

Patrick Keiller and 'the problem of London'

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*It is a journey to the end of the world.*¹

There are places whose character can be defined by integrity and cohesion. And there are ones whose character can be defined by ambiguity and diversity. London is one of the latter. For this is a place of striking contrasts and monumental contradictions requiring a 'personal approach' and demanding respect for its whims and oddities. Its 'true' identity can only be worked out in the process of reconciling numerous opposites and contradictions that are as valid as they are essential.

This can be achieved in many ways, but the most efficient and effective would be the physical acquisition of the urban space. Namely, by walking the city streets in an attempt to see its territory in a new light and therefore give it personal meanings. Such practices of urban walking have been performed in a number of mostly European cities from Berlin to Vienna, and from Paris to London. But it is the French and the British capital that have emerged as the most frequent points of reference, most often investigated by walkers and most often pondered upon. First in writing, and then also in film. Although Parisian and London strands of urban reflection have developed their own investigative traditions, they have a lot in common, since their authors and practitioners have influenced and cross-referenced each other. This two-way impact has generated a number of similar ideas and approaches. It has also given rise to the figure of the *flâneur*; and also Robinson², who settled for good within the urban walking tradition.³

Patrick Keiller, a British architect and filmmaker, is the author of the critically praised film essays *Robinson Trilogy: London* (1994), *Robinson in Space* (1997), and *Robinson in Ruins* (2010). They explore the notions of place, the production of space, the workings of memory and the interaction between place and emotions, linking their narratives with the practices of urban walkers, or psychogeographers. *London* offers a kind of permanence to subjectivity, akin to a narrative stream of consciousness.⁴ The plot is structured around a series of trips around London undertaken by the narrator and his friend, Robinson. The latter remains a driving force behind these escapades; they are made in response to his impulses and chronicled by the narrator.

On both sides of the Channel, the practice of urban walking has a long tradition. Merlin Coverley's *Psychogeography* provides a comprehensive overview, with occasional references to other practitioners and locations. And *London*, cross-referencing French and English luminaries of this tradition, draws heavily from both sources. Even Robinson's paradoxical assumption that the problem of London

seems to be, in essence, that it is not Paris creates an intellectual and emotional bond between both strands of thought.

French theoretical reflection on urban walking remains firmly linked to Charles Baudelaire, for whom *Paris becomes a book to be read by walking her streets*.⁵ The poet, developing the concept of the *flâneur*, finds his inspiration in Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Man of the Crowd*. In his search for the idealised *flâneur*, Baudelaire is supported by one of his most insightful critics and commentators – Walter Benjamin, whose *The Arcade Project* offers a broad panorama of Parisian city life, with the figure of the *flâneur* in his 'natural habitat', namely the French metropolis.⁶ Here, the *flâneur* becomes a composite figure of *vagrant, detective, explorer, dandy and stroller. Within these many, often contradictory roles, his predominant characteristic is the way in which he makes the street home*.⁷ However, unable to traverse the streets on foot, the *flâneur* has to resort to more radical means and employ his imagination. This method is perfected by Xavier de Maistre. In *A Journey Around My Room* (1795) and *A Nocturnal Investigation Around My Room* (1825), de Maistre embarked on long trips pioneering the mode of stationary travelling where the pedestrian and the armchair traveller meet.⁸

Toying with the idea of the imaginary *flâneur*, Arthur Rimbaud coined the verb *robinsonner*, indicating mental travelling, letting one's mind wander.⁹ Rimbaud, obviously, derived his term from Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, with its intertwining themes of isolation and imaginary voyage. Robinson turned into a model walker in the modern city, a mental traveller striving to survive in a hostile territory.¹⁰ Abandoning Paris for London, Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine were soon joined by Stéphane Mallarmé and Guillaume Apollinaire in collecting their urban experiences on the streets of the British capital – one of many instances where French and English reflection would overlap.

Their influence can be detected in the ideas developed in the 1950s in connection with the Letterist movement and then with the Situationist International. The former found its advocate in Ivan Chtcheglov. He outlined his vision in *Formulary for a New Urbanism*, discussing his ideas on the ways a city should be built. *We are bored in the city – there is no longer any Temple of the Sun*¹¹ – begins Chtcheglov, and continues in a similar fashion to propose new architecture that resists mundane features of the present urban environment. This idea is incorporated into Keiller's films.

