

LANDSCAPES THAT FLOAT: REIMAGINING THE NEW URBAN CONTEXT

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Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	5
BACKGROUND	5
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	7
TOWARDS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	10
<i>Dialectics</i>	12
LOCATING THE 'CULTURAL'	12
DISSERTATION STRUCTURE	13
CHAPTER TWO: TOWARDS A CRITICAL POSTMODERNISM.....	15
INTRODUCTION: LOCATING POSTMODERNISM	15
<i>Postmodernism and the Critique of Modernity</i>	17
<i>The Death of Meta-Narratives</i>	18
<i>The Suspicion of Science and the end of 'Grand Theory'</i>	18
FOUCAULT	19
<i>Discourse</i>	20
<i>Power/Knowledge</i>	20
POSTMODERN THEMES: DIFFERENCE, IDENTITY, AND EVERYDAY LIFE	22
CONCLUSION	24
CHAPTER THREE: THEORISING CONTEMPORANEITY	26
INTRODUCTION	26
MODERNITY AND THE CONTRADICTIONS OF ENLIGHTENMENT	27
THEORISING THE BREAK	28
<i>The Emergence of a Post-industrial, Information Society</i>	29
<i>Post-Fordism and a Flexible Regime of Accumulation</i>	30
<i>Globalisation</i>	32
POSTMODERNITY AND CULTURAL CHANGE	33
<i>Economy and Culture</i>	34
<i>The Dominance of Culture</i>	35
<i>Commodification</i>	36
CONSUMER CULTURE AND THE AESTHETICISATION OF EVERYDAY LIFE	37
<i>Limits to the Thesis of Commodification</i>	38
<i>The Aestheticisation of Everyday Life</i>	39
<i>Consumption of Signs and Symbols</i>	39
<i>Hyperreality and the Sign or the Extremes of Consumer Society</i>	40
<i>Fragmentation, Subjectivity and Identity</i>	42
<i>Globalisation and Culture</i>	44

CONCLUSION	45
CHAPTER FOUR: THEORISING SPACE AND SOCIAL PRACTICE	46
INTRODUCTION	46
<i>The Social Construction of Space and Time</i>	47
<i>The Spatio-Temporality of Modernity and Postmodernity</i>	48
<i>Absolute, Relative and Relational Views of Space</i>	50
THE SPACES OF SOCIAL THEORY	51
<i>Geographies and Sociologies of Space</i>	52
<i>The Social Production of Space</i>	53
<i>Spatiality</i>	55
<i>Space and Difference</i>	57
POWER AND SPACE	58
<i>Real, Imaginary and Symbolic Power</i>	59
CONTEMPORARY SPATIAL PRACTICE	60
DEFINING PLACE AS A SITE OF SOCIAL PRACTISE	62
THEORIES OF PRACTICE	65
<i>Bourdieu</i>	67
<i>Culture as a Social Practice</i>	68
CONCLUSION	70
CHAPTER FIVE: THE CONTEMPORARY CITY	71
INTRODUCTION	71
REPRESENTING THE CITY IN THEORY	72
<i>The 'Organic' City</i>	72
<i>Rise of Positivism</i>	73
<i>Political Economy Approaches</i>	73
<i>Contemporary Representations of the City</i>	74
<i>Los Angeles as the Paradigm of Postmodern Urbanism</i>	75
<i>City of Process and City of Layers</i>	76
THE SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF THE POSTMODERN CITY	77
<i>The Macro Location of Spatial Change</i>	78
<i>The Decentring City</i>	79
<i>Private Spaces and Space of Exclusion</i>	81
<i>Urban Space and Surveillance</i>	82
<i>Imagining the Global in the Local</i>	82
<i>Altered Spaces and Consumption Environments</i>	84
<i>Postmodern Architecture and Urbanism</i>	85
CHAPTER SIX: LANDSCAPES THAT FLOAT	88
READING THE LANDSCAPE	88

<i>Methodology</i>	90
BACKGROUND	91
<i>A History of Local Urban Growth and Decline</i>	91
<i>The Planning Framework</i>	92
<i>A Competitive Cities Discourse</i>	93
<i>Authorship and Authority</i>	94
<i>Signs of Expansion</i>	95
SAFE AS HOUSES: THE SPREAD OF UP-MARKET SUBURBIA	96
<i>Coding the New suburban Landscape</i>	97
<i>Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estate: the social construction of 'Community'</i>	99
LANDSCAPES OF POWER	101
<i>A Symbolism of Corporate Distinction</i>	102
<i>The Coding of Abstract Power</i>	103
LANDSCAPES OF CONSUMPTION.....	104
<i>Gateway as an Instrumental Space</i>	106
<i>An Ideology of 'the Urban'</i>	106
CONCLUSION: A TOTAL LANDSCAPE	109
CHAPTER SEVEN: SYNTHESIS	111

Chapter One

Introduction

Background

“Located on the Ridge overlooking Durban's upmarket northern suburbs, Moreland's commercial development, the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate and the Umhlanga Ridge New Town Centre, offer a truly integrated lifestyle, where work, entertainment and social life blend seamlessly into each other.....The New Town Centre is changing the way people work. The way they play. The way they live their lives”

“Building on a vision”, Moreland Marketing Brochure

The Umhlanga-Mount Edgecombe node to the north of Durban has recently undergone substantial urban development. This development is centred on an exclusive and sophisticated office estate, a grand sized shopping and entertainment centre, a proposed new town centre and a number of exclusive residential developments located on the suburban edge. The spatial transformations that have occurred suggest a change in practice in the production of the built environment and with it the emergence of a distinctly new urban geography. This kind of change has been reported on in general accounts of contemporary urban change and has been associated with structural changes and changes to the nature of capital as well as the ideas of globalisation and an epochal shift to postmodernity. Accounts of edge cities, polycentric growth, decentralisation, office parks, master-planned communities, consumption environments and postmodern urbanism and architecture all feature in this general discourse.

Rather than the result of an organic and market-driven laissez-faire process urban growth in the north has occurred in accordance with a particular vision and the creative orchestration and patronage of a dominant corporate landowner and developer. The level of control suggests a process that approximates the master planning of a total urban environment. Control over outcomes extends from the development of products for the market to the control over the visual and aesthetic form they take, the investment and design of public infrastructure, streetscaping and

landscaping. Part of the argument promoting this investment seems to have been derived from the imagination of a globally competitive city. This has resulted in the production of a set of "distinctive new urban settings" (Knox 1991) all of which are distinguished from other contemporary urban settings and contribute to the consolidation of the image of the north as a 'world class' context. Following this, significant investment and attention has gone into the design and production of a quality urban environment intended to project the ideal standard of 'world class'. This has involved both the physical and symbolic construction of a total landscape through the development of distinctive settings, the employment of iconic and symbolic structures such as public sculptures, gateways and boulevards, and the use of architectural coding, and an attention to urban design and landscaping.

This distinctive and aestheticised urban landscape may ultimately be driven by concerns for profit and a concomitant desire to construct a particular image but the emphasis on creating a distinctive urban environment seems to occur in conjunction with claims of a new urban model. Evidently these are based on a broadly urbanist set of ideas and discourse, showing concerns for an integrated, human-scaled and people-centred environment. This claim contributes to the projection of the north as a total lifestyle solution - as a new urban paradigm which seeks to change the way people live, work and play. Part of this may relate to selling the north as a commodity, but embodied in this is the recognition of the built environment as a social space in which lifestyle, culture and social practices are embedded.

The wholesale constructions of new spaces on the edge of the existing urban fabric, where they are relatively free from the material and symbolic reference points of existing urban structures, suggests the possibility of producing new spaces in the image of the ideal city. As such these new developments hold a privileged position by being able to construct whole new landscapes, restricted only by the imaginative constraints of the developer within the socio-economic context of the market, and as such provide the opportunity of providing a new model for urban development and urban experience. These new spaces, being constructed perhaps for a certain market, to fulfil specific functions and with apparent symbolic meanings attached to them, are still the products of social relations. The new urban geography emerging in the north therefore seems to offer a particular opportunity for the analysis of the urban environment in relation to social change. As such they are spaces filled with both material and symbolic power. On one hand this requires understanding the north as a social product shaped by broader social and economic forces related to the changing

dynamics of capital, but also as a cultural landscape through which ideas, images discourses and ideologies are established.

Conceptual Framework

The city is a spatial phenomenon, and remains so both substantively and in terms of our experience and perceptions of it. Recent social theory gives credence to an understanding of space as a dynamical feature of social processes. Societies are as much spatially located as they are located in the temporal flux of historical change. Accordingly and emerging out of the intersections of geographic and sociological imaginations there is renewed focus on the ways in which social processes and social practices are constituted spatially, while the spatial is at the same time an active part of these processes and practices. This suggests a dialectical relation between the social and the spatial. Space is not simply a universal given but is a fundamental human and social dimension. An epistemology that recognises the penetration of space into all realms of social life, being and subjectivity recognises the complex and contingent basis of human life.

Following this we can assume something of a dialectical relation between urban change and social change. Consequently the urban environment is not simply shaped by the forces of capital or social interests in a linear and automatic way, but is both the product and site of social interactions and acts as a medium in which social interaction and practice takes place. This tends to emphasise the role of process and social practices in shaping the landscape, but employs an understanding of process in which the urban landscape is understood as both a "mould and mirror" of the economy, culture and society (Knox 1991, 181 citing Meinig). Consequently the emerging urban geography does not simply reflect processes of social change but is directly implicated in them and are "simultaneously contingent and conditioning, outcome and medium, product and premise" of this change (Ibid: 182).

Cities and urban environments are sites of social process and practice. They are primary sites of human social and capital investment and the site of productive and creative output, consumption and production and social reproduction. We may assert that the city and the urban landscape forms the material and symbolic manifestation of a society's interested actions, aspirations, beliefs and value systems. Consequently these landscapes play an important part in social process as the sites of social and cultural meaning and as the location of relations of power. As Duncan

(1990) argues they need to be recognised as constituent elements in socio-political processes of socio-cultural reproduction and change.

A central concern here then involves the critical analysis of urban change as a dialectical feature of broader social change afflicting contemporary societies in general. In this sense the emergence of a new landscape in the north of Durban provides the impetus for a critical enquiry and case study for critique. The focus here is on understanding the particular characteristics of the north as part of a general phenomenon of urban and social change occurring within capitalist societies. It means relating these changes within a broader set of processes identified with fundamental social-structural shifts occurring in the organisation of societies as interpreted and filtered primarily through the ideas of postmodernisation and globalisation. It also means taking into account the changing nature of the economy as a fundamental structuring mechanism of social process and practice. It means identifying a set of structural features, related for instance to the restructuring of capital and the influence of new technologies, located at the global and broad scale of social change without giving primacy to these forces. Spatial change while perhaps originating at this level has a differential effect at the local level of experience as the flow of ideas, discourses and images are constituted through social practices in places in particular and unique ways.

In one way we can identify the broader structural features implicated in the changing nature and form of cities and urban geographies with the 'real'. These include the real processes of physical and material transformations of space and the degrees of division in the contemporary geography of cities as the social order of the city is influenced by insertions of new technologies, market forces and capitalist restructuring. This has been the focus of both positivist and materialist analysis of the city and their reduction of the city through definitive analysis. The 'real' is that part of the city that is objectified through rational scientific analysis and has formed the focus of conventional geography and urban planning practices. But the social life of a city, as the site of experience and meaning, is as much a product of the 'imaginary'— an idea which is not so easy to represent in scientific discourse and one that suggests that complete control over the diversity of the city is not possible.

There are a number of ways in which we may identify the 'imaginary' as constituted in the space of the city. Lynch (1959) for instance with methodical purpose set about to identify the ways in which we internalise the 'image of the city' as a structured form of

mental knowledge we have of places and used to guide practical action. This goes in some way toward acknowledging the 'imaginary' as a form of subjective experience and symbolic meaning. However in a more fundamental way the 'imaginary' tends to challenge the representability of the 'real' space of the city. It suggests that these and other spaces may exist as much in our minds and as part of our unconscious desires and imaginaries as they do in material form. It focuses on the city as a site of desire and fantasy but more particularly as a mental construct, as a thing situated firstly in the mind and related to both unconscious and conscious thought.

Acknowledging the imaginary tends to break down the object-subject dualism of theoretical engagement as our own imaginaries are implicated in how the world is constructed. And here importantly the imaginary may also be related to the idea of discourse. Harvey (1996: 79) defines the "imaginary" as that "complex interior world" constructed through our individual ontologies and epistemologies - our beliefs regarding how the world is, and how greater understanding of it may be achieved - as well as how I/we would like to "be" in the world. Discourses are located in the social, and in specific cultural and time-space contexts but come to shape practical action as an internalised set of beliefs. Consequently the way cities are envisioned has effects (Bridge and Watson 2001: 7) because in part these imaginaries are located in powerful discourses.

Spatial practices, such as the production of whole new parts of a cityscape are situated textually within discourses and systems of knowledge as well as in individual imaginaries and to various degrees have consequences for the way the city is shaped. Related then to the understanding of space as simultaneously the site of the real and the imaginary is the question of power. The question of power is contained in the continued flux of the city as it undergoes material changes and changes to its meaning. Power is frequently understood in a materialist sense as defined in terms of economic relations, access to resources or location within a social structure. But power can also be seen to operate symbolically and discursively through space as people struggle for control over the generation of meaning and the construction of identity in place particularly as societies undergo change. A great deal of what may be seen as discursive power struggles seem to operate at a symbolic level.

Identifying the location of the built environment within discursive practices then suggests that we need to understand the built environment not only as a social product but perhaps more specifically as a cultural product. Clearly though the

landscape becomes the depository of a set of culturally communicated ideals and values that originate within the system of social relations and are never entirely innocent or free of relations of power or discourse. Following the concept of 'mold and mirror' this landscape plays an active role as a structured and structuring mechanism as a means through which a "social system is communicated reproduced experienced and explored" (Duncan 1990: 17).

Towards a Theoretical Framework

A central intention of this enquiry lies in developing a more critical understanding of the processes structuring the built environment. An engagement with the problematic of space and the social production of space and place cannot be fully or appropriately explored through a conventional planning paradigm, which tends to reduce these questions to a set of normative concerns around performance. Urban planning as a spatial discourse and a practice has also been identified with an instrumental form of rationality and as implicated with totalising representations of the city (Lefebvre 1989; De Certeau 1984). A more critical stance has been adopted which requires that nothing in the process of re-imagining the city should be taken as given or accepted on face value without consideration of the source of these ideas and their location within the broader social context. The focus is rather on understanding the dynamic ways in which the urban landscape takes shape through social processes and as a cultural product.

This contextualisation and the location of phenomenal as well as physical and symbolic changes to urban landscapes within the social requires a particularly theoretical focus. The focus of this dissertation is therefore primarily theoretical and occurs at a particularly abstract level. The particular example of the landscape in the north of Durban offers an opportunity to test these ideas. The primary objective is then the development of a theoretical framework that allows us to understand how and why landscapes and the urban geographies located in them are primarily social constructs. This requires identifying theories that locate the shifting urban landscapes to the production and reproduction of social life and social structure. This involves a fairly explorative orientation and the convergence of different areas of analysis, involving perspectives from social theory, human geography, urban studies, and cultural studies, areas that have often been treated as separate lines of inquiry. Much of this enquiry is predicated on a hypothetical shift from modernity to postmodernity. This includes as much the accounting for 'real' substantive changes to the structures

of social organisation as it does for the shifts in the 'imaginary' and structures of thought that the epistemological challenges of postmodernism brings.

Perhaps in contradictory fashion it also involves an engagement with the general theories of social theory. Following Baert (1998: 1) we can take social theory to be "a relatively systematic, abstract and general reflection upon the workings of the social world". Some of this theory tends to reach a high level of generality, referring to the social realm across societies and historical periods, as well as reaching a high level of abstraction (ibid). However taking a critical approach interest in these ideas is directed toward developing an appropriate set of conceptual tools we can apply in the analysis of the phenomenal world and particularly the shifting urban landscape as a social product.

This suggests a common interest with the broad idea of critical theory. Critical theory as a distinct project seeks to combine "abstract and universal philosophy with historically concrete and empirical knowledge of the social world" (Calhoun 1995: 13). Calhoun suggests that while it is a term associated primarily with the Frankfurt school theorists, especially Horkheimer, Adorno and later Habermas, critical theory is not limited to them (ibid). Of central significance, drawing on Calhoun's (1995: 35) broad understanding of critical social theory is the view that a critique of the contemporary world requires the recognition that the present state of affairs does not exhaust all possibilities. It suggests a need to look below the surface, a need to 'denaturalise' the human world through enquiry and critique, uncovering the tension between what exists and a range of other possibilities. Applying this form of enquiry to the city suggests we should not accept the production of new urban environments as part of a 'natural' and inevitable part of social change or progress.

Critical theory confronted traditional 'non-critical' philosophical positions. To the early critical theorists a social science steeped in the philosophy of positivism claimed an objective and value-free enquiry but was unable to see the underlying conditions of social order or their own implicit involvement in constructing the social world (Calhoun 1995: 19). Consequently it missed out on the contingency and internal contradictions of the empirical world and precluded the possibilities of fundamental change by accepting the world as it existed. For the early critical theorists a critical theory involved a dialectical analysis of the contradictions "internal to every epoch, or social formation, or situation, or text" (Calhoun 1995: 23).

Dialectics

Identifying contradiction, complexity and contingency within social life involves a necessary sensitivity to dialectical thinking. A number of points can be made drawing on Harvey's (1996: 48-57) understanding of the principles of dialectics. Firstly and perhaps most importantly, emphasis is placed on process over things. The analysis of things, elements, structures and organised systems that we identify in the objective world are understood in terms of processes, flux and flows as being perpetually constituted and reconstituted out of these. Secondly, therefore, understanding the things and structures involves understanding the relations by which they are constituted. Relations between things are not simply described in a simple deterministic or cause and effect way. Thirdly, the relationship and constitution of things and structures is characterised and conditioned by complexity. Things being constituted by multiple and complex processes are themselves internally complex and contradictory. For these reasons things cannot be taken for granted as the objects of empirical analysis and change evolves in a dynamic way frequently encountered by contradiction. A dialectical enquiry refrains from a causal or mechanistic way of thinking about things and differs from a deterministic or functionalist teleology.

Locating the 'Cultural'

Part of the intention here is to reflect on the cultural location of urban geographies. Recently the social sciences are said to have taken a 'cultural turn' involving the emergence of an interdisciplinary field of studies. A concern for an 'objective' study of social life tended to marginalise culture from the core of sociology as a separate field of enquiry and one best left to anthropologists and literary theorists, amongst others (Calhoun 1995: 61). Postmodernism presents a swing to the cultural through its predominant focus on discourse and difference. This has also involved a decline in materialism and a move away from Marxist political economy (Ray and Sayer 1999 : 1). Following the Marxist model, what was seen as secondary or superstructural has now become primary (Ray and Sayer 1999 :1; Kumar 1995: 116). Today following the influences of structuralism and poststructuralism there is greater emphasis on the discursive constitution of social life. Structuralism introduced a semiotic analysis of social life and culture that traced all meaning to the structure determined by the functioning of systems of signs or symbols (Smith 2001). Although rejecting the structuralist belief in a single universal truth hidden in the systems of ideas and signs, postructuralism continued the emphasis on semiotic systems as targets of cultural analysis (Ibid: 118-9).

Postructuralists emphasise the role of discourse, linguistics and the text in understanding how social worlds are constructed and maintained. The adoption of semiotic models tends to give culture an autonomous role in social life (Smith 2001: 118) so that culture is understood as something that is not simply a reflection of underlying forces such as the technological, the political, the economic or the physical world. Although this semiotic logic of culture seems to maintain culture at an abstract level the cultural dimension of social life can never be completely autonomous from the forces of social life and its practices (Sewell 1999). Ray and Sayer (1999: 5) suggest that common to all ideas of 'culture' is a concern with the relationships and practices to which meanings, symbols and representations are important. This identifies culture with a set of 'signifying practices' that give meaning to and orientate social behaviour (Ibid). Following this we can identify the terrain of culture as an abstract system of symbols and signs, but link it with the material by suggesting that this system takes on primary meaning and has an effect on social structure and social life through the realm of practices.

Williams, identifying culture as a "signifying system through which necessarily (though among other things) a social order is communicated, reproduced and explored", insisted that cultural practice and cultural production are major elements in the constitution of social order (cited by Duncan 1990: 15). As "a signifying system" culture is present within all other social systems and "manifests all other systems within itself" (Duncan 1990: 15). This positions the landscape, the central object for empirical analysis here, as a discursive and textual terrain containing a system of signs, images and symbolic meaning laid down through social practice and contributing to the formation and reformation of social order. Applying the rubric of culture in the analysis of change to urban geographies therefore provides the opportunity for drawing together the social, the cultural and the economic as constituent fields in the production of an urban landscape.

Dissertation Structure

This chapter has outlined some of the conceptual thinking behind this enquiry. It has outlined a fairly broad objective. The second chapter is a closer engagement with the theoretical ideas located in postmodernism. This includes acknowledging some of the epistemological challenges of postmodernism combined with a shift in intellectual thought identified in a shift from modernism to postmodernism. The intention is to identify some of the conceptual tools we can apply within a critical postmodern

framework. The third chapter deals more specifically with a theorised epochal shift from modernity to postmodernity. This is an attempt to account for some of the substantive changes affecting social structure, social life, culture and contemporary experience. While many of these ideas are focused particularly on those societies rooted in enlightenment thinking, they also tend to have a more general and widespread effect through the forces of globalisation. The representation of these changes draw on insights both within and outside of a broad postmodern framework. The fourth chapter attempts to take account of the greater emphasis given to the spatial in social theory and its application in the understanding of social and cultural practice. This chapter also makes an attempt to define the related ideas of space and place by bringing together geographic and social perspectives. Within the fifth chapter 'the city' and urban process forms the most central object of enquiry. The intention is to locate substantive processes of 'real' urban transformation in the contemporary era. A secondary objective here, recognising that the city is never fully representable, is also to identify certain transformations in the theoretical imaginary of the city and to make some linkages with this and the 'real' transformations taking place. The sixth chapter involves a closer look at the specific transformations taking place to urban space and the location of a new urban landscape within the production of new urban geography. The intention is to identify transformation by locating change in both the 'real' and the 'imaginary' within urban space through an empirical and textual reading of the landscape.

Chapter Two

Towards a Critical Postmodernism

Introduction: Locating Postmodernism

Instead of being a general account of contemporary social theory and postmodern thought in engaging with postmodernism here two ideas seem of particular relevance. The first objective in this chapter is to identify and draw on certain critical insights emanating in particular from poststructuralism. It is recognised that the core of postmodernism involves an epistemological challenge to the intellectual enterprise and the state of knowledge in society. This challenge demands a reflective stance to the role of both theory and knowledge in constructing and shaping the real world. Theory does not happen in a social and historical vacuum. The second concern forms the focus of the next chapter and requires taking account of various sociological and other claims that point to a transition from modernity to postmodernity and the emergence of a new historical stage of social organisation. The purpose of this engagement is primarily to develop an understanding of the nature of change in contemporary society and the conditions within which contemporary social practices take place, but is not however geared towards a definitive account of the causes of change in any teleological sense. The intention is rather to identify some of the contextual features of socio-spatial change in the contemporary era and which should provide some tools for a critical engagement with the phenomenon of new urban environments.

These two central concerns point to a distinction made by a number of writers (Kumar 1995; Smith 2001; Woods 1999) between *postmodernism* and *postmodernity*, or the difference between a postmodernism of *attitude* or a postmodernism as *object* (Allmendinger 2001). In this regard we can distinguish *postmodernism* as an intellectual and philosophical project involving a critical shift in intellectual thought and the way we analyse the world. Central to this is a theoretical position derived largely from poststructuralism that rejects the tenets of modernist thought. Together with the intellectual project, *postmodernism* is also identified with an aesthetic enterprise involving the rejection or sometimes the continuation of artistic modernism. The clearest expression of this is in architecture where *postmodernism* delineates a stylistic shift generally involving the rejection of the architectural codes of high modernism and the international style. This form of postmodernism involves a self-

conscious way of thinking about and engaging with the world, in terms of theory, the arts, culture and even lived experience. *Postmodernity* on the other hand involves the idea of the postmodern as an epoch or object (Allmendinger, 2001), identifying complex social, economic, technological, and cultural changes involved in substantive historical change to society. Frequently this contains the idea that we live in a period which supersedes modernity - an age that is literally 'post-modern'. The question of epochal shift is contested. The idea of epochal change frequently rests on technological and economic shifts, the emergence of new productive activities and role of information in society, apparent structural changes affecting social life and social organisation. These ideas may be linked to broader cultural changes associated with the effects of electronic media, new attitudes, values, aesthetics, lifestyles and changing patterns of consumption. The process of transition and epochal change here may be understood as *postmodernisation*.

A hard division between these concepts is not really possible, particularly if we accept that shifts in knowledge and our ways of thinking of the world are located in real, material and structural shifts associated with social change. The distinctions therefore remain theoretical as these ideas in fact overlap and feed into each other as is reflected in the common ideas contained in the chapters that follow. Kumar (1995: 84) suggests that unlike the definition of modernity and modernism and the respective distinction of one as a social ideological category and the other a cultural, aesthetic response to this, the same cannot be made for postmodernity and postmodernism. Unlike modernity and modernism, postmodernity and postmodernism are more easily interchangeable, suggesting that the different realms of society - political, economic, social and cultural - tend to collapse into each another (Ibid). Postmodern culture cannot be considered apart from its social context. The term *the postmodern* then is used here as a general term to embrace the idea of a qualitatively new experience implicated in social life, cultural and aesthetic experience and intellectual thought. This forges a link between everyday life, its practices and the construction of meaning through postmodern discourse.

Following Smith (1999: 215) a distinction can also be made between a "postmodern sociology" and a "sociology of postmodernism". Following this we can distinguish between postmodern theorists and theorists of postmodernity. The former advances postmodern theoretical perspectives and the latter takes the postmodern and process of postmodernisation as its theoretical objects, often applying conventional/modernist frameworks of analysis. Baudrillard for example can be defined as a postmodern

theorist who applies a postmodern perspective to the analysis of contemporary culture and society.

Postmodern discourse has implications for the way we represent social change, as postmodern theory theorises contemporary society in a way in which society and culture tend to collapse into each other (Kumar 1995: 114). This kind of blurring tends to present a challenge in relating the intellectual current of postmodernism with change in social life, but also tends to confuse the problem of periodicity and how much of postmodern theory could be considered historically specific or transhistorical (Calhoun 1995:107- 107). The identification of a new age of 'postmodernity' is postmodernism's main claim for a historical grounding (Ibid: 107). At the same time a central feature of postmodern intellectual thought seems to be an implicit critique of modernity.

Postmodernism and the Critique of Modernity

The 'post' prefix suggests that postmodernism is a concept inextricably bound up with modernism and modernity. Following other writers, notably Jameson (1992) but also Kumar (1995), instead of the total supersedence of a set of practices, narratives, ideologies and aesthetic sensibilities, postmodernism involves a critical even continuous engagement with the modern. Postmodernism contains the idea of the modern, but also the idea of something new, emerging on the back of the realisation of the limits of modernity and modernism.

At the core of postmodern discourse is an implicit critique of modernity. Postmodernism involves an attack on its value systems and beliefs, drawing on a predominantly philosophical attack on its idealistic claims of human progress, reason, and scientific rationality (Smith 2001 234). As a theoretical and critical position, postmodernism derives substantially from poststructuralism, a loose body of work originating in the French intellectual arena as an outgrowth of structuralism. Its central protagonists are generally identified as Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard and Baudrillard. Together they represent a significant shift in social and cultural theory by offering "a critique of subject-centred reason, monological texts or readings, grand narratives, general truth claims and the normalisation of Enlightenment rationality" (Calhoun 1995: 100). By implication the broad shifts in intellectual thinking have involved a conscious re-examination of the nature of knowledge in contemporary society, the construction of the subject and a critique of totality – the attempt through intellectual and administrative systems to capture social life as a whole (Allmendinger

2001:23). Poststructuralism provides a powerful position in cultural and social theory today and has effectively replaced Marxism as the critical voice of the left.

