connections with places. As shown in the Figure 2, the artwork *Inverted Map of South America* by Joaquin Torres-Garcia (1943) represents this part of the continent while arguing that the hierarchical placement of the South at the bottom and the North at the top in cartography was inherently political (Riberio & Caquard, 2018, p. 6).

The term *map art* not put into formal use until the early 1990s. Earlier artworks exist (especially by the Fluxus artists, including Yoko Ono, Robert Watts, George Brecht, and Robert Morris); yet, they are few and far in between as opposed to how often the term is used today (Wood, 2006, p. 6). However, the 1910s are argued to be the real beginning of map art (Wood, 2010a). There is still evidence of map art practices in history according to some (Ribeiro & Caquard, 2018, p. 7); for example, *Carte du pays de Tendre* (1654) by Madeleine de Scudery has been referred to as a possible map art and the first feminist cartography. Its main purpose was not political; though, it depicted a succession of place names by means of its relationship with the space in a poetic way. With this approach, the artists resisted conventional maps, which were

mostly military- and state-centric at that time (Bruno, 2002, as cited in Ribeiro & Caquard, 2018, p. 7).

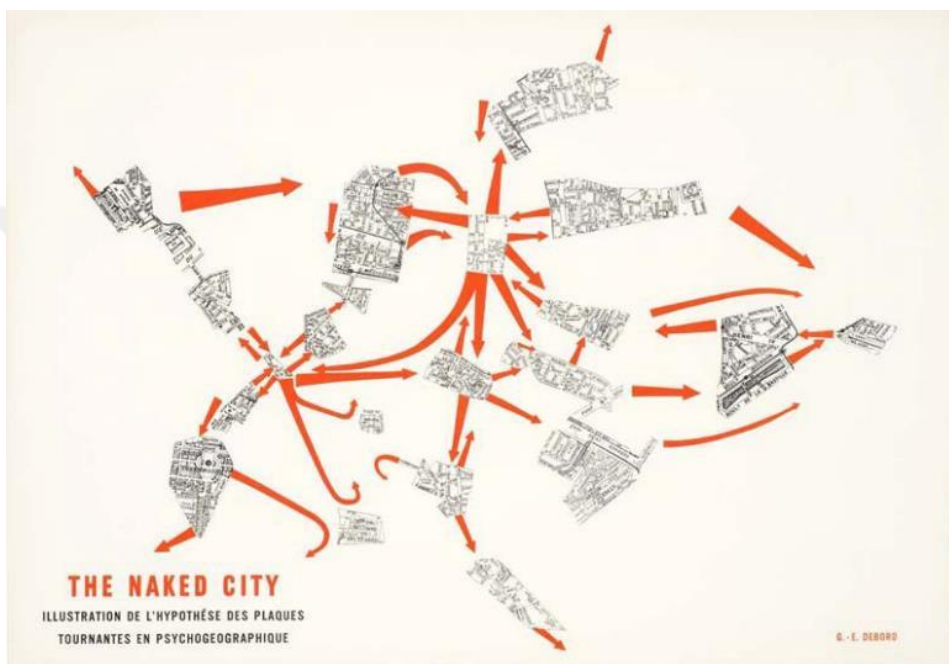


Figure 3, Debord, G. (1957). *The Naked City*.

As shown in the Figure 3, one of the most significant artworks in the field of map art before the 1990s is *Naked City* by Guy Debord as part of Situationist art and activism. The approach of this artwork is one of the theoretical and practical inspirations of the present thesis, directing the research towards further contemporary examples. *Naked City* conveys how different neighborhoods in a city can be perceived while walking around.

The connection between the walking practice and cartography intends to change the habits of ordinary people which are dominated by the functionalist use of the city. This approach attempts to show alternatives to interacting with urban spaces and to making one's own "psycho-geographic maps" that encourage us to visit places we have not seen previously in our daily activities (Pinder, 1996, p. 415). Precisely, this notion illustrates "the constraints on many people's spatial mobility, and the prevalence of habit and routine in shaping urban journeys" (Debord, 1981, p. 50).

Connecting people with spaces through a narrative perspective has become prominent since the works of Franco Moretti (1999) on literal cartography. This concept led to the need for a new field of study in mapmaking: *deep maps*. A deep map captivates a comprehensive understanding of a place through narratives in map-making by emphasizing the importance of using narratives in maps to show what is hidden.

When it comes to combining art and deep mapping, it can be argued that an artistic representation of a place with a narrative can serve as "a source of information that can be mapped to help understand a place in depth, as well as a form of expression that can help reveal and represent this understanding" (Riberio & Caquard, 2018, p. 8). Unlike a conventional map, a deep map shows what is hidden in an unexpected way to alter original forms of maps, which can be analyzed in terms of both geography and narrative (Riberio & Caquard, 2018, p. 9). Although there are historical examples, such as *Çatalhöyük Map (ca. 6200 BCE)* or *Ebstorf Map (1234)* which are considered as deep maps because of their narrative nature, the field of deep mapping today refers

to a wide area which can accompany different media, from analog to digital. Combining the possibilities of digital media, deep mapping, and artistic practices offers new sub-fields such as locative arts, GIS maps (geographic information systems), sensory maps or GPS (geographic positioning systems) drawings, while celebrating a deep connection between geography, individual experience, and art (Frears et.al. 2017, pp. 263-265).

As shown in Figure 4, an example with a traditional approach is “The World Government” by *Bureau d'études* (2013). Influenced by Pierre Bourdieu and the Frankfurt School, it recreates the world with a graphical representation, thereby reducing it to a set of relations among power, economy, and governments to encourage the users to apply their own strategies and find their way in a complexity of social and symbolic narratives (Weelden, 2005, p. 98, as cited in Siencnik, 2010, p. 9). In Chapter 4, a series of contemporary examples with digital or analog approaches will be reviewed and compared.



Figure 4, Bureau d'études (2013). *The World Government*.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORETICAL FREAMWORK

#### 3.1 Place and Space

The theoretical focus of the present thesis starts with drawing attention towards the significance of the distinction between place and space – two terms with different meanings because of the relationship people have with both including the spatial environment (Ozkul and Gauntlett, 2014, p. 5). It is important to understand this difference since our interaction with the environment around us is connected to this concept (Vermeulen, 2015, para. 10).

The definitions of place and space differentiate according to tradition. The roots of contemporary discussions are based on two distinct points of view: “Michel de Certeau’s post-structuralist theory of space as ‘a practiced place’ and Henri Lefebvre’s dialectically materialist conceptualization of place as a moment in space” (de Certeau, 1984; Lefebvre, 1992, as cited in Vermeulen, 2015, para. 3). As can be seen, these two approaches differ concerning the questions of space and place (Hardy, 2008, p. 29). According to de Certeau, *place* is a location, destination, or points on the grid of a map, and *space* is “what happens” when a person navigates these places. He associates the environment with language, and the place with letters of alphabet bringing that space to existence once the letters come together and formulate words and sentences.

Therefore, de Certeau asserts that space is a practiced place (Vermeulen, 2015, para. 4).

On the other hand, Lefebvre defines place, with a wink to de Certeau, as a “practiced space” which is the opposite (de Certeau, 1988, p. 174, as cited in Vermeulen 2015: para. 10). Unlike Certeau, Lefebvre does not see the environment as a language or a sign system; rather, he calls space a “continuous social dynamic” because there are different forces which “continuously move into one another, battling each other, subjecting, submitting, subverting and, eventually, turning struggle into synthesis” (Vermeulen, 2015, para. 8). Space constantly changes and manifests itself through place (Vermeulen, 2015, para. 9). In this way, one could argue that space is the place for Lefebvre.

Following the tradition proposed by de Certeauian, this thesis builds its basis of argument on the clear distinction between place and space by arguing that the former is a static site, and that the latter is the activation of this site by subjective interaction. In other words, space is a practiced place (Vermeulen 2015: para. 10). Rather than analyzing what kind of forces construct the space and questioning the fluidity between space and place, this thesis focuses on how subjective interaction changes a place to a space: a personal story. Therefore, space is the focal point of this thesis, and personal stories hidden or embedded in a space are used as data in the course of this study.

### 3.2 Stories of Space

A space speaks either loudly or silently with the inhabitants inside. Every talk is different because the space conjures up different memories, thereby provoking different emotions. People interact with a space through their own windows and by means of personal experience; i.e., stories. As each space is a practiced place, and each story is different, as de Certeau (1988) argues, space is a “product of subject” (pp. 174, 294). Space is like “a tapestry whose horizons encompass historic revolutions, economic changes and demographic mixtures, on which lie customs, rituals and practices” (de Certeau, 1988, p. 294). Before continuing with examples, a brief review is needed to see why space has been emphasized by some scholars.

In the past half century, the emphasis on place and space in social science and humanities has been defined as a *spatial turn*, where scholars from different disciplines have “reflected on our nature as beings in space”, and addressed our interactions with the space that surrounded us (Bodenhamer, 2022, pp. 2-3; Guldi, 2011, para. 2-3). Two intellectual trends played the most influential role on this spatial turn: Post-modernism and Deconstructionism. Both argue “rational empiricism were societal artefacts, with its truth merely one discourse among many” (Bodenhamer, 2022, p. 2). The advocates of deconstructionism stress the role of language as constructing reality. One could perceive the world differently compared to others since s/he uses language differently. Unlike the post-Enlightenment belief, the social construction of reality depends on both the natural world and the social world,

including “all material and symbolic forms of existence” (Susen, 2015, p. 1). One intellectual interest that has come about on this subject is the awareness of “the rich diversity of human experience” (Bodenhamer, 2022, p. 2). It is important to note that the word *language* does not necessarily refer to what words actually mean, but a point of view. It is well known that two different persons can see the world differently even though they speak the same language.

Regarding the role of language, it has to be stated that the thesis project reflects the researcher’s own experience as a non-native English speaker by creating an alternative map of Manhattan. Through my memories and stories, the space addresses my perspective, occasionally influenced by the American popular culture. It is because what is experienced is not only constructed by my own cultural and personal view, but also by the said culture, which I have been exposed to by media since childhood. In the project, the neighborhoods of Manhattan are texturized by a series of illustrations. Some of them are a clear reference to American popular culture, such as Mr. Burns from *the Simpsons* to symbolize the Financial District, or a pair of legs wearing the iconic blue Manolo Blahnik and referenced to Carrie Bradshaw from the HBO series *Sex and the City* to symbolize lower Manhattan. This kind of depiction of space through illustration shows that my experience with the space is filtered through not only by my interpretation of it, but also how a foreign culture and language can shape this interpretation itself.

In this sense, it has become a celebration of interest in the connection among “space, culture and social organization.” This post-modern thought refuses ubiquitous narratives, and structural and universal explanations; rather, it emphasizes the importance of “particular and local” (Bodemhamer et al., 2021, pp. 2-3). It rejects universal and fixed truths, ubiquitous narratives, and a structural understanding of the world that prevailed social science and humanities of 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is argued that geography underestimates the context of space since it has been treated “as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile.” (Foucault 1980: 70). Space has become as the medium for peeking at the embedded stories, collective or individual, seen (Bodemhamer et al., 2021, p. 3). This notion distinguishes space and place as different domains. De Certeau (1988) explains that "a place is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence" (p. 117). As such, a place is "an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability" (de Certeau, 1988, p. 117). On the other hand, space is unstable and changeable, embedded with stories.

In the thesis project, with Manhattan considered as a *place*, what will be seen is a set of buildings, each of which has its own blocks, sections, and organizational structure. All this structure assist and orderly follow the urban and regional planning; the place is geometrically defined.

On the other hand, Manhattan becomes a *space* when looked upon from an individual perspective. As de Certeau (1988) argues, "[a] space is composed of intersections of

mobile elements” (p. 117). For example, in East Village, a long line of people is waiting to have a slice at the Two Boots Pizza. The line does not move. Meanwhile, a person has been rushing to tour the Metropolitan Museum of Art since morning until it is closed at 9 pm. He is thinking a day should be more than just 24 hours. Finally, in the Grand Central Station, someone has just missed the train back to Brooklyn while listening to a street band, *Espiritu Andino*. Now, she has to wait another hour to catch the train. However, she seems quite content.

Although this list can continue forever, the main point is how mobile elements in a city turn places into a space through their experience. Via these stories, Manhattan is no more a place composed of buildings and geometrically defined streets and blocks, but a space constructed by different stories.