When the Letterists merged with the Situationist International, it was Guy Debord who became a prominent advocate of the movement. In his *Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography*, he labels the practice of city walking by stating that the word *psychogeography ... is not too inappropriate. It is not inconsistent with the materialist perspective that sees life and thought as conditioned by objective nature. ... Psychogeography sets for itself the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals. The charmingly vague adjective psychogeographical can be applied to the findings arrived at by this type of investigation, to their influence on human feelings, and more generally to any situation or conduct that seems to reflect the same spirit of discovery*.¹² Psychogeography then refers to the situation where psychology meets geography, indicating the impact of a physical place on the behaviour of an individual.

The Situationist International quickly distanced itself from the Letterists by shifting its focus from a clearly artistic (however limited and obscure) movement to favouring a much more politicised agenda. Heavily influenced by Marxist philosophy, the Situationists gravitated towards a radical political organisation aiming at challenging the established tenets of western capitalist society. Had it not been for the London Psychogeographical Association's proclamation a few decades later in *Why Psychogeography*, the Situationists might have themselves declared that *There is a spectre haunting Europe ... The spectre of psychogeography*.¹³

With a similar, yet much less disciplined adherence to Marxist philosophy, Michel de Certeau addresses city wandering in his seminal *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980), relocating his investigation from Europe to New York. Certeau, particularly in the chapter "Walking in the City", contrasts New York, a city in a state of permanent renewal and reinvention, with European cities, becoming old and covered with a patina of time. He makes a clear distinction between a walker and a voyeur, emphasising the self-distancing position of the latter.

Across the Channel the tendency to organise into ideologically bound groups was weaker. Here, it was rather a string of authors and practitioners who explored the potential of wandering and recorded their impressions. Daniel Defoe is usually credited as the 'founding father' of the literature dedicated to city walking. His pioneering *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) has already been mentioned, but it was *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) that particularly caught the interest of city walkers, who later became psychogeographers. Defoe *gathers bare statistical facts, the precise topographical details and the peculiar local testimonies ... and presents them in the non-linear and digressive fashion*, blending fact and fiction, local history and personal impressions, to achieve *an imaginative reworking of the city in which the familiar layout of the city is transformed beyond recognition*.¹⁴

Defoe was followed by William Blake – 'the godfather of all psychogeographers'¹⁵ – whose *London* (1794) amounts to a classic psychogeographical text about the mental traveller remaking the city according to his own imagination and the urban wanderer drifting through the city streets at the same time.¹⁶ But the first real practitioner of psychogeography can be found in the person and writings of Thomas De Quincey. His *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821) are less about drug taking and more concerned with the power and impact of the imagination in reshaping and rearranging the familiar and the mundane character of a well-known environment into something magical and wonderful.¹⁷

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) is considered as another confirmation of London's susceptibility to such endeavours. The idea was further developed by Arthur Machen. In *The London Adventure, or the Art of Wandering* (1924) he states that *there is a London 'cognita' and a London 'incognita'*. *We all know about Piccadilly and Oxford Street But where will you be, if I ask you about Clapton, about the inner parts of Barnsbury, about the delights of Edmonton?*¹⁸ London wears a mask of the ordinary, hiding the extraordinary.

J.G. Ballard, usually credited as having the greatest impact on the practices of urban wandering and writing, stands out with his 'Death of Affect', which depicts human interaction with technology and technological landscapes. His psychogeographical connection between the environment and the human strives

towards extremity. The permanent assault of imagery, news and novelty (fake and genuine) desensitises members of (post)industrial societies, making them unable to truly engage with their environment.

Yet, it was Iain Sinclair and his 'London Project' that made psychogeography mainstream. As he proclaimed, I realised that what I was going to do for some time was to cope with the mythology and the matter of London, incorporating diary material from my everyday life and so on.¹⁹ *Lights Out for the Territory* and his subsequent writings turned Sinclair into a modern advocate for and chronicler of walking the urban landscapes.²⁰ The *flâneur* has undergone a metamorphosis and has transformed into the participant, the stroller has become a stalker.²¹ Sinclair expanded his palette and also turned to film, including political overtones in his works.²²

Despite its recent ups and downs, psychogeography has never gone out of fashion and enjoys tremendous popularity to this day. It involves a number of different practices and ideas, which usually overlap, rather than occurring separately. The most general aspect is the influence of the environment and its emotional and behavioural ambience. It is linked with 'cognitive mapping' – creating an image of the place in the mind of an individual, and this includes a unique collection of places with a special meaning. The final element would be references to 'local history' – historical events associated with particular places.²³ As it started with London-based investigations, so it still revolves around this city, and in contemporary London psychogeographers abound.

