Envisioning Migration: Drawing the Infrastructure of Stapleton Road, Bristol*

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Abstract

This paper is an exploration of the different ways drawing can be practised to understand how migration shapes the infrastructure of the so-called 'British' high street. The research emerges from a cross-disciplinary study of migrant economies and spaces on Stapleton Road, a high street in a comparatively deprived and diverse part of Bristol, UK. Our primary aim is to contribute to discussions about the role of drawing as a critical visual practice in social research, highlighting methodological and substantive potentials. The second aim of our paper is to elaborate on the relationships between urban migration, urban marginalization and 'migrant infrastructure' (Hall, King and Finlay 2016), and we visualize through four drawings, how power, materiality and place constitute the infrastructure of Stapleton Road. We engage with infrastructure as a lively system of shared resources that situates migrant entrepreneurs in the city, and is configured by an array of migration processes across time and space. We suggest that drawing is an exploratory and critical visual practice, providing us tools to see socio-spatial relationships in temporal and scalar dimensions. To 'envision' migration is to encounter and re-present the varied dimensions of street life in relation to the structural production of urban migration, marginalization and diversity.

Keywords: drawing, critical visual practice, migration, marginalization, infrastructure, street, Bristol

Introduction: Why we draw

We started our research of the micro-economies on Stapleton Road in Bristol by walking the street – an architect, human geographer and sociologist – together exploring a densely packed retail strip shaped by long histories of migration to Bristol in the UK. A clear methodological question was how we could utilize our cross-disciplinary skills to comprehend the everyday inhabitation of Stapleton Road in relation to the geographies of migration across time and space. Another question, one less typically pursued in the social sciences (Wheeldon and Ahlberg 2012), was how we could experiment with drawing the street, not simply as a way of illustrating our conclusions, but as a means of encounter and discovery; a way of engaging with the diverse economic life of the street. Our starting point to walking Stapleton Road was initiated by a face-to-face survey with proprietors along the stretch of street. The survey with respective proprietors, frequently lasting no more than ten minutes, allowed us short entry to the interiors along the street. We gained a bit-by-bit insight into how the street, while composed of repetitive terrace units typical of

urban high streets across UK cities, is highly variegated in its economic and spatial dimensions. In this early process of looking and listening, the street appeared as a loose cohesion of bodies and spaces, coalescing into what we might call a collective 'urban infrastructure' or spatial system of economic and social transactions. We spoke with 77 of the 100 retailers on Stapleton Road, recording over 11 countries of origin amongst them (Hall, King, Finlay 2015). This street infrastructure therefore, while constituted in a comparatively deprived and ethnically diverse part of Bristol, is saturated with goods and practices brought from across the planet. The question of how we could explore – through drawing – the intimate and planetary dimensions of the street, arose in the early stages of our analysis.

Unlike the use of *in situ* photographs of people and places (Back 2007) or drawings elicited from research participants (Mair and Kierans 2007), our drawing of the street largely happened once away from the field and back at the desk, making our research enquiry not so much 'of' but 'through' the visual. The first challenge of our paper, therefore, is to engage with Ingold's (2011) call for a greater appreciation of drawing in anthropology, less as an instrument of representation in the first instance, and more as an exploratory method of finding out. We found that by starting with rough drawings, often by correlating one point in space to another, our vision of the street began to expand. As a highly exploratory process, drawing added a layer of enquiry rather than simply representing an additional layer of data. The images, once they emerged, frequently presented a view of socio-spatial relations that we had not anticipated. We made drawings at many scales, sometimes marking out the texture of thresholds, objects, and divisions of street interiors, as culture made manifest from the inside out. Bourdieu described this way of looking as 'the world reversed', encapsulated in his drawing of the precise habitation of the Kabyle house in Algeria (1960 [1977]). Here, Bourdieu's microcosmic drawing of the position of entrances, rooms and utensils both spatializes

the social relations of gender and religion, while connecting human bodies to the material life of surfaces and objects. We also made drawings beyond intimate dimensions, spanning across from the human to the global sphere, mapping the politics of bodies in space. Kurgan (2013) describes this in her own practice of visualization as drawing social relations 'close up at a distance'. Kurgan expands her drawing practice to trace ties between bodies, positions in space, and power, revealing in her prison admissions maps of Brooklyn, how an 'urban exostructure of prisons and jails' is ingrained in the racialized structure of the city (2013: 204). In this sense, drawing is a relational act, allowing for a careful consideration of what appears in place, as well as tracing associations between places and processes separated by distance.

