HACKING URBAN SPACE: PARKOUR AND SQUATTING

ZEYNEP VAİZOĞLU

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HACKING URBAN SPACE: PARKOUR AND SQUATTING

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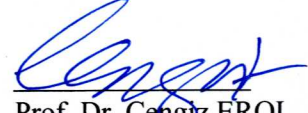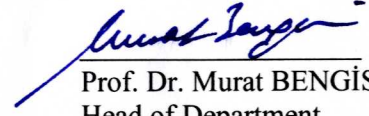
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BY

ZEYNEP VAİZOĞLU

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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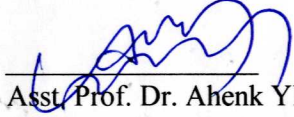THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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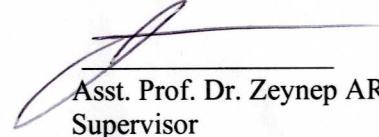Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Cengiz EROL
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis

for the degree of Master of Design Studies

Prof. Dr. Murat BENGİSU
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Design.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Ahenk YILMAZ
Co-Supervisor

Asst. Prof. Dr. Zeynep ARDA
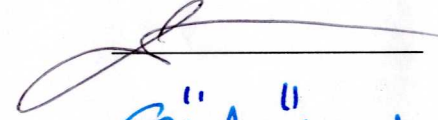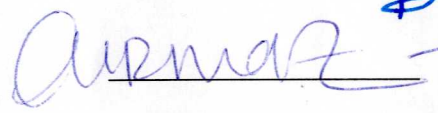Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Asst. Prof. Dr. Zeynep ARDA

Prof. Dr. Gülsüm BAYDAR

Asst. Prof. Dr. Bahar DURMAZ

Lecturer Dr. Emre GÖNLÜGÜR

Asst. Prof. Dr. Ahenk YILMAZ

ABSTRACT

HACKING URBAN SPACE: PARKOUR AND SQUATTING

Vaizoğlu, Zeynep

M.Des. in Design Studies

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Zeynep ARDA

Co-Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Ahenk YILMAZ

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The thesis looks at the practice of hacking urban space through the analysis based on contemporary architectural discourse on spatial production. It is maintained that hacking is a witty, defiant activity in any context, applicable in any medium. Emerging as programming a computer in an original way, hacking gained a wide array of connotations in time, the philosophy and the practice of the practice pervaded daily life. Following pioneering arguments on social space and the right to the city, it is argued that urban space can be hacked, opening up novel ways of producing space. The hack expresses criticism towards the established systems' rule over urban space, using space as a tool to manifest the dominant ideologies. In addition, the culture of hacking and the hack as abstraction serve to postulate how hackers work in the city, subverting and intervening into urban space. Parkour and squatting as practices of hacking urban space are discussed in the thesis through their actual interventions. It is suggested that hacking not only questions the spatial production in the cities and the control of established systems over it but also reproduces urban space in novel ways.

Keywords: hacking, squatting, parkour, urban space, urban culture

ÖZET

KENTSEL MEKANI HAKLAMAK: PARKOUR VE İZİNSİZ YERLEŞME

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Tez, mekan üretimine ilişkin güncel mimari söylemler üzerinden kentsel mekanı haklama (hack) pratiklerini inceler. Haklamak pek çok bağlamda ve ortamda uygulanabilecek muhalif ve nüktedan bir etkinliktir; zaman içinde bir bilgisayarı özgün biçimde programlamanın yanında pek çok yan anlam edinmiş, haklama felsefesi ve pratiği gündelik yaşama girmiştir. Tezde sosyal mekan ve şehir hakkı üzerine öncül tartışmalardan yola çıkılarak kentsel mekanın haklanması ve bu yolla mekanın farklı şekillerde üretilmesi tartışılır. Mekanı haklamak yerleşik sistemlerin mekana hükmetmelerini ve kentsel mekanın baskın ideolojilerin hizmetinde bir araç olmasını eleştirir. Bunun yanında, haklama kültürü ve soyutlama olarak haklama kavramı, haklamanın nasıl kentsel mekana müdahale edip, mekan algısını tersyüz ettiğini açıklamak için kullanılır. Kentsel mekanı haklama pratikleri olarak ele alınan Parkour ve izinsiz yerleşme (squatting), tezde şehire müdahaleleriyle tartışılır. Mekanı haklamak, şehirde mekan üretimini sorgulatmasının yanında, kentsel mekanı yeni ve alışılmadık şekillerde okuma olanağı sunar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: haklamak, kentsel mekan, kent kültürü, parkour, *squat*, *hack*

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I have always been a rebel at heart, I worked on this thesis with much interest and pleasure.

Here I offer my heartfelt thanks to those who made the journey joyous and worthwhile:

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Though there are numerous suggested names for the current era such as Information Age or Digital Age, the dominance of computational technologies is generally accepted due to the widespread use of the World Wide Web. As the name suggests, it is a web of information hosted by digital systems, and continues to evolve: With Web 1.0, which was a read-only web of information without any user participation, information became globally accessible and searchable. Web 2.0 on the other hand is a read-and-write system where the users actively generate a large portion of the information, which means that they are encouraged and often even required to participate in the worldwide creation and sharing of information; in turn, this accumulated information about the users, which is gathered and utilized in various ways ranging from helping enhance the Web experience to selling demographic data to governments and corporations. Moreover, surveillance cameras, ID cards and passports equipped with chips, cash registering systems, mobile phones and alike record every action, thus track all the users connected to the networks. Governments gather information on demographics, getting fingerprints, saliva samples and iris scans, attempting to collect more and more data to be able to map and analyse everything about the population. The human genome is sequenced and is now available to anyone, although still very expensive. Once the DNA sequencing technology gets cheaper and more accessible, humans will be able to use their and others' data for various purposes. As humans surpass the known limits of various areas of information with the help of digital technologies, their very existence is being converted into data in the process: with Web personas, ID chips, mass-stored fingerprints, and even the DNA itself - which actually works the same way a program does; with sequences of coded

instructions. Therefore, the societal changes made the Digital Revolution possible, but then this revolution led to fundamental changes in the society. Among these changes, the proliferation of hacking as a rebellion tactic is perhaps one of utter importance. Not only hacking leads way to conflicted issues about security such as digital piracy, copyrighting and alike, it also impacts the very concept of rebellion. The hack came to mean, roughly, a clever, subversive trick played on the grounds of an authority, be it a computer system or the routine of everyday life - hence the saying "life hack" which made its way from subculture to mainstream culture. Among the many connotations of the hack there is one which may be used in varying contexts but usually bears similar implications: *urban hacking*, *hacking the city*, *place hacking* and alike. These actions signify interventions made into the city on personal scale, often using the city as a canvas in order to question and subvert the embedded meanings and open way to new conceptions in and of urban space.

The number of people dwelling in cities increases every year on a worldwide scale. As of 2010 more than half of global population live in urban areas[1]. Over-crowding in cities leads to increase in authorial control; on the other hand, the discussion of urban space is more important and relevant than ever before. The incidents and discussions of hacking urban space become prevalent; through this thesis I raise the question of how the act of hacking relates to space, specifically, why and through what kind of actions urban space is hacked; and how the notion of hacking urban space regarding contemporary spatial theories should be discussed.

Individuals and teams who call themselves 'space hackers' and/or 'urban hackers' are multiplying day by day, as do the small and medium scale interventions made into the urban fabric, which may or may not be explicitly named 'hacking the city' but still fall under this category due to their subversive nature and playful attitude. The practices defined as hacking

the city may be explored within the framework contemporary spatial discourse. The digital framework for discussing the various acts of hacking is already highly developed, whereas an academic framework for hacking urban space is still lacking. Thus the problem at hand is to adopt an approach that takes both the philosophy of hacking and the applications of the hacker mind-set to the urban environment into account.

1.2   AIM OF THE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

The thesis investigates examples of hacking urban space through the examination of various cases to suggest a basic theoretical framework within which the act of hacking urban space can be discussed. The cases examined in the final chapter of the thesis serve to argue that it is possible to subvert and manipulate the conception and perception of and in the cityscape through the act of hacking. As the method, I am going to look at contemporary discourse on urban space. The propositions made in the thesis are going to be supported further by describing and discussing various cases of hacking urban space, collected under the titles of Parkour and squatting. Many exemplary cases of hacking urban space may be found in everyday life; but the cases selected for the thesis are noteworthy for the number of the participants, their philosophies and for the unusual ways of how urban space may be subverted and reproduced over and over again.

The cases serve to postulate how these activities may be dubbed as "urban hacking" for they have common characteristics similar to the hack. The hack basically consists of decoding an existing code and recoding it to meet the hacker's ends, practically and/or philosophically. The cases of Parkour and squatting are considered to be under the wide umbrella of urban hacking because they *decode* the existing urban system or setup into its elements, and then *recode* using the very elements in surprising, alternative ways. Thus urban hacking demon-

strates that a given process or system does not have to be taken for granted and can rather be *hacked*, employed in different manners through decoding and recoding. Through the analysis of these cases, the thesis aims to demonstrate that such reading of the philosophy and practice of hacking urban space is possible. For this purpose, well-known sociologist Henri Lefebvre's and geographer David Harvey's discourses on urban space are handled together with McKenzie Wark's writings on hacker culture.

Henri Lefebvre's theories on social space, everyday life and the right to the city, along with his definition of capitalist structures as surviving in and defining everyday life, reproducing in and shaping social space as a tool to oppress and dominate, form the basis of the thesis, empowering the reasons and results of hacking urban space. On the other hand, David Harvey's additions to the concept of the right to the city are supportive for this study in terms of understanding what rights the city should inherently support and how they are snatched from the citizens under the reign of capitalism and commodification of urban space. His writings describe how urban space stops enabling self-expression and appropriation, serving to the established systems rather than the citizens; thus explaining the need for hacking. McKenzie Wark, however, as a scholar on media theory and critical theory, claims that for the hacker anything is a code to hack. According to him, the hacker's mind-set is identified with extracting data and abstracting it to create something new. Therefore, his manifesto concerning the hackers of the Information Age is congruent with the aim of this thesis, supporting the claim that urban hacking reproduces urban space and recreates new experiences in the city.