Keiller's films, to various degrees, include all these elements of psychogeographical practices. Yet, they seem to draw particular attention to 'cognitive mapping', with its constant referencing of 'local history', as well as to past practices and practitioners of psychogeography. On the one hand, the filmmaker conforms to the literary tradition of providing a word-based narrative. On the other, he enhances it with additional aural components (music, soundscapes) and imagery. Keiller offers the audience a multi-sensual experience of urban travel unavailable to the 'letter-bound' earlier psychogeographers.

The subsequent trips undertaken by the unnamed narrator and Robinson, *a disenfranchised, would-be intellectual, petty bourgeois part-time lecturer at the 'University of Barking'*, are presented in the form of a fictional journal – much like Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*.²⁴ Robinson is referred to as a roommate, an occasional lover and an academic colleague.²⁵ Asked about such characteristics, Keiller explains: *I thought that if they were queer they could be more credibly alienated by the 'beef and beer' characteristic of London, which was then and perhaps still is prominent. I also wanted them to have – or rather to have once had – a close relationship, but doubted that I was skilled enough as a writer to deal adequately with the politics of heterosexuality, especially in the very compressed form of voice-over, so thought to make them the same. At the same time, although I didn't seem to know about it when we were making the film, the rediscovery of London as a cultural entity was by then a fairly widespread phenomenon. And it did involve a lot of gay people. Francis Bacon, for example, is almost an icon of 20th century London.*²⁶

But Robinson is also a decadent wanderer, a modern-day vagrant, a social outcast turned into the ultimate *flâneur*. Above all, he is the narrator's *doppelgänger*, since neither of them can be seen and their influence is clearly mutual. The name

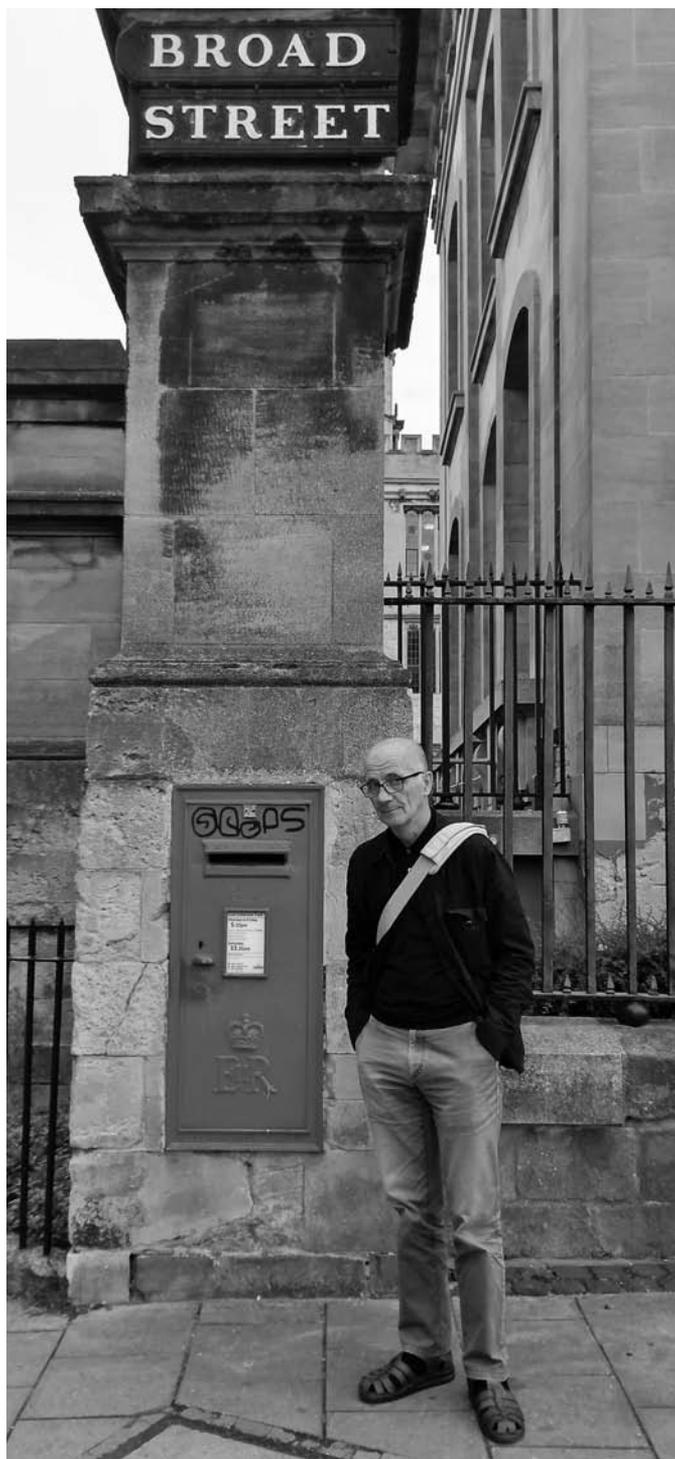
Robinson references the writings of earlier psychogeographers. Yet, contrary to the obvious associations with Defoe, Keiller looks for his inspiration elsewhere. *I took the name from Kafka's "Amerika", in which the protagonist Karl Rossmann encounters two itinerants, Delamarche and Robinson, who describe themselves as out-of-work mechanics.*²⁷ Intentionally drawing on the earlier tradition of urban walkers, Keiller manipulates obvious associations, reworking some of them to fit more contemporary contexts.