Our emphasis on drawing as encounter is not detached from the understanding that drawings, as products of social research, are mediated constructions of social reality. Seeing, as Berger suggests (1972: 8), is a highly selective act; 'The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe […] To look is an act of choice. As a result of this act, what we see is brought within our reach.' By way of example, Stapleton Road was recently referred to by an article in *The Mirror* as 'the worst street in Britain' (Sunday People 2011). The journalist depicting the street clarified the fleeting modus operandi of a single Friday night visit to the street to purportedly uncover 'the shocking truth about what's really happening'. In this visit, the journalist reports to having seen 'dozens of hookers … plying their seedy trade'; 'Drug-pushers with their faces masked with scarves'; 'Gangs loitered outside a phone box'; and 'hooded yobs on street corners' (http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/forget-home-office-crime-mapping-1695400). In this instance, seeing is not separated from representation, and the process of describing the pejorative 'other' in a public sphere is a political act. Urban sociology is not immune to limited portrayals of marginalized urban environments, where prejudice, morality or romance

masks the rich and varied dimensions of life-worlds connected to the structural production of poverty, race and ethnicity. In the process of drawing our research, our concern is not how to avoid the construction of a research object, but the reduction of it through a parochial rendition of 'a' people or 'a' place (Desmond 2014; Auyero and Jensen 2015). We explore the processes of power that sort people and places in deeply hierarchical ways, and are particularly interested in how the geopolitics of migration are related to the everyday life of the street.

As architect, human geographer and sociologist, we have also explored what kind of visual production (and consumption) through which our drawings emerge. We think about the visceral look and feel of our drawings and how they might resonate with a wider public audience that can freely access our drawings on the web by the click of a mouse. We think about how much complexity an abbreviated drawing can contain to capture the short attention span of the web surfer, or of how our drawings might translate on the street or in a planning or policy department. With pieces of paper strewn across our shared worktable we talk over our own conceptions and disciplinary reference points for how we might see and draw, bringing together highly differentiated software for enumerating, geographically locating, and digitizing social life. Evans and Hall (1999) refer to the 'cultural resources' available for visual 'meaning-making practices' as a whole repertoire of visual culture. Our visual practice, tightly contained in this paper in four key research drawings, therefore intersects our own disciplinary perspectives as we see and make drawings. Our visual repertoire includes the ever-increasing range of technologies to transfer drawings from sketch to 'finished' product and the immensely wide distributional network of the web, transmitting our drawings to audiences we can only partially anticipate. As we engage in our research there are daily reminders of the prevailing discourse resonating across the UK and Europe, as to how contentious a subject migration is. We are therefore especially mind-ful of the significance of presenting our research visually, and take care to connect our drawings of the street to the much longer and wider durées of migration across time and space.

Drawing the Infrastructure of the Street
If the first challenge of the paper is to engage with drawing as a way of probing at and disrupting what we think we know from the field, the second challenge of the paper is to connect what drawing processes might reveal about the everyday manifestation of urban migration on a multi-ethnic street in Bristol. Here, we expand on the notion of the city street in comparatively deprived urban localities as 'migrant infrastructure'; as a shared urban resource for lively economic and social transactions across residents from many countries of origins (Hall, King and Finlay 2016). Our analysis of Stapleton Road is part of a multidisciplinary, comparative ESRC study on '*Super-diverse Streets: Economies and spaces of urban migration in UK Cities*' (https://lsecities.net/objects/research-projects/super-diverse-streets) that aims to explore how urban retail economies in precarious urban localities are shaped by and shape migrant transactions. The project focuses on high streets within the UK's most diverse cities by country of origin, including Birmingham, Bristol, Leicester and Manchester, and also engages with why certain kinds of diversity are produced in marginalized urban localities.

At the core of this paper is the question of how to connect the techniques of drawing to an exploration of the street as an infrastructure that both embeds and is reconfigured by migrants. Specifically, drawing allows us to engage relations of scale and time with the long duration of migration to UK cities. These migrations resonate with historic colonializations and more recent political disruptions that connect the apparently local street to global asymmetries. In the four key drawings that form the empirical core of the paper, we draw the intimate, urban and global *scales* of the street, and the *temporalities* of migrant inhabitation of the street over extended

time frames. We literally draw the connections between the diverse histories of migration and countries of origin amongst the shop proprietors, their range of retail activities and practices, and the spaces that support and are altered by their endeavours. This paper, therefore, is an exploratory essay, engaging with the use of drawings for understanding the infrastructure of the migrant street. The aim of the essay is to contribute to discussions about the role of drawings and visualization in social research, highlighting their methodological and substantive potential. Specifically, we envision how power, materiality and place constitute the 'migrant infrastructure' of the city street.

The relationships between infrastructure and diversity is central to this special issue, and at this point we would like to expand on how we engage with literatures on urban infrastructure as the active sharing of resources, as well as incorporate our recent theorization of 'migrant infrastructure' (Hall, King and Finlay 2016). Central to our approach is the underlying notion that through the embedded qualities of infrastructure, it is deployed as a political and cultural resource (Barry 2013). We contend that unlike the notion of a static pipe below the ground, infrastructure only becomes installed when it is practised as both a technical and cultural system. The process of bringing infrastructure to life is referred to by Amin (2014) as 'lively infrastructure', and Amin focuses on the capacity of marginalized groups to organize around access to infrastructure. In this sense, infrastructure is at once political and material. Through an extended ethnographic process, Bjorkman (2015) integrates these political, cultural and material practices of accessing, sharing and regulating infrastructure at neighborhood and metropolitan scales in Mumbai. 'Pipe politics', as Bjorkman shows, is an infrastructural practice that intersects the particular *locality* of a tap for multiple users in an informal settlement; the specific *dimensions* of valves and pipes that permits water to flow with or without pressure at any given time; and the *regulatory* and illicit ease with which water pipes can be truncated

and relocated. In its material configurations, infrastructure reveals both pervasive hierarchies and everyday modes of resistance.