### 3.3 Narrating Space: De Certeau’s Concept of Memory

When narrative meets space, it creates a spatial practice in geometric forms which conjures up meaning. This production of space through the lens of narration refers to spatial trajectories which reconstruct places. Memories play a prominent role in creating stories “in the form of space and time”, where fragments of memories are visually stored in a mental state as a form of map (Coates, 2012, as cited in Nugroho et al., 2019, p. 59). In other words, memories resemble personal stories “created socially and somehow inscribed on our mental maps.” (Ozkul and Gauntlett, 2014, p. 9). In the literature, the visual representation of a mental map is also called a *cognitive map*

representing “a person’s mental sense of a place, including both a broad and specific sense of its geographical features, as well as memories, emotions, and other associations” (Ozkul and Gauntlett, 2014, p. 9). The mental process of “collecting, organizing, storing, recalling and manipulating spatial information” is defined as *cognitive mapping* (Ozkul and Gauntlett, 2014, p. 9).

In the thesis project, I narrated the space of Manhattan in the form of a creative map with my memories through illustration. These illustrative stories are kept in a sketchbook in the form of a diary as a method of documentation. I argue that this alternative map of Manhattan reflects my mental map of Manhattan where my memories or stories attached to the space are formed and inscribed. When I narrate the space, I draw my memories associated with it in the form of images.

As regards associating memories with certain spaces in the form of images, Frances Yates’s thoughts on memory, image, and place in her work *The Art of Memory*, would aid the discussion, although Yates does not mention any opposition between place and space the way de Certeau does. By referring to the classical memory techniques of the orators in Middle Ages, Yates points out that an orator internalizes a real place (*loci*) in his artificial memory, where he places certain visual images in a predetermined order in this memorized architectural space. These loci are arranged in a real building composed of stories, rooms, corridors, and ornaments. Artificial memory is developed as an art of memory to strengthen the natural memory. These images contain emotional associations which refer to a symbolic code respective to the order of the

speech. By accomplishing this memorization technique, the orator simply makes a journey through “his inner building from location to location in the correct sequence” to deliver his speech correctly (Yates, 1966, pp. 6-7, 9-10; Nelson, 1988, p. 3). This inner building symbolizes an artificial memory which includes places and images (Yates, 1966, pp. 6-7).

The relational context between memory and space in the thesis project is similar to what Yates argues. To create a map of Manhattan, I make a journey to my inner places, each of which I associate with certain images. With those images, I recollect certain memories embedded in a form of metaphoric images, such as icons or symbols. This technique is especially helpful in visual storytelling via the illustration method. For example, the depiction of the Greenwich Village in the map stands for its unique architecture, its vortical streets, and its unique sub-culture that pulls into the vortex anything on the outside. This feeling is attached to certain places where I associate with certain images, such as the Fat Cat Jazz Club, Magnolia Bakery, artichoke pizza as its signature street food, or even Edgar Allan Poe as a local historical figure. How I “practiced” those places comes to life in the form of an image and as a narrated space.

Taking this notion from Yates and combining it with de Certeau, it can be argued that by illustrating memories associated with a certain place, the place is practiced, and so it becomes a space. Regarding this, de Certeau’s concept of memory comes to the fore when the discussion comes to narrating space. As de Certeau states, memory is part of storytelling. A story alters what is seen (place) into the unseen (space) by making “a

detour” (de Certeau, 1988, p. 150). Memories are the “holes and gaps” of the subject constructed by the terms of a circumstance (Bode & Schmidt, 2013, p. 70). A subjectivity creates an ontological stratum whenever someone is interested in space as a social practice (Bode & Schmidt, 2013: 69). This state of act is called a “subject as witness” (de Certeau, 1988, p. 86). Artistic expressions conjure an “instant of art” which “constitutes the implantation of memory in a place” (de Certeau, 1988, p. 252).

In this sense, the status of *subject as witness* would be interpreted as an artistic expression. “Art has been understood as a “witness” to social life...The artist “registers” and then “expresses”, through the privileged input of subjectivity turning passivity to activity. Working with a concept of art in which aesthetics and discourse intersect the idea of the witness changes from a passive and distant receptor to a more active, or rather, involved position” (Bode & Schmidt, 2013, p. 85).

In the project, the fragments of subjective memories are used to reflect on the transformation of the place into space. To this end, Manhattan becomes a space where the hidden stories of each corner become visible via this transformation. Through the implantation of memories, the illustration method as an artistic expression is used to show this altered reality of Manhattan in the form of a map. As an artist, by illustrating memories on a sketchbook, I become the subject as witness. Visual storytelling provides metaphorical depictions of memories as icons and symbols addressing my interaction with a specific place. With this practice, the place becomes a space embedded with a story.

### 3.4 Walking as a Spatial Practice

According to de Certeau, *walking* is “a way of practicing space” as a tactic which is unseen, while the hidden acts of ordinary people start with a rejection of hegemonic perspective conditioned by urban planning (de Certeau 1974, p. 205, as cited in Jang 2015, p. 93; de Certeau 1988, pp. 143-146). In this *spatial town*, a pedestrian or a walker creates a practicing space by her/his movement. Different experiences form new “ways of interlacing” where a walker defines and forms the space. An ephemeral walking done by ordinary people is a spatial act which not only demonstrates a sense of interiorization of the streets (Ferdinand, 2019, p. 129; de Certeau, 1988, p. 148), but also reconstructs an alternative way of urbanism. In other words, walkers associate places with different textures or images specific to them; thus, reconstructing new meanings that embryoid the city. A space is born and, once more, a walker transforms a place, which is “geometrically defined by urban planning”, into space where her/his memories are embedded (Jang, 2015, p. 93; de Certeau, 1988, p. 117).

From a similar yet different standpoint, Debord (1981) coins the term psycho-geography which is defined as the effect of an environment on the emotions and behavior of people (pp. 5-8). The effect is called *ambiance*, which refers to the emotion or the feeling associated with a place to a certain tone, character, or appeal (Wood, 2010b, p. 187). Rather than walking, Debord formalizes *dérive*, which means *drifting* as a “mode of experimental psycho-geographic behavior” that is a technique to connect the space with varied ambiances (Debord, 1981, as cited in Knabb, 1995, pp.

43-45). Spatial drifting adopts an awareness of the psycho-geographical effects of a given space (Knabb, 1995, pp. 50-54). Unlike walking, drifting as mode of moving has no direction or goal, usually done by a group of people who “have reached the same awakening of consciousness, since the cross-checking of these different groups’ impressions makes it possible to arrive at objective conclusions.” During a drifting session, the members of this group detach from “their usual motives for movement and action, their relations, their work and leisure activities, and let themselves be drawn by attractions of the terrain.” According to the drifting standpoint, psycho-geographical relief is only possible by challenging the universal or fixed way of reading and discovering variable ambiances of a city – being “drawn through the city *by the city*” (Knabb, 1995, pp. 50-54; Wood, 2010b, p. 187).

Against this backdrop, the thesis project practices de Certeau’s walking rhetoric as a mode of experimental psycho-geographic behavior. I recall and recollect my memories attached to spaces by simply walking in my mental map of Manhattan. Unlike drifting, walking not only emphasizes the psycho-geographical effect of places on the artist’s emotions and behavior, it also draws certain goals while roaming around the city. More specifically, it aims for exploration, which notion supports storytelling. Not only memories but also these emotions and behavioral choices can be used as essential data in visual storytelling. These elements often convey a certain tone while being illustrated. For example, while some parts of the map project are illustrated as a set of chaotic blocks and buildings with a reference to the game *Tetris*, others are illustrated as a composition having different green shapes accompanied with several green fish.

The former illustrates a feeling of suffocation and alienation, whereas the latter depicts a sense of vitality and belonging.

### 3.5 When A Pedestrian Becomes an Illustrator: Imaginary Walking

Illustration is one of the prominent visual communication art forms in map-making. It is argued that illustration is a social practice since its adaptability and responsiveness to context and audience is the “central leitmotif” in terms of communication. It is fundamentally attached to the social world because it is produced within. Illustration is not limited to being performed or encountered exclusively in traditional spaces where the audience usually experience the arts; rather, it is inclusive. It is operated in everyday life via direct engagement with the social world (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, p. 19).

The field of cartography and the creative strategy of illustration are used together to examine lived experience including the interrelationships between space and experience. The illustrative sketches of a walking experience (sketchbook), or a pedestrian journal where memories kept are associated with the place, can be used as a method of documentation to uncover the hidden and to form a deeper understanding of the place (Gardener et al., 2019; Letsiou, 2017; O'Rourke, 2013; Harmon, 2016).

An illustrator adopts the practice of everyday life through illustrating as a tactic, in the same way that a pedestrian does with walking. Having said so, illustrating resembles

walking. Unlike the traditional and empirical research methods, illustration is a “quotidian interpretation practice”, and can be practiced by everyone who has an interest in understanding social situations. In the field of illustration, research is embedded within a creative process. It is important to note that in a research study related to an illustration project, the problem, research questions, and the knowledge need to be defined, while further experiences or insights are considered in the course of the progress towards concluding propositions and solutions. The process is not entirely implemented within the illustration project; yet, it actively penetrates the development of the study (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, pp. 18-19).

### 3.6 Map as a Tool for Spatial Practices

According to Siegert, a map is a territory where map-making is a cultural technique in the service of whom it is created by. However, they are not only representations of a territory, but also tools and parts of a cultural practice. In cultural studies, maps are read as “the understanding of the intentions of those who produced the image of the world that is displayed by the map.” The understanding of intentions means both conscious and unconscious inference by the author who creates the map – that is, her or his worldview (Schlögel 2003, p. 91, as cited in Siegert, 2011, p. 13). On the other hand, the media-philosophical approach rejects the representation of authorial subject, rather arguing that maps are a kind of media as “agents of subject constitution” (Siegert, 2011, p. 13). The signs and marks created by the author refers to “epistemic

orders and their struggle for dominance over other epistemic orders, in the course of which marks and things enter a new play of signs” (Siegert, 2011, p. 13).

Similarly, de Certeau suggests “walking rhetorics” as a tactic towards a personal search for identity and resistance while appropriating the map by moving around a city with “desires and goals” (de Certeau, 1988, pp. 143-146). A map is defined as a tool to “classify, represent and communicate spatial relations; concentrated database of information on the location, shape and size of key features of the landscape and the connections between them” (Dodge & Kitchin, 2001, p. 65). Based on the spatial standpoint, scientific, universal, and fixed maps are rejected because of their panoptic view and totalizing or universal vision (de Certeau, 1988; Debord, 1981). Rather, it is argued that personal maps can be used as an alternative method of graphical representations to provide a distinct view on spatial practice (Siencnik, 2010, p. 8). A spatial walker performs her/his practices in dealing with the city and, as such, rejects the limits and the orders imposed by the urban planning represented with conventional maps. By walking, a pedestrian draws her/his own routes, interiorizes the environment, and creates an alternative way of urbanism. The walking tactic is a spatial practice that transforms places to space while reconstructing new stories. These stories can be used as an alternative map in the form of a personal geography. These maps reject the limits and orders of the conventional maps.

The thesis project presents the creative map of Manhattan as a personal geography where I reject the limits and orders imposed by the conventional Manhattan maps by

altering the reality and reconstructing an alternative one. While walking in my mental map, I re-practice the places and recollect memories associated with these places in the form of images. In this way, a new and alternative map of Manhattan is reconstructed by those images.

### 3.7 Deep Maps

Deep mapping has been a relatively recent development, starting with the 1950s French Situationist Movement that influenced the perceived way of place by emphasizing affective geography to combine “material and emotional features of a place” (Bodenhamer, 2022, p. 1). De Certeau’s spatial stories capturing the practices of everyday life has been one of the influences in this field and, hence, the present thesis (Bodenhamer, 2022, p. 2).

A *deep map* is one that includes “geographic and cultural representations of a place” (Bodenhamer, 2022, p. 1). Seeking an inquiry in spatial practices embedded in cartography has brought about a new discipline known as *deep mapping*, as coined by William Least Heat-Moon (1991). The term is basically used for captivating a deep understanding of a space; in other words, “exploration of hidden cartographic details” of a space, through narratives in map-making (Forsdick et al., 2021, p. 106). Some have merged it with the term *vertical travel* inspired by travel writing studies (Forsdick, 2019). Performers of vertical travel favor variable forms of pedestrianism by rejecting any form of technology which might accelerate the speed of the travel

(Forsdick et al., 2021, p. 107). It is argued that a space can be better understood in depth by analyzing the interaction between a place and the people who interact with it. The feelings and experiences of individuals about a place are associated with the process of interaction expressed via storytelling (Susan Maher, 2014). This map is no longer a static representation (Ferdinand 2019, p. 130). On the contrary, it is a product of spatial practices embodied by varied stories. They are reconstructed each time they are engaged with since they are “transitory and fleeting, being contingent, relational and context dependent” (Kitchin & Dodge, 2007, p. 335).

