

Media's Reversed Provision: De-Growth of Beirut Post - 2005

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Introduction

For the past several decades, hundreds of thousands of Arabs have been staging protests and occupying streets and squares in their respective capitals and cities. The most prominent of these revolts, however, began against the occupying Syrian forces in Lebanon with the cataclysmic explosion that killed former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri in 2005. Almost contagiously, the Arab world began witnessing an unprecedented wave of civil uprisings (many of which are still ongoing), resulting in a series of separate revolutions - collectively termed as the "Arab Spring." These demonstrators, protestors, and revolutionaries have flocked en masse to overrun streets and squares in their respective capitals and cities (much to the horror of their authoritarian leaders), seeking to bring down these regimes through powerful rhetoric, and often-times violence, demanding new political systems and parties, and governments. For example, the civil uprising in Syria has plunged the country into what now appears to be a long and bloody civil war.

The media, especially through television, is playing an important and essential role in covering this revolutionary wave. As many would agree, television is an effective tool, which communicates information and opinions. In 1987, John Fiske wrote that the media is the world's new hegemony, which is articulating our culture.¹ A few years later, Jean Baudrillard wrote that the media is not only articulating our knowledge, it is effectively building illusions, which we are beginning to accept as our reality.

"We are hostages of media intoxication," Baudrillard wrote, "we are already all strategic hostages in

situ, our site is the screen on which we are virtually bombarded day by day, even while serving as exchange value,"² he continued. In such consensus, our wars are dead³ and we are stagnant. All recent acclaimed wars did not happen, and will not happen.⁴ But how far this can be true to revolutions? Are revolutions also dead events? Are the Arab uprising stagnant revolutions where revolutionists and protestors did not actually flow in the streets of the cities? Are they rather "hostages of media?"

To look closely at the issue, one can start by admitting that media has the power to either strengthen or weaken the legitimacy of these revolutions. In some instances, the media chooses to highlight and inflate the number of revolutionaries or demonstrators, and in other instances, decides to understate the numbers. My intention, however, is not to explicitly look at how the media chooses to broadcast these revolutions to their viewers, rather, my focus is on recognizing the space of flow of these masses and how perhaps this actuality is taken hostage by the media. Accordingly, I question whether the media's broadcasting techniques can magnify or understate an urban space. If this hypothesis holds water, then, in the case of the Arab world, how are the public spaces of a city ultimately recognized or possibly even redefined. And are significances such as those of the history of public areas part of such recognition and redefinition?

In order to study changes in a city's recognition and spatial definition and formation, I will argue that protestors exist and experience flow in two spaces: one is in the real space of the city, and the other is

¹ Fiske, 1987.

² Baudrillard, 1991, 25.

⁴ Ibid, 24.

³ Ibid, 24

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in the hyper-real space of the media. The experience is a procession between the real and tangible dimensions of the city and the intangible non-dimensional image broadcast on the television screen. While protestors circulate in the locality of the city's streets and squares, they circulate within the globality of the image. While their bodies move in the space of the city, they, and the city itself, are a stagnant and frozen mass and space—a simple moving and depthless image.

The objective of this work is to theoretically propose possible discourses that can outline a reconsideration of the media's effect on the space of flow. By reviewing the network coverage material of the demonstrations in Beirut in 2005, I will suggest a dual reading of the axis of flow of the masses: the first reading relates to the actual physical premises of the city of Beirut, and the second relates to hyper-real premises of television.

This work will not attempt to present any empirical studies to support its argument even though such references would be essential in verifying the possibility of the duality of space realities. Instead, the work will proposition theoretical terms for interpreting how the media reconfigures real urban spaces. Three different proposition/scenarios are presented as follows:

The first will be concerned with the embodiment of the mass in the space of the city, believing that, and due to the media's presence, there is a fragmented interrelation between both (i.e. between the local and global, discrete individual and defined space, and body and context). This will be mainly referred to the Space Syntax Theory, as postulated by Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson (*The Social Logic of Space*).⁵ In their argument, Hillier and Hanson suggest that the definition of space is set by a dichotomy: the genotype and the phenotype (one is the underlying mental principle of the occupation of space; the other is the actual occupation). The discussion here will focus on the double flow experience as a fragmentation of this dichotomy.

