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Introduction

Marshall Berman (1982) equates modernity (among other things) with a certain mode of experience of space and time. Daniel Bell (1978, 107–11) argues that the various movements that brought modernism to its apogee had to work out a new logic in the conception of space and motion. He suggests, furthermore, that the organization of space has 'become the primary aesthetic problem of mid-twentieth century culture as the problem of time (in Bergson, Proust, and Joyce) was the primary aesthetic problem of the first decades of this century.' Frederic Jameson (1984b) attributes the postmodern shift to a crisis in our experience of space and time, a crisis in which spatial categories come to dominate those of time, while themselves undergoing such a mutation that we cannot keep pace. 'We do not yet possess the perceptual equipment to match this new kind of hyperspace,' he writes, 'in part because our perceptual habits were formed in that older kind of space I have called the space of high modernism.'

In what follows, I shall accept these statements at their face value. But since few trouble to explain exactly what they mean by them, I shall give an account of space and time in social life so as to highlight material links between political–economic and cultural processes. This will allow me to explore the link between postmodernism and the transition from Fordism to more flexible modes of capital accumulation via the mediations of spatial and temporal experiences.

Space and time are basic categories of human existence. Yet we rarely debate their meanings; we tend to take them for granted, and give them common-sense or self-evident attributions. We record the passage of time in seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years, decades, centuries, and eras, as if everything has its place upon a single objective time scale. Even though time in physics is a difficult and contentious concept, we do not usually let that interfere with the common-sense of time around which we organize daily routines. We

recognize, of course, that our mental processes and perceptions can play tricks, make seconds feel like light years, or pleasurable hours pass by so fast we hardly notice. We may also learn to appreciate how different societies (or even different sub-groups) cultivate quite different senses of time (see table 3.2).

In modern society, many different senses of time get pinned together. Cyclical and repetitive motions (everything from daily breakfast and going to work, to seasonal rituals like festivals, birthdays, vacations, the openings of baseball or cricket seasons) provide a sense of security in a world where the general thrust of progress appears to be ever onwards and upwards into the firmament of the unknown. When the sense of progress is checked by depression or recession, by war or social disruption, we may reassure ourselves (somewhat) either with the idea of cyclical time ('long waves,' 'kondratieff cycles,' etc.) as a natural phenomenon to which we must perforce adapt, or dredge up an even more compelling image of some stable universal propensity (such as innate human quarrelsomeness) as the perpetual counterpoint to progress. At another level we can see how what Hareven (1982) calls 'family time' (the time implicit in raising children and transferring knowledge and assets between generations through kinship networks) may be mobilized to meet the exigencies of 'industrial time' which allocates and reallocates labour to tasks according to powerful rhythms of technological and locational change forged out of the restless search for capital accumulation. And in moments of despair or exaltation, who among us can refrain from invoking the time of fate, of myth, of the Gods? Astrologers, we have learned, peddled their insights even in the corridors of the Reagan White House.

Out of such different senses of time, serious conflicts can arise: should the optimal rate of exploitation of a resource be set by the interest rate, or should we search, as environmentalists insist, for a sustainable development which assures the perpetuation of the ecological conditions suitable for human life into an indefinite future? Such questions are by no means arcane. The time horizon implicated in a decision materially affects the kind of decision we make. If we want to leave something behind, or build a better future for our children, then we do quite different things than would be the case were we simply concerned with our own pleasures in the here and now. For this reason, time gets used in political rhetoric in confusing ways. Failure to defer gratifications is often used by conservative critics, for example, to explain the persistence of impoverishment in an affluent society, even though that society systematically promotes the debt-financing of present gratifications as one of its principal engines of economic growth.

In spite of (or perhaps precisely because of) this diversity of conceptions and the social conflicts that flow therefrom, there is still a tendency to regard the differences as those of perception or interpretation of what should fundamentally be understood as a single, objective yardstick of time's ineluctable arrow of motion. I shall shortly challenge this conception.

Space likewise gets treated as a fact of nature, 'naturalized' through the assignment of common-sense everyday meanings. In some ways more complex than time – it has direction, area, shape, pattern and volume as key attributes, as well as distance – we typically treat of it as an objective attribute of things which can be measured and thus pinned down. We do recognize, of course, that our subjective experience can take us into realms of perception, imagination, fiction, and fantasy, which produce mental spaces and maps as so many mirages of the supposedly 'real' thing. We also discover that different societies or sub-groups possess different conceptions. The Plains Indians of what is now the United States did not hold at all to the same conception of space as the white settlers that replaced them; 'territorial' agreements between the groups were based on such different meanings that conflict was inevitable. Indeed, the conflict in part was precisely over the proper sense of space that should be used to regulate social life and give meaning to concepts such as territorial rights. The historical and anthropological record is full of examples of how varied the concept of space can be, while investigations of the spatial worlds of children, the mentally ill (particularly schizophrenics), oppressed minorities, women and men of different class, rural and urban dwellers, etc. illustrate a similar diversity within outwardly homogeneous populations. Yet some sense of an overarching and objective meaning of space which we must, in the last instance, all acknowledge is pervasive.

I think it important to challenge the idea of a single and objective sense of time or space, against which we can measure the diversity of human conceptions and perceptions. I shall not argue for a total dissolution of the objective–subjective distinction, but insist, rather, that we recognize the multiplicity of the objective qualities which space and time can express, and the role of human practices in their construction. Neither time nor space, the physicists now broadly propose, had existence (let alone meaning) before matter; the objective qualities of physical time–space cannot be understood, therefore, independently of the qualities of material processes. It is, however, by no means necessary to subordinate all objective conceptions of time and space to this particular physical conception, since it, also, is a construct that rests upon a particular version of the constitution of matter and the origin of the universe. The history of the concepts of

time, space, and time–space in physics has, in fact, been marked by strong epistemological breaks and reconstructions. The conclusion we should draw is simply that neither time nor space can be assigned objective meanings independently of material processes, and that it is only through investigation of the latter that we can properly ground our concepts of the former. This is not, of course, a new conclusion. It confirms the general thrust of several earlier thinkers, of whom Dilthey and Durkheim are the most prominent.

From this materialist perspective we can then argue that objective conceptions of time and space are necessarily created through material practices and processes which serve to reproduce social life. The Plains Indians or the African Nuer objectify qualities of time and space that are as separate from each other as they are distant from those ingrained within a capitalist mode of production. The objectivity of time and space is given in each case by the material practices of social reproduction, and to the degree that these latter vary geographically and historically, so we find that social time and social space are differentially constructed. Each distinctive mode of production or social formation will, in short, embody a distinctive bundle of time and space practices and concepts.

Since capitalism has been (and continues to be) a revolutionary mode of production in which the material practices and processes of social reproduction are always changing, it follows that the objective qualities as well as the meanings of space and time also change. On the other hand, if advance of knowledge (scientific, technical, administrative, bureaucratic, and rational) is vital to the progress of capitalist production and consumption, then changes in our conceptual apparatus (including representations of space and time) can have material consequences for the ordering of daily life. When, for example, a planner-architect like Le Corbusier, or an administrator like Haussmann, creates a built environment in which the tyranny of the straight line predominates, then we must perforce adjust our daily practices.

This does not mean that practices are determined by built form (no matter how hard the planners may try); for they have the awkward habit of escaping their moorings in any fixed schema of representation. New meanings can be found for older materializations of space and time. We appropriate ancient spaces in very modern ways, treat time and history as something to create rather than to accept. The same concept of, say, 'community' (as a social entity created in space through time) can disguise radical differences in meaning because the processes of community production themselves diverge remarkably according to group capacities and interests. Yet the treatment of

communities as if they are comparable (by, say, a planning agency) has material implications to which the social practices of people who live in them have to respond.