It is argued that deep maps are developed to create a deep understanding of a place through depicting emotions, memory, and imagination. Memory drives emotions embedded in one’s perception of a given place. Due to the intense connection between imagination and map-making, deep maps can be a crossroads between conventional maps and artistic practice. This approach argues that these different fields can be gathered to produce new knowledge and perceptions in cartography to reveal how maps are capable of representing beyond what is physically observable (Gardener et al., 2019).

Deep maps answer the need for alternative cartography, where the space is considered as “dynamic and relative” (Bodenhamer, 2022, p. 4). They are graphical, multilayered, and comprehensive, offering a variety of perspectives related to a space. They are naturally unstable and constantly reconstructed as a response to new experience, new insights, and new perspectives as a new data. They do not make

statements; instead, they make conversations with the user. They embody individual interactions and stories in a way that opens a portal for the viewer to see the interactions of agents and structures in the stories people construct. Deep maps do not serve as a fixed form of representation; they reveal the fluidity of individual experience and stories shaped by the space, along with deep possibilities and particularities of that space (Bodenhamer, 2015, pp. 1-5; Bodenhamer, 2022, pp. 4, 13).

There are five categories of deep maps: (1) *Archival deep maps* are spatially and temporally open maps which give access to quantitative, qualitative, and visual data; (2) *Descriptive deep maps* are used as layered maps of a place with information gathered from multiple sources. They comprise a curation of different sources of information to reveal depth in a place; (3) *Narrative deep maps* concern narration and storytelling to shed light on the complex construction of social worlds; (4) *Exploratory deep maps* are constructed dynamically for the purposes of path-traceability and developing place-based themes in maps; and, lastly, (5) *Immersive deep maps* explore the sense of reality and embedded contingencies in a map platform. These maps attempt to place the viewer in a “spatially and temporally sensitive environment” where “an aesthetic and emotional experience” is expected to be fostered (Bodenhamer, 2022, pp. 7-10).

Examples of deep maps can widely range from one of the earliest known cases, the *Çatalhöyük Map* (ca. 6200 BCE), which displays dwellings as a possible

representation of social status, to today's mapping projects accompanied with *locative media*, by which "people can visualize their own location in a different way, as well as communicating it to others" (Ozkul & Gauntlett, 2014, p. 9). These maps often favor the technological possibilities of locative media, such as location services; for instance, GPS (global positioning systems), which determines the data bound to a location; and GIS (geographic information systems), which tracks and displays these data (Bodenhamer, 2022, pp. 4-5). DeepState Map<sup>1</sup> is a recent example of map projects that offers a perception of the Russo-Ukrainian War by tracking and recording military data location by location, including the headquarters, airfields, units, or which territory is liberated or occupied. The graphical tone of the map also reflects the destruction effects of a war by tracking the casualties as tensions increase. Although there is a wide gap between these two examples – one is analog and the other one, digital – they share a common logic of deep maps; both offer a view of the physical environment embodied with more than just geographical elements, further adding the interaction between people and place. In Chapter 4, there will be more examples in the artistic literature by combining cartographic practices and art addressing memory, storytelling, emotion, and space.

### 3.8 Deep Maps as a Map Art

There is a "difference between a map and a deep map. A deep map *tells* the story, or stories, it was created to embody" (Wood, 2022, p. 17). Deep maps are neither

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<sup>1</sup> DeepState Map (2019) accessed on March 19, 2023 from: <https://deepstatemap.live/en#6/49.438/32.053>

conventional nor merely decorative because the artistic elements used in them are part of the information itself. Therefore, a deep map can be a form of map art. This concept, though, begs the same old question: What makes an art *art*?

“Paint what you observe *and feel*” says Pissarro as an advice to a young painter (as cited in Galenson, 2009, pp. 84-85). Art forges singular perceptions rather than affirming the universal truth (Harmon & Clemans, 2009, p. 15). When an artist becomes a map-maker, an old tradition in this profession is inherited by them. Once upon a time, the pioneers of map-making were “liars, thieves and pirates” who were creative, innovative, and skilled. Their maps were mostly fictional. They told stories of adventure which did not have to be scientific. They experienced the space as their own territory to be transformed to their art. There was no cross-checking for the truth. There could be some mistakes on those maps, either by accident or on purpose. At any rate, this was a way of storytelling with maps. (Berry & McNeilly, 2014, p. 7). Reconstruction is more important than achieving absolute truth. It is the very truth of the author’s own.

In the literature, incorporating forms of art into map-making is seen as an attempt to seek idiosyncratic ways to understand the world around us in terms of urbanism with a graphical representation of our routes, paths, or patterns. They can be literal or figurative (Cartwright, 2009, p. 17). Unlike conventional maps, artistic expressions through deep maps play the reality as a dough. Interpretations give different viewpoints of a space: from the eye of the experiencer (Cartwright, 2009, p. 17). A

cartographic activity transforms into an artistic activity when it becomes involved in the “creation of an artefact resulting from human interpretation of senses, feelings, emotions, an understanding of phenomena, views of reality and other experiential elements” without a need to achieve “objective and data-specific results” (Cartwright, 2009, p. 24). Like scientific methods, artistic methods in map-making also use raw material, which could be an image or object, used to show an individual’s view of the world as an output (Cartwright, 2009, p. 26). Deep mapping, along with artistic practices, can support subjective narratives to make complex data-driven information legible and more meaningful (Butts & Jones, 2021: 4).

The theory of art posits that the individual view of an artist is “the language of emotions” (Gombrich, 1978, p. 56). It is argued that art mirrors what is going on in the inner state. There is no fixed or rigid line between emotions and various arts (Gombrich, 1996, p. 141). Moreover, there is a reversible relationship between art and emotions. Art drives emotions, and vice versa. It is “a communication of emotions” (Gombrich, 1996, as cited in Woodfield, 1996, p. 147). When it comes to artistic practice, signs and symbols are employed as an expression to frame emotions which are specific to the subject of the art. Because of the reversibility, the emotion becomes no longer inherent to the artist, and it triggers the same emotion in the recipient. For example, a person can be triggered by the emotion reflected by the painting of *Scream* by Munch, probably in the same manner the artist himself tried to describe. Artists seek ways to lead the audience in their journey through his/her art by guiding them on the emotions framed by the subject (Fairbairn, 2009, p. 27). Conventional maps have

“a mask of neutral objectivity” that an artist has an instinct authority to strip the mask off (Wood, 2006, p. 5).



## CHAPTER 4

### ARTISTIC REVIEW

Turning conventional maps into a tool for storytelling transforms our relationship with a place. There is a growing interest in creative projects that accommodate the context of memory, storytelling, emotion, and space at the center of their study. One of them is locative art projects. Regarding the concept of *walking rhetoric* (De Certeau, 1988), locative arts is a welcoming field which puts emphasis on moving and being mobile. The exploratory and artistic nature of locative arts positions itself between “the art of communications and networking and the arts of landscape, walking and the environment” (Hemment, 2006, p. 349). Artists use the technical possibilities of locative media to address the relationship between individual experience and environment. The content of these projects is ranged from analog to digital, where they often search for a new understanding or relationship between the physical and the digital (Hemment, 2006, p. 349). In this chapter, a series of art projects, though not limited to locative arts, is reviewed in terms of how they address the issues of memory, space, and storytelling, as well as how this thesis project contributes to the knowledge on this subject.

## 4.1 Examples of Sensory Maps

A sensory map “depict[s] the world as it is qualitatively experienced, drawing on alternative human sensory modalities to call attention to the more-than-visual sensory characteristics of place” (McLean, 2019, p. 153). Sensory mapping techniques combine artistic practices and “empirically sensed datasets”, such as smelling or hearing, to reveal our sensorial experience with a space. The main goal of sensory mapping is to address psycho-geographic experience upon drawing attention to the emotional effects a place could have on individuals (McLean, 2019, p. 153).

Regarding this, it can be argued that this experience shows how spaces are practiced places with an emphasis on the sensory aspect.

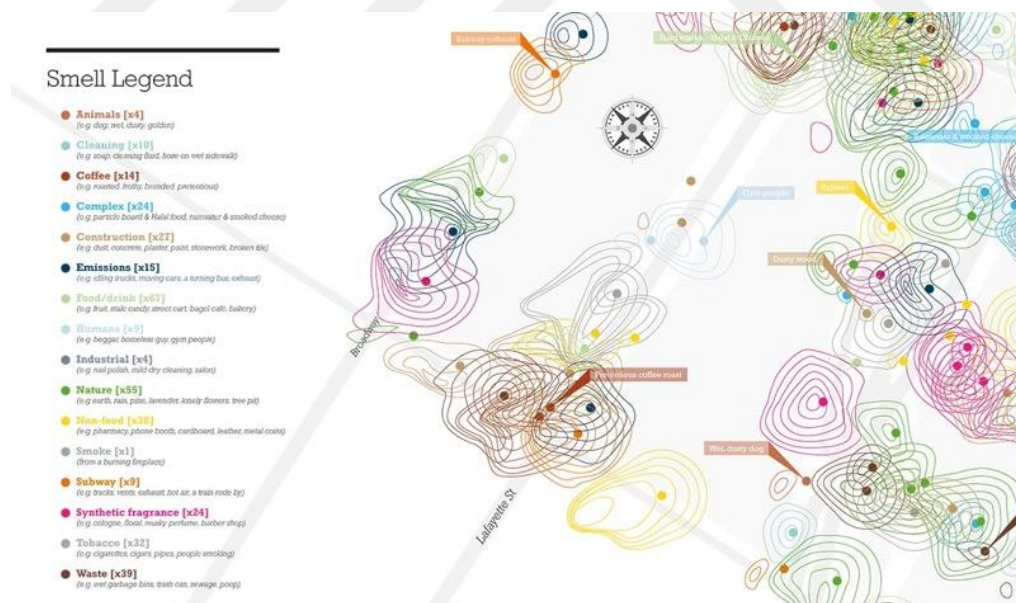


Figure 5, McLean, K. (2017). *Summer Streets*.

The Smellscape map projects by Kate McLean are a contemporary example of sensory maps, where the creator questions the relationship between odor and place, and how

this relationship affects the individual's interactions with that place. In the project of Summer Streets (2017), as shown in the Figure 5, McLean and her team take a "smellwalk" through the Astor Place in New York City by walking and smelling the locations of the neighborhood. The data used for mapping is collected by human-sniff gleaned from the noses of the team (Sensory Maps, 2017)<sup>2</sup>. Then, the data are reflected on the map in the form of colorful markings based on smell labels, such as coffee, garbage, food, synthetic fragrance, etc. The project concludes that "the map renders the smellscape as a dynamic and contested airspace" (Sensory Maps, 2017). Different individual experiences in smelling creates multiple layers on a same location. For example, while one nose associates the smell of a group of garbage bins with a particular label, another one labels each bin differently (Sensory Maps, 2017). McLean's smellscape maps stand in between physical and digital, where it is supported with locative media to precisely map the label of the smells and their locations.

The present thesis project, *Here and There*, shares a similar point in terms of unifying the digital and the analog. Using Google Maps, the precise locations of the Manhattan neighborhoods are illustrated with drawings. In the same way as the smells, drawings are used as data collected based on my own memories. While Mclean illustrates her map with colorful lines referring to different people's smell experiences, here the map of Manhattan is illustrated with icons and symbols referring to only one person's experience. However, although McLean's map offers a complex understanding of the

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<sup>2</sup> McLean K. (2017). *Sensory Maps*, accessed on March 20, 2023 from <https://sensorymaps.com/?projects=summer-streets-smellmapping-astor-place-nyc>

dynamism and fluidity of the individuals experiences through mapping, it does not present a story on an individual basis. Conversely, *Here and There* presents a visual essay which tells not just what I experienced in Manhattan, but also how I interacted with each neighborhood. As a result, it is also possible to predict what effect – positive or negative - a given place has had on me. For example, as mentioned before, while some neighborhoods are illustrated as a set of chaotic blocks and buildings with a reference to the game *Tetris*, some are illustrated as a composition of different green shapes accompanied with several green fish. The former illustrates a feeling of suffocation and alienation; whereas, the latter depicts a sense of vitality and belonging.