The second scenario will suggest that the double flow presents a duality in the movement and trajectory of the protestors' flow: whereby, in one instance, the trajectory of the mass is observed in motion, and in another, it is seen as a stagnate projectile. The mass, hence, moves in between what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, call striated space and smooth space.⁶ In the striated space, trajectories are dimensional and can be measured, elsewhere the smooth space trajec-

tories have no dimensions and consequently the flow is stagnant.

The third, and final, scenario of our subject will attempt to draw on a techno-political approach. The argument will turn to Jean Baudrillard's provisions on the media's power and capabilities to reshape realities and reverse forms. Accordingly, everything portrayed—the city, the mass—actually becomes material that can be retreated and reversed into ground zero, flat image, no-time, and no-space entity and being. I will conclude that this conjecture is particularly significant to Beirut. The retreat of Beirut to ground zero is a de-conciliation of the city. Precisely, it is a mystification of the area in which the demonstrations are taking place: a retreat of the memory of the place—or what was known as the demarcation lines during the civil war.

Based on the scenarios outlined above, I will conclude that these fragmentations, stagnations, and re-treatment are modes of revolutions against the city itself. The demonstrators' rebellion is not only political. Rather it is also spatial. As they circuit and flow in the double realities of the city (the physical reality and the representation), they remove the city from linear logic (i.e. the logic by which things progress and grow in space and time). Accordingly, the Arab city is overwhelmed by yet another logic: a reversed logic—reversed to its linearity and growth. I, nevertheless, believe that this reversed logic is for the benefit of the city.

Virtual Circuits

The duality of procession in the city is a duality of proceeding between the city's profane being and its sacred being (reality/illusion). The task is then to maintain flow in actual spaces while articulating a mental flow along sacred axes. The procession, hence, seeks destinies that are not articulated by the city but by the secrecy of the procession ritual. New depths in both nature and form are then distinctly created from those of the city. The measurability of the space (dimensions), the temporality of the movement, and the intension of the flow are reset, in such duality, into other criteria.

One essential aspect, which shapes these processions, has to do with the attained destiny. The sacred destiny can be a mythical/religious place whence the mass of procession flow in axes or circuits redefining the city's space forms and reconfiguring it in order to meet with the sacred ritual paths. The city of Banaras, for example, is an ancient Indian metropolitan, which is built on the banks of the river Ganges, according to Mahesh Senagala in *Circuits, Death and Sacred Fic-*

⁵ Hillier, Hanson, 1983, 33.

⁶ Deleuze, Guattari, 1987, 528.

tion: *The City of Banaras*. The river divides the city into two parts. The first part is the real city, and the second part is the mythological sacred city where pilgrims go "to die-die happily."⁷ Pilgrims, hence, flow between the real city and the virtual one in circuits: "The city is shaped like an onion: circuits within circuits, leading to the center where the great temple of Lord Shiva resides. The form of the city is created, recreated and reasserted as people trace the circuits in the footsteps of their elders."⁸ Senagala adds:

The city is defined by neither the fort walls nor the boundaries, but by the *circuits of sacred circum-ambulation*. Instead of a map, these circuits around the city and its countless temples form a mandala in the minds of the devoted pilgrims, as they follow the routes chanting and reciting the myths and stories of the places that they come across. In this way, the pilgrims meditate the city and establish a correspondence between the city of the mind and the city of the material world. Ultimately, what people carry with them is the city of the mind, not the material city.⁹

Banaras' spaces are re-defined constantly by the routes of the ritual and not by the streets of the city. The city experiences constant reconfiguration through stories, mental maps, and recitations of those who cross the actual being of Banaras over the river into the mythological land of the city. Spaces, hence, become the spaces of the pilgrimage, the destiny (death), and not of the real city. Consequently, the metric city is erased, and the dimensions of the city are set into the mythical city whose dimension, time, and space belong to that of the gods.

