Klaske Maria Havik (The Netherlands, 1975) is assistant professor at Delft University of Technology. She studied architecture in Delft and Helsinki, and literary writing in Amsterdam. As an architect and critic, she has been involved in a number of harbour redevelopment projects in Amsterdam, The Hague, Helsinki and Tallinn. Havik writes regularly for various magazines in the Netherlands and Nordic countries and is editor of the Dutch-Belgian peer reviewed architecture journal *OASE*. Her architectural and written work combines an experiential reading of the city with an academic and theoretical approach. At Delft University of Technology, she teaches the master diploma’s studio Public Realm and Border Conditions alongside courses in architectural theory and literature. She co-edited the anthology *Architectural Positions: Architecture, Modernity and the Public Sphere*, SUN Publishers 2009. Her PhD research *Urban Literacy. A Scriptive Approach to the Experience, Use and Imagination of Place* (TU Delft, 2012) developed a literary approach to architecture and urban regeneration, proposing the three notions description, transcription and prescription.
This lecture addresses the social dimension of architecture and stresses the gap between the design of urban spaces and their use. It argues that the interactivity between writer and reader in literature, in the sense that the reader co-produces the text, also counts for the designer and the user (or perceiver) of architectural space. I propose the notion Transcription as an approach connecting this interactivity to the role of activities, movements and events in the experience and the making of urban space.

TRANSCRIPTION: THE SOCIAL AND EXPERIMENTAL IN LITERARY AND ARCHITECTURAL SPACES

I would like there to exist places that are stable, unmoving, intangible, untouched and almost untouchable, unchanging, deep-rooted; places that might be points of reference of departure, of origin [...] Such places don’t exist, and it’s because they don’t exist that space becomes a question, ceases to be self-evident.... Space is a doubt: I have constantly to mark it, to designate it. It’s never mine, never given to me, I have to conquer it. (Perec 2008, 91)

As the French-Polish writer Georges Perec suggests, the relationship between architecture and the activities of the people who use and inhabit it is not neutral. This paper departs from the observation
that architecture is influenced by social practices and that even so, architecture, by giving shape to people's environment, has its influence on social behaviour. The dynamic relationship between people and places is the key focus of this text, and I introduce transcription as a conceptual tool to address this interactivity.

The word transcription implies a directional way of writing: "trans" is the Latin preposition "across" or "through". The etymological dictionary notes: "to write across, i.e. to transfer in writing." (Partridge 1983) The directional and experimental character that the word transcription implies, is crucial in that transcription can be understood as a dynamic notion.

First, aspects of movement and activity in literary writings are closely connected to the spaces in which they take place, and often point at social practices; offering information about the way people move through, use and appropriate space. In literary works, spatial metaphors often have to do with direction and movement. Indeed, in writing about spaces, the aspect of action implied by the space: a passage, a pathway, a threshold, a door, an opening to another space, can play a part in the narrative. Space can encourage characters to move, pass through, undertake action. In literary reflections about changes in society, architectural and urban scenes not only serve as the decor against which narratives of activity can unfold, these scenes also play an important part in depicting social practices. As Marilyn Chandler argues, our built environment and the way we live in it "has a good deal to do with the way we tell our stories... both architecture and literature are simultaneously reflective and formative social forces. In both, implicit issues of gender and class lie behind the politics of style" (Chandler 1991, 6). Indeed, literature both reflects the social codes and the use of the city, while it may also take part in its process of change. Literary texts on how people behave in the city shine a light on power relations in society, showing how the social codes of different user groups relate to specific urban places. In their own ways, both architecture and literature represent, reflect on and produce societal behaviour. Therefore, literary urban portraits are of interest for sociologists, cultural philosophers and others concerned with social and spatial practices. A second aspect of transcription has to do with its potential as an experimental practice: it searches the boundaries of the discipline by "writing through". Literary examples are the experimental practices of the literary movement Oulipo, or the "spatial" literature of James Joyce. These authors experiment within the use of language, or within the production of text, but also experiment regarding the structure of the novel, and its content. They explore the possibility for confrontations and conflicts, openings to include the unexpected. In these writings space, even the space of the novel itself, is constantly questioned, designated, marked or conquered. Here, issues of transgression and violation within the space of literature are at stake. Third, the
commonly used meaning of transcription is "to write a version of something", or "to write in a different medium; transliterate". When looking for direct transcriptions into other media, the transcriptions of literary scenes in film or theatre are probably most common. Writing another version of a text, however, can also happen within literature itself, namely through the reader, who can take on the role of an active participant. Indeed, one can speak of the interactivity between writer and reader as producers of the text. If transcribing indeed implies an active role of the reader as a producer, a maker of the text, architectural transcription might direct us to a similar role for the user of space.