The issue of hacking space is intertwined with the onset of the Information Age, so the thesis is going to briefly explore the impact of the Information Age on society and on urban space through investigating the various interpretations and applications of hacking and the hacker philosophy. In order to establish a theoretical framework for discussing the act of hacking space, the discourse on the production of space and the right to the city will be studied. Henri Lefebvre's spatial philosophy is going to provide the basis for exploring how hacking the

city leads to the production of novel urban spaces. As to exploring why urban space is hacked, arguments posed by David Harvey on the right to the city are going to be of central concern for the purposes of this thesis. In addition, McKenzie Wark's *A Hacker Manifesto* (2004), which delineates the act of hacking and the position of hackers in the society, is going to be referred to while examining the hacker mind-set and how it may be a transformative tool for any medium it is worked upon. Finally, various cases of hacking urban space are going to be examined with particular attention to how hacking urban space leads to new visions and conceptions.

1.3   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The phrase 'urban space' is preferred over 'public space' in the thesis because of the conflicts and discussions concerning the notion of 'public space'. 'Urban space' is the terminology used in order to denote the cityscape, including both open-air and closed spaces as well as spaces that are permeable in varying degrees, which are considered to belong to the urban fabric administratively and qualitatively. Although the relationship between hacking and urban space is discussed within popular culture, and terminology such as *urban hacking*, *hacking the city, place hacking* have appeared in magazines and Internet articles; academic literature dealing directly and specifically with hacking space is practically non-existent. It is very challenging to set up an academic framework within which to discuss the implications of the Digital Age on urban space. For the writing of this thesis I had to peruse philosophical articles about the city and urban space together with writings about hackers and hacking in the network culture. Hence I have derived information from both academic sources and non-academic articles including electronic media. I think this approach is well suited to the subject of the thesis, which correlates an action that proliferated within the digital realm with the experience of the urban space. As the world shifts towards digital and network based systems,

so does the mind-set of people. I believe the hacker culture will be eminent in the years to come and its examples will inevitably increase and proliferate in urban environments. Future studies on this subject might have the chance of making comparisons between different kinds of urban hacking practices.

According to the majority of the viewpoints on hacking, it has a "subversive nature", that is to say, it is an attempt to overthrow a system by working from within; by secretly violating the rules while seeming to obey them. However, hacking has a unique way of subverting (hence the name *hacking* and not simply *subversion*): Hacking is a particular way of subversion, practiced by decoding a given process or set of rules into its elements and then creating a new process or set of rules using those elements, thus recoding the given. Furthermore, the hack works on a given medium rather than forming new media; this is the reason that hacking is utilized as a provocative act in the 20th and 21st century. The established systems of the era directs and controls individuals and do not allow the introduction of new things into the systems – so individuals are bound to work with what already exists in the system.

This thesis does not aim to provide a theoretical basis for hacking urban space *per se*, but seeks to interrelate various provocative activities and interventions taking place in the cityscape with the hacker mind-set of the Information Era. Other actions and stances in and of the city may as well be attuned with the concept of hacking urban space; I believe there will be more cases of hacking space in the future, as the oppression of the established systems increases and more citizens take notice of and/or become willing to struggle with this oppression. Moreover, capitalism makes use of subversion and hacking, commercializes them; for example, the video of Ryan Doyle doing Parkour in Mardin, which is referred to in the fourth chapter of the thesis, is a professionally-shot, sponsored video which presents Parkour in series of carefully choreographed and assembled scenes. However the commodification and commercialization do not undermine the value of rebellious and subversive acts, and it

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does not pacify the true rebels and hackers. Thus, for the scope of the thesis hacking is taken

as a truly subversive activity and analysed as such.

"We are the hackers of abstraction. We produce new concepts, new perceptions, new sensations, hacked out of raw data. Whatever code we hack, be it programming language, poetic language, math or music, curves or colorings, we are the abstracters of new worlds." (Wark 2004, #002)

The current era is known as the Information Age. As the name implies, Information Age is characterized by instant access to knowledge and increasing ease in transferring information via networks and computers. Digital Revolution marks the beginning of the Information Age; with the Digital Revolution, traditional industry that was brought forth by the Industrial Revolution was largely replaced by economies based on digital reproduction, information and communication technologies.

Hacking developed along with computers and computer culture. At first it was a technique to manipulate software for recreational purposes; then the hack expanded with the digital culture. Through its unique position in the computer culture the hack became a notorious amateur tool, never losing the fun-oriented, free spirited attitude while also preserving its insurgent position. As the Information Age transformed cultural and economical values, so did the hack transformed the ways of subverting, manipulating, rebelling and protesting. Hacking offered a fresh perspective into standing up against the authority, because instead of raucous rebellion or organized protest, the hack often requires working on an individual level while also staying as a part of a team. The team may or may not actually work together; the important thing is rather to assert individual subversion from as many channels as possible.

This chapter focuses on the philosophy of hacking in order to demonstrate how the hack proliferated as an insurgent action through various writings on hacking. A portion of the many definitions of hacking is included, involving explanations coming both from designers and

computer hackers. Next, the subversive nature of the hack is explained; Gilles Deleuze's writings on the societies of control are handled together with McKenzie Wark's claims on hackers' ability to reprogram cultural values in order to show that hacking is a subversive, rebellious activity that came into being with the Digital Revolution, chiefly as a reaction to the increasing constraints in the contemporary era.

2.1   PHILOSOPHY OF HACKING

Hacking emerged as a programmer subculture in the 1960s with the arrival of digital technologies. It proliferated in the academic circles before computers and computer users were networked and hacking was identified with creating and sharing software, freedom of information and a distaste for authority. In time the hacker community was organized better and it started producing political movements and manifestos; today it is intertwined with open-source movement and information sharing as a fundamental human right. Moreover, hacking eventually came to define a creative activity and a philosophical stance as it became wider-spread and its applications and implications got explored. Although hacking in its specific meaning denoted programming a computer in an original way or breaking into a computer system, in a wider sense it is understood as the manipulation and/or subversion of a given system.

Gabriella Coleman, an anthropologist who works with hackers, defines hacking in the context of digital technologies and writes that "a 'hacker' is a technologist with a love for computing and a 'hack' is a clever technical solution arrived through non-obvious means" (Coleman 2010). Yet the "hack" has an array of different connotations. According to Richard Stallman, an MIT graduate software developer and a software freedom activist, for instance, "hacking means exploring the limits of what is possible, in a spirit of playful cleverness"

(Stallman 2013). He defines many subversive activities as "hacking", covering a variety of situations from physical pranks to grand interventions to governmental system. Similarly, Eric Steven Raymond, author, computer programmer and open source software advocate writes as follows: (Raymond 2013). On the other hand, Paul Graham, the author of the book *Hackers and Painters* (2004), writes that hacking is a tool in its juvenile phase. He states that a new medium need to be explored and experimented with before its full potential is realised. Graham compares the current situation of hacking as a tool to the status of painting before Leonardo da Vinci revolutionized it; implying that hacking is just as an impressive medium as painting, and has yet to reach its potential.

Coming from the forerunners of hacking, these claims clearly show that hacking has flourished well beyond the digital world and has gained a significant place in our daily lives. Moreover, *transcoding,* as used by Lev Manovich, has a prominent role in the proliferation of hacking culture. Manovich, a new media theorist and computer scientist, contextualizes transcoding as the interconnectedness of human culture and computer ontology in the era of new media. "Media" denotes the tools that are used to store and transmit information, whereas "new media" is a broader expression, which also encompasses computer and digital communication technologies. Transcoding basically refers to how computers influence the way humans understand and represent themselves. The blending of human and computer knowledge is the foremost aspect that makes hacking a valid and common practice in the era of computers. Manovich states that in the current era human culture is unavoidably linked with computers as follows:

> Since new media is created on computers, distributed via computers, stored and archived on computers, the logic of a computer can be expected to have a significant influence on the traditional cultural logic of media… the result of this composite is the new computer culture: blend of human and computer meanings. (Manovich 2001, 63).

Hacking gains its power from getting into a process, understanding its inner workings and exploring to make it work in alternate ways. The alternate ways of making a system work might support the current situation; on the other hand, it might counteract and even annihilate it as well. Hence the controlling parties are robbed of their authority and centrality when the system is worked in unexpected and unforeseen ways. According to theorist and designer Otto von Busch, hacking is "decentralizing control and empowering will at a low level as a response to the closing of systems" (Busch 2006). The hack identifies with the lower orders of a mass, and is executed by the masses or the representatives of the masses rather than by a unitary, singular institution. Hacking by definition is about counteraction and usually correlates with the seemingly impotent gaining power through manipulating and subverting the authority of the powerful.

Busch asserts that hacking is about utilizing (sub)culture and inventiveness to counteract (unwanted) situations. However there is another significant element to the hack, which is not only essential for computer culture but is actually a fundamental aspect of life: programming. It is meaningful how the definition of the word "program" refers to both a computer and an organism; program denotes a sequence of coded instructions that govern an organism or a computer. Basically, a program is a set of instructions to obtain certain results. In the digital context, it is a procedure that was identified and purposed by a human, a procedure that can be hacked by another human: change the sequence, add, extract, substitute, subtract… hack the procedure - hack the program. The hacker takes something conditioned and regularized only to serve to a preconceived purpose and tweaks it for a self-serving purpose. A program may be hacked to make it work better, to make it work differently or to make it into something else. The authority of the program is defied when the program is hacked – thus hacking means declining the authority; hacking is rewriting, reinventing, repurposing.

2.2   HACKING AS DELIBERATE SUBVERSION OF SYSTEMS

21st century saw the proliferation of computers and the advent of the Digital Revolution. Traditional industry, which was brought forth by the Industrial Revolution, is increasingly replaced by computerization and digital technology. Modern society is very much shaped by networking and rapid communication, supported by high-tech global economy, computerization, digital production and record keeping.