People flow into distinct cities and into distinct geographies, temporalities, and localities. During this flow, the masses, like the pilgrims of Banaras, proceed from the realities of the cities to the mythological destiny, shuffling between real dimensions with illusionary ones. Yet with the world increasingly embracing the digital/electronic age, the mythological destiny is in turn becoming more closely related to media/electronics. For instance, due to the communications revolution, many have argued how our perceptions and experiences of architectural spaces and urban spaces are becoming less metric. Accordingly, our itineraries and journeys into the city proceed along paths and through points that do not link realistic spaces and time. For Holger Schnädelbach et al., in *Mixed Reality Architec-*

ture: A Dynamic Architectural Topology, technology, in general, and telecommunication, in particular, have de-set the interactions and transportations of people into new space limits and speeds:

Telecommunication technologies allow certain activities to be pushed out to the periphery... The new architectural form enabled by communication but also rapid transportation technologies then affords near instant access to non adjacent parts and, as Virilio points out, the distinction between near and far becomes irrelevant here: the spaces 'travelled across' are lost and become invisible (Virilio, 1997); social interaction become effectively de-spatialised. This can result in the reduction of chance encounters, which form an essential part of the economic function of physical architecture (Hillier and Penn, 1992) and of its capacity to foster innovation (Penn, Desyllas et al. 1999). In this sense, although new technologies have had an effect of a compression of space, there appears to be a concomitant elimination of chance interactions and their unpredictable outcomes.¹⁰

Arab cities illustrate a similar situation of the "compressions of space." As the flow of mass moves into the metric space of the city, defining its depth through walking, telecommunication, and covering the event "live", it is hyper-realizing these spaces and depths, and projecting the axis of procession into a hyper-axis. I believe that the essential point here is that the mass of protestors are aware that they are ritualizing for the media coverage. They journey in fragmented spaces in order to reach their destiny, which is being covered by the media. They draw mental maps of how to move along streets, stagnant parts, diminish others, and retreat some. They aim at an ultimate destiny: their image-or to become hostages of the media.

My purpose, at this point, is to theoretically trace how spaces can be hyper-realized and ritualized for the sake of the media's image. By viewing some extracts of the live coverage of demonstrations that took place after the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri, I will suggest how the space of the flow of protestors has been captivated into the depthlessness of the image. They, along with the media, deprived the city from its locality/body, linearity/progression, and power/politics. I propose to show that in Beirut, the mass aimed to pass through the actual locations that retain memories of the civil war. They chose Beirut as the image-a city with a fragmented and reversed history.

⁷ Senagala, 1999.

⁹ Senagal, 1999.

⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰ Schnädelbach et al., 2007.

Duality of Streets

On February 14, 2005, former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri was assassinated. Lebanon, at that time, was still in the process of recovering from a devastating civil war that had ended 15 years earlier. The assassination of such a prominent and respected figure sparked fury across the country. Although Lebanon was still susceptible to political struggles and instabilities, members of various political parties took to the streets in protest. Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese traveled from across the country to meet at the main squares of Beirut (mainly Riad el-Solh Square on March 8 and Martyrs' Square on March 14). Demonstrators occupied all the streets and roads leading to the heart of Beirut. A series of similar demonstrations followed over the next several months and years, transforming the main squares and arteries of Beirut into spaces for protestation.

The mass of protestors comprises of individuals. Each is a discrete individual who left home and locality to join other individuals in protest. The mass is formed by an accumulation of small groups of individuals who infiltrated the streets of Beirut. This mass of pedestrians moved as a homogeneous body to finally fill the targeted square where they expressed a political coalition by collectively occupying spaces in Beirut.

Hillier and Hanson believe that the accumulation of the individual into a coherent body doubles the existence of the individual: “[d]iscrete systems, composed of nothing but mobile individuals, can quite easily form themselves into global systems whose existence as objective realities need to be doubled.”¹¹ This global system is what the media has established (as audience). Consequently, and as protestors try to address their other double existence, they flow for the camera: they walk in metric streets and, at the same time, for the camera frames.

Moreover, the re-allocation of the mobile individuals into the global system is in reality a compromise of the continuity and depth of their movement. These are fragmented by the snapshots and distinct frames of the camera (the global system tool), which move from one street to another and from one square to another, transporting individuals into other dimensions. Their locality and sense of place is compromised for the sake of the far-reaching TV image, the global network.