NARRATIVES AND SOCIAL PRACTICE. Thus, in literature, space is never neutral: it is the stage for social activities. Therefore, literature has the capacity to offer precise accounts of social processes, not only as vivid portraits of urban life, but also as "symptomatology" of social illness, to speak with Deleuze. Literature can provide a cure in the sense that it can offer alternatives, new directions for society. The field of tension between the reader and writer (or the designer and user) of a work come to the fore as important issue: the reader, by his very act of reading, has a role in the production of the text. Likewise, the role of the user of architecture can be brought into play when addressing the social dimensions of architecture. In the continuation of this text, I will bring to the fore how these aspects of transcription can be "transcribed" to architecture. One of the key arguments that Henri Lefebvre made in his conceptualization of lived space was indeed that such space is by definition socially produced. Like the reader, who has a role in producing the (experience of) the text, it is the user, the inhabitant, the passer-by, who has a role in producing the lived experience of space. In other words, lived space exists precisely through the actions of its users, inhabitants and passers-by, it is dynamic and subject to change. It has ability to speak, as it were, to address the visitor, user or inhabitant: "Representational space [lived space] is alive: it speaks." (Lefebvre, The Production of Space 1991, 42)

For Lefebvre, society produces its own space, through its own means of production. Social practices and structures of power thus play a role in this production of social space, and become visible in the streets and public spaces of everyday life. By analysing the behaviour of people in public urban spaces, social patterns can be found. In this way, Lefebvre argues, "[...] social space works as a tool for the analysis of society" (Lefebvre, The Production of Space 1991, 33-34), or even, "space is social morphology" (Lefebvre, The Production of Space 1991, 94). In his earlier book The Urban Revolution, Lefebvre focuses specifically on urban society, claiming that the city is inextricably linked with social
practices of everyday life (Lefebvre, The Urban Revolution 2003). His hypothesis is that society will become completely urbanized. He believes that the transformations he perceives in the society of Western Europe in the late 1960s will lead to an ultimately urban society: a dominance of the city over the country. This urban society will lead to a new practice: the urban practice (Lefebvre, The Urban Revolution 2003, 5). By this, he hints at a new mode of production: the citizen participating in the production of space. This production can also entail transgression of spatial and legal borders, as well as spatial violation, by means of which new rules, new spaces and new forms of social life are initiated. Here, Lefebvre foresees a change in power structures: it is not the institutions, the formal bodies of power, that write the laws and rules of society; rather, urban society is produced by people, in the streets. The street is seen by Lefebvre as the place where changes in society become apparent, society becomes produced and “inscribed” in the streets, and this has to do with the function of the street as a space for social interaction:

“Revolutionary events generally take place in the street[...]. The urban space of the street is a space for talk, given over as much to the exchange of words and signs as it is for the exchange of things. A place where speech becomes writing. A place where speech becomes ‘savage’, and, by escaping rules and institutions, inscribes itself on the walls.” (Lefebvre, The Urban Revolution 2003, 19)

Clearly, this interest in the streets as the place where societal changes are enforced by citizens, derived from the momentum in which Lefebvre’s argument should be placed: The Urban Revolution was published in France two years after the social events in Paris of 1968, when indeed the streets were the locus for social and political change. The “Right to the City” that Lefebvre advocates (Lefebvre, Right to the City 2006) may be read as the right to the participant to transcribe – and thereby to produce new urban practices.

Similarly, Jane Jacobs referred to the power of the citizens in her critical comments on urban planning and economy in the 1960s and 1970s. She pointed out the importance of diversity in city life and stated that planners and politicians should pay more attention to everyday practices that give shape to public life in the city, because: “The bureaucratized, simplified cities so dear to our present-day city planners and urban designers[...] run counter to the processes of city growth and economic development.” (Jacobs, The Economy of Cities 1972, 97)

Even though their contributions to the urban debate date from a specific period, their insights are far from outdated. Referring to both Henri Lefebvre and Jane Jacobs, the contemporary urban
Theorist Edward Soja argues that they were right: the twenty-first century has indeed become the era of urban society, and therefore it is necessary to acknowledge and study the productive capacity of users. (Soja 1999)

