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Géographies de la nuit / Geographies of the night / Geografie della notte

From geographical object to Night Studies

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Abstract. Geographies of the night. This intervention invites us to explore "geographies of the night" at multiple levels, in different contexts and through different approaches. If this project seeks to map out the geographies of a particular astronomical moment in the 24-hour cycle, it also aims to reflect on the emergence of a specific branch of the discipline, one with its own concepts, methods and tools. This is both a reflection "on" the night, "with" and "through" geography and an interrogation of geography from the perspective of night. In this article, we will begin by tracing the pressures which act upon the night and have made it a present-day concern, a preoccupation of public policy and an object of research in geography and across the social sciences and humanities. In a second movement, we will analyse research on the night within the discipline and trace the emergence of an interdisciplinary field of research: "night studies". Finally, we will explore the possible contributions of a "night" turn for geography. From such a perspective, the night is simultaneously a matter, an infrastructure, an object, an environment, an ambiance and a generator of research.

Keywords: night, geography, geography of the night, sustainable urban development, time geography, chrono-geography, night studies, sustainability.

1. The pressure to invest in a space/time

«*The night edge of thought is the anabis of infinity,*
awaiting the welcome»
Geneviève Clancy

Like the human organism, cities and territories exist within the rhythms of alternation of day and night. While the geography of the day is known and studied, less attention is paid to the nocturnal dimension. We might neglect this particular dimension on the pretext that the true "night" (when the world is asleep) often represents no more than a quarter of the day in

its entirety. In many regions, nevertheless, the "non-day", that period in which lighting is necessary, may reach – if only in winter – two thirds of the daily cycle. At the same time, there is quite clearly a life in our cities after the setting of the sun. The progressive colonization of darkness by artificial light, and the ongoing pursuit of work and leisure during the night have made this space-time attractive to geographers and scholars in the social sciences. Our project here is one of a reflection "on" and "with" the night, one which is not restricted to geographers exclusively, but open to those other disciplines possessed of a geographical inclination, which have taken up the topic at different levels, from different angles, and in different contexts. Conversely, this is also a reflection "on "and" "for" geography from the perspective of the night. Geography has much to say to the night, and the reverse, as well, is true. This is one of the hypothèses to be explored here, with our plural approach both to nights and to geographies. Geography is to be understood here as both "the object of this science, the space of societies" (as in "geographical space)") and the "science whose object is the space of societies, the spatial dimensions of the social" (Levy, Lussault, 2003). By night, we designate both the "duration unfolding between the setting and the rising of the sun, and during which the latter is not visible" (Larousse) and the space-time of societies which "inhabit" it, in Eric Dardel's sense of a (1952) "manner of knowing the world" and of those "affective relations [which are] far from an abstract or technocratic approach to space".

We will explore geographies of the night and the investigative methods used by the geography of the night, posing the question of what might be the epistemological value of the night for the discipline and for our societies.

2. A need for knowledge

The low level of accessible information on the night has made new research and inquiry necessary.

2.1 A long neglect

As the original basis of alternation, the night has long remained a forgotten dimension, a *terra incognita,* a border which has often blocked human ambition, a space-time marked by the weak investment of human activity (Gwiazdzinski 1998; 2005; Van Liempt et al. 2015). It has been a time of pausing – a frontier in that American, colonialist sense of a pioneering front, that is, "a limit reached in the exploitation and advancement by settlers seeking to establish a colony in territories hitherto empty or barely inhabited (Brunet 1992). It has inspired poets seeking after liberty, served as a refuge for evildoers and been a source of worry for the holders of power, who have often sought to control it (Palmer 2000). As a period of darkness symbolized by the curfew, the ceasing of all activity and the closing of the gates to the city, the night was long considered as the time for collective rest and retreat into the private sphere. City councillors, planners, and administrators have often treated cities and regions as if they only functioned sixteen hours out of twenty-four. Rare are the scholars who have found the topic worthy of interest, and rarer still are those who have approached it as a "geographical object", that is, as a "cognitive construction through we might understand a spatial phenomenon" (Levy, Lussault 2003) – or, more precisely, as one that is "spatio-temporal".