In engaging with the relationships between infrastructure and diversity as core to this special issue, Burchardt and Höhne (2015 this volume) challenge the researcher to consider what kinds of subjectivities are produced through accessing and inhabiting infrastructure. They refer to 'the different kinds of intensity and routine', highlighting the significance between bodies, spaces and temporality. Diverse urban citizens are already spatially positioned by the specific infrastructure to which they have conditional access. These citizens also simultaneously reconfigure infrastructure through their inhabitation of it over extended periods of time. Our understanding of 'migrant infrastructure' expands through the analysis of three interrelated properties including *historic depth (power), socio-spatial texture (materiality)* and *locality (place)* (Hall, King and Finlay 2016: 6-7):

i) *Historic depth* encourages the analysis of how global systems of power and regulation endure in the formation of infrastructure. The presence of proprietors on the street are connected to the globalizing reaches of the former British Empire and its colonizing imperatives, and more recent migratory propulsions including the global financial crisis of 2008 and political re-orderings in North-East Africa and the Middle East. We explore the temporal dimension of street infrastructure through drawing the multiple flows of migrations that have arrived on Stapleton Road over a period of forty-five years, and how this shapes the entrepreneurial rhythms on the street.

ii) *Socio-spatial* texture provides the cues for why certain migrants 'land' in certain parts of the city, connecting racialized and ethnicized patterns of social ranking, to enduring spatial morphologies of marginalization. This dimension of urban analysis prompts us to recognize how the material aspects of infrastructure co-constitute social relations

Figure 1: World to Street: A survey of proprietors on Stapleton Road by country of birth (2015).

(Barry, 2013). The migrant groups that occupy this street come from different parts of the world, and are emplaced in Bristol and on Stapleton Road, through a plethora of urban sorting mechanisms that rank racialized and ethnicized bodies relative to place.

iii) *Locality* situates Stapleton Road as a street outside the city centre within a marginal but not explicitly enclaved neighborhood. The street emerges in a locality where official scrutiny of entrepreneurial practices is not particularly high, land values remain generally low, and formal regeneration efforts, where they exist, are lacklustre. Stapleton Road is located in an area as markedly poor, as suggested by a high indices of deprivation (see the Indices of Deprivation 2010). However, these varied migrants groups also operationalize the street,

their variegated practices co-producing both stable and precarious aspects of Stapleton Road.

Drawing 1 – World to Street
Our first drawing (figure 1) comprises a world map juxtaposed with the layout and units that make up Stapleton Road. From the unit of each respective proprietor that we surveyed, a line is drawn to their country of birth, demonstrating the highly global nature of this high street. The image provides a visualization of Massey's notion of a 'global sense of place', which she describes as, 'a sense of place, an understanding of "its character", which can only be constructed by linking that place to places beyond' (1991: 29). These lines drawn between a global and local sphere collectively provide an emphasis of the

variegated constitution of the so-called 'British' high street. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, England, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan are all in some way embodied on the street, as a migration of people and ideas, reconstituting the spaces of Stapleton Road. The street converges an array of diverse migratory routes over time, including those who have entered the UK through former colonial ties, asylum processes or as economic migrants. In this drawing, migratory routes are drawn in a linear fashion, but in the drawing that follows, it becomes clear that migratory routes, alongside immigration legislations, are increasingly elaborate. The emergence of 'super-diversity' conceptualised by Vertovec (2007) as a pronounced increase in the range and number of migratory routes into the UK, in combination with long-established migrations connected to histories of the former British Empire and Commonwealth, has clear resonance in this drawing.

A particular set of lines emanate from established migratory routes connected with Empire, such as Pakistan and Jamaica, but a multiplicity of lines also emanate from less established routes, such as Somalia and Sudan. These lines of multiple migrations are therefore also temporal, exposing the *historic depth* of the street. The flows emanating from the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean were initiated in the post Second World War period and are integral to the colonial histories of Britain, exhibiting how the global reach of power endures in the formation of Stapleton Road. The drawing essentially highlights the relationship between who trades on the street, and where they have come from. If drawings can reveal the spatial manifestation of power through people and place, then we must also refer to the drawing for absence: who is not there, and why? The drawing registers the notable presence of enduring ties to former colonies, while it also signifies a correlation between Stapleton Road and many countries in the so-called developing world. Absent is any register of North and South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Australia. This national topography further aligns

with a racialized topography, where the visualization provides a mapping or inference of the *socio-spatial texture* of the street. It raises questions as to why certain migrants 'land' in certain territories of the city, and helps to recognize the embedded nature of infrastructural conditions. Where infrastructure is located has significant consequences for who will access it, and under what conditions. We learn from this drawing that Stapleton Road connects racialized and ethnicized patterns of global distribution to enduring spatial morphologies of marginalization.