In this respect, a reflection on the work of Michel de Certeau is appropriate. This French theorist in social sciences and literature has proposed a shift in thinking about everydayness: seeing everyday practices as valuable aspects of culture. Like Lefebvre, De Certeau is interested in the role of users, or consumers, the word De Certeau employs for the "dominated" groups (Certeau 1988, xi), in the production of culture. First, he makes a distinction between the "strategies" that those in power develop in order to organize and dominate society, and "tactics", the ways of operating of the dominated groups. Such tactics can "use, manipulate, and divert" (Certeau 1988, 30) the spaces that are produced and imposed by means of strategies. Everyday practices such as talking, reading, cooking and walking are, in his view, tactical. De Certeau argues that such practices have a much larger role in the production of society than is generally accounted for. It is through walking in the city, through the repetition of routes and rituals, through daily meetings, chats with neighbours or shop owners, that inhabitants live and produce the urban life:

"The ordinary practitioners of the city[... ] walk - an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers[... ] whose bodies follow the thick and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read it[... ] . The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces: in relation to representations, it remains daily and indefinitely other [...] a migrational or metaphorical city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city." (Certeau 1988, 93)

De Certeau sets this urban life, generated by the patterns of its praxis, against the conceptual city as seen from above. As a model for the rational 'Concept-City', imposed by the ones in power, visible from above, De Certeau uses the view of Manhattan seen from the top of the former towers of the World Trade Centre. In contrast to that bird's-eye view, De Certeau points at the city as experienced from below: a complex and barely visible conglomeration of the patterns of its users, full of turns, rituals and narratives. He recognizes in this city a different kind of spatiality, which is not a geometrical, but an anthropological space in which poetic experience plays a part. Similar to the productive role of the reader in appropriating and 'inhabiting' a text, De Certeau argues that the consumer actually 'produces' through his everyday practices: "Spatial practices[... ] secure the determining conditions of social life." (Certeau 1988, 96)
In order to analyse this neglected aspect of urban practices, De Certeau suggests we turn to stories. He argues that literature provides an extensive source for research, and states that the novel “has become the zoo of everyday practices since the establishment of modern science” (Certeau 1988, 78).

Of course, Michel de Certeau is not the first to enter the field of social spatial practices, though for my argument he is the most relevant, because he investigates this field through literary means, as I will soon discuss in more detail. Indeed, De Certeau suggests that narrative can be of great scientific value for research on social spatial practices:

“Shouldn’t we recognize [the narrative’s] scientific legitimacy by assuming that[...] it cannot be, or has not been, eliminated from discourse, narrativity has a necessary function in it, and that a theory of narration is indissociable from a theory of practices, as its condition as well as its production? To do that would be to recognize the theoretical value of the novel[...]” (Certeau 1988, 78)

The concept of narrative could be of great value if we are to see how a form of architectural ‘transcription’ could come about. This is not only because literary narratives frequently describe spatial practices, but also because of the role that stories play in the delimitation of space, in defining its boundaries. A story makes people identify with a place, just as the absence of stories leaves a space to neutrality.

De Certeau distinguishes two roles for the story. First, it founds: it sets a field, it creates a stage on which actions can unfold. This field is by no means fixed and neutral. On the contrary, it can be “fragmented”, allowing different social groups to act upon it; “miniaturized”, offering not only an account of a large community but also individual stories or stories related to only small groups; and “polyvalent”, with many different voices and allowing multiple stories to coexist (Certeau 1988, 123-125). Second, a story functions as a bridge and a frontier: it defines borders, delineates the field. By articulating the frontier, it can also be appropriated, connections are made between one side and the other. In this way it functions as a bridge, or again, as a passage (Certeau 1988, 126). A story “establishes an itinerary (it ‘guides’) and it passes through (it ‘transgresses’)” (Certeau 1988, 129). It can thus be seen as a journey, a transport from one place to the other, transgressing borders. De Certeau refers to the ancient Greek metaphorai, “means of transportation”. Indeed, if we look at the etymological origin of the word metaphor, we find that the first meaning is ‘to bring across’, indeed, a transportation, be it physically, in space, or figuratively, in speech. The current
meaning of metaphor, a figure of speech in which a certain concept or idea is explained by its analogy with another, is thus also a form of transportation. "Stories," says De Certeau, "whether everyday or literary, serve us as a means of mass transportation, as metaphor." (Certeau 1988, 155). Space is thus part of a narration, but if indeed a story makes the reader transport from one place to another, movement is also part of a narration.