Beneath the veneer of common-sense and seemingly 'natural' ideas about space and time, there lie hidden terrains of ambiguity, contradiction, and struggle. Conflicts arise not merely out of admittedly diverse subjective appreciations, but because different objective material qualities of time and space are deemed relevant to social life in different situations. Important battles likewise occur in the realms of scientific, social, and aesthetic theory, as well as in practice. How we represent space and time in theory matters, because it affects how we and others interpret and then act with respect to the world.

Consider, for example, one of the more startling schisms in our intellectual heritage concerning conceptions of time and space. Social theories (and I here think of traditions emanating from Marx, Weber, Adam Smith, and Marshall) typically privilege time over space in their formulations. They broadly assume either the existence of some pre-existing spatial order within which temporal processes operate, or that spatial barriers have been so reduced as to render space a contingent rather than fundamental aspect to human action. Aesthetic theory, on the other hand, is deeply concerned with 'the spatialization of time.'

It is a tribute to the compartmentalizations in Western thought that this disjunction has for so long passed largely unremarked. On the surface, the difference is not too hard to understand. Social theory has always focused on processes of social change, modernization, and revolution (technical, social, political). Progress is its theoretical object, and historical time its primary dimension. Indeed, progress entails the conquest of space, the tearing down of all spatial barriers, and the ultimate 'annihilation of space through time.' The reduction of space to a contingent category is implied in the notion of progress itself. Since modernity is about the experience of progress through modernization, writings on that theme have tended to emphasize temporality, the process of *becoming*, rather than *being* in space and place. Even Foucault (1984, 70), obsessed as he confesses himself to be with spatial metaphors, wonders, when pressed, when and why it happened that 'space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile' while 'time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic.'

Aesthetic theory, on the other hand, seeks out the rules that allow eternal and immutable truths to be conveyed in the midst of the maelstrom of flux and change. The architect, to take the most obvious case, tries to communicate certain values through the construction of

a spatial form. Painters, sculptors, poets, and writers of all sorts do no less. Even the written word abstracts properties from the flux of experience and fixes them in spatial form. 'The invention of printing embedded the word in *space*,' it has been said, and writing – a 'set of tiny marks marching in neat line, like armies of insects, across pages and pages of white paper' – is, therefore, a definite spatialization (quoted in McHale, 1987, 179–81). Any system of representation, in fact, is a spatialization of sorts which automatically freezes the flow of experience and in so doing distorts what it strives to represent. 'Writing,' says Bourdieu (1977, 156) 'tears practice and discourse out of the flow of time.' For this reason, Bergson, the great theorist of becoming, of time as flux, was incensed that it took the spatializations of the clock to tell the time.

The philosopher Karsten Harries (1982, 59–69) makes much of this idea. Architecture, he maintains, is not only about domesticating space, wresting and shaping a liveable place from space. It is also a deep defence against 'the terror of time'. The 'language of beauty' is 'the language of a timeless reality.' To create a beautiful object 'is to link time and eternity' in such a way as to redeem us from time's tyranny. The urge to 'devaluate time' reappears as the artist's will to redeem through the creation of a work 'strong enough to still time.' Much of the aesthetic thrust of modernism, we saw in Part I, is to strive for this sense of eternity in the midst of flux. But in leaning to the eternal side of Baudelaire's formulation, this emphasizes space rather than time. The aim of spatial constructs is 'not to illuminate temporal reality so that [we] might feel more at home in it, but to be relieved of it: to abolish time within time, if only for a time.' Harries here echoes those famous modernist formulations of Baudelaire, 'one can only forget time by making use of it,' and T. S. Eliot, 'only through time, time is conquered.'

But here arises the paradox. We learn our ways of thinking and conceptualizing from active grappling with the spatializations of the written word, the study and production of maps, graphs, diagrams, photographs, models, paintings, mathematical symbols, and the like. How adequate are such modes of thought and such conceptions in the face of the flow of human experience and strong processes of social change? On the other side of the coin, how can spatializations in general, and aesthetic practices in particular, represent flux and change, particularly if these latter are held essential truths to be conveyed? This was the dilemma that plagued Bergson. It became a central problem for both futurist and Dada art. Futurism sought to shape space in ways that could represent speed and motion. Dadaists

viewed art as ephemeral and, renouncing any permanent spatialization, sought eternity by embedding their happenings in revolutionary action. It was perhaps in response to this conundrum that Walter Pater argued that 'all art aspires to the condition of music' – music, after all, contains its aesthetic effect precisely through its temporal movement. But the most obvious means of representation of time was the film. The young Sartre was particularly impressed by its possibilities. 'It is an art which reflects civilization in our time,' he said; it 'will teach you about the beauty of the world you live in, the poetry of speed, machines, and the inhuman splendid inevitability of industry' (Cohen-Solal, 1987). The combination of film and music provides a powerful antidote to the spatial passivity of art and architecture. Yet the very confinement of the film to a depthless screen and a theatre is a reminder that it, too, is space-bound in some curious way.

There is much to be learned from aesthetic theory about how different forms of spatialization inhibit or facilitate processes of social change. Conversely, there is much to be learned from social theory concerning the flux and change with which aesthetic theory has to cope. By playing these two currents of thought off against each other, we can, perhaps, better understand the ways in which political–economic change informs cultural practices.

But let me first illustrate where the political significance of such an argument might lie. In so doing, I shall revert to that conception which Kant advanced (see above, p. 19), of aesthetic judgement as a potential mediator between the worlds of objective science and of subjective moral judgement (without necessarily conceding either the tripartite division of knowledge that Kant proposed or the entirely disinterested satisfaction with which his concept of beauty is associated). Aesthetic judgements (as well as 'redemptive' artistic practices) have entered in as powerful criteria of political, and hence of social and economic, action. If aesthetic judgement prioritizes space over time, then it follows that spatial practices and concepts can, under certain circumstances, become central to social action.

In this regard, the German philosopher Heidegger is an intriguing figure. Rejecting the Kantian dichotomies of subject and object, he proclaimed the permanence of Being over the transitoriness of Becoming (*Metaphysics*, 202). His investigations of Being led him away from the universals of modernism and of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and back to the intense and creative nationalism of pre-Socratic Greek thought. All metaphysics and philosophy, he declared, are given their meaning only in relation to the destiny of the people

(Blitz, 1981). The geopolitical position of Germany in the inter-war years – squeezed in a 'great pincer' between Russia and America – led to the following reflections:

> From a metaphysical point of view, Russia and America are the same; the same dreary technological frenzy, the same unrestricted organization of the average man. At a time when the furthermost corner of the globe has been conquered by technology and opened to economic exploitation; when any incident whatsoever, regardless of where and when it occurs, can be communicated to the rest of the world at any desired speed; when the assassination of a King in France and a Symphony in Tokyo can be 'experienced' simultaneously; when time has ceased to be anything other than velocity, instantaneousness and simultaneity, and time as history has vanished from the lives of all peoples . . . then, yes, then, through all this turmoil a question still haunts us like a spectre: What for? Whither? What then?

The sense of time–space transformation and the anguish it provoked, could hardly be stronger. Heidegger's response is explicit:

> All this implies that this nation, as a historical nation, must move itself and thereby the history of the West beyond the centre of their future 'happening' and into the primordial realm of the powers of being. If the great decision regarding Europe is not to bring annihilation, that decision must be made in terms of new spiritual energies unfolding historically from out of the centre.