*SonicMaps*<sup>3</sup> by Recursive Arts (2023) is another example of sensory maps, as shown in the Figure 6. It is a locative audio project which uses geo-located sound, voice, and music to address the human-environment interaction. As a digital-only platform, SonicMaps offers a location-based immersive experience by emphasizing on walking defined as *soundwalk*, which simply refers to a virtual walk while exploring (listening) different sounds bound to a specific location. It is a cross-use application where anyone at any location can upload the sound data by using location services, such as GPS. Similar to McLean’s smellscape maps, this approach provides multiple layers of experience. For example, a number of sounds are overlapped for the same location, and the user may listen to them all at once or separately. It is an influential, immersive experience to listen to a podcast about environmental politics in Toronto and, then,

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<sup>3</sup> Recursive Arts (2023), *Sonic Maps*, accessed on March 20, 2023, from <https://sonicmaps.xyz/player/>

move the cursor to another location in the world map and experience the sounds of protests in Beirut.

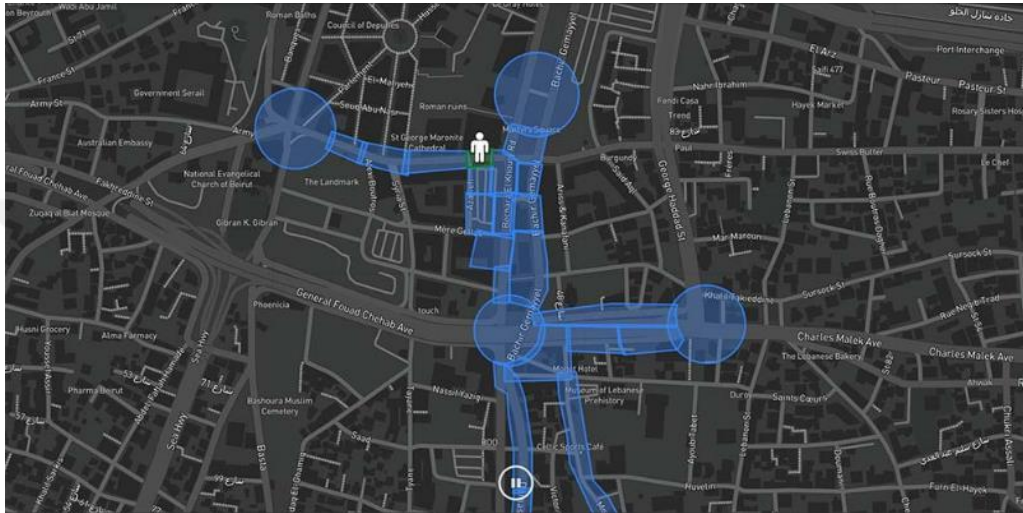


Figure 6, Recursive Arts (2023). *Sonic Maps*.

Similar to *SonicMaps*, different sounds are used in the exhibition of the thesis project to provide an immersive environment because visual materials accompanying a sound have a more immersive affect. For example, the audience takes an imaginary walk among randomly installed illustrations depicting the NYC Subway under the sound of traffic to reach out the Manhattan map, and the Brooklyn apartment which is a handcraft installation. When coming closer to the handcraft apartment, the audience explores not only a visual story, but also the sound of people exchanging laughs and partying.

It is also noteworthy to see how *SonicMaps* and the thesis project, *Here and There*, meet at a common point of memory storytelling and using sounds, but with a different

approach in terms of exhibiting. The former is digital, and the latter is analog. This project offers a similar immersive experience, but it is installed physically in an exhibition room. I argue that the exhibition provides the audience with an alternative, different sense of exploration and experience. In a time where digital media is more preferred to analog media in locative arts, it is an advantage and a different opportunity to be able to move and touch freely among the illustrations while experiencing what an imagination is at another level.

Similar to *Here and There*, both McLean and SonicMaps use memory or experience as data for mapping; however, the illustration technique in terms of storytelling is different in these projects. While SonicMaps and McLean illustrate the map with audio and smell, *Here and There* does so with drawings, thus showing the possibility of using both a material and non-material approach in illustration.

## 4.2 Examples of GPS Drawing

A GPS drawing is one of the tools of mapping an individual's experience with a physical environment. These projects basically use line drawings from the GPS data generated based on people's movement. As shown in the Figure 7, one of the early examples is *Amsterdam RealTime* by Ester Polak (2002)<sup>4</sup> in which participants, equipped with a tracer-unit tracking their movement via GPS, roam the streets of Amsterdam. Their traces are relayed on a screen inside an exhibition space. When

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<sup>4</sup> Waag (2002), *Amsterdam RealTime*, accessed on March 20, 2023, from <https://waag.org/en/project/amsterdam-realtime/>

people start to move around the city, the screen transforms from a black screen to a composition of multiple lines showing a map where unvisited spaces remain dark. This approach aims to show how people experience the city (Hemment, 2006, pp. 349-350).



Figure 7, Polak, E. (2002). *Amsterdam RealTime*.

Another similar example is *My Ghost* (2000-2016)<sup>5</sup> by Jeremy Wood; a GPS map presenting the artist's own traces of movement in London from 2000 to 2016 as a diary. These two examples share the same technique; though, Polak aims to show multiple experiences while Wood does so with an individual experience. Both

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<sup>5</sup> Wood, J. (2016) *My Ghost*, accessed on March 21, 2023, from <https://www.jeremywood.net/artworks/my-ghost2016.html>

approaches visualize mental maps of people moving through the city by narrating cartographic stories.

The last example of GPS drawings is again Wood's *GPS Drawing* series, which employ the same technique to create an unrealistic representation of an environment based on individual experiences; however, the GPS lines generate outline drawings of figures, such as animals, symbols, or icons. This time, Wood aims to focus on figurative drawing using GPS, and becomes "a geodetic pencil" when drawing (Lauriault & Wood 2009, p. 360). While moving around, he records his traces by connecting location-based points. The places and spaces are his canvas, the medium where his body moves, and the setting where he tracks his movement (Lauriault & Wood 2009, p. 360). *IF* (2002)<sup>6</sup>, one of his GPS drawings, aims to show "the world's biggest IF", as shown in the Figure 8. The word IF generated by GPS covers certain regions of Southern England.

I argue that Wood's GPS drawings present visual cartographic stories written on a territory, which does not exist in reality and, as such, cannot be seen physically. This notion stands at the center of Wood's works – the immateriality of places which are physical, scientifically modelled realities (Lauriault & Wood, 2009, pp. 360-361). This argument brings back to de Certeau's differentiation of place and space (1988). A place is merely a location, but a space is a practiced place where stories are written.

For example, *IF* presents a visual story of Wood's journey, a map of where he visits;

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<sup>6</sup> Wood, J. (2002) *IF*, accessed on March 21, 2023, from <http://www.gpsdrawing.com/gallery/land/if.htm>

though, the photographs of his experience through his journey, presented along with the artwork at his Website, play an essential role in telling the background story of his journey: how he interacted with places he visited, such as where he just passed through, or where he stopped and interacted with the place in different ways.



Figure 8, Wood, J. (2002). *IF*.

Both Polak and Wood share common ground with this thesis project in terms of mapping memories as data in cartographic practice. While Polak focuses more on multiple experiences, Wood and this project focus on a single experience. Wood's GPS drawing series reveal that a visual composition of GPS traces is only a part of cartographic stories. However, the photographs that accompany them tell how the

experience, *being there*, performs. In other words, in line with de Certeau, Wood shows how these places are practiced – transformed into spaces – with visual proofs.

*Here and There* has an analog approach which uses traces of memories in the form of complex illustrations. Similar to Wood's approach, these location-based illustrations tell a visual story about not just where I was, but also how I interacted with these places and how these places affected me. I argue that depicting an experience through photographs and illustration differs because reading or decoding illustrations varies from one person to another based on their visual literacy (making meanings from an image), experience, or cultural perspective. On this matter, *Here and There* advocates the freedom of interpretation when it comes to using illustrations. I allow the audience to have their own interpretation about what they think is actually taking place on the map. The audience not only walks around the exhibition space, they also interpret what they see in accordance to their own perspective.

In the thesis project, not a single photograph or object has been used related to the Manhattan experience so as to avoid any confusion caused by excessive visual information. It was thought that these materials would render the setup hard to grasp. However, a collage of photographs, images, and videos, which offer a glimpse of my memories attached to Manhattan, has been uploaded along with the project in my student blog, which is open for visitors who would like to dig further into the artist's Manhattan journey<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Sezen, S. (2022). *Here and There: Manhattan Memories*, accessed on March 21, 2023, from

### 4.3 Analog Approaches

Beside the usage of digital media, artistic practices with analog approaches to memory and space are abundant. An influential example is *Memory Palace* (2013)<sup>8</sup>, a collaborative installation project which brings multiple artists from the fields of graphic design, illustration, and typography together to build a multi-dimensional storytelling technique. Walking in a book – as a re-imagined activity for reading – stands at the core of the exhibition.

Departing from Hari Kunzru's story which creates a dystopian world set in London, where information, technology, and knowledge are lost. The city is ruled by an oppressive regime which enforces extreme simplicity on individuals, thus outlawing any kind of memory techniques such as writing, recording, or collecting. The narrator of the story is a prisoner who practices the so-called "art of memory" to transform the prison into a memory palace where each cell represents a different memory, he can recall. Since Kunzru's stories are a series of short passages written in a non-linear way, each artist works on a specific passage and interprets it in their own ways. The space of the exhibition represents the book, and the installations represent the passages. As shown in the Figure 9, The non-linear way of narrating gives the audience the chance to explore around the space freely.<sup>9</sup>

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<https://sssezen.wordpress.com/2022/11/15/here-and-there-moodboard/>

<sup>8</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum (2013). *Sky Arts Ignition: Memory Palace*, accessed on March 21, 2023, from <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/exhibition-sky-arts-ignition-memory-palace/about-the-exhibition/>

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

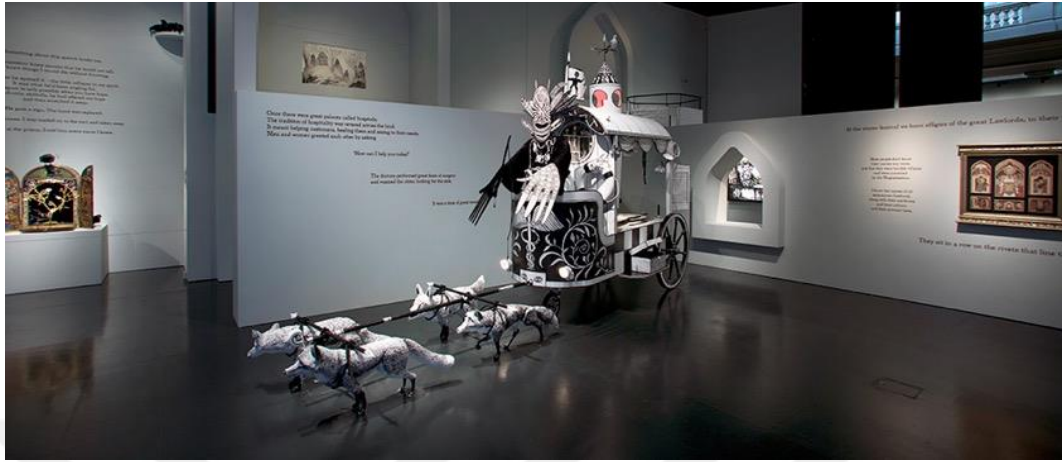


Figure 9, Multiple Artists. (2013). *Memory Palace* [Exhibition], Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

*Memory Palace* and *Here and There* share a common ground in using the space of exhibition as an accessory for storytelling; both turn memories into hand-drawn and hand-crafted illustrations, but re-imagine the setting of the story in a different format. While *Memory Palace* sets the story in an imagined book, *Here and There* does so in an imagined city, stressing upon navigation beside exploration. The project lets the audience navigate freely with their phone light in a dark room to find the installations of the Manhattan Map and the Brooklyn Apartment while exploring other illustrated elements as decorations. This navigational property turns the entire exhibition space into not just a part of the story, but also an aid to create a more immersive experience.

Next, Joyce Kozloff's map project *The Tempest* (2015) offers a more traditional approach to memory and mapping. Kozloff has been an artist and activist in the movements of Feminist Art and Pattern and Decoration as a rejection of overly-conceptual art world including male dominant, reductivist, purist and minimalist concepts in art (DC Moore Gallery, 2017; Hartnell, 2015). Opposing against

Minimalism, she is an advocator of patterned, decorative, narrative, and subjective expressions in art (Hartnell, 2015). Kozloff's works are intertwined with narrating social trajectories as data - the focal point of deep mapping. Embracing decorative as a feminine and traditional sense, she adopts patterning as a style in her geo-political concepts (Lovelace, 2015, p. 14).