Philosopher Gilles Deleuze wrote about the new society model in his short article "Postscript on the Societies of Control" in 1992. He refers to Foucault's definition of the "disciplinary societies" of 18th and 19th centuries, which came forth with the Industrial Revolution and reigned through the Industrial Age. Disciplinary societies seek to regulate the behaviour of the members of a society through designating certain norms which individuals are expected to conform to. In order to achieve this, disciplinary institutions such as asylums, barracks, schools and alike are employed to maintain control. On the other hand, Deleuze names the new social order that proliferated with the arrival of the 20th century as "societies of control". He asserts that in societies of control, *corporation* has replaced the *factory*; the factory is "a body" whereas the corporation is "a spirit, a gas" in this context, implying the corporation's ability to intervene into every stage of everyday life. While the factory of the Industrial Age sought to engage the workers only during the work hours, the corporation of the Digital Age claims every moment of the workers who do not have the option to cut connections with the corporation during their "free time" because every member of the modern society is enmeshed in digital networks.

Deleuze further compares the systems of past and present: disciplinary societies of the past operated with signatures (which signify the identity of individuals) and numbers (which signify the placement of an individual in a mass) whereas in societies of control what matters is a *code*, in other words, a password, which authorizes or rejects access to information and

services. The correct code includes the user within a network, a wrong code or the absence of a code excludes the user by denying access; thus the user is made part of data. Deleuze furthermore suggests that in becoming a part of data as users, samples, markets and alike, individuals become 'dividuals' – their very existence is divided within a network: "the man of control is undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network. Everywhere *surfing* has replaced the older *sports*" (Deleuze 1992, 6). Significantly, Deleuze points out the association between societies of control and computers by defining computers as the operative machines of such societies. He mentions that in case of computers the "passive danger is jamming and … active one is piracy and the introduction of viruses" (Deleuze 1992, 6) thus he defines those acts as destructive to societies of control.

It is true that occasionally the definition of "hacking" includes malignant acts such as jamming or piracy, however the hack is not necessarily done for personal gain or benefit in order for it to be destructive. Arguably, such societies are vulnerable to hacking understood in the broadest sense because any act that breaches the closed system harms the system. Consequently, the resistance to a system that operates with computers utilizes not only computers but also the logic of computerized systems – and hacking may be dubbed a guerrilla tactic that utilizes the system itself to rebel against it. In short, the societies of control *per se* have put the hack into an everyday context where anything is hackable. Computer hackers showed that a system could be manipulated and subverted, original functions, meanings, aesthetics can be extracted from it. The original extractions do not exclude the system, they in turn affect the system they borrowed the tools from.

Correspondingly, McKenzie Wark asserts that hackers "reprogram" social values that make room for new technologies in his book *A Hacker Manifesto*, which articulates Marxist thought in the light of the Information Age, the Digital Revolution and globalisation. According to Marxist thought, as technology improves, existing forms of social structure and organization become out-dated and obsolete and social unrest arises as a result. As Wark in-

dicates, social order has changed so profoundly with the Information Age that the notion of "programming" became applicable in every environment. According to Ross, as quoted in Wark's *Hacker Manifesto* (2004) hackers are empowered to rewrite cultural programs and they actually reprogram social values : because they have the power to abstract. Abstraction is the creation of "new concepts, new perceptions, new sensations" (Wark 2004, #002) out of the given. Information Age is rich in abstractions because of the abundance and accessibility of information, enabling larger and better abstractions. Wark emphasizes the power of abstraction by writing that "To abstract is to express the virtuality of nature, to make known some instance of its possibilities, to actualize a relation out of infinite relationality, to manifest the manifold" (Wark 2004, #008). This notion of "abstraction" or to "abstract" became prominent and visible with the Digital Revolution, partly through the understanding of the "program" and "to program" in the computerized world. Information Age and the Digital Revolution reframed our understanding of systems and how they may be tweaked, subverted, surpassed. In a way, digital revolution made it explicit that many things might be understood as a "program" and may accordingly be hacked. According to Wark, the hacker culture challenges the existing social order because it is more than a cultural change, what it calls forth is a "new world and a new being" (Wark 2004, #072) through the hack's power to abstract and recode. Thus he asserts that the hack should be understood in the broadest sense in order to comprehend this challenge.

In conclusion, hacking is to open way for things to enter into unique relations. The hack uses the elements of the status quo, the prevailing context and values in order to form something unprecedented, provocative and rebellious. Hacking is defying through creating.

Space is produced socially, that is to say, through social relations that occur within and transform the perception of space (Lefebvre 1991). It is one thing to pass by a square on the way to work everyday, quite another thing to take a break and sit down, watch the birds and talk to other citizens. And maybe, young people on rollerblades arrive and one cannot help but sit up and take notice of how rollerbladers use the very same square. These are very obvious examples of how an urban space designated as a square may be produced over and over again, under one's very eyes, with the arrival of users with different purposes in mind. With the vast variety of users and their purposes in a city, there would be a wealth of ways of producing urban space.

However, when the benches and any kind of support for sitting down is removed, spending free time on the square is effectively disabled – nobody wants to crank their neck looking at the flying birds while standing up. If the smooth floor covering is replaced with an uneven, rough material, no skateboards, rollerblades, baby strollers and wheelchair users will prefer to spend time there. By adjusting certain qualities of urban space it is possible to direct and dictate user behaviour. The control does not end there – there are always rules and regulations guarding urban space when it is not sufficient to limit the usage physically. Sometimes one obeys; sometimes one finds a way around. Some modes of finding one's way around the constrictions of the city are closely related to the concept of "hacking" as understood in the era of information. Hacking has already become a tactic for the oppressed and has been applied to a variety of situations, breaking the boundaries between the digital and the tangible. It is no wonder that *hacking the city* came to be understood as closely related with *the right to the city* after the Digital Revolution.

When applied to the city ruled by opressive systems that are only after surplus and economic gain, hacking space becomes a way to rebel, a way to inscribe one's existence in space. Har-

vey seems to support this point when he writes as follows: "The network of places constructed through the logic of capitalist development … has to be transformed and used for progressive purposes rather than be rejected or destroyed" (Harvey 1993). The transformation Harvey writes about may very well be achieved through hacking space - urban space is produced anew hence there is no need for destruction and reconstruction.

3.1   PRODUCTION OF URBAN SPACE AND ITS CONTROL

Well-known urban sociologist Henri Lefebvre wrote extensively about the notion of space, especially about the production of space. In his book *Production of Space* (1991) he claims that space is a social product and this production can be read according to three different processes: conceived space, perceived space and lived space. These can be considered as three main elements that make up social space. Conceived space is space as represented, perceived space is space as practised and finally lived space is space as produced in time and through use (Elden 1999).

According to the political scientist Stuart Elden, a scholar writing on Lefebvre's spatial philosophy, lived space is "invested with symbolism and meaning … space as *real-and-imagined*" (1999). The triad defines the social space, which is of main concern to Lefebvre. Social space is alive and never inert, it is created through interaction, it is at once reality and conception. It is turned into lived experience with the participation of social subjects (Lefebvre 1991, 190). Space is never neutral, it has a significant part to play in social and political issues, shaping and being shaped by them: "space is at once result and cause, product and producer" (Lefebvre 1991, 142). Furthermore, Lefebvre asserts that social space is a stage to everyday life, thus everyday life produces and influences lived space and in turn lived space influences and controls everyday life. By using the notion of social space

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Lefebvre argues that the conception, perception and representation of space come together to form a single impression. The impression, aptly named, allows room for modification and manipulation. Since the "social" is profoundly shaped by politics, everyday life is a product driven by the capitalist power and this necessarily refuses the old, pre-modernist physical, social and economic practices. Lefebvre jointly suggests that through colonising space, capitalism colonised everyday life, and through controlling everyday life, capitalism controls social space (Lefebvre 1991).

Contemporary urban environment is a product of capitalist mode of production; it must be examined in order to understand urban life. In his book *Everyday Life in the Modern World* Lefebvre writes that "the great event of the last few years is that the effects of industrialisation on a superficially modified capitalist society of production and property have produced their results: a programmed *everyday life* in its appropriate *urban setting*" (Lefebvre 1971, 65). Lefebvre claims that the state power is a dominant force on producing urban space and that the influence of capitalism expanded beyond working life to private life, thus space planned and executed by the established system strives to control the citizens through urban environment.

Lefebvre states that the state "is actively involved in housing construction, city planning, urbanisation. 'Urbanism' is part of both ideology and the would-be rational practice of the state" (Lefebvre 1969, 46). Arguably as space is a political and social tool and is produced and controlled by established systems, space is endowed with the ideologies of the government. The system seeks to control urban space by employing a wide range of spatial strategies. Manuel Castells, sociologist and a prominent thinker on urban and space issues, claims that space is always defined by the relationship between varying political, economical, juridical and ideological occurrences; thus space is defined through the social relations expressed in and through it (1977: 430).

As explained so far in this chapter, contemporary world mainly functions with capitalist principles and heavily relies on industrial production; as a result capitalism has restructured the global spatial economy (Elden 1999). On the other hand, as Deleuze puts forth in his article *Postscript on Societies of Control* (1992) we are progressing rapidly towards digital production, which is twofold for the purposes of the thesis. Firstly, the established systems can monitor and control the masses to a larger extent with the help of digital and information technologies. Therefore, individual's privacy is breached easily and often, leading to uneasiness and rebellion in the society. Secondly, the established systems' attempts to control and monitor can be nullified by using the very tools that digital and information technologies provide. The two-edged relationship between these two points is very coherent with the hack where the hacker takes whatever is enforced upon one and subverts it.

Since the notion of digital almost always allows room for the hack as argued in the previous chapters, the era of digital production and the capitalist system relying (wholly or partially) on digital systems engendered their own nemesis: the hack. The hack uses the instruments provided by the system in order to breach it. In an era where hacking is a tool and a tactic, space may also be hacked because space is socially shaped and social is spatially shaped (Elden 1999). The definition of "hacking space" within the scope of the thesis settles well with what Henri Lefebvre calls "space as *real-and-imagined*" (1991). As Elden puts it, "the production of spaces … owes as much to the conceptual realms as to material activities" (1999). Space is not only produced materially but also conceptually, and by altering the concepts that had seemed inherent in space before, space is produced anew. In other words the "code" written by the established system is broken down and then it is "recoded", leading to new concepts, images, ideas. Due to this "recoding", the control of established systems over space can be weakened and and in some cases can be forced to dissolve, because space that evokes imagination in a different way than was intended by the system shatters the imprint of approved ideologies on space, opening up new perspectives. Similarly, urban space that is

utilised in a way that evokes imagination, that forces the citizen to reconsider their perception and conception of space, breaks free from the control of established systems.