Herein, for Heidegger, lay the 'inner truth and greatness of the National Socialist movement' (understood as the 'encounter between global technology and modern man'). In support of Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations, he sought a knowledge that does not 'divide the classes' but binds and unites them 'in the great will of the state.' By such means he hoped that the German people might 'grow in its unity as a work people, finding again its simple worth and genuine power, and procuring its duration and greatness as a work state. To the man of this unheard of will, our Fuhrer Adolf Hitler, a three-fold Sieg-Heil!' (quoted in Blitz, 1981, 217).

That a great twentieth-century philosopher (who has incidentally inspired the deconstructionism of Derrida) should so compromise himself politically has been a matter of considerable concern (a

concern that has erupted once more into the status of 'scandal' in France as the result of Farias's (1987) documentation of Heidegger's rather long-lasting Nazi links). But I think a number of useful points can be made on the basis of the Heidegger case. He was evidently disturbed by the bland universalisms of technology, the collapse of spatial distinctiveness and identity, and the seemingly uncontrolled acceleration of temporal processes. From this standpoint he exemplifies all the dilemmas of modernity as Baudelaire articulates them. He is deeply influenced by Nietzsche's interventions (see above, p. 15–18) but sees them leading down the path of an unacceptable and total nihilism. It is from such a fate that he seeks to rescue civilization. His search for permanence (the philosophy of Being) connects with a place-bound sense of geopolitics and destiny that was both revolutionary (in the sense of forward looking) and intensely nationalistic. From a metaphysical point of view this entailed rooting himself in classical values (particularly those of pre-Socratic Greek civilization), thereby highlighting a parallel orientation towards classicism in Nazi rhetoric in general and in architecture in particular. The rejection of Platonic and Judaeo-Christian values, of the 'myth' of machine rationality and internationalism, was total, even if the revolutionary side to his thought forced him to compromise with the advances of science and technology in practical affairs. Reactionary modernism of the Nazi sort simultaneously emphasized the power of myth (of blood and soil, of race and fatherland, of destiny and place) while mobilizing all the accoutrements of social progress towards a project of sublime national achievement. The application of this particular aesthetic sense to politics altered the course of history with a vengeance.

The Nazi case is by no means unique. The aestheticization of politics has a long history and poses deep problems for doctrines of untrammelled social progress. It has its left and its right versions (the Sandinistas, after all, aestheticize politics around the figure of Sandino in order to promote adherence to a left political programme of national liberation and social justice). The clearest form the problem takes is the shift in emphasis from historical change towards national cultures and destinies, sparking geographical conflicts between different spaces in the world economy. Geopolitical conflicts invariably imply a certain aestheticization of politics in which appeal to the mythology of place and person has a strong role to play. The rhetoric of national liberation movements is here just as powerful as the counter-rhetoric, imposed through imperialism and colonialism, of manifest destiny, racial or cultural supremacy, paternalism (white man's burden, for example), and doctrines of national superiority.

How and why the world's history (the outcome of struggles between classes in Marxian versions) dissolves into geopolitical conflicts often of a most destructive kind cannot be regarded as a matter of mere accident. It may have its roots in the political–economic processes that force capitalism into configurations of uneven geographical development and make it seek out a series of spatial fixes to the overaccumulation problem. But the aestheticization of politics that accompanies this geopolitical turn must likewise be taken seriously. Herein, I think, lies the significance of conjoining aesthetic and social theoretic perspectives on the nature and meaning of space and time. And it is exactly from this sort of perspective that Eagleton (1987) launches his most virulent polemic against the postmodernism of Lyotard:

> Modernity for Lyotard would seem *nothing but* a tale of terroristic reason and Nazism little more than the lethal terminus of totalizing thought. This reckless travesty ignores the fact that the death camps were among other things the upshot of a barbarous irrationalism which, like some aspects of postmodernism itself, junked history, refused argumentation, aestheticized politics and staked all on the charisma of those who told the stories.

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Individual spaces and times in social life

The material practices from which our concepts of space and time flow are as varied as the range of individual and collective experiences. The challenge is to put some overall interpretative frame around them that will bridge the gap between cultural change and the dynamics of political economy.

Let me begin with the simplest descriptor of daily practices as set out in the time geography pioneered by Hägerstrand. Individuals are here viewed as purposeful agents engaged in projects that take up time through movement in space. Individual biographies can be tracked as 'life paths in time-space,' beginning with daily routines of movement (from house to factory, to shops, to school, and back home again), and extending to migratory movements over phases of a life-span (for example, youth in the country, professional training in the large city, marriage and movement to the suburbs, and retirement to the country). Such life paths can be portrayed diagrammatically (see figure 3.1). The idea is to study the principles of time–space behaviour through an examination of such biographies. Finite time resources and the 'friction of distance' (measured in time or cost taken to overcome it) constrain daily movement. Time for eating, sleeping, etc. has to be found, and social projects always encounter 'coupling constraints,' specified as the need to have the time–space paths of two or more individuals intersect to accomplish any social transaction. Such transactions typically occur within a geographical pattern of available 'stations' (places where certain activities like working, shopping, etc. occur) and 'domains' where certain social interactions prevail.

Hägerstrand's schema is a useful descriptor of how the daily life of individuals unfolds in space and time. But it tells us nothing about how 'stations' and 'domains' are produced, or why the 'friction of distance' varies in the way it palpably does. It also leaves aside the

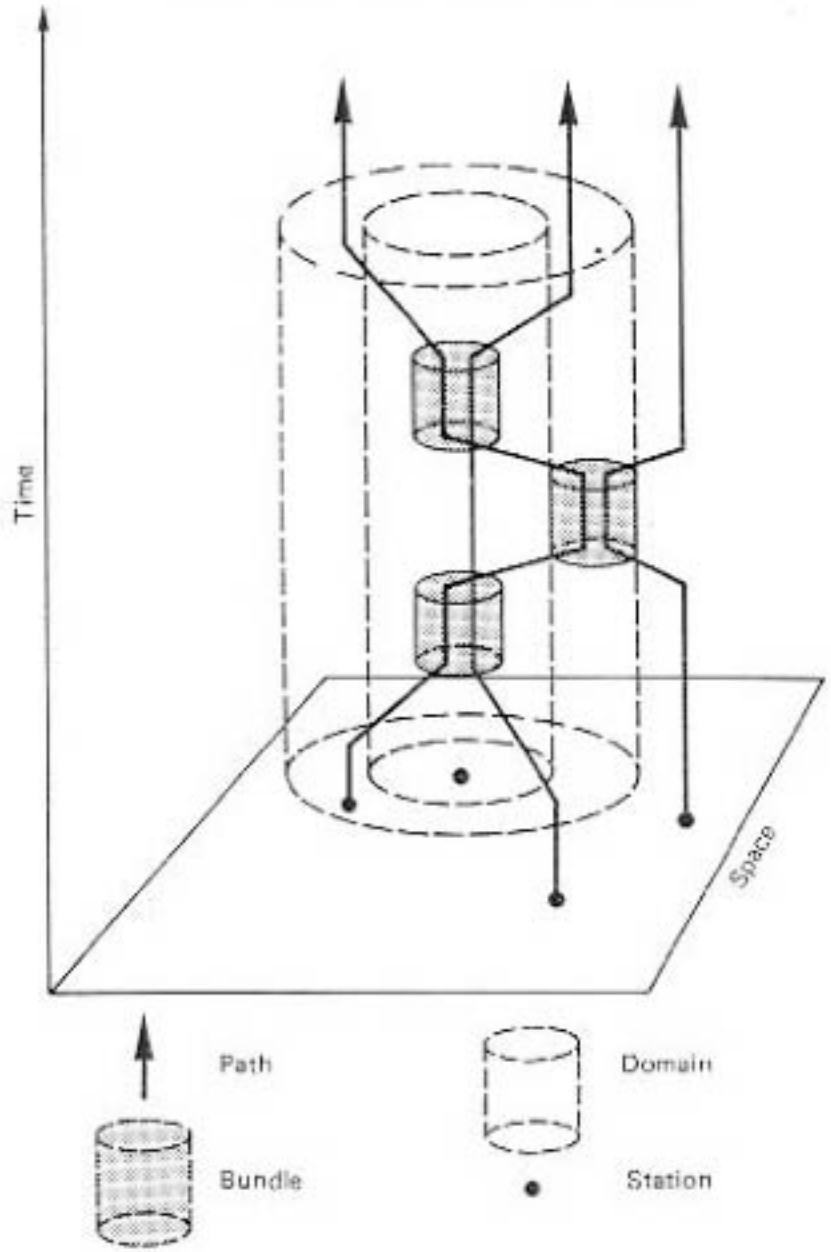

Figure 3.1 Diagrammatic representation of daily time–space paths according to Hägerstrand (1970).