The Death of Meta-Narratives

The foundational ideas giving modernity its specificity and sense of historical purpose (Crook et al., 1992: 224) and leading to modernist practices and discourse can be seen to originate with the enlightenment. The enlightenment vision, centred on the elevation of reason over other forms of knowledge and belief systems, such as religion or superstition in support of a process of demystification and ultimately the control of nature. The continued belief in the virtues of the public exercise of reason for political, intellectual and moral life may be identified as the continuation of this project (Barnes and Gregory 1997: 505). This general position is still defended by critics of postmodernism such as Habermas.

A central feature of the postmodern critique of modernity is derived from what Lyotard calls an "incredulity towards meta-narratives" (Allmendinger 2001: 51). This refers to a loss of confidence in, or a sense of disillusionment with the "great historico-philosophical schemes of progress" (Kumar 1995: 133) that were central to the impulses of the modern age. The narratives of emancipation, human progress and enlightenment provided the foundational urges for the search for truth and the building of knowledge. Underlying these urges is an apparent belief that the natural and social worlds are ultimately knowable, and that a true picture of this world may be constructed using the application of reason in the acquisition of knowledge. Also implicit in this is a teleological narrative of a natural progression of society to some ultimate goal based on the ideas of progress, enlightenment and emancipation.

The Suspicion of Science and the end of 'Grand Theory'

In Lyotard's schema enlightenment 'metanarratives' are prescriptive and practical in nature and therefore distinct from science with its specific claims to truth (Kumar: 1995). However as Kumar (1995:133) suggests much of the appeal of modernity's metanarratives is intimately bound to the role of science. The foundation of knowledge and the search for truth was largely predicated on the assumption that the structures of the natural and social worlds could be revealed through the application of reason and science (Featherstone 1995: 72). This led to the elevation of science and the belief in scientific method as the principle method of enquiry. Modernist philosophies of science such as positivism held that scientific knowledge based on the empirical evidence of detached experts could reveal truth about the objective

world for the common good (Smith 2001: 235). Science was a tool for understanding the world but also for transforming it. Postmodernists see these claims as problematic, and identify science as a form of ideology allowing domination, objectification and control rather than emancipation and truth (ibid). Modern science is seen as legitimising itself through an appeal to certain grand narratives. Consequently the decline of the grand narrative suggest a loss of faith in the ability of science to reveal truth and guide humanity towards emancipation and a better world.

Postmodernists reacted not only against science's formal claims to truth but also the notion of a singular and objective social science, or the possibility of general theory. Modernity resulted in a particular approach to explanation, what C. Wright Mills called grand theory and defined as "a systematic theory of the nature of man and society" (cited in Barnes and Gregory 1997: 84). Grand theory assumes that the social and natural worlds are organised according to a single universal scheme. A grand theory inevitably depends on a dominant "monolithic explanatory principal" (Barnes and Gregory 1997: 84) seemingly geared toward the systematic revelation of an underlying order and unity in the world. Accordingly 'grand theory' depends on scientific empirical practise through which it tends to validate its own assertions and provide a means of explaining the world by locating real examples, events or phenomenon within its own abstract conceptual framework.

Related to the critique of the validity and ontological and epistemological foundations of these formal claims, general or universal theory is rejected by postmodernists as being as much a means of control as a means of enlightenment and understanding. The construction of such knowledge and the reduction of society or history to a single objective schema through systems of classification and ordering tend to obliterate diversity, difference and otherness. This underpins the totalising role of general theory upheld through an appeal to science and scientific method. Scientific pursuits and the knowledge generated, far from being objective, are located in particular discourses with the production of knowledge being aligned with the delineation and reproduction of power in society. This kind of thinking we owe particularly to Foucault.

Foucault

The loss of confidence in the grand narrative and an attack on reductionist grand theory forms a central unifying scheme within postmodernism, but the influence of poststructuralism, and in particular Foucault in this is central and has a particular bearing on the critical framework being developed. Foucault is not principally seen as

a social theorist - there appears to be no specific attempt in his work to address the social. However his methods, the breadth of his analysis, and the central concerns of his theory have made his work central to our understanding of prevailing social conditions and contemporary social theory (Smart 2000: 632). Nor did Foucault ever see himself as a postmodernist although his work offers a profound critique and analysis of modernity and its social and epistemological practices. In this respect a central feature of his work has been a demonstration that all forms of knowledge have their origins in historical and social rather than abstract foundations (Allmendinger 2001:36). In addition he analyses the formation of knowledge by emphasising power and historical process therefore giving depth to a critique of enlightenment rationality and science.

Discourse

The idea of discourse is a central motif of his and has been absorbed widely into the language of postmodernism. Discourse seems to suggest a more or less stable coded field giving shape, meaning and stability to the formation of knowledge. A discourse predefines knowledge by determining those sets of rules and parameters within which the formation of knowledge is made possible (Barnes and Gregory 1997). These rules operate as a set of shared and implicit rules that operate 'behind the backs of individuals' and specify which statements can be made and which are true or false (Baert, 1998: 119). Seemingly knowledge on its own is too relative and unstable; knowledge and systems of thought are situated in, shaped and given meaning and value by the discourses that give rise to them. These ideas emerge in Foucault's archaeological methods and suggest structuralist roots. The intention of his archeological method was to map out the discourse structures and the epistemes - the deep epistemological foundations - that lay behind them (Smith 2001: 123). Epistemes act as a set of discursively created rules that function mainly to limit possibility and maintain discipline (Allmendinger 2001: 52). These structures tend to be taken for granted by individuals who operate within them; discourse is not the product of the individual agent operating in free will, but rather individual will is constituted in discourse. They operate over long periods of time, defining what classical sociology calls a *longue durée* and a set of practices which go with it, but which are disrupted with radical historical changes.

Power/Knowledge

Beyond the location of knowledge within specific time-space contexts, a more powerful critique emerges in his identification of the "mutual imbrications of power and

knowledge" (Calhoun 1995:107). Here and in his genealogy Foucault draws on Nietzsche's key understanding of social life as being driven by a "will to power". In his genealogical writing *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) demonstrates that while the development of knowledge systems of social science and psychiatry were presented as liberating, they were crucial to new and more efficient forms of social control (Baert 1998:123). Foucault formulates a discursive conceptualisation of power, arguing that discourses are situated within networks of power and are never free of power relations. In his schema individuals are constituted and regulated through discourse which are implicated in and arise out of the power/knowledge struggles between groups of people (Smith 2001: 122-23). Accordingly, instead of imagining "that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended", we should admit that "power produces knowledge...there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault 19: 27). Consequently in our study of 'power-knowledge relations', "the subject who knows, the objects to be known and the modalities of knowledge must be regarded as so many effects of these fundamental implications of power-knowledge and their historical transformations" (ibid 28).

Conceiving of a power, in which all ways of knowing are exercises of power, this power is constitutive of social life and culture generally (Calhoun 1995: 118). Smart (2000: 638) has summed up Foucault's conception of power as "a complex strategic situation or relation which produces social realities, practices, and forms of subjectivity, rather than as a property or possession which exclude, represses, masks or conceals". Consequently power should not be understood simply in terms of domination. Relations of power between people are better understood in terms of the relation of these actors to a discourse governing their interaction. Power becomes normalised in society through the routine practices of people as they reproduce the cultural codes that are shaped by it. This discursive, non-materialist idea of power, makes Foucault's conceptualisation of power very different and more nuanced than a class-based conception of power. Drawing on Nietzsche's notion of "will to power", power for Foucault appears to define a fundamental even ontological state in social life. Power is dispersed, or de-centred, arising out of the relation between people, and acts through rather than on them. Relations of power are fundamental to sociality; it permeates every aspect of social life, operating at all levels from the individual, local and institutional levels rather than acting as a univocal force located in the relation between the individual and the state.

Postmodern Themes: Difference, Identity, and Everyday Life

Postmodernism has involved the mobilisation of a number of themes related to a general attack on the grand ambitions of modernity. Consequently as Featherstone (1995: 80; 74) suggests the current mood in theory no longer carries the modernist desire for unity, generality and synthesis - instead there is an emphasis on "fragmentation against unity, disorder against order, particularism against universalism, syncretism against holism, popular culture against high culture and localism against globalism". More particularly the leitmotifs of identity and difference have become key oppositional features to the universal (Calhoun 1995: 75). Following poststructuralism there is sensitivity to the construction of the social world through language and discursive elements, the value of difference, sensitivity to marginalised or subaltern voices, and sensitivity to local practices, conditions and constructions.

A key characteristic of postmodernism has been the way in which various writers have thematised the importance of difference (Calhoun 1995: 114). The basis of this theme emerged out of Derrida's challenge to the implicit 'logocentrism' of the Western philosophical tradition - its belief in a "completely ordered world whose inner secret or logic - the ultimate 'word' or logos - provides the core, foundation and meaning for all thought language and experience" (Barnes and Gregory 1997: 509). In place Derrida asserts difference (*différance*) as a fundamental and predefining structure of human experience, thought, communication and identity. For Derrida the text is an attempt to establish knowledge through writing, but he maintains that the text is always open to multiple readings. There is no original and authentic reading of the text, nor an absolute author; "texts are open 'dialogic' structures, shot through with 'aporias' (ramifying contradictions) and 'heteroglossia' (a plurality of voices)" (Kumar 1995: 131)

There is a sense in which postmodernism at its most essential involves a celebration of difference, and the theme has come to be applied broadly. Difference is seen as primal. Following Lyotard, the activation of differences and acknowledging the unrepresentable offers a radical countering of totality (cited in Allmendinger 2001: 31). As part of a moral and political enterprise (Smith 2001: 240) it involves recognising otherness, different voices and identities in a counter to hegemonic practise. However following Calhoun (1995: 98) the valuing of difference, while avoiding the intellectual domination of Enlightenment theories, may also lead to the indulgence of a radical

relativism, a resignation to the incommensurability of language and the suspension of critical judgement. Calhoun suggests there are two real reasons why we should be sensitive to difference. Firstly we can recognise contra universalist thinking that there are many different values and modes of reasoning operating interpersonally and between cultures, and that often differences of value may be incommensurable. Secondly, there is positive value in these differences, akin to biological diversity, the production of cultural variation has intrinsic value. Diversity and difference is the source of possibility including the possibility of "reflective self awareness" and "creativity".

At the same time however and perhaps in contradictory fashion the question of human agency has become somewhat displaced by the rejection of the humanist ideal of the subject through an idea which is known as the 'decentring of the subject'. The humanist ideal is located in the ideal of the individual making rational choices as a motivated, conscious and autonomous agent. 'Man' was at the centre of attempts to uncover truth about the world. Following the influence of structuralism and poststructuralism the subject is understood as an arbitrary rather than a universal construction. Foucault's account of the development of the human sciences demonstrates that 'man' as a subject of science is an idea particularly located in the rise of modernity, rather than being a feature of Western thought located in antiquity (Kumar 1995:129-130).

Structuralism initiated the decentring of the subject by locating human behaviour and practice within an objectively available system of signs and ideas (Smith 2001: 98). The idea is extended by poststructuralism as attention is drawn to the way subjectivities are shaped by arbitrary yet powerful cultural and historic forces (ibid: 119). The human subject, rather than being free to determine his or her own future, is formed through the interstices of multiple and often competing discourses and as a matter of consequence becomes marked by terms of ethnicity, race, class, gender and sexuality (Barnes and Gregory 1997: 358). Located at the meeting point of discourse the subject also is located in the flow of power. The more deterministic poststructuralist view maintains that the individual is constrained by powerful discourses although they act with the illusion of free agents. In general poststructuralism tends to displace the question of agency - the discursively created individual has no real control over the construction of self-identity.

The shift in Postmodernism away from grand theory results in a focus on everyday life, the sites of everyday practice and the local. The theme echoes Lyotard's pronouncement of the disillusionment with total explanations and a shift toward the 'petit recits' – the "small narratives involving the micro-politics of everyday life" (Allmendinger 2001: 30). It has involved a range of alternative research genres that move away from an abstract, universal views of history and social life to the local-present. Featherstone (1995: 55) defines everyday life as associated with the mundane, taken-for granted, common sense routines that sustain the fabric of daily lives. It is the terrain of non-reflexive routines, beliefs and practices embodied in the present, the pre-institutional experiences that sustain the social world and associated with reproduction, maintenance, play and even consumption (ibid). It is more interested in the micro-world located in the cultural rather than the macro-world of social order and cohesion located in historical process.

This perspective seeks to counter the universalism and foundationalism contained in the philosophical framework of modernity. It emphasises the heterogeneity of everyday language, a plurality of voices in contrast to systemic modes of thought contained in scientific, philosophical and other formalised discourses (ibid). Everyday life offers forms of resistance, an idea emblematically presented for instance in De Certeau's (1984) "Walking in the City", as the 'concept city' - the rational city ordered through instrumental forms of reason - is re-appropriated through pedestrian acts. A focus on everyday life in its essence seems to be an attempt to recover the life-world of individual experience, the source of our beliefs, definitions and narratives and offers resistance to forms of methodical rationalisation maintained through the application of specialist forms of knowledge.

Conclusion

Part of the concern here is to identify ways in which the new urban landscape emerging to the North of Durban might articulate with a theoretical and a hypothetical historical shift from modernity to postmodernity. Postmodern theory at the same time provides certain insights that simultaneously challenges the formation of knowledge and our ability to give an objective 'true' account of this process, while also providing some of the critical tools for engaging with it. Postmodern theory is paradoxical; in its anti-foundationalism it sometimes approaches something of a meta-narrative itself (Allmendinger, 2001) while its emphasis on difference tends to undermine the possibility of critical thought (Calhoun 1995). Foucault's ideas identifying power as located in discursive practices and as imbricated in the formation of knowledge

seems of central importance to the interrogation of spatial practices and the production of a new urban landscape. The constitution of power as a fundamental feature of social life may be related to the formation of knowledge and to discursive practices. In turn the landscape seems to work as a particular site allowing for the concretisation of a society's knowledge and as a discursive field expressing cultural ideals and values. These ideas may provide clues to the way in which the formation of a distinctive landscape operates as a particularly powerful way for normalising power in society. This kind of thinking itself may be foundational. Consequently it is important to note other possibilities of postmodernism, such as the sensitivity to difference, identity and everyday life. While these themes may not have particular application in the analysis of the new urban landscape because of the broad nature of this enquiry, they nevertheless contribute by stimulating a set of hypothetical questions regarding the way in which this landscape as a discursive site and as a product of a set of practices articulates with these shifts in sensibility and attitude.

Chapter Three

Theorising Contemporaneity

Introduction

Both postmodernism and postmodernity are hypothetical concepts. We have already identified some of the theoretical accoutrements of postmodernism linking these with a philosophical shift and an epistemological challenge to modernity. The emphasis of this chapter is on identifying with the more sociological accounts related to a hypothetical epochal shift from modernity to postmodernity. The focus is identifying 'real' substantive changes to the socio-economic organisation of society as well as a qualitatively different form of 'lived' cultural experience brought on by the general processes associated with postmodernisation. Related to the idea of a postmodernity are a set of other ideas associated with the definitive features of contemporary society including the related ideas of a post-industrial society, post-Fordism and flexible accumulation. These ideas tend to locate social change within structural shifts associated with technological change and the nature of capitalism as central forces operating within society and related to its productive practices. While these ideas have their basis in materialist and consequently modernist modes of thinking, they are subsumed under the general hypothetical idea of a postmodern society. In addition the idea of globalisation suggests that these ideas may have wider socio-geographic application than Western capitalist society as ideas, technology, images, discourses and so on have a wider reach under the conditions of greater global interconnectedness and the receding of political, economic and cultural boundaries. Change is widespread and is not only confined to the advanced capitalist societies of the West.

From the start it may be important to recognise that postmodernity is theorised as a hypothetically defined historical shift. Theorising this shift inevitably involves theories that have their basis in both modern and postmodern modes of theorisation. Postmodernity must be considered in one way or another in relation to modernity. The observation that widespread and radical social change is taking place is accepted generally, although there is divergence over whether it is a simple extension or development of modernity or whether there is something of a historical rupture ushering in a genuinely new historical configuration (Crook et al 1992: 1).

Modernity and the Contradictions of Enlightenment

Durkheim, Marx and Weber were also important theorists and analysts of modernity. Some of their ideas may still have relevance for today if we consider postmodernity in some ways to be an extension of modernity. Modernity involves the realisation of change as a fundamental part of social life. Marx inscribed together under the sign of 'modernity' all the features of industrial capitalism and its disruptive effects to almost all traditional modes of association, thought and everyday life (Antonio 2000: 110). He identified *alienation* as part of the subjective experience of capitalism, but also used this to refer to the objectification of labour exploitation (Smith 2001: 8). Durkheim, applying a functionalist analysis of society, made a distinction between 'organic' and 'mechanical' forms of solidarity in society. Traditional society in which relations were defined by similar tasks operated through 'mechanical' solidarity while the division of labour in modern industrial society characterised an 'organic' solidarity in which social cohesion was based on interdependence and the co-operation of component parts (Smith 2001: 9, Baert 1998: 39). Consequently he identified modern society as being characterised by greater complexity and *differentiation*. For Durkheim 'anomie' was a product of differentiation, referring to a condition of dislocation arising from the lack of institutionalised values which provide the normative regulation needed by society (Smith 2001: 10, Baert 1998: 40). Weber's attitude to modernity was far more ambivalent. For Weber modern industrial society was characterised by the formal *rationalisation* of social activity which resulted in the development of separate value spheres such as law, art, architecture, education politics and economic life. Weber identified the modern bureaucracies with the pervasiveness of a *zweckrational* - an instrumental rationality concerned with the norms of efficiency and the means best suited to achieving ends - and its penetration into the different culture-spheres and the displacement of traditional value-rational action (Smith 2001:14; Callinicos 1999: 160). Weber was concerned about the dehumanising affects of rationalisation as systematic forms of logic maintained by specialist, especially scientific, knowledge and technically determined goals determine more and more of social life. The result was disenchantment as, with the onset of modernity, meaning was emptied out of the world leaving people trapped in an iron cage of meaningless bureaucracy and rationality (Smith 2001:14). Already these themes pointed to some of the contradictions of the enlightenment process and disillusionment with its grand narratives.

Habermas's ideas follow on these themes and suggest in shorthand that modernity has involved the process whereby the *system world* of state, capitalism, and large bureaucratic and capitalist organisations, has increasingly colonised the *life world* of solidarity, family, community and substantive value commitments (Smith 2001: 50). According to Habermas the lifeworld is increasingly state administered and commercialised. Late capitalist society while set with contradictions is seen as a highly organised and steered society (Crook et al 28).

Theorising the Break

The question of epochal change forms a central theme in the postmodern debates. Jameson (1992, 1984) and Harvey (1989) indicate continuity in a fundamental established system rather than a complete rupture or break by suggesting that postmodernism and its cultural manifestations are characteristic of a set of conditions set in place by late capitalism. As modernity is associated with the rise of industrial capitalism we consequently live in an age defined by an advanced stage of modernity and not in a substantially different period defined by postmodernity. For some writers, such as Habermas, Lash and Urry and Harvey, present transformations represent an advanced form of capitalism in which capitalism is modified to accommodate its own contradictions and crises (Crook et al, 1992)). Habermas is a strong opponent of postmodernism as an abstract ideological project and as representing the end of modernity. Likewise Giddens maintains that modernity has assumed a new form of 'radicalised modernity'. There exists a common view then that Western society is in an advanced stage of modernity or capitalism rather than in a period superseded by something fundamentally different. Calhoun (1995: 106) argues that postmodernism commonly involves a 'pseudohistorical' claim of epochal transition but that in nearly all material ways modernity remains intact. For him modern tendencies remain in the centralisation of power and demand for economic productivity (ibid). The consequences of the present emanate out of modernity.

Avoiding the dichotomies of a modernity-postmodernity debate, Crook et al (1992) suggest we are not in a postmodern period as such but that this process is already underway. Consequently they draw attention to the process of postmodernisation. Drawing heavily on modern social theory, postmodernisation involves the extension of the characteristic processes of modernisation to extreme levels such that postmodernity is an extension and reversal of modernity. Drawing on the idea of differentiation, Crook et al (1992: 32) describe the form of society in advanced capitalism as a highly differentiated society exhibiting high levels of complexity and

specialisation. This society is also a highly organised society exhibiting high levels of rationalisation and commodification, processes which provide for centralised management mediated through bureaucratic power and money (Ibid 32). However modernity is seen to be overreaching itself such that hyper-differentiation has begun to produce dedifferentiating effects. This leads to fragmentation as social units fragment into multiple types of structures – for instance the organisation of labour includes mass production as well as niche-market producers, co-operatives, homeworkers; family life is less defined by the nuclear model (Ibid 33). This also effects the value spheres of culture as their boundaries become hyperdifferentiated to the point of fragmentation (Ibid: 36). The effects of hyperrationalisation opens up the whole terrain of culture to commodification as taste becomes generalised and released from tradition or hierarchical value and becomes subject only to consumer selection (ibid: 37)

The Emergence of a Post-industrial, Information Society

Theorists of modernity recognise the radical transformations and disruption to tradition that occurred with the advance of industrial capitalism as a central feature of social change. Today, following Bells original thesis Western society is seen to be undergoing fundamental transformation with a move from a society based in industrial production to a post-industrial society. This view tends to locate the changing nature of production as the source of social and cultural change and therefore emerges out of an essentially modernist and teleological view of social evolution. The general thesis of post-industrial or information society suggests that society has moved into a phase of development based on the growth of knowledge and the role of information. This involves the transcendence of a modern industrial society geared to the production of goods and the arrival of a post-industrial society organised around the generation and use of knowledge and the management of information.

While there is a strong sense of technological determination in this thesis, there is an indisputable claim as Kumar (1995: 15) points out that today technological change and information have impacted on the way we work, communicate, do business and receive information. The focus of this thesis tends to centre on the particular role of information, over technological innovation as information forms a growing part of economic and productive activity. Knowledge does not just lead to technical innovation, but becomes the “principle activity of the economy and the principle determinant of occupational change” (Kumar 1995: 11). A significant argument here involves the changing structure of an information society with an increase in the

production of human and technical services leading to a new service class of knowledge workers - an expanding professional class with high levels of technical skill and theoretical knowledge (Kumar 25).

Many of these claims have been disputed, a principal one being the claim over what constitutes an information worker and the extent to which information activities more and more determine the economy and occupational structures (Allmendinger 2001: 60). While technological change and new productive activities are in evidence in social and economic life, the counter arguments hold that underneath old realities remain. Kumar (1995) amongst others suggests that rather than a radically new society based on the technologically driven emergence of a post-industrial age, changes are the result of processes speeded up but already at work in the dynamic nature of capitalism itself. Rather than post-industrialism, what we are seeing may be another cycle in the restlessness of industrial capitalism itself. Although they take on new forms, the imperatives for profit, power and control remain, and are applied following a communications revolution more intensely and through a greater range of applications (Kumar 1995). New class structures may emerge, but equally there is the possibility of the emergence of an information underclass with power concentrated with the professional and technical class because of their control over the production and storage of knowledge based products and their orientation to planning future development (Allmendinger 2001: 63; Crook et al 30).

Post-Fordism and a Flexible Regime of Accumulation

Just as technological change is seen to have an undeniable effect on society, so to are the organisational features of capitalism seen to provide a central force in social change. For Harvey although changes to the organisation of capitalism are apparent, "the basic rules of a capitalist mode of production continue to operate as invariant shaping forces in historical-geographical development" (1989: 121). Harvey (1989: 189) suggests then that the inherent logic of capital accumulation and its tendencies toward crisis remain the same and that these still have their effect on the trajectory of social and spatial change. The 'basic rules' of capitalism maintain that it is growth orientated, dependent on the exploitation of living labour, and is forced through competition into being technologically and organisationally dynamic. Together, these features operate in an inconsistent and contradictory fashion such that capitalism bears an inherent tendency toward instability and inevitable crisis.

Harvey (1998) suggests we have entered into a new era brought on by a crisis of overaccumulation between 1973 and 1975 and characterised by a severe period of recession. In response to this the capitalist world has witnessed the emergence of what he calls a *flexible regime of capital accumulation*, as either a new and stabilising regime or a temporary fix to this crisis. In pointing to a *regime of accumulation* Harvey borrows from a regulation school of thought. Drawing on Harvey (1989) and Liepitz (cited In Harvey, Ibid) by a *regime of accumulation* is meant a period of stabilisation in which there is positive relation between consumption and the accumulation of capital involving a mutual process of co-ordination between the conditions of production and the reproduction of wage-earners. A regime of accumulation can exist if the schema of reproduction is coherent. The co-ordinating factors that allows for the regulation of such a system is known as the *mode of regulation* and refers to not only the political-economic regulatory framework but also the complex interrelations of habits, practises, norms, the interiorised rules and social processes, that bring individual behaviours within the schema of reproduction. Harvey makes an argument for the economic foundation for change based on the logic of capitalism, but simultaneously recognises that this change is more complex, is embedded in broader socio-cultural change which in turn presents a challenge for theorising capitalism.

Broadly analogous to Harvey's concept, the fundamental shifts in capitalism as an organising force in society have been interpreted by others as a shift from Fordism to post-Fordism. Different interpretations of this occur, but broadly this shift is recognised as a move away from Keynesian forms of regulation and management, processes of standardisation, the factory assembly line, and the industrial mass production of commodities for a mass consumer market. This is replaced by a regime characterised by more flexible technologies, flexible organisational forms, flexible labour processes, greater geographic mobility, and new marketing and consumption practises (Harvey: 124). The characteristic of flexibility as a characteristic of this change may in fact be applied more generally than to production methods and labour practise. It is also applicable to many products and commodities themselves as well as the way space is produced and used.

A view less aligned to orthodox Marxism and operating perhaps on a more descriptive level put forward by Lash and Urry (1987), sees change as located in a shift from 'organised' to 'disorganised' capitalism. 'Disorganisation' refers to many of the post-Fordist traits as well as the global expansion of markets, greater class differentiation, the emergence of a service class with its own values, greater geographical dispersal

of activity, and the emergence of a cultural postmodernism (Crook et al 1992: 29). Through their idea of 'disorganisation', Lash and Urry's analysis starts to draw linkages between post-Fordism and postmodernism, although they maintain postmodernism as a cultural condition distinct from other areas of social life.

Globalisation

The idea of globalisation must also be included in the historical and macro theorisation of contemporary social change. Globalisation however should be understood as the extension of forces, such as imperialism, colonialism and international trade that were already in operation for a period of time. Consequently globalisation may be seen as a force allied to the extension of the process of modernisation, and in turn even postmodernisation. Globalisation may mean many things but essentially involves greater connectivity at a global scale. It refers for instance to "the spatial integration of economic activities, the movement of capital, migration of people, development of advanced technologies, and changing values and norms that spread among various parts of the world" (Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000: 5). It has particular spatial and material implications and describes a world in which the forces of the global impact on the local as places find it increasingly difficult to avoid being drawn into tighter relation through the flows of money, goods, people, information, technology and ideas.

Harvey (1996, 1989: 240) draws specific attention to the workings of capitalism as a root feature of this process. Drawing on Marx's concept of the 'annihilation of space by time' Harvey suggests that capitalism's restlessness has led to the overcoming of barriers of space and distance through technological advances, the flow and exchange of goods, and the flow of communication of ideas and images across the globe. For Harvey (1996: 242-7; 1989:240) the extreme nature of this process has resulted in an overwhelming change in time-space dimensionality.