2.2 A space-time under pressure

Things are changing, however. The pressures on the night are becoming ever sharper, as it comes to crystallize a variety of fundamental economic, political, environmental and social issues. Our society is engaged in a profound redefinition of its 24-hour cycle (*nycthémères*) and both our lives and cities are being shaken up as a result. These transformations correspond to what the American historian Koslovsky has called "*nocturnalization*", that is, the ongoing expansion of the legitimate social and symbolic uses of the night" in the course of modern history (Koslovsky 2011). Liberating themselves from natural constraints, our cities have come alive under the influence of lifestyles which are ever more desynchronized, for reasons ranging from the reduction of work times to new technologies of lighting and communication. Over the last thirty years or so, we have seen a progressive colonization of the night by human activities expanding beyond the limits of the day (Gwiazdzinski 2003; Crary 2013). This progressive colonization of the night, by economic and social activities which carry the risk of its *diurnalization* (Gwiazdzinski 2005) is now noted and documented by geographers and scholars working in other disciplines. Lighting now seems omnipresent, and its function is subject to ongoing change, moving from one of security to that of adornment, from lighting the city to illuminating it. A variety of infrastructures now function around-the-clock even as night work becomes widespread. The general tendency, then, is towards an increase in the perio-

dicity, scale and frequency of services. Cultural "nights" of various sorts are more and more numerous, and the frequency of night-time leisure activities continues to grow. Thematic night events are in fashion, media curfews have ended (Straw 2015) and the internet may be surfed all night. In this expansion of activity beyond the limits of the day, the night imposes itself upon us, for better (as with festivals and other events) and for worse (with urban violence, conflict, insecurity). From the sky, the night appears now as a giant urban metastasis in which we may glimpse, here and there, a few gaps and remaining dark spots (Serres 1993), suggesting that we are living on borrowed time, and symbolizing, perhaps, a change in our perspective on the relationships of nature to culture, and of city to country, within a broader problematic we call that of the "*anthropocène*" (Crutzen 2002; Lesourd 2018).

2.3 Present-day nocturnes

Colonized by light, and by the activities of the day, criss-crossed by users according to rhythms ever more out of sync, the night has become a field of social tensions. The continuous time of the economy and its networks sits in opposition to the circadian rhythms of our bodies and cities. Global time bumps up against local time. Conflicts proliferate between individuals, groups and neighbourhoods, between the city of sleep, the city of work, and the city of amusement. Tensions, changes of lifestyle and the demand for appropriate night-time services have compelled public institutions to react, to develop new approaches in the realms of regulation and mediation. Long marginal, the night has gradually become a central focus of economic actors, public policy, tourism, and urban planning, a domain in which the cities and societies of tomorrow are being reinvented (Gwiazdzinski 2015). Caught between planning and caution, exploitation and protection, artificialization and naturalization, freedom and instrumentalization, tension and innovation, the night has a great deal to say to the day. It has become, as well, a field of exploration by, with, and for geography and geographers.

2.4 New stakes

These developments require that we take stock of the reflection going on in geography and adjacent disciplines, identifying and analyzing approaches to the night in all their differences of scale and focus, in order to contribute to the development of this research in Europe and elsewhere in the world. Indeed, it is necessary that this exploration of the night happen at different levels and in different geographical contexts, and that it involves geographers and those other disciplines with an interest in space and territory, so that the latter, in return, may contribute to enriching the discipline of geography. We will look first at the "geographical space of night" before mapping out some of the possible tools which the night may bring to geography.

2.5 Difficulties

The exploration of the night requires the construction of tools: tools for defining the night, understanding its actors, spaces, temporalities and dynamics. This requires moving beyond the representations, the anxieties for so long associated with this period of time, and the clichés which have blocked a scholarly approach to the night by "gathering up, within its evil substance, all its negative associations" (Durand 1960) – going beyond those which have seen in, the night, a metaphor for error, ignorance, prejudice, superstition, fanaticism, and all those things which are the antithesis of truth in the domains of knowledge and action. This exploration must embrace the ambiguities of the night, the ways in which it may be equally conservative and revolutionary: "conservative", in the sense that "it harbors an earlier magical thinking that modernity, with its trust in the light of progress, seeks to surmount"; and revolutionary "in the spirit of Romanticism, because the world destruction that its darkness performs whenever sunlight disappears is also the precondition for the creation of new worlds, whether benign or malign" (Bronfen 2013).

