

ESA Arts Conference 2014 - Guidelines for the **Cluj Transect Walk (Wed Sept 3 2014)** **and feedback session (Sat Sept 6)**

The walk we invite you to take in Cluj is a 5 hours long “transect” walk through the city of Cluj, from one “end” of the city to another “end”. It is not to be confused with a guided tour which would focus on (or necessarily pass by) specific locations. On the contrary, it is a walk conceived as an explorative arbitrary cut through the entire city, which should not privilege one neighborhood against other ones. Nor should it privilege the center or the peripheries of the city: it should cover both center and peripheries, following a transversal imaginary line. We encourage you to consider this walk as a phenomenological exploration, whereby we invite you to raise your attention to the urban through the use of your senses and serendipity.

Registration and timeline

To take part in this walk, we invite you to register by sending an email to Sacha Kagan sachakagan@gmail.com with CC to the Conference secretariat esa.arts2014@gmail.com, with the subject line “ESA Arts 2014 Cluj Transect Walk Registration”.

Maps of “Cluj transect lines” will be uploaded on the conference website, and we will assign you into small groups. Each small group will be accompanied by a local colleague or student, and will **start the walk on Wednesday September 3rd at 15:00**. The walk duration will be of about 5 hours. Depending on the time taken for pauses and other factors, the walks will end between 20:00 and 20:30.

We are aware that some colleagues prefer to walk alone. If this is your case, here is an alternative option: If you prefer not to be accompanied for your walk in Cluj, you can take one of the suggested “Cluj transect lines” (starting at a different time of the day) or else determine a different transect line by yourself, of a similar length – at least 5 hours (!) walking, and join the rest of us for the feedback session on the Saturday. Even in this case, please do register by email, so we know the number of participants at the feedback session.

If you have reduced mobility but would like to experience the transect walk, please contact us by email as early as possible with details. We will do our best to find a suitable solution.

A **feedback session** for the walk is integrated in the conference program. It will take place on the last day of the conference, **Saturday September 6th, from 14:40 to 16:20** (before the Closing meeting).

There is **no extra fee** for participating in the walk. However, registration by email is required. (Please do mention in your registration email, whether you accept to be assigned to one of the small groups, or whether you prefer the option of “walking alone”.) For logistical reasons, we will cap the registration process to a maximum of 30 participants. Please do **register until July 31st**.

Please carefully read and follow the following guidelines for the transect walk:

Before the Walk

1. Choose a way to record your walk

You can decide to use photos, videos, sound recorders or to draw sketches on paper. However, writing is not permitted during the walking hours! Remember that the way you record the walks should not hinder the flow of the walk on this day. You should aim to be able to record elements along the whole walk (e.g. if you are filming, please try to have enough batteries and recording medium for at least about 4 hours).

2. If you have a smartphone (and especially if you choose the option to walk alone):

Choose a GPS-logging app that you can use on your phone.

There are many apps that you can use, many are available free of charge. You can look at the apps suggested here if you do not already have one: <http://bestandroidappsfor.com/maps-navigation/top-3-android-gps-logger-apps> or here: <http://www.trekbuddy.net/>.

If possible, please test your chosen app during one normal day, before the day of your walk! See if the battery is powerful enough, if there is a screensaver hindering the continuous recording, or any other issues... Many errors can spoil your recording, so prior testing should help you make the best out of the GPS-logging tool you will be using in Cluj. (If you walk with one of the small groups, the accompanying local colleague or student will be also using a GPS logging app, as 'safety backup'.)

3. Set your own rules for your walk

Keep the rules as simple as possible.

If you do the walk with other participants (we will put you in email contact with the other members of your small group a few weeks before the conference): Before your walk, communicate by email with the other members of your small group, to agree on clear common rules for your group. How will you document your group's walk, with which medium (see point 1 above)? Try to keep your rules simple so that you are sure to record a maximum of impressions, perceptions, memories, changes, modifications, repetitions of atmospheres, people, lights, architecture, streetscapes, trees, etc.

If you are in a walking group: Decide in advance 'who' is going to do 'what' during the walk, and who is responsible for bringing which material. For instance, one person could be in charge of taking pictures, another person of doing a sound-recording, the third person could take care of the GPS (if possible, let several persons do a GPS log, as a precaution). A fourth person could maybe do some drawings.

If you are taking photographic pictures make decisions about when and how you take them. For instance, you can decide to shortly stop every '5 minutes' and take 4 pictures (in 4 different directions) to record visual impressions from your walk. Or you can decide to take pictures every time you are struck by an impression and frame what raised your attention.

Please, write down your rules beforehand and make sure that the people in the small group agree and follow them consistently during the walk.

One possibility could be to have at least one person with a very strict rule-set and another one with rules as open (loose, free) as possible in your group.

4. Be prepared for a 5 hours walk

Prepare for a long walk that will occupy you for the entire afternoon and evening: Think of having sufficient water, food, backpack, good old shoes, raincoat/umbrella, etc.

You can stop for a short time to get some rest or to drink or eat something shortly, of course. However, do not let such activities distract you from your main goal: the experience of a full-day transect walk through Cluj (and not an hours-long stay at a nice café). If your pauses altogether take up more than 20 minutes, do take some more time for the walk (i.e. end it around 20:30 rather than around 20:00).