For Harvey (1996: 421) globalisation is a process that has always been implicit in capital accumulation. A globalising economy requires the liberalisation of trade and currency controls and national boundaries become less significant to global economic activity, opening up whole new fields of opportunity for capital. We may, following Harvey (1996: 422-423) even suggest that globalisation today acts with the force of objective fact, as an economic meta-narrative or as a dominant ideology, as nation states succumb to and are conditioned by the logic of global economic integration.

Postmodernity and Cultural Change

Today the more sociologically and structurally oriented ideas of post-industrialism and post-Fordism have been absorbed into broader accounts of postmodernism. Theories that focus on a historical period include sociological and political economic claims that identify broad structural shifts in the configuration of modernity based primarily on changes to the mode of capitalist organisation and shifts in forms of production allied to new technologies. Commonly postmodernism is seen as the cultural equivalent of a post-industrial society (Kumar 1995:112). This is a view for instance taken by Lyotard who sees the 'postmodern condition' as the cultural manifestation brought on by the state of knowledge of a society entering a postindustrial age (Kumar 1995). Following this Lyotard tends to sometimes treat postmodernity as a historical period and postmodernism as a separate project (Calhoun 1995: 106). Kumar (1995:113) suggests however that while modern culture in many ways represents a reaction to modernity and can be treated as distinct from modern society the same distinction does not apply to postmodern culture and society. The interchangeability of the terms postmodernity and postmodernism suggests that postmodernism takes its strongest meaning as a cultural idea (Kumar 1995).

Although it emerged in the cultural sphere, the concept of postmodernism has slowly pervaded the analysis of other aspects of social life, suggesting something important about the idea of postmodernism itself - that it breaks down the dividing lines between areas of social life (Kumar 112, 102). Following this the study of culture has taken on greater significance in the field of social sciences and is seen to have moved toward the centre (Featherstone 1995: 3). Following Kumar (1995: 103) the privileged discourse amongst postmodernists appears to be the cultural. The move to the cultural may simply be a reflection of academic fashions, but an argument may be made that in some substantive way culture as a more or less objectifiable force in social life has taken on a more significant role. In a practical sense there is a general recognition that the mass media - which has important implications for the dissemination of information, ideas, symbols and images - has become a far more powerful realm in social life than previously (Smith 215). In its most extreme forms this phenomenon involves an overexplosion of meaning leading to "the triumph of a signifying culture and the death of the social" (Featherstone 1995: 19).

Economy and Culture

The materialist bias of Marx's thinking resulted in a view of culture as the product of an underlying economic base. The base-superstructure model acknowledges the connectedness between culture and the economic determinants of social life, but saw them operating in a unidirectional way in which the independence of culture is denied. Culture is the reflection of underlying social forces and operates as an ideological function in the maintenance of a fundamentally capitalist social order. Much twentieth century Marxism sought to correct orthodox Marxism's very restricted, even dismissive view of culture by giving culture "an active and autonomous role in the regulation of social life and the maintenance of the capitalist economic order" (Short 2001: 37).

Although they have been identified with the explanatory principles of old master-narratives (Featherstone 1995: 79), neo-Marxist accounts of postmodernity and postmodernism such as Jameson's (1984, 1992) and Harvey (1989) have also provided valuable account of the relationship between culture, society and the contemporary experience. Simultaneously and ironically as a number of writers suggest, the plausibility of accounts such as Jameson's tends to undermine their own Marxist and traditional sociological frameworks (Kumar 1995: 119; Crook et. al., 1992.). Harvey (1989) and Jameson (1984, 1992) although privileging the economic draw a stronger link between changes in the broader areas of social life, making a particular connection between economic changes and changes to postmodern culture, its aesthetic and theoretical codes and forms of representation. Harvey's (1989) account of the postmodern condition offers a comprehensive examination of change across social life and the conditions of contemporaneity that results from the rampant effects of a modernity and the inherent instability of capitalism.

Jameson (1984, 1992) provided an influential neo-Marxist account of postmodernism. Jameson argues that capitalism is still a dominant force in social life and that it has advanced into a more sophisticated and purer form extending its logic to a far greater area of social life. He criticises theories of the postmodern as having an affinity with the "ambitious sociological generalisations" arguing the emergence of a new social formation, a postindustrial or information society, which seek to demonstrate that this new society no longer conforms to the rules of classical capitalism (Jameson 1992: 3). For Jameson in contrast the cultural logic of postmodernism articulates with the transformations of capitalism. However while his emphasis is on a basic continuity of

capitalist modernity, Jameson also suggests a radically different relationship between culture and society, seeing the cultural sphere as becoming central to the workings of late capitalism. Postmodernism is the condition we have arrived at when 'nature' has gone for good, the completion of the process of modernisation, and when culture is placed at the centre of society; if postmodernism involves the superseding of modernity and modernisation, culture itself has become a "second nature" (Jameson 1992: ix). Jameson sees a condition in which there is a dilation of the sphere of culture: there has been a "prodigious expansion of culture throughout the social sphere.....everything in our social life – from economic value and state power to practices and the very structure of the psyche itself can be said to have become 'cultural' in some original and yet untheorised sense" (Jameson 1992: 48). As Kumar (1995:116) points out this is an interpretation, that in traditional Marxist terms, would identify the superstructure of society – knowledge and culture – as moving to the core of society.

The Dominance of Culture

Kumar (1995) suggests a comprehensive definition of postmodernity. Accordingly we need to think of postmodern society, culture or sensibility as a "whole way of thinking, feeling and acting" – the penetration of postmodernism to all aspects of society making it unhelpful to privilege any particular sector (Ibid: 119, 120). In contrast the identification of the cultural and the social as two distinct areas of analysis and practice is a particularly modern idea. For Weber the rationalisation of Western society and culture produced the formation of different value spheres such as law, art, music, architecture, politics and economics. In contrast to this the separation and differentiation of spheres as held as a distinguishing feature of modernity is seen to collapse in contemporary sociology, but in a way which denies the possibility of society as an integrated and functional whole (Kumar 1995: 102). This follows the general idea of postmodernisation that Crook et al (1992) advance. They see the progressive differentiation of culture and society by modernity as involuting, so that "the very idea of an independent social structural realm no longer makes any sense...rather 'society' must be understood in terms of 'culture' as patterns of signs and symbols penetrate and erode structural boundaries" (1992: 35).

Following their thesis, postmodernisation in a practical sense is characterised by high levels of unpredictability and chaos, brought on by the extreme process of hyperdifferentiation and its dedifferentiating effects. Action becomes liberated from underlying material constraints leaving social boundaries to disappear. If modern

culture is a 'regional stability' created by functional differentiation and rationalisation, Crook et al (1992: 36) see the postmodernisation of culture as generated by the extension and intensification of these processes such that the regional stability of modern culture dissolves. Value spheres become hyperdifferentiated, multiplying to the point of fragmentation and producing the effect of dedifferentiation. The emerging 'postculture' is not a structure, as boundaries between economy, polity and society are blurred, and show multiple and shifting hierarchies. The cultural sphere is not a system that articulates with other systems as in the case of Marxist or Parsonian analysis (Ibid 1992: 75). Culture has pervaded society making it impossible to make the distinction between mold and mirror.

Crook et al. (1992) make a strong argument for the dominance of culture suggesting that it is in the cultural realm that the new sources of social formation are located; that a defining feature of the process of contemporary change (ie postmodernisation), is the degree to which the cultural realm provides an expanding source for the causes of changes in other realms. This also tends to follow a general recognition or belief that culture and the mass media today have become far more powerful and important realms in social life than previously (Smith 215), as well as the theoretical weight given to the discursive and the symbolic. Our social lives are more significantly influenced by modes of cultural production, through the explosion and exploitation of media and technology. Postmodern society is typified by the overproduction of symbolic goods such that experience becomes saturated by the confusing array of signs, images, information, fashion and styles, and leaving them impossible to read (Featherstone 1995: 22).

Commodification

One of the clearest ways of linking general changes to society with the cultural sphere is through the concept of commodification. In a Marxist vein commodification involves the process whereby social relationships and value are increasingly subjected to the forces of an alienating and objectifying monetary exchange. Marx's thesis shows how commodity market exchange transforms relations between people into relations between things while investing things with social value (Harvey 1996: 221). Modern society is afflicted according to Marx by commodity fetishism: as commodities become objects external to the self they receive by awe and reverence attaining significance previously given only to religious objects (Crook et al 1992; 7). Crook et al point out two processes that relate to this: the creation of new 'use' values through the operation of the market - creating demand through advertising and the mass

media and advertising, and the colonisation of established value spheres – to areas of life previously insulated from commerce. Being subject to meaning determined by the market, commodities take on an abstract and external significance. Modern culture, according to Marx, suffers from a commodity fetishism that also hides the relations of production held in society. Commodification is a particular process associated with modernity, but in postmodernity the process is extended to extreme proportions.

The theme of commodification in critical theory is well established. The theorists of the Frankfurt school built an account of the dehumanising effects of an abstract commodified society subjected to instrumental forms of reason. We could even interpret Adorno and Horkheimer as early analysts of cultural postmodernisation focusing on the commodification of cultural production and the transgression of the boundaries between high art and mass culture (Crook et al 54). For them totalitarianism is not only associated with a political regime but also the reduction of people to passive consumers of entertainment through a cultural industry (Calhoun 1995: 24-25). Adorno and Horkheimer showed how in late capitalism the production and consumption of cultural goods and products is absorbed by the system of capitalist production so that culture itself becomes commodified (Crook et al: 1992: 53). Consequently the cultural sphere becomes colonised by the same instrumental rationality that is applied to other forms of production.

Consumer Culture and the Aestheticisation of Everyday Life

The critique of commodification in its Marxist inspired form sees mass culture and the debasement of the cultural sphere as a logical outcome of capitalism. The commodification of everyday life also points to an intimate relation between culture and broader social change and an apparent epochal shift from modernity to postmodernity. The concept of the emergence of a mass or consumer culture therefore becomes central to the idea that culture takes increasing prominence within postmodern societies. There is a general recognition that in advanced capitalist society consumption has become even more of an important dynamic in economic and social life than production. The link between postmodernism as an epochal shift and the rise of a consumer culture is fairly widespread and is made by a number of theorists, including Jameson (1984, 1992), Featherstone (1995), and Baudrillard. Social change is seen more definitively in relation to changes in the cultural sphere as culture is no longer simply understood as the external consequence of deeper structural change.

Limits to the Thesis of Commodification

Evidently there is a limit to the point to which the commodification of culture can be cast solely within the working of the logic of late capitalism. As Crook et al (1992: 55) point out it seems an easy conclusion to arrive at theories of mass culture in which consumers are the victims of 'false needs' as created by capital. The concepts of commodification and commodity fetishism generated a negative association with consumption. Today a more positive association is made as consumption casts off the burden of ideological analysis. Instead of a picture of manipulation through consumption, the picture emerges of a social condition in which the human psyche and the 'structure' of desire become the pivotal forces in social life. This in turn gives credence to Foucault's non-materialist conceptualisation of power

Featherstone (1995: 20) points to a number of ways in which the critique of a mass, consumer culture has itself been questioned. This critique tends to display an unwarranted elitism in the distinction between mass and high culture. In contemporary society the boundaries between these have almost entirely broken down. Also rather than sheer manipulation mass culture also involves creative process and enjoyment as well as some democratic and egalitarian elements. People are not simply cultural dupes who consume blindly – they may engage actively in the construction of meaning and frequently commodities undergo modification by consumers who alter and subvert their intended uses and cultural meaning. This is also a particular practice of marginalised sub-cultures, the recognition of which subverts the idea of a mass culture. For Giddens the proliferation of images and goods under capitalism provides a plurality of choice which opens up rather than constrains the construction of the self and search for an authentic self (Smith 2001: 145).

The idea of consumption as an active and creative source of cultural innovation is a distinctly postmodern one. This general postmodern view, according to Ray and Sayer (1999) sees market forces as providing an opportunity for people to develop new identities and cultural forms. This "hybridisation of culture" is seen as something to be celebrated and "replaces a world of non-relational diversity with one of interdependence and difference" (Ray and Sayer: 1998: 11). Today consumption is seen as an important feature of social reproduction and is not simply the automatic consequence of production. It is useful then to see cultural life and its symbolic practises as being increasingly mediated by consumption practises.

The Aestheticisation of Everyday Life

Besides the political-cultural or ideological claims and disputes underlying consumption and the process of commodification, we need to note how production and consumption combine to influence substantive changes to the experience and practises of everyday life. In one way the emergence of a consumer culture has operated in conjunction with the aestheticisation of everyday life. Jameson maintains that in late capitalism aesthetic production has become integrated into commodity production generally, created through the explosion of commodities and the urgency of creating new waves of innovation and product differentiation (1992: 4). In this process the boundaries between high and low art as well as art and everyday life are blurred. Instead we have a consumer culture saturated in its everyday contexts and environments by signs and images. Advertising is a particularly pervasive source of this aestheticisation and the construction of new meanings operating in conjunction with the commodity itself. Detached from specific use value, the commodity is free to take on a set of secondary or artificial associations which operate as the symbolic dimension of the commodity which can be manipulated and promoted and generated through advertising (Featherstone 1995: 18). Following Crook et al (1992: 61) the spread of the commodity form into all spheres of life means that commodified meaning is not adjudicated by other non-commodified forms such as family or religion but becomes self referential in the production of self-meaning. The commodity takes its position in the constellation of floating signifiers giving meaning to culture and shaping society. This gives shape to the general notion of the fragmentation of social life in postmodernism.

Consumption of Signs and Symbols

The theme of the free-floating signifier becomes a familiar one in the analysis of the postmodern condition, but this kind of analysis arrives at a particularly nihilistic world-view in the work of Baudrillard (1999). His ideas have been absorbed by a general argument concerning the de-materialisation of experience and social organisation. For Baudrillard the transcendence of a modern to a postmodern society involves the movement from a society organised on the basis of power and the relations of production to a society and an economy organised on the basis of consumption and seduction (Calhoun 102, 108). Postmodernity is the era of the sign and the seduction of consumers. The result is a depthless culture in which the subject must surrender to the world of simulation and detached signs and images. This suggests an overwhelming aestheticisation of the social world at the expense of moral and ethical judgement. As Calhoun (1995: 108) points out this leaves no room for critical

judgement; instead Baudrillard advocates an attitude of "ironic detachment". Although Baudrillard tends towards overstatement (Kellner 2000), his critical social theory offers a number of insights which have relevance. Following Calhoun (1995: 108) this is because his vision is located within a sense of historic specificity and ties postmodern culture to a more general view of postmodern society.

Baudrillard attempted to merge a Marxist perspective with the insights of semiology to show that the economy increasingly involves the consumption of signs and images. The starting point for this is a familiar idea touched on by other critical theorists of the postmodern; new technologies and production techniques combine with increasing product differentiation and the creation of needs for a mass consumer market. He sees the logic of political economy extending whereby both use value and exchange value of the commodity is replaced by sign value (Featherstone 1995: 19). Sign value is based on the "logic of social differentiation" and is in a sense a logical extension of Veblen's notion of 'conspicuous consumption', although Baudrillard argues it has extended to everyone in consumer society (Kellner 2000: 734). The autonomy of the sign from the commodity production signals the end of political economy but also places consumption within the field of symbolic practices such as language. Consequently for Baudrillard the structure of relations in a consumer society is among signs as people seek to affirm their identities and difference, and experience pleasure through the consumption of a shared system of signs (Smith 2001:220; Calhoun 1995: 108).

Hyperreality and the Sign or the Extremes of Consumer Society

In later works Baudrillard moves further away from political economy and any sense of social life and cultural experience embedded in materiality or social structure. This involves both an active strategy in opposition to modern values but also the idea of a historical rupture, requiring a radically new form of social analysis. The basis for this analysis following Kellner (2000: 741) is the superseding of a modern capitalist era and an end to political economy as a social determinant and foundational explanation from which other phenomenon can be measured. Instead the constitution of contemporary societies is determined by the logic of simulation in which images, spectacle and the play of signs replaces the logic of production and class conflict. Baudrillard's postmodern simulation society is one in which identity makes use of the play of images and signs while codes and models become the organising principles of the new social order, its economics, politics and culture (ibid: 741). Baudrillard's code as a primary structuring principle of social life, has some apparent similarity with

Foucault's episteme although here the codes and models on which social organisation occurs is organised in accordance with the logic of hyperreal simulation.

Baudrillard describes this postmodern world of simulation as one of 'hyperreality' – an idea also used by Jameson and other critics of postmodernity. Involving "media simulations of reality, Disneyland and amusement parks, malls and consumer fantasy lands, TV sports, and other excursions into ideal worlds" the hyperreal dominates the 'real' with its models images and codes and is a powerful force in social life (Kellner 2002: 742). Hyperreality seems to be driven by the possibilities made available by new technologies and is constructed through the world of entertainment, media and information. The world of hyperreality provides experience so intense that it eclipses the banal world of everyday life and we cannot distinguish the 'imaginary' from the 'real', or the true from the fake (Kellner 2002: 743). For Baudrillard the hyperreal is the state of a society which has transcended the age of production and emerged in an age of simulation. Simulation involves "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (Baudrillard 1999: 325). It occurs where the image or the model becomes more real than reality - in a society where simulation dominates these models structure experience and the boundaries between the model and reality is eroded (Smart 1999: 26). This leads to the dominance of particular images and models described as simulacra, copies with no apparent origin or for which the original has been lost.

In a media dominated consumer society people are caught up in the play of images, spectacle and simulacra, which have less and less to do with an outside, objective or external reality to the extent that the concepts of the social, the political or even 'reality' itself no longer seems to have any possible meaning (Kellner 2000: 743). In a sense the media, the medium of the message, becomes the reality creating a whole new reality which is separate from the reality of physical embodiment in time and place. Similarly the signs tend to be self-referential, losing connection with the things they signify and resulting in as Smart (1999: 27) suggests 'an unprecedented destruction of meaning'. Baudrillard's account of contemporary experience, involving the near disintegration of the real, seems to offer a perturbing account of aesthetics divorced from ethics, in which seduction becomes a central driving force of human social behaviour and practice. The extension of Baudrillard's logic maintains that the events in the 'real' world are increasingly material expressions of models or mythologies originating in an autonomous cultural sphere (Smith 2001: 220). As our experience becomes dominated by images, the imaginary, its signs and symbols,

there is an evident loss of referentiality and loss of critical distance - the hyperreal is more real than the real (Allmendinger 2001, 43-44). From a radical postmodern position the effacement of the real does not mean that the truth is hidden, but that one truth claim is replaced by another. In this regard signs and symbols can be used as a tool of power, being located in the imaginary and being deployed in the place of the real. In Baudrillard's world the image and the sign become powerful forces because of its power of simulation and its ability to stand for the real. Power is no longer held in institutions, is far more dispersed being located in signs and codes, simulations and the media, and can be feigned, masqueraded and simulated (Allmendinger, 2001, citing Kellner).

Fragmentation, Subjectivity and Identity

While the aestheticisation of everyday life offers the possibility of breaking down barriers it is also associated with a greater sense of fragmentation. Experience is now seen to dissolve into a series of time-space moments defined by sets of disjointed and juxtaposed signs and images between which no ordered narrative exists (Featherstone 1995: 76). The extremes of postmodernity lead to dislocation as we are continually confronted by spatial fragments; space and image supersede temporality and disrupts location within a narrative and historical context. The primary mode of orientation under these circumstances is an aesthetic one rather than an ethical one and involves an intense immersion and immediacy at the expense of wider teleological concerns (Featherstone, *ibid*: 44). This is a point Jameson makes when he talks of "multi-phrenic intensities" involving the breakdown of the individual's sense of self-identity and societal purposiveness in the face of a bombardment by fragmented signs and images (Featherstone, *ibid*).

The sense of fragmentation extends to the individual subject. For Jameson the breakdown of a sense of individual purposiveness, the death of the subject, and a crisis of historicity are all related features of a postmodern aesthetic and culture of aestheticisation increasingly dominated by space and a spatial logic. As Kumar (1995:147) says this is a picture of the self conceived in spatial terms. The subject engages in juxtaposition and simultaneity and is saturated by a constant stream of detached free-floating images and ideas. Jameson, drawing on structuralism and poststructuralism identifies postmodern experience with the inability of the postmodern subject to organise their past and future into a coherent experience (1992: 25). According to Saussurian structuralism, meaning is generated not by a one to one, universal relationship between signifier and signified but through the relationship

between signifiers. Following this Lacan's description of schizophrenia suggests "a breakdown in the signifying chain....the interlocking syntagmatic series of signifiers which constitutes a meaning" (1992: 26). Consequently the breakdown of the signifying chain results in the breakdown of temporality reducing experience to a series of unrelated presents in time.

The situatedness of knowledge, the textual, the sign, has particular resonance in an age of mass media and communication. Centrally the dissolution of the subject, has its equivalent in the fragmentation of society and the loss of a central core. In its place is posited a conception of the subject as discursively-created, as the individual is seen to be caught in a web of signification and as a product of discourse (Featherstone 1995: 44). Traditional conceptions of the individual and the subject are undermined as "identity and biographical continuity give way to fragmentation" (ibid). Identity is conceptualised as shifting, not unitary. It is unclear whether this is a universal, ontological condition or the product of new times, but it seems more obviously a product of contemporaneity and the heightened effects of media and communication. Subjects derive their identity from the world around, but under the forces of modernisation and time-space distancing, or time space-compression, this world is no longer fixed and social positions are mobile up and down (Pile 1996: 64).

Supported by social shifts in the latter part of the twentieth century, identity and difference have arguable become key components within postmodern social theory focus. An emphasis and greater sensitivity to plurality and difference within postmodernism has increased sensitivity not only to the value of culture but the importance of culture as integral to social life and its social practices. Postmodern society is theorised through difference, and as characterised by plurality and diversity. Attention is given less to the politics of class, the distribution of economic wealth and relations to the mode of production than to the politics of identity. Following a sensitivity to difference there is a recognition "that social life is inherently cultural, that is, inherently shaped and even constituted by differences in the ways in which people generate or recognise meaning in social action and its products" (Calhoun 1995: 63). The collapse of the boundaries between the sectors of society, and the non-existence of a central organising principle, (religion, economics, culture) gives rise to fragmentation rather than a return to a primitive, pre-modern wholeness (Kumar 103)

Globalisation and Culture

Besides the economic narrative implicit in globalisation covered above, the process of globalisation also articulates with the cultural sphere of societies in complex ways. Predominantly we can conceptualise the process as involving a tension between the global and the local. Therefore globalisation involves an acute articulation with postmodernity as both political, economic and cultural life is influenced by developments at the global level (Kumar 1995: 121). This also signals the emergence of global consciousness and the location of people, identities and places within a common global space.

The cultural processes of globalisation evidently relates to the movement of commodities, tourists, services and information across global markets and the flow of images, signs and symbols. The expansion of the postmodern experience expands globally and in part is conditioned by the growth of an "electronically mediated reality" (Kumar 1995: 123). These forces may have become globally ubiquitous making it difficult for places not to be absorbed into the globalising process. With it comes the distortions or disruptions of place and space, which either define globalisation as an overwhelming and inevitable homogenising force or as having vastly spatially differentiating effects (Bridge and Watson, 2000: 107). This results in two possible perspectives on culture. One sees heterogeneous cultures as being incorporated and integrated into a dominant culture, and the other sees the compression of cultures in which cultural diversity and juxtapositions leads to disorientation, and a jumbling of belief systems and practical knowledge (Featherstone 1995:6).

Readings of the cultural effects of global integration tend to focus on the homogenisation of global culture, and the disruption of the local. Frequently the projection is of a hegemonic force emanating within the logic of a predominantly American free-market ideology. The expansion of capitalism exposes everyday lives across the globe to the message of a Westernised consumer lifestyle as large global firms seek to expand their markets outward (Featherstone 1995: 8). The Americanisation of global cultures has its limits however and there is a growing sense of an emergence of competing centres (Ibid). There is also the sense as part of the postmodern experience and sensibility that global cultural integration itself involves the collapse of modernist symbolic hierarchies and an awareness of new levels of diversity (Ibid: 14). Nevertheless these ideas evidently are held in tension with the homogenising forces emanating from the global. It is also apparent that within this

space new forms of symbolic power and cultural capital may emerge, relating to both expressions of national identity as well as the uniqueness of local places and identities as Harvey (1989, 1996) suggests. Consequently the cultural forces and effects of globalisation are best understood as paradoxical and complex rather than as emanating in a unidirectional way in accordance with the macro-logic of a global economic and cultural order.

Conclusion

The idea of the emergence of a substantively new historical period remains a theoretical concept. Arguably postmodernity involves some substantive shifts in the organisation of society, related to new technologies, the role of information and knowledge in society, and the restructuring of capitalism and globalisation. It also involves the sense that in terms of our 'lived' experience postmodernity involves something of a qualitatively different period. However the sources of this change are located in the extreme manifestations of a set of processes allied to modernity itself, rather than involving a fundamental break.

The sources of change may be located through various structural ideas as contained in the theses of a post-industrial society, post-Fordism, globalisation and the emergence of a more flexible regime of accumulation. All these ideas are located in modernist forms of analysis. The common denominator in these ideas and which needs emphasis here seems to be the central role played by capitalism in social change. The transformation of capitalism therefore articulates acutely with the notion of a historical shift from modernity to postmodernity. It also articulates with a particular understanding of the role of culture in social life as the related processes of commodification and rationalisation have greater consequence for our experience of everyday life and the aestheticisation of experience.

The analysis of the emergence of a new geography in the north needs to take account of the broad structural shifts related to general social change. Rather than operating as the definitive source of material and social change these provide the broad historical context in which the landscape as a particular cultural site and as a commodity is produced. This also suggests the need to look more particularly at how the landscape may be understood as the product of social practice and a site of cultural meaning.

Chapter Four

Theorising Space and Social Practice

Introduction

Space now seems of greater significant to our experience of the world than before. Postmodern juxtaposition and simultaneity, the global flows of capital, people, information and images, and the increasing significance of urban space within social life and experience tend to support this assertion. A number of theorists and in particular Harvey (1989), Soja (1989) and Jameson (1990) draw on the predominance of space in a postmodern era, maintaining that while the modern era was preoccupied with temporality the postmodern era is dominated by spatiality (Woods 1999: 117). Jameson (1990: 365) claims the postmodern reality is somehow more spatial than everything else: our contemporary period has its own particular sense of space; space has become "an existential and cultural dominant", and "a thematised or foregrounded feature or structural principle" in the present mode of production. Likewise Smith (2001: 215) suggests that there is a general claim within postmodern theory that "image and space have replaced narrative and history as the organising principles of cultural production".

This suggests a substantive shift in which the spatiality of social life takes on greater relevance. It suggests that space as an existential category has a profound affect on both subjectivity and lived experience. At the same time though there is a renewed theoretical interest in space, which offers a critical corrective to the "canonised rhetoric of temporality" (Jameson, *Ibid*) inherent in modernity. The significance of space also offers the prospect of a new sensibility for exploring the relational complexity between different entities, things, identities, people and processes - held in spatial and not just temporal relation with one another. Both sociological and cultural analysis have been transformed by a new spatialised language in which geography, place, space, location and locale feature. Likewise according to Woods (1999: 118), "the politics of space, the cultural function of geography, and the importance of place are increasingly being contested and asserted".

The city as a particular kind of space and place has also taken on greater significance in social and cultural theory. The city is interpreted more as a site of social and cultural significance as it undergoes both material and symbolic changes. Woods

(1999: 119) suggests that the city is now viewed as a kind of representation, as composed of imagined environments. Consequently the city needs to be reconceived as new spaces with their own models and metaphors emerge in response to the “structural changes in the organisation of capital” and which in turn affect “sense of self, consciousness and society” (ibid). Space is seen as a site of cultural production and consumption. The urban landscape becomes a repository of values and meaning and not just the location of objectified hard structures and material relations.