3. Exploring night as a geographer and the crossing of disciplinary boundaries

"Geographies of the night". Following pioneering work of the 1990s, which allowed this "lived, ephemeral and cyclical space-time" to be circumscribed (Gwiazdzinski 1998), and after the first multidisciplinary international conferences on the night in the 2000s[1] – which

[1] Gwiazdzinski, L. (Ed.) (2004). *Forum international des mobilités nocturnes*, Institut pour la ville en mouvement, 22, 23 et 24 Avril, Rome; Espinasse, C., Gwiazdzinski, L., Heurgon, E. (Eds.) (2004). *La nuit en question(s)*, 20 au 30 July, Centre culturel international de Cerisy-la-Salle, Cerisy; Gwiazdzinski, L. (Ed.) (2004). *Biennale internationale du temps,* 17, 18, 19 June, Besançon, Université de Franche Comté; Aubert, P., Boulin, J.Y., Dommergues, P., Gwiazdzinsk,i L., Heurgon, E. (Eds.) (2002). *Université européenne des temps de la ville*, 16 au 22 September, Centre culturel international de Cerisy-la-Salle, Cerisy; Bonfiglioli, S., Boulin, J.Y., Gwiazdzinski, L., Mückenberger, U. (Eds.) (2006). *Time,*

often coincided with French (and broadly European) reflection and experimentation on the subject of urban temporalities and the phenomenon of "Time Offices" (*bureau de temps*) – the night became a field of study in its own right for geographers (who eventually specialized in certain of its aspects) and for other disciplines, which develooped their own research, methodologies and tools in parallel (and dialogue) with geography.

3.1 Early geographical explorations

Geographers and the discipline of geography were no strangers to the first studies of the night, and of temporalities more broadly (Lepetit, Pumain 1993), with *Time Geography* (Hägerstrand, 1970), "*chrono-géographie*" (Bailly 2005) and the "chronotopic approach" (Bonfiglioli 1990; Drevon et al. 2017; Guez et al. 2018), joining together space and time, often with links to the field of public policy (Bonfiglioli 1997). For a long time, these had been part of an exploration of that "other side of the day" (Bureau 1997; Deleuil 1994, Gwiazdzinski 1998), in dialogue with other disciplines which had integrated a geographical dimension within their work on a variety of topics: lighting (Cauquelin 1977; Schivelbusch 1993), history (Verdon 1994; Delattre 2000), insecurity and the right to the city (Walkowitz 1992; Wilson 1991), night-time economies (Manchester 1994; Talbot 2007; Nicholls 2019), the relationships between youth, nightlife and urban space (Chatterton, Hollands 2003), culture (Palmer 2000), philosophy (Paquot 2001), sociology (Moreau 2003) education (Perraut-Soliveres 2001), public space (O'Connor 1997), chronobiology (Reinberg 1993; Millet 2003), urban policy (Erbeling, Henckel 2002) and planning (Roberts, Eldridge 2009) as well as with professionals in the fields of lighting or urban planning (Narboni 2004) and artists (Kersale 1998) whose engagement with the space-time of night showed how the latter could no longer be approached as the "un-thought" (Calenda 2017); and with poets as well (Clancy 2004). Both in academic research and in public policies, there was a slow transition from "Questioning the night" to "Making the night" (Gwiazdzinski 2017).

3.2 A bordered space-time

At first in poetic fashion (Bureau 1997), and conscious of the ambiguities inherent in defining the night – which can be one of both wakefulness and of sleep – geographers noted the importance of light and representation (Deleuil, 2009). Sensitive to both the limits and dangers of any simple parallels between the day and its other side, they nevertheless set out to study the night by identifying its actors, forms of interaction, amenities and services, its spatial and temporal limits, representations, "outputs" and governance. These early works contributed to the construction of a "geographical object" (Gwiazdzinski 2017), or, more precisely, a "spatio-temporal" entity, a "chronotope" resting on such concepts as "system', organization, centrality, diffusion, "frontier" and "discontinuity". These made it possible to show that the night could not be defined simply by the absence of light, but that there was a functional night, a juridical night, a social night, a lived night... in other words, a host of nights which were rapidly changing. The boundaries of the city were being transgressed and traditional definitions were no longer suitable for defining it.

