

Social Spatial Borders Delimiting Difference in Berlin

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Abstract

This ideational dissertation delves into the philosophy and theory of social space, and arrives at a theoretical vision of social space which can help explain social processes in Berlin. Drawing on Lefebvre, theories of difference and multiplicity are spatialised. Conversely, drawing on theories of difference and multiplicity from transnational urbanism and feminist geography, the limits of Lefebvre's theory of social difference are exposed. While the theories of Lefebvre are heavily based on Marx, the feminist poststructural theories of difference are based in the discourse on infinite flexibility, fragmentation, and radical multiplicity. There is thus a gaping cleft between the two theoretical perspectives. To illustrate the limitations and possibilities of these perspectives, two social phenomena are described. The first involves the post-Wall squatter scene in Berlin. The second involves experiences of newcomers in Berlin. By examining the theory of produced space from Lefebvre, the theories of coeval and flexible multiplicity from Doreen Massey, the theories transnational feminist geographies of Geraldine Pratt, and the imagery of flexible everything from Zygmunt Bauman, some theoretical borders of squatters and newcomers come into focus. The geographies of squatter movements and newcomers' history reveal not only a profound lack of centrality, rather an extensive trans-territorial network. They also show that difference is deeply spatialised and material. A bridge between Lefebvre and poststructuralist difference might be found in the rethinking Lefebvre's necessary centrality of social space, as the economic reductionism his Marxism requires. At the same time, the discourse on difference might benefit from a deeper analysis of the materiality of space. This dissertation is therefore an entry point into the general rethinking of social space.

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Preface

This dissertation was submitted towards the completion of my doctorate degree at the Department of Urban and Regional Sociology of the Institute for Social Sciences, Faculty of Philosophy III, at the Humboldt University, in Berlin. This was defended with distinction on June 18th, 2009.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Objective

Official governmental plans outline and illustrate the goals and objectives to be instituted for a given urban area, and present the future of social space as clear and decided. How these goals and objectives were agreed upon and by whom, however, is left unsaid. By looking at space as socially contested, addressed is the idea that urban spatial transformation is not the result of a step-by-step, straightforward, and linear procedure. The manifested physical environment is a result of complex, chaotic, and lengthy processes of discussions and disagreements, of political movements between coalitions and oppositions, involving or ignoring the outspoken and/or the complacent, and influenced by cultural histories, cultural experience, and capital. In short, contested social space addresses social interactions and their relationship to the space that contextualises and results from it.

The original impetus of this dissertation were the observations of two social phenomena in Berlin: 1) the tendency of squatter movements to refuse the state and to “emigrate” (*Aussteigen*) by creating island communities otherwise known as “Trailer Fortresses” (“*Wagenburgen*”) and/or squats); and 2) the integration of immigrants into German society. They were compelling stories because it was not clear what the entity actually was, to which the former tried to refuse and the latter tried to join. Or in the reverse, it was not clear what it was that the State was protecting in its attempts to integrate and/or exclude. The integration process could not merely be about the crossing of a line on

a map, or the jumping of bureaucratic hurdles through the immigration process, in order to join whatever it was that was inside. Governments retained and presented specific concepts of social space into which newcomers should integrate. Likewise, newcomers had a particular idea of what it was that they were joining. Similar could be said for many squatters, or the “refusers” (*Aussteiger*) of the state. They were not just sources of the hip and trendy waiting to be commodified and mainstreamed. Nor were they degenerates or anti-social. Their *aussteigen* did not mean a particular physical exit either. Instead, they seemed to work with a particular idea of a specific entity – a particular whole – that they rejected, and their struggle was about demanding space for alternative lifestyles amidst, despite, and free of, perceived dominating norms, and with or without the approval of the State.

These two groups were studied because of their similar yet contradictory statuses within Berlin. Neither seemed particularly well represented in the political system. Both seemed to struggle to fit certain norms. There were instances also that both were festivalised, harmonised, or minimalised, and both seemed to struggle against the same *Other* (the State). As a result of these processes, both were restricted from community and discursive identity – something that would allow them to signify themselves, to claim their maximal differences and independent coeval trajectories, and produce space.

These stories of squatters and newcomers posed certain problems for social spatial theory. They seemed to be coherent groups on opposite trajectories. It would seem contradictory that in a city that prides itself in diversity that squatters are in and want out, while newcomers are out and want in. Why wouldn't a politic of integration try to address issues of its own citizens? Why wouldn't an integrations ethos apply to squatters? It would seem that there was an inward (internal squatter relations) and outward (control of international migration) closing and control of borders. These stories, then, posed the theoretical problem of borders.

The border – as a dividing line no matter how thin and as a manifestation of a contested space – necessitates the concept of a whole. The border represents the division, perimeter, or surface area of this whole. The border therefore signifies insiders and

outsiders: on the one side or the other of the contradictory space, those inside or outside of *fields*, those inside or outside discursive arenas, those on one or another social trajectory. In other words, it constructs the *Other*: those that conceive of space and the others that do not; those that experience space and the others that do not; those that participate and the others that do not. A physical border can act as barrier or boundary that frames the whole. It may be a device of protection, exclusion, or control. It may be a point of entrance or of exit. It may be permeable, semi-permeable, or impermeable. Mental borders can discriminate or prejudice, or classify. Social spatial borders include all of the above and are manmade. They are ideological and real. Perceived space is wrought with borders that channel capital into particular flows, define the limits of transportation and communication systems, or fence off land designated towards particular uses. Conceived space pictorialises or charts out particular representations of space to signify particular purposes and rule out others. Or it expresses directives, hierarchies, or imperatives to channel and delineate social action. A contest arises as soon as one attempts to test, cross, redefine, or eliminate the border. Borders are experienced in lived space, and spark desire or complacency, fear or familiarity, artistic expression or formalism and repetition. Borders are seldom without dispute. A problem arises as soon as one tries to test, cross or redefine the border. Borders are not necessarily fixed over time, and it may be that an individual or group want to contest the limit, redefine it, or transverse to the other side. Each time an uncritical abstract subject of social space decides to do things another way, a border is challenged.

Borders are problems of social space. But what is social space? In the 1970s, Lefebvre approached social space with his book *The Production of Space* in which he examined the thesis that, “(social) space is a (social) product,” (1991: 26; parenthesis as in original). In this exploration, social space was a dialectic of mental and physical spaces. In the opening statements of this chapter, for example, it may appear already evident that the negotiation of a resulting spatial texture is, by definition, a process of balancing and weighing off various viewpoints whether they are perspectives of an individual or a larger group. However, in this explanation, we see an illustration of urban social and spatial development, in which people, real body objects, interact, and affect change in the external physical environment. Lefebvre (1991:16) attempted to push the boundaries of this classical sociological paradigm, to include not just the sensual and real, but also the

ephemeral, intellectual, representational, and imaginary. This dissertation also analyses the relationship between people and space, and interprets urban social spatial processes in Berlin. In addition to Lefebvre, Doreen Massey, Zygmunt Bauman, Pierre Bourdieu, Geraldine Pratt, M.P. Smith, Nancy Fraser, and Seyla Benhabib will also be examined.

That space matters is, in my view, best explained in *Production of Space*. Lefebvre's work is valuable because he wrote of space in response to an age-old fundamental philosophical question: what is space? In doing so, he broke the rigid Cartesian lock that academic tradition had divided space into, and bridged the corporeal, physical world with the logico-epistemological. His triad (1991: 38-39) was one such attempt. Lefebvre's (1991: 94) social space was dialectical and had form, structure, and function. It was socially constructed, and therefore neither natural nor neutral. As social space is produced, or abstracted from the absolute, it is also inscribed (1991: 37, 55, 78, 95, 142, 229-291), and according to Lefebvre (1991: 160), this product of inscription can be decoded. Decoding, or reading space, could unveil the social processes overlaying the triad of lived, conceived, and perceived spaces. Finally, social space differentiates itself, and this differentiation process generated incoherencies, or contradictions (1991: 292-351). His response to the problems posed by high modernity and all its contradictions was a Marxist shift, where the production of space is something that each person can assume, and through collective action space, and all its power relations, can change. Lefebvre's (1991: 365) urged his readers to locate contradictions in space as a starting point for social change.

Lefebvre has received much attention over the last few decades (Schmid 2008: 28) – attention that has sparked a “third wave” in Lefebvrology (Kipfer, Goonewardena, Schmid, Milgrom 2008: 13). Some of this third-wave analyses of Lefebvre are helpful in Chapter Four. It was Lefebvre's Marxism, however, that may lead to theoretical problems with difference. Already in the 1970s, feminist writers noticed that, “the categories of Marxism are sex blind.” (Hartmann 1981: 2). Marx and Engels had written (Hartmann 1981: 4) that the incorporation of women into the labour market was key to the emancipation of the proletariat, and that the revolution would bring about equality among the sexes because private property would be abolished, and all persons would be incorporated into the labour market equally. This could not explain, however, why it was

that women took over certain roles and men others, in their service towards capitalism (Hartmann 1981: 5). This mandated an analysis of patriarchy (ibid.). This feminist view caused a problem: sex conflict interfered with class solidarity, and feminists were accused of fragmenting the “left”. Later the categories of sex and gender were abandoned, altogether, with the emergence of poststructural feminism (Weedon 2000: 76). As Lefebvre was loath to fragmentation, and totality was one of his central concepts (Schmuelly 2008: 214), it would seem that there is a gaping cleft between Lefebvre’s emancipatory space and poststructuralist multiplicity.

This fissure is seen in aforementioned social processes in Berlin. For this reason, this dissertation will also draw upon some authors from poststructuralist feminist geography. Massey (2005: 140-142) wrote of a “throwntogetherness” of multiple trajectories throughout social space. Individuals, groups, populations, and even single and groups of inanimate objects travelled around the earth on their own time-space trajectories. Each living and non-living being was on a separate time-space trajectory: trajectories that demarcated or border-lined difference. Massey (ibid.) also argued that borders and boundaries have the potential to inhibit the continual motion of social relations on all levels, and are thus attempts to capture and maintain a particular space-time continuum. Metanarratives are then, by definition, necessarily problematic. To Massey (ibid.), the exploration lay in coeval trajectories and radical multiplicity. Pratt’s project was quite different. She aimed to spatialise feminist theory and get around feminist standoffs such as the materiality of discourse (Pratt 2004: 12). Her work conflated nicely with Massey’s because she sought to expose transnational geographies and histories of her research subjects (Filipino domestic workers), and in doing so she redrew the map of Canada. She showed that trajectories are materially underpinned and are spatialised in Vancouver, and that these local trajectories span across national borders.

Poststructuralism generally focussed on discourse and the logico-epistemological realms (Lefebvre 1991: 3-4, 10-11; Pratt 2004: 12). Pratt and Massey are among the few poststructural theorists who have shown that space matters – although neither referred to Lefebvre’s (1991: 38-39) spatial moments. Smith (2001) was interested in the role of agency and community in the production of space. Like Pratt, he argued (2001: 17, 111,

145) that people take part in creating the urban environment and that their transnationalist ties are woven into the urban fabric at very local levels. Urban life was infused with knowledge and meanings produced in transnational networks. Transnational trajectories needed therefore to be sorted out (ibid: 108-109). Bauman's (2005) liquid modernity was a vision of space in which everything is flexible and in motion. Bourdieu (1984) showed that sociological status, or placement within a trajectory (to use Massey's metaphor) was dependent on history. In deconstructing the universality of Kant's pure aesthetic, Bourdieu (1984: 467) showed that class, economic and educational capital, and place of residence, defined social perceptions and aesthetics. Social background led to varying distributions of symbolic power and capital, and ultimately social spatial differentiation. Although vast in their scope, all of these authors share a fundamental concept of radical multiplicity.

Fraser (1993) and Benhabib (2004) offered insights into how such radical multiplicity and transnationalism could be organised politically. Although it was not her specific focus, Benhabib (2004: 218) showed how non-territorial based polities could be organised. In Fraser's (1993: 13-18) view, diversity expanded democracy. She refuted the notion of a one and unified open public sphere, and argued that differences exist and can be neither neutralised nor negated. Furthermore, modifications to the notion of public must be made in order to accommodate difference. Counter publics could provide just the very space, that counter discourses require in order to form (1993: 14-15).

After outlining my methodology in 1.2, I systematically review in depth the authors mentioned above in Chapter Two. First, Lefebvre and his invaluable contribution to the concept of social space will be reviewed. Second, some theorists of difference will be examined. Afterwards, I cut to Chapter Three and tell the stories of squatters and newcomers in Berlin. In Chapter Four, I focus the theoretical lenses on these stories to expose their theoretical borders and alternate ways of understanding them. At the end, in Chapter Four, the confines and the potentials of the theory are examined. This approach poses an opportunity to rethink these two phenomena regard these social movements in new ways, while at the same time an opportunity to rethink space itself.

1.2 Methodology and research approach

When I came to Germany on my student visa years ago, I was fresh out of graduate school and ready to build on my knowledge base and research abroad. I had witnessed neoliberalisation of social housing policy in, and the amalgamation of local governments of Toronto – all under the name of Toronto, the new global city. From that I wanted to see how globalisation was affecting other cities. I was encouraged to investigate migration issues in Berlin. My original proposal to the Humboldt University read to the effect, that I would, “address the consequences of globalisation on the nature, composition, and socio-spatial patterns of multiculturalism in Berlin [...] employing population analysis, mapping communities, media analysis and interviews.” To be sure, many of these methods were indeed applied, and will appear in this dissertation, particularly in Chapter Three. Yet, when I arrived, I could not read the codes. I couldn’t even read the signs, or most of the newspapers. I arrived blind, illiterate, and – as someone with a past that occurred in another language and that was by in large unknown and irrelevant to most if not all – I also arrived without a history. I just appeared on the scene, so it seemed. Because of this I ran into a problem of voice. Indeed, I could have pretended to be capable of escaping my body, and chosen a purely positivistic and empirical research approach. However, this approach would be problematic and limited (see Beauregard 2003: 183-184). At the same time, I also did not feel capable of a subjective assessment of Berlin, as someone who had never been a subject of Berlin. I therefore felt incapable of telling any story whatsoever. But could it really be that I had no voice at all?

I stove to learn the German language, so that I could understand, pick apart, and even criticize the codes that surrounded me. All the while, I read English literature, made available to me by international online book stores, to keep abreast of debates in the Anglo-Saxon world from where I came. This was partly a survival tactic: should I drown in this foreign land, at least I could float back to my origins. I also married, had two children, and began to attach myself to informal networks of small families and businesses. I consciously refused German citizenship – on the grounds that I would have to relinquish my Canadian and American ones. For better or worse, for wrong, right or left, I settled. “*Ich habe mich sogar verdeutscht,*” (“I even Germanised”) I would tell myself. This was all before I

realised that I myself could be categorised as a transnational economic migrant, and in retrospect it is clear that my research and theoretical approach reflects this transnationality. I realise now, that this was part of the time-consuming process of finding my subjective voice – my subjective voice as a foreigner.