The problematic of space has both epistemological and ontological significance to this enquiry. Firstly we need to engage with the problematic of space as an internal conceptual ‘structure’ shaping our approach to knowledge and our practical dealings in everyday life. Both social theory and human geography have been dynamically re-invigorated by the recognition of the dynamic social value of the spatial. While poststructuralism shows the importance of the sign and language in the construction of knowledge and identity, it seems important not to forget that ultimately these knowledges and identities are embodied, acted out and take place in particular time-space contexts.

The Social Construction of Space and Time

Everyday usage of the word suggests that ‘space’ has many possible meanings. The term in addition has different practical and theoretical applications. Geographers, social scientists, architects, urban designers, planners and engineers, academics and professionals involved in the study and transformation of the urban environment, all use this term in various ways and often with different understandings of the term (Madanipour 1996). Following Simonsen (1996) there is nothing wrong with the multiple definitions of space; each one may be appropriate to a given theoretical context or practical purpose. More important than seeking a unitary definition may be the recognition of the situatedness of a particular understanding of space, either explicit or implicit within any theory, discourse, system of thought or practice.

For Harvey (1996: 208) space and time provide the foundational concepts for almost everything we think and do. Consequently these definitions have far reaching consequences for the way we understand and theorise the world and this makes the analysis of our understanding of these concepts an important project. We experience time and space as features of our existence in which our understanding of them is determined through common sense, and everyday actions. Yet anthropological evidence suggests that there is no universal concept of space and time; they are

social constructions - different societies possess qualitatively different conceptualisations of time and space (Harvey 1996: 210). Alternative conceptualisations of space and time are implicit in different forms of social organisation, in their particular forms of production and consumption and their processes of social reproduction. This challenges the idea of a single conceptualisation of time and space, a universal time and space against which the diversity of human perceptions are measured.

Drawing on Lefebvre, Harvey (1992, 1996) suggests that we may identify a history of space as different societies and even societies at different points in history are organised around particular conceptualisations of time and space. These conceptualisations are constructed through abstract engagement, as well as through encountering the particular conditions and concrete forms of space and time that need to be overcome in the struggle for survival (Harvey 1996: 418). As social constructs, conceptualisations of space and time act with the full force of objective facts and help guide material practices and processes which in turn help reproduce the particular social order (Ibid). As in Harvey's words: "each social formation constructs objective conceptions of space and time sufficient unto its own needs and purposes of material and social reproduction and organises its material practices in accordance with those conceptions" (Harvey 1990: 419).

The Spatio-Temporality of Modernity and Postmodernity

Following Harvey conceptions of space and time are seemingly implicit in the codes of social interaction and the material practices of social production and reproduction. Real material practices form part of social life and contribute to the way in which the existential categories of space and time are modified. A central defining feature of modernity has been rapid levels and forms of change in society. Giddens (1990) makes an intimate connection with the transformations of time and space and modernity. In premodern societies time and space were linked; in particular through the lived experience of daily life, time was linked to 'place'. The "emptying" of time and space that occurred with modernity is also explained by the discussion of absolute and abstract space below. An "empty space" involves the separation of space from place. In premodern societies place is defined by "presence" as the spatial dimension of social life within these physical settings is dominated by localised activity. By contrast Giddens sees modern places as becoming increasingly phantasmogoric; as being increasingly "penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them" (1990: 19). For Giddens the separation of time

and space is a critical feature of the extreme dynamism of modernity. Giddens sees the shifting alignments of time and space as an essential feature of social change and the nature of modernity in particular (1990: 22). A central characteristic of this shift is the phenomenon of 'time-space distancing'; the extension of social systems over space and time. The consequence of this phenomenon is the "disembedding" of social relations; social relations become removed from the immediacy of local contexts of interaction while they are restructured over indefinite spans of time and space (ibid: 21). This 'disembedding' of social interactions, is created primarily in two ways, through the media of interchange which transcends time and space, such as for instance, money and expert systems of knowledge and expertise

Similarly Harvey uses the term 'time-space compression' to capture the overwhelming change in time-space dimensionality and the supposed radical changes taking place in the current era. Harvey's (1989: 240) term signals the "processes that so revolutionise the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves". The concept Harvey offers, is not an exclusively postmodern phenomenon, but has its roots in modernity and is similar to what Marx called the 'annihilation of space by time'. It refers in a material sense to an extreme form of this annihilation with the overcoming of barriers of space and distance through technological advances, the flow and exchange of goods, and the flow of communication of ideas and images across the globe. All of these deeply effect our sense of time-space dimensionality leading to what Harvey (1989:240) suggests is an overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds.

Harvey suggests that we are currently undergoing an overwhelming and radical change in time-space dimensionality marking a new phase of accelerated time-space compression. In particular, as Kirsch (1995: 531) points out, Harvey draws a dialectical correlation between the materialist features of these new conditions and the representational modes involved in their production and reproduction. Harvey (ibid) makes the link between the material practises which are implicated in the production of the "objective qualities of time and space" and from which social life draws on as resources for its reproduction, and the changes in the way "we represent the world to ourselves". Harvey's idea of time-space compression rests not on an essential ontological shift but ultimately on the determination of the overwhelming effects of capital on the emergence of a new time-space dimensionality and the fundamental changes in representation and the experience of the world.

Absolute, Relative and Relational Views of Space.

In locating the changes in time-space dimensionality associated with modernity and postmodernity it may also be possible to trace a history of space implicated in Western experience, practice and representation. This history may be traced back to Euclid and Aristotle. Euclid established the basic principle of space as extending infinitely in three dimensions while Aristotle defined space as the container of all things in which everything had its natural place in accordance with a cosmological hierarchy (Burgin 1996: 40). Since the foundation of classical science the dominant arguments of space in metaphysics have revolved around the apparent oppositional notions of space as either absolute or relational. Newton's space was an absolute space. Newtonian physics established space and time as independent *a priori* realities existing in their own right. Space is a neutral, passive container and objects within this homogenous infinite space exist in their own right and may be absolutely determined as if on a grid. Newton's contemporary, Leibnitz offered a challenge to absolute space by contending that space and time had no independent, objective reality but arose out of our ways of relating to phenomena (Trusted, J 1991: 90). Leibnitz's view of space was a relational one; both space and time existed only through the relationship between phenomena and events, their existence being determined relative to the things and events that absolute space was supposed to contain. Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity offers a more fundamental challenge. This maintains that distance and periods of time and the observation of phenomena are not only relative to frames of reference but also that the very nature of the observed phenomena becomes dependant on the latter (Madanipour 1996; Trusted J. 1991: 176 citing Christensen, F).

The generally held worldview of space however remains predominantly a fusion of Newton and Aristotle (Burgin 1996: 42). Absolute space has become the dominant space of common sense experience in Western societies and is what we implicitly use in locating and defining the 'real' (Smith and Katz 1992: 75). Absolute space is a universal space, existing beyond the subjectivities of human experience, activity and even existence. It is a space which is predominantly determined by mathematical and geometric interpretations and therefore provides the objective backdrop to social activity (Pile 1996: 145). This is the dominant space of modernity and is allied to instrumental forms of reasoning and rationalisation. Smith and Katz (1993: 75) suggest that absolute space not only dominated theoretical discourse, but is also implicated in outcomes in material reality. Its dominance provides the premise for

hegemonic social practice and is specifically linked with the social shifts that occurred in conjunction with the emergence of capitalism in the West (ibid).

In opposition to this relational space may offer a challenge to the hegemony of absolute space and its related practices. It allows for a plurality of spaces and suggests the greater prospect for the inclusion of difference, recognising that there is no absolute and right vantage point from which to view the world. It tends to dissolve subject-object dichotomies, making the constitution of each dependent on the other, and emphasises 'process' over 'things'. A relational conception of space would seem to parallel dialectical argumentation. Drawing on Harvey's (1996) reading of Leibnitz it allows for the fundamental acknowledgement that we inhabit the same universe but perhaps are constituted in multiple spatial worlds with their own and possibly incommensurable spatio-temporalities. In the construction of these worlds, we may consider space and time not as the universal given but as the social ordering structures inherent within social practices and that in some sense are arrived at.

The Spaces of Social Theory

Until recently space featured little in social theory and sociology, even though practical logic suggests from the outset that social phenomena are, in one way or another also spatial phenomena (Simonsen 1996: 494). Soja (1989) points out that for modern social theory it was the immanence of history that provided the insights into social phenomena, social action and process. Time held a privileged position over space within the ontological and epistemological frameworks of modern sociology. History also contains a powerful narrative in which modernity and the narratives of progress, reason and enlightenment are located.

Space within this ontology would have been the static, taken-for-granted backdrop against which history unfolded, while time was actively engaged with causal processes and sequential change. Lefebvre (1991), and then Soja (1989), identify two reasons why space has been misrepresented within modern social theory. They suggest that space has suffered a double mystification, suffering either the illusion of transparency or opaqueness. The *illusion of transparency* tends to reduce space to an abstraction as a mental construction, which operates in place of concrete form. Through the *illusion of opaqueness* space is reduced to a fixed, dead and undialectical realm as space is understood in terms of a set of taken-for-granted concrete forms encountered through their substantive appearances within a principally empiricist approach (Soja 1989: 122; Keith M and Pile S 1993: 4). Neither

illusion provides an adequate conceptualisation of space as a dynamic dimension of social life, hiding from view the "deeper social origins of spatiality, its problematic production and reproduction, its contextualisation of politics, power and ideology" (Soja 1989:124).

Geographies and Sociologies of Space

The most obvious understanding of space is one rooted in the material environment. Traditional regional geography, involving a biophysical and cultural-historical study of particular landscapes, focused on outcomes in the material environment (Gregory and Barnes, 1997: 233). Here the material environment forms a causal relationship with social phenomena or is at least a conditional background to them (Simonsen 1996: 495). Later the proponents of spatial science sought to replace the 'physical' basis of geographic enquiry with a 'logical' basis involving an inquiry into the general and universal laws implicated in the physical configurations of space (Ibid, 23). Consequently the shift was toward uncovering the universal, abstract laws which would render these spaces transparent. Both forms of geography tend to substantiate Levebre's argument regarding a double illusion of space.

Either way the basis of this geography lay in an absolute conceptualisation of space. A reconceptualisation of space in part emerged out of the challenges to positivist geography that came from both humanistic and radical sources. Inspired principally by Marx, radical geography however was better suited to a critique of the structures of power in society and their spatial consequences (Pile; 1996: 46). Positivist geography was critiqued for identifying spatial structures and patterns of distribution as the outcome of abstract spatial processes when in fact these were the result of deeper social, historical processes. This challenge asserted that spatial relations were essentially social relations in a geographic form, and that the wider economic, political and social processes needed to be taken into account (Massey 1994: 254). Positivist spatial science was also seen as allied to hegemonic practice - its central preoccupation was with the spatial organisation of the capitalist economy (Barnes and Gregory, 1997: 18).

Radical geography made a significant contribution to the politicisation of space and the idea of space as a social category. The broad position was also followed in social theory with the recognition of space as a dynamic element operating in social life. Drawing on the time-geography of Hägerstrand, sociologists such as Giddens sought to demonstrate how social systems are constituted across time and space. This

encouraged sociological analysis to pay attention to practical constraints in time and space (Baert, 1998: 99) and involved a recognition that a particular analysis of the production of social life would benefit from a closer attention to the time-space setting and sequences of human activity (Barnes and Gregory 1997: 358). This influence has allowed for the emergence of a more spatially sensitive sociological analysis and afforded space a new and potentially dynamic and dialectic role within the moments of change and the constitution of societies.

The Social Production of Space

Following the convergence of geographic and sociological thinking within a critical frame, several writers have tried to transcend absolute and geometric notions of space in which space is a vague or static category and develop the idea of space as “a dynamic set of historically and economically contingent relations” (Zukin: 199?: 267). The burgeoning of a powerful conceptualisation of space as intimately linked with social life, its practices and processes however owes the most to the writings of Henri Lefebvre (1991). His thesis has been assimilated into geographic discourse in particular by Marxist geographers such as David Harvey, Doreen Massey, Neil Smith and Ed Soja in their efforts to produce a political economy of space (Keith and Pile 1993: 24). His more central ideas have contributed to a shift in critical analysis offering new interpretative possibilities that may be applied to all scales of socio-spatial organisation, from the micro-phenomena of everyday life to the macro-phenomena of globalisation.

A primary feature of his thesis is the analytical shift away from the conception of space as an abstract, passive geometry devoid of human subjectivity and agency. He seeks to transcend the idea of space as an *a priori* category of reality, or as simply the context for object interaction. In addition Lefebvre seeks to undermine the epistemological separation of mental space; the abstract space of philosophers and mathematicians, the space which is supremely Kantian, from social space and physical space; the space of practical social interaction and sensory experience. In doing so he seeks the formulation of a ‘unitary’ theory of space, while denying this means *the* discourse on space by bringing together all other spaces and their moment of actualisation.

Lefebvre proposes a conceptual and analytical shift from ‘things in space’ to the actual ‘production of space’ (Keith and Pile 1993: 24). This concept suggests the bringing together of all different kinds of spaces - physical material space, sensory-

practico-social space and abstract mental space, into a single, dialectical and generative moment. Under his formulation space becomes an intensely social construction and a dimension bound up and implicated in social practices, experience and social processes. In making sense of the complex relations implicated within the social production of space, Lefebvre suggests the use of a conceptual triad in which are held together three moments of space, remaining analytically inseparable and always operating in mutual relation. This triad is a central feature of his theorisation of social space and consists of the relationship between *Spatial Practise*, *Representations of Space* and *Spaces of Representation*

Spatial practises are in essence a projection onto the ground of all aspects, elements and moments of social practise (Lefebvre 1991: 8). Effectively they are the material effects and expressions of any given social formation with its forms of knowledge, relations and actions. Spatial practises at the level of daily life tend to reaffirm society's space – "in spatial practices the reproduction of social relations is predominant" (Ibid: 50). Spatial practises produce society's space, but do so slowly and gradually as they master and appropriate it. They tend to ensure continuation and a degree of cohesion through their actuation within the locations and spatial figuration of networks and routines through which, as Harvey (1989: 218) sees it, the "physical and material flows, transfers and interactions" occur allowing for the "continued production and reproduction of society". Spatial practises involve a range of activities, ranging from those of individual actions deployed in work, play and private life to the production of motorways, airports and other forms of infrastructure in accordance with the present set of socio-spatial arrangements. According to Lefebvre, spatial practises of a society may be revealed through the deciphering of its space (Lefebvre 1991: 38).

Representations of space encompass the codes, signs and knowledge of space; the dominant space of any society. Representations of space are in thrall to knowledge and power (Ibid: 50). This is the space we understand to be employed by the professionals and technocrats; the scientists, urban and regional planners, developers, architects, and social engineers, which allow for a specific mode of spatial appropriation and production. They make claims to truth through a representational system of worked out signs that tend to be verbal.

Representational Spaces (or the spaces of representation) is the space that is most dominated by other moments of space. It is the passively experienced space of

'inhabitants' and 'users'. But equally Lefebvre describes this space as "embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life" (1991: 33). Significantly then, it is the space associated with the imagination which seeks to appropriate and change it, and in doing so "overlays physical space making symbolic use of its objects" (1991: 39). As such it is predominantly non-verbal in character.

Lefebvre equates these three moments of space to *the perceived*, *the conceived* and *the lived*, descriptions that seem to imply different forms of embodied knowledges, practice and bodily interaction with the world. Spatial practises provide the space as *perceived* and empirically experienced; "the practical basis for perception of the world" (1991: 40). *Conceived* space is the dominant space of any society and provides the claims of truth, which although abstract in nature, has a decisive role in ordering socio-spatial practises and affecting outcomes in the material world; for instance interventions in the human body as well as physical space. The *lived* spaces of experience attempts to capture the symbolic engagement with the physical world through which the world becomes directly lived by its inhabitants. All three realms are interconnected and have their logical place within the way the human subject interacts with and finds their place in society and the world. It is clearly difficult to make any absolute separation of these spaces as distinct categories. The usefulness of this framework appears to be in his conceptualisation of the unity of the productive process within which there are identifiable and critical moments operating in dialectical relationship to one another.

Spatiality

While Lefebvre's overall thesis remains complex, his main points have been incorporated in different ways by writers drawing on both a geographical and sociological imagination and involved in a range of critical approaches from the development of a broad political economy of space to a localised politics of identity. Soja in *Postmodern Geographies* (1989) draws on Lefebvre's central thesis arguing for a reconstituted, spatialised social theory that will give direction to a new critical human geography based on a historical and geographical materialism. This reassertion of the spatial in social life and theory, as Soja sees it, is a complex feature of the restructuring occurring as part of the postmodern in both critical thought and in material life. The interpretation of postmodern geographies, involves more than analysing the materiality of space, or employing a spatialised language - it suggests a deeper project involving the "deconstruction and reconstitution of critical thought and

analysis at every level of abstraction”, including the ontological (1989:7). Soja suggests we need a “..critical sensibility to the spatiality of social life, a practical theoretical consciousness that sees the lifeworld of being creatively located not only in the making of history but also in the construction of human geographies, the social production of space and the restless formation and reformation of geographical landscapes...” (Soja 1989: 11)

Soja uses the term ‘spatiality’, an over-arching term to denote a spatial presence at all levels of social organisation and existential experience. Soja (Ibid: 79) produces the concept of ‘spatiality’ as an active concept and distinguishes it from space per se; space as a contextual given, as a backdrop for social action. Spatiality is socially produced space, the created space of social organisation and production. It forms part of a “second nature”, a transformed and concretised socially produced space which in turn “socialises and transforms physical and psychological spaces” (Soja 1989). This complexity points to what Soja calls the socio-spatial dialectic: that socially produced space is more than an external created structure or merely an expression of relations within some other structure, being simultaneously a product as well as a shaping force in social life. Spatiality is constituted through social action but is also constitutive of society.

Although Soja’s argument remains grounded within a materialist base, his position of space as a dynamic internal force involved in the production of social relations clearly modifies the conventional Marxist view giving primary position to the relations of production as a determinant force. Without resolving the question of determination, though, his general argument tends to suffer from an apparent tautology and an apparent circular form of reasoning – social space produces more social space (Farrar 1997: 106). Nevertheless the concept of ‘spatiality’ is used elsewhere. Kieth and Pile (1993: 6) for instance use it to conjure up the way the social and the spatial are inextricably realised within each other. In their interpretation there is the suggestion in which thinking, feeling, doing individuals may be either actively involved in this realisation or, more passively and under different conditions, may experience this realisation. The usefulness of the term seems to lie principally in its denial of the possibility of an innocent and detached space as an abstract arena within which objects simply interact. Spatiality identifies space as both the site and outcome of different forms of struggles as it is produced and reproduced through time.

A central feature of much post-positivist geographic enquiry contains the idea that spatiality - or social space – is produced by social processes and that consequently the “spatial structures of social life cannot be adequately explicated by the abstract logics of geometry or the abstract operations of mathematical processes” (Barnes and Gregory 1997: 236). This has also led to an exploration into the multiple ways in which the colonisation of many areas of everyday life has occurred through the social production of these abstract spaces (Ibid).

Space and Difference

There is a clear sense that within postmodernism the emphasis on difference results in a very strong spatial content. This is notwithstanding the original emphasis on the text and the fact that the ontological basis of this understanding is not well defined. However we can identify one fundamental way in which, as a starting point the spatial has taken on significance in theory. As discussed above a central feature of postmodernism is an apparent resistance to the possibility of metanarratives and master codes. A central critique made by postmodernism infers that the privileged position of time over space held in social theory is an expression of universality and implicates modern social theory in a totalising role (Simonsen 1996: 501). “Difference is invariably opposed to the universal” (Smith, 241), and because the basis of the universal is seen as time/history difference is located in space, or at least is conceptualised as such.

A renewed interest in space and the spatial provides the possibility of moving beyond universal views, the all encompassing narrative, to a greater sensitivity to difference and local discourses and other voices. This reaction initially evolved into place-based, local forms of inquiry known as locality studies. In more realist orientated forms the interest was on the relation “between large-scale processes of economic and social restructuring and localised practises, political struggles and outcomes” (Barnes and Gregory 509). Here space mattered in that the local provided a set of contingent relations which had a differential effect on the outcomes of these large-scale objective forces, but space remained a static and passive dimension (Simonsen, 1996: 501).

More recently theorists writing within a post-structuralist frame have drawn on a conceptualisation of space charged with the possibilities of difference. Being closer to the textual source, space as employed in feminist, postcolonial, and postmodernist enquiries and in an identity politics and a cultural politics of difference, forms the basis for a “whole new spatial language for comprehending the contours of social reality”

(Smith and Katz 1993: 67). In general these forms of writing use space as a metaphor to signal more open figurations of subjectivity and to create sites of resistance and political action against hegemonic discourses. Space becomes the qualitative representation of multiple subject relations and identities in opposition to the dominance of the white, Western, male authority. Spatial metaphors, such as position, location, margins, mapping, global and local, are used to “articulate an understanding of the multiplicity and flexibility of relations of domination” (Keith and Pile 1993: 1).

The discursive and metaphoric uses of space spatialise social and cultural differences and gives space a highly charged political moment. The interconnectedness of this metaphoric space with the material realities of space however, as Smith and Katz (1993) suggest, remains unclear and undermines the political intent of this writing. The value of this writing, however remains and raises important questions concerning regimes of power, representation and the politics of identity (Simonsen 1996: 502). Notwithstanding its lack of materialist content it seems to draw attention to the relation between representation, power and space that is central to the development of a critical framework here. Following Barnes and Gregory (1997: 238) this necessarily involves recognising that just as our knowledges are embodied and implicated in relations of power, so are the multiple relations between bodies and space refracted through grids of power and knowledge. The problem seems to be to understand how space becomes the location of multiple articulations of power. The challenge is to draw together the metaphoric and representational dimensions of space with the material.

Power and Space

Foucault’s notion of power as de-centred and dispersed is perhaps a very spatialised conceptualisation of power. Space is an implicit part of the Foucauldian text. This becomes particularly evident in his genealogies, such as *Discipline and Punish* where he made particular use of space and spatial concepts as a means of foregrounding questions of power. Foucault defines power in the modern era as a disciplinary power which replaced sovereign power in the early nineteenth century. Disciplinary power involved technologies of regulation and surveillance; worked on the body to regulate behaviour and patterns of thought, is rational rather than ritual and takes place within various institutions such as schools, prisons and barracks (Smith 2001:125). The idea of disciplinary power is best captured through the image of the panopticon as an instrument of incarceration. The panopticon involves the organisation of space to

allow for hierarchical observation such that prisoners understand that they may be observed, but are never sure of whether they are being watched or not. This leads to self – regulation and normalisation as people internalise the disciplinary regime to which they are subject and adhere to imposed and postulated norms of correct behaviour (Baert 125, Smith 2001).

Driver (1997: 287) points out that the idea of the panopticon offers a particular image of power realised more particularly in terms of concrete practises than ideologies. Although the panopticon itself cannot determine how space may be related to the broader diffusion of power in society the idea of disciplinary power should not be limited by a literal interpretation of this image. Foucault shows how this society of surveillance was bound up with methods of social control and that this extended beyond the boundaries of the prison as the new system, supported by the social sciences came to appear “obvious, coherent and benevolent” (Baert 1998: 126). Spaces then are located within relations of power-knowledge, and these are frequently maintained through technological means. Technologies of power may be seen as widely prevalent in modern society as a means of regulating behaviour. These are seen in clocks, schedules and timetables but can be extended to more sophisticated uses of technology in the use of surveillance cameras and the technological design of space to regulate the movement and behaviour of people. Evidently many of these technologies “work on reconstructing and normalising the self by controlling and disciplining the body” (Smith 2001:125). Foucault’s example demonstrates the importance of realising how the control and division of space plays a significant role in the strategies of dominance and the play of power.

Real, Imaginary and Symbolic Power

Lefebvre, according to Harvey (1989: 226) provides a more insistent source of the idea that “command over space [is] a fundamental and all pervasive source of social power in and over everyday life”. While acknowledging that power is spatialised and that following Massey (1994: 265), “space is full of power and symbolism”, this is not always obvious or evident. Consequently Soja (1989: 6) argues space can hide consequences from us and we need to be aware of “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”.

Understanding the power in and of space necessarily involves locating this power in ‘real’ material space, and ‘imagined’ representations of space as active dimensions of

the social production of space. Soja (1989: 120) makes the distinction between material space of nature and cognitive-mental space and suggests that neither exist as autonomous, universalised spheres. Both have social origins and are conditioned by social transformation. Following Smith and Katz (1993: 76), 'real' space is the common-sense understanding of space in society. But 'real' space also emerges from an absolute conception of space as the dominant space of Western society. Taking a particularly materialist view Smith and Katz (1993: 76) identify power in space in particular with "the thoroughly naturalised conception of absolute space that grew up with capitalism, and which expresses a very specific tyranny of power". For them absolute space is the source of hegemonic practices associated with the expansion of capitalism being responsible for divisions of land into private property, colonisation and global division of space into separate nation states.

'Imaginary' space may in opposition to this have transformative and liberatory possibilities. Harvey suggests that they form the "mental inventions...that imagine new meanings or possibilities for spatial practise" (Harvey 1989: 218-9) while Shields (1991: 54) suggests that they offer re-coded and de-coded variations of lived spatiality which offer aestheticised and symbolic forms of resistance. The power of imagined spatialities to affect the real space of interaction is however demonstrated in another way by Shields (1991). Here he draws attention to how particular places such as Brighton or Niagara Falls become mythologised and take on specific identities and meaning and come to be associated with particular practises. This space as part of myth or place-images takes on concrete form in complex and subtle ways. This suggests that popular and compelling forms of knowledge work in subtle and complex ways to define real spaces, behaviour, norms and standards within specific geographical spaces/places. Drawing on political economy perspectives and following Zukin (1991: 268) space provides material form for the differentiation of the market economy" but "also structures metaphorically". According to Zukin (Ibid) spatial changes are easily visualised and therefore easily "represent and structure orientation towards society". From this we can understand how the image of places has an effect on how we think and relate to places; how different places become differentiated through the structuring forces of perception and action socialised by these forms of spatial representations as forms of 'subjective knowledge'.

Contemporary Spatial Practice

By drawing attention to 'the production of space', Lefebvre drew attention to the production of social norms and cultural practices constituted through space. In

explaining the advance of hegemonic Western thought as well as capitalism itself, Lefebvre stresses the correlation between historically specific modes of production and space as a formal organisational category (Jameson 1992: 364). As argued above, Western society has progressed through successive categories of space as a dimension implicit in society's reproduction. Ultimately Lefebvre argues that natural space and after it absolute space are superseded by *abstract space*, a space essentialised through the abstract separation of the productive activity of labour from reproduction and the perpetuation of social life (Lefebvre 1991:148, 52). Abstract space may arise out of an absolute conception of space but it is more specifically the product of capitalism, neocapitalism, the power of money, the 'world of commodities', the logic of capitalism and the global networks of finance, transport and information (Ibid: 53).

Abstract space is the locus, medium and tool of a 'positivity' linked to technology, the applied sciences, and knowledge bound to power (1991: 50). In its essence it is the space of power, but it is a power hidden by an illusory transparency and cannot be reduced to what is perceived (Ibid: 50-51). The consequence of this is that 'lived experience' is vanquished by what is 'conceived': "[the] *representation of space*, in thrall to both knowledge and power, leaves only the narrowest of leeway to *representational spaces*" (Ibid: 50). For Lefebvre then abstract space tends towards homogeneity, the elimination of differences and peculiarities, but at the same time it carries the prospect of the emergence of a new kind of space (Ibid: 52). Differential space caused by the contradictions of abstract space and the created conditions of instability and fragmentation offers the prospects of overcoming hegemonic abstract space (Ibid: 52).