This first drawing of Stapleton Road, encompassing a view of 'World to Street', helps us to recognize that street infrastructure is simultaneously embedded in particular local and global geographies. Power, and the organizing principles of who 'fits' where, is inculcated in space. The geo-political texture of Stapleton Road visually combines the effects of the former British Empire, with the effects of an increasing unequal world, generating mobilities from the developing world to places like Stapleton Road. Through the drawing we are also able to see that the formation of the street in relation to migration emerges from many differing migratory journeys. This composition of drawing the space of the street in relation to the world is the first we generated from our survey data. From the drawing, many questions were raised around "Why this combination of people on this particular street?", providing cues for further lines of enquiry. In this sense, the 'World-to-Street' drawing is not unlike the process of first picking up binoculars and fiddling with the dials to see what comes into view. It gives us a tool to seek out other elements that gradually come into the frame. Our next drawing directly follows the first and provides more detail on the multiple lines of travel proprietors are required to take in order to ultimately arrive on Stapleton Road.

Drawing 2 – Multiple Journeys
In our second drawing (figure 2), rather than show solely the place of birth of respective proprietors, we chart the multiple migratory jour-

Figure 2: Multiple Journeys: A survey of proprietors on Stapleton Road and their multiple migratory routes (2015).

neys of proprietors before they reach Stapleton Road. Here, we drew lines from city to city and finally to the street, revealing the complex routes undertaken by respective proprietors. Not all proprietors articulated their extended journeys to us, but of those who did, a compelling narrative emerged of the kinds of energy and agility required in becoming multiple migrants. Their contorted journeys are captured in red zig-zag lines that cover vast distances: China-Argentina-Britain; Jamaica-Spain-Britain; Sudan-France-Holland-Britain. Following the trace of these lines, we see migration trajectories that include examples of 'twice migrants' as those who migrated to one other country before arriving in Bristol, as well as the emergence of 'thrice migrants' as those who migrated to two other countries before settling in Bristol. The image encapsulates the complex and arduous journeys and multiple relocations undertaken by proprietors on Stapleton Road. It refutes the notion of a linear migrant movement from one place to other, and emphasizes that migrants often, and perhaps increasingly, have to negotiate an array of immigration regulations, mobilities and spatialities across many national borders.

In this graphic depiction of multiple borders and mobilities, the drawing partially begins to open out the resourcefulness demanded of the contemporary migrant. The image probes at the emergence of an 'extended migration regime' comprised of the multiple inter and intra-national borders encountered by the migrant and the repertoires required to undertake extended journeys across space and time. But to tease out the nature of multiple journeys and migrant resourcefulness required us to engage further with individuals to explore the details. Here both image and voice are required to give the narrative of multiple mobilities both depth and detail. Through the narratives of proprietors, we became aware that an 'extended migration regime' and the process of settling in across numerous locations required a highly adaptable

bodily infrastructure. The changes in circumstances encountered with each border crossing often demanded of the migrant distinctive shifts in occupation and in training. At times the extended journeys produced a process of skilling, where, for example, migrants acquired proficiencies in multi-lingualism, as well as developing networks. Forty-one percent of the proprietors on Stapleton Road were competent in three languages or more, and frequently these language proficiencies extended beyond regional or national borders.

However, these multiple journeys inflict a deskilling process on the migrant, where existing or newly acquired work skills were either not recognized or where formal employment opportunities were restricted. We spoke with Caleb, a proprietor born in Somalia who moved to France and learned to be a baker. He then moved to Holland where he found it hard to set up a business due to restrictive business regulations, compelling his final move to Bristol. Caleb now runs a French bakery. While Caleb's account of his multiple journeys portrays a narrative of both restriction and resourcefulness, in other instances the extended journey results in the effective deskilling of the migrant. We spoke with Biyu, who was the only family member who spoke English and could recount their journey to Stapleton Road. Biyu described how her father, Chaoxiang, had left China to migrate to Argentina, where he had learnt to speak Spanish. He subsequently left Argentina and moved to Bristol setting up a takeaway. In Bristol, Chaoxiang no longer used Spanish as a skillset for his everyday life and livelihood, and had not yet learned to speak English. Such levels of required mobility and adaptation on the part of the migrant, demand significant levels of determination in negotiating space, language and work.