During the Walk

1. Be curious!

Be curious towards the urban, cultural and natural environment you are traversing and the other human and non-human beings you are encountering in the streets (but not too much towards the other conference participants walking with you in your group).

Do not limit yourself to the usual. Try to capture as many elements as possible.

2. "Break your pattern!"

The original suggested direction of your walk follows a given and abstract straight line going through the city, from one "end" to the other "end". This is intended to help prevent you from taking a specific "guided tour" through specific landmarks.

However, we do not ask you to take the straight line literally. Please consider the line only as a general direction for your entire walk.

If you notice that you are following a pattern during your walk, break it! For example, if you are walking down a big boulevard for a long while, or if you are systematically taking small paths and back-alleys, break the pattern and try something different. This is more important than exactly following "the line" or exact direction given to you with the map.

3. Be creative!

Be open to each other's suggestions (related to rules 1 and 2: curiosity and breaking the pattern). As an art sociologist you may be aware of processes of group/collective/social creativity: Keep this in mind during the walk, and try to stimulate your group's creativity.

4. (If walking in a group :) Limit your interactions with the people in your group!

In order to maximize the result of the walk, try to limit the interactions to the minimum required. Do **not** get distracted by long conversations that take your mind somewhere else. You should NOT use this walk as a way to get to learn about the other persons in your group. (That goal should be achieved outside the 5 hours of the walk.) If you notice that some members of your group engage in conversations about each other's research or private life (unless related to the present experience of the Cluj transect walk, and kept short), please kindly remind them of this rule, and bring the conversation back to your immediate surroundings.

5. Focus on your senses, not the map!

See, feel, hear ... Try to navigate without the map as much as possible. Do not look at the map (or at any map on your smartphone) more often than once per hour! Do not hesitate to ask questions to the local people you encounter, look for landmarks and follow street signs to orientate yourself. Do not use a compass.

In case you have any prior knowledge about phenomenology, please make an effort to explore the phenomenological quality of your walking experience.

6. Forget the rules

Once they are in your mind already, forget about them to open up to your immediate environment and your walking body (but be careful not to completely forget rule 4).

Do not let yourself get stressed or obsessed about the guidelines. But do not fully ignore the guidelines either. You need to find a balance: If you are too tense or if you are too careless, then the quality of your attention and the quality of the walk will be affected.

After the Walks. Reflections and Sharing

Important: You need to prepare for the feedback session! Please take the necessary time, for example during the lunch breaks and evenings at the conference...

1. Write down your impressions

The same day as the walk (in the late evening, after the walk is over), each participant should write some notes about the walk. You should focus on elements that you think are especially interesting; things that surprised you the most; elements that you find representative; thoughts that you had about this experience; questions that came up in your mind during the walk.

2. Prepare for sharing impressions at our feedback session at the conference:

In the days between the walk and the feedback session at the conference, i.e. on September 4th and 5th, prepare the following (together with the other members if you were in a walking group):

1. Documentary material (e.g. pictures, sounds, texts, video-extracts) ;
2. A map showing the GPS track of your group's walk (using the GPS logging data, with the help of the local colleague/student in your group)* ;
3. Thoughts, impressions and questions that came to your mind during the walk (put together short quotes or short paragraphs) ;
4. A short description of the rules that your group followed when performing the walk.

**About creating a map of your GPS track (if you do it yourself):*

Different smartphone apps will work differently (and we will not be able to give you individual technical assistance for your own smartphone), but the following advice might help if you are having difficulties to generate a picture of the trace of your (group's) walk (i.e. the recorded 'track'/'route'):

- You can simply try to take a “screenshot” picture of your screen.
- Or else you may have to convert the GPS data you obtained into a “GPX” file-format (if not done already by your app) and use that file on a PC. Then, once you have your GPX file ready, please try using the following software to generate the final picture file: GPX-Viewer, “GPS-Track-Analyse”

HYPERLINK: <http://www.computerbild.de/download/GPS-Track-Analyse.NET-6202058.html>

3. Put together these elements into an electronic format...

... that you (either individually if you walked alone, or together as a walking group) can show at the feedback session, on one of your laptop computers

For example, a powerpoint file, a short edited selection of video extracts, etc.

(If you will use a laptop from Apple, please bring an adapter for the VGA cable. Or else convert your document to PDF format and place it on a USB stick, before the feedback session.)

Please make sure that your sharing of impressions will last no more than 10 minutes (if you are a small group) or 5 minutes (if you walked alone), so that you can also listen to the impressions from others, and discuss all these together.

About the Cluj Transect Walk

The Cluj transect walk is organized by Dr. Sacha Kagan (Leuphana University) and Dr. Mara Ratiu (University of Art and Design in Cluj), with the help of PhD and MA students from Cluj.

The walk was designed by Sacha Kagan, based on previous experience he gathered:

- as founding director of the Summer School of Arts and Sciences for Sustainability in Social Transformation (ASSiST) – which in its 1st edition held in August 2010 in Gabrovo (Bulgaria) explored walking as a transdisciplinary methodology,
- and at seminars and workshops he taught at the Leuphana University Lueneburg (Germany) from 2010 to 2013. The design of the current walk is indebted to the practice of the “transect walk” by urban researcher and photographer Martin Kohler from the HafenCity University in Hamburg.