

ATACD A TOPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO CULTURAL DYNAMICS

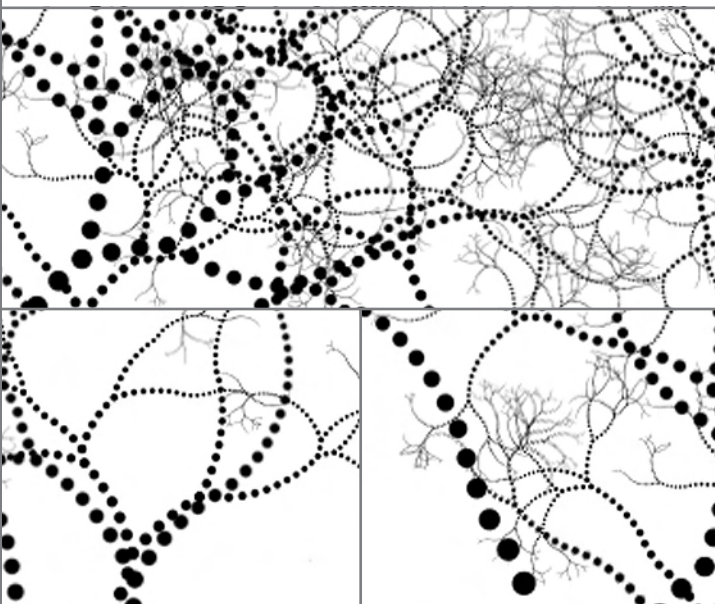


The first edition of our newsletter brings you a summary of activities held as part of the ATACD project, updates you on the latest news and introduces both the project and the partners.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

ATACD is an interdisciplinary research network developing topological approaches to cultural dynamics that is coordinated by Professor Celia Lury, Goldsmiths, University of London, UK. Funded under the 'New and Emerging Science and Technology' (NEST) priority of the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6), the ATACD project brings together some 20 partners from a variety of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, politics, mathematics, neuroscience, econophysics, web-based information systems, all of whom are using topology in their work.

ATACD aims to provide an infrastructure for the sharing and consolidation of topological approaches to the study of cultural dynamics across disciplines. ATACD has the potential to provide a set of tools and concepts to think about different levels and kinds of cultural change – learning, transmission, and innovation – as normal, relational and intensive. The approach is especially useful at the present time of rapid cultural change as it provides a distinctive perspective on the questions of cultural predictability and innovation.



LATEST NEWS

Colloquium 3—
Models and markets: relating to the future
SOAS, 9-10 October 2010

Organised by—
Goldsmiths, University of London, LSE and
University of Barcelona

The third ATACD colloquium takes as its subject the making of financial markets through the use of mathematical and other models. The aim is to consider the roles of language, representation and, in particular, models in the mapping of financial markets.

Registration is by invitation only.
Visit <http://www.atacd.net> for further information.

SHARING AND DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE

A series of activities have been underway since the project started in April 2007. These include network activities such as the formation of Steering Committee and its Working Groups to govern the management of the network, the organisation of colloquia and their associated events, the planning of residencies aimed at enabling partner and knowledge exchange, as well as the planning of the ATACD conference.

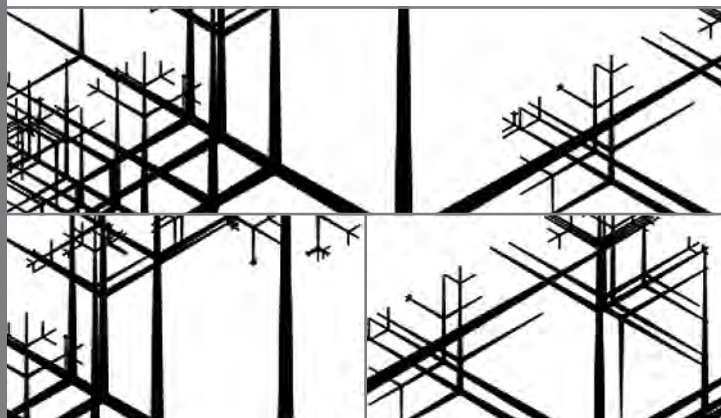
The first colloquium entitled 'Topology for culture: metaphors and tools', 28–29 November 2007, was organised by the University of Amsterdam and was designed as a small event for the sharing and exchange of knowledge, with a specific focus on tools of analysis. 30 people attended, with a very high proportion of partners being represented, and additional participants from partners' institutions, including researchers and doctoral students.

The second colloquium 'Evolution, Interaction, Communication', 17–18 April 2008, was organised by partner V2_. It focused on the inter-related topics of Evolution, Interaction, Communication and featured three keynote presentations, by speakers with different disciplinary backgrounds.

The colloquium was distinguished by two evenings of artistic work engaging with topological understandings of space. The first evening event was entitled 'The Map is not the Territory?!' and was hosted by partner Piet Zwart Institute. It featured a number of projects focused on mapping as a critical artistic investigation. The second evening event 'Test_lab: Topology', featured a presentation by ATACD partner Tiziana Terranova, outlining key concepts in topological thinking.

Video presentations from speakers for the two colloquia can be downloaded from the Colloquia page of the ATACD website.

In addition, a number of focused workshops organised by individual partners of the network based on their expertise and interest in the ATACD project are being planned or have already taken place. These include the future 'Workshop on Cultural dynamics of financial markets and crisis', 12 September 2008 and the already held 'Workshop on cultural dynamics and cultural studies', 30 June – 1 July 2008, both organised at the University of Bologna by the ATACD partner Sandro Mezzadra.



FUTURE ACTIVITIES

These include further development of the programme of residencies that has been underway since April 2008, the organisation of the fourth colloquium, to take place in Bologna in April 2009, as well as the further development of the ATACD knowledge base.

A conference in Barcelona is planned in December 2009 that will examine the value and potential impact of topological approaches to the study of cultural dynamics from a variety of perspectives.

MEET THE PARTNERS

Q: What do you expect from this project?

"I expect to be able to confront different understandings of topology which can explicate the challenges of such mathematical models of space without passively adopting the point of view of mathematics. This for me will imply an active effort to translate and reinvent the field of topology into that of culture and cultural studies."

Tiziana Terranova, University of Naples

"I expect to gain from it a rigorous cross-disciplinary knowledge transfer, new insights into contemporary digital culture, an active involvement in key social and political discussions today."

Rosi Braidotti, University of Utrecht

"What was appealing to me in this project was to see what topological approach could offer a better understanding of the dynamics of the heterogeneous nature/culture/technologies/texts etc. we are living in. It proved to be very successful in the natural sciences, so why should it not be applied in our 'soft' fields, too?"

Ivan Tchakov, Plovdiv University

PARTNERS

Goldsmiths, University of London (UK) | V2_ Institute for the Unstable Media (The Netherlands) | University of Basel (Switzerland) | University of Napoli (Italy) | Piet Zwart Institute (The Netherlands) | University of Bologna (Italy) | University of Utrecht (The Netherlands) | Copenhagen Business School (Denmark) | Sony France S.A. (France) | Panteion University (Greece) | Centre de Sociologie de l'Innovation (France) | University College London (UK) | Leicester University (UK) | The Passiy Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (Bulgaria) | London School of Economics (UK) | University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands) | University of Barcelona (Spain) | University of Aarhus (Denmark) | Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Spain) | Università degli Studi 'La Sapienza' (Italy)

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