A central concern of Lefebvre's analysis is the increasing subjection of everyday life to the processes of commodification and instrumental rationalisation. Clearly echoing Habermas and the Frankfurt School he suggests that the increasing production of space in accordance with the logic of instrumental rationalisation opens up the 'lived spaces' of everyday life to these colonising forces. While in highlighting the 'production of space' Lefebvre was pointing to space as a dynamic feature of social life, the term also suggests in a material sense the increasing commodification of space as part of the capitalist mode of production. Capitalism is vociferous in its influence on the practical arrangement of space, from the production of buildings to the international division of labour. Soja (1989: 92) suggests that the space of advanced capitalism is fragmented, homogenised and hierarchically structured, and

maintained through bureaucratically controlled collective consumption, the differentiation of centres and peripheries at multiple scales, and the penetration of state power into everyday life.

This analysis can be taken further. For Lefebvre the extremes of rationalisation and commodification have meant that space has taken on a sort of reality of its own which is distinct from but much like the abstract realities of commodities, money and capital (1991: 26). Lefebvre also points to the role of the image, writing and the media in usurping the place of social space as a whole, a role that amounts to the awesome reductionistic forces of abstraction in relation to 'lived' experience (Ibid: 52). This points to a theme already dealt with and one which Jameson (1992: 48) and other critical postmodern theorists see as the "transformation of the 'real' into so many pseudoevents" as the real becomes more and more subsumed by the forces of consumption, and aestheticisation. This is symptomatic of a society of the image in which semiotic systems over-extend themselves.

Defining Place as a Site of Social Practise

Place offers a particular opportunity to bring together the sociological and geographical imaginations. Like space, place is a term with multiple possible meanings. For Harvey (1993: 4) this multiplicity suggest an underlying unity, which if approached correctly would show something of the nature of the social, the political and spatial practises in interrelation to each other. For our purposes place seems important as a site of social practice, as sites of conjunction between the 'real' and the 'imaginary', as simultaneously the material context of human interaction and as a site of human experience and symbolic meaning. Places frequently have been imagined as 'naturally' bounded wholes and as closed systems expressing universal laws. This is challenged by a view that recognises that places are produced and reproduced through the contingencies of process. Harvey, borrowing from Whithead, understands place as a degree of 'permanence' within the flux of spatio-temporal processes in which places attain a degree of stability and a degree of bounded permanence for a period of time (1996:261). Places suggest relative stability but are also "contingent on the processes that create sustain and dissolve them" (Ibid). Harvey (ibid: 261), promoting a relational view, suggests place has no absolute reality; place is "the site of relations of one entity to another and therefore contains 'the other' precisely because no entity can exist in isolation". Similarly Massey (1994: 4) argues for a view of places as open and porous.

Place is not only produced by processes but is also clearly the context of social practice and relations. Place more so than space can be identified as the *meaningful* and *particular* context of human action. The view of place as the site of meaning, as a site of 'lived' experience, is one that has been generally marginalised through the processes of rationalisation. Countering positivist approaches to place, humanistic geography sought to restore the subjective possibility of places as sites of human creativity, giving primary emphasis to human experience and meaning (Entrikin, 1997: 303, 304). The concept 'sense of place' within a phenomenological inspired approach attempts to capture the virtual subconscious knowing of a place acquired through sense experience and the application of one's moral and aesthetic judgement (Yi-Fu Tuan 446). The purpose seems to be to uncover the essential qualities of place and the 'life-world' of the individual in response to an overtly instrumental rationality imposed through the spatial practices of modernity.

Although the phenomenological view reinstates place as the product of social process it does not give sufficient attention to the material context within which everyday life takes place, and therefore nor a convincing account of the relationships of power implicated in the structuring of social contexts (Pile 1996: 56). Consequently place took on significance as the specific context for exploring social action and the practicalities of everyday life in a view which drew on both neo-Marxist perspectives and structuration theory (Entrikin 1997). Following this social life is seen to take place as a practical accomplishment within a particular geographic location. This displaced the question of subjectivism and objectivism in the representation of place by focusing on the problematic of structure and agency. Through a focus on practice we may see social process as an interaction between human agency and the social and physical structures in a given place, in which the capacities of structures and agencies occur simultaneously (Madanipour, 1996: 133).

Under the influence of postmodernism and poststructuralism the study of place seems to shift attention away from a broad concern with either causation or subjectivity and toward the formation of identity through the workings of discourse as a product of dispersed manifestation of power. Place in the modern/postmodern debate takes on a central role within the theorisation of identity formation and the possibility for a politics of identity (Keith and Pile 1993). A poststructuralist approach to place tends to deny both materiality or the possibility of places as having a single essential quality, as in phenomenological readings, as places are subject to external processes including "discourses shaping identity or as external flows of information,

images ideas and commodities" (Barnes and Gregory; 1994: 294). On one hand the reality of place is always open, porous and subject to contestation within an inherently social process. Places do not have one a single, universal meaning. Madanipour (1996) however suggests that there is a problem with viewing place through the prism of post-structuralism, as a decentred site subject to the interaction of external currents. This view, by reducing the material and social dimensions of place to discourse, tends to undermine the sense that everyday lived experience is conducted through practical life (Ibid). Post-structuralism tends to reduce the physical and social dimensions of place to the workings of discourse.

Place matters because social processes *take place* within the context of a particular locality. Place is neither a structural concept nor simply the expression, as an enclosed site, of human creativity and meaning. Place should be more emphatically and consciously approached as a social construction but also related to the broader structures, historical, global and local as multiple forces working within and through place come to rest and to shape place. Here Harvey places great emphasis on the working of capital in the construction of place. For Harvey places are subject to the forces of capitalism as geographic expansion is an inevitable consequence of the crisis of overaccumulation (1996: 295). Places and networks of places are transformed through the "spatial fix" to capitalism's contradictions (Ibid). Place construction is given in the logic of capitalism's production of space, but frequently tensions in this process suggest that the process is not a linear one and success or failure is worked out through the experience of competition between places (Ibid 296). Consequently those who invest in the physical qualities of places must ensure that activities arise that allow the permanence of place and the profitability of these investments (Ibid). For Harvey with the reorganisation of space since the 1970's the meaning of place in social life has changed. On one level there is the suggestion that the significance of place is eliminated by the mobility of capital, but Harvey argues that the effects of competition is to make place more rather than less important as places seek to differentiate themselves from other places within an increasingly abstract and homogenous global space, in order to retain or capture capital investment (ibid: 297).

This process is clearly not divorced from the configurations of social organisation or meaning. Places as the product and locus of social practices and of institutionalised social power are also the focus of discursive activity and are filled with symbolic and representational meaning (Ibid: 316). Material investments in place involve the

material fixing of spatiality and tend to set in place a set of imposed or negotiated social values. As Harvey suggests the imagination implicated in the construction of place has just as frequently involved some sort of cultural politics as it has the desire for profit and speculative gain (Ibid: 318). These could for instance be related to the ideals of authenticity and community as well as a set of more universal ideals related to a global identity. The production of particular meanings within place occurs through both material and symbolic changes as well as changes to the representation of places and is testimony to the ability of people to instantiate powerful cultural and moral meanings in the world around them (Ibid: 322).

Theories of Practice

We can now conceptualise space as produced and reproduced as both the product and the medium of change and as the outcome of social, political and economic practices. Similarly we can see places as the particular sites of social practice, as produced according to particular spatial codes and as the location of experience and meaning. Contrary to the humanist privileging of consciousness, everyday life is acted out through direct practical action. The focus on practice directs attention toward the mediation between the role of subjectivity and agency and the broader and more objective structures of society, economy and culture. It demonstrates how these elements coincide and interact in the practical engagement of social life and in the production and re-production of space and place. This tends to evoke the question of structure and agency captured in Marx's well-quoted aphorism that 'people make history, but not in the circumstances of their own choosing'. Conceptualising the separation of structure and agency maintains structure as a given, objective, universal and external force and agency as an internal, individualised subjectivity. Maintaining this separation as Pile and Thrift (1995: 4) point out we are unable to interrogate everyday life as simultaneously real, imaginary and symbolic.

Thrift in 'On the determination of social action' (1983) attempted in a more purposeful way to define a theoretical agenda which would come to terms with the broader more abstract questions regarding social phenomena and their application to the features of place and the actions of individuals within a specific locality, at a specific time. Determinism and voluntarism offer opposing conceptualisations of agency and to an extent parallels respectively the macro focus of structures constituting society and operating over long periods of time and the micro picture of agents operating within the routine day to day activity. This opposition meets a particular challenge, partly as a product of capitalism and the advance of modernity as the individual is

conceptualised within the context of “seemingly ever-greater scale and extent at which the production and reproduction of society takes place” (ibid: 65).

In attempting to overcome this dualism and being one of the first to attempt a systematic understanding of place and geographic location as a site of social practice, Thrift (1983) turned to the structurationists. This refers, following Baert (1998: 94), to a general theory aiming to explore the interaction between social structure and human agency associated primarily with Giddens, but not solely confined to him. One of Giddens’s key notions is the idea of a *duality* of structures. This suggests that social structure and human agency are intimately connected rather than opposing powers (Ibid: 101). Giddens Rather suggests a recursive rather than oppositional relationship between structure and agency. This recursiveness, using Barnes and Gregory’s definition (1997: 514), is defined as a “...continuing mutual process of interaction between [the] two entities such that each is involved in constituting the other”.

Following Baert (1998), Giddens conceives of agency as the capability of the individual to act causally as a purposive individual within a series of events. Added to this rather than being simply constraining, structures are also enabling features. Following this Giddens’s idea of a duality of structure suggests that “structures, as rules and resources, are both the precondition and the unintended outcome of peoples agency” (Ibid: 104). For Giddens people in their process of performing actions and choices in their daily routines draw on these structures as a set of rules and resources. In so doing they unintentionally reproduce these structures, thereby creating the unacknowledged conditions of further acts.

Giddens also conceptualised different forms of consciousness through which people as agents operate with. People as knowledgeable agents engaging with social life in a practical way draw on a “practical consciousness” - or a tacit form of knowledge. This level of consciousness is permeable by ‘discursive consciousness’ - explicit forms of knowledge - but both are distinct from the level of unconscious motives and cognition (Baert 1998: 106). Structures are therefore internal to our actions, embedded not only through the unconscious but also by the unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences of these actions. The idea of ‘practical consciousness’ suggests that subjects actively engage with the production of social order through the routines of daily activity. Thrift (ibid), following Giddens’s formulation suggests that human agency should be seen “as a continuous flow of

conduct through space and time constantly interpolating social structure". Social life is maintained and produced through the practical action of individuals whose knowledgeability is bounded by both their unconscious and conscious levels of experience. This is an important point because it suggests that spatial and temporal practices in societies are intimately, and in many ways, subtly tied up in the reproduction or transformation of social relations.

Bourdieu

Bourdieu similarly sought to transcend the antinomy of objectivism and subjectivism and to show that social life is a "practical achievement by skilful actors" (Baert 1998: 30). Bourdieu, following Calhoun (1995), provides another path between modernists and postmodernists, universalism and particularism, rationalism and relativism. While employing a rich theoretical approach, his approach tends to overcome social theory as an abstract project independent of an empirical basis and concrete social relations (Calhoun 1995: 132, Baert 1998: 29). Through a close attention to empirical detail and concrete analysis he attempts to show how society is constituted across time and space. His notion of 'habitus' forms a useful conceptual tool in understanding how people, as relatively resourceful agents must adjust to social constraints, and how their aspirations and goals are shaped as they internalise the social environment in which they are brought up.

Practices for Bourdieu both reflect and reproduce the objective social relations of the social world and the internal subjective interpretations of the individual (Smith 2001: 136). The 'habitus' is conceptualised as a mediating structure between objective social forces and internal subjectivities. We may describe the 'habitus' as a structuring structure, a generative schema of dispositions which generate people's practices, improvisations and attitudes providing them with a 'practical sense' and a set of resources to cope in diverse social settings (Baert 1998: 31, Smith 2001: 136). By referring to 'dispositions', Bourdieu links the 'habitus' with the cognitive and motivational aspects of individual behaviour but positions the 'habitus' within the terrain of unconscious, non-reflexive action. As something embodied within us it has much in common with the phenomenological idea of 'lifeworld'. The 'habitus' elevates the fact following Calhoun (1995: 132) that human knowledge and practical action are physically embodied.

The 'habitus' differs according to social and cultural background. Cultural codes are perpetuated through 'habitus', which undergoes subtle adjustment and adaptation to

allow tradition to continue. This passing on of tradition and affirmation of culture occurs in the course of interested actions in which people pursue a variety of ends both conscious and unconscious (Calhoun 1995: 149). The notion of 'habitus' is then also important to the reproduction of social inequality. The 'habitus' emerges out of society characterised by differential relations of power and access to resources. Emerging out of inequality the 'habitus' influences practical actions which are "always tending to reproduce the objective structures of which they are the product" (Bourdieu cited by Smith 2001: 136).

Culture as a Social Practice

Although Bourdieu has in common with Marxist sociology that power struggles are central to social life he insists that power struggles are not simply economic, but also operate at a symbolic level (Baert 1998: 30). Bourdieu subordinates the economic as a dynamic of social practice. He sees at work an "economy of practices" in which people pursue and accumulate many kinds of goods and resources which take their particular meaning from the social relationships that constitute different fields of social engagement (Calhoun 200: 714). This involves a much broader idea of capital, extending beyond capital as a resource of financial power. Accordingly other forms of capital, such as social, cultural and symbolic forms of capital also operate in society as resources determining social power and inequality. Social capital refers to ones capacity to draw on social networks and ties to achieve advancement. Cultural capital and symbolic capital are closer markers of social location, related to education and upbringing, aesthetic taste and judgement and the ability to discriminate between "good" and "bad", and as markers of social prestige and distinction (Smith 2001:137, Baert 1998: 31). In this way Bourdieu maintains that taste is social and is used to perpetuate social division as elites in society define what is valued cultural capital and what is devalued (Smith 2001: 138).

Following Bourdieu's ideas, Featherstone (1995) suggests that we need to locate culture as a social practice in which the practices of consumption, lifestyle and taste are seen as socially located and as a function of social relations. For instance goods are consumed and used as markers of difference or communality between people; goods contain symbolic value, employed within the marketing, design and imagery of products and drawn on by consumers (and used as symbolic capital) to construct differentiated lifestyles (1995: 21). Following Crook et al (1992: 21) this differentiation of lifestyles becomes a particular feature of postmodernisation as class membership becomes far more differentiated and as much determined by patterns and powers of

consumption as by location in the system of production. In this way class reproduction becomes more 'cultural' in character and increasingly dependent on the application of such consumption standards such as 'taste' and 'distinction' (ibid)

Also following Crook et al (1992: 36-37), as a result of hypercommodification and hyperdifferentiation the cultural unity evident in the correlation between taste and class in modernity becomes fractured. Consequently what they call postculture is associated with the broad idea of a new postindustrial middle class, or what Bourdieu called a new petty bourgeoisie and involves the consumption of postmodern cultural forms and symbolic products. Taste becomes generalised and released from any form of hierarchy or tradition; this cohesion is replaced by an exuberance of style and a profusion of choice as well as postmodern solutions to this dilemma (Ibid). The result is the repackaging of fragments into commodified 'lifestyles' in which logical cohesion such as the authenticity of tradition is replaced by a simulated 'unity' employing a semiotic promiscuity and preference for pastiche and parody many commentators point to as a feature of postmodernism (Ibid: 37).

Culture is produced and reproduced by social practise and the landscape is part of this system. Bourdieu's ideas may have implication for understanding culture and for locating our built environment as a cultural space. Also it suggests the importance of the built environment in the reproduction of social life, as both a structural material reality and containing codes as part of the structures we draw on through everyday practice. Featherstone (1995: 21) feels that in looking at culture we need to look at the actual practices of cultural production and particularly the way particular groups of cultural specialists relate to the actual practices of consumption on the part of different groups. Like other postmodernists Bourdieu sees relations of power in society as imbricated with society's knowledge, but while he acknowledges that power is fundamental, unlike Foucault it involves domination and can be applied practically and personally, albeit sometimes unconsciously (Calhoun 1995: 135). This is a view closer to Harvey (1996: 44) who argues: "Transformations of space, place and environment are neither neutral nor innocent with regard to practises of domination and control. Indeed they are fundamental framing decisions – replete with multiple possibilities – that govern the conditions (often repressive) over how lives can be lived."

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to identify the basis for a spatialised critical social theory. In doing so it has attempted to draw together the different ideas of space and place by relating these to social life in particular through the idea of social practice. Lefebvre's thesis allows us to understand how space forms a critical feature in social life as society perpetuates its codes through the production and reproduction of space. His thesis also allows us to interrogate the way in which space particularly under capitalism, plays an instrumental role as a means of hegemonic control. Echoing Foucault's concept of knowledge-power, for Lefebvre power is maintained as space concretises knowledge through action: space contains both knowledge and practical action and may be used as a tool for domination (Lefebvre 1991: 26). This idea implies that knowledge and space combine to establish systematic forms of control and organisation in which power is situated. Lefebvre also draws our attention to the way in which the production and reproduction of space involves different moments of space that articulate between subjective experience and the broader structural codes of society as people continually act out their daily lives.

This focus on practice suggests the possibility of combining poststructuralist and materialist forms of analysis. A materialist analysis would tend to focus on the way place is shaped by the forces of capital, reflecting perhaps the restructuring of capital. For Harvey place is given in the logic of capitalism's production of space, particularly as places are defined in competition for capital, because of capital's mobility. At the same time the construction of place is implicated in the transformation of meaning, self and consciousness in place as a fundamental aspect of social life in a particular place. Consequently place is not simply shaped in a unilinear way as the product of greater structural forces related to the notion of global change. Places in this sense are also shaped by spatial practices that take place in a locality. Bourdieu argues that practices both reflect and reproduce the objective social relations of the social world. Subordinating the economic as a dynamic of social practice, Bourdieu integrates social practice and the economy within the cultural through the notion of symbolic capital used by people as markers of social location. These ideas seem to have particular relevance to the emergence of a symbolic landscape.

Chapter Five

Theorising the Contemporary City

Introduction

The city as a particular kind of space is produced and reproduced over time and reflects changes to the modes of social organisation and reproduction as well as historically specific cultural and social values. Today the city has become the common focus of a transdisciplinary approach bringing together critical cultural studies with a more traditional social scientific analysis of urbanism and urban process (Soja 1997: 21). Recognising this trend this chapter is based on the idea that the city may be identified on one hand as a real object, as a site of historic-specificity as a space and material object produced through real social and economic processes such as globalisation and the structural changes to the organisation of capital. On the other hand the city is also powerfully linked to the imagination, as an imaginary space or as a kind of representation, but also as a site which comes to reflect society's values and itself has a powerful effect on the imaginary and imagination.

There are many ways in which the idea of the city seems to bring together both the 'real' and the 'imaginary'. With regard to the first understanding we are interested in identifying material changes to the city its shape, form and structure and changes as well as its symbolic coding and meaning as it reflects a hypothetical epochal shift from modernity to postmodernity. With regard to the second our focus is primarily on the changes to the way the city has been conceptualised and represented through theory, in other words the city as a conceived space. The intention then is to develop an understanding of the city as a theoretical construction but also to identify those changes taking place in the city under broader structural processes. Equally though, this chapter is interested in identifying those spatial practises implicated in the restructuring of urban space and the patterns and structures of urban change that make the 'perceived' spaces of the city. This chapter then involves both an exploration of the representation of the city within the theoretical imagination and the contemporary spatial practises implicated in the restructuring of urban spaces and places. The next chapters follow on from this and attempt to engage with the city as a lived space, as a site of imagination and representation.

The way cities are imagined and represented through both the theoretical and practical imaginations have implications for the way that the city takes shape as a physical space. Cities may be seen as the concretisation of a society's knowledge. Here we draw on the insights of Lefebvre (1991) as well as Foucault. We may see a practical example in the way the ideas of specialists such as planners and urban designers, regarding how the city should look, function and be lived, is translated into plans and urban environments (Bridge and Watson 2000: 7). The way the city evolves over time under these influences also effects the form the city takes as a mental space – the image of the city and as a form of subjective knowledge people carry with them as they go about their everyday lives – an idea we owe particularly to Lynch (1959). Nowadays as our lived experience is more and more saturated by media images, following Bridge and Watson (ibid) the public imaginary of the city is as much constituted by lived practises as by media representation. Clearly there is no total separation between the conceived and the perceived in the production of the space of the city, just as we cannot privilege the real or the imaginary over each other, as these elements are dynamically related.

Representing the City in Theory

As the literature tends to suggest (Westwood and Williams, 1996; Bridge and Watson, 2000), any representation of the city is located within the confines of a particular imaginary, including the theoretical; any particular discourse of the city offers its own particular representation of objective reality as constructed within the framework of that theoretical imagination.

The 'Organic' City

The first attempt at a systematic spatial theorisation of the city lies with the Chicago School (Soja 2000: 93). This imagined a logical unity and order to the city and its form; both spatial and institutional realities could be mapped out into an 'ecological' structure. Resulting out of this a particularly idea of the city has endured through the twentieth century which presents it as an organic structure, with its social structure, bureaucratic institutions and physical structures relating to each other in an organic way. Burgess's *zonal* or *concentric ring theory* was based on Chicago as the model of the modern industrial metropolis. This model has provided a particularly dominant mode of thinking about city growth and structure (Dear and Flusty, 1998: 51). Although Hoyt's *sector theory* and Harris and Ullman's *multiple nuclei theory* reflected a more complex pattern of organisation, the biological ontology and the internal logic of the city as an organism remained. Notwithstanding their limited application to the

American context much urban research was based on these precepts. Their influence can be seen in factorial ecologies of intra-urban structure, land-rent models, studies of urban economies and diseconomies of scale as well as designs for ideal cities and neighbourhoods (Ibid: 51).

Rise of Positivism

This dominant conceptualisation and the representation of the city through organic models was limited to the interpretation and explanation of the 'perceived' space of the city. Following this and under the dominant influence of logical positivism and a scientific rational approach the focus in urban studies shifted toward uncovering the underlying universal and abstract laws of distribution, verifiable through empirical observation and quantified in the form of mathematical models (Hall P, 1984). The rational choice of individuals under the conditions of the 'friction of distance' produced spatial regularities as the expression of universal laws of spatial arrangement (*Ibid*). Under these conditions all urban activities would theoretically be allocated to their economically proper and rational place (Soja 2000: 92). Social and spatial disciplines became increasingly subject to an instrumental rationality as the space of the city was increasingly represented in the abstract coding of statistics, mappings of land use patterns, household locations, income disparities, transport network and so on (Soja 2000: 90).

Political Economy Approaches

The crisis of the 1960's and 1970's exposed the shortcomings of spatial science and urban theories, which conceptualised the city as having an apparent logical order, a sense of regularity and progressive evolution (Soja 2000). The break came with the understanding that urbanisation was a mediated outcome of a specific set of dynamics fundamental to the capitalist mode of production and consequently that historical-materialist analysis was the appropriate means of gaining knowledge about cities (Hall 1984). The prevailing imaginary employed by Marxist writers was of a city working in the interests of capital accumulation and exploitation (Bridge and Watson 2000: 15). Castells's structural critique sought to de-legitimise what he saw as the ideologically defined theoretical objectification of the city as the product of a natural evolutionary processes (Soja 2000: 97). Instead the space of the city was located in power struggles over resources and expressed the interests of the dominant class and power of the state. David Harvey's view provided a more explicitly spatial focus in which the material dimensions of the physical landscape were made in the image of capitalism. The basis of this being the importance of land in the circuits of capital,

investments in the city being made in the second circuit of capital in order to overcome the crisis of over-accumulation of commodity production (Bridge and Watson, 2000: 102). Through the lens of historical materialism the city is a representation of deeper socio-economic structures produced by powerful historical forces working in the interests of capital accumulation and exploitation.

Contemporary Representations of the City

More recently the city has become the focus of much wider analysis. The cultural turn has introduced other representations not strictly limited to an analysis of the 'real' objective structures of material and economic process. Many of these readings are based in a poststructuralist framework in which the boundaries between the 'real' and 'imagined' city and the discursive and non-discursive terrain are self-consciously disrupted (Bridge and Watson 2000: 15). The construction of the city through literary accounts or in local histories and narratives, for instance becomes as valid a means of analysis as the material city itself. Underpinning many of these accounts as Westwood and Williams (1997: 4) point out is a decentred account of the social, a view which sees society as fractured and in a continual process of constitution and reconstitution rather than as governed by organic wholes and systems. Accordingly social life takes place through the production and reproduction of urban practices within a series of possible sites (ibid).

In this regard urban sociology of late has dedicated particular attention to division and difference in the contemporary city. More structurally orientated representations indicated greater social polarisation in city space induced through economic, technological and global forces. Consequently the metaphorical idea of 'Dual Cities', 'Divided Cities', 'Quartered Cities' or the 'Fragmented Cities' have emerged. Differences are constructed spatially, socially and economically, but are something particular to the city in that it tends to concentrate difference through the intensity of its meanings and discursive practices (Bridge and Watson 2000: 252-253). In this sense differences are constructed in and themselves construct city life and spaces (Ibid). A greater sensitivity to the discursive and difference means social struggles in place are not just over resources but also take place over identity and meaning. Consequently simple class analysis gives way to issues of community, race, ethnicity, culture and gender.

Los Angeles as the Paradigm of Postmodern Urbanism

Following postmodernism's loss of faith in the grand narrative exploration of the urban has tended to focus on the micro worlds of everyday life; following Soja (1997: 21): "the local, the body the streetscape, psycho-geographies of intimacy, erotic subjectivities'. Soja however feels that this focus has taken place "at the expense of the structuring of the city as a whole, the macro-view of urbanism, the political-economy of the whole urban process" (Ibid: 21). Consequently just as Chicago was offered as the logical model of the modern industrial metropolis so Los Angeles has become the paradigmatic model of contemporary urban restructuring. For some Los Angeles represents a sea change in urban life and process.

There is a sense however that changes are so fundamental that they involve a radical transformation in the complex relations between social and spatial form and process, what Soja referred to as the socio-spatial dialectic (Ibid: 20), and that this requires a radically new reconceptualisation of the city itself. Consequently Soja uses the term 'postmetropolis' to capture the sense of breakdown, instability and crisis affecting the contemporary city, but also to incorporate the perspectives of other post-prefixed discourses such as that of postindustrialism and post-Fordism as well as poststructuralist and post-colonial modes of critical analysis within this concept (Ibid: 20, 21).

This postmodern 'model' of urbanism centred on Los Angeles (Soja, 2000; Dear, 1995; Dear and Flusty, 1998) tends to emphasise fragmentation and dislocation over internal order and cohesion and unity, qualities that equally apply as much to the physical form of cities as the city as a 'lived' space. For Dear and Flusty organic models of urbanism inherited from the Chicago School provide an untenable guide to contemporary urbanisation (1998: 65). The inadequacy of these models is in part due to their epistemological location in the discourses of modernity – the city as centred, organic, even moral whole. The need for radical reconceptualisation also emerges out of the failure of rationalism as an ideal and practical guide to thought and social action in which there was an appeal to a universal, timeless, truth through the meta-narrative (Dear 1995: 28).

The general idea suggests a radical break in the world of spatial practises re-shaping the city but is still heavily dependant on a macro view that locates these practices in the material world of information and capital flows, and a globally integrated economy

driven by new flexible patterns of production and consumption. For Dear and Flusty capitalism is still behind this spatial manifestation of the postmodern condition. This involves a dramatically different form of capitalism called 'Keno' capitalism, driven by the imperatives of flexibility, altered by advances in technologies, particularly the telecommunication revolution, the changing nature of work and globalisation and hypermobile capital (ibid: 65). The spatial manifestation of this form of capitalism reflects a seemingly haphazard and fractured affair, as capital makes decisions on the basis of a "quasi-random field of opportunities" (ibid: 66). The result is a disjointed city-form, "a non-contiguous collage of parcelled consumption orientated landscapes devoid of conventional centres yet wired into electronic propinquity and nominally unified by the disinformation superhighway" (1998: 66).