For this ideational dissertation, I walk through the theory in Chapter Two, that one on one hand covers Lefebvre's theory of spatial production, and on the other hand reviews theories of difference. The latter draws upon literature spanning transnational urbanism, poststructural feminism. In Chapter Three, I tell two stories of social phenomenon in Berlin. One might consider these to be "contours" (Pratt 2004: 163 -165) of Berlin that I viewed while finding my voice. These stories pull a thread in the fabric of Berlin that might otherwise be overlooked by pie charts and tables and other Cartesian means of knowing space without being present in it. Epistemologically, I situate my research methods as critically subjective observation, stemming from the premise that complete value-free positivism and objectivity is unattainable, and agreeing with Beauregard's assertion that:

"objectivity and critical distance...are problematic practices, [and if] they are defined as the absence of subjectivity or as the search for a single truth, they are impossible to attain," (Beauregard 2003: 183)

As I want not and, indeed, cannot escape my body, and am unable to perceive the world without the filter of my comprehension, this dissertation does not uncover a new reality. Rather, this paper is an exploration of the Anglo-Saxon literature on difference in its relationship to Lefebvre's production of space, while using the landscapes of Berlin as well as my own experiential knowledge (as an American-born Canadian landed as an immigrant in Germany) as illustrations.

Before moving on to describe the materials and methods of composing Chapter Three, I want to make a short statement concerning what might be construed as the feminist component of this dissertation. I do not actually consider myself a feminist. If feminism is a project of locating inequalities and power imbalances, I could say that I am a feminist in

the same way that I would expect anyone to be when they discover that they are being discriminated against. I did consider myself a feminist when I was 10. As a child, it really galled me to think that people actually believed that girls were worse at math and science – something I knew was utterly false – and that the only thing they had to aspire to were their bodies. But I halted in this position when my gay father told me that there was more in the world to be angry about, than the easily fought disadvantaged position of women in the 1980s. Since then I never considered myself a feminist. I was raised in a very loving, well balanced family, where my kitchen savvy was taught to me by my father, and that women earning money was a fact of life as ordinary as brushing teeth. Although, women's movements throughout the centuries have worked for and made this equality available to me, I personally, never felt the need to fight. What women had fought for over the decades prior to my birth, was – as a child growing up after the fact – normalcy to me. I would even admit that I belonged to the group of women who considered feminism an F-word. It was therefore odd, even discomfoting, that I should be considered a feminist now, and that my work might be pigeon-holed into the category of women's studies, or feminist studies. As it is, however, this dissertation is mainly about difference, Otherness, and borders, and the literature in feminism has undoubtedly contributed very much to this discourse.

In Chapter Three stories are told. On one hand, they are the stories of squatters and newcomers, told to the best of my abilities. On the other hand, they are my stories. I say this, because as a transnational economic migrant who is at once suspended in the hybrid and blurry personality of migration, and footed in the foreign German educational system (i.e. at Humboldt University as a Canadian), how can one comprehend the complicated mass of Berlin? I am a fragment viewing fragments, so to speak. How then, can one *view*? Lefebvre employed levels (Goonewardena 2008: 126-127). Pratt (2004: 163-164) used contours. I use stories, whose reading is yet another representation of that space. It is my humble postmodern contribution to the multitude of stories that might be told about Berlin, that may stand in contrast to overarching metanarratives, and seeing as deconstructing metanarratives is a project of poststructural feminism, here again, my work might be considered feminist.

There is another element of my research approach that might be classified as feminist. Pratt (2004) discussed this phenomenon in relation to her “melodramatic” (Pratt 2004: 1) presentations of Filipino domestic workers. She commented that at first glance, having work labelled melodramatic, was not a compliment. She was able to harness this quality, however, as a corporeal reaction to the subject matter that binds the ephemeral into a physical understanding, and as a political means of subverting metanarratives. On melodrama, Pratt wrote:

“the carnivalesque juxtaposition of official documents and popular forms, such as gossip and melodrama, is used within this fiction to destabilize official histories because it has the effect of rendering official accounts as fabrications or fabulations. The pastiche of melodrama and documentary evidence thus opens a space to tell other, non-official, counter histories,” (Pratt 2004: 2).

Melodrama, as a means of testing norms and invoking a corporeal reaction, had the capacity to politicise academic discourse by telling an alternative story. It became a *method* of understanding. Pratt wanted the reader to have an emotional reaction to the material. Pratt was not the first feminist thinker to push the limits of rationality. This has been a subject of debate in feminist philosophy for decades¹.

This analysis is relevant to this dissertation because, on a couple of occasions, some of the readers of my work have commented that my style is sometimes “chatty” – a characteristic that is not particularly flattering at first glance. While I have made many attempts to reduce this quality in my work -- because somehow it embarrasses me -- and find the straight and systematic approach that is generally demanded of me, perhaps it is the very abandoning of systematic form that makes this dissertation different, and this dissertation is ultimately about difference. After all, just like Pratt’s (2004) domestic workers, neither the squatters nor many of the newcomers that I have examined in this

¹ See, for example, Sherwin (1988), Morgan (1983), and Lloyd (1979).

dissertation, want to preserve the *status quo*. Furthermore, I have a personal interest in telling an alternative story. I, too, have a bodily reaction to some of the subject matter. As a foreigner in Germany and as someone who supposedly looks politically left, I too have been in situations where I have had to hide my foreign language tongue or be careful of where I walk, out of threat from neo-nazis. These are corporealities that sole empiricism seldom examine. Although further empirical analysis may well contribute to, and support my work, I hold a, “respect for the work that theorists can and have a responsibility to do,” (Pratt 2004: 3).

To create the stories of squatters, I have relied heavily on information available through the internet. Many squats represent themselves at their websites. There are also websites that network them. This has been an invaluable source of data. To tell the stories of newcomers, I have relied on a multitude of traditional secondary sources, including statistics, census tracks, and maps. Where possible, music, newspaper and magazine clippings, and internet sources were also used. In both cases, I have relied on the use of photography to convey messages and provide a visual representation of the arguments composed in this paper. The photos in this paper are presented as visual imagery to compliment the sociological framework that is constructed. They are chosen to illustrate and provoke the reader on levels that may go beyond the limits put forth by the text.

During the process of data collection, I relied heavily on secondary sources. Sometimes my personal experience was drawn upon too. I drew my information from the squat’s self-presentation, as well as from representations of them from the City. Similarly, I drew information from the representations posed by immigration activist groups, as well as those of the City’s. In both cases, I remained at the level of the institution. Indeed, these stories might well be strengthened by interviews with participants. I could, however, at least draw out stories at the group level – I could simply rely on *their* open self-representation – without having to sort out individual perspectives on the issues. At the same time, I could locate possible weaknesses in policy and their implementation. By and large, however, the data sets available were radically different. Except for the *Bethanien*, that houses immigration initiatives, there was almost no overlap.

2.0 Lefebvre, difference, and theorising social space

The relationship between human beings and their environments has been a topic of discussion that dates older than antiquity. Mathematics – that logico-perceptual study of space – dates back nearly six millennia to the earliest known numbering systems and mathematical formulae (for example, the Egyptian decimal system of circa 3500 BC; the Chinese the *Lo Shu* or magic square of circa 2800 BC). Later Greek mathematicians such as Pythagoras (Pythagorean Theorem), Euclid (Euclidean Geometry), and Archimedes (Pi, Archimedes Screw, and Claw of Archimedes) also systematically explored these mathematical endeavours that bridged the mental and the physical – two spheres that were later encapsulated by the idealism-realism arguments of Aristotle and Plato. Almost two thousand years later, Descartes continued where Plato and Aristotle left off, amidst an oppressive church and the parallel beginnings of scientific exploration of the heavens. In 1637, Descartes wrote *cogito ergo sum* and thereby neatly sealed the idealism-realism dualism into the two spheres of the logical subjective reflective mind on the one hand and the physical, corporeal body-object on the other (Lefebvre 1991: 1). The implication on research was that physical corporeal space could be empirically measured or rationally determined. This spun off two major trajectories within science. Empiricism gave way to the positivist sciences, including early sociology, and rationalism provided a structural means to explore deeper into metaphysics as well as the space of the mind.

But what is social space? Although not articulated as such, a social space can be interpreted among the classics spanning Plato to Marx. In writings as early as antiquity, a

social space can be located and interpreted as having dealt with socio-spatial problems. However, it remained an unspecified realm until the 19th century when the specific field of empirical sociology began. Yet for another half century, social processes would remain understood as belonging to either the mental or physical realm. Lefebvre attempted to bridge this Cartesian split and define a social space in which the spaces of the physical, the mental, and the social were interconnected. In his book, originally entitled, *La production de l'espace*, (1974) Lefebvre explored the thesis, “(social) space is a (social) product,”(1991: 26; parenthesis as in original), and in so doing, he exposed the links and overlaps among the three spheres, thereby breaking out of the dualities wrought throughout academia before him. The result was a compelling vision of social space that is socially produced, is wrought with form, structure and function, full of contradictions, and could be perceived, conceived, and lived.

Lefebvre’s (1991: 292-351) contradictory space (that will be reviewed in Section 2.1) suggested borders – those that defined the difference among the various sides of a contradiction – those between hegemonic and dominated; heterogeneity and homogeneity; centre and periphery; work and leisure. However, Lefebvre was, as will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Four, resistant to abandoning totality. He was loath to fragmentation (Schmuelly 2008:214). His project, however, was not motivated by a search for a theory of difference. His intentions were to address the problems imposed by modernity (Lefebvre 1991: 24), and to seek ways to address this problem by changing space. Lefebvre was concerned with hegemony and, like Marx, class (Lefebvre 1991: 10, 59, 383).

Marx was also not motivated by ideas of difference, rather explorations of class dynamics. Essential difference as a concept, was, in western literature at least, first addressed by the feminists: Wollstonecraft, Wright, Wheeler, and later de Beauvoir, are considered among the earlier writers. Later in the 1970s, Foucault discussed power. He is widely considered one of the forerunners of poststructuralist feminism (Pratt 2004: 12), which has deconstructed not only the concept of gender but also the concept of sex itself².

² See Butler (2004) and (2006).

Thus, we arrive at many of the authors that will be examined in Section 2.2. Stemming from the literary trajectories of sociology, transnational urbanism, and feminist geography, Massey, Bourdieu, Smith, Pratt, Benhabib, and Fraser all discussed theories of difference. Massey illustrated a vision of social space as a dynamic and unending “throwntogetherness,” (Massey 2005: 140-142) of coeval trajectories. Smith (2001: 93, 107) and Pratt (2004: 133, 143, 144, 145, 163, 188) emphasized the relevance of transnational histories, knowledge and geography. Bourdieu (1987: 5, 6, 41, 42, 486, 487, 499) argued against the Kant’s universal aesthetic, and Fraser (1993: 1-27) rejected Habermas’ (1989, reprinted 2006) one and open public sphere. Benhabib (2004: 218), too, imagined alternative forms of democratic participation. Although these authors stemmed from various academic fields, their conceptions of space are not mutually exclusive. Rather, the space is conceived of as capable of accommodating vast differences.

One of the primary questions that this dissertation attempts to address is whether or not Lefebvre’s (1991) theory of space can be merged with contemporary theories of difference. To begin this exploration, I will first introduce the theories. In Section 2.1, I will examine Lefebvre’s (1991) view of space and its production. In section 2.2, I will review Bauman, Massey, Bourdieu, Smith, Pratt, Fraser, and Benhabib, and show that their views of difference in social space can be conceived as a decentralised network. Of these authors, Fraser (1993) and Benhabib (2004) showed, too, that a political organisation of such a space is also possible. In Section 2.3, I will close the Chapter with a discussion on some compatibilities that the theories have. I will then, in Chapter Three, break to some stories in Berlin, and return again to this discussion of compatibilities and inconsistencies in Chapter Four.

2.1 The production of social contradictory space from Lefebvre

The following eight subsections outline Lefebvre’s (1991) path to social contradictory space. In this section, Lefebvre’s (ibid.) powerful ways of imaging space (and its production, on levels of the real, imaginary, and social) can also be seen. Social space: has form, structure and function (Lefebvre 1991: 149); is not neutral (Lefebvre 1991: 210, 292); is inscribed and decidable (Lefebvre 1991: 17); can be conceptualised

architecturally (Lefebvre 1991: 169-228); is an abstraction of the absolute (Lefebvre 1991: 229-351); and, is contradictory (Lefebvre 1991: 352-400).

2.1.1 The plan of Lefebvre's 'work'

Lefebvre was motivated to write *Production of Space* (1991) because of his observations of academia and wider socio-political and economic processes. Philosophy, in his opinion, lacked a science that could adequately address the issue of space (Lefebvre 1991: 7). Meanwhile, in his view, the capitalism under modernity had reached vast new levels of oppression and dominance (Lefebvre 1991: 10). *Production of Space* was both an analytical and a political project to address these trends (Lefebvre 1991: 11).

Lefebvre (1991: 11, 21) saw a breach in philosophy among three spheres of space: mental, physical, and social. He wanted to bridge this gap (Lefebvre 1991: 11). To Lefebvre, as each science old and new evolved, they developed further and further along their own trajectory, disassociating themselves and their subjects of attention from the other realms of space. Mathematics, he argued for example, had become so abstracted in mental space that it had disconnected itself from the physical and concrete, and even more so from the social (Lefebvre 1991: 2-3). In the earlier half of the 20th century, the dimensions of psychological space had also been so expounded upon in sophistry, linguistics, neo-Hegelianism, and neo-Kantianism, that, in Lefebvre's (1991: 3-7) opinion, it showed no limit, and lacked any clear definition of it. In this process, mental space had all but abandoned the realms of the physical and social. Similar arguments could be made about the physical and social sciences. Lefebvre thought this breach represented the height of Cartesian thought³, and that a blending might be more methodologically useful in interpreting space. Each of the sciences of the mind, which could otherwise be named the epistemological method, could all be reduced to the, "great Cartesian family known as

³ "I think therefore I am," ("*Cogito ergo sum*") was the phrase that Descartes discussed in 'Principles of Philosophy' (Cottingham et. al 1985: 196). Deliberating on the observation that the thoughts of his sleep (dreams) could be of no greater falsehood than the thoughts of his alertness, he concluded (ibid.) that the proof of his being was in the act of thinking itself: the human is a thinking being. The methodological problem that then arose was: how could scientists, who perceive the world through the senses which have been observed to be imperfect, adequately observe, examine, and comprehend external phenomena? Thus, empiricism and cartography in particular was born.

Subjectivity,” (1991: 6; capitalisation as in original). The physical and social sciences could be allocated to the Cartesian objectivity. This division rendered space once again subject to yet another Aristotelian categorisation⁴ (Lefebvre 1991: 1): 1) of thought (*res cogitans*); and 2) of material (*res extensa*). With *Production of Space*, Lefebvre sought to bridge this rift with a dialectical science of space. Lefebvre’s objective was to draft a science of space that bridged the severed spheres of mental space, physical space, and social space: a “unitary theory,” (1991: 11). He wanted to expose the production of space, by examining various kinds of spaces and uniting their various modalities under a single social theory (1991: 16). The thesis that Lefebvre posited, was a Marxist shift⁵ from products to the production process: that, “(social) space is a (social) product,” (1991: 26; parenthesis as in original).