Stephen Read expressed the loss and fragmentation of the reality of the city:

I have already begun to intimate how ‘networks’ of places and the ‘equipment’ they situate may distribute not just material and money bits and bytes around the globe, but also our actions and intentions *into* it. Our networks may become ‘technological’ in the way André Leroi-Gourhan has already theorized, as part of the means by which we ‘exteriorize’ our bodies and actions. We may live *through* networks as networks create the conditions and *distribute the potentials* for such living. And we may not just connect over distance through networks, we may also *situate* ourselves and the things we connect to through networks: here ‘coherency’ and the networks which enable the work we put into making things work and making fragmented things coherent, suddenly come to the fore. The question about the local we started out with – about how the local becomes fragmented – is suddenly turned around, and what is interesting and the thing to be explained is precisely how it manages to become *coherent*. We find ourselves imagining not a landscape of fragmented things, but rather a ‘suspension’ of imaginers (people who may therefore become realizers – or actors and agents) in higher-scaled connective webs that enable their non-local actions, but who exist at the same time in particular local contexts which concretely and practically facilitate their actions and give them intelligibility and *sense*.¹²

Essentially, then, the loss of sense of the real space is overlapped by a sense of belongingness to the place of the global connected network. The body is “exteriorized” from one axis to be adhered to by another axis or, more accurately, to the grid of the media’s network. The locality of the individual and mass is suspended into the locality of media. Further, what also gets suspended is the locality of space and its configuration.

Mechanism for Spatial Re-configuration

The reallocation of the body of the flowing individual from one system (that of the city) into the network of the media is a reconfiguration of the space of flow. The realization and recognition of the flow and hyperflow is actually marked by how protestors re-define the city’s space (streets and squares). The procession, in this sense, draws lines of configuration that follow mental decisions of the individuals leading to a “dialectic between mental model and spatio-temporal reality.”¹³ Yet what is the mechanism of this dialectic?

Hillier and Hanson explains that the dialectic of the

¹¹ Hillier, Hanson, 1984, 33.

¹² Read, 2007.

¹³ Hillier, Hanson, 1984, 39.

individual's mental status and the city's reality is subjected to the "different physical circumstances" as in the game "hide-and-seek." They added that the:

structure will be modified to a greater or lesser extent in different physical circumstances, but always within limits which can themselves be specified. There is, in effect, a *genotype* to the game of hide-and-seek, one whose presence can always be described as the underlying organizing principle of the *phenotype* of the game, that is, the actual realization of the game in the different physical milieu.¹⁴

Hence, what underlies realistic occupation of a space (phenotype), other than the realistic formation of a space, is a mental principle (genotype), which guide the flow and movement of the individual.

Yet in some instances, the mechanism of genotype-phenotype works in an inverted way. In such instances, the realistic configuration of a space and the way individuals flow inflict and transmit information, which guide the mental conception of the individual (genotype) to conceive the occupation and movement within a space. Hillier and Hanson wrote:

Thus in this sense also a genotype-phenotype mechanism is inverted. The consistency in human activity at the social level is not the product of a biological genotype but of an artefactual genotype: one that is retrieved as a description from reality itself which has already been constructed by the activity of man.

The protestors' activity is an activity dictated by this inverted mechanism. The phenotype or the realization of the spatial occupation mass is mental decision made by inflicted information. The biological genotype, which in principle initiates the realization of the flow, is now replaced by the artefactual genotype initiated by an outside system such as "the activity of man."¹⁵

In the case of the demonstrators, and what I am suggesting here, is that this outside system (the activity of man) is rather the global network, the media. The global network transmits information, which imposes a particular flow of the individuals in the space inverting the mechanism of the genotype-phenotype.

The meaningful implementation of such mechanism, and again if we are looking at the protestors flow, is, when the activity of those is a projection of

how media expects and draws the activity of protestors. Media expects that the flow is "massive." Media expects that the mass is coherent, one solid image, it moves like "sea waves," and it occupies the whole space-spread. The mass leaps from one point to another, cutting distances. Actually distance, which is about how close the mass is and how far away it is, is irrelevant. Since distance and media is concerned with how much the camera can zoom-in and zoom-out.

These expectations are the artefactual genotypes, the information, that are projected on the mental activity of the protestors while moving: they recognize themselves and consequently re-articulate the city's space, as a mass, their only concern is not to walk the distance but to appear in the zoom-in shot and in the zoom-out view as a "sea waves." The city and its streets and squares, hence, become captivated in the inverted mechanism of the artefactual genotype-phenotype (information and human mental activity), and in the flat "sea waves" image. In such mechanism, the mass is detached and fragmented from the reality of Beirut and the ritual leaps into the reality of TV and its depthlessness. The whole cause of Al-Hariri's assassination and Beirut are then driven by the inverted mechanism.

