The Limits of Domestic Spatiality in the Information Age – A Secondary Publication

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Abstract: The limits of spatiality have blurred in the information age; a phenomenon that can be observed through the socio-spatial implications of Internet use in the domestic sphere. How and why are the use and organization of space-time around the Internet shaping a new domestic spatiality that intertwines the digital space with the production of social space through the practice of habits, presence, and interaction of individuals? What are the repercussions of the superimposition of digital space on human existence? The units of analysis were integrated through the sum of people and middle-class housing in the face of the digitalization process in the city of San Luis Potosi, Mexico. The questionnaire consisted of 35 questions designed from the Likert scale under the thematic order of presence, interaction, and habituality. The data were analyzed using SPSS software. This research contributes to explaining the current period in the history of inhabitable space, dominated by the simultaneous interrelationships between individuals, digital space, and architecture, which result in the detachment and devaluation of physical domestic space, while also highlighting the lack of control and regulation of individuals over the Internet.

Keywords: Graffiti; Urban image; Legislation; Regulations; South America

1. Introduction

The transformations of domestic spatiality are manifested through the new forms of spatial production characteristic of the 21st century, as a result of the way we perceive, think, and act within the space-time of the digitized home. Spatiality is a manifestation within the process of cultural configuration and is constantly redefined due to the different ways in which it is the various ways in which space-time is used, organized, and given meaning. Although human thinking and acting, according to Clifford Geertz, are produced as a public act and are only secondarily considered as an intimate matter and private matter [1], the Internet confuses this order and leads us to dwell on the margins of extinction of physical space, rapidly affecting spatial practices by abruptly incorporating itself into the intimate sphere of the home, thanks to its capacity to accommodate and integrate into all human activities.

The domestication of the internet involves integrating digital space into the household. This creates a new

space, originating from technology and science, that parallels the three dimensions of involvement in everyday life as proposed by Roger Silverstone for television: cultural transformation, communication system, and reality definition [2]. Within this new culture, it is defined as a large information system, including humans and their activities [3]. Thus, some of the main changes brought about at the domestic scale by this phenomenon are the alteration of human presence through the fragmentation of attention, the re-signification of space-time, the lack of control over the force of habituality exerted by the digital space, and the modification in the way people and objects interact in the home.

This is due to the fact that space-time is currently understood as a commodity and hides the social relations within its production scheme. In particular, it "conceals the contradiction of the coexistence of homogenization and spatial fragmentation, as well as the tendency to its totalization and atomization simultaneously" [4]. Here it is proposed that new domestic spatialities are now produced simultaneously and immediately through a process of fragmentation of private and public dimensions at both local and global scales. This redefines people's daily lives, distances, and chronological sequence of traditional daily activities, which are on the brink of disappearing. Thus, spatial production appears in a schizophrenic manner, in the sense that it alters the awareness of reality, and displaces people's orientation and attention in space-time due to the condition of simultaneity and the illusion of ubiquity. This phenomenon generates a new conception of space and a hybrid way of inhabiting the house, akin to wandering among fragments of labyrinths in a state of permanent wakefulness between physical and digital space, diminishing the value and importance of physical space.

Within this context, living in the information age is directed more towards the consumption of data, goods, and services; more toward superficial communication than to the construction of face-to-face personal social relationships and to the care of what constitutes the being of individuals – the presence and interaction of people in the home.

The home, as a space meant to accommodate the relationships and social practices that define spatial production in everyday life, seems to be disappearing, replaced by the digital space that concentrates activities unrelated to the domestic sphere, compressing and exposing it. This new layer of social space has become intertwined with established spatial and behavioral patterns in 20th-century spatiality. This leads to questioning whether contemporary everyday life lacks the stability provided by rituals and customs, which are forms of knowledge belonging to the home [5]. Through rituals, things and time-space are neither consumed nor spent, but used [6]. In this way, the digital space is becoming the universal vehicle through which the understanding of the globalized world is mediated, dividing as much as uniting, and also in how people understand and relate to it [7]. Therefore, it is essential to explain from architecture the implications of the overlap of the digital space in the space-time of the home through changes and continuities in habits, patterns of behavior, forms of communication, distance between people, time spent online, and level of internet dependence; as well as through changes in the meanings attributed to places by new ways of living together and the new activities incorporated into the home as a result of its digitalization.