Lefebvre also saw his project as politically relevant. At the time of writing, Lefebvre was witness to a global economic situation of mass consolidation and an oppressive form of high modernity, complemented by a counter force of groups struggling to create their space and articulate their full opposition (Lefebvre 1991: 23). He observed that capitalism influenced space (Lefebvre 1991: 9). He observed that capitalism has a class structure and a hegemony that the ruling class attempts to reinforce (Lefebvre 1991: 10). Lefebvre borrowed the concept of hegemony from Gramsci, and defined it as:

“...an influence, more even than the permanent use of repressive violence [...] that is exercised over society as a whole, culture

⁴ Aristotle implemented two primary methodological avenues: the development of logical reasoning; and the systematic division, categorisation, and objectification of the natural world (see Barnes 1971a/b).

⁵ Marx had argued that his predecessors, the Hegelians and his contemporaries, the Young Hegelians overemphasised the consciousness as motivating force in human interaction, and thus subjectifying the material world to it (see Marx and Engels, F. ‘Critique of Modern German Philosophy According to Its Representatives Feuerbach, B. Bauer and Stirner’ in (1998: 48) ‘The German Ideology’). Marx, then, presented was a paradigm shift within metaphysics away from ideology and back to materialism, empiricism and reality (ibid.). Marx proceeded into four “moments” or “aspects” of what might be interpreted as social space (ibid.): 1) that men must be in a position to be able to produce history; 2) that the satisfaction of the need be able to create history the first need leads to new needs, and this is the first historical act; 3) that men, who remake their lives, reproduce the relations within it; and 4) that the mode of (spatial) production is interwoven with a certain social interaction that is its productive force, and further that the multitude of productive forces determine the nature of society and its resulting history. These moments became central to the arguments of Lefebvre (see Lefebvre 1991: 30-31).

and knowledge parties, as also a good many intellectuals and experts...” (Lefebvre 1991: 10).

Hegemony affected space, said Lefebvre (1991: 10-11). Yet, space was not a mere passive stage on which social relations unfold (1991: 11). Lefebvre asserted, instead, that space is coded and instrumentalised by the hegemonic class. Lefebvre’s aim was to, “detonate this state of affairs,” (1991: 24).

Lefebvre saw that social relations were construed in a Hegelian abstract space, which each society produces for itself. His thesis was a deliberate turn of attention from products to the production process itself (Lefebvre 1991: 26), a redirection away from the static and towards the dialectic (Lefebvre 1991: 85). Lefebvre saw four implications of his thesis (1991: 30-46): 1) that natural space (i.e. the biosphere) is disappearing; 2) that every mode of production produces its own space; 3) that one’s knowledge of space must be able to reproduce and explain the process of production; and 4) that the production of space is historically situated. The first implication referred to the condition of the Hegelian absolute, which according to Lefebvre was the only common underpinning of all societies, the only stage, in all its chaos, on which social relations take place (Lefebvre 1991: 35). The remaining three implications redirected analysis to the production of space, and how it occurs.

Exploring this thesis was a challenge, however. To Lefebvre, semiology offered insights towards the understanding of space. It was a science that was still in need of more defined parameters (1991: 7), yet the concept of codes was a useful starting point. Lefebvre’s trick was not just to decipher codes within a given space and thereby reducing space to a text to be read by an observer (ibid.), but to devise and expose a dialectic of codes, i.e. to study the interaction of subjects and their space, and the coming and going of codes (Lefebvre 1991: 18). To this end, Lefebvre (1991: 33, 38) proposed another dialectic triad: 1) spatial practice or perceived space (that is, the practical basis of perception. i.e. real); 2) representations of space or conceptualised space; and 3) representational spaces or lived space. The triad upset and broke away from the dualisms that constrained critical thought to single axes and polar opposites (Lefebvre 1991: 39). The triad of the perceived,

conceived, and lived, were constructed as spatial moments and presented as a framework in which to interpret the three spheres of space:

“...spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production, and according to the historical period. Relations between the three moments of the perceived, the conceived, and the lived are never either simple or stable, nor are they ‘positive’ in the sense in which this term might be opposed to ‘negative’, to the indecipherable, the unsaid, the prohibited, or the unconscious,” (Lefebvre 1991: 46).

His triad – to be thought of as overlapping and converging and indistinct from one another – called for a radical revision of how various disciplines approach their object of study . This triad demanded interweaving of objectivist and subjectivist approaches, intertwining idealist and realist approaches, and a dialectic analysis of the static and non-static, coding and decoding, and of thought and experienced.

This was Lefebvre’s method of understanding the relationship between capital, hegemonic domination, and space. It was a theory that would contribute to his political project. It provided a means in which oppressed groups could assess their situation and change it. The key was to change space by changing the code. Lefebvre wrote:

“...by seeking to point the way towards a different space, towards the space of a different (social) life and of a different mode of production, this project straddles the breach between science and utopia, reality and ideality, conceived and lived. It aspires to surmount these oppositions by exploring the dialectical relationship between ‘possible’ and ‘impossible’, and this both objectively and subjectively,” (Lefebvre 1991: 60).

By seeing the relationship between the dominator and the dominated as dialectic, and as a project in which both attempt to produce space through the production of codes, one can see that the limitations imposed on any group is their ability to produce their own space. This was Lefebvre's plan.

2.1.2 dialectic social space

Lefebvre first brought the reader's attention to the thesis itself – that (social) space is a (social) product. Here, Lefebvre defined the words carefully that would be used in his dialectics of social space. The words implied in this statement were 'work', 'works', 'products', and 'production' (Lefebvre 1991: 68-70). Lefebvre argued that the meanings of these words – the images that these words represented – also implied that social space is distinct from natural space. Nature does not produce (Lefebvre 1991: 70). It creates (*ibid.*). In contrast, social space was not a 'natural' product, rather a social production (Lefebvre 1991: 71). Because nature does not produce, it therefore does not labour, as do humans. Nature, too, was not staged. What nature creates is not created with intent or with consciousness of itself. Lefebvre concluded, then, that, "the 'beings' [nature] creates are works," (1991: 70). 'Work' and 'produce' were thereby differentiated from the word 'create', and social space was distinguished from natural space.

After showing this initial characteristic of social space (its unnaturalness), Lefebvre used a linguistic analysis to outline the first dialectic of social space. First, both 'work' and 'products' require labour (*ibid.*). Second, the labour process for a 'work', however, is not labourious, whereas the labour process for 'production' is predominant (*ibid.*). Third, 'works' imply diversity, whereas 'products' imply conformity (*ibid.*). Fourth, a 'work' cannot be reproduced, whereas a 'product' can (*ibid.*). Because social space cannot be narrowed down to one of these traits, Lefebvre concluded that, "social practice creates works and produces things," (1991: 71). Furthermore, social space cannot be disassociated from the labour that produces it, nor can it be relegated to the status of a pure object:

“...social space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather it subsumes things produced, and

encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object. At the same time there is nothing imagined, unreal or ‘ideal’ about it as compared, for example, with science, representations, ideas or dreams. Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh actions to occur, while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others. Among these actions, some serve production, others consumption. [...] Social space implies a great diversity of knowledge,” (Lefebvre 1991: 73).

Each work and product takes up space, and at the same time creates and produces that space. Social space is therefore a dialectic of work and production, and of works and products.

The relationship among these poles within the dialectics can be mapped out to be the triad of social space: social practice, representations of space, and representational space. The dialectics of social space can be dissected along the axes defined by the triad, which can be used as tools for social spatial analysis. As an example, Lefebvre (1991: 77) described Tuscany, which emerged out a specific historical transition, embodying town and country. This spatial texture induced a specific spatial praxis, which yielded new representations of space (from local artists and experts), that then spurred yet new lived experiences based on those new orders. A certain dialectical cycle of work and production was set in motion that determined the perceived, conceived, and the lived space. This mapping of the dialectic over the triad can therefore identify the non-linear, and not necessarily predictable nature of social spatial development, as Lefebvre continued:

“social space cannot be adequately accounted for either by nature (climate, site) or by its previous history. Nor does the growth of the forces give rise in any direct causal fashion to a particular space or a particular time. Mediations, and mediators, have to be

taken into consideration ... social space contains a great diversity of objects, both natural and social, including the networks and pathways which facilitate the exchange of material things and information. Such 'objects' are thus not only things but also relations," (Lefebvre 1991: 77).

Production and work set the relationships necessary for works and products, as well as vice versa.

A second social spatial dialectic that Lefebvre (1991: 83- 85) located was that of products and their means of production. A curious paradox then arose with respect to social space: if products conceal and if space is full of products (as well as works), then the *reality* of social space can only be an illusion. Here again, Lefebvre delineated social space from natural space, as nature does not illude, and also that:

"the more a space partakes of nature, the less it enters into the social relations of production," (Lefebvre 1991: 83).

Still, as Lefebvre recalled (*ibid.*), to merely notice the object is to overlook all that the object embodies, and the social relations that formed it. In the same way, Lefebvre argued (1991: 85), social space is neither a collection of objects, nor is it a medium precisely because it is full of objects, nor is it simply a superstructure . Space, Lefebvre wrote:

"...is at once a precondition and a result of social superstructures. [...] networks of exchange and flows of raw materials and energy fashion space and are determined by it. Thus [social space as a] means of production, produced as such, cannot be separated either from the productive forces, including technology and knowledge, or from the social division of labour which shapes it, or from the state and the superstructures of society," (1991: 85).

Thus, Lefebvre arrived at his next observation of social space: that social space is a dialectic of products and their means of production.

Further dialectics were also discussed with respect to the architectonics of space. See below.

2.1.3 Social space has form, structure, and function

All space has a form, structure, and function. This, and the dialectic character of social space, led Lefebvre (1991: 94) to conclude that space is to social morphology as form is to living organism. To Lefebvre (1991: 101), the form of social space was: meeting, gathering, and simultaneity. What structures the forms and what performs the functions are all the objects, natural or social, which fill a space. Here again, social space was differentiated from natural space. To Lefebvre, social spaces imply the actual or potential accumulation around a certain point, whereas natural space simply creates at random. Urban space, for example:

“... gathers crowds, products, in the markets, acts and symbols. It concentrates all these, and accumulates them. To say ‘urban space’ is to say centre and centrality, and it does not matter whether these are actual or merely possible, saturated, broken up or under fire, for we are speaking of a dialectical centrality,” (Lefebvre 1991: 101).

Centre and periphery can therefore be seen as the spatial form in this case. Crowds and structures are the living social praxis that morphs. While nature spontaneously creates, social space develops patterns.

2.1.4 Social space is not neutral

If space is not neutral, the question that follows, then, is: whose ideal is the form? Plato, Kant, and Hegel never addressed this question. It was a moot point, in fact, because

the ideal was metaphysical. To Plato, the author was the sun (in 'The Republic' (Bloom 1991)). To Kant⁶, Descartes⁷ and Hegel⁸, the author was the Christian god. In the vein of Marxist realism, Lefebvre brought social space back to the corporeal. Form, structure, and function were the instruments of corporeal objects (humans) that organise space. However, they were also the instruments that mask. These aspects could be helpful in deciphering the code of space, but they cannot expose the production process. In other words, form, structure, and function could expose the signified but not the signifier. If each social space has a signifier, then no space can be neutral. Lefebvre refuted the notion of neutral space:

“...a space that is apparently ‘neutral’, ‘objective’, fixed transparent, innocent or indifferent implies more than the convenient establishment of an inoperative system of knowledge, more than an error that can be avoided by evoking the ‘environment’, ecology, nature, and anti-nature, culture, and so forth. Rather, it is a whole set of errors, a complex of illusions, which can even cause us to forget completely that there is a total subject which acts continually to maintain and reproduce its own conditions of existence, namely the state...” (Lefebvre 1991: 94).

Further, the relegation of space to the realm of experts reinforces the split between the representations of space and representational space. Here, Lefebvre (1991: 95) argued that experts straddle the ‘commands’ from above, and the ‘demands’ from below. The production of the conceptualised form, structure and function is produced under the guise of professional objectivity, while masking the perceived ideology of the dominant and the lived experience of the dominated.

2.1.5 Social space is inscribed and decodable

⁶ In, 'Introduction to the Metaphysics of Morals' (reprinted 2008: 45), Kant wrote of supreme lawgiver or the divine will.

⁷ In 'Principles of Philosophy, Part One, The Principals of Human Knowledge' (Cottingham et. al. 1985: 193-197, paragraph 4) Descartes deliberates on God as the supreme author of our being.

⁸ The subjectivity of the human mind prevented the human individual from perceiving the omnipresent, heavenly ideal (see Hegel's 'The Phenomenology of Mind, Part VII, Religion' (Baillie 2003: 396-462).

Social space might be described as the space that results as nature proceeds to abstraction. The more humans interact and modify their environment the further they distance themselves from nature, and the deeper they delve into abstraction. The production of space is therefore a historical, time-honoured process, and this, says Lefebvre (1991: 142), is inscribed in space. Moreover, this inscription is produced. History, defined by Lefebvre:

“...is to be distinguished from an inventory of things in space ...
It must account for both representational spaces, and representations of space, but above all for their interrelationships and their links with social practice,” (Lefebvre 1991: 116).

The history of a space includes (ibid.): nature; an anthropological analysis (measurements, myths, images, material); a mode of production (industry, or means of reproduction, repetition, and inherent social relationships within it); the apprehension of space; and evolution of space through social practice. In sum, social space reflects the story produced by its inhabitants (ibid.). A couple of issues arise once it is recognised that history is produced and inscribed in space. First, the products produced in space mask their production process. That is, the inscribed history, the product, masks its history (ibid.). Can this be recovered? Second, if time inscribes itself in space, is it a language, and can one read it without reducing space to a text? Lefebvre (1991: 130-140) took the position that indeed a language in space existed. The task was then to determine the language of space – of dialectical social space –, find a means to decipher it, and reveal the hidden production process.

Before venturing to solve the above problems, Lefebvre first examined language and its limitations. He first adopted Nietzsche’s definition of language, as:

“...‘a mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms – in short, a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and

rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people, '...'" (Lefebvre 1991: 138).

He outlined two (in 1970s France) prevalent views of language and space. The first view held that no sign exists in isolation – without a subject signified and an object signifying. Everything, therefore, is language – sounds, visuals, forms, and structures. Space is also therefore epistemological, and reduced to a set of signs. The second view held that language and signs create an abstract realm that nullifies nature's wildness. Space inscribed with language is therefore dominated space. Whichever view one followed, the following conclusion could be reached:

"...once brought back into conjunction with a (spatial and signifying) *social practice*, the concept of space can take on its full meaning. Space thus rejoins material production: the production of goods, things, objects of exchange – clothing, furnishings, houses, or homes – a production which is dedicated by necessity. It also rejoins the productive process considered at a higher level, as the result of accumulated knowledge; at this level labour is penetrated by a materially creative experimental science. Lastly, it rejoins the freest creative process there is – the signifying process, which contains within itself the seeds of the 'reign of freedom', and which is destined in principle to deploy its possibilities under that reign as soon as labour dictated by blind and immediate necessity comes to an end," (Lefebvre 1991: 137-138).