As a result of ongoing transformations (Gwiazdzinski 1998), we sleep one hour less than did our grandparents. In cities, the night – if defined as that period in which activity is sharply reduced – is often limited to three hours, from 1:30 to 4:30 in the morning. Gradually, human activities are moving towards the night, producing a new space of work and leisure. Seen from space at night, lights allow us to understand the importance of cities and to grasp the organization of territories, laying bare processes of metropolitanization and the fluidity of boundaries between the urban and rural world. The image which prevails when we imagine the geography of the night is that of an archipelago. For a few hours, a new geography of activity brings about a partition of urban space, between the city that sleeps, the city that keeps working, the city that entertains itself, and the empty city, simple shell for the activities of the day-time. Places of nocturnal centrality, often different from those which are central during the day, reveal themselves. The poles of attraction of the day are not automatically those of the night, and the borders between then are neither regular nor continuous at the scale of the city or urban network. The night has its frontlines, its anchoring points, its bastions of continuous time, but also its little pockets of resistance, where city dwellers hold on to their classic life-rhythms, in zones of withdrawal wherein their resistance has been victorious. It is between these spaces, with their different functions and contrasting uses, that tensions and conflicts may appear (Maggioli 2016), allowing the observer to note the zones of conflict and the authorities to imagine solutions. Beyond spatio-temporal demarcations, the night, so often considered merely as a factual given, is very much a social and cultural construction whose very definition is the

citizenship and City, Higher council of Scientific Research, 25 mai, Diputacio Barcelona, Barcelona.

result of a balance of power which evolves over time (Deleuil 1994).

3.3 Extending the domain of geographical research

Since the early 2000s, research in geography – and in adjacent fields such as urban planning and urban studies – has continued to unfold in different directions, studying such phenomena as lighting (Edensor 2015), planning (Mallet 2009) and light pollution (Challéat, Lapostolle 2014); urban climates (Sobstyl et al. 2018), the patrimonialization of nature (Charlier, Bourgeois 2013), nocturnal landscapes (Bertin, 2016), services and mobilities (Espinasse, Buhagiar 2004; Gwiazdzinski 2007), night-time economies (Talbot 2007); night-time urban environments (Shaw 2018), gentrification (Nofre 2013), nocturnal tourism (Giordano et al. 2019), governance (Berthet 2019), the circulation of best practices within an institutionalization of the night (Pieroni 2017), night-time festive spaces and sociabilities, or "Nightlife" (Bonte 2017), urban transformations (Comelli 2015), quality of life issues (Chausson 2014), etc. Research has also moved to incorporate both methodologies for the acquisition of spatio-temporal numerical data (Hu, 2017) and approaches based on immersion in the night, such as night walks (Gwiazdzinski 2006; Guérin, Hernandez Gonzales 2017).

The work of geographers – and of planners and urbanists – has been primarily centred on Europe, with studies looking at Great Britain (Shaw 2015), France (Challéat et al. 2018, Mallet 2009; 2016; Gwiazdzinski 1998; 2005; 2007), Germany (Eberling, Henckel 2002; Meier, Henckel 2017; Schwegmann 2016), Holland (Van Liempt et al. 2015), but also Spain (Nofre 2013), Portugal (Jordi 2016), Switzerland (Pieroni 2017) and Italy (Boffi et al. 2015), with limited incurisons into the Mediterranean basin (Bonte 2017), Turkey (Eder 2015), Canada (Bertin 2016), the United States (Ocejo 2014), South America (Santos Vieira de Jesus 2017), Central America, (Hernandez Gonzales 2010); Mercado Celis 2014; Sagahon, Léon 2014), China (Chai, Shang 2005; Hu 2017), Indonesia (Tadié, Permanadeli 2015), Japan (Dimmer et al. 2017), l'Afrique (Morelle, Fournet-Guerin 2006; Oloukoï, Guinard 2016), the Arab Peninsula (Stadnicki 2005) and Oceania (Wolifson, Drozdzewski 2016). This research is interested principally in urban spaces and particularly in large metropolises, despite recent openings onto mid-range cities (Mallet, Burger, 2016), or towards examining the rural world in relation to issues of light pollution or the touristic exploration of those mountainous regions which have not been spared the extension of the domain of the day.

The development of research on the night has not been limited to geography but has come to concern numerous disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. These include anthropology (Galinier et al. 2010), ethnology (Racine 2004), history (Cabantous 2009; Polido Llano 2016; Zhang, Wang 2013), criminology (Hobbs et al. 2005), sociology (Candela 2017; Boffi et al. 2015), tourism studies (Nofre 2018; Grèzes et al. 2018; Chew 2009), communications and media studies (Straw, Pearson 2017; Straw 2015; Sharma 2019), environmental studies (Hölker et al. 2010), literary studies (Bronfen 2013), architecture (Armengaud, Cianchetta 2009), studies of light technologies (Meier et al. 2015), film studies (Falardeau, Leperrière 2014), the sociology of music (Guibert 2015), gender studies (Deschamps 2016), and aesthetic and cultural studies (De Guzman 2014), notably around the fluid notion of nightscapes, or that phenomenon, much studied and embraced by city marketing and tourism, of "nightlife", which resonates with a social desire rooted in the rapid transformation of the spaces and times of our lives, and with the opportunities and conflicts which such transformations have engendered.