3.2   HACKING AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

The idea of "the right to the city" was proposed and investigated by Lefebvre in his book *Le Droit à la ville* in 1968. He claims that the right to the city is "a superior form of rights" (Lefebvre 1968) which encloses freedom to individualization, socialization and inhabiting. The right to the city implies that the citizens should be able to act individually and collectively in the urban environment, impacting the city to meet their needs. Lefebvre argues that only when the urban dweller *makes use* of the city, urban life becomes fulfilling and the city gains a social value beyond mere economic value. In his philosophical framework, the notion of *making use* corresponds with the production of new social spaces. Similarly, the right to the city is obtained through making use, creating, inhabiting and contributing to the production of lived space.

Leading social theorist David Harvey has made perhaps the most significant contributions to the understanding of Lefebvre's right to the city. In his well-known article "The Right to the City" (2008) Harvey expands upon Lefebvre's writings and suggests "… it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city… The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is … one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights" (2008). According to Harvey and some other leading theorists on urbanism, the urban environment fulfils its actuality only when it is a collective project for the citizens, a collective work which flourishes with social interaction and cooperation. This is what fundamentally constitutes the right to the city.

Consequently, capitalistic systems and governments deprive the public of their right to the city because what they need is a space which can be exploited as capital, to produce surplus (Harvey 2008); thus the city is virtually invaded by the capitalist system. Space and time, basic categories of human existence according to Harvey, are produced within and by the context of social action. Money, space and time are now seen as interconnected sources of power. Consequently the experience of time and space is changed as the mode of social and political regulations are altered by the government. In short, as space becomes temporal and time can be spatially represented, capitalism gains control over both, therefore influences the way people experience them.

Harvey asserts that this influence mainly causes alienation from the city saying that "only as modern industrialization separates us from the process of production and we encounter the environment as a finished commodity does it emerge" (Harvey 1993). Likewise, Harvey describes the deceptive nature of postmodernist urban environment by writing that the "[q]uality of urban life has become a commodity" and describing the "aura of freedom" in the contemporary experience of the city as far from being a freedom and merely being the illusion of it (Harvey 2008). The city is designed and regulated to function as if citizens are "free" to "choose", however the so-called choice is present as long as the system fabricates it and approves of it, which effectively negates the very definition of "choice". Needless to say, even these so-called choices are only available to those who can afford them.

The capitalist city gives the message that the urban dwellers are citizens as long as they have money and agree to spend it on the choices they are coerced into. The capitalist city communicates that it neither acknowledges nor cares about the existence of citizens unless they have capital and unless they agree to obey the rules. In addition, the "neoliberal ethic of intense possessive individualism" (Harvey 2008) influences institutions as well as individuals, driving them to buy, rent and claim what is otherwise public space as their own. In the contemporary city, courtyards, parks and even streets are not entirely public – some are private

legally, some are controlled and monitored by institutions so strictly that social pressure and private security measures drive urban users away. Although these locations may be defined as "urban space", it ceases to fulfil this quality the moment the security guard of an institution is given the right – legally or otherwise – to ask people to move away.

Moreover, the aforementioned possessive individualism leads to aggrievement between urban users, as fellow citizens compete for space. The situation of public transportation system in Istanbul is a good case for observing this: The metrobus, which is defined as a "rapid bus system" by the metropolitan municipality, works between the two continents, the two sides of Istanbul and it is the cheapest and fastest way across the Bosphorus. The people who use this service, especially at the rush hour, seem to be possessed by an uncanny, feral force that drives them to push, poke and assault fellow travellers - all for a space to stand in the metrobus – to claim the bare minimum standing space. Needless to say, it is a huge daily stress for those who have no other option than using the metrobus. The current public transportation system drives passengers literally to fighting for the small space they will occupy on a public vehicle. The established system turns people against each other, reinforcing their individualistic tendency to maximum, increasing stress and giving the message that they *have to fight* in order to get a basic service, in order to *exist* in the city.

As Foucault puts it, the city is a model of regulating and governing the nation (Foucault 1982). Today it is explicit that construction, planning and urban policies serve to reinforce the dominant ideologies (Lefebvre 1969, 46). Stuart Elden comments on this in his essay titled "Henri Lefebvre and the Production of Space" saying that "Lefebvre suggests that just as everyday life has been colonised by capitalism, so too has its location – social space" (1999). The established system strives to control social interactions in urban space by employing architectural and urban interventions and planning as well as laws, legislations, regulations and rules.

3.3   URBAN SPACE AND THE HACKER SPIRIT

Richard Sennett writes in his book *Flesh and Stone,* in which he elaborates on the relationship between body and city, that the living environs function as extensions of the dwellers' bodies and minds (1994). Users need to make the city – where system prohibits them from doing so using legitimate, logical, straightforward ways, they cannot help ourselves but take the sideway, the subversion, the hack.

Urban hacking, *place hacking*, *hacking the city*, *cultural hacking* and alike have already entered the urban subculture as phrases defining civil urban interventions ranging from enhancing one's neighbourhood with amateur, ingenious solutions to urban exploration; from local modifications to occupations that defy governments. Nevertheless all of these practices may be explored under the wide title of "hacking urban space" since they all deal with, on a general basis, the right to the city and more specifically with the right to urban space. The quest for the right to the city has inevitably been correlated with the notion of hacking in the era of computer culture because hacking as a guerilla tactic has been widely embraced by the generation brought up with computer technology.

Theorists and academicians like MacKenzie Wark and Manuel Castells maintain that the computer culture helped transform the social order and has a significant impact on the human culture in the Information Age. McKenzie Wark, the author of *A Hacker Manifesto*, asserts, "a hack touches the virtual – and transforms the actual" (Wark 2004, #71). Urban space, as a commodity planned and regulated by established systems in order to control the behaviour of the masses and individuals, can be viewed as a "virtual product" on which the hack is utilized to transform the "actual product". Lefebvre's point of space being a concrete abstraction, which both provides the medium of social actions and is also a product of those

actions further enhances the impact of hacking space. In Wark's framework, hacking space unravels the suppressed but inherent meanings in space and actualizes them. Urban space as planned by the state is "virtual" because it neither takes into account nor credits the alternative, subservient interactions that may happen within and without that space. Thus urban space as a product of abstraction is not actualized until social relationships begin to give new meanings and override the given meanings in space. Space embodies social relationships and social relationships proliferate space (Lefebvre 1991, 27) therefore it is perfectly possible to transform space through the mere act of interacting with it and within in. The hack comes into perspective when the interaction knowingly utilizes the space itself in order to transform it beyond the intended use, function and meaning – as Otto von Busch puts it, hacking is a "very conscious opening of a system, revealing its power under new light to modulate or amplify it" (Busch 2006, 37).

The digital way of thinking and conceptualizing have already seeped into the everyday life; Stuart Elden writing on Lefebvre employs the very language of the digital age and computer programming. Elden usefully states,

> whilst the use of spatial language for metaphor should not be knocked, an understanding of *why* this language is so useful should perhaps be appended … This is precisely because it mirrors the actual uses and experiences of space (1999).

So, Elden emphasizes that spatial language is important in determining the approach to space. At this point it is important to note the language he uses to write about Lefebvre's philosophy, in turn, makes his point about the usage of spatial language valid. Elden describes the *new town* as follows:

> The *new town* was the typical significant phenomenon in which and on which this organisation could be *read* because it was there that it was *written*. What, apart from such features as the negation of traditional towns, segregation and intense po-

lice supervision, was inscribed in this social text to be deciphered by those who knew the code, what was projected on this screen? Everyday life – organised, neatly subdivided and programmed to fit a controlled, exact time-table (1999).

Some examples from the vocabulary Elden uses while writing about space are as follows: *read*, *written*, *text*, *decipher*, *code*, *projected*, *screen* and *programmed*. These are all keywords fitting a digital framework. It is not a coincidence but the general approach of the era; as Elden himself puts it, space is produced socially as well as mentally – the way we mentally produce space in the digital age opens up new perspectives on hacking space.

As explained so far, hacking culture proliferated in the societies of the digital era. As a sociologist researching extensively on the information society Manuel Castells writes that "spatial transformation must be understood in the broader context of social transformation" (Castells 2002, 393) explaining that social changes inevitably manifest in spatial dimensions. It is no coincidence that the movement of urban hackers emerged simultaneously with the popularization of hacking in the digital sense. When the society undergoes transformation so does the space it produces. Castells argues that space is the expressive medium of the society rather than being a mere reflection of it. He analyzes the network society and the Information Age in order to understand the advent of the new society, which according to him is an outcome of the "information-technology revolution, socio-economic restructuring, and cultural social movements" (Castells 2002, 393). His writings exhibit and describe how far the urban life and the society came to be affected by the Digital Revolution and the Information Age. In addition to demonstrating the association between these two emergences and how far they affect the society and the urban life, Castells explores urban space and urban centers. He asserts that capitalist interventions attempting to increase the economic value of urban space actually "tranforms public spaces into theme parks" which leads to urban environment becoming "consumption items to be individually appropriated" (Castells 2002, 395). Thus Castells maintains that the use value of urban space is more important in terms of the quality of

life in cities; contrasting with the degradation in the quality of urban space when it is designed and interfered with in order to gain surplus, in other words, for its economic value.

Lefebvre puts *oeuvre*-cities against the modern cities planned and regulated by the established systems. He defines the classical cities of antiquities as *oeuvre*-cities, works of art that the citizens collaboratively created, whereas he implies that the modern city planned and intervened by the established systems according to capitalist principles are commodities, always geared towards economic value. He defines *oeuvre* as "closer to a work of art than to a simple material product" (Lefebvre 1996, 101). Perhaps the greatest deed of capitalism is that they "have both crushed the creative capacity of the *oeuvre*" (Lefebvre 1996, 20). *Oeuvre* emphasizes the value of citizens' participation in creating and enhancing the urban environment. Furthermore, he argues that the right to participation and appropriation are implied in the right to the city (Lefebvre 1996, 173-4) and specifies the goal as the overthrowing of boundaries in order to reach totality. Indeed, hacking as a creative act has the power to make one see matters under a new light. Hacking has already become a kind of illegitimate art form therefore it fits well with the understanding of *oeuvre* as an artistic production rather than material product.