question of how and why certain social projects and their characteristic 'coupling constraints' become hegemonic (why, for example, the factory system dominates, or is dominated by dispersed and artisanal forms of production), and it makes no attempt to understand why certain social relations dominate others, or how meaning gets assigned to places, spaces, history, and time. Unfortunately, assembling massive empirical data on time–space biographies does not get at the answers to these broader questions, even though the

record of such biographies forms a useful datum for considering the time–space dimension of social practices.

Consider, by way of contrast, the socio-psychological and phenomenological approaches to time and space that have been put forward by writers such as de Certeau, Bachelard, Bourdieu, and Foucault. The latter treats the space of the body as the irreducible element in our social scheme of things, for it is upon that space that the forces of repression, socialization, disciplining, and punishing are inflicted. The body exists in space and must either submit to authority (through, for example, incarceration or surveillance in an organized space) or carve out particular spaces of resistance and freedom – 'heterotopias' – from an otherwise repressive world. That struggle, the centrepiece of social history for Foucault, has no necessary temporal logic. But Foucault does see particular historical transitions as important and he pays great attention to the periodization of experience. The power of the *ancien régime* was undermined by the Enlightenment only to be replaced by a new organization of space dedicated to the techniques of social control, surveillance, and repression of the self and the world of desire. The difference lies in the way state power in the modern era becomes faceless, rational, and technocratic (and hence more systematic), rather than personalized and arbitrary. The irreducibility (for us) of the human body means that it is only from that site of power that resistance can be mobilized in the struggle to liberate human desire. Space, for Foucault, is a metaphor for a site or container of power which usually constrains but sometimes liberates processes of *Becoming*.

Foucault's emphasis upon imprisonment within spaces of social control has more than a little literal (as opposed to metaphorical) relevance to the way modern social life is organized. The entrapment of impoverished populations in inner city spaces is a theme that has, for example, long captured the attention of urban geographers. But Foucault's exclusive concentration on the spaces of organized repression (prisons, the 'panopticon,' hospitals, and other institutions of social control) weakens the generality of his argument. De Certeau provides an interesting corrective. He treats social spaces as more open to human creativity and action. Walking, he suggests, defines a 'space of enunciation.' Like Hägerstand, he begins his story at ground level, but in this case 'with footsteps' in the city. 'Their swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together,' and so create the city through daily activities and movements. 'They are not localized; it is rather that they spatialize' (note how different the sentiment is from that conveyed in Hägerstand's work). The particular

spaces of the city are created by myriad actions, all of which bear the stamp of human intent. Answering Foucault, de Certeau sees a daily substitution 'for the technological system of a coherent and totalizing space' by a 'pedestrian rhetoric' of trajectories that have 'a mythical structure' understood as 'a story jerry-built out of elements taken from common sayings, an allusive and fragmentary story whose gaps mesh with the social practices it symbolizes.'

De Certeau here defines a basis for understanding the ferment of popular, localized street cultures, even as expressed within the framework imposed by some overarching repressive order. 'The goal,' he writes, 'is not to make clear how the violence of order is transmuted into a disciplinary technology, but rather to bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical and makeshift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of "discipline."' The 'resurgence of "popular" practices within industrial and scientific modernity,' he writes, 'cannot be confined to the past, the countryside or primitive peoples' but 'exists at the heart of the contemporary economy.' Spaces can be more easily 'liberated' than Foucault imagines, precisely because social practices spatialize rather than becoming localized within some repressive grid of social control.

De Certeau, as we shall see, recognizes that the practices of everyday life can and do get converted into the 'totalizations' of rationally ordered and controlled space and time. But he tells us little of why and how the rationalizations take the forms they do. In some instances it seems as if the Enlightenment project (or even capitalism) has something to do with it, although in other instances he points to the symbolic orderings of space and time which give profounder continuity (by no means necessarily freedom giving) to social practices. On this latter point, de Certeau draws some sustenance from Bourdieu.

Symbolic orderings of space and time provide a framework for experience through which we learn who or what we are in society. 'The reason why submission to the collective rhythms is so rigorously demanded,' writes Bourdieu (1977, 163), 'is that the temporal forms or the spatial structures structure not only the group's representation of the world but the group itself, which orders itself in accordance with this representation.' The common-sense notion that 'there is a time and a place for everything' gets carried into a set of prescriptions which replicate the social order by assigning social meanings to spaces and times. This was the sort of phenomenon that Hall (1966) saw as the root of a lot of intercultural conflict, precisely because different groups signalled quite different meanings by their use of space and time. Through studies of the internal world of the Kabyle

house and of the external worlds of fields, markets, gardens, and the like in relation to the annual calendar and divisions between night and day, Bourdieu shows how 'all the divisions of the group are projected at every moment into the spatio-temporal organization which assigns each category its place and time: it is here that the fuzzy logic of practice works wonders in enabling the group to achieve as much social and logical integration as is compatible with the diversity imposed by the division of labour between the sexes, the ages, and the "occupations" (smith, butcher).' It is, suggests Bourdieu, through the 'dialectical relationship between the body and a structured organization of space and time that common practices and representations are determined.' And it is precisely out of such experiences (in the home, in particular) that durable schemes of perception, thought, and action get imposed (see figure 3.2). Even more profoundly, 'the organization of time and the group in accordance with mythical structures leads collective practice to appear as "realized myth."'

Findings of this sort have been replicated in many anthropological studies in recent years (through without necessarily accepting all of Bourdieu's interpretative apparatus). The more general question, however, concerns the degree to which similar kinds of social