3.4 Interdisciplinary approaches and "Night Studies"

This evolution of ways of knowing the night is not simply the doing of geographers, who have borrowed concepts, methods and tools from other disciplines and pursued their research in the context of multidisciplinary teams. The exploration of the night fits well within the contemporary phenomena of disciplinary "hybrids" and unfolds within a context of "interdisciplinarity" (Citton 2012) which has created new "continuities" outside of the domain of geography. After the pioneering work of the 1990s, a new, specific field of research breaking with disciplinary continuity could be seen taking shape. "Night Studies" (Gwiazdzinski, Straw 2016) emerged, henceforth bringing together historians, geographers, urbanists, sociologists, economists, anthropologists, ethnologists, philosophers, biologists, specialists in culture and communications, political scientists, specialists in gender studies, architects and artists. Their version of the concept extends beyond the original sense put forward by Cyrus Colter (1979), to designate those forms of knowledge elaborated in the night by the excluded and subaltern, for whom the night is simultaneously a refuge from oppressive circumstances and a place of reflection in which new modes of critical thought may be developed (De Guzman 2014; Straw, Gwiazdzinski 2015). A night culture research "scene"

– "the group of people, as they move from place to place…the places through which they move... the movement itself (Straw 2002) – has taken shape in partnership with public authorities. Around the world, colloquia[2], seminars, research projects, thematic issues of scholarly journals[3], theses[4] et exhibitions on the (mostly urban) night (*Nuits parisiennes*[5], *Peindre la nuit*[6]) have proliferated. This research – "inter-", "trans-" and "post-" disciplinary – is gradually opening up to spaces other than Europe and North America, and, in parallel with this opening, to new specializations with different objects and themes: light, governance, landscape, geography, the circulation of practices, light pollution, culture, media, representation, urban innovation, night-time economies and regional marketing. Over the last several years, scholarly publications, research programs and partnership platforms have taken shape (like the *Plateforme nationale de la vie nocturne*)[7] , and research teams have been formed. More and more articles, books, special issues of scholarly journals[8] – not to mention magazines aimed at the general public[9] or in the marketing field[10] – have been devoted to nocturnal themes, contributing to a spatial, sensory and experiential turn in the humanities and social sciences (Maggioli 2015).

3.5 A double movement of gathering and dispersion

We have seen how this turn to the night has participated in the emergence of a new inter- – if not trans- – disciplinary field, "Night Studies", and in specializations around several different themes. In a double, supplementary movement, we may see the academic domain of "Night Studies" as having emerged at roughly the same time as several developments in the extra-academic world of urban policy and governance. On the one hand, cities have invested in the organization of *nuits blanche* art events, in "museum nights", in bookstore nights (*noches de las librerias*) intended to prolong the time devoted to legitimate culture into the depths of the night and, in doing so, draw upon the transgressive associations of the latter. At the same time, conflicts linked to gentrification in cities manifest themselves more and more as battles over the right of cultural institutions to make noise and the obligation of city administrations to regulate such conflicts. Amidst all these initiatives and conflicts, we are witnessing an explosion of new policy instruments through which cities claim to acknowledge the importance of the night and to remedy their historical negligence thereof: "Night mayors," "night czars", "night ambassadors"; public consultations such as roundtables and the "Etats généraux de la nuit" held in Paris, Geneva and Lausanne; negotiated agreements, such as the Charters of Nightlife on the right of different social groups to occupy and use the night; and the setting in place of mediating agents, like the "pierrots de la nuit" in Paris. And, after pioneering work on night-time economies in the 1990s, a large number of studies have been carried out in London, Gloucester, Leicester, New-York, Sydney, Melbourne and in numerous South American cities.

4. Thinking Geography with the Night

In a society which is rethinking its 24-hour cycle, the night has things to say to geography. Our discipline has often been bound to describing and understanding those physical and social configurations visible within geographic space. Those recent developments "on the other side of the day" have shaken things up and obliged us to rethink certain concepts, methodologies and tools.

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[2] "3èmes rencontres européennes de la vie nocturne 1, 2, 3 February 2018 à Lyon / NIGHTS 2018 – 4ème Conférence internationale sur la vie nocturne 15-17 November – Bruxelles.