The theorisation of the city in this vein tends to disrupt the discourses of order contained in modern representations of the city, privileging instead the idea of chaos and unintelligibility in the city as an organic form (Westwood and Williams 1997: 4). Ironically however while attempting to capture the complexity as a whole, and even though fragmentation, chaos and disruption are emphasised, such readings still depend on the idea of some underlying structure even though this is based on a disorganised form of capitalism. Ironically also the model of Los Angeles has become a powerful, even dominant discourse influencing interpretations of urbanism elsewhere and consequently approaches something of a metanarrative. In response a number of writers warn of the dangers of taking one single city as a paradigmatic case applicable to all other cities (Amin and Graham 1997; Marcuse and van Kempen, 1989). Los Angeles has mistakenly been treated as the trajectory of future urbanism rather than a special case in point (Westwood and Williams Ibid). The idea of radical break is also questioned by writers who suggest that the city is still in many ways fundamentally subject to the influences of processes located in the modern, Fordist city (Beauregard and Haila 2000).

City of Process and City of Layers

The formation and reformation of the spaces of the city through powerful and increasingly complex processes provides a challenge to defining the contemporary city. The search for some logical process and internal order or structure seems an implicit part of any attempt in making objective sense of the city. On this point Harvey (1997) suggests we need to distinguish the category of the city as a 'thing', from the processes of urbanisation. For Harvey it is important to recognise that the city as a 'thing-like' structure is constituted out of processes and that this relationship is a

dialectical one; once laid down through fluid social processes these fixed forms exert a powerful influence on the way social processes operate. Understood this way the city becomes a palimpsest; a series of superimposed layers each constituted and construed out of different historical moments (Harvey 1997: 22).

Likewise for Marcuse and van Kempen (2000: 265) the city is really “multiple cities, layered over and under each other” rather than a single “whole, organic, entity”. Consequently identifying *the* city seems reductionist; it seems more valuable to conceptualise the city as a series of multiple spaces and realities. This view is also expressed by Graham (1997: 56) who suggests that the “actual expression of the consequences of global restructuring in advanced capitalism is expressed not among places but within them”. To understand an apparent new phase of urban process we need to focus on how cities take on multiple internal realities and this involves an analysis in terms of intra- as opposed to inter-differentiation. Likewise as Amin and Graham (1997) point out, the real danger lies in over-generalising the city from one example, and of overemphasising particular representations which are not ‘whole’ cities but rather ‘time-space’ samples of cities. While recognising then that the idea of ‘the city’ cannot stand for the multiple realities that in fact make up urban spaces, the term is used here to denote the general idea of urban space as both a social construction and a site of cultural meaning.

The Social Production of the Postmodern City

As suggested above one way of conceptualising contemporary changes to cities is through an analysis of the macro forces seen to be structuring cities and the concomitant patterns and forms of urbanisation that result from this. The conditions under which urban change occurs are sometimes conceptualised in terms of a set of external structuring forces shaping cities in accordance with some super economic, political or technological logic. The danger of this macro view is exemplified in the image of Los Angeles as a paradigm of postmodern urbanism. Nevertheless the intertwined frameworks of post-Fordism, post-industrialism and globalisation provide the predominant conceptual basis for understanding general structural change to the contemporary city in a phase of advanced capitalism. Together these discourses offer an interpretation of spatial practises shaping and differentiating space, at higher speeds and across the global, in accordance with a more flexible logic of spatial organisation and production than before.

The Macro Location of Spatial Change

Post-Fordism has framed a primary focus on the geographic impact of industrial restructuring and a more general and longstanding inquiry into the causes of geographically uneven development (Soja 2000: 158). The term carries an antithetical idea to the conceived rigidity and hierarchy of Fordist industrial and spatial organisation. In a more general sense it also marks a shift away from the order of mass production and consumption toward increasingly segmented markets. The primary idea contained in the post-Fordist discourse, however is around flexibility in opposition to the idea of the industrially driven expansion of the Fordist city around a single core (Amin and Thrift 1995: 91; Soja 2000: 171). The industrial emphasis in post-Fordism tends to limit analysis to empirically observable effects of new production systems and their consequences for spatial organisation. Post-Fordist production processes have been re-organised into smaller, fragmented and dispersed units of organisation arranged in a network of producers and sub-contractors, allowing for instance the emergence of smaller decentred, suburban developments (Soja, *Ibid*)

Likewise new information technologies have also likely had their influence on the practical arrangement of space and the decentring of the industrial metropolis. The idea in this thesis is that knowledge generation and information, driven by a fundamental technological revolution are the basis for a new information society in which control of information and the generation of knowledge shapes social processes and social organisation (Castells, 1991). At a fundamental level telecommunications and computer networks, collapse altogether the problems of space and distance, constraints that formed the original basis for concentration in the industrial city (Graham 1997: 32). The advance of communication technology allows for greater flexibility leading to the segmentation and rationalisation of productive activity including service sector work and information processing. Computer based telework and telematics replaces the need for physical concentration, allowing some workers to combine home and work and base themselves in the idealised and anti-urban settings of the countryside or the village (Graham 1997). While this has led to some utopian democratic and environmental claims, the same forces in reality may also allow for concentrations of power and wealth. This occurs both at a global level amongst a few dominant urban centres and at the local amongst a new elite benefiting from and controlling the mode of production in segregated spaces within individual cities (Castells, 1991).

The restructuring of urban space is related in an even more general sense to the process of globalisation. Increasing trade and mobility, the spatial integration of economic activity, the advance of technologies and changing values and norms in various part of the world all form part of this. All of these may be identified as part of the macro-societal forces influencing urban patterns within and among cities. Marcuse and van Kempen (1998) suggest however that these do not occur in a general way as a unidirectional force, universally affecting cities connected to the global nexus. Globalisation while being a very real process is best understood as a general idea as a set of related processes that operate within particular places in the face of multiple contingencies (ibid).

One clear way in understanding how globalisation affects cities is in the changing nature of economic activities. Here Harvey's notion of a regime of flexible accumulation appears to be the most useful and draws together the basic economic ideas on post-Fordism and globalisation. Capital mobility seems a crucial factor as capital seeks out places where profit is expected to be highest. The flow of capital in this way has differential effects between and within places as flexible accumulation exploits conditions on a far wider spatial scale in order to expand markets and extract greater profit (Kirsch 1995). The transformative effects of this is seen in the formation of highspeed geographies of production, exchange and consumption (Kirsch 1995: 529).

For Harvey flexibility is a deep-seated condition within the regime of capitalist accumulation itself and induces patterns of uneven development across both geographic space and economic sectors (Harvey 1994: 362). For Harvey it is through the particular shifts in the urban process and the production of the urban environment that the new regime has been successfully implanted (Ibid, 364). In this sense the move to flexible accumulation articulates in a key way with a general cultural-aesthetic trend towards postmodernism and the production of urban innovations, products, cultural forms and lifestyles (Ibid: 366).

The Decentring City

The restlessness of contemporary urbanism tends to subvert the notion of a coherent city; a city constituted out of sectors such as a dominant centre, suburbs and industrial area working more or less in organic relation to each other. (Soja 2000:239). The edge city phenomenon is a particular example of the seemingly

radical changes occurring within the multinucleated postmodern city. Soja (1997, 2000) appropriately defines this phenomenon of urban restructuring as *exopolis* – representing the process of urbanisation occurring outside of the city in a literal and spatially figurative sense. These spaces according to Soja deny any qualitative identification of 'cityness' (1997: 26). They contribute to the physical fragmentation of the city as well as the way it is lived out as a social, cultural and historically constituted space.

We may see them as the products of the communication revolution, the proliferation of motor vehicle ownership and a general trend towards greater privatisation (Dear and Flusty 1998: 55). The edge city phenomenon tends to be distinct from the historical process of suburbanisation – the formation of residential dormitories, displaying a fairly homogenous social structure of white, middle-class, nuclear family households, removed by distance but not functionally from the central city. Suburbs are the products of voluntary decentralisation, driven by improved transportation facilities and later by burgeoning car ownership, real estate speculation and the ideals of town and countryside (Soja 2000: 240). In the latter half of the twentieth century the outward spread of the suburbs was followed by the urbanisation of suburbia as higher order economic functions decentralised from the dominant centres and gathered in suburban locations. While breaking down the clear socio-spatial distinction between 'suburbia' and 'the city' as definitive urban forms and lifestyles, 'postsuburbia' has propelled the formation of the inverted metropolis and is understood by Soja (2000: 238) as signalling the end of the era of the modern metropolis as the dominant model.

A conventional explanation of these shifting structures given by Clark (2001) suggests that polycentric growth and edge city formation is understood as a perfectly rational continuation of past urban structures and market processes. While household choice and market processes (ibid) may account in some part for the emergence of a polycentric urban system this provides only a limited one-dimensional picture of the changing social space of the city by ignoring the fact that such practices may be embedded in cultural and political values and ideals. The deconcentration and peripheral reagglomeration of corporate business services within edge city office nodes would suggest that they compete with the central cities for dominance in the region in a process which cannot be described as sprawl or metropolitisation (Marcuse and van Kempen 2000: 255). The central city is no longer the dominant site in the metropolis for jobs, offices, restaurants and cinemas (Ibid: 15). Some studies

suggest neither self-sufficiency nor economic independence, and others show that they perform specialised functions significantly different from those of the older established centres. (Beauregard and Haila 2000: 28). Edge cities now play a major role in the formation of economic integration across regions as the city connects with an urban economic network that extends to the global.

Marcuse and van Kempen (2000) have a particular understanding of the edge city. The Edge City for them is a totalised cluster of residences, businesses, commerce and recreation which may or may not be economically dependant on the central city, but which in the daily lives and routines of its users remains independent from the central city and remains a large reason for its existence. The relation to the central city is downplayed and the tendency is toward insulation as activities seek to draw in the same institutions of international business, professional consultancies and cultural activities that the central city has. (Ibid) The residents of edge cities tend to be no different from the typical suburb and edge cities tend to reinforce the class and racial partitioning of metropolitan areas (Marcuse and van Kempen 2000: 15, Beauregard and Haila: 2000: 29). Similarly they are places more likely than not of common interest developments (Beauregard and Haila: 2000: 29).

Private Spaces and Space of Exclusion

The edge city it seems, is not all together innocent, displaying features of exclusion either as an external or central feature of their formation and not captured by the non-critical conventional interpretations regarding market forces and consumer choice. The outward growth of the city around totalised clusters has occurred in conjunction with the proliferation of private housing developments, particularly in the United States, where they have come to define the norm in mass production of housing (Dear and Flusty 2000:55). Dear and Flusty capture the idea of these space in their term "Privatopia", referring to the existence of private housing developments administered by homeowners associations and located in common-interest developments, as perhaps the quintessential edge city residential form. Private developments tend to prescribe a set of norms of behaviour and aesthetic conformity, but also encourage a culture of civic non-participation in which duties are centred around private property (Dear and Flusty 2000: following McKenzie).

The social production of exclusion works in hand with, but is not limited to, the privatisation of space in advanced economies. Private developments may be aggressively private to the point of being exclusionary. Generally these are the gated

communities of the rich, what Marcuse and van Kempen (2000: 254) call 'exclusionary enclaves'; housing those that benefit from globalisation and economic change but manage to live without being affected by their immediate surroundings. These are not geographically specific areas, not being limited to the edge city or suburb. Nor is the walling limited to the wealthy elite (Ibid); It is the proliferation of the phenomenon of demarcating exclusionary spaces through the erection of physical as well as social barriers to maintain internal coherence and security and keep out the perceived social dangers that Marcuse and van Kempen seem to point to. These divisions are therefore materially and symbolically produced, constructed and maintained through the social practices contained in urban space.

Urban Space and Surveillance

While Marcuse and van Kempen talk of a more general phenomenon regarding the divisions in space a more ominous version of this draws on the image of Los Angeles as a 'fortress city'. Crime and violence in the city and fear become manifest in the physical form of the city as "it is divided into fortified cells of affluence and places of terror" (Dear and Flusty 1998: 57). Public spaces are replaced by privatised spaces dominated by intensive surveillance technologies and high security policing. These writers draw on a particular analysis presented in *City of Quartz* in which Davis (1990) explores the privatisation of public space and the obsession with security and the surveillance of urban space. The image that develops is of a city that promotes social control and discipline. Here the image of Foucault's panopticon is particularly relevant as it describes how knowledge and power combine and are translated into 'real' relations of power as they are spatially constituted. For Davis this produces a "carceral city" a place where the criminalised poor are excluded from places of affluence and consumption, which are largely controlled by privatised interests through a process of "security by design" (cited by Dear and Flusty 1998: 57).

Imagining the Global in the Local

Division and polarisation within cities are linked to the general forces we associated with globalisation (Marcuse and van Kempen 1989). These division may be the result of structural forces operating at a global level, frequently linked to the economic activity of production and markets having differential effects depending on locality. One way of identifying how city-space has been altered in the contemporary period is to look at the way globalisation articulates with the local. Ironically under the forces and conditions of globalisation the signification of place becomes an important feature for cities attempting to project themselves onto the global.

As cities become more preoccupied with local economic development and employment growth there appears a powerful drive to build an appropriate physical and social imagery of a city suited to this competitive purpose (Harvey 1989b: 14). For Harvey the heightened inter-urban competition that results has been a central feature of the urbanisation process and the successful implantation of systems of flexible accumulation and the cultural-aesthetic shift toward postmodernism (Ibid: 364). Here the production of the built environment by powerful interest groups has actively promoted the transition to flexible accumulation and the production of urban innovations in life-styles, cultural forms and products. While these can contribute to social solidarity, civic pride and even a sense of refuge from totalising urban environments (ibid), ultimately the representation of an urban imagery through the built environment and the media has social and political significance. Tim Hall (1997) for instance argues how fundamentally the re-presentation of Birmingham as part of a wider, more global geography, involved an internal process of cultural transformation or production that engaged with and countered deep-seated cultural prescriptions embedded in the national culture.

Other writers (Watson 1990, Stevenson 1998) have commented on how place marketing inevitably involves the mobilisation of a selected set of images shaped by the dominant perceptions of the symbolic and imaginary idea of the city and held generally by a business and political elite. The issue of equity is raised by Harvey (1989b) who points out that speculative investments resulting from partnerships between government and business interests frequently amounts to a subsidy for affluent consumers and corporations (Harvey 1989 b). On the same token, but pointing to the way the city is experienced as an imaginary space it also raises the issue of the struggle for identity in place. Frequently, as Stevenson suggests, the re-imagining of place often endorses an urban imagery built on the urban discourses of the global rather than symbolic expression of local cultural identity (1989: 110). Evidently these representations operate as an ideology as much as myth and metaphor (Eyles and Peace 1990, Watson 1990). In this sense while we may understand globalisation as a set of macro socio-economic forces coming to rest in places in particular ways, it operates as much as a rhetorical force, or even as a dominant discourse, shaping the way cities are re-imagined and re-presented.

Altered Spaces and Consumption Environments

Globalisation and Postmodernism come together to describe changes to the spatio-temporality of city as a lived space through both its material and its symbolic restructuring. A significant aspect shaping the consciousness of globalisation, culture and identity in the contemporary period is the transfer of ideas and the productions and consumption of images occurring on a global scale. Following Giddens or Baudrillard respectively this either increases the reflexive sense of self or leads to a sense of disembeddedness in a sense of hyperreality (Bridge and Watson, 2000b: 107). The increasing proliferation of images through the media influences the urban imaginaries, the imagery employed in cities and the public imaginary about cities (Bridge and Watson 2000a: 7). These images tend to originate in particular cities based in a form of capitalism located in a post-Fordist regime of accumulation in which a significant portion of the productive output involves commodified cultural production or the production of symbolic forms (Scott: 2001). Many cities however, and not just those in the advanced economies have made a symbolic as much as a material shift away from being sites of industrial production. Many cities have become sites for the production and consumption of images and the cultivation of spectacle (Harvey: 1989b). The symbolic order of the postmodern global or globalising city is one which is dominated by a consumption-based cityscape geared toward the provision of entertainment, leisure or lifestyle services (Smith 2001: 215).

With the symbolic and material changes to urban space, so as some argue, has the urban experience and our cognitive and subjective engagement with places altered. Soja suggests that in a fundamental way the space of the city as a lived space has altered. Parrallelling the 'real' physical changes there has been a restructuring of the *urban imaginary*; "our city-centric consciousness" but that this "ideological refabrication" affects everyday life in the city; the way we think, evaluate and act in the places, spaces and communities in which we live (Soja 2000: 324). This recalls our earlier engagement with the ideas of Bourdieu. In effect these new spaces require the adaptation and restructuring of the structuring schema of dispositions that make up the Habitus to allow people to engage with these spaces in a practical way. Simultaneously adaptation occurs to allow the perpetuation of certain ideals, values and cultural codes which tends toward the perpetuation of the objective structures of social division.

In some way the restructuring of 'habitus' may occur in hand with the supposed detachment taking place at a broader level of contemporary experience through the inability to differentiate between the *real* and the *imagined* or the sense of 'hyperreality'. It is a condition generated in part by the frenetic engagement with media images, but also works through the over-production of images and consumption spaces occurring with the commodification of city-space. Borrowing from Baudrillard, much of the production of the city is dominated by the logic of simulation in which images, spectacle and the play of signs stand in place of the 'real' referents of class fractions and production; we are more obsessed by the sign and the image rather than the concrete reality to which it refers. Our perceptual and cognitive structures are left to engage with a free play of signs as free-floating signifiers as the sign and the symbol become divorced from the commodity. With it is theorised is an inevitable sense of dematerialisation and dislocation. A darkly ironic view of a simulation culture would see Times Square, New York as a centre of hyperreality where you can watch live the destruction of your own city. The realm of the hyperrealm simulations of reality however are associated principally with sites of consumer culture: Disneyland, theme parks, amusement parks, shopping malls and consumer fantasylands (Featherstone 1995: 76; Kellner 2000: 743), but the codes and models of simulation also effects gentrified spaces, waterfronts and themed residential complexes.

Postmodern Architecture and Urbanism

Architecture provides the most visible manifestation of a shift in aesthetic production (Jameson, 1991: 2). Because of its visibility and public profile architecture emerged as a central feature in the postmodernism debate, while postmodern architecture is inseparable from a formal critique and analysis of architectural high modernism which occurred in conjunction with the reconsideration of urbanism and aesthetic practice (Jameson Ibid: 2; Woods 1999: 89). Modern architecture in its purest form came to be a prescription for functionality and rationality and the formation of a new social and moral order in which architecture could play a heroic role. It swept aside tradition and embraced the possibilities offered by the new technologies of glass, steel and concrete allowing a new geometric ordering and coding of space in articulation with social function and the broad ideologies of rationality, progress and emancipation. The dominant metaphor was of the machine with form and design being subservient to function.

High modernism was attacked for its elitism and its destruction of the local fabric of the city by commentators such as Jane Jacobs. Likewise postmodern architecture is seen as a reaction against the monumentality, stylistic uniformity, monolithic formality and the totalising prescriptions of architectural modernism. In response postmodern architecture following general consensus (Smith 2001: 217) involves a stylistic eclecticism and hybridised styles, an ironic use of pastiche, makes use of historic reference, emphasises the playful and tries to have mass appeal. Both Robert Venturi and Charles Jencks drew attention to architecture as a language that communicates and symbolises while Jencks attempted to more explicitly formulate the semiotics of a postmodern architecture (Woods 1999: 98-99). Postmodern architecture becomes a pluralist concept incorporating many styles and influences, but in which narrative is important and releases the building from function and elevates it to the realm of fiction (ibid). Crook et al (1992: 64) argue however that postmodernism is too imprecise to denote a style at all, the term designating rather the whole field of cultural postmodernity. Following this postmodern architecture embraces a plethora of stylistic possibilities including hi-tech and minimalist aesthetics that build on modernist concerns for the relation between form, function and materials (ibid). For Crook et. al. the plethora of styles reflects postmodernity's hyperrationalisation, as each style elaborates its own theme in a "methodical 'rationalised' way" – just as even the extremes of pastiche or parody explore the limits of simulation (ibid).

Following its response to the failures of modernism, postmodern architecture supposedly includes a greater sensitivity to scale, attempts to link people to neighbourhoods while aiming to cultivate an ethos in place, local identity and local culture (Kumar 1995: 123). Greater sensitivity to the meaning of place and the production of meaningful human environments suggests a counter practice to the abstraction and anomie of modernist space. Several commentators (Knox 1991, Kumar 1995, Woods 1999: 131) however have re-iterated Foster's identification of a 'postmodernism of reaction' and a 'postmodernism of resistance '. While this is interpreted differently the former may be understood as a reaction against modernism and embracing the multivalent possibilities of postmodern pluralism but in fact doing so in a way which tends to perpetuate a set of objective structures and therefore "fits rather snugly with the requirements of late capitalism" (Kumar 1995: 193). While it suggests a superficial response replacing one set of styles and fashions with another (Knox 1991) it also at further extremes offers a return to tradition in the face of uncertainties of postmodernisation (Crook et al 1992: 73). Postmodern architecture and urban design tends to fit in with this set of responses (Knox 1991) rather than

offering any real attempt to deconstruct the continuities and hegemonies of modernity as in a postmodernism of resistance.

Chapter Six

Landscapes that Float

Reading the Landscape

Lefebvre (1991: 17) hypothesises that different periods have their own spatial codes, each characterising a particular spatial/social practice. Following this an already produced space can be de-coded, or read and that such a space implies a process of signification (ibid). At the same time Lefebvre is cautious about the reductive possibilities of this, suggesting that reading the city as if it were a text, and by drawing on literary codes of understanding, this space is reduced to a reading (1991: 7). Spaces then for Lefebvre are *lived* and not just read - the reduction to a text tends to ignore the contingencies of history and practice implicated in that space. In 'reading the landscape' then the intention here, following Duncan (1990), is to engage with the role of landscape as a dynamic feature within social process - the landscape as a constituent element within the socio-political processes of cultural reproduction and change (1990:11).

Duncan suggests that the landscape forms one of the central elements in a cultural system, that as "an ordered assemblage of objects, a text, it acts as a signifying system through which a social system is communicated, reproduced experienced and explored" (1990: 17). As a signifying system it is more than just the sum total of material conditions in which people and social groups live out their routine lives. In reading the landscape then we are not limited to reading the landscape as a text but must also acknowledge it as a "structuring structure" (ibid) that helps reproduce a social order.

The signification of landscape is evidently something that depends on interpretation and position. The signification of the landscape for those who make use of it everyday is evidently different from those from the outside. To the users of the landscape, that landscape may appear 'natural' and depending on their reflective stance would logically contribute to the structuring of an internalised and embodied form of knowledge that enables them to live out their daily lives. Part of this may refer to a purely practical engagement as suggested by Lynch's (1959) identification of an 'environmental image' the powerful internalised knowledges people develop of their environments through the

mental structuring and organisation of individual sensory experience and perception. Reducing the meaning of the landscape to this emphasises the apparent tangibility and transparency of the landscape and naturalises a set of economic, social and political relations embedded in it.

Taking a more critical and reflective approach we would recognise that, following Duncan (1990: 18), the landscape as a signifying system is also a site of ideologies. We might say that landscapes are discursive fields, originating out of and structured through discourses. Particular ideologies are present however and serve to hide the origination of a space in discourse or to naturalise this space. Here Duncan points to the rhetorical role of landscape and the process whereby the landscape as a text is read and “acts as a communicative device reproducing the social order.” Landscapes act as powerful ideological tools because they become part of the everyday, objective, natural and taken-for-granted world and this masks the “artifice and ideological nature of its form and content” (ibid). Because of their objective qualities, landscapes may make “objects and subjects appear as fixed, codified, reified, to make what is patently cultural to appear as if it were natural” (ibid). A similar approach was taken by Barthes who developed a semiological analysis to decode French everyday life and culture. For Barthes signs are never innocent and are caught up in a complex web of ideological reproduction; “myth is experienced as innocent speech, not because the intentions are hidden...but because they are naturalised” (cited by Smith, 2001: 110).

The landscape as a signifying system according to Duncan makes use of various tropes which may or may not provide the mechanisms to convince users or readers of the landscape of the rightness, naturalness, or legitimacy of hegemonic discourses (Ibid). Clearly in highly textual, cosmically ordered or traditional societies there may be a distinct narrative structure to the language of the landscape and this might entail as Duncan (ibid: 19-22) suggests a variety of tropes such as allegory, synecdoche and metonymy. In non-traditional capitalist societies the language of the landscape may be more difficult to decode not being dependent on a cosmically ordered reality. Nevertheless people and particularly people in powerful positions are able to impose their ideals on the landscape. Through a “vocabulary of various conventional forms – signs, symbols, icons and specialised tropes in the landscape”, people may

communicate a set of ideals and tell particular stories about themselves and their social relations with others (Ibid: 20).

The landscape then is "a product which expresses a distinctive culture of ideas and practices" (Ley cited by Knox 1991: 182). As such it contains sets of signs, images and symbolic meaning laid down through the production of a space and the formation and reformation of a social order. We may also recognise that the landscape does not just originate from nowhere and that it is historically located within the broader macro processes of social change. Consequently we may identify the shifting urban landscape as located within social, economic and cultural change related to a hypothetical process of postmodernisation and resulting in the distinctive features of a postmodern geography. The formation and the production of a landscape may also serve the interests of distinctive social groups (Ibid). Consequently although we may recognise capital's power in shaping the landscape ultimately it is lived as a cultural space and takes on its meaning particularly through this form of signification.

Likewise although the landscape and the ordering of urban space may originate out of specific underlying discourses which tend to structure the implicated practices, the landscape also mobilises a set of ideologies, which although inherent in the language and structure of the discourses, has the effect of 'naturalising' this landscape. This suggests that landscape, besides being a powerful medium for establishing social order is also a medium of symbolic power. Power symbolically expressed may be identified with the specific interests and ideals of social groups and their relation to others and the shaping of the environment. In reading the landscape the emphasis here is more on the demystification and deconstruction of power than locating the landscape within causal explanation.

Methodology

The process of interpreting the landscape is based on the idea of the landscape as a discursive and textual terrain. Following poststructuralism we need to accept that there is no one single true reading of the landscape. This is equally true for the 'writing' of the landscape as there are always unintended consequences. However the reading makes use of different media sources including planning documents, and marketing information, brochures and the Internet. This is in support of an engagement with the actual

landscape. Planning documents inform part of the rhetoric of the landscape and locate the sub-region within a particular 'imaginary'. Marketing brochures, pamphlets and web pages are valuable sources for understanding the construction of these places as products to be sold. The actual interpretation of the landscape therefore draws on multiple kinds of texts including the landscape itself each of which relate to a variety of discourses underlying this new landscape.

Background

The physical landscape of the northern sub-region of the Durban metropolitan area is one characterised by a topography of rolling hills, a relatively unspoilt coastline, coastal resort towns and a number of small economic centres. The dominant image of the north may arguably be one of rolling green hills and resort towns. However the north has its own geography of division played out under the particular circumstances associated with the growth of the sugar industry under corporate-colonial power. It is also a landscape that bears the imprint of history of social relations of class and race. Settlement inland connected with the history of the Indian population in Natal and their economic self-determination took place around a few small industrial and trading centres. Coastal resort developments emerged as leisure environments predominantly for whites. The visual landscape of the northern metropolitan sub-region has also been shaped through the growth of the sugar industry. Today Tongaat-Hulett as Durban's major private landowner, and with huge tracts of land under sugar cane in the north, continues to play a dominant role in driving development in the sub-region (Todes, 2000).