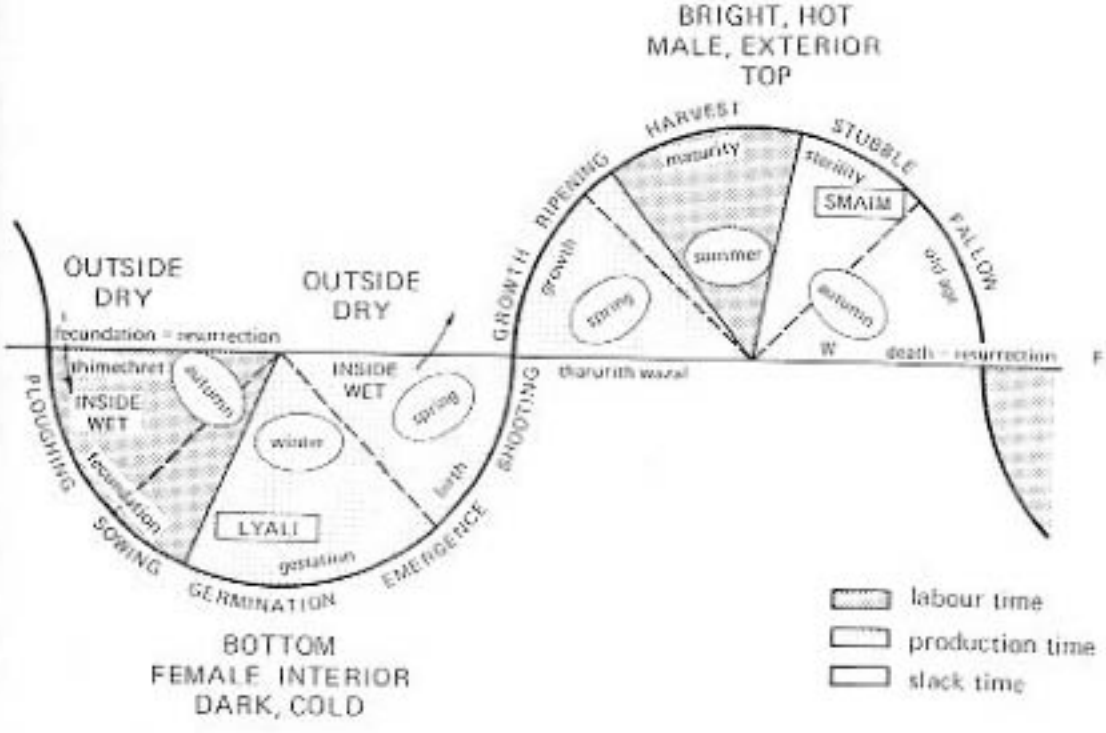

Figure 3.2 The annual calendar of the Kabyle, according to Bourdieu (1977) (reproduced by permission of Cambridge University Press)

meanings can be signalled through spatial and temporal organization in contemporary capitalist culture. Certainly, it is not hard to spot examples of such processes at work. The organization of spaces within a household, for example, still says much about gender and age relations. The organized spatio-temporal rhythms of capitalism provide abundant opportunities for socialization of individuals to distinctive roles. The common-sense notion that there is 'a time and a place for everything' still carries weight, and social expectations attach to where and when actions occur. But while the mechanisms to which Bourdieu points may be omni-present in capitalist society, they do not easily conform to the broadly static picture of social reproduction which he evokes in the case of the Kabyles. Modernization entails, after all, the perpetual disruption of temporal and spatial rhythms, and modernism takes as one of its missions the production of new meanings for space and time in a world of ephemerality and fragmentation.

Bourdieu provides the barest hint of how the search for money power might undermine traditional practices. Moore (1986), in her study of the Endo, elaborates on that idea, and in so doing sheds further insight on the complex relations between spatializations and social reproduction. Value and meaning 'are not inherent in any spatial order,' she insists, 'but must be invoked.' The idea that there is some 'universal' language of space, a semiotics of space independent of practical activities and historically situated actors, has to be rejected. Yet within the context of specific practices, the organization of space can indeed define relationships between people, activities, things, and concepts. 'The organization of space amongst the Endo can be conceived of as a text; as such, it "talks about" or "works over" states of affairs which are imaginary' but nonetheless important, because they represent social concerns. Such spatial representations are 'both product and producer.' Under pressures of monetization and the introduction of wage labour, the representations shift. In the case of the Endo, 'modernism' is displayed by the replacement of the traditional round house with a square house, coupled with an overt display of wealth, the separation of the cooking area from the main house, and other spatial reorganizations that signal a shift in social relations.

The potentiality for such processes to become wrapped in myth and ritual tells us much about the dilemmas of modernism and postmodernism. We have already noted, in Part I as well as in the introduction to Part III, how modernism was so often to flirt with mythology. We here encounter the fact that spatial and temporal practices can themselves appear as 'realized myth' and so become an

essential ideological ingredient to social reproduction. The difficulty under capitalism, given its penchant for fragmentation and ephemerality in the midst of the universals of monetization, market exchange, and the circulation of capital, is to find a stable mythology expressive of its inherent values and meanings. Social practices may invoke certain myths and push for certain spatial and temporal representations as part and parcel of their drive to implant and reinforce their hold on society. But they do so in such an eclectic and ephemeral fashion that it is hard to speak of 'realized myth' under capitalism with the same certitude that Bourdieu achieves for the Kabyles. This does not prevent the deployment of powerful mythologies (as with the case of Nazism or the myth of the machine) as vigorous provocations to historical–geographic change. Moreover, mythology is presented in mild enough forms (the evocation of tradition, of collective memory, of locality and place, of cultural identity) to make of it a more subtle affair than the raucous claims of Nazism. But it is hard to find examples of its workings in contemporary society that do not in some way evoke a very specific sense of what a 'time and a place for everything' means. Hence the significance of spatializing practices in architecture and urban design, of historical evocation, and the struggles that go on over the definition of what exactly is the right time and right place for what aspects of social practice.

Bachelard (1964), for his part, focuses our attention on the space of imagination – 'poetic space.' Space 'that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor' any more than it can be exclusively represented as the 'affective space' of the psychologists. 'We think we know ourselves in time,' he writes, 'when all we know is a sequence of fixations in the spaces of the being's stability.' Memories 'are motionless, and the more securely they are fixed in space, the sounder they are.' The echoes of Heidegger are strong here. 'Space contains compressed time. That is what space is for.' And the space which is paramount for memory is the house – 'one of the greatest powers of integration of the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind.' For it is within that space that we learned how to dream and imagine. There

> Being is already a value. Life begins well, it begins enclosed, protected, all warm in the bosom of the house. ... This is the environment in which the protective beings live. ... In this remote region, memory and imagination remain associated, each one working for their mutual deepening. ... Through dreams,

> the various dwelling-places in our lives co-penetrate and retain the treasures of former days. And after we are in the new house, when memories of other places we have lived in come back to us, we travel to the land of Motionless Childhood, motionless the way all Immemorial things are.

Being, suffused with immemorial spatial memory, transcends Becoming. It founds all those nostalgic memories of a lost childhood world. Is this the foundation for collective memory, for all those manifestations of place-bound nostalgias that infect our images of the country and the city, of region, milieu, and locality, of neighbourhood and community? And if it is true that time is always memorialized not as flow, but as memories of experienced places and spaces, then history must indeed give way to poetry, time to space, as the fundamental material of social expression. The spatial image (particularly the evidence of the photograph) then asserts an important power over history (see chapter 18).

Spatial and temporal practices, in any society, abound in subtleties and complexities. Since they are so closely implicated in processes of reproduction and transformation of social relations, some way has to be found to depict them and generalize about their use. The history of social change is in part captured by the history of the conceptions of space and time, and the ideological uses to which those conceptions might be put. Furthermore, any project to transform society must grasp the complex nettle of the transformation of spatial and temporal conceptions and practices.

I shall try to capture some of the complexity through construction of a 'grid' of spatial practices (table 3.1). Down the left hand side I range three dimensions identified in Lefebvre's *La production de l'espace*:

1 Material spatial practices refer to the physical and material flows, transfers, and interactions that occur in and across space in such a way as to assure production and social reproduction.

2 Representations of space encompass all of the signs and significations, codes and knowledge, that allow such material practices to be talked about and understood, no matter whether in terms of everyday common-sense or through the sometimes arcane jargon of the academic disciplines that deal with spatial practices (engineering, architecture, geography, planning, social ecology, and the like).

3 Spaces of representation are mental inventions (codes, signs, 'spatial discourses,' utopian plans, imaginary landscapes, and even

material constructs such as symbolic spaces, particular built environments, paintings, museums, and the like) that imagine new meanings or possibilities for spatial practices.

