Critical Heritages (CoHERE): performing and representing identities in Europe

Work Package 5: Work in Progress

The Cultural Approach to Heritage Learning: A Critique

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CoHERE explores the ways in which identities in Europe are constructed through heritage representations and performances that connect to ideas of place, history, tradition and belonging. The research identifies existing heritage practices and discourses in Europe. It also identifies means to sustain and transmit European heritages that are likely to contribute to the evolution of inclusive, communitarian identities and counteract disaffection with, and division within, the EU. A number of modes of representation and performance are explored in the project, from cultural policy, museum display, heritage interpretation, school curricula and political discourse to music and dance performances, food and cuisine, rituals and protest.

WP5 develops best practices in the production and transmission of European heritages and identities within two sectors that face challenges in an age of immigration and globalization, namely education and cultural heritage production. It explores how European identity is shaped through formal and informal learning situations both in and outside the classroom with the purpose of enhancing school curricula and informal learning at heritage sites by integrating innovative technologies and including multicultural perspectives.

This essay is a critical discussion of key notions of the document prepared by the working group specifically mandated to prepare the synergies between culture and education within the framework of the European Agenda for Culture. Heritage is considered as part of culture and therefore a considerable part of the document is dedicated in establishing recommendations for heritage education. The document is based on notions such as culture, cultural diversity, cultural identity etc which have sparked a theoretical debate among academics. This paper discusses the controversial nature of these notions, tracing their origins in the much celebrated 'postmodern condition'. In its second part, this paper embarks in a discussion of the notion of spatiality (closely related to the various definitions of heritage) linking it to the "fragmentation of the subject", as a result of the multiple identities induced by a policy of identity construction. It proposes the strategy of cognitive mapping, highlighting the contribution of cartography and therefore of Geography as a central pillar in Heritage Education.

Keywords: European Agenda for Culture, Education, policy papers,

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Introduction

In the document under study[1], heritage education is considered as an essential component in the formation of personality of the individual subject enabling each individual's history to be integrated into a collective history and an important factor in the acquisition of the key skills needed by every European citizen.

According to the document, the ultimate goal of heritage education is to provide every child with knowledge of its own heritage. This heritage is not only tangible heritage but also intangible heritage. And it is not only heritage shown by major professional institutions (monuments, museums etc) but also heritage of local value.

In this sense heritage education helps build a feeling of belonging to a national (whether or not this is associated with a nation state) and European community. Heritage is considered not simply in terms of traces of the past, but also as carrying meaning for present and future generations.

The document rightly says that heritage is also what each society decides to pass on to future generations and thus it also includes architecture, the art of space that affects our daily lives and relates to the future. Thinking about the urban environment and its spaces makes it possible to create the conditions for a culture open to contemporary design.

The structuring of individual cultural identity is not so much a matter of understanding a cultural legacy in which a large section of the population can find no place for themselves, but as a process of adopting a heritage comprising the successive creations of the people and societies that have gone before us in the geographical area we live in today. This conception is thought to facilitate intercultural dialogue, as individual cultural identities are built through exchanges with different cultures. The idea of national identity is always seen as a dynamic notion, open to external exchanges.

The key Recommendations in the document for heritage education are centered around the fulfillment of the following goals:

• Strengthen the sense among European citizens that they have a shared European identity;

The European dimension and the transnational nature of our heritage should be promoted in order to transmit a sense of belonging to a shared European cultural space. Our culture and heritage are a transnational transfer and exchange between the artists and intellectual movements that have forged European history, making them the ideal domain for the transmission of a shared identity based on cultural diversity, nurtured by cultural exchanges within Europe. Seen in this light, heritage education

[1] EUROPEAN AGENDA FOR CULTURE: Working Group on developing synergies with education, especially arts education- Final Report – June 2010

is part of the process of building a European identity, while avoiding confrontation with others and rejection of all that is foreign that are often seen as inherent in the process of building collective cultural identities.

• Introduce the knowledge of heritage into school curricula;

In societies with national minorities or facing the issue of integrating populations of immigrant origins, the teaching of the mother tongue and cultural heritage of the different components of society are factors in the struggle against failure at school. Learning about the different elements of heritage also involves setting them in their historical context.

• Promote a transdisciplinary approach to heritage education involving archaeology, history, geography, literature, philosophy, music and the visual arts. This approach must be accompanied by its integration into university curricula, the implementation of a teacher training programme, and the development of appropriate teaching tools, in which a bilateral or multilateral dimension could be encouraged. Within this framework of transdisciplinary approach we will try to highlight the role of Geography by analyzing the concept of space and space production which is central in constituting and structuring the notion of heritage.

Some of the ideas discussed in this paper have also been outlined in detail in previous works of ours (Skordoulis 2008, 2016).