According to Lefebvre the city itself is essentially formed by *oeuvre* therefore it is absurd that the established systems are trying to rob citizens of this right that inherently comes with city-dwelling. The right to the city encompasses the right of citizens to inscribe their activities in the urban area – urban space should not be a constricted tool of the state but rather a canvas open to free-flowing expressions. When urban space is commodified, it ceases to sustain the right to appropriation. Consequently the disenfranchisement of citizens and the decrease in use/social value of urban space for the sake of increasing the economic value creates resistance and opposition in the society. Since Lefebvre's argument that "space is the ultimate locus and medium of struggle, and is therefore a crucial political issue" (Elden 1999) proved to be very accurate, it is only natural that the cases of appropriation of urban space

explored in the thesis all give crucial political and social messages. Another important aspect to note is that the messages can be characterized by the correlations between the occurrences of the digital era and increase in controlling and monitoring systems of the state due to the digital technologies. Furthermore, the very tools that the established oppressive systems employ are the weapons of guerrilla tactics for the oppressed. The city, according to Lefebvre, is one big *oeuvre* being made over and over again, instantly and unceasingly; this is exactly from which the power of hacking stems. Because the city in essence is born out of *oeuvre*, it can never submit to the attempts to control it. Likewise, because a program is made of source code, and source code is by definition decodable and recodable and therefore open to being hacked, the program can never be truly protected from outside intervention – it was made to be intervened in the first place.

In his article "Excavating Lefebvre" urbanist, geographer and political theorist Mark Purcell writes, "challenging property rights, of course, means challenging the foundation of capitalist class relations," (2002) mentioning a widely applicable principle present in hacking. If architecture and urbanism are used as tools to enforce laws and ideologies, they are subject to violations. Violations carrying certain characteristics may be defined as hacking in terms of the wide definition of hack. I argue that hacking as a stance, as subversion of given, imposed meanings is a prominent attempt to reclaim (the right to) urban space. Lefebvre himself seemingly describes a similar action when he asserts that "[a]n existing space may outlive its original purpose and the *raison d'etre* which determines its forms, functions, and structures; it may thus in a sense become vacant, and susceptible of being diverted, reappropriated and put to a use quite different from its initial one" (Lefebvre 1991). Lefebvre furthermore suggests that industrialization and capitalism have reached the peak when "a programmed everyday life in its appropriate setting" became the norm in cities. (Lefebvre 1971, 65). Urban environment is the product of industrialization and capitalism hence it must be examined in order to understand modern life, as well as to analyse the urge to "reprogram"

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the urban environment and everyday life. It is curious how the very verb "to program" is used in order to describe the way new everyday life and its appropriate urban setting closed upon the city dwellers. Since I assert that what urban hackers do is "reprogramming" the urban environment, we come across yet another way that contemporary urban dwellers react against the clutches that keep them from building their own environment, thus living their own choice of life. Hacking as a guerrilla tactic against the grand strategy of the state (de Certeau 1984) becomes a way of subverting forced meanings and functions, whether taking place within the boundaries of digital realm – such as computer coding – or translating into physical realm by various means of action, which serve to decontextualize and subvert urban space.

4   HACKING URBAN SPACE

"[I]n making the city man has remade himself" (Park 1967, 3).

Hacking space is a distinct case of how digital culture seeps into everyday life and its physical manifestations. The interfusion of digital culture and everyday practice leads to the remaking of physical forms in a process that is coherent with the understanding of hacking. Thus hacking finds new identities and unforeseen expressions in the city in the form of subversion of urban space. Hacking is practiced in order to break the given code and to recode according to the hacker's individual will and purposes. Usually there already is a structure, a given, a code to be hacked. Hacking by the wide definition means challenging an established set of workings – the code – by means of using the elements of it to create something new. Hence the hacking of urban space works by utilising the given order of the in order to produce brand new, unusual, unique spaces. It might be speculated that one of the characteristics of the hacker spirit is not taking the given as granted. Hence the specific circumstances that lead to the hack usually involve a given, established structure – a code, a program, a set of directions, a designed environment, a city – and the hacker, who is able to envision the structure transforming into something new.

Society is regulated by powerful institutions, a legal code and culture. One of the prominent spaces of the society is the city, where power relations are inscribed in urban space (Soja 1989, 6). Hence, challenging the way urban space is produced by the controlling mechanisms such as the state, challenging urban space itself means challenging the established system through the spaces it produces. Space is constructed physically and mentally hence it is perfectly possible to go beyond the established construction and extract new meanings and produce novel spaces. Foucaults says that liberty is what must be exercised (Foucault 1982).

According to him, as the established system strives more to control the society, individuals work harder to find ways to breach control. Foucault portrays the unruly masses and the devotees of the order as locked in a vicious circle (Foucault 1982), in a battle of strategy against tactics, one of stability versus spontaneity. Self-expression in contemporary society is important, because the established system assures its existence by normalizing individuals, institutions and concepts. Thus the individuals who do not wish to comply with the standards of the society seek to express themselves in various ways. The city is the backdrop and the stage of everyday life also for the individuals who do not comply with certain standards and normalizations. Hacking the city through its spaces can be considered as an act of self-expression.

It was mentioned in the previous chapters that Parkour and squatting are chosen for their approach of decoding a given code and recoding it – the code here being the elements of urban space and the established system within which urban space is governed. In addition, the cases are selected for the contrasts they pose: While Parkour is a mobile activity that decodes the urban space into its elements (e.g. walls as boundaries vs. walls as jumping points); squatting is mainly a static activity, which recodes urban services where they are insufficient or restrictive. Parkour may be seen as a disruptive way of hacking the city for it literally disrupts the way urban elements are designed to work; whereas squatting may be seen as a constructive activity, creating shelters and services where they are needed. Finally Parkour is usually practiced individually even if practitioners may form groups and share a common philosophy, in opposition with squatting which is usually a collective activity, bringing people together and gaining its impact force precisely from the communal, collaborative approach.

In the cases explored in the following chapter, unique acts of self-expression in the urban setting enable individuals to hack urban space. In these cases the urban space is first unassembled into the elements that form it, e.g. walls as boundaries, abandoned structures as

shelter, and then the elements are used to form novel experiences and produce unexpected spaces, e.g. walls as vertical surfaces for movement, abandoned structures as community centres. Through these cases the methods as to the certain ways of producing space is explored, in addition, reasons as to the yearning to transcend space as a product and a tool of established systems is speculated.

4.1 HACKING MOVEMENT IN URBAN ENVIRONMENT: PARKOUR

A city is sometimes described as an urban jungle. This may have to do with the fact that the urban environment that individuals construct for themselves turned out to be chaotic and full of traps. Walls are barriers, sometimes only visually, usually also physically. Some fences are designed to hurt those who approach, some can even electrocute. Urban design and architecture are very effective in dictating how to use, how to exist in the urban space. City is designed to be used in certain ways and often directs the urban user through architecture and urban planning, without the need of rules and regulations. The pavement that should belong to pedestrians is invaded by municipality-managed parking spots, or at best, it goes through a cafe. Some urban elements are anti-wheel: anti-rollerblade, anti-bicycle, anti-skateboard and finally anti-stroller and anti-wheelchair. One might get assaulted by a group of law-abiding citizens for painting on a city wall, the same group of that law-abiding citizens do not realize that the city belongs to those who make it by living in it.

Nevertheless, the designated usage of urban space is transformed with the onset of the Digital Revolution. It is only natural that the advent of a new era, the era of information, affects the way citizens perceive and experience the city. As self-described hacker, maker, journalist and author Ashley Hennefer states in her article *Space Hacking: An Introduction* as follows:

Technology has sparked an imaginative evolution. The expression of our relationship with digital systems is now being inscribed upon the urban landscape by our novel, technologically inspired uses of ordinary city structures … an imaginative shift. The city is being reshaped first in our minds, and then by our actions (2012).

What she elaborates on in this quotation constitutes the central argument of the thesis, writing that the digital age opened up new possibilities of perceiving and acting upon the physical space. This ties with Lefebvre's point of "social space" by means of which he argues that a space is constructed mentally as well as physically and that mental conception is just as cogent as the physicality of space. Thus as the digital age warps our mental conceptions we perceive space differently. As explained in the previous chapters, physical space is neither free from the projections of mental space nor it could ever be. The city dwellers are conditioned through the dominant ideologies to perceive and mentally construct the city in a certain way. The established systems further impose dominant ideologies through architecture and urban planning. One usually does not question the conventional conceptions about the city but just takes it for granted; never realising how the urban environment actually interferes with and diverts one's life.

Figure 1 Daniel Ilabaca does a cat balance.
Photograph: Jon Lucas
http://www.flickr.com/photos/jonlucas/204150906

However when one sees a *traceur/use* (a Parkour practitioner), in his/her natural environment, that is, in urban space, using walls as jumping points, window frames as handles, rooftops as walkways and handrails for climbing, one cannot help but stare in awe (Fig.1). For this is what Parkour does; it takes urban space as conceived by the authorities and their subjects and subverts it by utilizing in new and unexpected ways, by producing urban space over and over again in a bewildering, boundary-breaking, mind-blowing way. The activity that is called "Parkour" in the thesis has other names and branches such as *freerunning* and *l'art du déplacement.* The expression *Parkour* is preferred in the context of this study because it is the name which can be traced back to the origins of the activity. Similarly, the terms *traceur* (man) and *traceuse* (woman) are used for denoting the practitioners of Parkour.