Produced in space are not only things, but also symbols. Buildings and structures have meaning or a code, as do spaces occupied by social groups. In social space, too, the abstraction function of language devices such as metonym, metaphors, and metamorphosis could also be seen. *Meta-*, Lefebvre said (1991: 138), refers to the transcending function, and these were also were produced in social space.

What is the language of social space and how is it produced? Is it merely the marking of space? If so, that is, if it is a container of signs and symbols, can it be read? If so, how? To Lefebvre (1991: 141) marking could not be the sole method of producing language in space, as this reduction of the abstract – the denaturalisation of space – to the simple act of marking, overlooks the vast diversity of abstraction across human culture in its entirety. Nor could space be reduced to the status of a text to be read, although reading is possible – even if the messages in space are not clear or complete. In fact, Lefebvre (1991: 142) argued that reading space is secondary because social space, and its particular order, restricts social activity. Further, the producers of this restrictive function are the occupiers of power (*ibid.*). Space is not created to be read, but to be lived (*ibid.*). Reading is perhaps primary in the search for knowledge, but secondary in the creation of space itself (1991: 143).

The last aspect of social space that Lefebvre (1991: 163) discussed in his chapter on social space was that it could be decoded. How this was possible was one of the questions that Lefebvre posed. Messages were indeed to be uncovered – but how? Semiology, at least in the 1970s, had not refined its techniques sufficiently (*ibid.*). To Lefebvre:

“There is a proper role for the decoding of space: it helps us understand the transition from representational spaces to representations of space, showing up correspondences, analogies and a certain unity in spatial practice and in the theory of space. The limitations of the decoding-operation appear even greater, however, as soon as it is set in motion, for it then immediately becomes apparent just how many spaces exist, each of them susceptible of multiple decodings,” (Lefebvre 1991: 163).

Lefebvre argued (*ibid.*) that simple decoding unveils still more codes. Lefebvre argued that the diversification of codes through its historical processes can be categorised according to its social function, structure, or form. Dominated and appropriated space, for example, could be differentiated to reveal not just a readable but also a socially dynamic code.

2.1.6 The architectonics of social space

Refining the art of interpreting social space was the remaining focus of the rest of the book. Lefebvre (1991: 86) had observed that no finite number of maps – representations of space – could ever capture the depth and breadth of space. Instead, “social spaces interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another,” (Lefebvre 1991: 86). Social space was akin to a “*mille-feuille* pastry,” Lefebvre said (1991: 86) – although that image too was limited because it implied divisions and barriers that might not be appropriate (*ibid.*). Lefebvre thus sought after a science of dialectic social space that would enable: 1) space, and the multiplicity of social relationships within it, to be observed at various levels; 2) a different understanding of history; 3) and understanding of how societies generated their representational spaces and their representations of space; and 4) the ideologies that produce and dominate space to be identified and framed – thus bringing the project, as a whole, back to that of a political project. In searching for the code of codes, Lefebvre (1991: 169) proposed an examination of the architectonics of space. These were formulated as categorical supercodes to embrace still general codes, which could be applied as variant forms locally and dialectically.

Beginning with ‘nature’ and ‘natural space’, Lefebvre conceptualised the architecture of social form, structure, and function – the architectonics of which could identify some operative works within, and map out the route from abstract to concrete, social space. Lefebvre’s fundamental basis was that:

“ ... before *producing* effects in the material realm (tools and objects), before *producing itself* by drawing nourishment from that realm, and before *producing itself* by generating other bodies, each living body *is* space and *has* its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space,” (Lefebvre 1991: 170; italics as in original).

Bodies are inextricably bound to their spaces, and are not, for example, simple Cartesian objects distributed across a divine space or subjects of a Hegelian divine ideal. Lefebvre,

for example, observed that even simple and wild beings were capable of producing space. A spider can produce a web of astounding intricacy and function:

“... for all its ‘lowliness’, [the spider] is already capable, just like human groups, of demarcating space and orienting itself on the basis of angles. It can create networks and links, symmetries, and asymmetries. It is able to project beyond its own body those *dualities* which help constitute that body as they do the animal’s relationship to itself and its productive and reproductive acts,” (Lefebvre 1991: 173; italics as in original).

‘Marking’ is therefore a basic gesture of simple *beings* as they *become*⁹. Beings – even the simplest of beings – *have* space, are simply *in* space, can orient themselves and navigate around and within it, and can command and produce their inner and outer space. This was evidence, to Lefebvre, that space retained certain geometric and morphological characters, with which beings are in a dialectic relationship.

Symmetries and reflections (Lefebvre 1991: 182), the finite and the infinite (Lefebvre 1991: 181), mirages (Lefebvre 1991: 188-189), the senses (Lefebvre 1991: 198-199), energy, consumption, investment and expenditure (Lefebvre 1991: 176-177), were some of the architectonics acting dialectically in social space, that to Lefebvre, connected the physical to the ephemeral, and could be implemented as a tool of reading space. Many of these dialectic effects were encompassed by the metaphor of the mirror. He wrote:

⁹ Another cardinal departure from Plato upon which Aristotle embarked was the notion of time (see Barnes 1971a/b). In all of Aristotle’s writing, it must be seen that understanding is a process, social development is a process, sensing is a process, and all of these processes require the concept of time. In contrast, it could be argued that Plato retained the notion of a static universal truth (see Bloom 1991). Truth existed, ready and waiting to be intuited. Truth existed as an ideal, ready and waiting to be realised (See Bloom 1991). Aristotle, however, saw truth as real, and as a result of motion or time, and this enabled the notion of change and the distinction between what *is* and what *becomes*, between the actuality of a being and its potentiality to become something else. Aristotle discussed these concepts in his twelve books of ‘Metaphysics’ (Barnes 1971b: 1552-1728), in which he discussed the essence of what *is* (*being qua being*), and the transformation process of what *becomes*. Together, these books illustrated Aristotle’s understanding of nature and beyond (*meta-*) nature.

“If my body may be said to enshrine a generative principle, at once abstract and concrete, the mirror’s surface makes this principle invisible, deciphers it. The mirror discloses the relationship between me and myself, my body and the consciousness of my body – not because the reflection constitutes my unity *qua* subject, as many psychoanalysts and psychologists apparently believe, but because it transforms what I am into the sign of what I am. This ice-smooth barrier, itself merely an inert sheen, reproduces and displays what I am – in a word, signifies what I am – within an imaginary sphere which is yet quite real. A process of abstraction then – but a *fascinating* abstraction. In order to know myself, I ‘separate myself out of myself’. The effect is dizzying. Should the ‘Ego’ fail to reassert hegemony over itself by defying its own image, it must become Narcissus – or Alice,” (Lefebvre 1991: 185; italics as in original).

The object and its subject, the substance and the image, the real and unreal, the tangible and intangible, the finite and the infinite (place another mirror opposite the first), the opening of an idea yet the closing of a barrier, reflection and symmetry, all tangle themselves together within the mirror effect. Lefebvre supposed that these forms and structures might be interpreted from a dialectic analysis of conceived, perceived, and lived space. How, for example, do representations of space (charts, paintings, photos), mirror and distort the space of human practice, and vice versa? What, for example, is symbolised by representational spaces like reflecting ponds, or structural symmetries, and how might this affect social practice? The answers are endless. Similar vertiginous interpretations can be constructed with human forms that structure the functions of social space, such as those also specified by Lefebvre (1991: 202): consciousness, subconsciousness, Ego, and Alter Ego.

These spatial forms, non-human and human, were dialectical processes that stemmed from the corporeal body into space, mark that space, and subsume its further

development. Space thus had a dual nature. On the one hand, space was a container of objects in the Cartesian sense (Lefebvre 1991: 296) – a space in which bodies and objects exist and orient themselves. On the other hand, space offered also a mediating role (Lefebvre 1991: 297) – like the mirror – and offers sequences, a realm where beings can become. Using the metaphor of the looking glass, Lefebvre wrote that this arbitrating character of social space:

“tends to turn [it] into a transparent medium occupied solely by light ...where bodies pass from their natural obscurity into the light,” (Lefebvre 1991: 183).

This meant that social space, as does the mirror, unveiled movements as they come into the light, and activate social reality.

2.1.7 Social space is an abstraction of the absolute

To avert the misconception that social space is merely ‘organic’ – that social realms begin solely with the interaction between the single body and nature, and then later emerge as an aggregate social interactions from a linear development out of nature – Lefebvre (1991: 229-291) launched into a discussion of the absolute and abstract. In essence he borrowed the Hegelian meanings of abstract and absolute, where the absolute refers to the unknowable cosmic cosmos, and the abstract is the human-made construction upon it¹⁰. To Lefebvre, it was necessary to break down the conception of space as natural in order to politicise space. The non-naturalness of space was also a particular point that set Lefebvre apart from the canon of authors that he built upon – with the exception of Marx. To Plato,

¹⁰ Hegel saw the universal ethic and morality as internal to each person, each of whom had, ideally, the capacity to realise or embody this virtue (Baillie 2003). Real life, then, was an external and dependent on the universal ideal. Hence, embodiment itself is abstraction. Hence, religion itself is an abstraction of the absolute, and according to Hegel, the existence of various religions around the planet was proof of the inadequacy of human beings to express the absolute in the abstract, “Absolute appears, is circumscribed in its nature and processes each is per se inadequate to the revelation of complete absolute self-consciousness: hence the variety of religion is necessitated by and is indirectly due to the failure of any one type and the inadequacy of every single type to reveal the Absolute completely,” (Baillie 2003: 397, Part VII, Religion). Thus, with Hegel, we see a return to Platonic view of an unattainable idealistic social and physical sphere, (the absolute) subject to human perception (abstraction).

social space was the imperfect copy of the heavenly ideal¹¹. Similarly, Kant, Hegel, and to some extent Descartes, depicted a social space that was the imperfect copy of the godly ideal¹². Aristotle rejected idealism, but at the same time rendered social space to be the pinnacle of human biological development¹³. These views, rendered social space to some notion of naturalness. Naturalness is socially and politically problematic, however, because it cannot account for differences in social or social spatial development. It cannot account for the differential emergence of matriarchal or patriarchal societies, or of democratic and totalitarian societies, and it cannot explain the differences among similar societies. Why, for example, do women work in some capitalist societies, and in other capitalist societies not? These questions cannot be answered with notions of space rooted in naturalness.

Lefebvre (1991: 183) argued that as soon as humans are situated within a space, absolute space say, they – just like the spider – apprehend that space. Human interaction with other humans, however, sends social development spiralling into abstraction. It is this differential spiralling development that accounts for differential action among and within societies. Lefebvre (1991: 238-239) argued that the ancient Greeks, for example, did not differentiate among form, structure, and function. The Ionic, Dorian, Corinthian architectural orders, for example, delineated all three at once. Agreeing with Hegel, Lefebvre (*ibid.*) supposed that the Greeks were essentially sculptors. The Romans, on the other hand, developed with different concepts of space such as private property, which,

¹¹ To Plato, social space was the imperfect copy of the heavenly ideal (Bloom 1991: 211, Book VII). As told in his Allegory of the Cave in ‘The Republic’ (*ibid.*) all that the human mind can know is limited by his body, while truth, as authored by the sun (Bloom 1991: *ibid.*), existed independently and transcendently of humans. This truth was not attainable by human beings limited by their bodies.

¹² Although Descartes neatly sealed space into two realms (the mental and physical) he was sceptical (in ‘The World’) (Cottingham et al. 1985: 81) that humans could accurately understand the sensual messages that they receive. Furthermore, there is a recurring reverence for God and a heavenly reality throughout his works (Cottingham et al. 1985: 40, 90-96, 99, 102, 117-118, 129-130). Later, in his ‘Introduction to the Metaphysics of Morals Part IV’, (Kant reprinted 2008: 45), Kant reasoned that each individual retains good will within him, and this good will is delivered by God. The closer one’s corresponding actions resembled a divine action, the closer the realised action resembles the (heavenly) ideal (*ibid.*) Hegelian godly ideal was represented by his notion of the absolute – an unknowable space only felt and intuited (see ‘The Phenomenology of Mind, Part VII, Religion in’ Baille 2003).

¹³ Aristotle rejected idealism and instead worked from the premise that the world outside was real and knowable. While Plato argued that only the soul could know truth, Aristotle argued (in ‘On Sense and the Sensible’ (Barnes 1971a)) that the soul was the sounding board of the senses, and that it was through the senses that humans could perceive the world (Barnes 1971a). In his discussions on the organization of the state (‘Politics, Book II’) (Barnes 1971b: 1986-2129), Aristotle also makes it clear that each person is, at least in theory, capable of attaining their ideal life (*ibid.*). Under the right circumstances, each individual can achieve their ideal form – the form being the limiting factor (*ibid.*).

Lefebvre (ibid.) argued, sent Rome off into a different social developmental trajectory based not in Logos but in Law (ibid.). Perhaps this particular point about Greece and Italy is debatable, but Lefebvre essentially argued (ibid.) that upon close examination, and preferably implementing the social spatial triad, the abstraction of space was a dialectical process that can explain the differential codes inscribed into various social spaces.

As for absolute space, Lefebvre (1991: 236-238) argued that social space has absorbed the absolute into both its ideological and real worlds. The space of tombs, cemeteries, churches, all reflected a social ideological conception of the absolute that can only be understood through experience. In and of themselves, these physical real structures have no meaning (ibid.). Also, because this conception of the absolute is experienced in the ephemeral, it is also surreal, and perhaps the space of art. Again, social space is severed from the natural. Instead, social space apprehends the natural, incorporates it within it, and society is freed from ideological domination, which was merely the conception of space by selected and privileged few.

One might say that Lefebvre's concept of social space echoes that of Marx, as he breathes new meaning into the concrete abstraction. Lefebvre, as does Marx, politicised social space specifically because it is not the result of divine ideals. Social space, and all its patterns, are a result of human action, human decisions, of human production. Lefebvre departs, however, again with his insistent triads. Marx was preoccupied with the duality of the bourgeoisie and proletariat – class divisions that, to Lefebvre (1991: 324), were too reductionist. Lefebvre's approach breaks out of this dualism, but leaves social space as real, concrete and at the hands of humankind with their perceptions and conceptions.

2.1.8 Social space is contradictory

Another deconstruction is also necessary: the notion that social space, once abstracted from the absolute and matured, is homogeneous, coherent, or consistent. Lefebvre argued just the opposite: that space, and particularly space in 20th century modernity, is full of contradictory cycles, and opposing forces, which act to fragment and

splinter social space. These contradictions were readable by first locating a logic (Lefebvre 1991: 293) in social space:

“Human beings do not stand before, or amidst, social space; they do not relate to the space of society as they might to a picture, a show, or a mirror. They know that they have a space and that they are in this space. They do not merely enjoy a vision, a contemplation, a spectacle – for they act and situate themselves in space as active participants,” (Lefebvre 1991: 294).