2. Habituality, interaction, and presence

To address spatiality in the information age, in which there is a transition from a heavy industry-based economy to a service-oriented economy with the needs of the service-oriented economy with the needs of the consumer at the center, domestic spatiality is explained through a theoretical model of three main categories that account for how space-time is used and organized: habitualness, interaction, and presence [8]. These three realities shape the different spatialities and domesticate space-time through the daily uses it is given; uses that are deeply

and constantly influenced by emerging and dominant communication systems. Specifically, the way we think, abstract, and communicate meanings within the social structure of the family is an act inscribed in the act of inhabiting that is manifested through architecture [9]. Firstly, habitualness enables the modification of people's material existence through transformations arising in representational spaces due to the intensive use of the internet. Thus, the recurrence of practices becomes a habit in the process of configuring spatiality [5]. Habits shape different ways of life and are also present manifestations of the spatiotemporal mutations originated by the technological and social conditions of a given period. The use of space takes on its temporal dimension through habituality, which, in turn, redistributes and diversifies people's actions and habits within the process of assimilation and resistance initiated, in this case, by the emergence of a new communication system, the internet. The greater the influence of habituality on daily life, the lower the degree of awareness of subjects about the details of existence, which are veiled by routine activity. Thus, habituality is defined as a force that lies precisely in the invisibility, familiarity, conditioning, and power exercised by the instituting society. It is a power that is practiced through space-time and resorts to the family as an institution for its production and reproduction.

Secondly, interaction implies corporeality, contiguity, and distance between people and the domestic object system of objects; it integrates emotions and feelings, gives rise to the tensions and conflicts generated by the domestication of the internet, as well as the contradictions between proximity and isolation caused by the overlapping of digital space in the home. Human interaction involves dialogue, giving voice to the other and simultaneously constructing a self; it brings together and disposes subjects for the production of space through action, intersubjectivity, and otherness. The active subject appropriates space-time and inhabits it; they do so alongside others, with others. In this way, dialogue becomes the vehicle that activates and animates the presence of interaction, composed of polysemic gazes and voices; gazes that either facilitate or avoid dialogue, filling space-time with silence or emptying it. Interaction carries meanings of existence through corporeality, which is the quality of being that allows access to material and symbolic experiences with others.

For both Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Alfred Schütz, the body represents a means of communication and relationship with the world in which language is essential; because, thanks to corporeality, the internal and external worlds are organized [10]. For Niklas Luhmann, the structural coupling between consciousness and communication is embodied through language, which has developed acoustic forms; and in the case of writing, optical forms that draw attention to consciousness and at the same time convey communication [11]. For Henri Lefebvre, language is constructed from the immediate: the body, sensation, impulses and practical activities, memory, and spontaneous relations [12].

Martin Heidegger asserts that the exhortation of the essence of a thing comes to us from language, on the assumption that we pay attention to its essence [13]. Given these conditions, the domestic spatiality is constructed intersubjectively to understand and interact with the other through the body and language, within a process of distancing/un-alienating, embodying consciousness in space-time. Thus, the importance of the body itself is not that of an object of the world, but as a means of our communication with it through architecture.

Thirdly, presence is characterized by something being present in time and space, ready to enable and provide room for action. In this sense, presence grants individuals a propensity associated with the act of creation through poiesis [13]. The presence of ourselves to ourselves is consciousness, and our body is embodied consciousness that opens to the world creating an inseparable unity in space and time [14]. This immediacy is not symbolic like representations, which easily enter the internet as a dominant communication system. This means that the study of presence, as part of the process of configuring spatiality, plays a fundamental role in explaining how actions unfold in the presence of individuals. This means that the study of presence, as part of

the process of configuring spatiality, plays a fundamental role in explaining how actions unfold in the presence of individuals. Presence predisposes people to the acts of daily life that unfold as a mode of temporality and constitute the original sense of being, of being-there [13]. Presence is in itself the vehicle for communicating through corporeality; it allows interaction in space through the temporality exercised by habituality. Beyond this, presence, from its physical dimension, uses the body as an instrument to perform acts of everyday life in the perceived space, in architecture; and from its symbolic dimension, presence resorts to the imagination to operate from the lived space and deepen the search for new possibilities of spatial reality. From this perspective, presence allows for the appropriation of space-time and "turns space into places by adapting them, using them, transforming them, and pouring on and into them the affectivity and imagination of the inhabitant, giving them their playful and symbolic dimension" [4]. This is how being present in the home evokes existence, which, through the use of domestic space-time, integrates habituality, interaction, and presence. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to reflect on the utilization and arrangement of space-time in contemporary times and highlight the impact it is exerting on the bond between individuals and their living environments.