As the name implies, Parkour is an adaptation of a military training program that focuses on overcoming all kinds of physical obstacles while moving in urban space. Parkour has evolved from the obstacle-training course that was created by pioneering French physical

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educator Georges Hébert. Hébert was inspired by the native African tribes and how they move in nature easily and skilfully, only with the aid of their flexible and resistant bodies. Later on, obstacle-training course became a part of standard military training. Raymond Belle, a French soldier who fought in the First Indochina War, passes his training onto his son, David Belle, who developed and spread the practice of Parkour with a group of friends. Today David Belle is one of the founders and greatest practitioners of Parkour. Interestingly, The British Royal Marines recently hired Parkour athletes to train their members, hence the "art of movement" that was inspired by the easy grace of tribal people living in nature made its way once more into the army.

There is no consensus on whether Parkour is a sport, an art, or a discipline; the practitioners rather prefer to deem it a way of living (Edwardes 2010). Above all, Parkour means moving in the environment fluidly and without limitations while also expressing oneself through one's unique style of movement. It is a non-competitive activity, needs no equipment and can be practiced alone or with others. The naturalistic roots of Parkour shine in the philosophy of it, many practitioners agree that being at ease with one's natural instincts and being able to move with using the body as a whole are essential for Parkour. It has been written "it is mastery of one's movement and the constant development of one's body and mind that one should seek through the practice of Parkour" (Edwardes 2010) hence implying that the relation between the body, the mind and the environment are central to Parkour.

Figure 2 Parkour Wallflip
Photo: http://www.flickr.com/photos/49503154413@N01/2915154818

Parkour is a blend of recreational sports and performance arts, which brings the movement of the body in the city into question from an original angle. Readily expressing rebellion against and manipulation of given resources; it has been defined as a type of freedom and a kind of expression. Having evolved from a strict discipline that is practiced by soldiers, it has an ironic position: It utilises one of the strongest tools of the established system – army training – in order to manipulate the pre-planned routes, paths, sequences and structures of urban space. Parkour practitioners, through their training, gain the ability to use the surfaces of urban space as departure points and paths rather than submitting to them as elements defining, limiting and manipulating movement (Fig.2). They have no tools other than their bodies and their physical strength. They exercise a lot to gain the unaccustomed skill of bending the conception of cityscape, but once a traceur/use gets enough physical and mental experience s/he could perform it anywhere in the urban jungle.

Perhaps it is Richard Sennett, sociologist and author of several books on individuals living in the modern world, who has written most extensively and enlighteningly about the relationship between the body and the city. Although he writes about the past, the arguments he pos-

es and the results he exhibits are all very much relevant today. It has been written that *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (1994) is a book about "how bodily experience has been shaped by the evolution of the cities" (2008). Arguably the experience of the city is dependent on body and movement; the body and the city are in a mutual relationship. With the onset of digital age body acts as a catalyst for a brand new interpretation of the cityscape. Thus I argue that what is implied through the right to the city and by the idea of remaking ourselves through making the city have something inherently in common: That bodies form the city and the city is the backdrop and the stage of bodies since the beginning of urban history.

Parkour practitioners state that they reclaim urban environment and they reclaim their presence as humans. According to them, by breaking boundaries and pushing the limits of physicality they are being true to their nature as human beings, actively rebelling against the confinement of the city (An Tran 2007).

Parkour philosophy is well informed of how capitalism controls the cities and the minds. The fact that military obstacle training provides the basis for Parkour is in correlation with the hacker philosophy: One of the strongest tools of the established system, military training, is utilized in order to rebel against the very same system. In coherence with the definition of guerilla tactics in leading thinker Michel de Certeau's essay *"Making Do"*, freerunning is a guerilla tactic employed against the grand strategy of the system as follows:

> I call a strategy the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated. It postulates a place that can be delimited as its own and serve as the base from which relations with an exteriority composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country sur-

rounding the city, objectives and objects of research, etc.) can be managed (de Certeau 1984, 35-6).

Furthermore, de Certeau writes that "the space of a tactic is the space of the other" emphasizing that tactics belong to the otherized, to the ones who are seemingly weak on the face of the system. Tactics work in the terrain of those in power, which is more than often imposed upon the weak. The paramount of tactic shines because "… a tactic boldly juxtaposes diverse elements in order suddenly to produce a flash shedding a different light on the language of a place and to strike the hearer …" (de Certeau 1984, 38). De Certeau diagnoses the guerrilla as the ones lacking in power, that very lack of power makes them likely to succeed when confronting the authority and its strategies.

This is where Parkour comes into perspective as a tactic very similar to computer hacking. A traceur/use's experience is very similar to a computer hacker's experience. They both work on a medium that is owned and regulated by something bigger than them as individuals. They both utilise the given in order to create. They both surprize and shock those who never question the authority. And usually they both employ the elements of the system in order to annihilate it, in order to question it by subverting it. They both open new ways, new perspectives to look at the world, and at the same time compel to be well aware of their being exploited by the established system.

Figure 3 PKTO, a gathering of Parkour practitioners in downtown Toronto, Canada.
Photo: Patrick Dep http://www.flickr.com/photos/34328098@N08/3790511685/

Lefebvre writes that "[b]odies themselves generate spaces, which are produced by and for their gestures" (Lefebvre 1991, 216) and that a series of gestures define spatial segments which may be completely original. Parkour practitioners present a shockingly concrete example of how bodies generate spaces. With their bodies as their self-proclaimed instruments, traceur/use create and define "spatial segments" which come together to surpass the contemporary spatial understanding of the city. Stuart Elden, writing on Henri Lefebvre's spatial philosophy, suggests that the conception of space and the abstraction of space represent the two ends of spatial cognition (Elden 1999). While the conception of space relies on abstract understanding including the geometry of space, the perception of space is based on concrete, physical experience. Naturally the perception of space stems from the body; through the body we experience the physicality of space. Bending the geometry (conception) through manipulating the physicality (abstraction) of space solely with their bodies, Parkour practi-

tioners demonstrate that space is produced mentally and physically. Physically, because frames and facades serve as ladders, tall walls lend themselves well to vertical movement, heights are opportunities for flips – what before had seemed impossible now appear literally as child's play. Mentally, because what seemed to serve as roads, barriers, openings, railings, and coverings all gain very different purposes in the interaction with the traceur/use's body and mind. The traceur/use continues moving straight on, it is the traceur/use's principle to overcome whatever obstacle the urban environment puts in one's way – hence the obstacle is no longer obstructing but yielding. Presumably this is why seeing Parkour in action is very inspiring. When a traceur/use is in motion in the space, that space that we know well, or we think we know well, is transformed before our very eyes: The body generates its own space by performing. The city for an ordinary citizen is not the same city the Parkour practitioner experiences. By training his/her body and mind, the traceur/use gains the ability to manipulate space. S/he is not bound by the rules dictated by the conception and the physicality of the city. Consequently the traceur/use – and also those who see him in action – are free from the rules dictated by the established system through the physical and mental constructs of the urban environment (Fig.3). Ashley Hennefer writes about how freerunning creates a new language in and of the city as follows:

> By sitting on benches, driving in the street … we communicate congenially with the authors of the city, on *their* terms. On the other hand, when someone does a backflip off an elevated walkway and runs across a wall, they translate the architects' expression (uninvited and without consent) into a language no one else speaks—yet (2012).

This new language/metaphor relates to the metaphor surrounding computer coding: Source code is written in a language, which is only legible to those who have specially trained. A programmer possesses the necessary education and equipment to hack; nevertheless one is not a hacker until one thinks of tweaking and subverting the source code. Likewise all citi-

zens possess the equipment, their bodies, to hack urban space in the way traceurs/use do, however ordinary citizens will never use the walls for jumping and seemingly barriers as shortcuts. The difference between ordinary programmers and hackers, between citizens going around doing their everyday business and Parkour practitioners is the creative thinking. The creative state of mind is what leads to hacking; it inevitably explores and explodes the boundaries.

Figure 4 Ryan Doyle in Mardin
Photo: **Lukasz Nazdraczew / Red Bull Content Pool**
http://www.redbull.com/cs/Satellite/en_INT/Article/Ryan-Doyle-in-Mardin-Red-Bull-Time-Run-%E2%80%93-Photostory-021243051179345

In his video made in Mardin, Turkey, traceur Ryan Doyle says that before each performance, he conceives each move in his mind and visualizes it over and over again, so when it comes to actually performing he feels like he has already done it before (Fig.4). Doyle also states, smilingly, that he can perform anywhere just by standing still and imagining himself practicing Parkour (Doyle 2011). His words support the assumption that Parkour is first and foremost a mental exercise that can only be executed when one perceives the urban environment in a very different way than is accepted as the norm (Fig.5). Parkour, as well as making the

performer perceive and conceptualize the city in a unique, challengingly different way, manipulates the onlookers' minds, too. Just as the traceur/use envisions himself/herself performing in order to aid the actual performance, seeing him/her subverting the city warps the vision of the city in the onlookers' minds.

Figure 5 Ryan Doyle in Mardin
Photo: **Lukasz Nazdraczew / Red Bull Content Pool**
http://www.redbull.com/cs/Satellite/en_INT/Article/Ryan-Doyle-in-Mardin-Red-Bull-Time-Run-%E2%80%93-Photostory-021243051179345

4.2   HACKING URBAN SERVICES: SQUATTING

One of the current critical urban issues is scarcity of space especially in metropolises. As I have discussed in the previous chapters, citizens are turned against each other due to the lack of space and insufficient urban services. Indeed Lefebvre has compared the shortage of space in the contemporary developed world to the shortage of bread of the past (Lefebvre 1971, 52). New residential and commercial buildings are increasingly planned in cities where the construction market is on the rise. The aim is to maximize the profit. Redevelopment of city centre and suburbs, gentrification and more generally urban transformation are current issues especially for big cities. Urban transformation has its advantages however there is always a big financial profit involved. As managements and corporations seek more financial income, modest districts, small neighbourhoods and even historically valuable places are torn down in order to build mass housing blocks and skyscrapers. Those who are evicted are usually taken advantage of due to their financial insecurities. On the other hand, sometimes a public or a private building closes down creating vast empty spaces devoid of function, of people, of flux. This is where and why squatters appear.