This human interaction inside abstract space produced networks and social webs that have structure, form and function. Just as the spiralling social development explained the differential emergence of social spheres, it could explain internal social developments. An examination of these internal social developments exposes non-coherent and perhaps even non-logical social spatial patterns. It reveals differential development of social groups and individuals. To illustrate with an example that might have been relevant to Lefebvre, one might look to the architecture and spatial forms of Corbusier as wrought with opposing messages. On one hand, the tall, flat surfaced, high rises represented emancipation from the earth, and conquest over the skies. The surrounding vast green spaces represented emancipation from the dirt and grime of central city streets. The broad open spaces, simple designs, represented access for everyone and equality. On the other hand, the compartmentalisation of residents into individual apartments might represent the subjugation of the lower classes. The elimination of architectural intricacies and vulgarities of the city street might represent the exclusion of difference and even the confinement of the legitimate. Hence, the contradictions in Corbussian social space are those of appropriation versus domination, exclusion versus confinement, equality versus oppression, liberation and repression.

Lefebvre’s (1991: 292-351) theory of contradiction, is by extension, the general notion that what would appear as a logical and coherent social spatial model, is by another analysis, neither nor. Rather, it is full of dialectical contradictions. This theory of contradictory social space was one of the primary outcomes of Lefebvre’s decoding

project. He argued that social space, is an abstraction of the absolute, and is full of dialectical contradictions: exchange value versus use value, homogeneous versus heterogeneous, work versus leisure, centre versus periphery, quantity versus quality, abundance versus scarcity, global versus fragmented, productive consumption versus non-productive consumption, spatial consistency versus spatial opposition. The list of contradictions that Lefebvre (1991: 292-400) identified is long. Yet it is only limited to the imagination of the theoretician.

Social space was comprised of overlapping or isolated individuals, little groups, big groups, and networks, which are real and concrete, and who had the innate power to produce their surroundings. For uncritical abstract subjects, social space posed no contradictions – not even divisions in the “*mille-feuille* pastry;” (1991: 86). As Lefebvre wrote:

“The person who sees and knows only how to see, the person who draws and knows only how to put marks on a sheet of paper, the person who drives around and knows only how to drive a car – all contribute in their way to the mutilation of a space which is everywhere sliced up. And they all complement one another: the driver is concerned only with steering himself to his destination, and in looking about sees only what he needs to see for that purpose; he thus perceives only his route, which has been materialized, mechanized and technicized, and he sees it from one angle only [...] It is hardly surprising that one soon seems to be contemplating the product of a coherent activity, and, even more important, the point of emergence of a discourse that is persuasive only because it is coherent. Surely this effect of transparency – so pleasing, no doubt, to lovers of the logical – is in fact the perfect booby trap,” (Lefebvre 1991: 313).

The abstract subject will therefore see neither threat nor trouble. An aggregate of abstract subjects will perceive this non-contradictory space as the common denominator, and

conceive it as neutral. Identifying axes of contradiction, however, dispels any illusions of a pure and neutral space, and hence imbalances of the dominating and the dominated. Lefebvre (1991: 365) argued that contradiction was even a strategy of domination. By dividing and fragmenting, excluding difference, homogenising, and cloaking its ideas as knowledge, it manages to silence ‘users’ into subjects, and, “the silence of the ‘users’ is ... the *entire* problem,” Lefebvre said (1991: 365; italics as in original). Critical subjects, those who identify and react on contradictions therefore demarcate moments of possible breach, struggle, differentiation, and consequential social change.

2.2 Considering difference and multiplicity

In the social sciences, theory of difference might be most easily found in the feminist theory literature. Although the Anglo-Saxon feminist literature has a long history, I am going to focus here only on developments since the 1960s – a time when Marxist feminism was the hot topic. This trajectory was largely abandoned with the onset of radical and poststructuralist feminism. It is relevant to remember it, however, because it may hold clues as to how poststructuralist feminism and Lefebvre can meet (which will be discussed in Chapter Four). Kelly summed up the Marxist tradition in feminist thought as follows:

“Feminist thinkers of the Marxist tradition have traced the divided sociosexual order to the organization of capitalist production outside the home. They have shown how the separation of work (production) from leisure (consumption) really exists for men only. As a conception of society, the notion of home as a refuge from the world of work masks a sexual division of labor. It mystifies women’s work in the home, obscuring the fact that this domestic labour helps “reproduce” capitalist and patriarchal society. i.e., procreation and the daily work that goes into consumption (housework) and socialization (childrearing) in the private family sustains the working population: trains people to know and keep their place: and provides for their replacement. At the same time, this unwaged

and unacknowledged work of women in the home keeps women dependent on men and bound to a subordinate, servicing role,” (Kelly 1979: 217).

Anglo-Saxon feminists of the post-war Keynesian era analysed the organization of capitalism and blamed it for the unequal division of labour among the sexes. A Marxist reorganization of production would redistribute this unequal division of power (Hartmann 1981: 3), where men and women would unite, grab control of production, and eradicate gender roles produced under capitalism. Hartmann (1981: 2), however, argued that Marxism was incapable of considering sexual difference. Although, this may level out wage differentials within the family and reconstruct patriarchal relations within the family and society, this analysis, Hartmann (1981: 5) argued, could not explain why it was that women took particular roles while men assumed others. This, she argued (*ibid.*) could only be explained through an analysis of patriarchy.

Radical feminist theory of the 1970s and 1980s was a wide and varied body of literature that is not easily summed up. Kelly (1979: 218) described it, however, as having supplemented the feminist Marxist movement by being more concerned with socialization and sexuality than with labour. They:

“...analysed the psychic, sexual, and ideological structures that differentiated the sexes, setting up an antagonistic relation of dominance and subjection between them [...] With different emphases, one on societal structures, the other on psychic-sexual ones, both the radical and socialist currents of feminist thought thus point to the centrality of reproduction in women’s lives. The defining of women as reproductive beings – as housewives and mothers – is seen as shaping women’s self image and sense of worth. [...] In the Marxist inspired analysis [of radical feminism], women’s work of biological and social reproduction in the home (procreation and domestic labour) is seen as supporting an economic, social, and political order dominated by

men, while at the same time preventing women from participation directly in that order,” (Kelly 1979; 218).

Radical feminist, Firestone (1970, reprinted 2003), was one such writer who bridged Marxism with feminism. Her approach involved reducing the historical materialist view of space to reproduction as opposed to economics as Marx had done. Marx and Engels, she argued (1970: 5) reduced the re-creation of space to economics, and that controlling the means of economic production was their key to controlling the material production of space. Firestone argued (1970: 7) that there were elements of life on this earth, however, that were not reducible to economics, and then delved into the implications of controlling the means of reproduction. She explained as follows:

“...just as the end goal of socialist revolution was not only the elimination of the economic class *privilege* but of the economic class *distinction* itself, so the end goal of feminist revolution must be, unlike that of the first feminist movement, not just the elimination of male *privilege* but of the sex *distinction* itself,” (Firestone 1970, reprinted 2003: 11).

Forty years later, it is arguable whether Firestone’s vision of indifferent sexual reproduction is viable, and there are concerns to be had with the rationalization of child-bearing that her vision necessitates, but the approach was fundamental critique of Marx and Engels: reduce the production of the material world to something other than economics.

The Marxist (and Socialist) tradition of feminist thought was generally abandoned by the late 1980s (Anyon 1994: 117), as feminist thinkers turned towards post-modernity and poststructuralism for answers. This movement was described by Weedon as follows:

“Attempting to go beyond the liberal feminist goal of extending rights to women, postmodern feminists have sought to theorize those areas of women’s experience and oppression that elude liberal theory and politics. [...] In poststructuralist theory,

meaning is not guaranteed by a world external to it. Language neither reflects nor expresses meaning but constructs it through an infinite process of what Derrida calls *différance*, that is, difference and differal. Postmodern theory offers no privileged objective position from which to ground universally valid ideas of truth and morality or the politics that follow from them. Nor does it offer a position from which to write a history that is objectively true. Knowledge and power are integrally related and, as feminist postmodernists argue, they have worked systematically to marginalize women, defining them as “other” to the patriarchal order of meaning,” (Weedon 2000: 75).

Butler (1988: 529), likely one of the most important poststructuralist gender theorist, drew partly on the works of Foucault, and dismissed the concept of gender and sex as core human qualities. She argued that they *both* were social constructions. Neither sex nor gender therefore were universal categories. She wrote:

“...The option I am defending is not to redescribe the world from the point of view of women. I don’t know what that point is, but whatever it is, it is not singular, and not mine to espouse [...] Indeed, it is the presupposition of the category of woman itself that requires a critical genealogy of the complex institutional and discursive means by which it is constituted. Although some feminist literary critics suggest that the presupposition of sexual difference is necessary for all discourse, that position reifies sexual difference as the founding moment of culture and precludes an analysis not only of how sexual difference is constituted to begin with but how it is continuously constituted, both by the masculine tradition that pre-empt the universal point of view, and by those feminist positions that construct the univocal category of ‘women’ in the name of expressing or, indeed, liberating a subjected class. As Foucault claimed about

those humanist efforts to liberate the criminalized subject, the subject that is freed is even more deeply shackled than originally thought,” (Butler 1988: 529).

Here we arrive at the junction of feminist thought and flexibility, and it would seem that the collective action inherent in Marxist analyses is all but abandoned. If this is steadfast, then it would seem that there could be no common ground with Lefebvre either – but this will be discussed later.

In the following subsections, I want to introduce the works of several authors who discuss difference, which might be considered poststructuralist. I begin with a brief look at Bauman’s (2007) *Liquid Times* as a snap shot of the times in which we live, at the beginning of the 21st century. I then move to Massey’s (2005) *For Space*, in which she argued for a radically new vision of space as fundamentally composed of an endless number coeval trajectories. Attaining this vision demanded the conceptualisation of radical multiplicity. Like Bourdieu (1984), whose *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* I consider next, everything is relative and can have neither centre, nor overarching metanarrative. This was not Bourdieu’s (1984: 101, 114, 172, 208) objective in his deconstruction of Kantian transcendental aesthetics, but his conception of *habitus* and *field* could be interpreted as such. Similarly, both Pratt (2004) in *Working Feminism* and Smith (2001) in *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization* re-charted space by focussing on geographies of history. The maps of space that they arrive at transcended central structures (for example, national borders). The effect, then, is a vision of space, similar to Massey’s, which is wrought with coeval trajectories. Finally, I consider Fraser’s (1993) infamous *Rethinking the Public Sphere: a Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy* and Benhabib’s (2004) *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens*, which consider how decentralization might be, at least in theory, politically organised.

2.2.1 Bauman on flexible everything

In this dissertation, I do not dwell too long on Bauman, but I want to mention him here quickly because he does render a picture of space that is radically flexible, changing,

or to use his metaphor, liquid – and his vision of space as fundamentally flexible can be seen as the height of all literature on post-fordism over the last two decades. *Liquid Times* (2007) was Bauman's rather dire picture of the world - so dire, in fact, and without empirical foundation whatsoever, one might wonder if the book was meant as a cynical comment, a joke of some kind, and/or the paranoid meditations of a batty old man. According to this book, the planet's population, the "redundant... surplus of human, " (Bauman 2007: 32) has reached its limit (Bauman 2007: 29, 34). Humans are living in an age of waste (human waste, toxic waste, waste production, waste disposal, waste recycling (Bauman 2007: 34).

“The volume of humans made redundant by capitalism's global triumph grows unstoppably and comes close now to exceeding the managerial capacity of the planet; there is a plausible prospect of capitalist modernity (or modern capitalism) choking on its own waste products which it can neither re-assimilate or annihilate, nor detoxify...” (Bauman 2007: 28-29).

We are in times of fear (Bauman 2007: 5-70), and migration (Bauman 2007: 28-53).

Bauman, however, is worth pause because he also reflected on a world in which everything is fragmented and flexible: that is, liquid. He thus drew a picture of the world that is not merely on the brink of horizontalization, detachment, and fragmentation, but is. This is a move away from literature of the last 20 years that problematised emerging globalisation and deindustrialization and suggested a fight against its onset. Lefebvre and his project against modernity, could be interpreted as a political project of reorganizing vertical structures. In *Production, Work and Territory: The Geographical Anatomy of Industrial Capitalism*, Scott and Storper (1986) problematised the: “disintegration of the production processes of many once vertically integrated industries,” (ibid: 11); the “rapid growth of the office-based economy, which is devoted principally to managerial control, business services, and information processing (ibid.: 11); and the increasing output of “versatility and flexibility” (ibid.:11), and called for an examination of the geography of social-spatial produced territory (ibid.: 14). Zukin (1991: 273-275) called attention to “public value” and problematised landscapes and their hidden and sometimes remotely located power

structures of flexible economies. While many have ruminated on post-industrialization, the destruction of vertical forms of production, and their replacement by horizontal modes of production and flexibilisation, Bauman (2007) described a social space that has arrived at the pinnacle of that development. The only project that remains is how we might organise within it.

Bauman's (2007: 47 77, 81, 85) image of a liquid modernity was also relevant when we consider Lefebvre (1991), as we shall see in Chapter Four. How can Lefebvre's production of space be applied to a space where the centre, under flexible and hyperfragmented-everything, has disappeared?

2.2.2 Massey – multiplicity thrown together

Perhaps coincidentally, the cover of Massey's (2005) book, *For Space*, shows a melting glacier. Liquidity comes to mind. To make her point as clear as possible, Massey (2005: 1-7) opened her book with a story of the Aztecs and their first encounters with the Spanish. She compared the information available to each party: calendars and maps, and noted that the information conveyed by the tools of the Aztecs reflected a different set of value, than did those of the Spanish (ibid.: 3, 7). The Spanish maps conveyed land and water surfaced that were crossed (a Cartesian map), and the calendars marked the number of sunrises (Aristotelian time). They were on a mission of discovery, it was the "Year of Our Lord" (ibid.: 3) and they were about to cross into Tenochtitlán – a city that, at the time, was five times larger the city of Madrid (ibid.). The Aztecs, on the other hand, noted that the men were coming from the direction that signified authority, and they were arriving in the year of One Reed – no ordinary year (ibid.: 7). They braced themselves for an important encounter. Massey (2005: 8) called this a clashing of thrown together historical trajectories. A two-year war followed, and the Aztecs were conquered in what is now known as Mexico City (ibid.: 4).

The story is poignant because, seen the way Massey described it, it is clear that the Aztecs were indeed not "discovered" (Massey 2005: 14), nor were they just there in the wrong place at the wrong time and happenstance victims of Spanish exploration. It

illustrated Massey's core argument: that the real issue at stake is space, and that our concepts of space must open up in order to engage in, deal with, and thoroughly understand multiplicity and difference.

“The imagination of space as a surface on which we are placed, the turning of space into time, the sharp separation of local place from the space out there; these are all ways of taming the challenge that the inherent spatiality of the world presents. Most often, they are unthought. Those who argue that Moçambique is just ‘behind’ do not (presumably) do so as a consequence of much deep pondering upon the nature of, and the relationship between, space and time. Their conceptualisation of space, its reduction to a dimension for the display/representation of different moments in time, is one assumes, implicit. [...] None the less, the persistent associations leave a residue of effects. We develop ways of incorporating a spatiality into our ways of being in the world, modes of coping with the challenge that the enormous reality of space throws up. Produced through and embedded in practices, from quotidian negotiations to global strategising, these implicit engagements of space feed back into and sustain wider understandings of the world. The trajectories of others can be immobilised while we proceed with our own; the real challenge of the contemporaneity of others can be deflect by their relegation to a past (Backward, old-fashioned, archaic); the defensive enclosures of an essentialised place seem to enable a wider disengagement, and to provide a secure foundation,” (Massey 2005 : 8).