Robinson's project was a study of 'the problem of London', and the problem of London seemed to be, in essence, that it was not Paris.²⁸ As the narrator and Robinson set out on their consecutive trips across London, they come across places of symbolic importance in the psychogeographical tradition. The sight of Defoe's house in Stoke Newington makes Robinson proclaim London as a place of shipwreck, and the vision of Protestant isolation.²⁹ And it is this sense of isolation, this 'unsociability' of London that inspires Robinson to conclude that the true identity of London is in its 'absence'. As a city, it no longer exists. In this alone it is truly modern: London was the first metropolis to disappear.³⁰

For, in a way, London is and is not there. The 'absence' of London in Keiller's film stems from the absence of the city's historic structural centre (overrun by the blandness of the finance industry's office towers), from the lack of a single focal point symbolically marking London's outward movement. In the course of time the city's growth has amounted to a continuous cannibalisation of its surrounding villages and towns, eventually turning them into London boroughs. Though not a unique process in itself, it has nevertheless failed to provide any sense of connection, but rather meant a practice of addition, where one town after another has been incorporated into the administrative limits of (Greater) London. As Robinson observes, the bigger London becomes, the more it disappears and the more it becomes absent. The process of disappearance is chronicled in a series of static images illustrating the narrator and Robinson's itinerary.

Their expeditions, to borrow from Michel de Certeau, begin on the ground level, with footsteps: *They are myriad, but do not compose a series. They cannot be counted because each unit has a qualitative character: a style of tactile apprehension and kinaesthetic appropriation. Their swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together.*³¹ Robinson and the narrator perform this weaving by zigzagging across the city and drawing their own patterns. They know that the *ordinary practitioners of the city live down below, below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They ... are walkers, 'Wandermänner', whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text'.*³²

Akin to Certeau's walkers who write without being able to read³³, Robinson and the narrator produce stories delivering a subjective insight into the deeper workings of London and thus investigating its 'absence'. Their *networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story ... shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces.*³⁴ While traversing the streets of London, Robinson and the narrator perform a dual action: since *the act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements uttered*³⁵, London's narrative enables likening traversing the urban space to speech acts. As a consequence, any act of walking operates on three levels: (a) as a process of appropriation



Patrick Keiller, fot. Artur Piskorz

of the topographical system by the pedestrian; (b) as a spatial acting-out of the place and (c) as an implication of relations among differentiated positions.³⁶

The 'appropriation of the topographical system' results from the film structure: a collection of shots of a 'built environment', practically devoid of human presence and filled with architectural artefacts whose builders have become invisible, obsolete, nonexistent. The director's approach implies shooting and editing first, and only then structuring the narration. Hence, it is the visual and the edited that determine the written word. As a consequence, putting the pictures together in a different order, or shooting different pictures, might have resulted in some other equally plausible fiction.³⁷ The series of images of London, coupled with the interior monologue, suggest some *more-or-less comic attempt to represent consciousness ... – the inner experience of an alienated and rather unreliable artificial 'flâneur'*.³⁸ The 'acts of walking' create a narrative based on free associations combining visual and aural elements.

