BECOMING AND UNBECOMING SILICON VALLEY: TECHNO FANTASIES AND FRICTIONS IN POSTSOCIALIST TIMES

In this talk, Erin McElroy draws upon research from a forthcoming manuscript project on intersections of technocapitalism, racial capitalism, urbanism, and gentrification in and between postsocialist Romania and post-Cold War Silicon Valley. This lays the groundwork for what McElroy describes as Silicon Valley imperialism—or the global condition in which Silicon Valley's existence is necessitated by its unending growth, and in which it devours people's intimate lives and personal data while also consuming un-Siliconized technological histories and epistemologies. Yet despite its grip, anticapitalist techno-urban projects endure—evading, defying, and unbecoming Silicon Valley. From underground computer cloning to neighborhood intranet crafting, from speculative arts projects to housing justice organizing—the work of unbecoming Silicon Valley is ongoing. McElroy foregrounds some of these projects in Romania and the US throughout this talk while also charting the dispossessive techniques of Silicon Valley imperialism.

Erin McElroy is an Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. McElroy's work focuses upon intersections of gentrification, technology, digitality, empire, and racial capitalism in the US and in Romania, alongside housing justice organizing and transnational solidarities. This informs the focus of a forthcoming manuscript, Silicon Valley Imperialism: Techno Fantasies and Frictions in Postsocialist Times with Duke University Press. McElroy is cofounder of the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, which produces countermaps and digital media for housing justice, and additionally runs the Anti-Eviction Lab at UT, where much of the research focuses upon producing collective knowledge about landlord-driven surveillance technologies. McElroy has published numerous peer-reviewed articles and public scholarship pieces, and is also an editor with the Radical Housing Journal.

ERIN McELROY

18/05

5 pm (CET)

In person at:
Sala Vigliano, DIST, Castello del Valentino
Viale Mattioli, 39, Torino

on ZOOM at:
https://polito-it.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIqcemurjMiGNUhNWeD63_vYUejXohLDDpd

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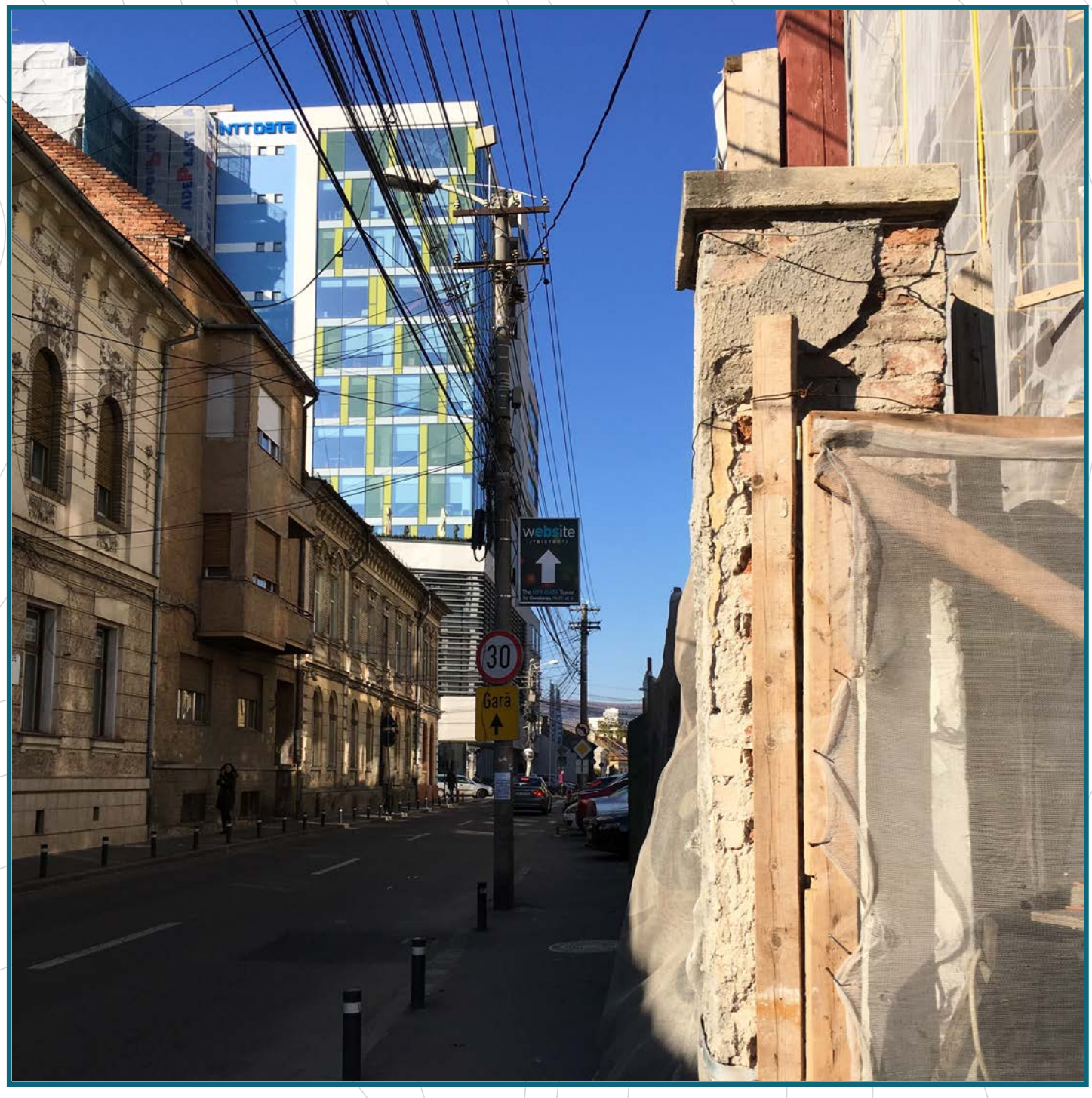

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