Discrete Spaces and Stagnant Events

The duality of the (mental) activities of the demonstrators proceeds in a duality of spaces, which are defined by such elements as points and lines. These, in turn, formulate the movement in space and the happenings of the events: points present stops, individuals, or places; elsewhere, lines stand for the trajectories of movements and their direction. Deleuze and Guattari identified two distinct spaces formulated by distinct interrelations of points, lines, trajectories and directions. These are striated space and smooth space:

In striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from point to another. In the smooth, it is the opposite: the points are subordinated to the trajectory... there are stops and trajectories in both the smooth and the striated. But in smooth space, the stop follows from the trajectory; once again, the interval takes all, the interval is substance (forming the basis for rhythmic values).

In smooth space, the line is therefore a vector, a direction and not a dimension or metric determination. It is a space constructed by local operations involving changes in direction. These changes in direction may be due to the nature of the journey itself...

¹⁴ Ibid, 38.

¹⁵ Hillier, Hanson, 1984, 39.

but it more likely to be due to the variability of the goal or point to be attained... Smooth space is filled by events or haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things.¹⁶

Deleuze and Guattari added

The smooth and the striated are distinguished first of all by an inverse relation between the point and the line (in case of the striated, the line is between two points, while in the smooth, the point is between two lines); and second, by the nature of the line (smooth-directional, open intervals; dimensional-striated, closed intervals).¹⁷

The 2005 events took place in two such spaces. The journeys of the demonstrations circuited in striated space. The trajectories of their paths were defined by metric points and directional axes. Individuals, as a mass, moved from one point of the city to another marking with their footsteps points and configuring with the trajectories (which link the points) not only the space of flow but also the event itself and the spatial actualization of the happening.

The mass has demonstrated the smooth space model as well. In an “inversed relation,” the trajectories of the events and happenings proceeded the step-by-step, point-by-point procession of the mass. What modulated and established this “inversed relation” is the global system’s (media) inverted genotype-phenotype mechanism. The infliction of the global network’s information, influencing the mental perception and re-configuring spaces, pre-defined the trajectories and lines of flow. The media draws on the overall outline and scenario: covering the event, setting the spaces and places, allocating cameras, frames, zoom-ins and -outs, interviews and instances; the whole phenomenological stage.

The mass was subordinated later to this stage setting and spatialization of the scenario. Its activity was seen then not in its natural metric flow but in fragmented spheres presenting the coverage various set scenarios. One sphere showing this street fully occupied, another projecting affiliations, coherence, consistence, persistence, strength or power. Individuals and masses flow within these spheres manifesting their power and persistence by occupying the space of the camera frame (the whole zoom-in and-out view).

The mass is like a moving still-life image, points moving within a stagnant picture frame:

There are not *only* strange voyages in the city but voyages in place...We can say of the nomads, following Toynbee’s suggestion: *they do no move*. They are nomads by dint of not moving, not migrating, of holding a smooth space that they refuse to leave, that they leave only in order to conquer and die. Voyage in place: that is the name of all intensities, even if they also develop in extension.¹⁸

The individuals, therefore, voyage in the smooth space. “[T]hey do not move” but circuit between one camera and another and in between one story and another, they are “points in-between the lines of trajectories,” events happening just for the sake of TV happening. Moreover, individuals, within the framed image and fragmented space, are instances subjected to the time conditions of media. Time, in media, is a hyper time. It is not linear and not defined by points and limits. It is not the time of striated space where one moves in intervals from point to point. The media’s time is the time of smooth space. It is the time that, as Paul Virilio believes, can be controlled, retreated, progressed, rewind.¹⁹ It has open intervals and progress in all directions. The mass, accordingly, is an entity, which is voyaging, in unlimited time intervals, in the stagnant TV image.

The smooth space city is “the place” of this voyage where its people “do not move.” But they might move and leave “in order to conquer and die.” If so, then this will mark the death of the place, the city and the cause, because these are the points that come after and for the no-moving mass so if they move the places, destinies and causes vanish. But did the mass of demonstrators moved outside the smooth space, and outside the striated one? Did they freeze in place and frame the city (of Beirut)? Left to die, but for what? Or to conquer, and again conquer what? In any case, the city is not the same city and Beirut is no longer old Beirut.