The 'spatial acting out of the place' remains closely connected to the media which the narrative utilises to tell the story. *London* is primarily image-driven, with intentional visual references to the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher and also to the Surrealists, with their *adoption of particular sites in Paris – the Tour Saint-Jacques, the Porte Saint-Denis, the abattoirs of La Villette, the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, and so on*.³⁹ The voiceover commentary is delivered with infectious panache by Paul Scofield. The sounds are distant and muted. The traffic is almost noiseless. Brian Eno's *Music for the Airports* – renamed *Music for London* – may serve as the soundtrack for the city by providing a narrative sonic loop.⁴⁰ All the elements are seamlessly combined, creating a nostalgic and timeless state of being of a place that is and is not there. The visual and aural ambient construct is as real as it is imaginary. There is a feeling of peculiar numbness and stillness emanating from the unfolding narrative, a feeling that encompasses the viewer who is drawn into the flow of images and words.

Michel de Certeau explains 'an implication of relations among differentiated positions' as a term suggesting relations between pragmatic 'contracts' in the form of movements, just as a verbal enunciation is an allocution positioning another opposite the speaker and putting contracts between interlocutors into action.⁴¹ The trajectory of the wanderers in *London* is always sketched out by Robinson, who remains the driving force behind their journeys. He is inspired by the references to past events or famous people, and absorbed with the imaginary representation of London then and its sorry replica of today: *Robinson was following up a rumour that Conan Doyle had once lived in the neighbourhood, but he was unable to contact anyone who could help him*.⁴² Although he knows that the past is a foreign country, he is unable to reconcile himself to this fact and acknowledge this past's irreversible demise. For Robinson believed that *if he looked at it hard enough, he could cause the surface of the city to reveal to him the molecular basis of historical events. And in this way, he hoped to see into the future*.⁴³ Yet for now he remains a traveller, a vagabond whose compulsive wandering is structured by nostalgic references to the past.

In doing so, Robinson frequently focuses on the seemingly trivial and obvious: a plaque on the side of a building, or a signboard with a name of a school of English. He stops and listens to the gateposts at the entrance to a park. Robinson engages

with these objects, for they provide him with a link to the personalities he is connected with emotionally and intellectually. It also helps him produce his own 'cognitive mapping' of the place: the gate leads to a park in Vauxhall (*a district famous for its associations with Sherlock Holmes*)⁴⁴; the English school is named after Montaigne (*It is not generally agreed that Montaigne lived for a time in London, in a house in Wardour Street; the first of a number of French writers who found themselves exiled here. Robinson studies the work of this group. Mallarmé, who lived nearby. Rimbaud and Verlaine. Marcel Schwob, the translator of Defoe, De Quincey, and Robert Louis Stevenson, and Baudelaire, who translated Edgar Allan Poe*)⁴⁵, and the plaque informs passers-by that Daniel Defoe stayed in this house while writing *Robinson Crusoe*. Such devices enable Robinson (and the narrator) to engage in a conversation with places and people, to re-search and re-view the 'local history' of a fragment of the city.

And it is this very fragmentation that makes London 'absent.' It is created not only by the lack of a physical centre, but also implied through the film structure. Visually, *London* amounts to a series of postcards, often close-ups rather than panoramas, offering images of mostly unfamiliar places. *What began as a search for individual buildings gradually widened to include all sorts of details of everyday surroundings – odd ruined shopfronts, roofscapes, scaffolding, the spaces of the London underground, and so on – explains Keiller.*⁴⁶ Although the locations of these buildings, parks or streets are provided in the narration, the final result generates a distancing feeling of dislocation and anonymity. Even such well-known locations as Piccadilly Circus or Trafalgar Square look and feel alien, thus strengthening London's 'absence' even further.