Lefebvre characterizes these three dimensions as the experienced, the perceived, and the imagined. He regards the dialectical relations between them as the fulcrum of a dramatic tension through which the history of spatial practices can be read. The spaces of representation, therefore, have the potential not only to affect representation of space but also to act as a material productive force with respect to spatial practices. But to argue that the relations between the experienced, the perceived, and the imagined are dialectically rather than causally determined leaves things much too vague. Bourdieu (1977) provides a clarification. He explains how 'a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions' can at one and the same time be put to work flexibly to 'achieve infinitely diversified tasks' while at the same time being 'in the last instance' (Engels's famous phrase) engendered out of the material experience of 'objective structures,' and therefore 'out of the economic basis of the social formation in question.' The mediating link is provided by the concept of 'habitus' – a 'durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations' which 'produces practices' which in turn tend to reproduce the objective conditions which produced the generative principle of habitus in the first place. The circular (even cumulative?) causation is obvious. Bourdieu's conclusion is, however, a very striking depiction of the constraints to the power of the imagined over the experienced:

> Because the habitus is an endless capacity to engender products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production, the conditioning and conditional freedom it secures is as remote from a creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from a simple mechanical reproduction of the initial conditionings. (Bourdieu, 1977, 95)

That theorization, though not in itself complete, is of considerable interest. I shall return to examine its implications for cultural production later.

Across the top of the grid (table 3.1) I list four other aspects to spatial practice drawn from more conventional understandings:

1 Accessibility and distanciation speak to the role of the 'friction of distance' in human affairs. Distance is both a barrier to, and a

Table 3.1 A 'grid' of spatial practices

	Accessibility and distanciation	*Appropriation and use of space*	*Domination and control of space*	*Production of space*
Material spatial practices (experience)	flows of goods, money, people labour power, information, etc.; transport and communications systems; market and urban hierarchies; agglomeration	land uses and built environments; social spaces and other 'turf' designations; social networks of communication and mutual aid	private property in land; state and administrative divisions of space; exclusive communities and neighbourhoods; exclusionary zoning and other forms of social control (policing and surveillance)	production of physical infrastructures (transport and communications; built environments; land clearance, etc.); territorial organization of social infrastructures (formal and informal)

Representations of space (perception)	social, psychological and physical measures of distance; map-making; theories of the 'friction of distance' (principle of least effort, social physics, range of a good, central place and other forms of location theory)	personal space; mental maps of occupied space; spatial hierarchies; symbolic representation of spaces; spatial 'discourses'	forbidden spaces; 'territorial imperatives'; community; regional culture; nationalism; geopolitics; hierarchies	new systems of mapping, visual representation, communication, etc.; new artistic and architectural 'discourses'; semiotics.
Spaces of representation (imagination)	attraction/repulsion; distance/desire; access/denial; transcendence 'medium is the message'.	familiarity; hearth and home; open places; places of popular spectacle (streets, squares, markets); iconography and graffiti; advertising	unfamiliarity; spaces of fear; property and possession; monumentality and constructed spaces of ritual; symbolic barriers and symbolic capital; construction of 'tradition'; spaces of repression	utopian plans; imaginary landscapes; science fiction ontologies and space; artists' sketches; mythologies of space and place; poetics of space spaces of desire

Source: in part inspired by Lefebvre (1974)

defence against, human interaction. It imposes transaction costs upon any system of production and reproduction (particularly those based on any elaborate social division of labour, trade, and social differentiation of reproductive functions). Distanciation (cf. Giddens, 1984, 258–9) is simply a measure of the degree to which the friction of space has been overcome to accommodate social interaction.

2 The appropriation of space examines the way in which space is occupied by objects (house, factories, streets, etc.), activities (land uses), individuals, classes, or other social groupings. Systematized and institutionalized appropriation may entail the production of territorially bounded forms of social solidarity.

3 The domination of space reflects how individuals or powerful groups dominate the organization and production of space through legal or extra-legal means so as to exercise a greater degree of control either over the friction of distance or over the manner in which space is appropriated by themselves or others.

4 The production of space examines how new systems (actual or imagined) of land use, transport and communications, territorial organization, etc. are produced, and how new modes of representation (e.g. information technology, computerized mapping, or design) arise.

These four dimensions to spatial practice are not independent of each other. The friction of distance is implicit in any understanding of the domination and appropriation of space, while the persistent appropriation of a space by a particular group (say the gang that hangs out on the street corner) amounts to a *de facto* domination of that space. The production of space, insofar as it reduces the friction of distance (capitalism's 'annihilation of space through time,' for example) alters distanciation and the conditions of appropriation and domination.

My purpose in setting up such a grid is not to attempt any systematic exploration of the positions within it, though such an examination would be of considerable interest (I have penned in a few controversial positionings within the grid for purposes of illustration, and would like to suggest that the different authors we have so far examined concentrate on different facets of it). My purpose is to find some point of entry that will allow a deeper discussion of the shifting experience of space in the history of modernism and postmodernism.

The grid of spatial practices can tell us nothing important by itself. To suppose so would be to accept the idea that there is some universal spatial language independent of social practices. Spatial

practices derive their efficacy in social life only through the structure of social relations within which they come into play. Under the social relations of capitalism, for example, the spatial practices portrayed in the grid become imbued with class meanings. To put it this way is not, however, to argue that spatial practices are derivative of capitalism. They take on their meanings under specific social relations of class, gender, community, ethnicity, or race and get 'used up' or 'worked over' in the course of social action. When placed in the context of capitalist social relations and imperatives (see chapter 14 below), the grid helps unravel some of the complexity that prevails in understanding the transformation of spatial experience associated with the shift from modernist to postmodernist ways of thinking.

Gurvitch (1964) suggests an analogous framework for thinking about the meaning of time in social life. He addresses the issue of the social content of temporal practices directly, however, while avoiding issues of materiality, representation, and imagination of the sort that Lefebvre insists upon. His primary thesis is that particular social formations (listed in the right-hand column of table 3.2) associate with a specific sense of time. Out of that study comes an eightfold classification of the types of social time that have existed historically. This typology proves rather interesting in its implications.

To begin with, it inverts the proposition that there is a time for everything and proposes that we think, instead, of every social relation containing its own sense of time. It is tempting, for example, to think of 1968 as an 'explosive' time (in which quite different behaviours were suddenly deemed acceptable) emerging out of the 'deceptive' time of Fordism–Keynesianism and giving way in the late 1970s to the world of 'time in advance of itself' populated by speculators, entrepreneurs, and debt-peddling finance capitalists. It is also possible to use the typology to look at different senses of time at work contemporaneously, with academics and other professionals perpetually condemned (it seems) to 'retarded time,' perhaps with a mission to avert 'explosive' and 'erratic' times, and so restore to us some sense of 'enduring' time (a world also populated by ecologists and theologians). The potential mixes are intriguing, and I shall come back to them later, since they shed light, I think, on the confused transition in the sense of time implied in the shift from modernist to postmodernist cultural practices.