This aspect of movement is of crucial importance if we want to connect the notion of narrative to architecture, because it means that narrative is spatial, but also temporal. The events in a story unfold in space and time. In architectural practice, the temporal aspect is often forgotten. Strangely enough, the architect's involvement in a project does not reach much further than the day of the opening, while the life of the building or urban site starts after that: it changes in time, through use, activities, events. Spatial practices imply activity and movement, and thus time; lived experience is experience in time. According to Lefebvre, the contemporary focus on image has shifted the attention of architects and planners away from temporal experience, as the image "detaches the pure forms from its impure content — from lived time, everyday time[...]." (Lefebvre, The Production of Space 1991, 95). As Lefebvre has explained, lived space "embraces loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time. Consequently, it may be qualified in various ways: it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic" (Lefebvre, The Production of Space 1991, 42). Indeed, space changes, it is used, appropriated and transformed by everyday life. Space is thus "not a thing but rather a set of relations between things" (Lefebvre, The Production of Space 1991, 83). This relational aspect is important for our account of spaces and the role of the architect-writer. If space is indeed relational, we cannot define the task of architecture as to design a fixed space, in which all actions are pre-programmed. Rather, the task could be, as in a story, to found a field upon which actions and transformations can take place in time.

If we follow De Certeau's ideas on the role of the story, we can transcribe some characteristics of these literary concepts to the field of architecture. If we indeed see architecture as dynamic, rather than static, as social, rather than formal, and as participatory, rather than imposing, a 'narrative' approach to architecture can offer a passage to explore its relation to human action and temporality. If the role of the story, according to De Certeau, is to set a field for human action and to function as a bridge and frontier, we might state that the task of a narrative architecture would be to offer a spatial field that invites human actions to take place, and that through this field, borders can be defined as well as transgressed. Can architecture, like narrative, bring together past, future and presence in a
moment of architectural experience? Can architecture be designed to give space to different temporal experiences, and simultaneously generate memories and evoke imaginations? Also, the architectural project mediates between the parts and the whole, between its details and the totality of its appearance. Like the narrative, it mediates between a large number of heterogeneous factors, such as its programmatic and functional demands, structure, climate, materiality, aesthetics and so forth. And, it mediates between writer and reader. Likewise, in architecture, the participation of the user, inhabitant or perceiver is at stake. Architectural design, then, does not offer one single narrative, but allows for different stories to happen, it allows for confrontations between spaces, users and events. Transcribing in architecture, then, could be a socially engaged form of experimentation, ultimately aimed at provoking new or other uses of space, at challenging the unexpected, at transgressing boundaries of the commonly accepted. In this view, transcription provokes, rather than offering comfort, it searches the sublime, rather than the beautiful, and it points at difference, asking for an active participation of its reader or user.

TRANSCRIPTION: ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVES.

How, then, can architects take into account these aspects of transcription? How can they provide a spatial setting for multiple events and narratives to unfold? How can architecture, which generally speaking puts physical material in place, thus solidifying rather than generating movement, play a part in the dynamics of city life? How can an architect define space and simultaneously provide possibilities for the users to "co-produce"? And how can transcription as an experimental practice help to explore the potentiality of architectural design? If transcription is an essentially dynamic notion, a dynamic definition of architecture should address aspects of use and activity. Such concerns have indeed been important for a number of architects, especially since the late 1960s. Around 1960, an international group of young architects known as Team 10, including Alison and Peter Smithson, Aldo van Eyck and Georges Candilis, reclaimed attention for the social practices of everyday life (Avermaete, Havik and Teerds 2009, 38-39).° Their designs made use of studies of behavioural patterns of everyday life. Dutch architect Herman Hertzberger and Danish architect and planner Jan Gehl were among those arguing for more attention to be paid to the behavioural aspects in design, bringing knowledge from the fields of cognitive and behavioural psychology into the architectural debate. Likewise, Christopher Alexander considered the relation between architectural spaces and practices of everyday life in his architectural theory of behavioural patterns (Alexander 1977)' In the Netherlands, architects and urban planners searched for new models in which the social aspect of the urban environment was emphasized, in reaction
to rationalized modern planning. Dutch architects such as Herman Hertzberger, Piet Blom and Aldo van Eyck strived for a more social approach to housing and urban space. New housing areas with a strong focus on collective, pedestrian space and neighbourhood structures were for example the Cul-de-Sac housing estates in the Netherlands". John Habraken provided a theoretical framework with his differentiation between "support" and "infill" (Habraken 1962). In his view, architects and planners were first and foremost responsible for providing a supportive built structure, flexible enough to allow different infills by inhabitants. His was a bottom-up approach in which inhabitants would have a say in the design of their living environment. Professor of architecture Lars Lerup was also interested in the influence of user's practices on the built environment. He has studied the interactions between the social and the physical world, stating that people are "active individuals who in their approach to things produce meaning" (Lerup 1977, 19).