In this way a readymade film set (the city, London) becomes cinematically transformed into a kind of imaginary, mental space, reconfigured and restructured in accordance with the intention of the urban walker. In "Architectural Cinematography," Keiller explains that one of the ideas behind filming *London* was to reconstruct the experience of the world, and by doing so, get out of this world into another. Quoting Henri Lefebvre, Keiller refers to it as 'the preconditions of another life'⁴⁷ and goes on to explain that this precondition would be *to endow with a poetic value that which does not possess it, to wilfully restrict the field of vision so as to intensify expression ...*⁴⁸ The series of static images has a hypnotic power, presenting objects and places endowed with a kind of poetic aura. In consequence, everything becomes surreal, otherworldly, almost magical.

This is Keiller's practical application of Raoul Vaneigem's statement from *The Revolution of Everyday Life: I'm struck by everything and, though not everything strikes me in the same way, I am always struck by the same basic contradiction: although I can always see how beautiful anything could be if only I could change it, in practically every case there is nothing I can really do. Everything is changed into something else in my imagination, then the dead weight of things changes it back into what it was in the first place. A bridge between imagination and reality must be built.*⁴⁹

London becomes an attempt at building such a bridge, and this is achieved through its two level narrative. Keiller uses a narrative technique almost directly lifted from *The Arcade Project*. All the references to places, events or individuals create a Benjamin-esque 'literary montage'. *London* 'reads' well in the sense that

it might work as a self-standing literary piece creating a *very strong sense of the city-as-palimpsest, a city that is both 'geological' and composed of many historical layers, as well as the textual city, a city composed of layers of text.*⁵⁰ This, in turn, is reflected in the way Keiller assembles and structures the visual narration. The words of the narrator, by his constant referencing to particular places, addresses or individuals, produce a sense of credibility and thus familiarity which is brought into question by the images – seemingly functioning as direct illustrations of the narration. The effect is achieved through the stillness of shots, taken with a dispassionate and distancing ‘look’ of the camera. The result is a kind of friction, a clash of the real and unreal, familiar and unfamiliar, present and imaginary. The imagined and the real are there at the same time.

In this way *London* (the film) builds a bridge to London (the city). The former becomes an imaginary entity filtered through the camera images and the words of the narration. The latter becomes a point of reference. Yet, in the course of the narration the former takes precedence over the latter, thus creating in the viewer’s imagination a place deprived of its referent. The real London disappears, becomes ‘absent’, leaving behind in the mind of the viewers a construct of the city. London as an apparition, as a visible invisible.

This is further reinforced by the fact that neither the narrator nor Robinson make an appearance. If the former’s presence is acknowledged at least in the form of his voice, Robinson might be as real as he is imaginary, and his existence is taken for granted. Very much like London itself, Robinson is and is not there. A figment of imagination or a phantom. Both men, like Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, in their own ways walk in the footsteps of those frequenting the streets of London decades or even centuries before. Their presence is only imaginary, as they are long dead and gone. Yet those populating the city today appear in front of the camera at a distance. Commuting. Shopping. Driving by. In passing. Anonymous. Not really there.

London, says Iain Sinclair, has become *a necropolis of fretful ghosts, a labyrinth of quotations*⁵¹ and Keiller’s film amounts to just that – a visual palimpsest telling a story of a place collapsing under the burden of its own history and the histories of its inhabitants. London, in the words of the narrator, is a *city full of interesting people most of whom, like Robinson, would prefer to be elsewhere*. Modern-day urban wanderers and psychogeographers, Robinson and the narrator, are like two ghosts traversing the metropolis in search of the hidden meaning behind it all. Exorcising the present in an attempt to reconcile it with the past, they *journey to the end of the world*.

London is a unique experience and may be viewed on a number of levels: a modern-day attempt at recording a psychogeographical experience, a contemporary dialogue with past urban walking theory and practice, a meditation on modern architecture, an expression of the concerns of a London inhabitant, and so on. But what *London* does on top of that is present the image, the idea of a ‘disappeared’ city, of the physical and mental fragmentation of the British capital, so that it virtually – in the literal and figurative sense – becomes ‘absent’.