Discussing Culture, Identity and Cultural Identity

The discussion about Culture, Identity and Cultural Identity has resulted in heated and controversial debates among academics. Although these notions have been met with criticism in the academic world they managed to enter successfully mainstream political discourse. Their appeal lies in an attempt of developing an all-encompassing theoretical construct, which aims at explaining the international interstate and inner-state conflicts of the present and future.

At the center of the debates stand the concepts of civilization and culture[2]. Civilization is the broadest level of cultural identity that people have. Religion and language are the two most important characteristics defining civilizations.

The recent election of Donald Trump in the presidency of the US brings in the discussion conservative thinkers, like Huntington (1996), who reject the idea that any form of universalization among civilizations is occurring. Instead of universalization, global politics are being reconfigured according to cultural lines with peoples and countries from similar cultures coming together and those of different cultures separating. The relationship between differing cultures tends to be antagonistic. At a micro-level the antagonism takes place between different civilizations. At the macro-level the dominant division is between the West and all other civilizations (the rest).

[2] A definition of culture is not an easy task. This is apparent in Huntington's book as well. Sociologists have counted at least 168 different definitions of culture. Raymond Williams (1983) suggested three broad definitions. First of all, culture can be used to refer to "a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development". For example, one can speak about the cultural development of Western Europe and be referring only to intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic factors. A second definition of culture might be to suggest "a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group". Finally, according to Williams culture could be used to refer to the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity.

Among civilizations the west alone has had a major impact on every other civilization. The relation between the power and culture of the west and the power and cultures of other peoples is the most important characteristic of the world of civilizations.

The argument that ideology no longer counts lies at the core of the debate. Nevertheless, this whole thesis reflects not so much a cultural affiliation as an ideological creed. Cultural differences in themselves do not produce conflicts by definition. It is the approach to cultural questions that plays the most significant role. This approach is largely determined by ideology. Our epoch, is characterized by the dominance of ideology[3] over all aspects of social life including knowledge production and learning.

It is true that as the relative power of other civilizations increases, the appeal of western culture fades and non-western peoples acquire increasing confidence and commitment to their indigenous cultures. The central problem in the relations between the West and the rest is, consequently, the discordance between the West's efforts to promote universal western culture and its declining ability to do so. The universal aspirations of western civilization, the declining relative power of the west and the increasing cultural assertiveness of other civilizations insure generally difficult relations between the west and the rest.

Huntington (1996) prescribed the elimination of the multiculturalist agenda in the USA as seeking to reduce the nation to a conglomerate of civilizations without a single cultural identity. His firm belief that the "American Creed" should be the centerpiece of American policy leads him to fear *"the dangers of racial, sectional, ethnic, economic and cultural diversity"*. He firmly rejects multiculturalism and contends that the real clash in American society is the clash between multiculturalists and the defenders of Western civilization and the "American Creed". In his criticism of multiculturalism, he states explicitly: *"the multiculturalists are very often ethnocentric separatists…their mood is one of divesting Americans of the sinful European inheritance and seeking redemptive infusions from non western cultures…they are a dangerous force, which may damage and even destroy the relationship of the US with Western civilization."* (Huntington 1996, pp. 305-307)

Huntington advocated a xenophobic and very often a racial attitude towards other cultures. His arguments against the multiculturalists imply that the European cultural heritage of the US is what determines its current prestige, wealth and power and that the presence of other cultures will only serve to accelerate the decline of the US. His rejection of multiculturalism is pursued from a conservative standpoint. Evidence of Huntington's ideological affiliation can be found in his definition of American "core values". He writes explicitly: *"Historically, American national identity has been defined culturally by the heritage of western civilization and politically by the principles of the American creed on which Americans overwhelmingly agree: liberty, democracy, individualism, equality before the law, constitutionalism, private property."* (Huntington 1996, p.305)

[3] Ideology is a crucial concept in the study of the cultural forms of any social formation. Therborn (1980) quotes R. Johnson arguing that ideologies always work upon the ground of culture. Like culture, ideology has many competing meanings. An understanding of this concept is often complicated by the fact that in the field of cultural studies the concept is used interchangeably with culture itself. For reasons of clarity we will adopt a very broad definition according to which ideology refers to a systematic body of ideas articulated by a particular group of people. Since ideology is bound to the interests of a particular social grouping it produces a distorted image of reality thus coming in an uncompromising antithesis with science.

When Huntington speaks about the heritage of western civilization he refers precisely to the classical heritage: Greek philosophy and the rationality of the Enlightenment tradition. These are the cornerstones of western (mainstream) culture.

Rationalism has indeed developed within western civilization. But does this fact mean that it bears the imprint of the civilization in which it emerged?