The resourcefulness involves mobilizing infrastructure, both bodily and grounded, in persistent and various ways. In the process of journeying the multiple migrant confronts an extended migratory regime as the increased density of limitations that are part of having to cross numerous

national borders over a lifetime. With each crossing skills are both acquired and made redundant by regulatory constraints, and limited access to formal employment structures. We learned from sample surveys that 50% of proprietors on Stapleton Road had some form of tertiary education, while 42% had experience of some other form of work or occupation before setting up shop. The narratives within this drawing and the complex nature of migration challenges the idea that assimilation is a process readily available to all migrant citizens, as dependent on the hard work of integration. It suggests that with the elaborate nature of internal and national border mechanisms, the process through which migrants skill up through acquiring additional languages, or upgrading occupational or educational status, does not necessarily secure stable work prospects.

Drawing 3 – Diverse Uses

In our third drawing (figure 3), we shift the scale of focus to the street level, and explore how long traders have had their respective shop units on Stapleton Road, as well as what core area of retail or service they are engaged in. Through overlaying the data of time and use, we began to unpack the variegated nature of the street infrastructure, discovering a wide range of inhabitations over time. The street is drawn as a reference point that sits at the bottom of the drawing, where each unit we surveyed is linked to a vertical or 'y' axis that extends over a forty-five-year period, from 1970 to 2015. This period captures the range from the longest to the newest proprietor on Stapelton Road. The temporal occupation of the street reads almost like the graphic of a heart beat on a display monitor, suggesting that the rhythmic life of the street is sustained by both long-established retailers, as well as very recent arrivals. We see that approximately a quarter of the proprietors have been on Stapleton Road for twenty years or more. In contrast, the density of lines at the bottom of the drawing shows that a large proportion of proprietors – 47% – have been on the street for five
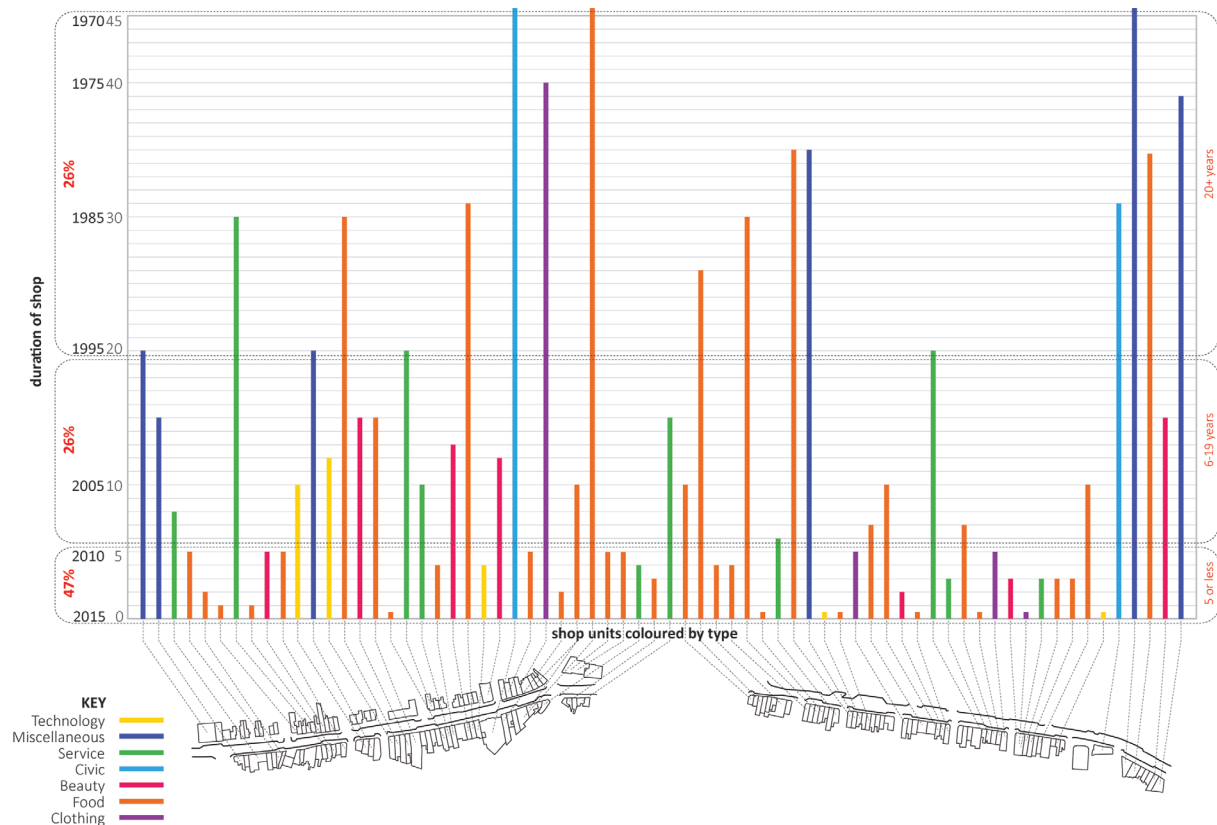
Figure 3: Diverse Uses: Rhythms of activity on Stapleton Road over time (2015).

years or less. This prompts questions as to what the connections and relationships are between long-established and recently arrived proprietors and respective retail economies, and whether the vitality of the street is reliant on having both groups present in the formation of its livelihoods.