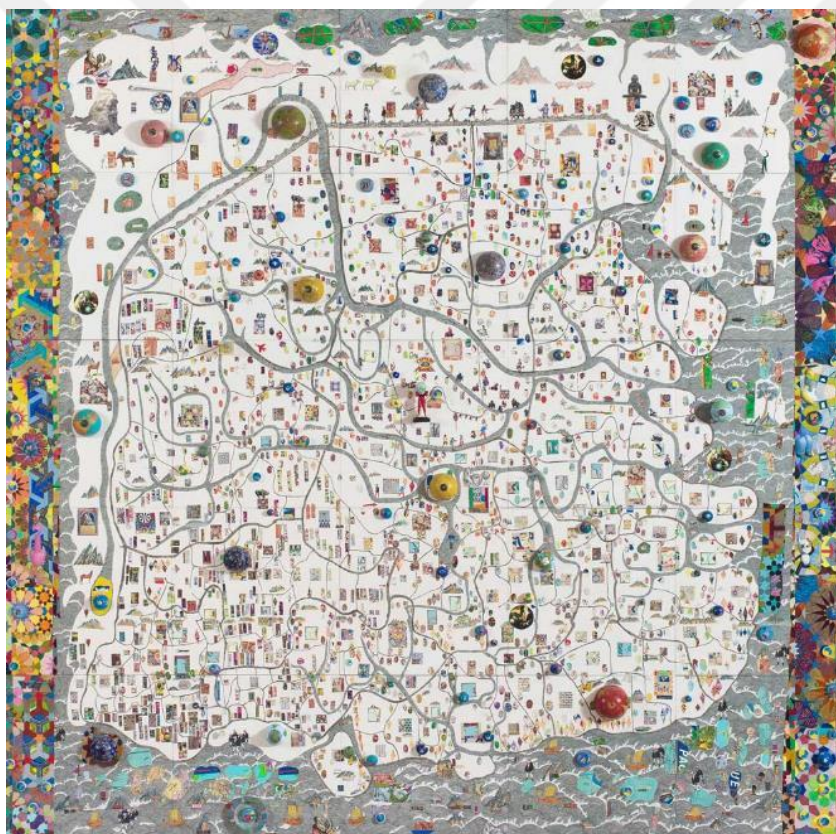


Figure 10, Kozloff, J. (2015). *The Tempest*.

In *The Tempest* (2015), as shown in the Figure 10, Kozloff centers her art on the theme of geo-political art going through a synthesis with her simulacra of an altered historical map: an eighteenth-century Chinese world map. By using a mixture of

drawings, objects, crafts, and collages, she tells a story of power and politics through journey. She maps the story around European colonization (Lovelace, 2015, p.12).

Her work is influential in terms of mapping historical elements and stories, along with her experience using different materials as media. The mapping process shows that there is a fluidity between common memory and individual memory; both tend to reconstruct each other – a process that is reflected in the form of visual cartographic composition. The map is more distorted and more unrealistic compared to the digital locative art examples discussed earlier. *The Tempest* reminds us of ancient medieval maps, such as the *Ebstorf Map* which prefers storytelling over realistically representing a place, as shown in the Figure 1.

It could be argued that both *The Tempest* and *Here and There* may have biased interpretations of a place. In my opinion, the map-maker's perception shaping her/his world is a part of their experience as well. Similar to what Kozloff attempts to show in her map, the very nature of map art, even deep mapping, can be biased, and biased perceptions can serve as data revealing more than a map-maker may or may not intend to. In the sense of this perspective, the illustrations were made in the thesis project reflect not only my own memories and emotions, but also my biased depictions about the people, food, places, or facts in Manhattan. These depictions, negative or positive, are part of my personal geography.

Additionally, both *The Tempest* and *Here and There* use different materials to create illustrations. In the installation of the Brooklyn Apartment, the illustrations turned into hand-crafted materials combined with other objects to create a scene of memory. However, *Here and There* somehow stands in between digital analog, but closer to the latter. Unlike *The Tempest*, the thesis project favors Google Maps to place the memories at the right location. While mapping, I take the outline of Manhattan's plot as a reference; thus, avoiding re-imagining the borders of Manhattan and focusing solely on the spatial storytelling in terms of each neighborhood.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE PROJECT

#### 5.1 Purpose of the Project

*Here and There* is an art project developed within this thesis to answer the following research question: *how to narrate a space with personal memories*. It is a map art representing Manhattan where I map my own memories in the form of illustrations. These personal memories span between 2006 and 2010 while residing in the United States. Manhattan is not an ordinary place for me; I have a nostalgic attachment to this place, where I used to walk around the city to explore, try new routes, and explore questions concerning psycho-geographical awareness. In the sense of space, memory and storytelling, I wanted to create my own personal map of Manhattan for memories represented as illustrations.

The project aims to demonstrate how mapping can be used to bring depth and meaning to spaces through portraying, storytelling, and imagination. The project illustrates the role memory has on feelings and emotions attached to the perception of place. My experience of Manhattan is used for mapping, and the memories are collected as data in the form of illustrations in a sketchbook. The sketchbook also has become a printed picture book titled *Here and There: Manhattan Memories*. The process of collecting memories is carried out through

recalling by means of viewing photos, videos, images, or objects that reminds me of a specific memory attached to a specific place in Manhattan.

The intent of this study is to invite the viewer to an alternative perception of a place and to allow them to draw their own routes, move through, discover, and compare their own perceptions to the artist's perception to the place, including the emotional connection to it. The audience interacts with the map by taking an imaginary walk through the streets of Manhattan in the dark. The reason for the installation of a dark setting is to inspire a sense of navigation and exploration in the audience. The exhibition process allows the audience to find their own way while exploring. To see around, the audience is expected to use their cell phones as the light source since almost everyone nowadays carries one.

## 5.2 Overview

*Here and There* is composed of a map art, along with a sketchbook which serves as a tool for data collection and guidance. All artworks are built upon a series of illustrations made with traditional drawings in a sketchbook. Illustration as a methodology here favors transforming the fragments of personal memories into icons and figures, which are drawn in 2D and flat-style with colors. Each page of the sketchbook illustrates a particular neighborhood of Manhattan containing a glimpse into my memories of that specific space. These memories are an

experience, emotion, occasion, or circumstance that, alone or together, convey a story.

The map of Manhattan divided into multiple neighborhoods with borders and streets is filled with these illustrations. Through the lens of the map and the sketchbook, I invite the viewer into an imaginary space of Manhattan – as if a different dimension - to be a witness or an explorer experiencing from a different dimension or perspective.

### 5.3 Theoretical Conceptualization

The theoretical framework of *Here and There* stems mainly from approaches of map art along with the theoretical approaches on space, walking rhetoric, memory, and psycho-geography (de Certeau, 1988; Debord, 1981; Yates, 1996).

Firstly, entering into the cartographic perspectives on mapping as an art form, and the studies on deep mapping as an emerging field was a starting point during the development of this thesis. These perspectives guided this study to understand how mapping has become an art form different from classic cartography, which favors rationalism and science over imagination. Apart from this, map art travels beyond the boundaries of geography by reflecting the perspective of the map-maker in terms of experience and feelings – that is, not

simply the physical world around them, but also their place in this world (Wood, 2006, pp. 5, 11; Harmon, 2004, p. 11; Taylor et. al., 2019, p. 26).

The epicenter of these perspectives which reflect on the project *Here and There* is the argument as to how map art reveals what is *hidden*. Once an art-maker present her/his own perspective of what is seen, an alternative spatial reality is born. It, then, becomes a challenge for viewers to see the space from the perspective of the other; yet, this serves as resistance from the art maker against conventional maps. Viewers, upon, discovery, are faced with these alternative realities, which had been previously unnoticed or hidden from them.

Questioning the *hidden* about a space from the perspective of map-makers leads the second part of the theoretical framework. This is where the background of the discussions around the linkage among space, memory, and map art are examined. Understanding the difference between a place and a space was a starting point for this thesis (De Certeau, 1988, pp. 174, 294). What makes a place a space is directly related to the meaning people associate with it; it is a “product of subject” (de Certeau 1988, p. 294). Each place transforms into a space whenever someone experiences it. This practice creates countless individual stories out of these spaces. Each individual story is an everyday resistance, as de Certeau (1988) argues, against fixed, ubiquitous, and structural understanding of the world (p. 117).

What is the *hidden* in an everyday encounter with a place? It is the individual stories. It is important to mention here that the point of resistance has been emphasized in this study because the very nature of map art is related to the resistance against conventional maps. Concerning space, map art favors imagination and narrative over scientific realism. Rather than just being a representation of geometrical forms, it reveals what is *hidden* within these forms.

This automatically leads to the question: *Where do the stories come from?* The answer is found in de Certeau's concept of memory, along with Yates's discussion on how memory builds upon image and place in mind (de Certeau, 1988; Yates, 1996). Memories play a prominent role in narrating a space. In doing so, a story is created "in the form of space and time" where the fragments of memories are visually stored in a mental state as a form of map (Coates, 2012, as cited in Nugroho et al., 2019, p. 59). De Certeau (1988) calls this status "subject as witness" to emphasize the importance of memories as the "holes and gaps" of the subject constructed with the terms of a circumstance (or the other) (p. 86). A subjectivity creates an ontological stratum whenever someone is interested in space as a social practice (Bode & Schmidt, 2013, p. 69).

Map art as an artistic expression, in this sense, can be interpreted as *subject as witness* because it conjures an "instant of art" which "constitutes the implantation of memory in a place that already forms an ensemble" (de Certeau, 1988, p. 252). "Working with a concept of art in which aesthetics and discourse intersect the

idea of the witness changes from a passive and distant receptor to a more active, or rather, involved position” (Bode & Schmidt, 2013, p. 85).

De Certeau’s discussions on *walking rhetoric* are important to understand how to create a map while practicing the place (1988). Meanwhile, Debord’s concept of *psycho-geography* guided this thesis to improve the arguments on how this spatial movement engages in psycho-geographical awakening by changing the usual routes and discovering new paths and directions in a place (1981). A pedestrian or simply a *walker* performs her/his practices in dealing with the city; thereby, rejecting the limits and the orders imposed by the universal maps.

For the project, I took an *imaginary walk* in my mental map of Manhattan and reconstructed all neighborhoods. This ephemeral walking not only demonstrated a sense of interiorization of the streets (Ferdinand, 2019, p. 129; de Certeau 1988, p. 148), but also created an alternative way of urbanism. As a walker, I associated the place with different textures specific to them, reconstructing new meanings that embryoid the city (Jang, 2015, p. 93).

The emerging field of *deep mapping* opened a specific space where “exploration of hidden cartographic details” and the importance of narrative as data in map-making is addressed specifically. Deep mapping, along with artistic practices, can support subjective narratives to make complex data-driven information legible and more meaningful (Butts & Jones, 2021, p. 4).

To take an imaginary walk through the streets of Manhattan, the essentials of deep mapping and the methodology of illustration as a drawing practice were incorporated. In the de Certeauian sense, an illustrator adopts the practice of everyday life through illustrating as a tactic in the same way a pedestrian does with walking. Illustrating is like walking, operated in everyday life via direct engagement with the social world (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, pp. 18-19). A sketchbook was used for data collection related to personal memories. An illustrator's sketchbook is like a pedestrian's journal where she/he keeps memories associated to a place and which can be used as a method of documentation to uncover the hidden, thus providing a deeper understanding of the place (Gardener et al., 2019; Letsiou, 2017; O'Rourke, 2013; Harmon, 2016).

#### 5.4 Ideation

As seen in the Figure 11, the mandala inspired, spatial art of *Yukarı Ayrancı* was made for GRA 504 as a part of a course project, serving as the base idea later leading to the interest that initially shaped the present project. It illustrates my perception of Yukarı Ayrancı, one of the neighborhoods in Ankara where I spent most of my childhood. Although it is just a set of buildings, personal memories, and emotions attached to this place; yet, there is more than what meets the eye since it is not just a place for me, but it is something created by my stories: a space. When I created this map of Yukarı Ayrancı, the geometric forms of its conventional map became shattered, distorted, and then reconstructed because of my own experience with this place.