If there were an independent language (or semiotic) of time or space (or time–space) we could at this point reasonably abandon social concerns and enquire more directly into the properties of space–time languages as means of communication in their own right. But since it is a fundamental axiom of my enquiry that time and

Table 3.2 Gurvich's typology of social times

Type	*Level*	*Form*	*Social formations*
Enduring time	ecological	continuous time in which past is projected in the present and future; easily quantifiable	kinships and locality groupings (particularly rural peasant societies and patriarchal structures)
Deceptive time	organized society	long and slowed down duration masking sudden and unexpected crises and ruptures between past and present	large cities and political 'publics' charismatic and theocratic societies
Erratic time	social roles, collective attitudes (fashion) and technical mixes	time of uncertainty and accentuated contingency in which present prevails over past and future	non-political 'publics' (social movements and fashion-followers); classes in process of formation
Cyclical time	mystical unions	past, present and future projected into each other accentuating continuity within change; diminution of contingency	astrology-followers; archaic societies in which mythological, mystical and magical beliefs prevail
Retarded time	social symbols	future becomes present so late as to be outmoded as soon as it is crystallized	community and its social symbols; guilds, professions etc. feudalism

Table 3.2 cont.

Type	*Level*	*Form*	*Social formations*
Alternating time	rules, signals, signs and collective conduct	past and future compete in the present; discontinuity without contingency	dynamic economic groups; transition epochs (inception of capitalism)
Time in advance of itself (rushing forward)	collective transformative action and innovation	discontinuity, contingency; qualitative change triumphant; the future becomes present	competitive capitalism; speculation
Explosive time	revolutionary ferment and collective creation	present and past dissolved into a transcendent future	revolutions and radical transformations of global structures

Source: Gurvitch (1964)

space (or language, for that matter) cannot be understood independently of social action, I shall now shift the focus to a consideration of how power relations are always implicated in spatial and temporal practices. This will then permit us to put these rather passive typologies and possibilities into the more dynamic frame of historical materialist conceptions of capitalist modernization.

14

Time and space as sources of social power

We owe the idea that command over space is a fundamental and all-pervasive source of social power in and over everyday life to the persistent voice of Henri Lefebvre. How that form of social power articulates with control over time, as well as with money and other forms of social power, requires further elaboration. The general argument I shall explore is that in money economies in general, and in capitalist society in particular, the intersecting command of money, time, and space forms a substantial nexus of social power that we cannot afford to ignore. 'Time measurement,' Landes (1983, 12) declares in his authoritative study of the subject, 'was at once a sign of new-found creativity and an agent and catalyst in the use of knowledge for wealth and power.' Accurate timekeepers and accurate maps have long been worth their weight in gold, and command over spaces and times is a crucial element in any search for profit. For example, the property speculator who has the money to wait while controlling development on adjacent spaces is in a much better situation to make pecuniary gains compared to someone who lacks power in any one of these dimensions. Furthermore, money can be used to command time (our own or that of others) and space. Conversely, command of time and space can be converted back into command over money.

Two very general questions then emerge. First, those who define the material practices, forms, and meanings of money, time, or space fix certain basic rules of the social game. I do not wish to imply by this that those who define the rules always win any contest that may ensue. There are too many examples of unintended consequences (in which those in power define rules that undermine their own power base), and of oppositional groups learning and using the rules to overwhelm those who devised them, for such a simple equation to be credible. It is nevertheless the case that ideological and political

hegemony in any society depends on an ability to control the material context of personal and social experience. For this reason, the materializations and meanings given to money, time, and space have more than a little significance for the maintenance of political power. The immediate problem, however, is to understand the social processes whereby their objective qualities are established. That way we can better evaluate the claim that something vital has happened to our experience of space and time since the 1970s so as to provoke the turn to postmodernism.

Interior to that general question lies another: to consider how well-established spatial and temporal practices and 'discourses' are 'used up' and 'worked over' in social action. How, for example, does the grid of spatial practices or the typology of social time acquire a class, gender, or other social content in a given historical situation? The common-sense rules which define the 'time and place for everything' are certainly used to achieve and replicate particular distributions of social power (between classes, between women and men, etc.). This question is not, however, independent of the first. Frustrated power struggles (on the part of women, workers, colonized peoples, ethnic minorities, immigrants, etc.) within a given set of rules generate much of the social energy to change those rules. Shifts in the objective qualities of space and time, in short, can be, and often are, effected through social struggle.

It is against this background that I shall take a cursory look (drawing heavily upon materials already published in Harvey, 1985a, chapter 2, and 1985b, chapter 1) at the relations between money, space, and time as interlocking sources of social power. I begin with the simplest connection. Money measures value, but if we ask what constitutes value in the first instance, we find it impossible to define value without saying something about how the time of social labour is allocated. 'Economy of time,' says Marx (1973, 173), 'to this all economy ultimately reduces itself.' Conversely, though money represents social labour time, the rise of the money form shaped the meaning of time in important and specific ways. Le Goff (1980) points out, for example, that the enlargement of the monetary sphere of circulation, and the organization of commercial networks over space in the early mediaeval period, forced the merchant to construct 'a more adequate and predictable measure of time for the orderly conduct of business.' But notice the implication of space in this argument. The mediaeval merchant discovered the fundamental concept of 'the price of time' only in the course of exploring space. Because trade and exchange entail spatial movement, it was the time taken up by this spatial movement which taught the merchant to

attach prices, and hence the money form itself, to working time (cf. Landes, 1983, 72).

Two general implications then follow. First, progressive monetization of relations in social life transforms the qualities of time and space. The definition of a 'time and a place for everything' necessarily changes and constitutes a new framework for promoting new kinds of social relations. The mediaeval merchants, for example, in constructing a better measure of time 'for the orderly conduct of business' promoted a 'fundamental change in the measurement of time which was indeed a change in time itself.' Symbolized by clocks and bells that called workers to labour and merchants to market, separated from the 'natural' rhythms of agrarian life, and divorced from religious significations, merchants and masters created a new 'chronological net' in which daily life was caught. The new definition of time did not pass undisputed by religious authority any more than by the workers called upon to accept the new rules of temporal discipline. 'These evolving mental structures and their material expression,' Le Goff concludes, 'were deeply implicated in the mechanisms of class struggle.' Ironically, the explorations of the calendar and time measurement that had been promoted by the monastic orders in order to impose religious discipline were appropriated by the nascent bourgeoisie as a means to organize and discipline the populations of mediaeval towns to a new-found and very secular labour discipline. 'Equal hours' in the city, comments Landes (1983, 78), 'announced the victory of a new cultural and economic order.'

By the same token, the mapping of the world opened up a way to look upon space as open to appropriation for private uses. Mapping also turned out to be far from ideologically neutral. Helgerson (1986), for example, argues that Christopher Saxton's collection of county maps of Britain, published in 1579, not only allowed the English, for the first time, to take 'effective visual and conceptual possession of the physical kingdom in which they lived,' but also strengthened the sense of individual and local powers within a framework of national loyalties, all 'at the expense of identity based on dynastic loyalty.' But if the dynastic powers looked to trade as a source of the money power which they needed to pursue their political and military objectives (as well as their passion for consumption), then they had to initiate the rational representation of space and time that supported the power of that class (the merchants) which would ultimately supplant them. In the long run, of course, the state authorities had little option. The cost of cartographic ignorance – militarily as well as in trade and commerce – was so enormous that the incentive to procure good maps overwhelmed any other reservations. 'In the

international contest for access to the riches of the Indies,' Landes (1983, 110) notes, 'maps were money, and secret agents of aspiring powers paid gold for good copies of the carefully guarded Portuguese *padrons*'.

A second, and in some respects more difficult implication is that modifications of the qualities of space and time can result from the pursuit of monetary objectives. If money has no meaning independent of time and space, then it is always possible to pursue profit (or other forms of advantage) by altering the ways time and space are used and defined. This thesis can be most cogently explored in the context of the profit-seeking that occurs within the standard form of circulation of capital. Material commodity exchange entails change of location and spatial movement. Any complicated system of production entails spatial organization (even if only of the shop floor or office). Overcoming these spatial barriers takes time and money. Efficiency of spatial organization and movement is therefore an important issue for all capitalists. The time of production together with the time of circulation of exchange make up the concept of 'the turnover time of capital.' This, too, is an extremely important magnitude. The faster the capital launched into circulation can be recuperated, the greater the profit will be. The definitions of 'efficient spatial organization' and of 'socially necessary turnover time' are fundamental norms against which the search for profit is measured. And both are subject to change.