The idea that rationalism encodes western social-cultural values and is therefore hostile to the interests of non-western peoples unites many scholars in American and European universities. By portraying rationalism as an integral part of western civilization and simultaneously placing it in an antagonistic context with other civilizations, in practice undermines any such claim for the preservation of classical heritage.

The social constructivist critique of rationality

The constructivist theories treat rationality as an epiphenomenon of the wider cultural and social structures of the west.

For Harding (1998) and many others, knowledge systems cannot be classified in terms of better or worse accounts of reality. They are simply different accounts of reality that different social orders produce in order to cope with their culture- and language- bound perceptions of reality. She believes that in order to coexist with other cultures in a multicultural world we have to abandon the idea of "one true knowledge" and begin to live in a "borderland epistemology". That means an epistemology respecting the distinctive understandings of nature that the world's different cultures have the ability to produce.

Harding (1998) claims that a new movement of comparative epistemology emerged from the older "Eurocentric" colonial frameworks which had represented other cultures and knowledge traditions as the products of "savage minds". She believes that other cultures had local knowledge systems but only the west produced claims that were universally valid. The anti-Eurocentric comparative epistemology movement began to reevaluate the sophistication of other cultures' achievements and the contributions these had made to the development of Europe and have gone unmentioned in the conventional historiography. Her conclusion is that modern western knowledge has to be reevaluated as another local knowledge system.

Challenging the so-called "Eurocentrism" is a characteristic feature of postmodernism. S. Amin confronts "Eurocentrism" by presenting the central contributions of the Arab-Islamic cultures to world heritage. He claims that the Eurocentric version of "humanist universalism" negates any such universalism since Eurocentrism has brought with it the destruction of peoples and civilizations who have resisted its spread.

In the same collection Martin Bernal, author of "Black Athena: the Afro-asiatic roots of classical civilization", insists that the Greek foundations of European knowledge are themselves founded upon black Egyptian civilization. He disputes the originality of Greek mathematics and argues that Eurocentric ideology has distorted the history of the development of knowledge. According to him, "Eurocentrism" developed in 18th century Europe as the rationale for various forms of European slavery and imperialism.

In a recent article Josette Adda (1998) discusses the issue which is at stake here: Rationalism and Universality. She states her view very clearly: *"Many local actions or innovations may be interesting,*

politically important and so on but have no universal value; they are providing a momentum for the local educational system without contributing to the growth of universal knowledge. It is an error to call them 'science'". (Adda 1998, p.53)

The author of this paper, being an educator, shares the view that it is a mistake to make decisions about education on the basis that local knowledge systems are cognitively equivalent to that being developed in Europe. Of course traditional knowledge systems ought to be addressed in multicultural situations and teaching is greatly facilitated if it is conducted in a native language or dialect.

The differences in the multiculturalist debate in the last 20 years could not be reconciled. For Harding (1998) the Enlightenment philosophy of universality defined the growth of knowledge in ways that devaluated women, nature and "backward cultures". She believes that the new philosophies of knowledge and power emerging from the gender, environment and sustainable development discussions and the analyses they draw signify the return of the Enlightenment's "others" (women, nature, "backward cultures"). Harding's article takes us to the root of the problem which is no other than the politics of "identity" being closely associated with the postmodern assault on Reason.

The Postmodern Critique On Reason: Lessons to be Learned

The leading postmodernists reject "Enlightenment politics", which can be defined as the project of a world according to the principles of universal reason. They follow Nietzsche in being suspicious of all claims to universality and reason. They believe that such claims always mask the power interests of those making them. Imperialist nations, ruling classes, males, whites heterosexuals, doctors, psychiatrists and criminologists have all claim that their perspective defines a universal and rational outlook. By doing so they have effectively silenced other nations, other classes, other genders, other races, those of other sexual orientation, patients etc.

The leading postmodern theorists do not conclude from this that we should simply replace one claim to universality and reason with another. That would be to continue playing the Enlightenment game and they believe that something more radical is called for. They proclaim that reason is inherently manipulative and dominating and that claims to universality necessarily involve the subjugation of what is "other".

For Lyotard (1984) the postmodern condition is marked by a crisis in the status of knowledge in western societies. Postmodernism is said to signal the collapse of all universalist metanarratives with their privileged truth to tell, and to witness instead the increasing plurality of voices from the margins, with their insistence on difference, on cultural diversity and the claims for heterogeneity over homogeneity.

Lyotard's particular focus is the function "of narrative within scientific discourse and knowledge". His interest is not so much in scientific knowledge and procedures as such, as in the forms by which such knowledge and procedures claim legitimacy. Science is important for Lyotard (1984) because of the role assigned to it by the Enlightenment: its task, through the accumulation of knowledge, is to play a central role in the emancipation of humankind. Science has thus assumed the status of a metanarrative, organizing and validating other narratives.