A squat is a dwelling that is used on a regular basis without the explicit consent of the owner. Although there are different types of squats and squatters; squatting is often a self-served so-lution when appropriate space is not provided for citizens. The squat is sometimes a simple survival action and sometimes a provocative solution to the shortage of space to dwell. Soci-ologist Hans Pruijt from Eramus University, Rotterdam divides squatting into five categories, in his paper titled "The logic of urban squatting in Europe," according to a set of variables (2013). These are: deprivation-base squatting, squatting as an alternative housing strategy, entrepreneurial squatting, conservational squatting and political squatting. He looks at the activity of squatting from an analysis-oriented view, comparing and contrasting various prac-tices under these five categories. Pruijt asserts that squatting is an action-based urban move-

ment, fuelled by the lack of proper urban planning, high rents, and public buildings being closed down due to budget cuts or strategical decisions. In addition to being an urban movement, squatting enables citizens bypass bureaucracy by serving as an alternative housing and establishment plan. Squatters are generally free of paperwork and do not need large resources or budgets in order to set up not only residential squats but also community squats. Obviously this makes squatting and ideal option for those without the financial means and those who have issues with the (lack of) urban services. Furthermore, as Pruijt writes, the squats' and squatters' relative independence from the state and the market gives a sense of empowerment, which is "and element in counterculture and countercultural politics" (Pruijt 2013).

Squatters may seem to be disorganized and even scattered from a conventional point of view, however they usually are a part of a network which, although tied loosely, have the power to act together in times of necessity. The cases discussed in this chapter are major examples of how people, who are prone to be judged as incapacitated in various ways due to their lifestyles or due to having been victimized, can come together and form civil organizations. Moreover, these civil organizations in some forms have the ability to help others; and produce better urban spaces. Hacking space by squatting may also work as a protest tactic; squatting may even be preferable for some people with certain political views and who are unwilling to spend great amounts of money for meagre services. However the three cases discussed in this chapter both examine squatting from the angle of production of urban space, explaining how abandoned buildings are made into community centers and collaborative, autonomous hostels by individuals who come together with shared goals.

Squatters make the space their own by the very act of occupying and taking care of space. A squatter produces new spaces with his/her presence and dwelling. A squat offers a sense of place, a sense of community. The community is often leaderless, non-hierarchical and is considered as one of the greatest virtues of squatting because it is autonomous. Moreover,

since squatters are free of paper work, bureaucracy, taxes, permissions and regulations, the squat is the myriad of autonomy. The autonomy of the squat is a part of the similarities between the hack and the squat. Like hackers, squatters have no leading force but organize on their own with a bottom-up approach. They form and work with solidarities as well as working towards a common benefit; they also tinker for fun and for the pure joy of learning something new. Squatters work against the established system often by breaching property rights and local regulations, but theirs is a way of standing up against a corrupt system. Where thousands are homeless while new residences are constructed everyday, squatters seek to attract attention to the meagre conditions of those with a low income or without an income at all. Squatters occupy a building, see the whole through its elements and produce new spaces out of the decaying leftovers. A columnist in the website of the Guardian, Owen Hatherley writes about squatting as follows:

> Squatting is usually – and especially now – a response to emergency, a matter of improvisation, taking somewhere dilapidated, removing the trees growing into the floorboards and getting electricity and drainage working. Like all experiments of this kind, squats can find themselves making a virtue of necessity (Hatherley 2012).

The case of a local library in London portrays a radical example of squatting in that the act of squatting, while providing shelter for squatters, also restores urban services and gains admiration from the local people. Besides, by reactivating the space that was widely used and popular in the local area, squatters gained positive feedback and recruited volunteers to work with them. The Council shut down the Friern Barnet Library due to budget cuts in April 2012. Shortly after, squatters moved in and aside from maintaining and taking care of the building, they restored the library services and received 10.000 books in donation. According to an article on the website of the Guardian, the ones who were actively involved in the reac-

tivation of Friern Barnet Library were not only squatters and some members of the Occupy movement, but also white, middle-aged Londoners (Rose 2012), indicating how otherwise ordinary citizens collaborated for the squat. The library began to function with the collaboration of squatters, neighbours and volunteers (Fig.6).

Figure 6 Squatters run the local library
Photograph: Graham Turner for the Guardian
http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/06/friern-barnet-library-victory-shows-way

Later it came forward that the local council actually planned to sell the premises of the library to a commercial developer. However, in the meantime the library is open and run by civilians, there is a heated debate about the situation. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood have been against losing the library from the beginning and they are actually pleased to see that squatters and volunteers can work together to restore urban services, albeit anonymous and civilian (Fig.7). The squatters in this case are hacking urban space through invasion of the space that was supposed to be public but closed down. They re-enact and enliven the space and make it public again, all outside authorial control. The library is a unique case because it is managed neither by the government nor by private corporations. Thus the social

centres activated and run by squatters emanate openness, cooperation, a sense of community

and freedom from managerial control.

Figure 7 Friern Barnet Library
Photograph: Graham Turner for the Guardian
http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/feb/05/library-campaigners-save-friern-barnet-branch

Beyond all, communal squats and squats functioning as social centres make a bold political statement. The Guardian columnist Steve Rose states that "property equals power, and squatting has been historically linked with the struggle of the dispossessed, anti-establishment movements, and the control of space" (2012). He emphasizes that squats have a significant meaning in terms of production and control of space. The case of the Torre de David in Venezuela is a meaningful case in terms of the relationship between squatting and control of space: The 45-story skyscraper in Caracas houses about 2500 squatters (Fig.8). It was left unfinished when a financial crisis hit the country and the investors. In a city where thousands are without proper houses, or not housed at all, the Torre quickly became a communal squat. The skyscraper, lacking running water, functioning sewage system and lifts, is run by groups of coordinators and houses squatters in 22 floors since it was first taken over in 2007 (Fig.9). Moreover, with a lot of small businesses established inside the squat, it offers a quirky insight into the squat economy. Most of the people living in the Torre have moved from shan-

tytowns and claim that the Torre is a lot better – shantytowns in Venezuela are notorious with high crime rates, while allegedly a sense of community reigns in the Torre de David.

Yet another affinity between hack and squat is manifested here. The skyscraper was built to be a financial centre, yet with the collapsing economy it was crippled exactly by what it was planned to serve: a broken economical system feeding capitalism. Later, the squatters, or in this context the space hackers, moved in to the panoramic units and built their lives there in the very centre of one of the established system's corporation buildings. The corporation building, if it was completed and was functioning according to the plan, would be one of the office blocks that provide employment to hundreds of people; a considerable amount of the workforce would be composed of overworked and underpaid employees without social security. Instead, the very same people who might have been hired under these conditions and who would have spent their work days in parts of the building that are devoid of fresh air and

sunlight while the white-collared workers and administrators were enjoying the panorama, are dwelling wherever they deem suitable in the building, enjoying the scenery and sunlight (Fig.10). The Torre as a squat hacks the established system as a whole by transforming the oppressed and the ignored and the underprivileged into dwellers in space that was planned for the working upper class. The hack is always ironic – whether wholly or just a little – always gives a sense of poignant, poetic justice and has a say against the oppressive system.
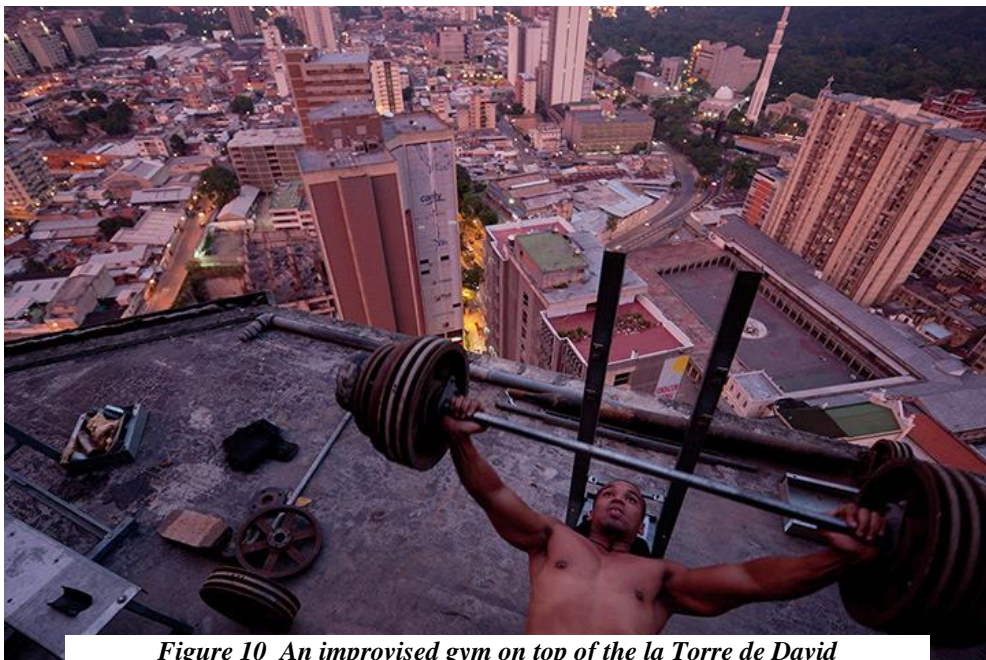

Figure 10 An improvised gym on top of the la Torre de David
Photograph: Iwan Baan/WENN.com
http://www.theguardian.com/cities/gallery/2014/feb/12/la-torre-david-vertical-slum-caracas-venezuela-tower#/?picture=429561751&index=2

Yeldegirmeni Dayanismasi, literally translated as the Windmill Solidarity, is housed in their squat in Kadiköy, Istanbul (Fig.11). The squat was an unfinished 3-storey building without a roof; according to the stories in the news the contractor disappeared after he sold one flat to five different buyers, the law suit has been going on for quite some time. Empty and devoid of activity for years, the building was rotting until Yeldegirmeni Dayanismasi came along

and turned it into a squat, which serves the neighbourhood. Yeldegirmeni Dayanismasi is one of the many political offsprings of Gezi Movement in Turkey, a community activism solidarity with projects like establishing a community house, encouraging citizens to buy from a local tradesman rather than going to shopping malls and chain markets, collecting books for school libraries, organizing public film screenings and presentations. They generally aim to inspire the citizens to own up to their neighbourhood and their right to the city. The squat is named Don Quixote House, as of spring 2014 it is partially completed with the help of the volunteers (Fig.12).

