

● cartographies

'beacons', 'geography', [VG]
'eomancy', 'layers',
'naps', 'places', 'stains',
'k', 'trailers', 'trip' [MG]

To represent a reality is to begin to transform it.'

José Antonio Sosa, paraphrasing Deleuze, suggested that "each system of representation should be assigned a different capacity for organising the world."

If perspective representation (pre)supposed a hierarchical structuring of the world, if modern planimetry counterpoised the latter to the relativity of its own fragmented and self-referential organisations, then today we sense the passage from what had been, in both cases, a deterministic cartography (univocal, total, exact and literal in its referent, but also in its procedures and in its outlines) to a cartography which is increasingly 'indeterminate' (open, versatile, abstract) and, therefore, also more evolutionary in its trajectories. The classical observer and the modern *flâneur* are thus succeeded by the contemporary *explorer*.

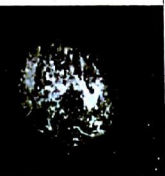
Indeed, to the classical observer, the term 'space' is translated into a static and permanent concept; an absolute framework, exact and literal in its manifestations, but always observed "from without," with an apparently stable framing, which would present at its vanishing point – in its relationship with the human eye – its maximum reference.

Modernity, on the contrary, enhances the notion of "relative position." The compact (and cohesive) idea of hierarchical, absolute, genuine, classical space has thus yielded to a more atonal vision, of discontinuous experiences in "correlative positions;" a discontinuous surveying of fixed, though fragmented, figurations; fundamentally static in their conception, though incipiently dynamic in their objectual perception; pertaining to a vision that still trusts in autonomous scenarios (or grids) – panoramas – of codes as predetermined as they are exact and univocal.

Today, however, the contemporary *explorer* – at once navigator, hunter and "soldier" – confronts a progressively multiphase – complex and heterogeneous – space. A multiplied, physical – and not always physical – space in a constant situation of latent flux and of simultaneousness between different messages and scales in which the traditional distinctions between *city*, *nature* and *territory* have increasingly lost their traditional meanings, blurred in progressively equivocal and overlapped geographies.

Plural, undisciplined scenarios – increasingly less "domesticable" – physically identify a structure which becomes more ungraspable and invisible in its globally, and from which emerges only a field of projections and displacements, simultaneous and intersected, hardly adaptable to the traditional – and static – parameters of traditional perception and representation.

By the same token, their representation can no longer remain a simple question of figuration or grid, but rather of an operation that should necessarily draw upon a multilayered set of bits of "n-dimensional" information (open and elastic maps) intended to recognise the web of manifold hidden relationships which develop simultaneously within it over time and whose shape defies exact definition.



Distribution map of satellites.

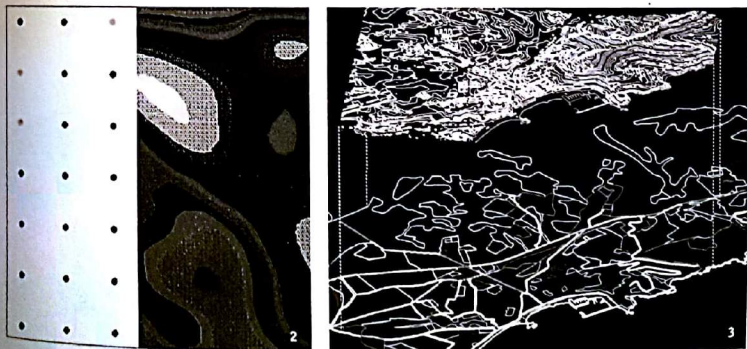
The old idea of representation is now complemented – in this new intelligent cartography – by the capacity for projection, combination and modification provided by new interscalar logics and instruments of recognition based upon a sophisticated organisation of an information, captured no longer (only) in the place, but remotely (via satellite), proper to present-day digital technologies.

Logics aimed at articulating the superposition and the crossing of data, of currents, of flows and of forces. Logics that introduce the temporal variable, modification and alteration. Logics emerging from abstract processes rather than from literal figurations.

Synthetic, evolutionary and a-figurative matrixes (capable of compressing – synthesising – information) rather than predetermined forms – or models. Search structures conceived based upon diagrammatic formats – graphics, grids, webs, etc. – aimed at recording and processing multiple data: parameters of incidence assimilable in synthetic signs – or trajectories – (points, lines, surfaces) which would subsequently undergo specific appropriate alterations and/or manipulations in indeterminate processes of concretion and, therefore, a movement from the abstract to the singular in situations as uncertain as they are specific.



Diagrammatic (analytic)



Matrix (evolutionary)

Multilayered (simultaneous)

1. System of paths on a topographic surface, in *Arch+ 121*, 1994. 2. Strategic codifications and visualizations on a map, in GAUSA, Manuel, *Housing. New alternatives, new systems*, Barcelona: ACTAR, 1998. 3. Thematic maps of land régime and planning sectors with topographic projection (Direcció General d'Urbanisme, Generalitat de Catalunya), GAUSA, Manuel, *Housing. New alternatives, new systems*, Barcelona: ACTAR, 1998.