Massey's vision of space is one in which time and space can neither be conceptualised as separate independent entities, and where everything is in motion. It was an idea that was already developed in an earlier book, *Space, Place, and Gender*:

“[If space is] thought of in the context of space-time and is formed out of social interrelations at all scales, then one view of a place is as a particular articulation of those relations, a particular moment in those networks of social relations and understandings. . . . It includes relations which stretch beyond – the global as part of what constitutes the local, the outside as part of the inside. . . . The identities of place are always unfixed, contested and multiple. And the particularity of any place is, in these terms, constructed not by placing boundaries around it and defining its identity through counter-position to the other which lies beyond, but precisely (in part) through the specificity of the mix of links and interconnections to that "beyond". Places viewed in this way are open and porous. . . . All attempts to institute horizons, to establish boundaries, to secure the identity of places, can in this sense therefore be seen to be attempts to stabilize the meaning of particular envelopes of space-time... such attempts . . . are constantly the site of social contest, battles over the power to label space-time, to impose the meaning to be attributed to a space, for however long or short a span of time...” (Massey 1994: 5).

People move about and engage with other beings in their environment that, in turn, changes the course of their lives. The built environment changes physically and symbolically over time. Nature too is in process (Massey 2005: 130). Plants and animals come and go, the deserts expand and contract, the shorelines recede and advance, even the mountains who have been around since the beginning of memory, are only passing through. Any one snapshot of space frozen in time is, therefore, a magnificent meeting up of life trajectories. Space is therefore a product of interrelations as well as the possibility of multiple relations. It is never complete, and a perfect simultaneity cannot be attained.

Massey argued too, that this vision has social and political implications. It means that recognition of heterogeneity is also a recognition of space (Massey 2005: 11, 105, 174-

175). She showed that metanarratives of time and space are implicated in order that the multiplicity of stories stay masked. Massey (2005: 11) therefore called for a radical opening of space (and thereby future), and recognition of it always being process. Too often, she argued, space is conceived as closed, or as complete systems or structures (ibid.). This negates its inherent multiplicity. One cannot conflate various temporal trajectories into a single chronicle (Massey 2005: 71) – as might be performed by grade-school history books telling of European exploration. Likewise, a single understanding of land cannot explain all territorial disputes. Massey thus called for a big challenge – to change the way we think about space altogether.

2.2.3 Bourdieu – *fields of difference*

In *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984) Bourdieu critiqued Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (translated by Bernard 2000) that attempted to establish some underlying principles that dictate the human sense of aesthetic. Kant had supposed that human perceptions of aesthetic could be split into two primary camps: those that please and those that gratify (Bourdieu 1984: 41); or those of reflection and those panning towards an immediate sense; or, those that are difficult (*difficile*) and those that are facile (*vulgar*) (Bourdieu 1984: 486). Bourdieu (1984: 1-7) argued that taste could not be disassociated from the sociological framework that created the object of aesthetic value or non-value. It was a direct deconstruction of Kant's presupposed (*a priori*) that humans, created equal in heaven's view, were capable of ascertaining a pure aesthetic. The closer one leaned towards the pleasing, reflective, and the *difficile*, the closer was their judgement to the pure (and higher, noble, and/or unviolated) aesthetic, while those who entertained immediate and vulgar tastes that merely gratify were socially further removed from this ideal (Bourdieu 1984: 11-17).

Bourdieu argued (1984: 4), however, that the pure gaze was a historical invention and linked to a particular field of artistic production that was capable of imposing its own norms on both the subject and object of consideration. In other words, objects could not be valued or devalued without the capacity to decode the codes that defined and embedded the object. Tastes were a product of history, personal upbringing and education, and above all,

were the markers of social class (Bourdieu 1984: 6, 106-112, 194, 233). He argued that there was no such thing as pure. All gazes were relative. Taste signified the corresponding class condition of the signifier and the classifying practice, which revealed in turn the subjectivity of the classification scheme. Taste was:

“...the source of the system of distinctive features which cannot fail to be perceived as a systematic expression of a particular class of conditions of existence, i.e., as a distinctive life-style, by anyone who possesses practical knowledge of the relationships between distinctive signs and positions in the distributions...”
(Bourdieu 1984: 175).

As class indicators, aesthetics can then reinforce class division, and respective power structures.

Bourdieu (1984) proceeded to deconstruct Kant and argued his opposition with an empirical, rational, *a posteriori*, analysis of surveys. His research method was a compilation of data collected from numerous studies and a study of surveys. He formulated his own ethnographic survey and distributed it among 1000 participants (Bourdieu 1984: 503). In addition, he borrowed data collected from a number of institutes and governmental organizations. In total, over 100,000 individuals were surveyed. The surveys addressed questions concerning the respondents attitudes towards literature, cinema, clothing, politicians, and celebrities, as well as income level, profession, family history, and living conditions (Bourdieu 1984: 526-555). By tabulating the data, and analysing the surveys themselves, clear and significant trends emerged showing that taste was not an *a priori* inclination guided by natural or supernatural phenomena, rather one informed by class, economic and/or educational capital, and place of residence. That is, aesthetic disposition, preferences in art, music and literature were developed *a posteriori* by the *habitus* by which one lives and by the *field* in which one lives.

The gathered data supported his theories of *habitus* and *field*. It became empirically apparent (*a posteriori*) that lifestyles, or the system of distinctive signs (i.e. tastes) were the

systematic result of *habitus* (Bourdieu 1984: 415, 507) -- a, “structured and structuring structure,” (1984: 171) and qualitative formula that is both a product of its respective social condition, and generative of its social condition. *Habitus* was a social dialectic between the production and consumption of lifestyles. Specifically, *habitus* is the force that produces the spaces of social positions and lifestyles. The *habitus* was a:

“...system of dispositions – a present past that ends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similar structured practices, an internal law through which the law of external necessities, irreducible to immediate constraints, is constantly exerted – is the principle of the continuity and regularity which objectivism sees in social practices without being able to account for it; and also of the regulated transformations that cannot be explained either by the extrinsic, instantaneous determinisms of mechanistic sociology or by the purely internal but equally instantaneous determination of spontaneist subjectivism,” (Bourdieu 1990: 54).

Habitus is a sense that one develops for her surroundings and an understanding of how to act and react within it. This sense and understanding, is a predisposition that is accumulated and learned beginning in childhood and carried throughout one’s life. Neither calculable nor random, it is behaviour that may not surprise the observer, but behaviour that one can definitively predict.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984: 208, 258) expanded on some of the dynamics of *habitus*. Symbolic power (ibid.) refers to power attained through social status or other forms of social capital, and not necessarily financial or fiscal power. Symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984: 172, 282) referred to the accumulated prestige, prominence, and influence that one acquires as a result of their relative ability to ‘know’ (*connaissance*) and ‘recognise’ (*reconnaissance*) cultural capital, which was the competencies and cultural know-how that one accumulates as a consequence of her relative education and familial upbringing. Specific forms of *connaissance* and *reconnaissance* permitted an individual to

decode cultural meaning inherent within material culture – a capacity that leads to, reinforces, and recreates, a process and cycle of social stratification (Bourdieu 1984: 247).

Because human behaviour occurred in space, Bourdieu (1984: 94) developed his concept of *Field (Champs)*. The *field* was the social environment in which an individual is situated. *Fields* can be defined on any level with respect to any theme. Artistic fields, scientific fields, fields of respective social classes, intellectual fields, fields of production, and fields of struggles are a few of the fields that Bourdieu (1984: 152, 228, 431, 469, 511) discussed. By extension, we can formulate political fields, academic fields, economic fields, cultural fields, and also more specifically, fields of production or consumption, field of fashion, and so on and so forth. Individuals could also, for example, occupy certain positions within their respective fields and interact (commensurate or competitive) with others. Social formation could, then, be ascertained and analysed as a series of overlapping, interlocking, and interacting fields.

A change in *field* means a change in space. To play within a given *field*, one must retain the befitting *habitus* (Bourdieu 1984: 114, 223). Educational capital, for example, might be the key that opens the gate to a particular occupational *field*. On the other hand, the devaluation of a certain capital may restrict activity within a certain field. The popularisation of education, for example, created a widely educated population, but at the same time devalued it, thus driving massive social structural changes. Upward social mobility (which Bourdieu (1984: 131) articulated as a misleading concept) or its opposite, down-classing, or lateral switching could be explained by internal operations of a given *field*. Bourdieu (1984: 131-132) named these dynamics as vertical or transverse movements within a *field*.

Fields were also dialectic. Bourdieu (1984: 123), for example, referred to what he called the homology of fields. The dynamics of production and consumption, Bourdieu (1984: 232) argued for example, were not the net result of a mathematical formula of supply and demand but the result of a dialectic of fields – in this case, the fields of production and consumption – that react and feed one another. For another example, the field of directors and playwrights has a corresponding field of actors and stage

performances which has a corresponding field of audience participants. The specific character of these spaces and their corresponding spaces can then be analysed by the *habitus* of the specific participants and their predisposition to particular needs, desires, and tastes.

2.2.4 Pratt and Smith on transnationalism

What Pratt (2004) and Smith (2001) did was drive home the local embeddedness of transnational networks. Their arguments are relevant here because they localised the transnational while at the same time they network localities. Problems of difference rooted in immigration are not merely locally bounded problems, but are part and parcel of wider social processes. Such analyses are then required if these problems are to be effectively solved.

One of Pratt's (2004) primary goal was to spatialise feminist discourse theory. Nussbaum had charged that feminist discourse theory following Butler, had all but abandoned material and spatiality (Pratt 2004: 12). Pratt took on this challenge (albeit without referring to Lefebvre):

“Discourses are materialised in the world and they are spatialised in ways that matter in the world;” (Pratt 2004: 35).

In the process, she traced the lives of Filipino domestic workers in Vancouver (Pratt 2004: 8), who landed in Canada on a visa as a domestic caregiver and then, after the necessary period of two years, applied for citizenship. Here she showed that the resulting classism and racism were inextricably linked to discourses that are materialised and spatialised not only locally in Canada, but also internationally in the Philippines as well.

At first glance, Smith's primary goal in *Transnational Urbanism* seemed to be to utterly deconstruct the theories and approaches of Saskia Sassen (Smith 2001: 8, 10, 12, 49, 50-52, 55-58, 60, 62-63, 72-73, 79, 146) and David Harvey (Smith 2001: 10-12, 23, 25-27, 29-30, 32, 34-35, 37-38, 39-41, 43, 58, 103, 114, 116, 121, 124-126, 146, 164), as the first

half of the book was dedicated to deconstructing their theories. However, the central thesis of his work was an argument for the study of a transnational dimension in sociological urban studies. In his own words, further:

“By deploying the metaphor of transnational urbanism I have tried to capture the notion of the city as a crossroads of social relations constituted by the interactions of local, national, and transnational actors and the networks through which they operate. The optic of transnational urbanism brings into focus historically specific activities and projects instituted, reproduced, or transformed by these social interactions. Viewed in this light, the diversity of place-making practices, the dynamics of political conflict and accommodation, the variety of state policy-making projects, and the agency of social networks come to the forefront of urban analysis,” (Smith 2001:184).

Transnationalism differs from globalization (ibid.) in that the latter subsumes or ignores the role of national, regional and local policies and social processes. In contrast transnationalism theory, Smith (2001: 127) argued, insists that transnational processes are anchored in, and inseparable from, local socio-political constructions of agency:

“From a social constructionist perspective, an intellectual focus on the analysis of discursive practices, on discourse itself as a space of the “self-production of society,” should not simply shift our attention from macro-politics to micro-politics, and then valorize the latter, as if the two were distinct and irreducible binary opposites. Rather, such a focus can be used to shift our attention to the processes whereby *networks of power*, subsisting at every point from the most “local” to the most “global,” are formed, related to each other, and transformed. Since human agency operates at many spatial scales, and is not restricted to “local” territorial or sociocultural formations, the very concept of

the “urban” thus requires reconceptualization as a social space that is a cross-roads or meeting ground for the interplay of diverse localizing practices of national, transnational, and even global-scale actors, as these wider networks of meaning, power, and social practice come into contact with more locally configured networks, practices, and identities.” (Smith 2001: 127, italics as in original).

2.2.5 Fraser and Benhabib – reorganizing democracy with difference

Fraser (1993: 1) directed her focus primarily on Habermas’ (1989, reprinted 2006) *Structural Transformation: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society* which discussed a normative form of public sphere which was separate from the state, and a forum for discourse, in which all citizens can deliberate on ‘common’ affairs concerning the citizenry (Fraser 1993: 2). As neither the arena of market relations, and neither the state apparatus itself, Habermas’ universal public space was therefore was indispensable to critical social theory (Fraser 1993: 2-3). Yet, Habermas failed in, “developing a new, postbourgeois model of the public sphere,” (Fraser 1993:3). Fraser argued that a one singular public sphere was not sufficient to forge an egalitarian participatory democracy. Her fundamental arguments are summarised below.

First, Fraser (1993: 10) argued that is not possible for participants within a public sphere to deliberate *as if* they were equals. A simple example of this problem was the well documented and widely experienced phenomenon of individuals in a seminar room (ibid.): men speak more often than women, men are listened to more often than women, and women’s voices are often quicker to be discredited. Fraser argued, that the simple declaration of:

“...a deliberative arena to be a space where extant status distinctions are bracketed and neutralised is not sufficient to make it so,” (Fraser 1993: 7).

Fraser argued further that this assumption of equality among participants furthered the agenda of the dominant group because individuals could not find the arena in which to articulate their opposing views.

Second, the idealisation and supposition of a one public sphere neglects the inevitability of emerging competing and/or counter discursive arenas as places of deliberation. Fraser (1993: 14) recounted previous studies of 20th century women's groups that acted as forums of discursive exchange that eventually led to the articulation of women's issues and the inclusion of women voices into the wider bourgeois public realm. History shows that members of subordinated groups have repeatedly taken advantage of separate discursive forums (Fraser 1993: 14).

Third, the assumption that a multitude of public spheres is a step away from democracy is arguable (Fraser 1993: 9, 18). Fraser alluded to the success of the women's groups was evidence to the necessity of counter publics. In spaces only for women, for example, women could invent a language to describe their social situation (Fraser: 14). "Sexism," and "Sexual harassment", for example were terms invented by women for women and are now in wide spread use (ibid.). Thus, the products of these counter publics are evidence to the idea that a multiplicity of publics does not fragment the great democratic sphere, but rather expands it, if it is recognised as a necessary and equal component of total discursive action.

Fourth, it cannot be assumed that participants will agree on what issues are relevant to be discussed. Fraser (1993: 19) argued that in Habermas's (1989, reprinted 2006) public sphere, deliberators would discuss affairs concerning everyone. If individual points of contestation could not be formed due to lack of opportunity to meet and discuss with like-minded co-deliberators, then issues of common concern would be limited to the lowest common denominator of 'we,' (Fraser 1993: 21). Habermas's public assumes a certain concept of public. Where as, as Fraser (1993: 19) pointed out, the word, "public" can mean: state-related, accessible to everyone, and/or pertaining to a common good. Fraser argued (1993: 20) that it cannot be assumed that the division between public and private is

universal. Fraser (1993: 22) cited the problem of wife battering, for example. Is this “domestic” or “personal” affair a public problem? What is thematized and who decides what is of public concern are questions that are difficult to address in a one and open public sphere (Fraser 1993: 22).