[3] Cultures de la nuit. Quels enjeux et quels défis? *Observatoire des politiques culturelles*, 53, January 2019; Nuits et montagnes, *Revue de géographie Alpine (RGA)*, mai 2018; The urban night, a time space of innovation, *Articulo, Journal of urban Research*, 11, November 2015; Geographies of the urban night, *Urban studies*, 52 (3), February 2015; Inhabiting (the night), *Intermédialités, Histoire et théorie des arts, des lettres et des techniques*, 26, October 2015; Temporalités urbaines et projets, *Urbia*, 16, février 2014; La ville la nuit, *Strada, Le magazine de la création hors les murs*, 20, Avril 2011.

[4] Comelli, C. (2015). Mutations urbaines et géographie de la nuit à Bordeaux. Université Bordeaux Montaigne, France; Pieroni, R. (2017). Institutionnaliser la nuit. Géographies des politiques nocturnes à Genève. Université de Genève, Switzerland; Bertin, S. (2016). Le paysage urbain nocturne: une dialectique du regard entre ombre et lumière, Université de Montréal, Canada; Bonte, M. (2017). Beyrouth, états de fête: géographie des loisirs nocturnes dans une ville post-conflit, Doctoral thesis, Université Grenoble Alpes, Switzerland; Walker, E. (2018). Quand la ville ne dort pas: S'approprier l'espace-temps hypercentral nocturne par et autour de l'usage récréatif. Les exemples de Caen et Rennes. (Pour une approche aussi sonore des rapports sociaux de proximité), Université de Caen Normandie, France; Chausson, N. (2019). L'économie et territoires de la nuit urbaine. Université Grenoble Alpes, Switzerland; Hu, W. (2019). Nuits de Chine. Université Grenoble Alpes, Switzerland.

[5] From 25 November 2017 to 27 January 2018, the exhibition *Les Nuits parisiennes* retraced more than two centures of night life in the capital and brought together more than 300 paintings, photos, sets and films.

[6] From 13 October 2018 to 15 Avril 2019, the Centre Pompidou-Metz devoted a large-scale exhibition to the theme of the night in modern and contemporary painting.

[7] http://pnvn.org/a-propos/

[8] Revue Hémisphères, 2017, 12, 18-22.

[9] Socialter, June-July 2018, 29.

[10] La revue des marques, January 2017, 97.

4.1 Immersion and a sensory approach

The human being is not *nyctalope* – 90 % of the information that we perceive passes by the eyes – and the lowering of luminous intensity and readability naturally requires that individuals and researchers adapt. When we are literally "enveloped by the night", other senses take over. Research on the night should include room for a geography of the sensible (Guinard, Tratnjek 2016), and geographies of emotions (Anderson, Smith 2001; Davidson et al. 2007), representations and imaginaries (Bailly 1989) in which the human is central. This obliges us to take up the question of the test posed by the night and the senses when sight is not supreme. It allows us to embrace the observational forms of geographical approaches in which "learning" takes the form of a journey (Gwiazdzinski, Drevon 2018), like the night walk, which allows for a physical experience of the body and the senses. And, above all else, it requires us to use the tools, methods and concepts from other disciplines which together participate in the dynamics of Night Studies.

4.2 From systemic decomposition to the ethosystem

One of the central and paradoxical questions posed by the night is that of "representations". A priori, a world in which everything becomes indistinct, and in which there is no way of recognizing, identifying and mapping spaces, in which the marks which allow us to orient ourselves are diminished, is a world in which geography – "the science of spatial differentiation" – would have no reason to exist. If the day represents the realm of differentiation, the night, instead, is that of an indistinct mixing. The geographical mapping of nights, however, is but one aspect of the investigation that geographical research might bring to *Night studies*. The analysis of the "diurnization" of the night, the "cartography" of its furthest advances, is but one way of pursuing research on representation even if one adds to it more anthropological approaches. The night pushes us to go forward, beyond ourselves, to bypass limits. To dwell, in Dardel's sense, implies a material and semantic appropriation of the surface of the Earth, an "organization" and an "interpretation", an ecosystem and an "ethosystem", that is, "a system that contains not only the culture, but also behavior, values, and the *habitus* of a population which is not closed in on itself but in regular contact and constant exchange with other groups" (Turco 2010; Gruet 2012), a system which remains to be explored. Exploring the night obliges geographers to interest themselves in contemporary "nocturnality", that behaviour characteristic of a night-time activity which "implies an idea of transformation, induced by those changes which affect the physical data – external and internal to the body – experienced by humans, and the cultural interpretation which they make of them" (Mercier 2017), as well as the concepts, methods and tools of a "nocturnology", that is the "multidisciplinary study of activities, behaviors and states of living organisms during the night" (Fontaine, 2014). The night sets its practices in the middle of a discipline moving towards a "non-representational geography" which opposes "representation" – of an image, a description of the world from an essentially intellectual perspective – to "performance", which designates a body in action, perpetually producing a new reality (Thrift 2000). In this sense, the "geography of the night" contributes to a rethinking of the very modalities of geographical research. It supposes new spaces, new forms of intervention and collaboration, new moments and situations in which the forms of art and those of geography must find new hybridities.