Evil ...Revolution

Perhaps Beirutis do not want it to be the same Beirut. All Beirutis really remember of the city’s recent history is the bloody civil war. Most of the demonstrations seem to take place at the former demarcation lines between East and West Beirut. These demarcation lines are located mostly around the wider vicinity of Downtown Beirut, namely, Martyr’s Square and Riad al-Solh Square. These are the exact areas were the world witnessed the post-2005 demonstrations, and where only a few decades earlier, the warring factions

¹⁶ Deleuze, Guattari, 1987, 528.

¹⁷ Ibid, 530.

¹⁸ Deleuze, Guattari, 1987, 532.

¹⁹ Virilio, 2000, 2.

spilled blood during the civil war. When the civil war ended, following the Taif Agreement, or the Document of National Accord, which was signed by the warring factions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1989, the downtown district and its neighboring areas witnessed a wave of reconstruction, revitalization, and rehabilitation. Solidere, a Lebanese company, became the main player in the development and reconstruction of Beirut city, transforming the once devastated area into a new Beirut: the Beirut of the future.²⁰

The downtown area is actually a compilation and layering of memories: post-civil war Beirut (known in its heyday as the Switzerland of the East), the city of civil war (death and destruction), post-1990 (resurrection. Beirut recaptures its crown and former glory, international recognition, and a revived interest in downtown Beirut), and then in 2005, a Beirut in a new wave or turmoil (assassination of Al-Hariri, political uprising,). It is through and across these memories and layers of prosperity, war defeat, destruction, and revolution that the mass of protestors flow. The mass does not only flow to construct a stagnant event and an impressive TV image, doubling existence, but also flow to do evil; defeat the city and its memories and history. They flow to reverse time and the form of Beirut.

They do evil to defeat reality and its objective: "Evil has no objective reality." They do evil to demystify violence and celebrate "reversibility of forms," as Baudrillard cut it in *The Intelligence of Evil: Or the Lucidity Pact*:

The evil you can will, the evil you can do and which, most of the time, merges with violence, suffering and death, has nothing to do with this reversible form of evil. We might even say that those who deliberately practice evil certainly has no insight into it, since their act supposes the intentionality of a subject, whereas this reversibility of evil is the reversibility of a form.²¹

With the flow of demonstrators into the linear metric city and non-linear fragmented stagnant city, they dismantle space, time, memories, and form because the hyper-reality of the media cannot claim any history. The slit, capture, and discrimination of the camera cuts out any hint of history from the frame. The layering of Beirut's revolution is flattened into the one layer on the screen. Old memories are taken as "hostages of the media."

History is being intoxicated and possibly reedited to

fit within the context of the media's scenario. The protestors, however, sense this editing process. They willingly choose to pursue their political attestations, they also willingly choose, by accepting to be an image, to fragment history, reverse the city, and bury any reminiscence of form of the city. The route the protestors take, hence, has an evil spirit and its destiny is not to riot, but to spiral the city downward into ground zero.

Conclusion

Revolutions are circuits and projectiles that proceed in dual reversed circumstances. In real circumstances (metric cities, real people) are powerless because their will is the will of the media, and their flow is limited by the metric and time intervals of the city. In the un-real circumstances, revolutions are powerful as they speak the language of the evil global network and travel in the limitless flat realm of the image.

Significantly, Beirut, as in other cities of the Arab world, presents substantial material of how the media created another reality of the city. The intensity of the events and protestors on the streets of the Arab world provided concrete models of the changing realities, perceptions, and experiences of their cities.

Arab cities further provide a model of cities under siege by their own populations. At one point, I suggested that the uprisings are an attempt to reverse the logic of the city and deprive it from any subjectivity and objectivity (space depth, political causes). It's, therefore, an evil revolution bringing the city to its end or... death.

Yet, I believe that the reversibility is the new spirit, which is capable of setting the city into another inverted act and, consequently, returning it to its reality:

For it is not possible for any act whatever or any kind of talk not to have two sides to it; not to have a reverse side, and hence a dual existence. And this contrary to any finality or objective determination.²²

As Baudrillard wrote.

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²⁰ Makdisi, 1997.

²¹ Ibid.

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