A very comprehensive analysis and critique of the postmodern agenda has been given by Meiksins-Wood (1997). This critique focuses on the postmodernists' main preoccupations: language, culture and "discourse".

According to one version of postmodernism, human beings and their social relations are constituted by language. Language is all we can know about the world and we have no access to any other reality. In its extreme "deconstructionist" version, postmodernism has adopted those forms of linguistic theory according to which our patterns of thought are limited and shaped by the underlying structure of the language we speak. This means that society and culture are structured in ways analogous to language, with underlying rules and patterns that govern social relations in more or less the same way as the rules of grammar. As Meiksins-Wood rightly said, for the postmodernists society is not simply like language, it is language. And since we are all entrapped in our language, no external standard of truth, no external referent for knowledge, is available to us outside the specific "discourses" that we inhabit.

Another postmodernist current does not give language such an importance but insists on the social construction of knowledge[4]. The most vivid illustration of this epistemology is the claim that western science, founded on the belief that nature is governed by universal laws, is just an expression of the imperialistic and oppressive principles on which western society is based.

The social constructivists confuse the forms of knowledge with its objects. They say for example that not only the theories of science are a historical construct that has varied over time and has taken different forms in different social contexts but that the laws of nature themselves are socially constructed and historically variable (Newton 1997). This is the consequence of the epistemological position that human knowledge is enclosed within particular languages, cultures and social interests and therefore science cannot comprehend or approximate the physical reality. If the standard of scientific truth resides not in the natural world itself but in the particular norms of specific communities, then the laws of nature might as well be nothing more than what any particular community says that they are at any given time. Within this context it is a natural consequence of postmodernist epistemology to support particular "knowledges" including sciences particular to ethnic groups.

Koertge (1996) in her article "Wrestling with the Social Constructor" identified the critical component in the debate on the social construction of knowledge: *"There is no question that social epistemology can be a valuable enterprise. Unfortunately much of what goes by that name today consists of barely disguised ideological initiatives. One attempt begins with a discussion of the role of values in science and then attempts to incorporate political values into the construction of science"* (Koertge 1996, p.268)

This is in the best way exemplified in the writings of Luce Irigaray (1989), one of the leading postmodern feminists. In her book "Le temps de la difference", Irigaray speaks of a male dominated culture and after having declared that sciences are not neutral she criticizes the natural sciences not on the basis of scientific criteria but from the point of view of the masculine sex of the scientific thinkers. And as men for her are on the side of death, their dominance results in the following situation in the field of knowledge: *"Science and knowledge are today a real apprenticeship of the negative without a positive vision"* (Irigaray 1989, p.50).

Irigaray incorrectly identifies the natural sciences with the human sciences, which are obviously a lot more permeable to ideology than other fields of knowledge. The reasoning of Luce Irigaray is

[4] The thesis for the social construction of knowledge traces its roots to the tradition of sociology of knowledge that includes K. Marx, K. Mannheim and R. Merton. The crucial difference between these prominent figures of the past and contemporary postmodernists is that none of them was an anti-realist. None of them ever denied that science although situated in specific social contexts, it provides knowledge of reality independent of our social practices. It is therefore necessary to draw a clear distinctive line between social mediation of knowledge and social construction of knowledge.

perfectly comparable to that developed by the supporters of a "proletarian culture" in the USSR in the Stalin era.

In my view, it is Fredric Jameson who provided the final blow to postmodern arguments. In Jameson's view, moralistic dismissals of postmodernism are useless. Much more important is the task of furnishing a theoretical understanding of 'the postmodern moment' within the totality of capitalist social, political and cultural relations. Jameson analyses the theories of postmodernism by situating them within the theoretical milieu of Marxism and shows how Marxism, an archetypal 'modernist' theory, can be theoretically adequate and consistent with an analysis of the postmodern condition.

Jameson identifies four fundamental antinomies of postmodernism: time and space, subject and object, nature and human nature, and finally the concept of Utopia.

This work focuses on the first of these antinomies, what Jameson describes as the foundational antinomy of postmodernism, that is, between space and time.

Postmodernism, though it originated in opposition to modernism, has evolved into something more than a mere reaction to modernism. The epoch of Postmodernity has its own economic, political, and cultural ideals and practices. Jameson defines postmodernity in all these areas by studying the relations between society and the logic of capitalism within the market.

Jameson periodizes the history of capitalism by linking different cultural styles to different stages of capitalist development. He sees realism, modernism and postmodernism to be the cultural levels of market capitalism, monopoly capitalism, and multinational capitalism respectively. These cultural levels are dialectically related to the particular capitalist economic organization of their time.