4.3 The chronotopic approach, the temporary and rhythm

As an "ephemeral and cyclical lived space," the night obliges us to think in terms of time, of space-time and of an exploration of these for which a chronotopic approach is required. It obliges us to think of the temporary within the continuity of days and cycles. As a caricature of the day, the night allows us to observe the co-habitation and tensions but also the innovation which are there deployed (Gwiazdzinski 2015). Faced with the hybridization of worlds, spaces, times and mobilities (Gwiazdzinski 2015), the binary approach which opposes night and day, or the continuous and discontinuous, is insufficient. The complexification of systems pushes us to imagine a passage from the notion of "discontinuity" to one of "rhythm" – going beyond the rhythmicity of the "*rythmanalyse*" associated with Bachelard (1950) and Lefebvre (1992) to open onto an "organisation of movement and a modality of accomplishment" (Michon 2007) at the crossing of space and time. Rhythm enables us to think through the alternations, the relative continuities and discontinuities, the permanent porosities and configurations of territorial schema and of worlds in movement. As a concept, it allows us to bypass the study of the night as "island", as a "natural" time which is psychologically and socially isolated. More operationally, night invites us to seek out *eurythmy*, that "harmonious beauty produced by the happy and balanced fitting together of lines, forms, gestures and sounds" or,

more precisely, the "good rhythms which together, each with the other, magnify the singular and the collective" (Michon 2008).

4.4 Extensions towards the day and the building of the city

As the day more and more invades the night, one might imagine that the night's ways of knowing, its more sensory and humane approaches to society, might also contribute to a "nocturnalization" of the day and thus participate in the building of a sustainable city. In this space-time in which notions of security and liberty are essential, a new urbanism could be developed according to a few grand principles we might import into the day: the hospitality of public spaces, transport systems and urban housing adapted to the difficulties of life conditions; information with which to navigate a poorly-defined territory; a quality of life in the midst of a difficult environment; equality in the face of excessive disparities between centre and periphery, individuals and social groups; a sensuality to counter the strict rationality of the day; variety against the risk of standardization; the unexpected through invention and event-making; the alternation of shadow and light to counter homogenization; a sense of safety based on the growth of urban spectacle and human presence rather than security technologies; and the enchantment of the night by creativity.

4.5 Towards a "night thinking" about city and society

Night obliges us to move beyond a dichtomous approach, towards a thinking which integrates paradoxes (Barel 1979) and a third term (*tiers*), a thinking which allows us to escape dualisms, to explore mediation and its possible figures. A sign of difference and an operator of change, the third (*tiers*) is a space, a time, and an interesting position from which to explore that in-between in which are renegotiated the relationships between the *one* and the *other*, and from which might emerge new configurations as well as unexpected syntheses (Dahan-Gaïda 2007). For each of us, there is always a tension between the different sorts of night: as the space of merchandise, conquered by enterprise; as the space of creation and entertainment; and as the space of the intimate and the inappropriable. To begin to work on geographies of the night is to accept the experience of a "night thinking" (Clancy 2004) to "enter the night of thought": it is to integrate "specific knowledges » (Perraut-Soliveres 2002), live the inversion of values, try to inhabit the night (Gwiazdzinski 2014) and learn to manage the contradictions and paradoxes of a hypermodern society (Lipovetsky 2004); it is to light up the night without killing it, to render the night accessible and preserve its original identity; to develop the night without creating new conflicts over its use; to animate the night while respecting its biological rhythms; to ensure public safety without recourse to a curfew; to open up the night while preserving the health of those who work within it; to assure the continuity of center and periphery without rendering the night uniform; to leave the night unregulated without abandoning it to the market; to develop services while maintaining silence and darkness; to reconcile the "right to the city" with the "right to the night" (Manifesto da Noite 2014) and, finally, to explore the night without essentializing nocturnal time.