Fifth, if civil society referred to everything non-governmental – as it does Habermas’s (1989, reprinted 2006) definition of the bourgeois public sphere as a forum where private individuals meet (Fraser 1993: 2) – then it may be argued that the distinction is necessary to keep discourses free from state influence. Namely, it is necessary to prevent a conflict of interest among participants who might have a dual interest in the outcome of the discussion. Fraser referred to such public spheres as “weak publics,” (1993: 23-26) – publics that have no jurisdiction in decision-making structures. Autonomy of discussion is perhaps maintained, but influence towards social and political change remains limited. Instead, Fraser argued for the blurring of civil society and the state because in this way the public sphere or spheres become more influential as their power to control decision-making increases. She named these decision-making public spheres, “strong publics” (ibid.). Further analysis, Fraser argued (ibid.), would then look closer at the relationship between strong and weak publics.

Fraser’s (1993: 14) publics are easy to imagine inside local, regional or national spheres. They can be imagined as spheres that enable a variety of, and democratically enriching, discourses to arise. These spheres may be well implemented in such spaces that are imagined to have hegemonic processes. A rigid, centralized, and vertically organized polity might do well with some marginal spheres that can contribute to back to the main discourse in a meaningful way. Fraser’s (1993: 14) counterpublics, however, can also be conceptualised in a much more diffuse and horizontal organization of democratic publics.

In her observations of migrants, Benhabib (2004: 65) noticed a discrepancy between human rights for refugees and national rights to sovereignty. For a number of reasons concerning the plight of illegal migrants, these two perspectives were not compatible with one another, in her view. She saw no new democratic model that could solve the “Gordian knot” (Benhabib 2004: 219). On one hand:

“...democracies enact laws that are supposed to bind those who legitimately authorize them...the scope of legitimacy cannot extend beyond the demos which has circumscribed itself as a people...Democratic laws require closure precisely because democratic representation, must be accountable to a specific people,” (Benhabib 2004: 219).

On the other hand there are 175 million individuals on this planet who are living abroad as migrants (Benhabib 2004: 5): refugees with or without papers, aliens, or transnational migrants. Her concluding proposal was an organization of democracy in which nations retain their sovereignty and rights to control their borders, but remain porous for the international needs of refugees (Benhabib 2004: 3, 39,177). Refugees and asylum seekers should receive a right to first-admittance, in her view (ibid.). Her conclusion entailed, indeed, a closed system, combining a Kantian moral universal with cosmopolitan federalism (Benhabib 2004: 213) -- a proposal that legitimated the needs of, and also legalised, each person on the planet, while retaining the rights of those already participating in closed democratic systems.

“For some, these proposals will go too far in the direction of rootless cosmopolitanism; for others, they will not go far enough,” (Benhabib 2004: 221).

Although she herself did not, in her conclusion, find extreme forms of non-territorially based democracies and disaggregated citizenships plausible or helpful because:

“...we can never eliminate the paradox that those who are excluded will not be among those who decide upon the rules of exclusion and inclusion,” (Benhabib 2004: 177).

Yet, her exploration of democratic forms are useful for the theory here:

“Disaggregated citizenship permits individuals to develop and sustain multiple allegiances and networks across nation-state boundaries, in inter- as well as transnational contexts. Cosmopolitanism...is furthered by such multiple, overlapping allegiances which are sustained across communities of language, ethnicity, religion, and nationality,” (Benhabib 2004: 174-175).

Although she concluded that a territorially based democracy should not be abandoned, she did explore the possibilities of non-territorially based models of representation. She wrote:

“[They] are certainly possible: one can be represented by some individual or a body of individuals by virtue of one’s linguistic identity, ethnic heritage...religious affiliation, professional activities, and affected interests. Representation can run along many lines besides territorial residency,” (Benhabib 2004: 218).

Taken in its extreme, Benhabib illustrated a world full of a variety of political spheres, that theoretically, resembles a world that would be full of nothing but Fraser’s (1993: 14) counter publics. This extreme “rootless cosmopolitanism,” as Benhabib called it, (2004: 221) is a model too that maps coeval democratic organization over Massey’s (2005) multiple trajectories.

2.3 The compatibilities of various theories in social space

Lefebvre (1991) lifted social space out of the dualistic and opposing realms of the mental and physical spheres. His work brought the reader back to the antique question of what space *is* (or is *becoming*). He wrote:

“[social] space qualifies as a ‘thing/not-thing’, for it is neither a substantial reality nor a mental reality, it cannot be resolved into abstractions, and it consists neither in a collection of things in space nor in an aggregate of occupied places. Being neither

space-as-sign nor an ensemble of signs related to space, it has an actuality other than that of the abstract signs and real things which it includes. The initial basis or foundation of social space is nature – natural or physical space. Upon this basis are superimposed – in ways that transform, supplant or even threaten to destroy it – successive stratified and tangled networks which, though always material in form, nevertheless have an existence beyond their materiality: paths, road, railways, telephone links, and so on. Theory has shown that no space disappears completely, or is utterly abolished in the course of the process of social development – not even the natural place where that process began. ‘Something’ always survives or endures – ‘something’ that is not a thing. Each such material underpinning has a form, a function, a structure – properties that are necessary but not sufficient to define it. Indeed, each one institutes its own particular space and has no meaning or aim apart from that space. Each network or sequence of links – and thus each space – serves exchange and use in specific ways. Each is produced – and serves a purpose; and each wears out or is consumed, sometimes unproductively, sometimes productively,” (Lefebvre 1991: 402-3; italics as in original).

Lefebvre’s (1991) closed with a number of openings for further theoretical deliberation, empirical research, and above all a new social project. He called for a project of:

“a different society, a different mode of production, where social practice would be governed by different conceptual determinations,” (Lefebvre 1991: 419).

His work was therefore also political because he urged his corporeal readers to engage in the production of space as a socio-political act, as a means of re-inventing power structures.

He urged researchers to view and redefine beginnings and endings of, “well-defined,” (Lefebvre 1991: 408) periods as transitions. While urging researchers to resist conflating social space with the rigid spaces traditionally conceptualised by spatial experts (ibid.), he also urged that an ideal study of space would transcend representational space and representations of space to illuminate contradictions (ibid.). His work was, however, heavily Marxist in tone, and as such, left itself a commitment to totality that is at odds with literature on poststructural difference. I will return to this aspect in Chapter Four.

From the other authors discussed in Section 2.2, difference could be conceived as a decentralised network. This was probably most obviously seen in Massey’s (2005) and Bauman’s (2007) respective books. In Bauman’s (2007) a liquid modernity, everything was elusive and flexible. Massey’s (2005) social space was a product of multiple coeval trajectories and their interrelationships. She argued against the conflating of time-space metanarratives into a single story, and illustrated social space as a “throwntogetherness” (Massey 2005: 140-142) of coeval trajectories. Each and every object was on its own path. Bourdieu (1984: 493) argued against the Kant’s so called pure aesthetic, and showed that tastes were socially constructed. His theories of *habitus* and *field* also illustrate how people might move along, across or between trajectories (Bourdieu 1984: 131-132). Smith (2001) and Pratt (2004) argued the relevance of transnational histories, knowledge, and geographies. Social processes could only be understood by considering respective histories and geographies that transcended and decentralised the populations living together on one territory. This was a centreless network in much the same way as the:

“...labyrinth of invisible pathways which meander all over Australia and are known to Europeans as ‘dream-tracks,’ or ‘songlines’,” (Chatwin 1988: 2).

Histories denoted a particular path, not an all-encompassing territory that contained just one history. And despite the somewhat chaotic characteristic of a centreless network, Fraser (1993) and Benhabib (2004) could still envision forms of democracy that could, in theory, work in this model. Fraser (1993: 14) assuming that a hegemonic public sphere would exist, proposed alternative counterpublics in which counter discourses could

develop. Theoretically, a centreless network could be composed solely of alternative publics. Benhabib (2004: 218) although unwilling to advocate a dissemination of territorially bounded publics, described a political organization in which individuals or groups aligned themselves according to causes. Again, they were centreless and not territorially bounded.

Lefebvre's (1991) production of space, Bourdieu's (1984: 114, 223) *habitus* and *field*, Bauman's (2007) flexible everything, Massey's (2005) coeval and multiple trajectories, Pratt's (2004) and Smith's (2001) transnationalism, and Fraser (1993) and Benhabib (2004) political organization of space, do share the same paradigmatic basis. The physical natural world is the underpinning of social interaction, but cannot account for social interaction. Social space is a concrete abstraction of nature and the absolute whose reality can be *a posteriori* understood. The interplay among representational space, representations of space, and spatial practice, show that social space cannot be categorised into simple Cartesian classes of mental and physical. Humans produce their perceived space, conceived space, and lived space. The production of space, *fields*, trajectories, and counterspaces, are historically contingent. Social space is therefore a necessarily dynamic model that leans towards Aristotelian metaphysics that inherently reconciles the notions of time and change. It also rejects Platonic, Kantian, or Hegelian notions of a pre-existing universal ideal. Instead, it borrows on Marxist and Aristotelian notions of the real and concrete – although it does not reduce it to these categories, for to do so would undermine the dynamic nature of social interaction. Humans are viewed as corporeal and as capable of manifesting their reality, within the limits of the corresponding power structures. Space is neither neutral, nor are its inequalities a natural outcome of natural or divine processes. The form, structure, and function of social space and its Lefebvrian abstract contradictions are therefore the outcome of social imbalances of power, and a tool for further domination. These authors, differing significantly in their literary trajectories, do attune with one another in some ways. Although there are incongruencies (which will be discussed in Chapter Four after a look to Berlin in Chapter Three), from them, certain threads can be drawn about social space in general. Specifically, there are five sociopolitical implications of social space. All show that space is: 1) necessary and real; 2) not a natural phenomenon;

3) not neutral; 4) and dialectic. In the following subsections, the character of social space and these five implications will be discussed.

2.3.1 Necessary and real social space

Each author showed why space matters in sociology. These authors are certainly not the only ones to refer to space in the context of social theory. Since the 70s in general, space, has enjoyed a renaissance, particularly in the fields of social geography and feminist as well as queer theory. Lefebvre was of particular significance to the former, and hence his renaissance in the 1990s (Schmid 2008: 27). Many of the other authors discussed in this chapter (Massey, Pratt, Fraser, Benhabib), stem from the broad field of feminist theory, and were influenced therefore by a French contemporary of Lefebvre who also referenced space and its relevance to sociology, Foucault (Pratt 2004: 12). Bourdieu (1984), also a French contemporary of both Lefebvre and Foucault, was also preoccupied with space. Lefebvre (1991), however, was the only one to really bring back the age old question of what space is (Schmid 2008: 28). He was not concerned with analysing the placement of any individual or group within space. His inquiry was more cosmic, so to speak. Convinced of the faulty division between *res cognitans* and *res extensa*, Lefebvre, like his philosophical predecessors, (Schmid (2008: 28) observes that the works of Lefebvre are primarily based on Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche), although Lefebvre refers also to a myriad of philosophers going as far back to Plato) wanted to know simply what space is (ibid.). And although this cosmic question was not asked among the feminist/queer theorists, space remained central to their work and is, whether it was deliberate or not, of the same paradigmatic position: space was necessary and real.

To Lefebvre (1991), social relationships required space, and the relationship between space and the relationships that it supports was the crucial question at hand. He argued that the fundamental underpinning of social relations is spatial (Lefebvre 1991: 403) and that for each social case, an analysis of the spatial is in order. He wrote, "...spatial practice regulates life – it does not create it," (Lefebvre 1991: 404).

He also argued that social groups could not:

“...constitute themselves, or recognise one another, as ‘subjects’ unless they generate (or produce) a space. Ideas, representations or values which do not succeed in making their mark on space, and thus generating (or producing) an appropriate morphology, will lose all pith and become mere signs, resolve themselves into abstract descriptions, or mutate into fantasies,” (Lefebvre 1991: 416-417).

Without space, ideas cannot actualise and become anything more than fantasies. Fraser’s (1993) concept of counter publics also require space. She argued that counter spaces are necessary in order that an alternate discourse could arise (Fraser 1993: 9). By extension, restricting this necessary space may therefore be a tool of domination. In a similar vein, it may be interpreted that Bourdieu’s (1984) *fields* were also required for social expression. Either each individual must produce her *field*, thus creating a social spatial manifestation of her intent, or the *field* must already be in existence in order for her to move towards it. The space, the *field* that one inhabited also defined the person. Space was therefore also capable of classifying people. Massey (2005) dared a step further and conflated space and social into one. Space did not underpin the social, space was the social (Massey 2005: 61). Pratt (2004: 12) had not made this step, but spatialising feminist geography was the primary goal for her book. She had done this by tracing the material manifestations of discourse, and the personal geographies of the interviewees. Quite clearly, the study of feminism was not mere logico-epistemological. Smith’s (2001) intent in the first part of his book was to deconstruct the theories of Sassen and Harvey, which he saw as reductionist and overlooking the role of agency in place making. For Smith (2001: 28, 45), the reduction of social processes to economic processes was akin to laying an ideology over actual processes. Thus, Smith (2001: 6-7) demanded examinations of a real social spaces that included embedded and transnational agency.

Each also showed that space is political, and that an analysis of space can reveal sources of domination and repression. This was considered neither among the Ancient

Greeks nor among the classical philosophers until Marx. Earthly space, as *res extensa* or *res cogitans*, was in all cases subject to a supreme force. A person's position in society was shown to be more a result of a fore gone destiny, rather than as a result of specific social or political circumstances. Space was therefore not political. Space – and the social interaction within it – simply was. Lefebvre (1991), like Marx, urged readers to recognise their relationship to space, and the boundaries within it that confine them to their specific mode of production. Bourdieu (1984: 114, 223), less prophetic, saw *habitus* and *field* as theoretical tools to understand one's position within a given social network. Fraser (1993: 27), too, spoke of the space of counterpublics as a means participating in democratic space. For Massey (2005: 189), space was a product of interrelations and to fully understand it, this multitude and the coeval must be addressed.