A History of Local Urban Growth and Decline

The new urban landscape has a particular historical context related to the development of the metropolitan region as a whole, and a response to urban crisis. Durban's position in the national space economy, has historically been a secondary one with its growth in part being determined by its relation to the wealthier urban agglomerations of the now Gauteng province. The historical trajectory of urban expansion in Durban took on its own peculiar forms of Fordism and post-Fordism (Freund 2000). Durban's growth was typified by the related themes of industrialisation and modernisation, while the particular variation of the Fordist model resulted in the administration of society in terms of race and the organisation of the city predominantly for whites (Ibid: 151). Like other regions the 1960's was a period of burgeoning expansion. In contrast the roots of a self-

conscious reassessment of the city must surely be traced to the response to the crisis of the eighties - poor economic growth, burgeoning and unmanaged urbanisation, endemic regional violence, and a decline in tourism and general confidence in the region. Durban's weak position was exacerbated as South Africa opened to a global economy and as Durban's tourism position declined as it was by-passed by both international and a traditional middle-class white market (Todes, 2000b). In response this phase of transition has been marked by two potentially competing and contradictory imaginations, one based in the emergence of a local growth coalition dominated by business interests and seeking the realisation of spectacular 'flagship' urban investments (Boldogh and Robinson, 1994) and the other based in urban spatial restructuring (Todes, 2000a). While subsequent arguments that promote Durban's potential as a globally competitive city have tended to displace the importance of spatial restructuring within the planning agenda (Todes 2000b), both discourses in a sense combined in the development of the north.

The Planning Framework

The framework for development in the North, together with the impetus for a new paradigm in local planning, emerged through the Tongaat Hulett Planning Forum Plan (1989). The plan emerged in the vacuum left by the lack of any coherent metropolitan scale planning framework, as Tongaat Hulett realised the need to look critically at the process of urbanisation (THPF Report: Executive Summary, 1989). The plan involved a regionally orientated strategic planning exercise and was instrumental in identifying some critical issues facing the region. Nevertheless a principle outcome of the plan, justified by expected population growth, was the incorporation of significant growth to the north and orientated along a dual system of corridors and nodes, with a more protected coastal corridor oriented toward tourism and an inland corridor focused on industrial development (Todes 2000a) (Figure.1). Development through the decade of the 1990's has proceeded in accordance with this framework, but resulting in a particular concentration of up-market, and grand-sized developments occurring within the Umhlanga-Mt Edgcombe node and involving numerous high income residential developments, a sophisticated office estate and regional shopping and entertainment complex.

A Competitive Cities Discourse

Development in the North emerged through consensus regarding its role in relation to metropolitan growth and spatial restructuring, but has also been subject to other powerful discourses. While part of the argument is based on urban restructuring and the claims that it forms part of the need to integrate the “marginalised periphery.....into the mainstream of economic life and opportunity” (Moreland, 1999a: 6) the language of competitive cities has been dominant, allowing the north to emerge as a separated high-income world and as a platform for Durban to attract Gauteng and foreign based capital (Todes 2000). The discourse has helped shape the relevance of the sub-region as a whole and is reflected in the planning vision for the North Local Council as a “globally competitive,.. tourism gateway of high international standard” (NLC IDP, 1998). Through the rhetoric contained in planning reports the North is presented as having numerous ‘hidden’ and unrealised assets, relating to its agricultural land holdings, a relatively ‘unspoilt’ coastline, limited industrial development and a potential International Airport (Moreland, 1998b: 12). These kind of unrealised assets are perpetuated through the image of the North Local Council as “Durban’s Jewel”, an image which was accepted within a participative planning process without much internal debate, but also provides the basis for the monopolisation of development in the north (Todes, 2000a, 2000b).

The discourse of competitive cities provides a dominant logic for development in the North. Following this the imagining of a ‘world class’ context provides the basis for a broader argument around the nature of development occurring here. Development is presented as “part of the shift that needs to occur.....to convert and transform Metropolitan Durban into a “globally competitive” city” (Moreland, 2000: 8). This in turn is supported by an argument that highlights the North as “better attuned to patterns of demand” for living and working in the twenty-first century (McCarthy and Robinson 2000, cited in Rezoning Application, Moreland Developments, June 2000: 10). Likewise it is seen to contribute to the diversity of the urban system, and as “appealing to a different sector and/or to a different business cycle which company’s go through” (Moreland 1999a: 14). Such arguments tend to present the emergence of new development as a ‘natural’ process of urban evolution, as an inevitable development in tune with a new age and occurring as an essential component in the maturation of a more sophisticated urban system. The dominance of this logic tends to provide justification for the

construction of an elite 'world class' urban context and consolidation of wealth within the Umhlanga-Mt Edgecombe node.

Authorship and Authority

While development has proceeded in apparent accordance with a consensus reached through the Tongaat Hulett Planning Forum Plan (1989), and through early metropolitan planning processes, development in the North was aided by the fragmentation of local government and reflects the power of Tongaat Hulett as a major landowner to influence the planning process towards their own ends (Todes: 2000a). Arguments supporting the transformation of the North and based on the economic logic of competitive cities and the rhetoric of metropolitan spatial and economic restructuring may have had broad appeal to a struggling local authority as well as a provincial Town and Regional Planning Commission rooted in traditional forms and values in planning (Todes, 2000a: 6). It could be argued however that transformation of the landscape has emerged as the result of the power and interests of a "local place-based elite" (Zukin 1993: 136) with extensive vested territorial and capital interests tied up in land. Consensus on the role of the north as a critical aspect of future metropolitan growth creates a framework allowing the capital locked into agricultural land to be realised through urban development.

The dominance of Tongaat Hulett as a place-based elite has given it the particular agency to act as developer of the overall development and to shape the landscape in accordance with its own logic. The emergence of a distinctive landscape may be ascribed to Tongaat Hulett's power of authorship. Historically as a major employer with significant territorial interests, Tongaat Hulett's relationship with the sub-region may be identified as one of paternalism. This view is upheld by the impressions gained through the IDP planning process of a "subdued" and "captive" civil society and a constituency who's interests have been "looked after" by both the institutions of government and Tongaat Hulett (NLC IDP, Draft Situational Analysis, 12 June 1997: Section 3:5). Today this paternalism continues in the form of Moreland the property wing of Tongaat Hulett established to oversee the property development of the company's land holdings in accordance with the philosophy and consensus reached through the Tongaat-Hulett Planning Forum Plan. This paternalism is expressed vividly in the Moreland logo, which reads "Developing a better future for you".

Signs of Expansion

During the decade of the 90's development around the Umhlanga – Mount Edgecombe node appears to have been the most significant and concrete change affecting Durban (Figure 2). Development today continues to rapidly transform this landscape and due to the scale and nature of developments the significance of the north has shifted more centrally in relation to the metropolitan space economy. Transformations to the north provide the clearest picture of decentralisation and diversification occurring within the metropolitan region as change occurring elsewhere occurs on a relatively scattered basis (Todes 2000b). Rather than being an ad hoc, laissez faire process the transformation and emergence of a new urban landscape has occurred under the visionary curatorship and control of Moreland, the property wing of Tongaat Hulett. It has also occurred in accordance with a broad spatial planning consensus regarding metropolitan restructuring but is also arguably fuelled by an emerging urban imagination that combines the production of a quality, differentiated urban environments with the idea of global competitiveness.

To date the major transformations taking place have occurred in the form of new differentiated residential settings, secure office estates, and a regional entertainment and shopping centre forming the vortex around which an ever growing retail environment revolves. Industrial growth linked to an inland industrial corridor and lower income housing has not evolved as envisioned and although this may relate to locational factors (McCarthy and Robinson, 2000) it occurs in the context of an evolving landscape centred on the imagery of high-income residential estates, consumption and corporate prestige. In part development is driven by market interest in the affluent residential sector and the demand for secure decentralised office space. The creation of a coherent planning vision and image for the node and the authorship of a dominant landowner/developer may have created the appropriate conditions for further speculative investment by corporate and financial institutions. The production of this landscape also occurs because of its proximity to an existing geography of affluence - the area is among the highest per capita income areas within the Metropolitan Region (Urban Strategies, 2001) - and plush predominantly white suburbs. The result is the emergence of a new high income office-retail-residential world (Todes 2000b) within a landscape that has more in common with the post-industrial landscapes of advanced economies than that of

an industrialising economy and one that is shaped primarily through the interests of capital.

Looking down on the inchoate landscape of the evolving node, it may be all too easily read as the contemporary urban malaise of urban sprawl (Figure 2). The looping, curvilinear road network through which new residential space is appropriated and structured tends to suggest the expansion of an increasingly incoherent and illegible suburban world. In one respect however the new urban geography of the north seems to mirror the literature on the postmodern city and we are now told that where there was once an emerging node we are now witnessing the growth of an "edge city" (La Lucia office Estate Extension and Business Park Rezoning Application, July 1999: 3). Superficially urban development has proceeded in accordance with this logic; the most conspicuous features of the 'edge city' following Garreau's analysis are the shopping mall and office-centred developments around which they revolve (Cited in Soja, 2000: 243). Evidently, however this new urban space has not simply been produced in accordance with the super-logic of postmodern urban process. It is rather the particular example of historical-global structural trends related to the local through the particular play of power and politics under the dominant influence of a local place-based elite.

Safe as Houses: The Spread of Up-Market Suburbia

A remarkable aspect of residential growth is that while a range of residential settings and housing types have been provided as a conscious strategy to appeal to a wider market it is the developments aimed at the top end of the market that have been the first to go (Chetty, and Wilkinson, R, 2001). Umhlanga and the secure golf course estates of the sub-region are seen as the preferred location for the metropolitan regions affluent residents (Moreland, 1996). The effect is the consolidation of wealth in the sub-region as the built environment takes shape through the process of commodification and the controlled release and development of land parcels to the market. The production of a residential built environment in orchestration with the market, while occurring at a rapid pace, has occurred both consciously and deliberately in order to deliver a variety of differentiated housing products for consumption by a relatively affluent population. Each phase of expansion tends to have occurred through the production of a new and distinctive residential setting with their own coherent character and unique branding and image, institutional structures and residential organisation, and supported in the most

exclusive settings through a set of aesthetic codes and criteria that help reinforce the construction of a particular social ideal.

Coding the New suburban Landscape

On one level these new residential spaces are shaped by socio-economic and market forces such as land costs and a heightened contemporary concern for security and the fear of 'others' are reflected in secured complexes as part of general urban change in the metro (Todes 2000b: 7). The north, echoes residential trends elsewhere for the middle and upper market involving the serial production of townhouses, cluster homes, and housing estates. This allows for product differentiation but also the collective organisation of security. In more elite complexes the employment of sophisticated security mechanisms, comprehensive design and spatial organisation tends to reduce the undesirable carceral signification of the secured walled residential community. Drawing on Dear and Flusty (1998) and experience elsewhere, a security by design creates a series of interdictory spaces which exclude as much by way of their function as by their cognitive sensibilities. Elsewhere, while internally complexes are opened up, walls, fences and even electric fencing become the general signs of consolation for the security conscious (Figure 3).

The emerging residential landscape, while spatially perpetuating urban sprawl, contradicts the dominant notion of suburbia. Suburbia has been described as "an archetypal middle-class invention", or as a "bourgeois utopia", as the embodiment of the anti-urban ideals of a middle-class seeking the privacy and containment of family life (Madanipour 1996: 197-200; Fishman cited by Chaney 1997: 142). The suburbs provided the typical late modern arrangement for domesticity, as the planned and organised site of broadly similar nuclear families in which lives were determined by the conditions of constraint (Crook et al, 1991: 15). Suburbia may also be recognised as the product of the process of modern rationalisation, the separation of reproduction and production activities, the home and workplace. The consequence of this has been interpreted as middle class homogeneity and a degree of standardisation. The postmodern suburban landscape evolving in the north reveals the emergence of increasingly differentiated and discrete residential settings. Nevertheless standardisation is still vastly apparent in the production of styled and homogenous residential complexes (Figure 4). These settings remain to various degrees disconnected and separated from

surrounding suburban space exhibiting signs of both physical and symbolically coded closure.

In what may be seen as the aestheticisation of suburban life, the overcoming of homogeneity and sameness, differentiation has increasingly involved overlaying stylistic and thematic elements to distinguish residential settings and products from one another, particularly in higher income, exclusive residential estates. The aesthetic treatment tends to rely on a set of textual strategies such as themeing, the enforcement of architectural codes as well as marketing claims regarding a particular and unique lifestyle. Security and territoriality are part of this coding and frequent use is made of security houses or gateway entrances to demarcate different private suburban worlds and neighbourhoods (Figures 5&6). Elsewhere in more open conventional suburban layouts the imprint of the developer works to codify space and territoriality through the signature coding of street signs and urban design details (Figure 7). Increasing use has been made of prescriptive design codes in the more distinctive and upmarket developments. Frequently this involves an apparent postmodern mixing and matching of architectural styles. The architectural style of 'The Gardens' for instance suggests the hybridisation of architectural elements borrowed from Mediterranean and Polynesian vernacular architecture (Figures 5&8). This combines with a concern for locale and defining an architectural style which is responsive to and reflects the natural local conditions (Moreland 2000a). These also tend to draw on vernacular styles allowing for the projection of character through "cohesiveness and uniformity" (Ibid).

The application of particular codes also tend to carry the inherent claims of 'authenticity' and 'identity' in accordance with a central, and perhaps paternalistic commitment by Morelands in "building meaningful communities" (Moreland Developments 2002: website). In accordance, promotional material tends to contribute to the textual construction of place by building claims to a sense of 'community' and 'neighbourliness'. Residential products may be constructed around a set of lifestyle claims invoked in the ideals of the 'village' or the 'countryside', offering an alternative suburban lifestyle: "Somerset Park offers a country-like atmosphere on the fringes of the city"; the Gardens is presented as a 'village' and offers "a new interpretation of suburban living" (Ibid). A significant force shaping the evolving landscape is the construction of a community

lifestyle which, following Harvey's observation, may be either real, imagined or simply packaged by the developer (1989: 82).

Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estate: the social construction of 'Community'

"Seen as a microcosm of social and natural perfection, Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estate stands as testimony to the ideal social credo: live and let live. Moreland and its various groundbreaking projects can be seen as the forefront of creating a prototypical lifestyle by drawing on international influences in promoting eco-sensitive architecture and encouraging international investment. For the individual investor the estate openly fosters a changed lifestyle, an improved mind-set, integrating all-important leisure time and thus reflecting what a global village – and living to let live – should ultimately be"

"More than a mere security village, Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estate is built on an underlying ethos that could and should be seen as a blue print for a prototypical society as close to perfection as can be achieved by mere mortals"

("Field of Dreams", Moreland Brochure)

The Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estates are exclusive master-planned residential estate developments set around two separate international standard golf courses and located within the obsolete company mill town of Mount Edgecombe. Branded as a 'Moreland signature development' and intended to be "the finest residential estate in South Africa" (Ibid) it articulates part of Moreland's intentions of creating developments of 'world-class' international standard. Development began in 1992 shortly after the conclusion of the Tongaat-Hulett Planning Forum exercise. It is a true gated community containing over 1000 single residential sites and over 145 cluster units (ibid). While arguably it represents the most significant feature of the new residential landscape it is also the most sequestered. Its isolation and orientation around the privatised consumption and leisure space of a golf course gives it its particular exclusivity (Figure 9).

Like other residential developments, success in part reflects on the 'real' contemporary concern for security. The estate provides manned gates, patrolling guards on horseback and has the most "advanced technological security systems installed" ("Field of Dreams", Moreland Brochure) (Figure 10). However this security is "all but invisible" (Ibid), the only visible walling being an electrified palisade fence running the full perimeter of the estate (Figure 9). Evidently as the brochure claims it is "more than a security village" (Ibid). Walling and gating itself is not sufficient to define a social space. The general phenomenon of walling can be distinguished from the postmodern phenomenon of "walled communities of the rich.....more closed today than ever before...not spatially dependant on any particular geographical location in relation to the rest of the city...[and who] rather create and control their environment at the local level" (Marcuse and van Kempen (2000: 254).

More than any other development it suggests the extreme forms of a 'postmodernism of reaction'. Its conceptualisation was based on the imported American concept of 'cocooning', predicted as one of the most influential movements of the 90's ("Field of Dreams", Moreland Brochure). 'Cocooning' represents the desire for home-comforts away from the pressures of the new age (Ibid). This may be read as a reaction to the rampant effects of time-space compression, hyper-commodification and hyper-rationalisation but as a social space its success is likely to be based on more than a concern for containment, security and home-comforts. Evidence of this is the inherent social construction of an ideal society. Marketing brochures suggest a sense of communal vision among developers and residents alike who are "united in their desire for peace-of-mind living and an improved way of life...[and who] speak with a genuine pride of what has been achieved" (Ibid). The idealism in this is reinforced by the utopian claims that this development represents "a blue-print for a prototypical society as close to perfection as can be achieved" (Ibid).

The ideology of postmodern urbanism and architecture has always expressed a community element and a concern for locale (Woods 1999: 109). Appeals to community and meaning in place may also create the basis for an ideology of space, presenting them as 'natural' or 'ideal' constructions while concealing the fact that this place is in fact a consummate privatised consumption landscape. An urban community and society surely means more than social closure and conformity to a set of social, lifestyle and

aesthetic codes. Conceptualising this development as a model of the ideal social order tends to support Baudrillard's notion of the simulacrum as a dominant code in society. This prototypical society instead tends to stand for the exclusion of difference and as a neo-conservative reaction to change and unpredictability. At the same time it draws on the motifs of nostalgia, leisure, consumption, and a vernacular architectural style set physically and symbolically within the landscape in support of the construction of a distinctive habitus. This habitus has its own set of dispositions which accordingly allow for the reproduction of the codes of social interaction and a self-contained elite social order. The dominant symbols of the landscape, the distinctive architectural theme based on a colonial vernacular and the golf course as the symbol of prestige and a leisure class all contribute and help maintain this construction.

Landscapes of Power

The decentring city and the decentralisation of office space into many parts of the metro has brought with it the diversification of the suburbs (Todes, 2000b). The metropolitan landscape has undergone discrete transformations as secure office parks establish in scattered and often in-between locations. The emergence of the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate as a dominant feature of the emerging landscape in the north suggests this process has taken on a different dimension. Positioned as a response to Durban's potential as a global competitor and as South Africa's premier decentralised office node it is branded as a 'Moreland world class signature development' (La Lucia Ridge Office Estate: A Moreland Signature Development, marketing brochure: 2). The intention of the developers has clearly been the production of a high quality, up-market office environment intended to meet world-class standards. This forms part of the claim that argues the need for this space in terms of the demands created by a particular type of institution rather than simply taking ad hoc advantage of perceptions of decline elsewhere (Moreland 1999b).

Like the market for upmarket residential products commercial office investment in this sub-region has been significant. In 1998 based on building plans passed, the Umhlanga region produced 55% of the total new office space in the province and accounted for 58% of the total capital expenditure (Statistics South Africa, 2001). The La Lucia Ridge Office Estate ties in closely with the emerging space economy of upmarket and prestigious developments. As a corporate business environment it offers a particularly

distinctive and differentiated setting for businesses to profile themselves. Part of this, drawing on Saussurian semiology, lies in the fact that the corporate office estate takes its particular meaning in relation to the system of signs making up the urban system. Consequently although it is legitimised as “appealing to a different sector” (Moreland 1999a: 14), as a symbolic space a good portion of its meaning and power may be derived from its antithesis to an ailing CBD as the tradition home of corporate business. More overtly however the development is legitimised through the discourse of globalisation as a necessary feature of the restructuring of a more sophisticated globally competitive urban system (ibid).

A Symbolism of Corporate Distinction

Distinctiveness and a symbolism of corporate prestige and power are derived in the first instance from the site itself. Straddling the top of a ridge the office park is strategically located to command at the same time spectacular panoramic views and dominance over the landscape (Figure 11&12). The evolution of the office park in accordance with its setting and the preservation of views over an idealised ‘natural’ landscape have been prime considerations in its design (La Lucia Ridge Office Estate, Brochure). Beyond the obvious aesthetic value in this there may also lie beneath a particular ideology of space which correlates this kind of command and surveillance over space with a particular articulation of power. After all the command of strategic points in the urban landscape by powerful institutions has its precedence in the history of urban form (Madanipour 1996: 36). The conceptualised ‘sense of place’ (Moreland 1999a) as an internalised phenomenological experience of place therefore has as much to do with the social expression of power as it does with the natural qualities of place.

A sensitivity to place is an obvious consideration for the developers and designers (Ibid) but similarly this is in order to produce an office environment of distinctive quality. The low-rise, low-density built form, the establishment of a park-like setting, the absence of boundary walls, a cellular division of space into separate contained office parks all integrated on a public road system all avoid the impression of the office park as a carceral, impenetrable, monolithic and detached space (Figure 13). The image of distinction is developed further through the aestheticisation of the landscape through small urban design details, the use of material variety, as well as attention given to the design and image of formal urban elements. A Millennium Bridge, a tree lined central

boulevard, traffic circles and public sculptures form the key symbolic urban features contributing to the identity of the office estate, the production of an aestheticised landscape and an image of distinction (Figure 14&15).

The Coding of Abstract Power

While the physical treatment of space in this way has produced an aestheticised landscape the architectural language itself becomes a more pronounced expression of ideology. All buildings need to adhere to an architectural code as laid out in a development manual and providing a set of directives and guidelines meant to achieve unified architectural character (Moreland 1998a). Accordingly the intentions of these guidelines are "to achieve jointly an elegant and dignified development of distinction" (Ibid). The prescribed dominance of white as a colour theme has a unifying effect and results in overall integrity and coherence. Secondary colours are restricted while guidelines show a preference for high quality and enduring materials, which result in a dominant use of contemporary high-tech materials such as glass and aluminium cladding.

The guidelines serve to discourage the postmodern habit of copying historic styles, the intention being the production of a 'timeless' architecture that transcends stylistic obsolescence (ibid). Although no prescription in terms of style are given what has emerged through the collective efforts of architects and corporate clients is an architecture that although may be called postmodern is predominantly free of hybridised styles, pastiche, historic reference or narrative. In contrast the architecture tends to reflect something of a contemporary international style and has drawn on international trends (La Lucia Ridge Office Estate, Marketing Brochure: 5). The main stylistic features make use of formal architectural elements such as single-pitch roofs, glass-screen exterior walls, modulated sun-screens, trusses and steel ties while any reference to traditional elements and stylistic features remains understated (Figure 16&17). This coding enforces a technological articulation of space that is both rationalist and coherent. The result is an architecture that has in common with modernist concerns for the relation between form, function and material. The result is an architecture that reflects function but is not purely functionalist. The highly ordered and rational organisation of space in this way and its articulation through a language of high-tech and

innovation itself becomes the dominant basis for the expression of abstract corporate power.

The particular spatial practices implicated in the construction of this space recall some of Foucault's themes regarding the nature of power/knowledge and a disciplinary society. Involving a particular application of knowledge and a technology of space the rationalisation of space through its physical and symbolic ordering results in a coded and aestheticised landscape which is also consciously disciplined. This articulation of space recalls Foucault's idea of the panopticon, but also becomes a symbolic expression of the mutuality of power and knowledge. This expression of power works in hand with a kind of abstract mastery of space that is different from the imposing dominance of the modernist towers of the Fordist city. In place of this verticality, its horizontality and scale tends to suggest a more subtle function of a dispersed command and control over space more in tune with a knowledge based economy. The result is what we might call an architecture of stealth rather than dominance (Figure 19). This image in part is the consequence of the trend toward smaller user-owned office buildings (Todes 2000b) operating in accordance with the economic and spatial organisational logic of post-Fordism and its tendencies toward flexibility. It is also an image that seems more appropriate to the financial and hi-tech tenants who apparently establish themselves here and represent strong growth performers in the economy (Moreland News, Summer, 1998: 3; Winter 1998: 4). Consequently the rationalised and abstract image of power that predominates articulates powerfully with the symbolic order of a knowledge based society and the post-Fordist / late-capitalist logic of capital accumulation (Figure 20).

Landscapes of Consumption

The privatisation of space and the privatised production and control of public urban space is accepted as a general consequence of the process of commodification (Madanipour 1996: 144). As privately owned and controlled consumption spaces, the increasing role malls play in urban life reflects the changing nature of urban space (Shields, 1989: 148). As a typology of urban space the mall is distinctive with an identifiable genealogy in Western culture and may be traced from the market place, through the Parisian arcades and the department store. They are the product of the processes of rationalisation and commodification as consumption activities are increasingly separated from other sectors of social life. The privatisation of space, a

result of the processes of rationalisation and commodification must also, following Madanipour (1996: 144) be seen in the context of the entry of the finance industry in the production and management of the contemporary built environment.

Opened in September 2001, the Gateway shopping and entertainment complex is the flagship investment of Old Mutual Properties, the property development arm of a major local and international financial institution (Gateway Website, 2002). Like other speculative developments of this size and nature it comes with a number of claims, not least being to do with its sheer scale - "one of the largest single phase shopping centre developments in the world" (Moreland Today, November 2000: 3). Spectacular claims appear to be matched by the inclusion of features of spectacle itself, such as "the world's largest indoor climbing rock" and "the world's first permanent standing wave". Novelty also extends to the inclusion of innovation and progress – it is seen as "at the cutting edge of international design trends", and "Gateway represents the shape of shopping in the new millennium" (Gateway Launch Supplement, September 2001).

Gateway intentionally transcends the standard concept of a mall. Following international practise Gateway merges retail and entertainment in a marketing concept known as "shoppertainment", intending to take this "to a new level" (Gateway Theatre of Shopping supplement: Issue 1). At the heart of the complex is a shopping mall orientated along a single axis, but in addition it includes an Imax theatre, popular and 'art' cinemas, live theatre, indoor and outdoor extreme sports experiences, a children's entertainment zone and pool tables with a bar (Ibid). This plethora of leisure and entertainment activities suggest a hyperreal blend of technology, culture, sports, adventure and fantasy making it a consummate consumption environment. The presentation and location of seemingly contradictory activities and experiences within the consumption space of the mall is an obvious consequence of a commodification drive and the penchant for novelty. It also suggests the levels of hyperrationalisation and de-differentiation that Crook et. al. (1992) associate with a shift to a postmodern cultural experience as previously separate spheres collapse and blur with each other. This is a condition of Gateway as a whole as it blends spectacle and liminality with a civic expression of urbanity and sobriety. As in the office park, technology is a particular feature of this manipulation, exemplified for instance in the numerous 'dancing' fountains. The extreme levels of abstraction and hyperreal simulation are defined by the inclusion of a wave-house with a permanent

standing wave meant to reproduce the perfect wave, notwithstanding the fact that the 'real' thing exists nearby.

Gateway as an Instrumental Space

Based on a materialist cultural interpretation the mall acts as an instrumental space for the selling of consumer goods and extracting profit and hides or naturalises the relation between producers and consumers. Following this logic the purpose of its design and semiotic coding is to facilitate its instrumental function through "the stimulation of consumer fantasies" (Gottdiener 1986, 293). Clearly being a product of capital interests a significant aspect of this space is the consequence of these ideological concerns – a total leisure experience provides the instrumental means to attract customers and extend their stay: "the longer they stay the more they spend" (Andrew Murray, principal architect cited in Moreland Today, November 2000: 3). At a conceptual and aesthetic level the 'interested' nature of the development needs to take account of the vested interests of capital. The desire to 'de-mall the malls and optimise the recreational aspects of shopping' (Ibid), may be interpreted as part of these ideological interests. However analysis cannot be limited to this.

The intention to de-mall the malls in part is a response to the overt instrumental nature of shopping malls in general and the desire to differentiate this space from other malls in the competitive terrain of consumption environments. But it may also point to an ideological shift that transcends simply an ideology of consumption.