Jameson has given an analytical explanation of how he reads postmodernity culturally by contextualizing postmodernism within the Marxist evaluation of capitalism. In order to do this he had to deal with the initial limitations that the base/superstructure metaphor yields for cultural theory. The economic base is seen in dialectical relation to the cultural superstructure, yet the base is seen as foundational and all attributes of the superstructure (politics, legislation, cultural creations etc.) are seen as owing their particular forms to the determining factors of the economic base. This analysis, employed by Jameson, provides all superstructural elements with the same meaning: they are all reduced to commodities within which they have no inherent meaning outside of their market value.

Postmodernity, is a cultural logic exemplary of the economic setting to which it bears a dialectical relation. It is a cultural dominant that arises as a result of the present stage of capitalist development.

Subject and Space

The notion of the subject seems to be at the heart of Jameson's formulation of the postmodern. While modernity designated the individual subject, postmodernity displays a radical fragmentation of the subject of Late Capitalism. The postmodern subject is denied of its past unique identity comprised of a coherent, continual consciousness. It is a fragmented, decentred, unstable subject (Stephanson 1988).

Crucial to Jameson's understanding of the postmodern is the transition from a temporal to a spatial logic. Time is an organizing system, a continuity within which the subject may situate him/herself as a unitary individual. Humans used to map themselves temporally within the scheme of history.

Within multinational capitalism, it is critical for the subject to be able to cognitively map him/herself within not only a physically global system but also within a social one. The spatialization of time is a result of the destruction of the temporality of the subject.

In postmodern society where the temporal continuity has collapsed, time implodes into a perpetual present. "Time has become a perpetual present and thus spatial. Our relationship to the past is now a spatial one" (Stephanson 1988, p.6).

Space becomes the crucial key to understanding our place within the cultural logic of Late Capitalism.

Jameson suggests that there are three basic phases in the development of the spatial logic of society under capitalism:

Market Capitalism was dominated by the spatial logic of the grid. Capitalism organized, and was organized by, a geometrical, Cartesian view of space.

In Monopoly Capitalism, figurative (representational) space stands in the place of the absent causality (indeterminacy). Space represents, and is represented by, distorted images of the real determinations of social relations.

In Late Capitalism, spatial logic is simultaneously homogeneous and fragmented. Postmodernism is connected with a certain type of conceptual space which Jameson terms 'hyperspace'.

Hyperspace characterizes the inability of the subject to locate him/herself physically/spatially within the world. Hyperspace is a cognitive variable of the subject in direct relation to the physical environment.

The emphasis on spatial analysis in Jameson's work, has emerged from a much wider debate within the social sciences and particularly from the work of Marxist geographers in the mid-70s. These geographers challenged the privileged position accorded to temporality in social theory, insisting on the necessity of a more dynamic conception of space.

The Production of Social Space

Space had always been assigned a secondary position in relation to time; temporality is history, it is dynamic, the site of the dialectics, it is the potential for change and transformation, the historical possibility of revolution. Space, on the other hand, has always been seen as static and inert, space is simply given, a neutral category, an emptiness which is filled up with objects. The new geographers challenged the contemporary conceptions of space insisting that space is not given but produced. Socially produced space, spatiality, is not inert and static but is itself constitutive of social relations. Spatial relations and spatial processes are in fact social relations taking a particular geographical form. Therefore, we cannot simply take space as a given but require, what Henri Lefebvre (1991) called, a unitary theory of space, a theory of space which brings together all its elements: physical space, mental space and social space. What Lefebvre calls the perceived, the conceived and the lived. Perceived space is the space of surfaces. It is material, socially produced and empirically verified. It is also the space of production and reproduction, since for Lefebvre, space is not given but produced, it always rests on social and physical processes for its existence. Conceived space is made up of the mental representations of space that we generate. Euclidean Geometry, diagrams and maps of all kinds constitute the conceived space. It is the ideal, abstract space that we mentally imagine and then apply to the world. Lived space is the space of everyday life. It is space experienced through the complex symbols and images of its ‘inhabitants’ and users. The key element of lived space is that it both

includes perceived and conceived space and yet exists in opposition to them as well. Lived space resists the reductive abstractions of both materialist physical and idealist mental space. It is the site where our perceived and conceived notions of space meet, contested, combined and altered.

For radical geographers spatiality is differential, conflictual and contradictory.

Lefebvre, in his *Production of Space*, sets out a paradigm in which he claims all realms of epistemological enquiry should take note of the transition of general space into 'mental space', the assumption of *'logical coherence, practical consistency, self-regulation... and so on' that follows the appropriation of 'the status of space' purely as 'a mental thing' or a 'mental space'* (Lefebvre 1991, p.3).