As already noted, each author also uncovered a form of social space that was fundamentally within the same philosophical paradigm: the real, the sensual, and *a posteriori*¹⁴. Lefebvre addressed fundamental notions of humanity and space. His trinities of social space, of the, “space of people who deal with material things,” (Lefebvre 1991: 4) of the practico-sensory realm, of the real space, of the space of society and social life, were no accident. They were set up to deliberately upset the dualities that had prevailed in social philosophy for centuries (Schmid 2008: 28). These demanded a side step away from polar, black and white, deliberations, and a step towards social space as dialectic. And although, his triads invoked the ephemeral, imaginary, and tried to blur the lines between the mental and physical, the *a priori* and *a posteriori*, his thesis (that social space is a social product) traced neatly Marx's fundamental moments of social reproduction. In this sense, the social space that Lefebvre discussed was, like Marx, a space existing in an Aristotelian sensual, and Cartesian external, reality. None of the other authors elaborated on the age-old philosophical relationship between people and their environment. They simply began with the premise that they and their actions *are* in space. Bourdieu's (1984) stance was a deliberate strategy of deconstructing Kant. He likely chose empirical and *a posteriori* method deliberately, in order to deconstruct the idealism of Kant *a priori* transcendental aesthetic. Bourdieu's social space was therefore also real and concrete. Individuals had

¹⁴ This paradigm sits in opposition to the idealism posited by Plato, Kant, Hegel, and to the religious Descartes.

varying capacities to know or to understand, and this was informed by their physical environment, or *field* that they inhabit. Similarly, neither Fraser (1993), Benhabib (2004), nor Bauman (2007) deliberated philosophically over the relationship between the person and its surroundings, but simply began with the premise that humans are in space.

2.3.2 Unnatural social space

The unnaturalness of social space has political implications towards the development of social space, because notions of tradition, custom, or “the way things are” cannot be reduced to natural development. Again the authors introduced above are not the only ones to assess space as an unnatural event. The primary aim of feminist theorists has been to deconstruct the so called natural order that prevailed throughout academic history. Queer theorists, one of the most prominent would have to be Judith Butler (2006), have deepened feminist thought with the supposition that everything is socially constructed, not just gender, as feminists had previously argued, but also the concept of sex itself.

Again, Lefebvre (1991) differs from the feminist theorists mentioned in this chapter, because his concept of unnatural space is not concluded from an analysis of individuals or individual bodies, but as an extension of the philosophical discussion of the Hegelian and Marxist abstract (Schmid 2008: 28). For Lefebvre (1991), abstract space is also politically loaded space, because it renders space to the will of humans. He deliberately and carefully delineated social space from natural space. Social space was, in fact, defined as an abstraction of nature, or of the absolute (nature in its unknowable totality) (ibid.). Humans were bound to nature, insofar as they *have* physical space (ibid.). Marking space and inscribing history was the physical result (ibid.). The more humans apprehended their environment, the more it was abstracted (ibid.). That humans were capable of producing their space, meant that the social space they manifested was not a result of divine or cosmic intervention of any sort. Humans, real corporeal beings, produced social space.

Concerning the authors introduced in 2.2, Bourdieu and Lefebvre rigorously and explicitly argued that social space was not a natural phenomenon. Bourdieu (1984: 493)

refuted the notion of a natural social space by deconstructing Kant's pure aesthetic – the notion that tastes are based in nature and are a natural phenomenon. Bourdieu had shown that this was not the case. Rather that tastes were a result of specific social conditions, that were based on individual *habitus* and corresponding *fields* (Bourdieu 1984: 131-132). The works of Fraser, Benhabib, Pratt, and Massey, stem from the wide field of feminist theory. As such, their work necessarily challenges norms, which – and especially for those who do not question them (like Lefebvre's (1991: 313) driver) – might be confused with naturalness. Fraser (1993: 1-27) and Benhabib (2004: 218) questioned the normative ideas of publics and democracy, and thereby called into question the idea of a territorially bounded democratic sovereignty. Political realms, forums, spaces, and places could be conceived of as far more nebulous and multi-layered. In effect: the political structures we have are, to a certain extent, chosen. They are a result of social interaction. By expanding the map of Canada into the Philippines, Pratt (2004: 8) questioned the normative idea of national borders. In effect: the borders we defend are chosen. That is, they are a product of social interaction, and they may be revisualized and changed. Massey (2005: 142) questioned the normalizing effect of metanarratives, and opened up space as integral to the social. The conceptions and representations of space that we have are chosen. They, too, are a product of social interaction, and can be changed.

2.3.3 Non-neutral social space

The myth of neutral space was also a common observation of social space. Each author deconstructed the idea as a form of repression, where the dominant class, group, or institution maintains the status quo through the illusion of an all inclusive space. Kant constructed an idealistic notion of purity that was a common natural denominator to all human beings¹⁵. This was the fundamental premise that Bourdieu (1984: 493) argued

¹⁵ In introducing his transcendental aesthetics – the science of all principles of *a priori* sensibility – Kant analysed the relationship between human mental and physical understanding and the natural world in which it is situated. Representations of objects existing in space, according to Kant, are transmitted *a priori* (knowledge before experience) to the mind via the senses. It is in the mind, then, that one understands – pure knowledge. Empirical exploration of this understanding might further verify its existence *a posteriori* (knowledge after experience, or empiricism), or it could lead to the creation of yet another representation of the existing object, again, represented anew *a priori* within the mind. Knowing, then, was a process of representation, understanding, experience, and representation again (Smith 2003: 36-41).

against. Fraser (1993: 2) deconstructed Habermas's notion of a one all-inclusive and neutral public sphere. Lefebvre's (1991) theory of contradictory space revealed the otherwise concealed production processes that create the illusion of neutral space.

Bourdieu (1984: 493) argued against the Kantian notion of purity, arguing that the idea of purity itself is relative, and that tastes in general were dependent on social background, and not on an idealistic common-to-all natural state that each individual should possess. Bourdieu's (1984: 131-132) construct of *habitus* and *field* showed that neutral Kantian pure space is *a priori* and mental, and has no real existence except for those who think it up. Further, it showed that space (*fields*) is loaded with rules and prerequisites that either permit or negate an individual's access to it. Space, therefore, could not be seen as culturally neutral, pure, or as offering equal and indiscriminate opportunities of articulation to all forms of cultural expression. Instead, spaces materialised, and existed in and through cultural institutions. This position argued against Kantian and Hegelian concepts of a social space that is abstract, ideal, and universal.

Lefebvre argued that spaces and places are not public, neutral, or common because architects and planners designate them as such (Carr and Allahwala 2003: 65). Instead, it is the socially interacting milieus within a given space that made it so (*ibid.*). The codes to be read as neutral are read by living that space. Just as a church, in and of itself, is not absolute and carries no meaning until it is experienced (Lefebvre 1991: 236), so is neutral space. Furthermore, Lefebvre (1991: 94, 292) argued that neutrality was a tool of domination, and an illusion designed to hide class struggle. The participants that collectively create the illusion of neutrality in space are those – like the illustrator and the driver (Lefebvre 1991: 313) – that conform to, and do not question, their social modes (*ibid.*). This tool effectively placed the individual in a space-producing role, a space that both supports and confines them. Neutrality could therefore conceal the fragmentation. This concealment was the same illusion that Marx had observed in the industrial production process: that the product, itself, does not reveal or necessarily even allude to the processes that produced it:

“How is [production] concealed? The answer is: by a double illusion, each side of which refers back to the other, reinforces

the other, and hides behind the other. These two aspects are the illusion of transparency on the one hand and the illusion of opacity, or ‘realistic’ illusion, on the other,” (Lefebvre 1991: 27).

The driver (Lefebvre 1991: 313) who only knows how to drive does not question from where the car came, or how and by whom the streets were made. A neutral space seems neutral precisely because it – the social milieu and interaction – is a product that does not refer to the processes or struggles that created it. His theory of contradictions, then, was a tool that illuminated the fragmentation wrought throughout space, and the processes that produce it.

Lefebvre’s comment that, “for conflicts to be voiced, they must first be perceived, and this without subscribing to representations of space as generally conceived,” (Lefebvre 1991: 365) is reminiscent of Fraser’s counterpublics (1993: 8) – although the social theoretical production of space was not her specific objective, nor was the structure of democracy a project of Lefebvre’s. Fraser (ibid.) argued for a multiplicity of public spaces, and against the unity of a one neutral public space that was proposed by Habermas. She (ibid.) argued against the possibility of a pure neutral space, and that such spaces serve the interests of the dominant class. The creation of counterpublics was her solution to the illusion of neutrality (ibid.) – and by extension, space was a necessary requisite of this social expression. Neither Massey (2005), nor Smith (2001), nor Pratt (2004), nor Bauman (2007) discussed neutrality per se, but trajectories, transnational histories, and liquid and flexible modernity negated the possibility of overarching and neutralising metanarratives. Neutrality can only exist for someone as they travel within their own path – just as neutrality exists for Lefebvre’s (1991: 313) unquestioning driver. Outside of this path, among *Others*, neutrality cannot exist, or is at best relative.

2.3.4 Dialectic and dynamic social space

Schmid (2008: 30) wrote that the deeper meaning of dialectics can only be captured in the German phrase, *das Aufheben des Widerspruchs*, which has two meanings: negation of the contradiction; and/or, preservation and lifting (to a higher level) the contradiction.

Schmid (ibid.) explained that dialectics is a logic that allows for every proposition to be both true and false, in contrast to formal logic that every proposition can be only one or the other. Lefebvre (ibid.) applied these core ideas to create a dialectics of contradictions, in which a sublated contradiction will not reach its resolution, but its transformation. The contradiction is overcome, and at the same time, preserved and further worked (ibid.). Lefebvre's dialectics then are necessarily at the same time negation and resolve, where each resolution carries with it a seed of change (ibid.). Lefebvrian dialectics then is a return to an age-old debate on *becoming*¹⁶ (Schmid 2008: 31).

The central concepts of dialect thinking was key to understanding Lefebvre's specific dialectics of work and product, of work/product and production, but also of his triad of space (Schmid 2008: 39-40). Dialectics, however, were also not discussed among the other authors discussed above. In fact, dialectics is not to be found among prominent feminist and queer theoretical thinkers¹⁷. Can dialectic thinking be applied to *habitus* and *field*, or trajectories, or publics, or liquid modernities? Exploring these questions are indeed dissertations in and of themselves. Yet, it is probably fair to say that Lefebvre would confirm that it is, indeed, possible, and for the purposes of *this* dissertation, it can be said that the authors above illustrated a social world that, was perhaps not dialectic, but was dynamic to say the least. Bourdieu's (1984) theories were relevant to the production of social space. Bourdieu's (ibid.) concepts of *habitus* and *field* imply a dynamic social space, as they generate one another. To own a certain *habitus* is to be permitted to a certain *field*. To occupy a certain *field* is to occupy a certain social condition that generates further the *habitus*. Also *fields* among *fields* were dynamic. The dialectic relationship between the fields of directors, playwrights, actors, and technicians defined, for example, the master

¹⁶ One of Aristotle's cardinal departures from his predecessor, Plato, was his notion of time (see 'Metaphysics' in Barnes (1971b: 1552-1728)). The question of what *is* and what *becomes* has remained a philosophical debate over the millennia. In classical philosophy, feminist philosophy (see Freeland (1998), or Jagger and Young (2005)), and in urban sociology such as Werlen (1993).

¹⁷ In addition to the feminist thinkers already mentioned in this paper, no where in the following books is dialectics discussed: *Oxford Readings in Feminism: Feminism and History of Philosophy* edited by Genevieve Lloyd (2006); *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* edited by Seyla Benhabib (1996); *Re-Reading the Canon: Feminist Interpretations of René Descartes* edited by Susan Bordo (1999); *Re-Reading the Canon: Feminist Interpretations of Immanuel Kant* edited by Robin May Schott (1997); *On Female Body Experience: "Throwing like a girl" and Other Essays* by I.M. Young (2005); *Undoing Gender* by Judith Butler (2004); *Space, Place, and Gender* by Doreen Massey (1994); *Re-Reading the Canon: Feminist Interpretations of Aristotle* edited by Cynthia A. Freeland (1998); *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy* edited by A.M. Jagger and I.M. Young (2000).

production. The theoretical counterpublic (Fraser 1993: 8) also implied a dynamic model of social space. The multitude of public spheres – as spaces (or *fields*, perhaps) – was a step towards democracy insofar that it would promote and further diverse discursive arenas. Massey's (2005), Pratt's (2004) and Smith's (2001) trajectories were constantly in motion and ever changing. Bauman's (2007) world, too, was in constant transformation.

3.0 Restricted by the border – two contradictory Berliner stories

If there was a European city that would know what it means to live with borders, it would be Berlin. For nearly three decades, residents of the divided city were segregated by a guarded wall that was erected by external forces, and exchange between the parts was all but obsolete. Even if the story of the Wall was an example of conflating a variety of temporal trajectories into one spatial metanarrative, and a rude awakening to the capacity of vertical structures to apply power and violent oppression, it remains an ode to the problems of barriers that thwart horizontal pathways. Now¹⁸, it is nearing on two decades since Berlin reunified, a process that hoped to amalgamate (and create) a new city of the formerly segregated eastern and western parts. However, this process simply generated new contexts to frame new forms of fragmentation and new rules of segregation. There are now a new set of stakeholders, occupiers of capital power, holders of citizenship and status, which reinforce the social patterns that create and sustain new forms of repression. The question remains (and therefore, the outstanding political project) whether or not a critical discourse is possible that can transform social space – one that critically challenges existing structures, and emancipates disadvantaged or marginalised groups that counteract, counterpose, and counterbalance the dominant.

This chapter will describe two phenomena in Berlin: 1) the story of Berlin's "exit scene" (*Aussteigerszene*) of the squatter movement; and 2) the experience and position of

¹⁸ "Now," refers to the date of the defense of this dissertation on June 18, 2009.

newcomers (*Einwanderer*) in Germany. Exit and entry: at first glance it appears that these two social movements (in so far that they can be categorised as unified movements) are on opposite trajectories. Moreover, it would appear that the city is a kind of container in which some insiders attempt to refuse it, while others attempt to enter. I will return to the question of whether or not this is so in Chapter Four, but for now I will let this contradiction stand. This apparent contradiction was, after all, one of the reasons that I chose these two topics in the first place. They were also chosen because they are prominent and current social struggles in Berlin, in which respective participants struggle for place to produce space.

3.1 A Story of Refusal and Exit

“Das ist unser Haus, schmeißt doch endlich Schmidt und Press und Mosch aus Kreuzberg raus!,” (Ton Steine Scherben 1972).

So sang the beloved punk-folk band, in resistance to the developers that posed a constant threat to the squatters, who during the 1970s, lived in the district of *Kreuzberg*. It translates – unfortunately not so rhythmically – to, “That is our house, throw *Schmidt* and *Press* and *Mosch* out of *Kreuzberg*, once and for all!” *Ton Steine Scherben* (1972) sang this in the 1970s, but these sentiments still characterise the spirit of many protests that carry on today in Berlin as squatters continue to resist City revitalisation programs, developers rebuilding infrastructure, and private institutions staking out and cultivating capital investments.

After the German Democratic Republic (GDR) collapsed, and the border that divided Berlin opened, Berlin’s housing market went through a period of pandemonium, and so too the dialectic of protesting and singing versus ignoring and developing. Suddenly, properties that formerly lay on the eastern fringe of East Berlin were, in the re-unified Berlin, centrally located and available at (by western standards) rock bottom prices (Strom 1996: 7). For many, it was a real estate “gold rush,” (Strom 1996: *ibid.*). Among the myriad of speculators and investors hunting the sites, were young people searching for cheaper rents (Berg 1998: 85). Some simply squatted empty buildings – of which there were plenty – and thus began a new era in Berlin’s squatter history. Most found opportunities in the abandoned tenement housing stock of the former eastern fringe districts

