

GRAVITATIONAL GEOMETRIES OF EXCLUSION: Infrastructuring injustice in Brescia (Italy) and Newark (New Jersey, US)

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ABSTRACT

My dissertation is situated in the complex intellectual and multidisciplinary fields of contemporary urban studies. In particular, my research focuses on the relationships between urban processes, post-industrial capitalism, injustice, and mobilities in Italy and the United States.

In my work, I observe the modalities in which mobilities and infrastructuring processes support and collaborate in either the entrenchment or the production of novel forms of socio-spatial injustice. By drawing from historical processes of urban development in Brescia (Northern Italy) and Newark (NJ, US), I constructed a framework (gravitational geometries of exclusion), to understand and describe the ways in which urban splintering is a fundamental force shaping the urban conditions featuring the two contexts. In Brescia, these took the form of the Axial City, an urban assemblage governed and controlled through normative axes of mobilities radiating from, and (dis)integrated to/from, the main subway line running through the city. Newark appears as a Teleport City, a territorialized entity governed through and by the infrastructural politics that, historically, provided privileged metropolitan elites for premium regimes of connectivity to the “economic city” of Downtown Newark, leaving marginalized subjectivities subjected to the poor quality regimes of access and appropriation of a hyper-segregated city.

By following Jennifer Robison, the comparison between “*elsewhere*” revealed the emergence of four major issues, which represent the most innovative findings of the research. These issues – post-industrial development-through-regeneration, urban splintering, shifting urban-metropolitan power relationships, and kinetic segregation – have been observed through both territories, revealing the emergence of relationships between structural forces of capitalism and localized politics of production of injustice – in terms of class, gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, and other structures of inequality featuring both the Italian and the American societies.