He expresses his disapproval for theoreticians ranging from Foucault to Chomsky to Derrida and concepts such as grammatology and semiotics for a logical sloppiness that, he maintains, disrupts their whole projects. What, he argues, is missing from epistemology, as we know it, is a thorough conceptualisation of space and of its relationship to social practice. Modern critical thinking fetishizes mental space - which it has not actually defined - and uses it to authorise its theoretical and methodological agendas: *"...mental space then becomes the locus of a 'theoretical practice' which is separated from social practice and which sets itself up as the axis, pivot or central reference point of knowledge* …(Lefebvre 1991, p.6).

Lefebvre's work is of paramount importance in any examination of space. It is his recognition that space is a medium as powerful as any other for social formation and his notion that such space is *produced* that are central for a theory of space.

Lefebvre`s idea of 'social-spatial dialectic' is a method of inquiry. It is a method aiming in the formulation of a new dialectical relationship summarised in the term 'historico-geographic materialism'. His arrival at the idea of social-spatial dialectic came after a prolonged engagement with historical enquiry criticising the limitations of historical method.

Postmodern Geographies

In accordance with Lefebvre, Edward Soja commences his work on Geography by formulating a definition of historicism as '*an overdeveloped historical contextualization of social life and social theory that actively submerges and peripheralizes the geographical or spatial imagination*' (Soja 1989, p.15).

Critical rationality, argues Soja, is conventionally seen as historical: *'The critical hermeneutic is still enveloped in a temporal master-narrative, in a historical but not yet comparably geographical imagination'* (Soja 1989, p.11).

This has been at the expense of space and at the considerable advantage of capitalist ideology, whose creation of social inequality owes much to what space conceals. As Soja puts it: *"Today it may be space more than time that hides consequences from us, the 'making of geography' more than the 'making of history' that provides the most revealing tactical and theoretical world.* (Soja 1989, p.1)

Radical criticism, therefore, must: *"...be insistently aware of how space can be made to hide consequences from us, how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology.* (Soja 1989, p.6)

There exist, Soja explains, specific illusions that have helped hide space from critical thought: the 'illusion of opaqueness' and the 'illusion of transparency'.

Soja defines these 'two persistent illusions' - firstly identified by Lefebvre - thus:

"The 'illusion of opaqueness' reifies space, inducing a myopia that sees only a superficial materiality, concretized forms susceptible to little else but measurement and phenomenal description: fixed, dead, and undialectical: the Cartesian cartography of spatial science. Alternatively, the 'illusion of transparency' dematerializes space into pure ideation and representation, an intuitive way of thinking that equally prevents us from seeing the social construction of affective geographies, the concretization of social relations embedded in spatiality, an interpretation of space as a 'concrete abstraction', a social hieroglyphic similar to Marx's conceptualization of the commodity form. (Soja 1989, p.7)

Out of these two forms it is impossible to try to decide which has hidden consequences from us most. Soja himself makes no such attempt, simply stating instead that philosophers and geographers have tended to bounce back and forth between these two distorting illusions for centuries.

But he arrives at his clearest statement of the power of these illusions in a footnote explaining the dominance of space thought of as a physical entity:

"The dominance of the physicalist view of space has so permeated the analysis of human spatiality that it tends to distort our vocabulary. Thus, while such objectives as 'social', 'political', 'economic' and even 'historical' generally suggest, unless otherwise specified, a link to human action and motivation, the term 'spatial' typically evokes a physical or geometrical image, something external to the social context and to social action, part of the 'environment', part of the setting for society - a naively given container – rather than a formative structure created by society. We really do not have a widely used and accepted expression in English to convey the inherently social quality of organized space, especially since the terms 'social space' and 'human geographies' have become so murky with multiple and often incompatible meanings. For these and other reasons, I have chosen to use the term 'spatiality' to specify this socially produced space. (Soja 1989, p.80; n.3)

This is the 'spatiality' referred to earlier, a complex ideological *product* that involves space in all its social forms and in its relationships to society. The material structuring around us in, say, the city is one form of space: we can call it the *experience* of space. Yet this is only one single element of spatiality. Add to this experience what can be called the *perceptions* and the *imaginations* of space: maps, architecture, national boundaries in the former term; utopias, dystopias, in the latter. Spatiality is, following Lefebvre here, the interplay between material spatial practices, representations of space, and spaces of representation (Lefebvre 1991, p. 38).

Following Bachelard (1969), under the heading 'spaces of representation', Harvey (1989) lists 'places of popular spectacle', 'constructed spaces of ritual', 'symbolic barriers' and 'mythologies of space and place'.