The shops are also classified by seven types of use represented by different colours. The array of colours on the drawing demonstrates that Stapleton Road is made up of a wide array of retail activities as well as services. What is specifically apparent is the prevalence of food-related retail units, which dominate at half of all units (50%). The orange lines on the 'y' axis indicate the duration of the shop on the street and show that food is a prominent form of retail business on Stapleton Road. The selling and making of food also registers significantly on the drawing over the period from 2010 to 2015, further suggesting it is a viable entry point into the retail business for many migrants who have recently set up shop on the street. The relatively short duration of this group of food outlets on the street also reflects

their precarious nature, with businesses frequently opening for a brief period, only to close within a year. In reflecting on field notes, closure is most common in the sector of fast food outlets. Nonetheless, a significant number (23%) of food outlets had been on the street for 20 years or more, indicating that livelihoods on Stapleton Road are simultaneously stable and precarious. We also see the gradual emergence of new activities on the street, highlighted, for example, by the yellow lines that refer to new retail uses connected to technology, including mobile phone shops and internet cafes. Retail enterprises on the street both endure and fail.

It remains relevant to take a view of these retail precarities in light of limited access to capital and formal accounting procedures as well as market saturation in low entry barrier areas (Jones et al. 2015). However, the graph also suggests a more rhythmic and varied sequence of street occupation over time, revealing a 'trial-and-error urbanism' from and of the urban margins. The incremental nature of this 'migrant infrastructure'

emerges precisely because land values are relatively low and official scrutiny is lack-lustre (Hall, King and Finlay 2016: 18). In this drawing of the diverse uses along the street over time, we begin to comprehend the street as an aggregation of differentiated practices. Variegation is evident not only in the differing uses or activities along the street, but also in its rhythmic composition of who arrived on the street at what point in time.

The drawing not only underscores that the shared infrastructure is practised in a rhythmic way, but that street infrastructure itself is highly variegated, shaped by many differing uses in close proximity to each other. This aspect of variegation is analytically useful in itself, but it also allows us to consider, add to and challenge other frames for exploring migrant enterprise in the city, specifically the frame of 'ethnic minority entrepreneurialism' (see for example Aldrich and Waldinger 1990). It is not explicitly apparent that street-based trade is a cultural disposition that belongs to particular ethnic groups. Rather, self-employment in retail, particularly retail in areas of low entry land markets, is historically available to many varied migrant groups who are otherwise more likely to be excluded from formal employment sectors (Jones et al. 2015). By looking at the street as a varied infrastructure, we are

therefore encouraged to engage with and move outside of categories of analysis such as ethnicity, to consider the 'roll of micro-global networks sustained by migrants in ongoing urban transformations' (Hall 2015: 857). The particular *locality* effect of Stapleton Road means that the street is already positioned in Bristol within an area categorized with a high indices of deprivation, and amongst the most deprived 10% in England (Bristol City Council 2010). However, the process of drawing how street retail is practised suggests that infrastructure is effectively operationalized by migrants on the ground, in far more complex and variegated ways.

Drawing 4 – Interiors

Our last drawing (figure 4) brings us up close to the material dimensions of a single shop along Stapleton Road. Here we draw how a meeting space is ordered by the preferences and practices of its largely male congregation. The shop is leased by Alimah, who arrived on Stapleton Road from Darfur in Sudan, via Greece and France. Alimah currently studies electrical engineering at Coventry University, and set up the shop with his friend two months prior to our interview in August 2015. The shop is drawn in plan, revealing how the space is composed of five distinct but