Keiller, by offering a highly subjective version of reality, adheres to the idea that *the true mystery of the world is the visible, not the invisible...*⁵²

- ¹ *London* (1994), directed by Patrick Keiller.
- ² For an interesting insight into the Robinson Mythos see: S. Cooper, *Distant Relatives: The Robinson Mythos from Defoe to Keiller* [at] <https://situationistresearch.wordpress.com/2019/05/28/distant-relatives-robinson-from-defoe-to-keiller/> (accessed: 8.01.2019).
- ³ A 'globalised' version of city walks is included in Will Self's *Psychogeography*, London 2007.
- ⁴ P. Keiller, *The View from the Train. Cities and Other Landscapes*, London 2014, p. 83.
- ⁵ M. Coverley, *Psychogeography*, London 2018, p. 71.
- ⁶ W. Benjamin, *The Arcade Project*, trans. H. Eiland, K. McLaughlin, Harvard University Press, 2002.
- ⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 78.
- ⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 79.
- ⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 85.
- ¹⁰ *Ibidem*.
- ¹¹ I. Chtcheglov, *Formulary for a New Urbanism*, trans. K. Knabb [at] <http://www.bop-secrets.org/SI/Chtcheglov.htm> (accessed: 8.01.2019).
- ¹² *Ibidem*.
- ¹³ The text can be found at: <http://www.uncarved.org/turb/articles/whylpa.html> (accessed: 8.01.2019).
- ¹⁴ M. Coverley, op. cit., p. 39.
- ¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 43.
- ¹⁶ *Ibidem*.
- ¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 45.
- ¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 54.
- ¹⁹ I. Sinclair, *Entropy*, vol. 2, Summer 1997, quoted in M. Coverley, op. cit., p. 184.
- ²⁰ See also I. Sinclair, *The Last of London*, London 2017; I. Sinclair, *London Orbital*, London 2002; P. Wright, *A Journey through Ruins. The Last Days of London*, Oxford 2009.
- ²¹ M. Coverley, op. cit., p. 154.
- ²² Another example is Chris Petit's novel *Robinson* (1993), with the central character, a filmmaker, frequenting the streets of Soho. The list of the most prominent contemporary practitioners usually includes such names as Peter Ackroyd (concentrating on the exploration of urban zones with emotional ambience), Stewart Home (a prime mover of the London Psychogeographical Association) and Will Self (notorious for his long-distance walking incorporating train or plane journeys).
- ²³ P. Barker, *Secret City: Psychogeography and the End of London* in: *London. From Punk to Blair*, ed. J. Kerr, A. Gibson, London 2012, p. 277.
- ²⁴ P. Keiller, op. cit., p. 86.
- ²⁵ *Ibidem*.
- ²⁶ Personal communication. Oxford, September 2019.
- ²⁷ P. Keiller, *The Possibility of Life's Survival on the Planet*, Tate Publishing 2012, p. 6.
- ²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 86.
- ²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 90.
- ³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 91.
- ³¹ M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Rendall, London 1988, p. 97.
- ³² *Ibidem*, p. 93.
- ³³ *Ibidem*.
- ³⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 97.
- ³⁶ *Ibidem*.
- ³⁷ P. Keiller, *The View...* p. 79.
- ³⁸ *Ibidem*.
- ³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 77.
- ⁴⁰ For an excellent analysis of the use of sound(track) in Keiller's films see J. Hegglund, "Patrick Keiller's Ambient Narratives: Screen Ecologies of the Built Environment", *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 2013, vol. 20, pp. 274-295.
- ⁴¹ M. de Certeau, op. cit., p. 98.
- ⁴² Voice-over commentary.
- ⁴³ *Ibidem*.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.
- ⁴⁶ P. Keiller, *The View...* p. 77.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 76.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 75.
- ⁴⁹ This excerpt, translated by Christopher Gray, comes from *Leaving the 20th Century. The Incomplete Work of the Situationist International* (London 1974, p. 111). In *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, it runs as follow: *The vibrations reach me wily-nilly and, though not everything affects me with equal force, I am invariably confronted by the same paradox: no matter how easily my imagination takes possession of the facts, my wish truly to change them is almost invariably foiled. The subjective centre registers the transmutation of real into imaginary and simultaneously the return flow of the facts rejoining the uncontrollable course of things. A bridge must therefore be built between the work of the imagination and the objective world.* (R. Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, London 2012, p. 219).
- ⁵⁰ A. Kinik, "A Bridge Between Imagination and Reality Must Be Built": Film and Spatial Critique in the Work of Patrick Keiller", *Intermediaries* 2009, vol. 14, p. 113.
- ⁵¹ I. Sinclair, "London. Metropolis of Fretful Ghosts", *Sight & Sound* 1994, vol. 6, p. 13.
- ⁵² Voice-over commentary.