Figure 12 Don Quixote House in Kadikoy, Istanbul
Photo by the author

Figure 13 Inside Don Quixote House
Photo by the author

The solidarity claims that when they decided to squat there were no windows and doors, large portions of walls were missing, the building consisted just the foundation, structural system and some outer walls. Now they have electricity owing to a power generator, most of the walls are built and insulated; floorboards are laid, all with the contributions from the Solidarity as well as the volunteers and neighbours. It is becoming a real centre for the community built with the efforts of those who believe in a better life in the city. Sociologist Hans Pruijt writes that the squats make "people see empty buildings as opportunities and imagine that collective support for occupying those buildings can be organized" (2013, 19). The Don Quixote House is characterized by the collaboration and participation of the entire neighbourhood in its reanimation. The citizens who wouldn't dare dream of such a community-fuelled house now entrust their children to the squat, embracing the young and the activist. The house fulfils a variety of functions the government should take care of, however when

the government is absent and furthermore pursuing to incapacitate the citizens' daily lives in the city for profit and/or for control, the citizens take initiative to meet their needs.

Don Quixote House works as a social centre, undertaking education for all ages with seminars and presentations that are open to public, looking after and teaching to children, encouraging the neighbours to get out on the street and join the communal life, promoting activist ideas to make a difference. The house generally works in favour of the community by organizing and responding to their needs. The communities formed and working as such are hacking urban services, taking the sideway where the main road is blocked, using whatever tools at hand to own up to their lives and their space.

5   CONCLUSION

Focusing on particular kinds of civil urban interventions, aspiring to establish a relationship between *hacking* and urban space, the thesis suggests that hacking could be a way of standing up to being depraved of one's right to urban space in the Information Age. Hacking urban space as a provocative act has the power to alter the conventional conception of the city, opening up new perspectives on being in urban space. In this context, urban space is hacked through working with the elements that engender it, in order to construct brand new experiences. There have always been opposing forces seeking to claim territory and employ it for their specific motives; however, with the advent of the Information Age, a protest tactic that is peculiar to the era proliferated. Hacking first came about within the computer culture; as the Digital Revolution and the computer logic exudes into everyday life, hacking is understood as a tool to subvert and manipulate the existing situation, a tool that can be wielded in diverse fields of action.

Exploration of the Digital Revolution and the Information Age in relation with the innovations that characterize the network epoch and their effects on everyday life and culture manifests that the Information Age is indeed a revolutionary era in terms of how humans understand and express themselves. This notion is due to the World Wide Web's widely available and influential presence in sharing and producing information. A significant result of the Digital Revolution is the shifting of production processes to predominantly digital methods, hence the logic of digital processes transmute the industry, the culture and everyday life. The definition of the hack in its near-historical context is basic: Hacking is recoding, repurposing a given set of code, a given program in order to make it serve to different purposes, to understand its inner workings, and/or to tinker and have fun. At first the delineation of hacking in such a way was only valid within the computer culture, then it was understood that hacking could also be practiced in different fields and mediums. Moreover, with the reign of comput-

ers, what was tangible and concrete before is now being turned into data; information about the society is collected, stored and used easily by institutions. Hence the computers that allegedly make life easier also help in monitoring and controlling citizens. Naturally this is interpreted as the established system breaching the privacy of individuals and causes uneasiness in the society, especially amongst those who have different agendas and political views. So hacking as a guerrilla tactic comes into perspective as a way of withstanding the established system.

Due to the widespread use of computers and the centrality of computer culture in the contemporary era, hacking has become a subversive, somewhat rebellious act practiced in different mediums, which is employed to extract new meanings out of the given. The investigation of hacking with the guidance of contemporary identifications of the act itself shows that although the hack proliferated within the computer systems, the philosophy and the practice of hacking are relevant in other areas and find new and unprecedented expressions in alternative contexts. However the proliferation of hacking still owes much to the Digital Revolution and its forthcomings, because the mind-set that gave way to the hack in the first place is closely acquainted with the understanding of the program and programming in the digital era. The computer culture established distinct notions of coding and recoding which overall affected the notion of creativity; with the abundance of information available abstraction became an important tool in creative processes. Abstraction here refers to understanding a mechanism, an object, a rule as an entity which can be broken down to its elements; abstraction works by understanding the foundational elements of anything, and abstracting the elements -the code- from the whole -the program- in order to form something different than the one the hacker started with. In an era ruled majorly by computer culture, hacking is relevant in any context and it can be practiced using any medium; because hacking basically means using the given elements to create something new in a light-hearted and defiant attitude.

In order to explore how urban space is hacked, the notion of production of space with respect to the philosophy eminent in hacking and in terms of the established system's dominancy over producing space effectively prohibits citizens, the rightful owners and makers of the city, from producing their own space. Modern cities of 21st century are planned and regulated by established systems and produce generic spaces; such spaces usually are designed and managed to reflect the dominant ideologies. However the urban space planned in such a way is inert unless social relations enliven it. The urban space that belongs to the citizens, is becoming extinct not only because of the rules and regulations of the government, but also because of private institutions claiming urban space through legal or social advancements. Therefore an ordinary citizen does not identify with the city, not even with her own neighbourhood, because the city is not made collaboratively, and moreover, contemporary urban space is a political tool rather than a social product.

Hacking space as a defiant act drives one's attention to the making of city spaces through producing space in new and unexpected ways. Similar to hacking of computer systems, the practice of hacking space takes whatever is given and embedded in space and uses them to create unique perceptions and conceptions of space. The Information Age is unique in that the specific tool that enhances established systems' power over masses also empowers the masses to rebel against the domination and oppression. Just as individuals are able to hack into computer systems, they are able to hack urban space in order to recode it and endow it with new meanings and functions. Space is hacked on more than one level; by altering space, the hacker not only changes the space on a material level, but also modifies space on the conceptual level by employing it in different ways than the system conceived. Hence, the hacked space has the effect of invoking fresh feelings and visions in urban users, because it is free from ideological postulations, even if it lasts an instant. Thus hacking space is a rebellious act because the established system works with imposition and the ones who question it are deemed outlaws. In terms of this approach, hacking urban space can be a profoundly en-

lightening act, broadening the vision of both the actors and the viewers. Such is the case of Parkour, first of the two cases explored in this thesis.

It is debatable whether Parkour is a sport, or an art form, or a discipline; nevertheless Parkour is a novel way of being and moving in the urban environment. Parkour reminds one that the boundaries are limiting only when one perceives them as such. Perhaps the greatest effect of Parkour is that it demonstrates the fluidity and alterability of the cityscape, by employing the elements of the built environment in unique, unusual, even outrageous ways. It has two substantial purposes: To express oneself utilizing urban space, and to move freely, without limits, in the city. Moving freely means that one does not even try to obey the rules that the city dictates through architecture and urban design; Parkour practitioners (named *traceur/traceuse*) use barriers, stairs, heights, rooftops, and alike in order to aid them in freeing movement rather than submitting them as elements defining and constricting movement. Hence they hack urban space through alternate ways of being and moving in it. Both Parkour and the hack are guerilla tactics against the strategies of established systems; they work the system against itself by employing its elements in diverse ways (de Certeau 1984, 35). Firstly the traceur/use's vision hacks urban space on a conceptual level because in order to practice and perform Parkour, the traceur/use has to stop taking the elements of the city as granted and seek to utilize them in new ways, thus envisioning a unique experience of the urban space. Then, the traceur/use hacks movement in urban space on a physical level with experiencing it in an unexpected, creative way. The limits of urban space are broken and the rules, laws, ideologies inscribed in it are effectively negated by the very performance of the traceur/use because s/he showed that the conceptions of physical and ideological limits exist in the citizens' minds and it is indeed possible to break and transcend them.

In the case of squatting, specifically the one in which the squatters take over a public building or make the squat serve to the public, the hack modifies and contributes to the spaces of the city. An example from London, England focuses on how a local library, Friern Barnet

Library, is opened and run by squatters and volunteers after the city council closes it due to financial cuts. The general public often complains about squatters; however in this case the neighbourhood embraces them because they enlivened a formerly dead space as they continue to serve in the library. Another example from Caracas, Brazil presents how an abandoned skyscraper named Torre de David, planned to be the financial centre of the city before the investors went bankrupt, was taken over by squatters. As hundreds of families made home in the communal skyscraper-squat, the building has particular spaces for homes, shops, games and sports. Remarkably, it is run by groups of people and considered to be autonomous. Finally, the example from Istanbul, Turkey exhibits how an abandoned, unfinished building was transformed into a community centre by squatters, local people and diverse cultural groups. Yeldegirmeni Dayanismasi, (The Windmill Solidarity) is housed in their squat named Don Quixote House, a communal centre contributing to raise awareness on issues such as Occupy movement, environmental problems, freedom of speech and alike. In the cases of squatting mentioned in this thesis, the squatters contribute to the making of urban space through hacking existing buildings and services in provocative ways in order to suit their needs. Arguably the squatters are hacking their way into the urban service system when it is insufficient or non-existent, hence producing urban space in unforeseen ways.

In a system where teenagers wear mass-produced Che t-shirts and think they know what revolutions are about, the concept of rebellion is defined, tagged, put on the shelf and is a best seller. However true rebellion that has the capacity to transform lives on, albeit in different forms. Hacking urban space is sometimes a quiet but always an effective way of standing up to the established systems; whether it be through Parkour, squatting or any other way. The incidents of hacking space explored in the thesis are all inspired by the rebel spirit and seek to create new, all-encompassing, collaboratively produced urban spaces despite the attempts of the established system to regularize and normalize.

Incidentally, it is possible to ask other questions about hacking and hacking urban space such as, how do computer hacking and space hacking relate in terms of coding, decoding and re-coding, or, how far hacked urban space affect the city overall and what kinds of alterations or transformations they contribute to, and alike. I think just as computer hacking has become a common phenomenon and engendered a wide subculture, the diversified ways of hacking and producing urban space will be on the rise in the years to come, bringing forth many nov-el perspectives from which to inquire and intervene into the urban space.

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