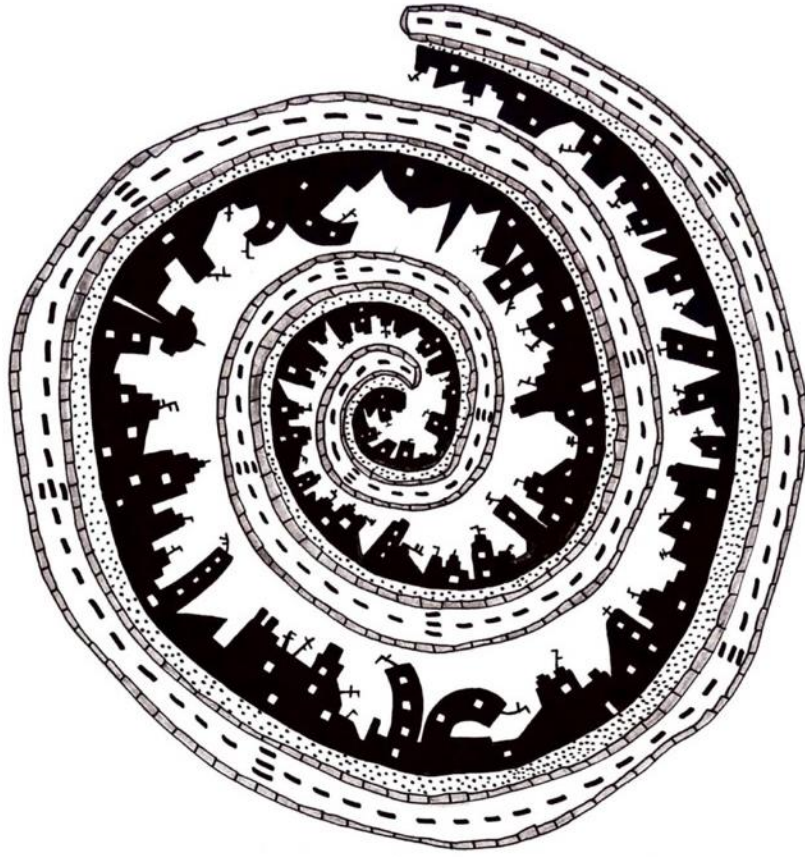


Figure 11: Savacı Sezen, S. (2021). *Yukarı Ayrancı*.

The most interesting part was the feedback given when map of *Yukarı Ayrancı* was presented to the thesis monitoring committee. It was argued that *if* they drew this map, it would have been very different since their experience and emotions attached to this place was different than mine. This feedback strengthened the argument over the possibility of countless subjectivities that transform a place, which is “geometrically defined by urban planning”, into space where memories are embedded (de Certeau, 1988, p. 117).

As seen in the Figure 12, The ideation process started with brainstorming on the design canvas before drawing began. Essentially, this activity allowed for the division of the project under sub-elements and foreseeing what kind of needs and problems may be encountered during the development process and the exhibition.

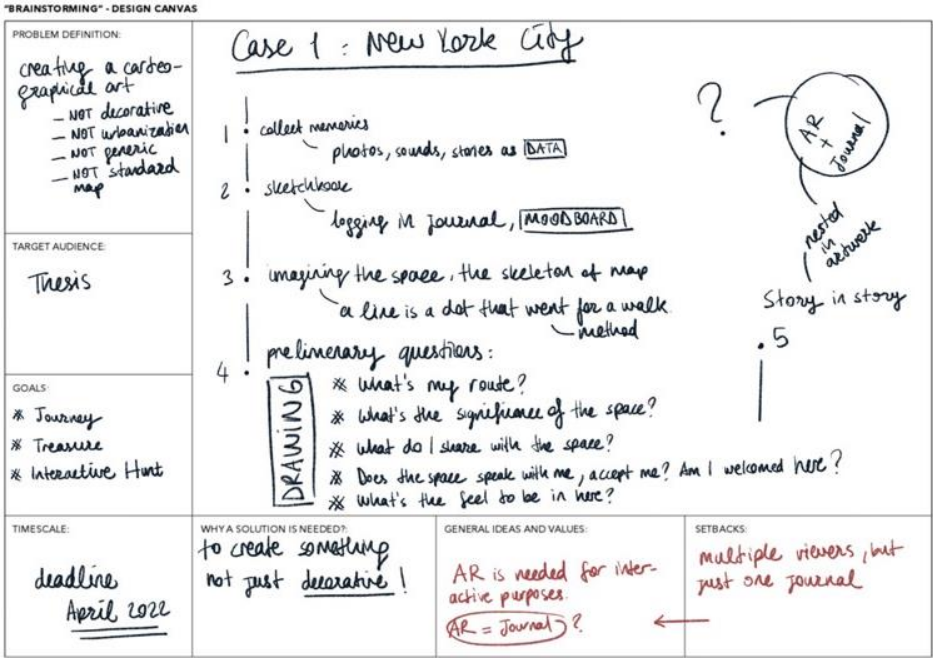


Figure 12, Design Canvas

As seen in the Figure 13, the first version of the design canvas included Augmented Reality (AR) technology since the aim was to form interactivity between the illustrations and the audience. Because of the time restrictions and the long process of preparing the sketchbook, I decided to create a more analogous way of interactivity, later excluding AR adoption.





Journey Steps Which step of the experience are you describing?	Experience What do audience experience?	Experience How do audience experience?	Outcome What do you want the audience to take away from their experience?
<b>Actions</b> What does the audience do? What information do they look for? What is their context?	The audience views and analyzes the artworks which present a series of illustration of maps as a travel story.  They are asked how personal stories and memories create metaphorical visions/imageries about a space in the form of a map.	While viewing the artworks, they interact with other supplements as a part of the exhibition, such as the sketchbook, augmented reality, and other possible supplements such as texts, old passports, etc.	Personal stories transform places into spaces. There are as many spaces as there are distinct spatial experiences. Creating your own spatial experience in the form of a map is an act of resistance to the today's generic maps which feeds on power relations.
<b>Needs and Pains</b> What does the audience want to achieve or avoid?	They try to fill the gaps among story, memory, spatial metaphors and space in the form of a map.  They avoid ambiguity, incoherence, and inconsistency.	While viewing the artworks, they take other supplements as reference to how they relate to each other, and how they together become a response to the research question.  They avoid ambiguity by following up the exhibition guide.	The whole composition intends to give the audience a form of itinerary and immersion while inviting them into my personal journey in the way to my research question.
<b>Interactivity</b> What part of the service do they interact with?	Beside the artworks, they interact with sketchbook, augmented reality, and other possible supplements, such as texts, old passports, etc.	They touch and use the sketchbook as a proof of process and journey. Additionally, they use their phones to find out which stories embedded in the artworks.	While viewing and interacting, they find themselves in an immersive situation where they play a treasure hunt.
<b>Audience Feeling</b> What is the audience feeling?			 
<b>Backstage</b>			
<b>Risks and Precautions</b> What could we improve or introduce?	The research question should be given as a form of text in the exhibition process. The audience should know what they are looking for at first sight.	The guideline related to how to view artwork, how to make a relation between artwork and other supplements, and how to view exhibition should be clear and coherent.	It should be clear that the audience take my personal journey as a reference to think about the possibility that they can create their own maps of journey. <small>miro</small>

Figure 13: *Prototype I*

When it came to mapping, I aimed to be loyal to the relativity of Manhattan's conventional map and, yet, reconstructed the sub-divisions and the details based on my subjectivity to the place. The length of the map was set to be at least three meters long to permit the audience to expend minimum effort for walking it and discovering the hidden details.

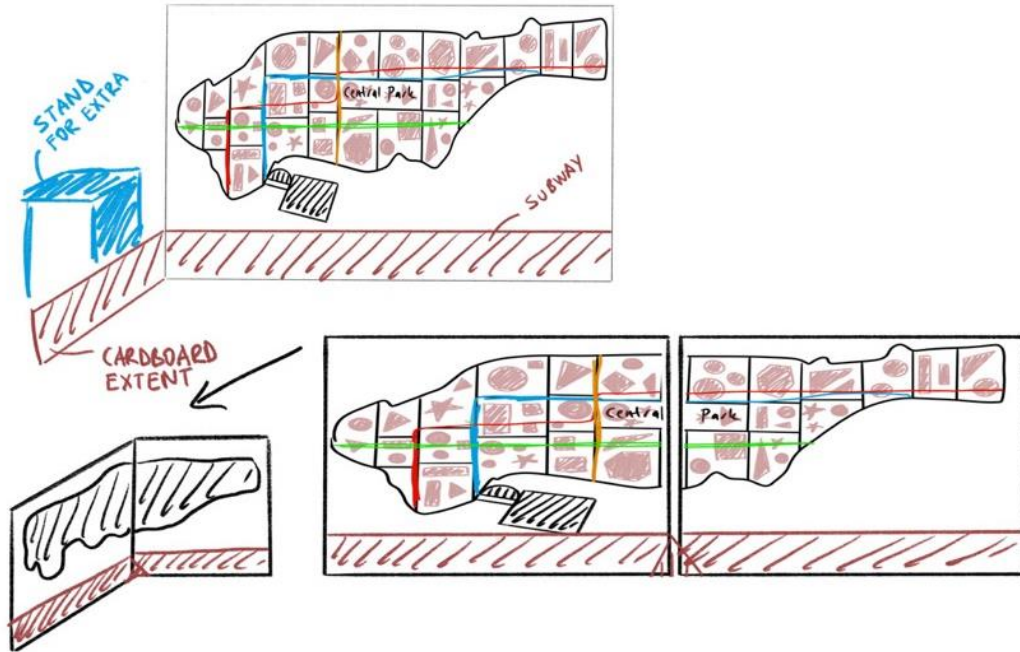


Figure 14: Prototype II

The sketchbook was due to be complete while prototype II was being prepared, prompting me to check the wall options in the exhibition hall at Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA) in Bilkent University before developing the map. In this prototype, different wall options were compared in terms of how they can be used with the artwork during the exhibition.

As seen in the Figures 14 and 15, I decided to use the main artwork mounted on one wall along with the other details. I aimed to exhibit the entire work in a dark room to provide a better spatial setting for the audience to interact with. Because the nature of illustration focuses on storytelling, the audience is expected to be focused on discovering the details of the artworks set to challenge them in a dark atmosphere as

well as to immerse them in the idea of discovery. The details of the exhibition will be addressed in the respective part within this thesis.



Figure 15: Prototype III

## 5.5 Illustration as Methodology

*Here and There* favors illustration by means of drawing as a methodology. This is an ideal tool for this project because it is one of the prominent visual communication art forms in map-making. Illustration merges mapping with creative strategies to examine the relationship between space and memory. In the de Certeausian sense, an artist's sketchbook resembles a pedestrian's journal where fragments of memories kept are associated with the place in point. As a research *for* illustration, this project adopts the

use of a sketchbook as a method of documentation to uncover the hidden and bring a deeper understanding of the place (Gardener et al., 2019; Letsiou, 2017; O'Rourke, 2013; Harmon, 2016). In the project, I illustrate my memories attached to specific places in Manhattan in my sketchbook and, then, use each illustrated element for the mapping process with the help of Photoshop. The project also benefits from Google Maps to outline the actual physical borders of Manhattan. This is followed by placing each illustration in its specific location on the map.

By using markers as the medium, the 2D flat illustration technique is applied to create metaphorical storytelling in the project. As a user-interface (UI) designer, I frequently use this technique when it comes to storytelling; in this case, to make the interpretations more visual literacy-friendly. In terms of the art material, traditional media (markers and pen) were preferred to emphasize authenticity in the same way a pedestrian takes notes on her/his travel journal. Markers, the medium of choice, are ideal tools to create graphic illustrations as their vivid colors provide a technical advantage in easily accompanying them with other media, such as colored pencils.

The detail of the technical process will be examined in further detail in the following sections. Before continuing further, it is important to review what illustration as methodology is in the literature. Illustration is a visual communication tool where artists create an interpretation or visual explanation of a concept, text, or process. Critical insights on methodological approaches to illustration have been emerging for long now (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021), and the creative practices are diverse within this

domain. These methodologies are a response to the need for analysis methods gather a set of tools to be employed by both qualitative researchers during research – documentation and analysis to name two - to syncretize with creative arts and, thereby, address the questions related to where “theory and practice are intertwined” (Leavy, 2020, pp. 2-3).