3. Methodology

The approach strategy to the studied reality was defined as non-experimental conclusive. The objective was to find links and associations between the categories from which the phenomenon is approached, understood as a correlational/causal process. For the study of changes and continuities in this process, it was necessary to interrelate the previously exposed categories: habitualness, interaction, and presence, to obtain the necessary information to explain the transformations of the domestic space. For operationalization purposes, the home was integrated as the unit of analysis by summing up the individuals and middle-class households in the city of San Luis Potosí, Mexico, undergoing digitalization. On one hand, the middle class is the social stratum that, besides having the purchasing power to hire internet service and possess various personal digital devices, plays a determinant role in shaping society. On the other hand, their homes are architectural objects that fulfill a determined architectural program that establishes, from the physical space, a series of possible preconceived relationships, according to the type and number of people using the different spaces within it. In this study, the architectural program, resolved in constructions of 145–225 m^2, consisted of 3–4 bedrooms, 2 ½ bathrooms, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, a TV room, a service room, a service patio, a garden, and a garage for 1–2 automobiles.

The study encompassed all households in the city of San Luis Potosí that met these selection criteria and also had internet service. the population was defined by selecting 42 Basic Geo-Statistical Areas (AGEBs), primarily because the largest concentration of internet-connected households is situated to the west of San Luis Potosí. This area predominantly consists of medium to medium-high-density residential zones, catering to middle-class households on lots ranging from 144 m^2 to 249.99 m^2, totaling six thousand one hundred eighty households. The sample size was determined by considering the various stages of the household life cycle and its 11 different configurations [15], as well as the four housing typologies specified in the Building Regulations of San Luis Potosí Municipality, Mexico. Addresses were randomly selected for the administration of the survey instruments.

The questionnaire consisted of a total of 35 questions and was divided into three sections. Each contained a series of questions that represented the sequence of the interview under the thematic order of presence, interaction, and habituality. The interview began with four open-ended questions, followed by 24 questions designed on a Likert scale, and concluded with seven open-ended questions. This instrument sought to narrate

the everyday life of the families from the individual and collective, through the perception of their daily life, interaction, and presence in the domestic environment. The information obtained was processed and analyzed using SPSS software. The objective was to understand how people produce their space in the information age and the value they place on physical and digital spaces. Therefore, it was possible to reveal, from the subjects' point of view, the current daily life, by comparing different moments of the presence of digital space in the home.

4. Results

4.1. A new domestic space

The home is a place of learning, a practical space in constant movement for social production and reproduction. According to the findings, domestic spatiality in the information age generates the idea of home generated by the digitalization of the habits, interactions, and presence of individuals. The knowledge of the world and the establishment of places occur from the coexistence between digital and physical space. People are learning to situate, interact, and orient themselves through social practices that go beyond the understanding that the individual knows the world in an isolated and static way [16]. Therefore, people give meaning and value to the relationships they establish with others and with objects through everyday practices in the digitized home.

These changes in family dynamics inevitably transform people's understanding of the domestic environment and the way they relate to the world. The members of a family, individually and collectively, constitute social structures and actively participate in their construction through their daily practices. These cannot be studied separately from the architecture and the lived space because it is there that the changes in the use of space-time of the social body. Therefore, analyzing what is happening around and within us during this period allowed us to discover how the digital space is imposing itself as a new area of the home. Our data showed that the four stages (adolescents, young adults, middle-aged, and elderly) agree that the internet is a new space within the home, and the size of physical spaces is no longer as important if access to the network is available.