David Harvey states that real space embraces imaginary space. Space has power, it is as powerful as history or language. And as such, it is said, it is about time its political importance was recognised. Not only the political importance but the centrality of spatiality to culture as a whole[5].

[5] Peter Jackson (1989 p.3) goes so far as to claim that *'culture is not only socially and geographically expressed...it must also be admitted that culture is spatially constituted'*.

Cognitive Mapping

Whereas, originally the transformation of space was a constitutive feature of modernism by the late 80's it had become the constitutive feature of postmodernism. Modernism was seen as essentially temporal whereas postmodernism became spatial. Modernism was valorised as dynamic, the site of history, narrative and memory, in short, the potential for change. Postmodernism is characterised as the site of pure immanence, immediacy, stasis and above all a disorientating and disempowering realm of space. The notion of postmodern 'hyperspace' has been put forward by Jameson (1991) to characterize the inability of the subject to locate him/herself physically/spatially within a world that is in itself mappable.

Jameson turns to architecture to illustrate this point and uses John Portman's Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles as an analysis example. This building sticks out in the city landscape, signalling itself as a self-contained world.

The visitor, when entering the building, is absorbed into a shopping, eating and living machine where orientation becomes almost impossible with its multitude of levels, panorama elevators and criss-crossing escalators illustrating (what Jameson calls) postmodern hyperspace. And he sees in this spatial disorientation a metaphor for postmodernism as such: *"So I come finally to my principal point here, that this latest mutation in space - postmodern hyperspace - has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world"* (Jameson 1991, p.44).

The metaphor of a "cognitive map" has attracted wide interest since it was first proposed in the late 1940s. Researchers from fields as diverse as psychology, geography, and urban planning have explored how humans process and use spatial information, often with the view of explaining why people make way finding errors or what makes one person a better navigator than another.

It is interesting to note that Jameson shares the anxiety of getting lost expressed by Kevin Lynch (1960). This is also apparent in his 1988 article "Cognitive Mapping" (Jameson 1988) by suggesting a counter strategy of "Cognitive Mapping" based on acceptance of the concept of social totality.

The concept of totality is Hegelian, a modernist concept. This is where Jameson departs from the theoreticians of the postmodern for whom the rejection of any social totality is a fundamental of the postmodern condition. Part of the passage out of the logic of postmodernism will be the way in which the subject will relocate him/herself within this fragmentary culture; the key lies in "Cognitive Mapping".

Jameson writes: *"...the conception of space that has been developed here suggests that a model of political culture appropriate to our own situation will necessarily have to raise spatial issues as its fundamental concern. I will therefore provisionally define the aesthetic of such a new (and hypothetical) cultural form as an aesthetic of Cognitive Mapping"* (Jameson 1991, p.50-51)

For Jameson, a cognitive map is *"that mental map of the social and global totality we all carry around in our heads in variously garbled forms"* (Jameson 1999, p.162). As a metaphorical example of a cognitive map, Jameson refers to literal maps of cities and to Kevin Lynch's *The Image of the City*, which showed that *"urban alienation is directly proportional to the mental unmappability of local cityscapes"* (Jameson 1999, p. 163).

Lynch showed that people find it easier to navigate some cities than others, primarily because of the rivers or mountains that border some cities, and/or their prominent landmarks (skyscrapers, monuments, etc.) which allow their inhabitants to draw more accurate mental maps of the city as a whole.

Jameson expands the idea of this mental map we have of our city, to the larger mental map we have of our world (our cognitive map). He then likens this cognitive map to Althusser's formulation of idealogy as *"the Imaginary representation of the subjects relationship to his or her Real conditions of existence"* (Jameson 1999, p. 163).

This brings him to the conclusion that *"the incapacity to map socially is as crippling to political experience as the analogous incapacity to map spatially is for urban experience. It follows that an aesthetic of cognitive mapping in this sense is an integral part of any socialist political project"* (Jameson 1999, p. 163).

In other words, if we can't locate who and where we are in the world, we'll never figure out how to take any positive action toward changing or improving the world.

Let us elaborate further on this point. We are, Jameson argues, in a spatial and social confusion. We find ourselves within a system so large that our only way to re-orient ourselves, physically and socially, is to employ a method of mapping ourselves spatially. Cognitive Mapping is, therefore, a necessary principle which the individual subject must utilize in order to figure its way out of the spatial confusion. It is the possible attempt by each person to understand him/herself in relation to the disastrous effect that multinational capitalism has on the subject.

It is Jameson's political project to pull us out of this despair, to show us how we may cognitively map our way out. Cognitive mapping is essentially a modernist strategy, is the invention of ways of using one object and one reality to get an understanding of space, which the subject cannot represent or imagine.