Gannon and Fauchon (2021) have adopted a framework for categorizing the methods of illustration as research *into*, *through*, and *for* illustration. The first one represents the critical studies of illustrative practices. The main focus is on analytical discourses related to artefacts, methods in art-based practices, historical studies concerning illustrative data, and so forth. The second method, research *through* illustration, is conducted and performed through illustration practices including creative experiments with different materials and tools to test ideas while developing a development a project. Examples in this category include art-based research practices, participatory methods, exhibition, and performing arts. Lastly, research *for* illustration covers preparatory artworks, such as sourcing artistic inspirations for the learning process, and the technical skills to produce outcomes during the development of a project (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, p. 20).

Regarding the technical background, illustration practices stem from a design model regardless of the impetus of a project. The design model composes of four main categories: *principles*, *common strategies*, *behaviors*, and *tools and instruments*. A principle in an illustration project is defined according to the following criteria:

(1) *Social/public* meaning: Whether the project is engaged with specific people or public; (2) *Audience-specific* meaning: Who the audience is; (3) *Communicative* meaning: Whether it is communicative and, thus, needs to be engaged in so as to be understood; (4) *Multiform* meaning: Whether it conveys various forms and has no material boundaries; and (5) *Intent* meaning: What the intention or motivation is even if it is experimental (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, p. 16).

The common strategies in response to the task in an illustration project are: (1) *Narrative*: It implies the use of storytelling as a method of covering information and content; (2) *Creative*: Using interpretation as a method to use imagination; (3) *Participation*: A method of engaging with the audience to be understood better; and (4) *Responsive Methods*: In illustration, these methods are adaptive in terms of people, environment, and situations (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, p.16).

The behaviors of an illustration project compose of its (1) *subjective* position; (2) *emphatic* usage through portraying variable emotions; (3) *persuasiveness*; (4) *transferability* to other media platforms; and (5) *accessibility*, whether it could be accessible by a diverse audience in terms of context (Gannon & Fauchon, 2021, p. 16).

Lastly, the tools and instruments of an illustration project not only refer to the art material itself, but a form of medium that promotes and supports the field of illustration as a wider discipline, such as organizations and individuals, agents, venues, retailers, and so forth.

## 5.6 Method of Documentation: The Sketchbook

In the project, the sketchbook serves as a method of documentation as well as a former of the project itself, with the aim to be used while taking an imaginary journey to the artist's own memories of Manhattan. I illustrated my experiences, emotions and even the influence of popular culture in the sketchbook while wondering around the imaginary streets of Manhattan in my mental map. These experiences constituted my stories of the space.

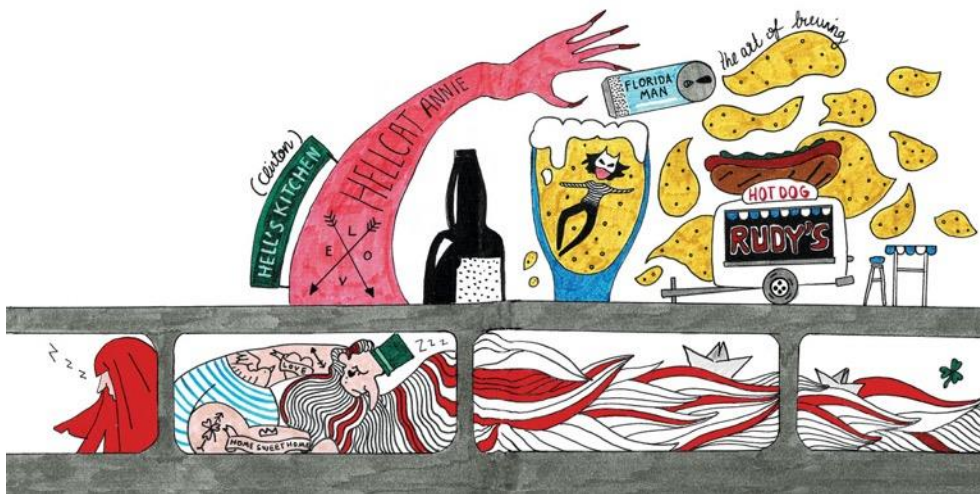


Figure 16, Savacı Sezen, S. (2022). *Here and There: Manhattan Memories*.

The subway is the focal point in the sketchbook. It is because the NYC Subway is believed to be the center point of New Yorkers' life since they spend a majority of their time commuting in this way. I decided to illustrate them sleeping to demonstrate the contrast between the energy of people and that of the city, which highly active and demanding, thereby forcing people to balance this gap by sleeping while on the subway. In the sketchbook, a subway train constantly travels from the beginning to the

end of the book as a part of the story. It gives an extra glimpse into specific neighborhoods. The people on the subway came purely out of my imagination; yet, somehow, they mirror the neighborhood they reside in, as seen in the Figure 16.

Another focal point in the sketchbook is the girl figure with a cat mask. It is a mascot, a representation of myself, and I have been using it in my drawings for years. The viewer sees a series of these mascots around the map. From the artist's perspective, this is the inspiration behind titling the project *Here and There*.



Figure 17, Draft. *Here and There: Manhattan Memories*.

The sketchbook consists of 40 pages including 20 neighborhoods in Manhattan. For each neighborhood, two pages were used to tell a story specific to that neighborhood. The road map of this practice started with preparing a *moodboard* comprising

photographs that the artists took when she was in Manhattan, including some videos, music, and books as reminiscent of those times.<sup>10</sup> When it comes to drawing, it was started with a plan and doodling for each neighborhood. For example, as seen in the Figures 17 and 18, before designing the memories specific to the Hell's Kitchen, the prototype of the composition was divided into main and secondary keywords, including doodles. Then, the composition was made.

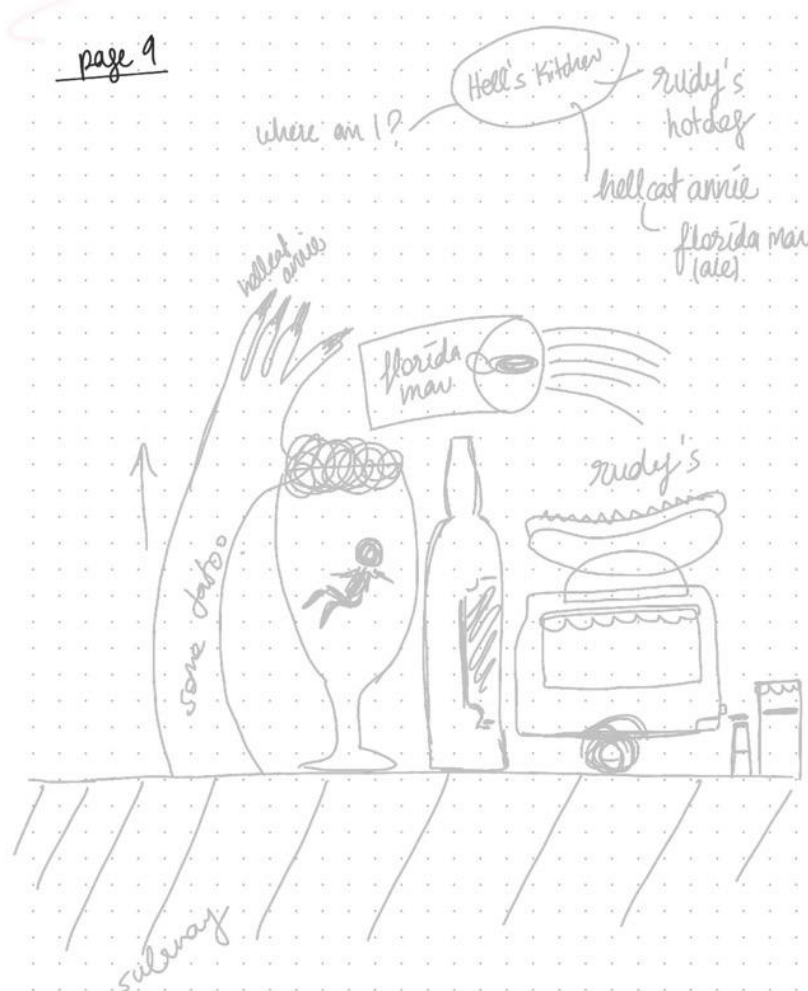


Figure 18, Prototype. *Hell's Kitchen*,

<sup>10</sup> The moodboard can be accessed through <https://sssezen.wordpress.com/2022/11/15/here-and-there-moodboard/>

## 5.7 Technical Process: The Map of Manhattan

To create a creative map by using the elements of the sketchbook, I used Photoshop, while Google Maps was used to outline the physical borders of Manhattan and, later, to map the illustrations on the specific locations. As mentioned before, I aimed to be loyal to the relativity of Manhattan's conventional map and, yet, to reconstruct the sub-divisions and the details based on my subjectivity to the place. After the pages were scanned with high quality, each page was retouched, and then various elements were selected with the 'select and mask' tool. The map and the sketchbook are similar, yet at the same time, different from each other. As seen in the Figure 19, to transfer the illustrations from the book space to the map space, a different perspective was used for the same compositions. The biggest challenge of this method is that the elements have to be cut out with the pen tool precisely enough to leave out the white background; otherwise, the multiply tool would not operate successfully in some cases as a result of random white patches still visible on other layers.

After the map was finished, the files were sent to *Eryilmaz Offset* in Yenimahalle for printing. The map was printed on a 3mX1.5m sheet. Each illustration of different subways was printed on a 3mX50cm sheet for decorative purposes. Lastly, the sketchbook was printed as a picture book with hard cover.

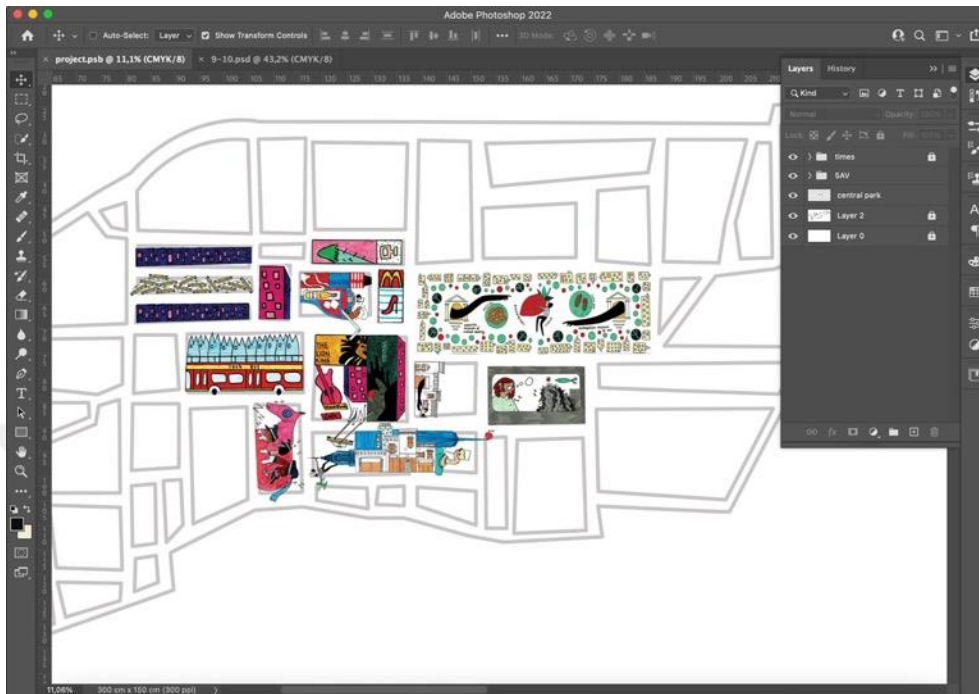


Figure 19, Technical Process I



Figure 20, Technical Process II

A darker background of the map composed of my handwritings was used to make an eye-friendly sample for exhibition on a white wall. The background consists of the notes from the present thesis, as seen in the Figure 20.

### 5.8 Handcraft: The Brooklyn Apartment

Since the map consists of only the neighborhoods of Manhattan, and since there is an extra page in the sketchbook for the Brooklyn apartment where I lived, there was the need to demonstrate it in a different way but as a substitute for the map, as seen in the Figure 21.