While the domestication of digital space began in the late 20th century, wired connectivity to the internet and the speed of digital devices restricted the spaces and times in which the network could be accessed. The domestic spatiality of that time was characterized by programming and sequentiality. Similarly, interaction and the presence of people were differentiated between the private and the public, the interior and the exterior, and the home and the non-home. In the third decade of the 21st century, connectivity expands wirelessly throughout the house, allowing the overlay of the digital space through the personal portability of digital devices. Currently, the entire house is permanently connected to the digital space, enabling people to move from one space to another and engage in multiple activities simultaneously in physical and digital space, regardless of the time or place these activities take place in daily life. The results of our study showed that the level of control and regulation over the use of the internet is virtually non-existent, and disconnection from the digital space causes anxiety in people.

Digital space now contains and produces society's representations, models and lifestyles, behaviors, and global trends in what is erroneously instituted as real time.

Digital space, under this approach, is consumed and consumes us as we relate to each other in and through it. In itself, it is a new domestic space, a product of the technology introduced into the home; a place in which our new understanding of the world is articulated. Today, the family environment is surrounded and revolves around the activities that are carried out through smartphones, tablets, and computers [17]. The familiarity with which we interact with and through these portable devices prevents us from easily recognizing that beyond the Internet as a medium, what underlies is the relationship of dependence of people with the digital space and its detachment from the physical space. It has also instituted the false belief of ubiquity and timelessness.

Our data indicate that, for the time being, the conscious action of the subjects within the process of overlapping digital space and the domestication of the Internet is limited and passive. In most cases, there is a high degree of ignorance in general about the Internet and particularly about what its domestication represents for the family space-time, with its value often assessed solely based on utility and convenience. As long as the connectivity and service quality meet expectations (such as uninterrupted connection, full coverage, and high speed), there is little concern about this new household space, as long as it enables a prolonged digital presence.

Therefore, it is essential to be aware of the implications of coexisting in physical and digital spaces simultaneously. Without realizing that we are doing something significant, the everyday, the habitual, and the little things that make up our existence give meaning to architecture and form part of the history of inhabitable space. It is crucial that each moment becomes something wonderful in itself, to the point of justifying existence, life, and inhabiting [18]. Otherwise, and without the need for physical contiguity in digital space, presence, which is existence embodied in space by means of social relations governed by mysticism and imagination, is at risk [4].

5. Conclusion

This moment in the history of domestic inhabitable space is crucial because, within different family structures and life cycle stages, there are still those who remember life before the internet, alongside young people and children who do not know any other way of interacting and communicating with others inside and outside the home. This study establishes that the force of habit determines and accommodates a multiplicity of spatialities in the information age. All of them share the pressure to digitize the maximum number of human activities and detach from physical space according to the degree of control and regulation over the internet. This level of action is determined, initially, by the stage of the family life cycle and the group to which one belongs; however, it was found that the force of habit has instituted a common mode of spatiotemporal use, shared by the diversity of spatialities; a mode that involves architecture but also transcends it.

Domestic spatialities share the difficulty and lack of regulation of intensive use of digital devices from fixed spaces and schedules at home; a phenomenon originating from the domestication of 3G phones connected to the network, Wi-Fi technology, and Web 2.0. Additionally, this condition is directly related to media imposition and social pressure to incorporate digital devices into the domestic object system.

Today, the idea of the home as the center of the individual world of each person, which flows back to childhood, needs to be rethought under the conditions provided by the digital space, as home is easily lost, and reclaiming it is a tough journey [19]. his is even more relevant now, as the home, as a space of alterable centrality and relative orientation granted by people and their habitual practices, has paradoxically contracted and expanded its territoriality, modifying its socio-spatial meanings through the unregulated superposition of the digital space.

This study confirms that the current domestic spatiality is shaped by two key factors: Firstly, there's a growing separation between physical proximity within the home and the execution of daily activities, which are increasingly conducted through digital spaces. Secondly, there's a transformative ability to redefine experiences by blurring the boundaries of architecture and digitizing social practices. As a result, individuals now derive a sense of belonging more from digital spaces than from physical ones, where their events and repetitive actions unfold in the context of a global society.

Consequently, the study of spatiality in the information age is fundamental for the habitat sciences. Since, in the words of Edward T. Hall, it is a serious mistake to make as if the human being were one thing; and his house, his technology, and his language, were another [20]. It is precisely the conscious exercise of spatiality that integrates the existence of the subject through the inhabiting of space-time. Therefore, the spatiality in the

information age should be further studied to better understand what is happening and what the domestication of space represents for our society.

Disclosure statement

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