A similar strategy, underscoring the historical importance of mapping, is proposed by David Harvey (1989) in his book on "The Condition of Postmodernity".

Harvey points out how the accessibility, appropriation, domination and production of space has been crucial in the development of modern society from the first, primitive stages of capitalism and up to today's "flexible accumulation", a definition for the economic setting of postmodernity he employs, instead of Jameson's "Late Capitalism" (Harvey 1987).

Linking the growth of capitalism with the concept of spatial control, Harvey shows that, historically, the fragmentation of space was a major factor in achieving this, and that the development of accurate maps was one of the tools facilitating this. During the last hundred years, this development has been accelerated, represented by, as Harvey put it, the annihilation of space through time.

This time-space compression has given rise to a cultural homogenisation. One obvious effect of this is what Harvey terms as a "loss of place-identity" - the inability of the individual to identify his or her world geographically.

To illustrate this, we can turn to Lynch (1960) and his description of Jersey City as it appeared through interviews with inhabitants where in studying the individual sketches and interviews, it became apparent that none of the respondents had anything like a comprehensive view of the city they had lived for many years. The maps drawn were often fragmented, with large, blank areas...(Lynch, 1960, p.29). Jersey City is a negative example for Lynch by the very lack of place-identity that it elicits.

This is exactly what the Cognitive Map is called upon to do in the framework of the physical city: to enable a situational representation on the part of the individual subject to the unrepresentable totality which is the ensemble of society's structure as a whole.

The History of Cartography

Jameson's work on Cognitive Mapping is further elaborated by making explicit reference to the History of Cartography (Jameson 1991, p. 51-52). The citizen is portrayed as an urban practitioner; a cartographer who constructs his or her own mental maps of the city. The History of Cartography functions as a transitory for a modernist analysis of a problem situated in a postmodern setting. In a similar manner, Marxism, an essentially modernist theory, is employed to provide a definition of postmodernism.

The return to the History of Cartography shows us that Lynch's subjects are involved in precartographic operations. The results of precartographic activities are historically described as itineraries rather than as maps: diagrams organized around the subject-centered journey of the traveller along which various significant key features are marked (eg. oases, mountain ranges, rivers, monuments etc.). The most highly developed form of such diagrams is the nautical itinerary, the sea charts (the portulans) where coastal features are noted for the use of the navigators who rarely departed into the open sea.

The use of the compass introduced a new dimension into sea charts, a dimension that transformed the problematic of the itinerary and allows us to pose the problem of Cognitive Mapping in a more complex way.

For the navigation instruments (compass, sextant and theodolite) correspond not merely to new geographic and navigational problems (determination of longitude in the curved surface of the planet, as opposed to the simpler matter of latitude which navigators could empirically determine by ocular inspection of the coast); they also introduced a whole new coordinate: the relationship to the totality, particularly as it is mediated by the stars and by new operations like those of trigonometry. At this point Cognitive Mapping comes to require the coordination of the empirical position of the subject with abstract conceptions of geographic totality. This procedure of locating the subject's position within the totality signifies the reconstitution of the postmodern subject's identity, the transcendence of its fragmentation and the regaining of its ability to act.

Finally with the first globe (1490) and the invention of the Mercator projection, yet a third dimension of Cartography emerges which involves the nature of representational codes, the fundamental question of the languages of representation and in particular the unresolvable problem of the transfer of curved space to two dimensional charts.

At this point it becomes clear that there cannot be true maps (true representations). What is affirmed is not that we cannot know the physical/social world and its totality in some abstract or "scientific" way. According to Jameson, Marxian science provides us with a firm knowledge of the world, of the social totality as such.

The fundamental problem that the "knowing subject" has to solve is the problem of the representation of space. So there is an apparent shift in the problematic of space conceptualisation. The focus of research is shifted in studying the forms of space representation that include not only maps and diagrams but also forms of art (painting, sculpture), computer software (simulations, virtual reality) etc.

Parallels are also frequently drawn between navigating through everyday spatial environments and information systems, (eg. Cyberspace, hypertexts etc). In these cases, conceptual differences between Euclidean and virtual spaces are identified and ways considered in which to make information spaces more coherent.

The strategy of Cognitive Mapping is discussed as the invention of ways of using one object and one reality to get an understanding of the totality. Our analysis, following an analogy to the History of Cartography reveals that the fundamental problem is not knowledge of the totality, which is adequately provided by abstract scientific thinking but that there cannot be true representations of space. Research should be shifted from the perpetual effort to resolve the ontological dilemma between substantival and relational space, to the study of true forms of space representation.

In the educational field, this is translated into new research directions that should be drawn departing from the abstract conceptualisations of space to the study of representations of space where information technology plays a key role.

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