A place is a place is a place: Subjective perceptions and liminoid practices of interstitial spaces.

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* thimble = Fingerhut, dedal

outline

1. co-spatiality
2. interstice
3. limen (threshold) & liminoid experiences
4. alternative conceptualizations of in-between spaces

Research context:
IDENT2 - Strategies of Regionalisation: Constructing Identity Across Borders

preliminary remarks

Spatial turn

Place (lieu) -> space (espace)


Places (lieux) & non-places (non-lieux)

1. co-spatiality

Interspatiality
• interface
• spatial scaling (emboîtement spatial)
• co-spatiality

2. interstice

Contact zone, co-presence


Third space


Hybridity

Interstitial (urban areas, communities)


Contact zone

Fig. 1: Petrol stations as border markers.

“Each fuelling procedure is a mixture of pure routine and immersion into a very specific microcosm. [...] The subject perceives themselves as in an *in-between world*: for a brief moment, the visit to the petrol station has torn them out of their normal everyday routine. In this ‘no man’s land’, the obligations and the rules of everyday life are less palpable, the subjects are more open towards the unknown and new products, and they will follow impulsive feelings and wishes more spontaneously. [...] This alien/unfamiliar *in-between world* also generates fears and perhaps even a diffuse sense of threat and insecurity”

“They came there with a supermarket trolley and they were already a little drunk [laughter]. [...] I think they wanted to wash the cars, but it wasn’t very clever, because [loud laughter], just next to them, there was the petrol sta... – er – the automatic carwash station [...] they must have stayed two, three hours before they left for – I don’t know – Clausen, well, and confront the bride with further dares. They made – er – a lot of noise. Me, I passed by twice with my dog and you could hear them in the entire village [laughter] laughing like crazy. That was really funny”

- Female interview partner, 30 y., Portuguese-Luxembourgish, living in Luxembourg
3. threshold

"The middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed. *Between things* does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle."

**liminal**

**liminoid**

**Different experiences at the threshold**
- a) Mildly transformative, creative actions (liminoid)
- b) Potentially radical actions, only envisaged
- c) Wavering, paralysis
Different experiences at the threshold

a) “Attention ladies and gentlemen! Three packs of cigarettes for the price of five!”

- Aire de Wasserbillig Unpublished iPhone Video Filmed on 20.10.2012 by Agnès Prüm

b) “This is dreadful, because I really don't like it. [...] I don't want anybody else to fill up my car, I want to do this myself. [...] I really wanted to say ..., and I got very angry at myself because I didn't intervene. I really wanted to tell him ‘Here, take 5 or 10 € as a tip, but just leave me alone’ [laughs]. I did tell him ‘Please, leave it be,’ but he just did it and afterwards I was so very angry at myself, I should have struck his fingers and told him ‘Just go, I’ll do this myself’”

- Male interview partner, 29 y., German, living in Saarland
Different experiences at the threshold
c) “Once I’m there, it no longer bothers me, and actually, I rather like [petrol stations], it’s tidy, sometimes you can get rather nice chocolates, beautiful flower arrangements, and in general, the girls are nice ... In fact, I do not like going there, I keep telling myself, oh shit, I have to go and get fuel, but once I’m there, it does not bother me. It’s fast, and rather comfortable, well thought-through, well laid out”

“Moreover, if we are not talking about petrol stations in Luxembourg, when you drive down to the south, the only ray of hope [sunbeam] of the journey [small ironic laughter], is to stop at petrol stations. During a long journey, I love it! But the stations are different from the ones you find here. There, you can see people, lorry drivers from different countries, you see people who take a sort of shower in the toilets, well, I think it's very lively. [...] And then, you see people, and there are people who make you laugh, some of them are fighting, and it’s a very, very lively environment!” (ibid.).

- Female interview partner, 33 years, French, living in Lorraine
4. alternative conceptualizations

**Overlaps, fuzzy sets**


**Transdifference**