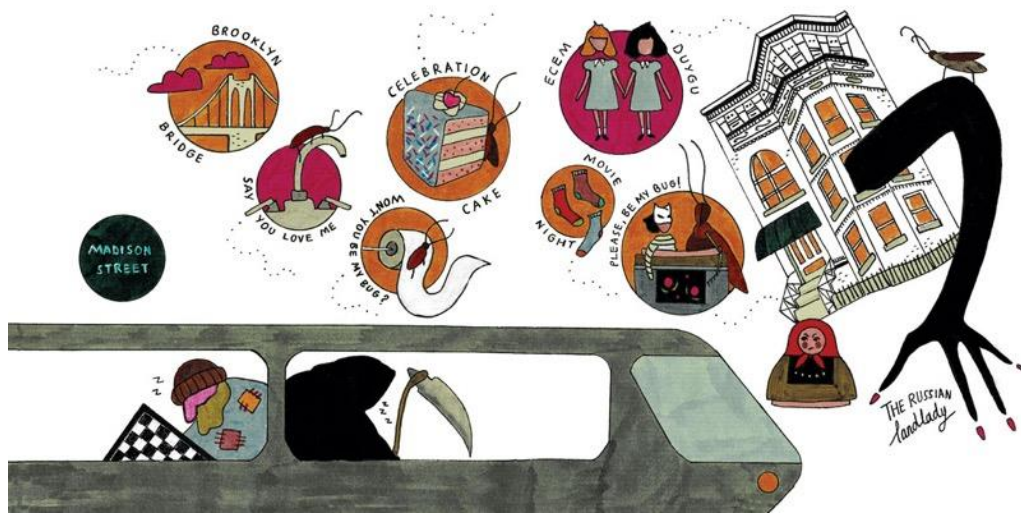


Figure 21, Savacı Sezen, S. (2022). *Here and There: Manhattan Memories*.

The Brooklyn Apartment was illustrated with different materials, such as paper crafts and objects. Transforming an illustration into a hand-crafted object has been an inspirational process for me. For the apartment, the course project was designed for GRA 501: *Make Thing That Work* inspired this process. Some objects were re-used

and re-edited, such as the bookcase, books, armchair, and coffee table. As seen in the Figures 22 and 23, in the apartment, all the furniture was made with cardboard and, then, painted with acrylic. The illustrations and the mixed-media elements on the walls were designed in such a way to illustrate the details in the room. The plastic cockroaches are the only objects that were not crafted. They were applied as a part of the story.

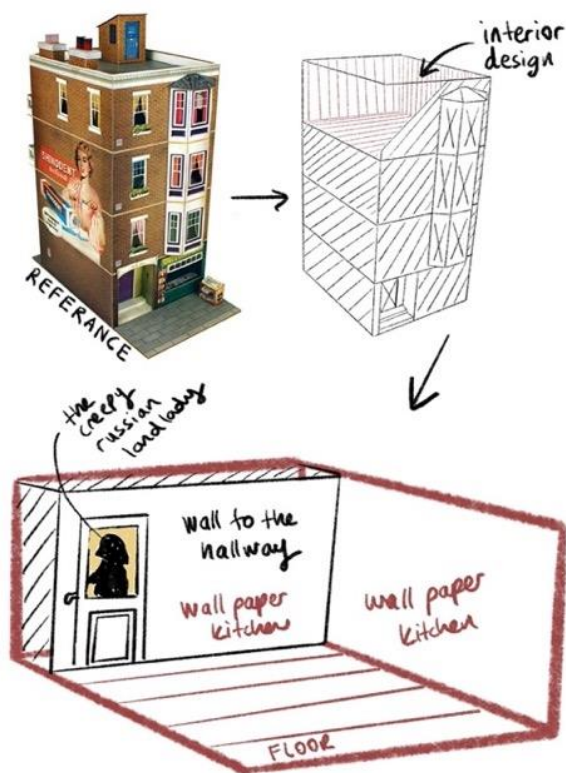


Figure 22, Prototype. *The Brooklyn Apartment*



Figure 23, *The Brooklyn Apartment*

## 5.9 Exhibition

For the exhibition, as the Figures 23 to 30 show, a whole room in FADA was used to create an immersive atmosphere in darkness to encourage the participants to use their phones as a light source to see around. By doing this, I aimed to challenge them and enhance the idea of discovery. To do this, all the windows in the exhibition area were covered with black paper. The subway posters were pasted on the walls and the floor in an asymmetric way all through the room space. The map with the project banner was mounted on the main wall. The apartment was physically placed in front of the map.

Lastly, the exhibition area was supplied with a sound system playing the city and traffic sounds to make sense of the subway illustrations while randomly covering the

room. Moreover, when coming closer to the installation of the Brooklyn Apartment, the audience would hear the sounds of a party and people interacting, thus helping to create sensual scene. The sound system is used to accompany the artworks in achieving a more immersive experience. The objects were positioned away from each other to let the audience walk around at ease.

During the exhibition, I realized the power of light: for instance, when more than four people used their phone light at the same time, the ideal level of darkness in the room diminished. This affected the ambiance. A solution could have been small flashlights handed out at the lobby, or a maximum number of the audience set for each entry.



Figure 24, Exhibition I



Figure 25, Exhibition II



Figure 26, Exhibition IV



Figure 27, Exhibition V

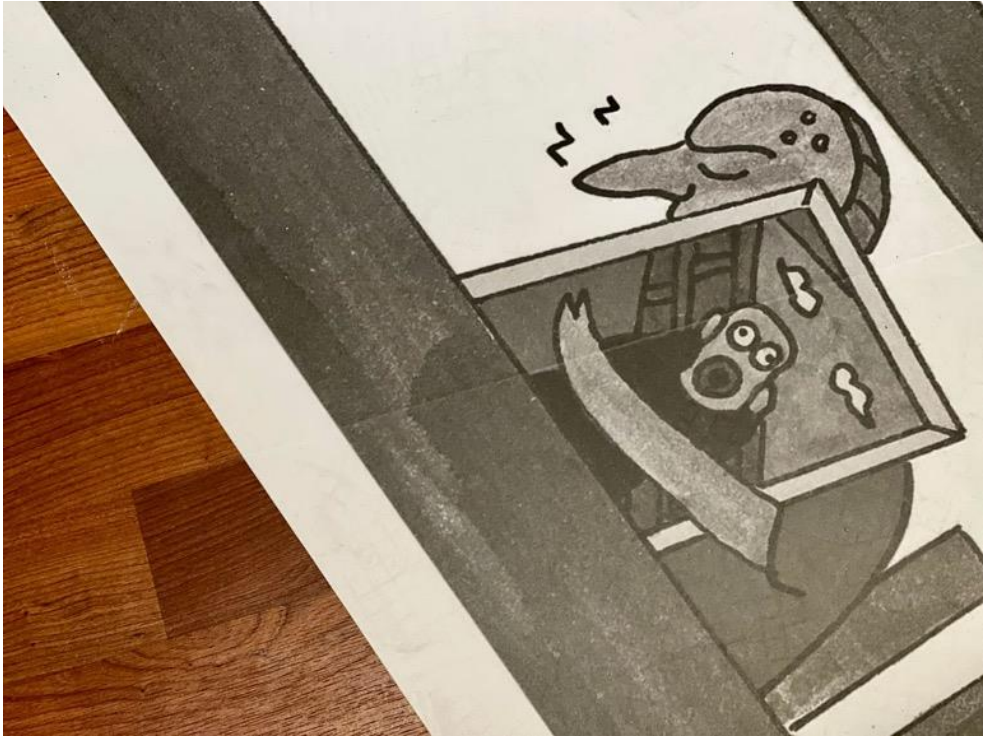


Figure 28, Exhibition VI



Figure 29, Exhibition VII



Figure 30, Exhibition VIII

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Stories made by memories are what is hidden about a place. When we practice a place, what is hidden becomes visible – the hidden stories that make a place a space. This thesis, accompanied by a project named *Here and There* aimed to investigate how to narrate a space with personal memories through map art. Taking de Certeau's motto *space is a practiced place* into account, it is argued that a space can conjure different emotions where it intersects with personal memories (de Certeau, 1988, p. 174). This leads to a spatial experience attached to the space where it creates a metaphorical imagery about the space itself. Personal geographies can be used as an alternative method of graphical representations in order to provide a distinct view on spatial practice (Siencnik, 2010, p. 8). It is because personal maps are created by the people who walk and move in the city with “desires and goals” as a tactic for a personal search for identity and resistance to conventional and fixed maps (de Certeau, 1988, pp. 143-146). A walker performs her/his practices in dealing with the city; thus, rejecting the limits and orders imposed by conventional maps.

In accordance with this discussion, the connection between space and personal memories was examined by adopting certain theoretical and artistic approaches of space, memory, and mapping, along with illustration as a methodology and a tool of visual communication. The aim was not only to design a creative map embedded with

personal memories, but also to invite the viewer to an alternative perception of a place and let them draw their own routes, move through, discover, and examine their own perception and emotional connection compared to the artist's perception of the place in these respects.

As a project supplementing this thesis, *Here and There* was designed to demonstrate how mapping can be used to bring depth and meaning to places by portraying memories through storytelling and imagination. The project was designed to illustrate the role of memory and experience in feelings and emotions attached to the perception of place. A sketchbook was used not just as a method of documentation, but also as an alternative to the map. The intent of the project was to invite the viewer to experience the space, not from the perspective of the artist, but as a different individual.

Emphasizing the notion of discovery, the project motivates the audience to take an imaginary walk in an imaginary space, explore the details, and compare their perception to the artist's perception.

## 6.1 Relevance and Research Outcomes

The marriage among the artistic approaches of map art and the theoretical approaches on space, walking rhetoric, memory, and psycho-geography contributes to this field as a crossroads between cartography and art (de Certeau, 1988; Debord, 1981; Yates, 1996). Moreover, it is believed that this thesis, along with the project *Here and There*, can contribute to the emerging field of deep maps by examining the connection

between space and personal memories through the adoption of creative storytelling as data. The present project does not only attempt to reveal what the hidden is about a space in terms of personal memory and story, but also grants the audience an opportunity to think about walking and discovery, and to practice the place both based on the artist's perception of the space and that of their own.

## 6.2 Limitations and Further Research

Along with the critical questions regarding the research outcome, the limitations of this research determine the possibilities of further studies. Regarding the memory-space context, the best area to raise alternative research questions is around the concept of subjectivity. De Certeau, discusses subjectivity in terms of a broader sense (1988). When someone practices a place, a subjective reflection of the space is created through personal memories. This thesis approaches artistic expression as in the de Certeauian sense of *subject as witness* (Ferdinand, 2019, p. 129; de Certeau, 1988, pp. 117, 148). A personal level of subjectivity associated with memory and space serves the purpose of the present research and project. However, a broader meaning of subjectivity can be taken to another level when thinking about the conditions of subjectivity, and how these conditions are part of the power relations.

Whereas, a “de-centered or contingent subjectivity” can be accessed through memories (Bode & Schmidt, 2013, p. 69), a more de-centered sense of subjectivity can be a focal point accompanied with theoretical discussions of critical thinkers in this field; among

them, Lacan, Hegel and Deleuze. An art project where the artist de-centers her subjectivity and focuses on *the other* would be an entirely different experience. There are art projects that can be taken as reference in this respect; for example, Vito Acconci's *Following Piece* (1969) is based on creative mapping through his pursuit of random people in streets and making collages of their photos with his records in the form of notes and mapping (MoMA, 2022). Another example could be Maryam Khaleghi Yazdi's illustrations (2023) of refugee stories that question how to experience *otherness* through illustration<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> "These stories were collected from immigrants who participated in "Photoville," a photojournalism festival in New York. When visitors' hands approximate each fabric scrap, they activate an immigrant's voice narrating their story." Retrieved from <https://currentsnewmedia.org/work/fairgrounds-speaking-blanket/> The illustration and the interview text retrieved from Maryam Khaleghi Yazdi's Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/maryamkhaleghiyazdi/>

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

*Here and There* is a map art representing Manhattan, New York City. It aims to demonstrate how mapping can be used to bring depth and meaning to places through portraying emotions, memory, storytelling, and imagination. The project questions the role of memory and experience on feelings and emotions attached to the perception of a given place. Drawing upon the artist's own experience, the intent of this study is to invite the viewer to an alternative perception of a place, and to offer the opportunity to draw their own routes, move through, discover, and examine their own perception compared to the artist's perception of the place, including the emotional connection to it. Using their phones as the light source to venture through the author's journal of the city, the audience interacts with the map by taking an imaginary walk through the streets of Manhattan in the dark.

## APPENDIX B

### ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Seba Sezen holds a Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Political Science from the Middle East Technical University, Turkiye, and Lund University, Sweden. She worked 4 years as an expert at the UNHCR. While working, she decided to study graphic design and, in 2020, she applied to the Bilkent University Media and Design MFA Program to pursue her career as a graphic designer. Through this program, she developed design and theoretical approaches. Currently, Seba works as a graphic designer, based in Ankara, Turkiye, with interests in storytelling, illustration, and multimedia design.