5. Conclusion. From geographies of the night to *Nights studies…*

The purpose of science is not only to accumulate objective knowledge but to define, with candor, the actual limits of this knowledge and, in doing so, "to designate the unknown such that it is not easily mythified as unknowable"[11]. This warning is as pertinent for the night, so long given over to fear and phantasm, as it is for geography, and for the geographer, who is no longer the learned one of Saint-Exupéry's *Petit Prince*, writer of "eternal things", but a scientist obliged to leave the library and become an explorer of other spaces and other disciplines, with a changed look, imagining other methodologies and tools with which to read and write about worlds in movement.

This exploration "with", "by" and "for" geography has allowed us to draw a first cartography of research on "geographies of the night" – to set out the first elements of an analysis of urban nocturnal systems, of the limits, representations, tensions and conflicts which cut across them, and the forms of mediation and governance which are there being invented. It has highlighted the emergence of a "scene" and field of interdisciplinary research which goes beyond the discipline of geography: that of "Night Studies". Inversely, it has shown the possible contributions of the night to geography and, beyond that, to the city and society.

The coupling of night(s) and geography(ies) is highly fruitful. On the one hand, the disciplines of geography – in their extreme diversity – bring their contributions

[11] Quote from Jean-Pierre Changneux in Blondel J., *L'archipel de la vie*, Paris, Buchet-Chastel.

to the exploration and multiscalar knowledge of the nights of the world. The "geographies of the night" being sketched are still partial, limited to the urban environments of cities of the global north; they are plural, discontinuous, temporary and cyclical. The very definitions of the night, based as they are on "natural" criteria, are no longer appropriate to the artificial universes of cities undergoing pressures from their day or invaded by a range of actors. They are socially reconstructed and reinvented as a function of divergent interests and strategies, by different actors who colonize and inhabit the night. While we may not really speak of a "geography of the night" as a specific and autonomous current, geographers – and their urbanist colleagues – are contributing in major ways to *Night Studies*, most notably in the Francophone world, but also in relation to public policies, such as those set in place under the framework of "temporal politics" (Krüger 2019), or in connection with Anglo-Saxon research more centred on the *Night Time Economy,* and taken up operationally around the world in international fora such as the *Tbilisi International Night Time Economy Forum,* in December, 2018 in Tbilissi (Georgia) and the *ANZ Night Time Economy Forum,* with its evocative subtitle, *Creating Vibrant Cities After Dark*) in June, 2019 in Sydney, Australia.

On the other hand, the night has much to offer the discipline of geography, where it notably carries out the functions of revelation, disruption and anticipation. Revelation: If the night cannot be easily discovered, it nevertheless reveals the human and the city. In the night, we better understand the organization of a territory and its structure. It is often in the night that use conflicts are exacerbated and legible, and that front lines and pressures upon society may be located. The night is often conducive to confidences. Disruption: Night obliges geographers to leave their comfort zones and enter into temporal, temporary and cyclical dimensions leading to the "chronotopy" of the night, in which are reconciled the dimensions of space and time. The night pushes the geographer to leave behind a strictly visual approach to environments, to become interested in other senses, in experience rooted in other ways of existing and being in the world, through the "experience of presence in a place" (Maldiney 2007) and by enrichening the sustainable development of new ethical and poetic dimensions. The night urges the encounter with micro levels, like those of the street or a night club, or the passage from the eventful to urban ordinariness, from the extraordinary to the infra-ordinary. Leaving behind the reason of the day, the night naturally places the human, the sensory and emotion at its centre. In the absence of data, the night leads the researcher to be immerged and enveloped, to traverse it and to imagine other ways of observing spaces, times and inhabitants, other ways of speaking of these and experiencing them. To do so requires the mobilization of other looks and other scientific or artistic disciplines, and invites a great many forms of hybridation. Anticipation: As a space-time under pressure, the night enables us to pick up weak signals and imagine the city of tomorrow. Better still, as space-times, nights are infinite and full of potential, reinvigorating spaces and moments of invention "in an age haunted by ideologies of the end of the world" (Imhoff et al. 2016).

At once matter, support, object, environment, ambience and generator of research, the night, in the early days of this century, is still resistant to geographers and those of other disciplines. Those who chose to explore it should, above all else, take to heart this warning: "Without light, no city at night and too much light will kill the night." Following a logic of sustainable development, far from all-powerful thinking and transparency, it might be good to engage with the night while preserving a part of its "mystery" (Morin 2017). To know it and to care for it.

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