Zone 1
Mobile Phone Accessory &
Internet Cafe

Zone 2
Pool Hall

Zone 3
Coffee Shop

Zone 4
Card Playing

Zone 5
Outdoor Social
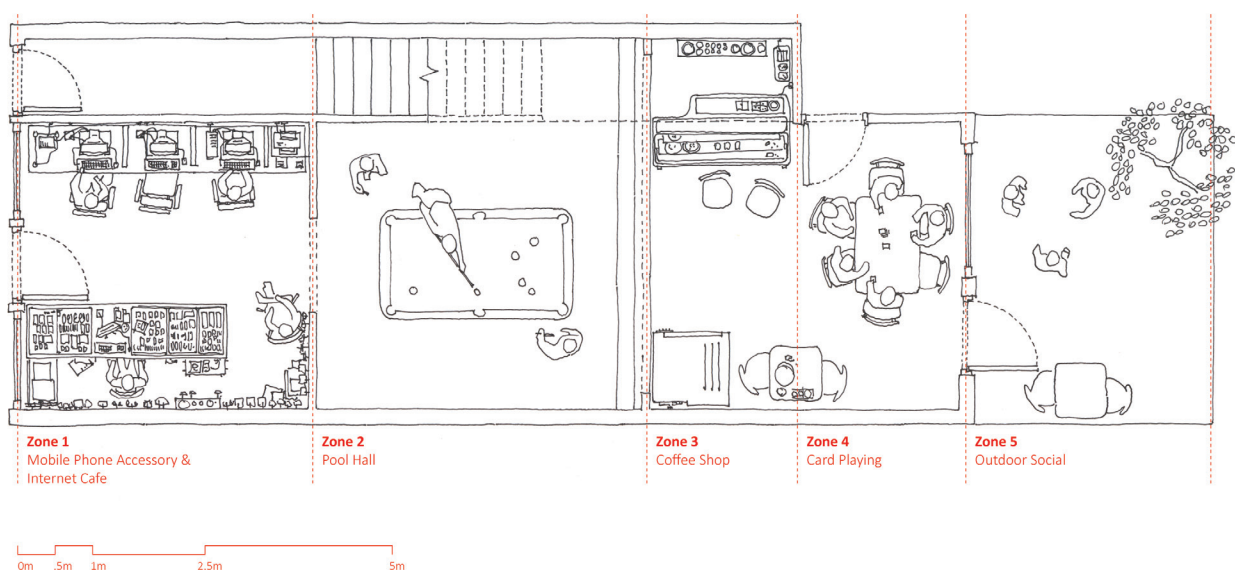
0m .5m 1m   2.5m   5m

Figure 4: Street Interior: Dimensions, divisions and texture of a shop on Stapleton Road (2015).

related social zones. The first zone, which fronts the street, comprises an internet café on one side and mobile phone accessories on the other. The row of computers with internet access – a not uncommon feature of shops along Stapleton Road – suggests a demographic of users without regular, affordable access to either a computer and/or an internet contract. Phone covers, batteries, cables, printer cartridges and mobile phone cards adorn the opposite wall and every inch of space is covered with inexpensive goods. Above the row of computer terminals, walls remain clear, painted orange and yellow, absorbing the white light from the fluorescent tubes that run the full length of the ceiling. The rafters are spray painted in a dotted orange pattern, and the distinctive aesthetics distinguish this shop from others along the street.

A dividing wall with a meter-wide opening marks a clear threshold between the first zone and the rear spaces. Like a threshold into someone's living space, the shop transforms at this point from a mercantile to a more semi-public setting. The second zone is dominated by a pool table which is placed in the centre of the room, and is activated by bodies playing and observing the game. The third zone, comprises of a coffee area with a vending machine, a couple of plastic chairs and a small table, and a food display. The shop reconfigures east African coffee-drinking street culture within the confines of the terrace house. Two men sit reclined in their chairs drinking coffee, hardly paying attention to the card game happening just behind them in the fourth zone. The fourth zone, the most removed from the street, is dominated by a single large table, and offers a semi-private setting to play cards. Last in this progressive sequence of social spaces, is an outdoor space hidden from the street and only accessible through the shop, and this is where the smokers gather. The shop itself offers a differentiated interpretation of socio-economic transactions, offering multiple business and social activities within the depth of the 60 square meters of space.

The plan as a form of drawing is useful in this instance because we can both draw and read the space as a graduated sequence of sociability. The plan is purposefully drawn as 'non-hierarchical' in the sense that a wall is given the same line thickness as a computer keyboard, or a chair. The ambition is to show from the several combined spaces, including the smallest increments, how the shop functions as a differentiated whole. Doors and windows, tables and counters, all contribute to the small clusters of situations, from playing cards to checking e-mails. We encourage the viewer to hold both the card and the structural envelope of the shop in the same gaze, as part of a composite social order. The drawing denotes one particular moment in time and space, capturing the practised and material culture particular to Stapleton Road and the people who inhabit it.

The process of drawing interiors sets out a spectrum of public life and *socio-spatial texture* that exists on the street. We suggest that the very nature of the street and the attached and still-affordable terraced units that line its edges accommodate the possibilities of designing in, and of living with, difference. The spatial skeleton or frame of Stapleton Road supports a particular kind of high-street, which in this case is about transactions that are at once economic and social (Simone 2004). The capacity for Alimah to experiment with the incremental making of his shop interior, is supported by the street infrastructure in two key ways. Primarily, the aggregation of individuals along this seemingly banal stretch of street provides a space that is shared, although much of the visible public life of the street occurs within specific networks of kin (Somali and Sudanese) and gender (men). Secondly, the materiality of the street, with its narrow-fronted shops and deep extension to the rear, arguably accommodates the alternative and creative forms of encounter and exchange that run along the depth of the unit. Transactions are differentially paced, from the commercial and highly visible space at the front of the shop, to the more obscure, semi-

private spaces at the back. These incremental experiments are also accommodated by the comparatively low land values along the street, as well as the loose regulatory frames that allow for interior alterations, provided fire and safety rules are not contravened. Drawing the life and space of street interiors is particularly useful in this context because it is the richness of urban topography and civic life that is always so hard to both quantify and qualify. Simplified representations such as the "failing British high street" or the notion of "migrant enclaves", on which policy and planning decisions can be based, fail to grasp the deep and richly textured orders of the street that exists beyond the street façade.