The interactive relationship between writer and reader, or: between architect and user/perceiver has also been investigated by a number of architects such as Bernard Tschumi, Peter Eisenman and Daniel Libeskind, who were interested in an experimental approach to architecture, in which the process itself plays an important role. Their work relates to the experimental aspect of transcription I have discussed earlier in this text. They criticize mainstream architecture for its formality and its affirmative attitude concerning functional and aesthetic demands. Instead of comfort, stability and stylistic clarity, these architects set out to search for the dynamic in architecture, looking for spaces that can take up various, even contradicting programmes. They search for the dynamic in architecture and aim for spaces that can take up various programmes. They search for an architecture that provokes social interactions, events, intense experiences. They are interested in time, change and instability, and consider architecture as a process rather than as a fixed object. Their work is trans-disciplinary, in that they employ literary references, but also explore other fields such as philosophy, the social sciences and cinema. Indeed, the "transcriptive" approach, as I call it, is without exception trans-disciplinary. This seems self-evident, considering the context of this research, but I wish to stress this point here, because precisely the concept of transcription offers the possibility to link up with other disciplines and use their instruments to involved lived practices in architecture. Architects explicitly search for connections with other fields, and not only the literary. Both Bernard Tschumi and Raoul Bunschoten turn, for example, to cinema to find techniques of framing and sequences for their design works. Dutch architect Raoul Bunschoten, with his London-based practice CHORA, defines scenarios as "narratives of urban possibilities, alternative realities, alternative practices" (Binet, Bunschoten and Hoshino 2001). In the view of Bunschoten, scenarios can be generated by the use of literary elements such
as authors, actors, agents and angels. It is through interaction and conflict that such elements can evoke new uses of space. Peter Eisenman has drawn close connections with philosophers to find new ways in architecture, while illustrating his ideas about dislocation through examples from cinema. Indeed, in the work of these architects, the borders between disciplines seem to merge.

In this text, I have highlighted how architecture is connected to social practices, stressing the role of the user of space in its production and experience. Then I have given an, admittedly, very short overview, of how different architects have used transcriptive experiments as a means to address social issues in architecture. Some architects, like John Habraken and the architects of Team 10 have searched for ways to give space for inhabitants to appropriate and change their living environment. Others, such as Daniel Libeskind and Bernard Tschumi, have taken on an experimental attitude to provoke confrontations between spaces, people and activities. Indeed, it is by a consciousness of the social dimension of architecture, and finding new (transcriptive) tools to address such issues, that architecture can offer a passage to new ways of living.

NOTES
1 This text is an excerpt from the chapter "Transcription" of my dissertation, Klaske Havik, Urban Literacy, a Scriptive Approach to the Experience, Use and Imagination of Place, 94-149 (Delft: TU Delft Library, 2012)
2 Georges Perec, Species of Spaces (London: Penguin Classics, 2008), 598
4 Ronald Bogue has in detail discussed Deleuze's use of literature throughout his philosophical works. Bogue frequently refers to Deleuze's metaphor of health: literary writers as symptomatologists of sickness in society, and as the ones capable offering new possibilities. See for symptomatology especially chapter one, Ronald Bogue, "Sickness, Signs, and Sense", Deleuze on Literature, 9-20 (New York/London: Routledge, 2003)
6 Original italics
I need to stress here, that I use another definition of space and place than De Certeau. De Certeau regards place (lieu) as something stable, which can be geometrically defined, and space (espace) as "a practiced place... composed of intersections of elements", thus, made by practices, activity of users (Certeau 1988, 117). I would argue precisely otherwise. Space, to me, is rather neutral and can be described by its spatial properties, whereas place is connected to identity: place consists not only of spatial properties, but also of social practices, stories, memories, etc. In that sense, I follow Edward S. Casey's account of place in The Fate of Place, as discussed in this work, and Marc Augé's antropological account of place as defined by history, identity and relations. Marc Augé, Non-Places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity (London/New York: Verso, 1995). Original work Non-lieux, introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité (Paris: Seuil, 1992).

For a closer discussion of this paradigm shift in architectural thinking, see also Max Risselada and Dirk van den Heuvel, Team10, 1953-1981. In Search of a Utopia of the Present (Rotterdam: Nai Publishers, 2005).


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