An Ideology of 'the Urban'

In "catering for the demanding needs of the modern consumer", Gateway seeks to establish itself as the "ultimate lifestyle destination" (Gateway Website, 2002), through the creation of a total experience that converges retail, pleasure, recreation and entertainment. The selling of a lifestyle is a particular strategy explored through a novel retail concept that focuses on stand alone leisure brands and sees a strong fusion between lifestyle and product (Gateway Theatre of shopping supplement, Issue.1). The commodification process in this is obvious, as personal identity, image, leisure and recreational choice is colonised by consumption related activities, taste and fashion all available within the integrated experience of a privately owned retail space. The desire to de-mall the malls and the creation of a lifestyle experience extends beyond

consumption trends and suggests an evolution of the genealogy of the mall itself. The articulation and organisation of its space tends to break away from the conventional model of an insular, controlled and artificial environment. The internal structure of the mall operates on a single dominant access with two main levels that remain open to each other. A high interior space and ceiling with natural clerestory lighting gives the impression of transparency and openness and the feeling “of a high street that has been glazed over”(Moreland Today, 2000) rather than a closed in mall (Figure 21). This effectively involves a deconstruction of the mall as a typology of space as it begins to show greater affinity with the Parisian arcades that are its precedent.

This kind of treatment of space articulates broadly with a set of urbanist concerns. In fact the mall is designed to open up and interact with components of the future master planned new town centre (Moreland Today, November 2000: 3). The proposed Umhlanga New Town Centre is designed as a mixed-use urban environment built around a series of squares, parks and boulevards. It is modelled on the principles of New Urbanism, which seeks to re-establish the urban basis of town life, by reviving the qualities of urbanity, opportunity, and open-air lifestyles (Moreland 1999c: 11-12). These principles have a predominant environmental and design focus based on the idea of pedestrian network, well designed public spaces and human scaled buildings (Ibid). More than this however, it is related to “a new way of life” being imagined as “a model for future urban developments” which will “revolutionise the way people see living in cities” (Umhlanga Ridge, 2002: Website). The focus is evidently on integration and the re-capturing of essential wholes as the basis to social life. As a place where people “live, work, learn, shop, worship and play” (Ibid) it clearly articulates with a postmodernism sensitive to the creation of meaningful environments emerging as a reaction to the modernist anomic rationalisation of urban space into differentiated activities.

But on another level this may indicate an ideology of space presented through the language of urbanism. Gateway is modelled on a similar notion of the urban. This is evident in the formal articulation of spaces which break up the model of the mall as a closed and insulated experience. This is seen in the internal scale and volume, and the way interior space merges with exterior space through entrance ways, atria and courtyards in ways which deny the closure of the mall into a privatised, insular space designed for the instrumental purpose of consumerism. Breaking down the conventional

boundaries of internal and external space tends to blur the demarcation of public and private space and to naturalise the privatised organisation of consumption. Clearly the articulation of this space according to the codes of urbanity is associated with the production of a whole lifestyle. Somehow though it is an urbanity that is based on the simulation of the urban rather than the real. This is evident in those specialised tropes, the numerous water features, fountains, and cascades that aestheticise the space adding to the fullness of the aesthetic experience and simultaneously the signification of the space as a pseudo-civic public realm (Figures 22&23).

The coded simulation of the urban ideal is evident in the treatment of the external spaces centred on the main accessway and the main complex entrance. The external edge of the main building is designed to articulate with the exterior urban space and a 50m wide tree-lined boulevard with 'street' cafes and restaurants that spill out onto it. In its present state, without any real connection to an existing urban structure, the boulevard ironically operates as a free-floating, urban element. In addition the articulation of this edge presents a wild array of architectural forms which, while not quite a pastiche of styles presents a theatrically staged urbanity or a collage of form that offers the simulacrum of the cosmopolitan ideal (Figure 24).

This staging of the urban is ironically reinforced through the marketing of the Gateway experience as a "Theatre of Shopping" and tends to reaffirm Baudrillard's conceptualisation of a simulation society and the degrees of abstraction brought on by the extreme forces of rationalisation. Simulation space presents a commodified consumption world in which the real and imagined collapse. The fragmentation of space in hyperreal worlds and entertainment zones are the most literal signs of this simulation but the production of the 'real' spaces of the centre also articulate its codes and models. Baudrillard's vision according to Calhoun (1995: 108) provides a tragic account of the completion of the abstraction of power and the process of rationalisation by the commodity-based system of capitalism

Conclusion: A 'Total' Landscape

Relating these different spaces together and the landscape as a totality it is evident that the landscape has been shaped by a range of powerful social and economic forces, located in both the historical sweep of time and in the local specificities of place. At the same time it is evident that it represents a landscape that has been shaped in the interests of capital. It points to a burgeoning process of commodification as previous agricultural land is turned over to higher order uses and to unlock embedded capital. But the landscape also bears the imprint of a dominant place-based corporate elite that has maintained a level of control and authorship over the environment. This control over outcomes has resulted in a particularly distinctive environment that may also contribute to the establishment of forms of symbolic capital in the interest of elite class factions. Consequently while emerging out of a competitive cities discourse and articulating with the imagery of a 'world class' global space, globalisation operates here primarily on the level of discourse and ideology rather than as an invariable structural force determined by capital mobility.

In many respects it represents a hegemonic form of spatial practice, as a landscape representing the ideas, interests and values of a dominant voice. These ideals are located in very specific ideas regarding social life and are implicit in the production of a rational, ordered and aestheticised environment. In this sense then the landscape of the north acts as one large Masternarrative, by establishing a set of prescriptive codes regarding the right kind of environment and society appropriate to imagining the global through the local. The production of space here also indicates a spatial practice characterised by the domination of abstract, conceived, and technically designed spaces over those of lived experience (Kirsch 1995: 552). In this sense rather than having liberating consequences the aestheticisation of the landscape acts as an ideological strategy and a means of reinforcing symbolic capital, rather than as an opportunity for individual or alternative imaginaries.

Evidently this process leaves little space open for the expression of difference, marginalised voices and insurgent identities that the postmodern era is supposed to be sensitive to. While the discursive terrain of meaning, text and symbolism in the landscape has consequences for lived space and individual imaginations, the physical

geography also exerts a real material force. While the planning rhetoric suggests that the North is maturing into a "sustainable, 'total living environment'" (La Lucia Glades: Rezoning Report 8), contra to these urbanist ideals, in fact these developments represent unintegrated forms of development dependent on access by motor car (Todes 2000a). Their effects are the creation of a new form of divided city (Ibid) as wealth and investment consolidates around existing concentrations of wealth.

Chapter Seven

Synthesis: The Power of Landscape

This dissertation is the product of a fairly general and exploratory exercise in attempting to account for some of the features of urban change in the present era. It principally attempts to develop a critical framework applicable to the analysis of a particular urban environment and landscape emerging within a particular historical and geographic context. Of central conceptual importance here has been the argument that the city and its spaces are the products of social action and social practice. This involves locating the city as a product of general historical change but also as the product of local social and cultural practice involving particular interests. A central idea giving form to this enquiry has been that the built environment is both the product of and mediator between social relations (Knox 1991: 82). In part this dissertation attempts to make a point for conceptualising the urban project, involving the politicisation of space as the locus of social relations, actions, cultural meaning and power. Space is as much potentially a transformative terrain as it is implicated in the perpetuation of the objective social structures of division and inequality.

The landscape emerging in the north tends to offer a demonstration of the related processes of rationalisation and commodification as central forces in contemporary spatial practice related to the production of the urban environment. The general argument giving legitimacy to this formation presents the emerging urban geography as a 'natural' evolution in the production of a more sophisticated urban form and as a product in response to the challenges of globalisation and demands of the market. The highly rationalised and centrally controlled evolution of this landscape tends to support Lefebvre's (1991) argument of the emergence of an abstract space. Rationalisation occurs in the first instance through the logic of creating an environment of 'world class' standard. The rationalised organisation of space proceeds through the application of a set of specialised professional discourses and as space is opened up, packaged and produced for consumption. The abstraction of space continues in the rationalised organisation of discrete uses and functions that in relation to each other create a 'total' landscape. It offers a hyper-rationalised landscape in which the anomie of modernity is displaced by a methodically rationalised aesthetic and the ascription of appropriate

codes to each of these spaces. Consequently the new urban geography and landscape seems to suggest that extension of the processes of rationalisation and commodification of lived experience while simultaneously offering a total solution to this apparent malaise. The codes themselves are located in the imaginary of invented models or simulacra - the idea of ideal urban form in new urbanism, the nostalgia of community and village or country life, cultural vernacular styles, and the global city

The theory shows us that space is a political, power-filled terrain, as containing struggles over material resources as much as struggles over representation and identity. The landscape of the north also suggests the emergence of a highly coded and aestheticised landscape. The landscape may become the literal expression of power as well as a symbolic marker of distinction. Even a bridge is not a bridge but an expressive gesture of technological power. As such it may be the terrain in which a set of hegemonic values and relations amongst society become objectified. In many respects the 'idealised' landscapes and representations of conventional and even traditional models such as 'the village', 'the countryside', 'community', and even 'the urban' itself tend to hide this. Instead of the production of real space we witness the mobilisation of a symbolic order.

In many respects the symbolic and textual claims through the spaces themselves as well as the marketing texts tend to present the new urban environment as a brave new model of urban living. Many of these claims suggest the integration of an idealised lifestyle with an ideal urban form and context. The apparent rationalisation and commodification of space however tends to perpetuate a mechanistic form of integration which perpetuates modernist codes of spatial practice but takes them to new levels. Differentiation occurs in the production of discrete spaces that have the appearance of integration, but that are in fact self-contained. Differentiation combines with commodification to produce distinctive residential settings that make claims to some form of organic integration, 'village life' or 'community', but may predominantly extend the bourgeois suburban ideal and the maintenance of the 'habitus' of discrete class factions.

Although the approach to the topic has been off a primarily exploratory nature, if an argument needs to be acknowledged as tying all this together it is that the north is produced in accordance with what is inherently a totalising urban imagination. Consequently it may be useful to heed Lefebvre who suggests that “a revolution that does not produce a new space has not realised its full potential: indeed it has failed in that it has not changed life itself, but has merely changed ideological superstructures, institutions or political apparatuses” (1991: 54).

NORTHERN PLANNING CONCEPT

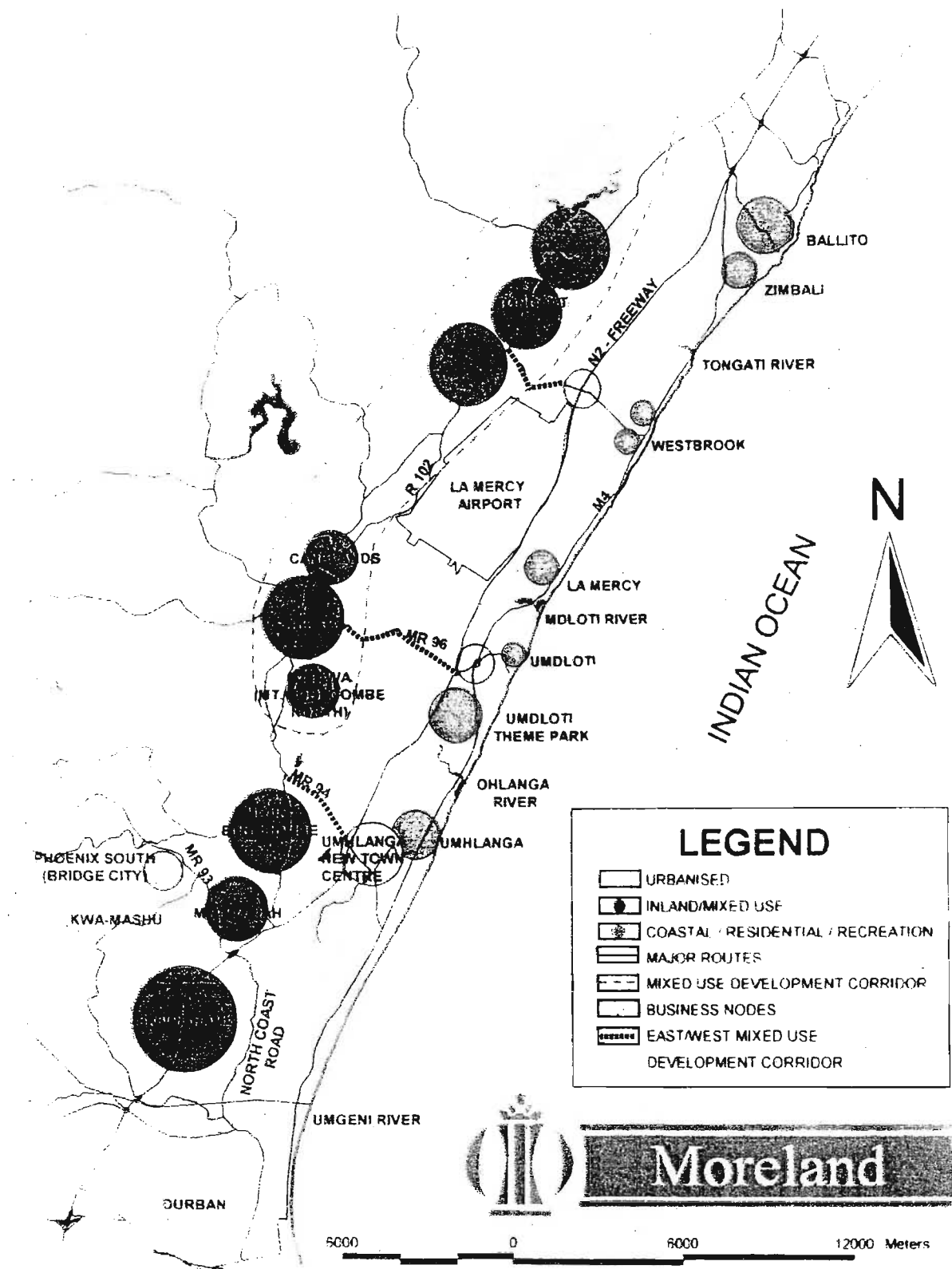


Figure 1

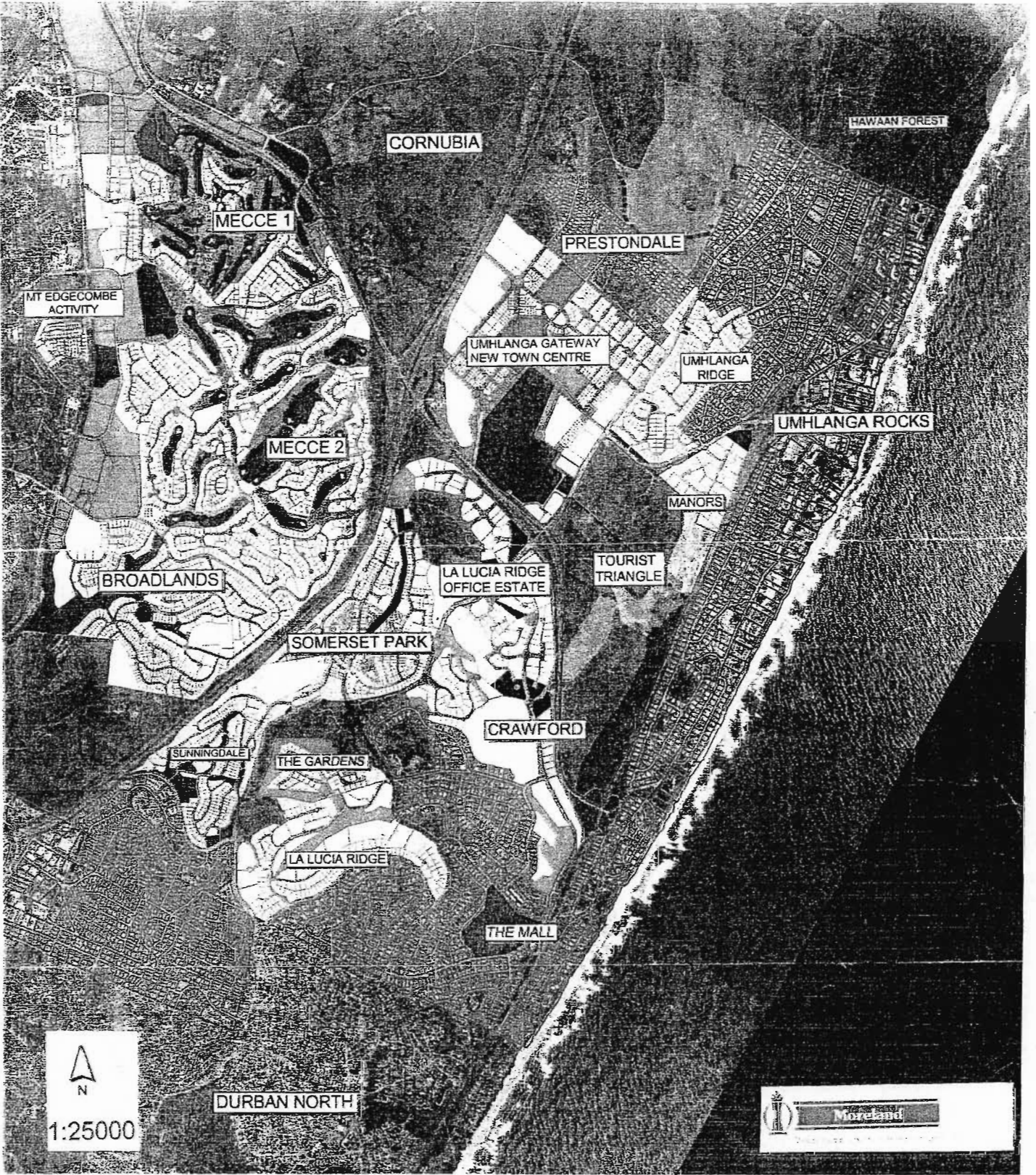


Figure 2



Figure 3

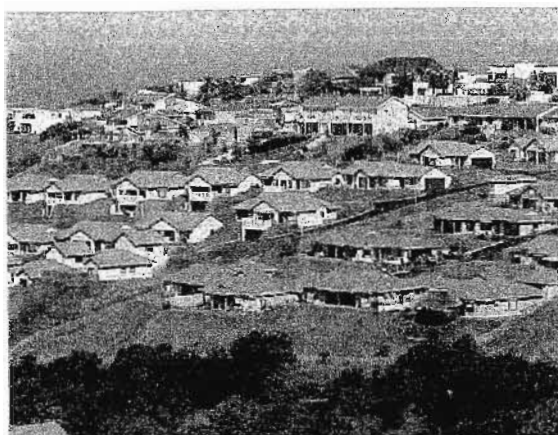


Figure 4

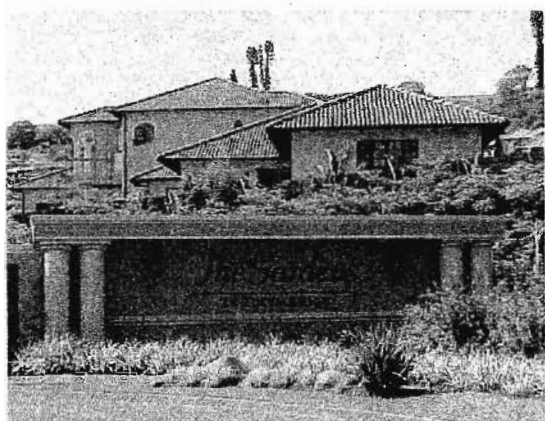


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

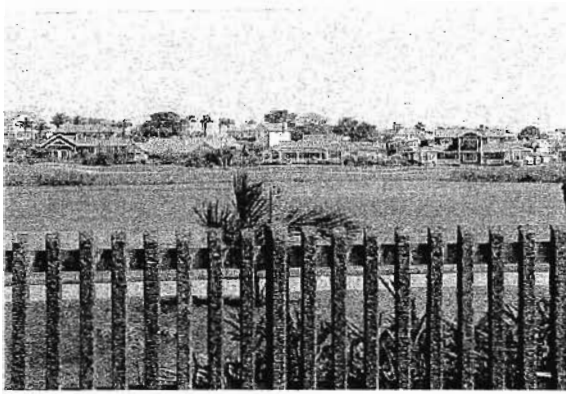


Figure 9

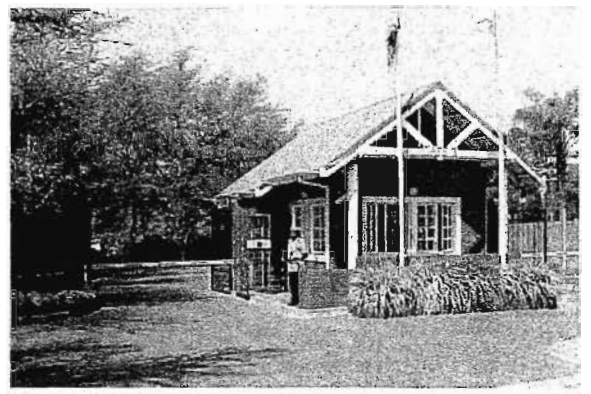


Figure 10

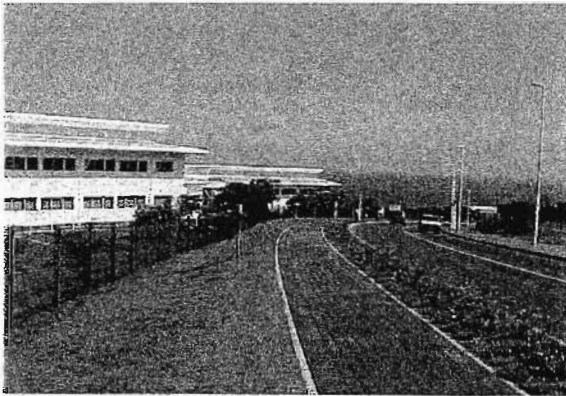


Figure 11

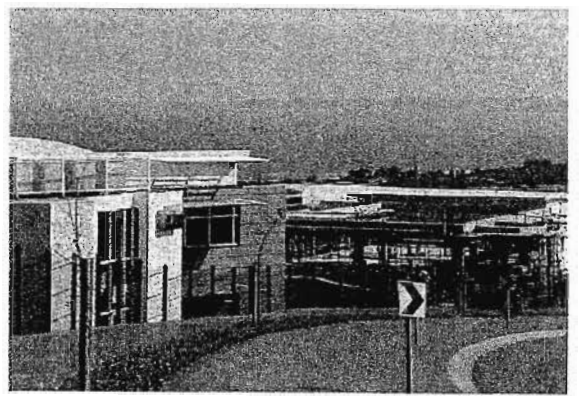


Figure 12

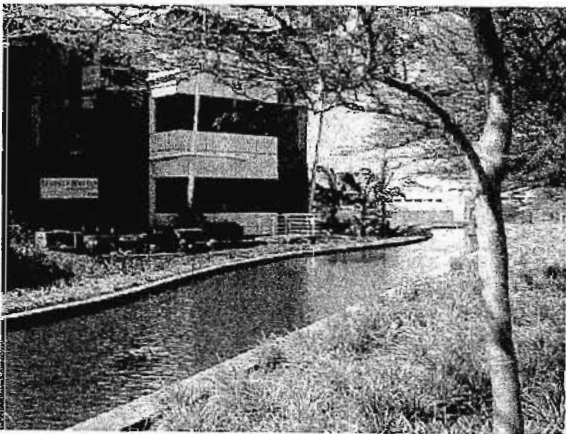


Figure 13

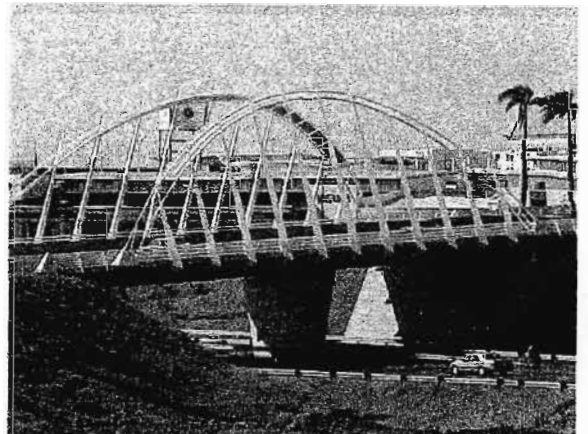


Figure 14

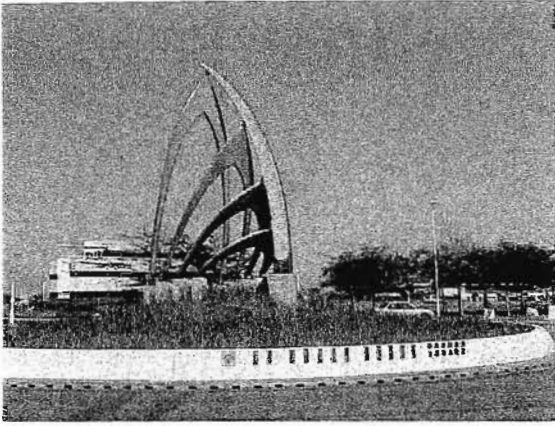


Figure 15

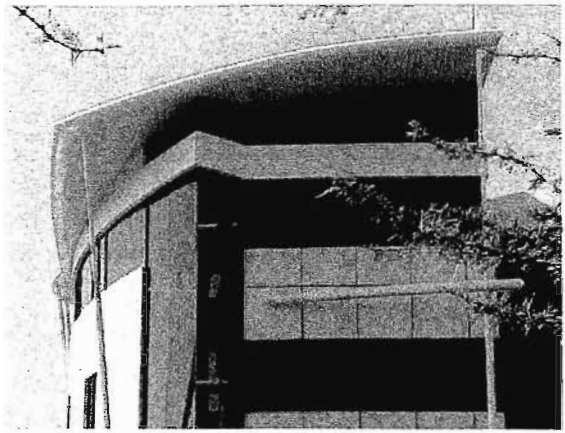


Figure 16

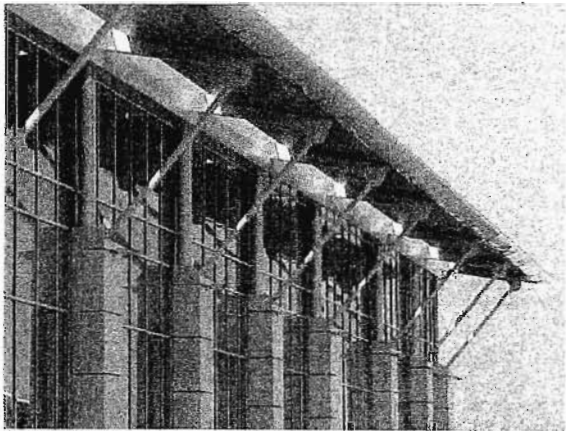


Figure 17

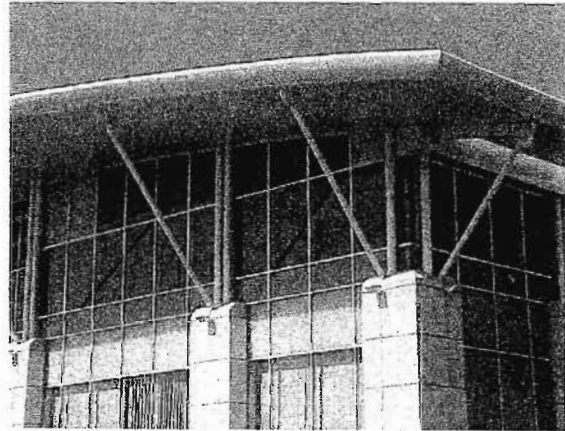


Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20



Figure 21

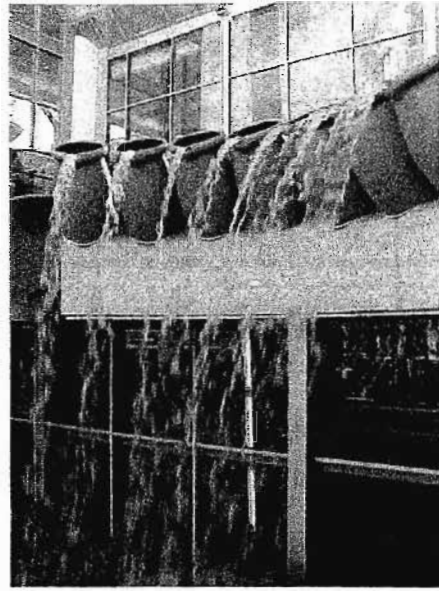


Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24

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