Conclusion: Envisioning Migration

Drawing itself is a form of critical visual practice, a way of encountering the field through seeing and marking out possible relationships and connections across histories and geographies. In the first instance, the aim of drawing the migrant infrastructure of Stapleton Road is exploratory. We make our drawings to try things out, to test a hunch, to expand or eliminate a hypothesis. We sit with our drawings on our desks and walls and discuss them together around a table. We look at them over long periods of time, to then discard them, fine-tune them, or to add a previously unrecognized layer. Drawings are core to our research process, as well as to the challenge of communicating the complexity of our research to varied audiences. As a critical visual practice, drawings not only re-present social relations, but as Weizman shows us in his project on 'forensic architecture' drawings redirect the gaze. In Weizman's (2014: 9) detailed visual scrutiny of the relationship between violence and trauma, drawing brings 'new material and aesthetic sensibility to bear upon the legal and political implications of state violence'. In our paper, 'envisioning migration' serves to redirect the intensely focused view of the 'crisis of migration' as constituted at the national border, to the long-standing histories, varied journeys and interiors made across and within mobile and unequal societies.

In his extraordinary book on *Envisioning Information* (1990: 9) Edward Tufte evokes the possibilities of drawing as integral to an imaginative and measured research process:

'The world is complex, dynamic, multidimensional; the paper is static, flat. How are we to represent the rich visual world of experience and measurement on mere flatland? […] To envision information, is to work at the intersections of image, word, number, art'.

The inspiration for making all four of the drawings in this paper comes primarily from envisioning the street. While the first mark on the paper inevitably *locates* one thing or one aspect in space, the next mark is always *relational*; it positions one aspect relative to another. If drawing is both spatial and relational, then it is never simply technical, or innocent of how the drawing-maker sees and sorts the world (Berger 1972, Evans and Hall 1999). Our processes of drawing described in this paper begins by walking, the kind of walking that is intentional and partly programmed. We stop in at each unit on the street, and wait for the proprietor's agreement as to whether we may proceed with our questions. We arrive with a set of questions, each preselected in advance to allow us to learn about migration in relation to trade, origin, skill and the street. Although the survey is about the street, we refer to our disciplines and our own views of the world to shape the survey. As we go on, we refine our surveys in response to the answers and questions from the field. In our process of walking and looking, we are less the abandoned *flaneur* or the psychogeographer, and more the dutiful surveyor, our access limited or expanded by what we ask, who responds to us, and how.

Envisioning the street and its inhabitation by migrant proprietors, is, as we have discovered, to work at the intersections of power, materiality and place (see also Hall 2010). In particular, what we have learnt by making the four drawings that are highlighted in this paper, is that Stapleton Road is a lively system of infrastructure that both situates migrant entrepreneurs in the city, and is actively reconfigured by an array of border

crossings from across the planet. The diversity of migrant proprietors on the street manifests with respect to a number of important regulatory, spatial and social processes. The first is the important differences between historic and contemporary flows of migrants, including whether entry occurs via the regulatory regimes of asylum, conditional visa or citizenship. The second aspect of diversity lies in the variety of the respective countries of origin amongst the proprietors on Stapleton Road, converging multiple nations on a single street. The particular convergence on Stapleton Road suggests the racialized and ethnicized global topography of migrant geographies and how these intersect with the composition of marginalized urban neighbourhoods. Finally, in the side-by-side arrangement of shops on the street where land values remain fairly affordable and regulatory regimes for regulating business remain fairly unrestrictive, a range of uses and activities emerge in a side by side fashion. Our drawing of the shop interior shows a highly adaptive and incremental form of urbanism where economic and social transactions overlap.

Infrastructure emerges as an embedded yet highly variegated resource, differentially accessed by individuals and groups over extended time periods. We have further shown that 'migrant infrastructure', while embedded in a local place, is simultaneously embedded in specific global geopolitical relations. In drawing the combined countries of origin of proprietors on one street, we gain a view of how imperial domination asserted by colonial rule and global divisions upheld by sustained inequality, are reflected in who 'lands' on Stapleton Road (and who does not land there). By moving across scales through drawing, we have aimed to capture how infrastructure is practised as a cultural and material process. What constitutes a public or a private interior is marked as much through distinctive practices of 'hanging out', as by how chairs, counters and televisions are placed, each increment reflecting cultural preferences. Drawing can be used to unsettle our sense of what we think we know, and also to challenge more lim-

ited or over-simplified narratives of urban marginalization. Here, we show the street as an infrastructure that forms in relation to migration that, because it is lived, is both highly situated and variegated. 'Migrant infrastructure' eludes the singular articulations of 'failure' or 'success' that are endemic to limited notions of urban vitality and regeneration. In drawing the migrant infrastructure of Stapleton Road, emerging practices of economic life are brought into view, relating the processes of migration and marginalization to the spaces of world, street, shop and body.

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