Consider, first, the turnover time of capital. There is an omnipresent incentive for individual capitalists to accelerate their turnover time *vis-à-vis* the social average, and in so doing to promote a social trend towards faster average turnover times. Capitalism, as we shall see, has for this reason been characterized by continuous efforts to shorten turnover times, thereby speeding up social processes while reducing the time horizons of meaningful decision-making. There are, however, a number of barriers to this tendency – barriers in the rigidity of production and labour skills, fixed capital that must be amortized, marketing frictions, consumption lags, bottlenecks to money circulation, and the like. There is a whole history of technical and organizational innovation applied to the reduction of such barriers – everything from assembly-line production (of cars or battery hens), acceleration of physical processes (fermentation, genetic engineering), to planned obsolescence in consumption (the mobilization of fashion and advertising to accelerate change), the credit system, electronic banking, and the like. It is in this context that the adaptability and flexibility of workers become vital to capitalist development. Workers, instead of acquiring a skill for life, can now look

forward to at least one if not multiple bouts of de-skilling and re-skilling in a lifetime. The accelerated destruction and reconstruction of workers' skills have been, as we saw in Part II, a central feature in the turn from Fordist to flexible modes of accumulation.

The general effect, then, is for capitalist modernization to be very much about speed-up and acceleration in the pace of economic processes and, hence, in social life. But that trend is discontinuous, punctuated by periodic crises, because fixed investments in plant and machinery, as well as in organizational forms and labour skills, cannot easily be changed. The implantation of new systems has either to await the passing of the 'natural' lifetime of the factory and the worker, or to engage in that process of 'creative destruction' which rests on the forced devaluation or destruction of past assets in order to make way for the new. Since the latter implies a loss of value even for the capitalists, strong social forces are ranged against it. When the conditions of accumulation are relatively easy, the incentive to apply such innovations is relatively weak. But at times of economic difficulty and intensifying competition, individual capitalists are forced to accelerate the turnover of their capital; those who can best intensify or speed up production, marketing, etc. are in the best position to survive. Modernizations that affect turnover time are not, therefore, deployed at a uniform rate. They tend to bunch together mainly in periods of crisis. I shall later explore (chapter 17) this thesis in the context of speed-up as a response to capitalist crisis since 1972.

Since 'moments' are 'the elements of profit' (Marx, 1967, vol. 1, 233), it is command over the labour time of others, however, that gives capitalists the initial power to appropriate profit as their own. Struggles between owners of labour and of capital over the use of time and the intensity of labour have been endemic. They go back, as both Le Goff and E. P. Thompson (1967) agree, to at least the mediaeval period. Marx notes that the struggle over the length of the working day arose in Elizabethan England when the state legislated an increase in the length of the customary working day for labourers freshly released from the land by violent expropriation, and consequently prone to be unstable, undisciplined, and itinerant. The incarceration of the unemployed with the mad (which Marx highlights and Foucault erects into a whole book) was but one of many means to bring the labour force to heel. 'New labour habits were formed, and a new time-discipline imposed,' Thompson confirms, over several generations, forged under the pressure to synchronize both the social and the detail division of labour and to maximize the extraction of the labourer's surplus labour time (the basis of profit).

Thus came into being 'the familiar landscape of industrial capitalism, with the time-sheet, the timekeeper, the informers and the fines.' The battle over minutes and seconds, over the pace and intensity of work schedules, over the working life (and rights of retirement), over the working week and day (with rights to 'free time'), over the working year (and rights to paid vacations), has been, and continues to be, right royally fought. Workers learned to fight back within the confines of the newly internalized sense of time:

> The first generation of factory workers were taught by their masters the importance of time; the second generation formed their short-time work committees in the ten-hour movement; the third generation struck for overtime or time-and-a-half. They had accepted the categories of their employers and learned to fight back within them. They had learned their lesson, that time is money, only too well. (Thompson, 1967, 90)

It is still very much the case that attempts to speed up or intensify labour processes spark some of the strongest and bitterest of struggles between labour and management. Stratagems such as piece-work or production bonuses can only ever be counted partial successes from the standpoint of management, because workers frequently establish their own work norms that in turn regulate the rate for the job. Direct confrontations over speed-up and intensity, over break times and schedules, are too often destructive to be engaged in with ease. The speed of assembly-line movement, robotization, and automated control systems provide more insidious means of indirect control, but rarely can be altered except marginally without sparking worker protest. Yet in spite of this resistance, most work schedules are extremely tightly ordered, and the intensity and speed of production have largely been organized in ways that favour capital rather than labour. Telephone operators working for AT&T are expected to deal with one call every 28 seconds as a condition of contract, lorry drivers push themselves to extremes of endurance and court death by taking pills to keep awake, air traffic controllers suffer extremes of stress, assembly-line workers take to drugs and alcohol, all part and parcel of a daily work rhythm fixed by profit-making rather then by the construction of humane work schedules. Compensations, such as paid vacations, higher wages, shorter working weeks, early retirement, are all too often, as Marx long ago observed, recuperated by capital in the form of even greater intensity and speed-up on the job. The balance of class forces is not easily struck, however. When the General Motors plant at Lordstown was set up in the early 1970s, a young and restive

labour force fought speed-up and automated control tooth and nail. By the end of the 1970s, however, much of the resistance had crumbled under the pressures of widespread local unemployment, fears of plant closure, and co-optation into new rhythms of work.

We can track similar processes and arrive at similar conclusions with respect to the experience of space. The incentive to create the world market, to reduce spatial barriers, and to annihilate space through time is omni-present, as is the incentive to rationalize spatial organization into efficient configurations of production (serial organization of the detail division of labour, factory systems, and assembly line, territorial division of labour, and agglomeration in large towns), circulation networks (transport and communications systems), and consumption (household and domestic layout, community organization, and residential differentiation, collective consumption in cities). Innovations dedicated to the removal of spatial barriers in all of these respects have been of immense significance in the history of capitalism, turning that history into a very geographical affair – the railroad and the telegraph, the automobile, radio and telephone, the jet aircraft and television, and the recent telecommunications revolution are cases in point.

But here, too, capitalism encounters multiple contradictions. Spatial barriers can be reduced only through the production of particular spaces (railways, highways, airports, teleports, etc.). Furthermore, a spatial rationalization of production, circulation, and consumption at one point in time may not be suited to the further accumulation of capital at a later point in time. The production, restructuring, and growth of spatial organization is a highly problematic and very expensive affair, held back by vast investments in physical infrastructures that cannot be moved, and social infrastructures that are always slow to change. The continuous incentive for individual capitalists to relocate in lower-cost or higher profit locations is likewise checked by the costs of movement. Consequently the intensification of competition and the onset of crises tend to accelerate the pace of spatial restructuring through selective and place-specific devaluation of assets.

These general trends and tensions have to be set, however, against the background of divergent interests and class struggle, since it is almost invariably the case that shifts in tempo or in spatial ordering redistribute social power by changing the conditions of monetary gain (in the form of wages, profits, capital gains, and the like). Superior command over space has always been a vital aspect of class (and intra-class) struggle. In 1815, for example, Nathan Rothschild used his unrivalled information network to get the first news of Wellington's victory over Napoleon at Waterloo, promptly sold, and triggered such a market panic that he could then move in to pick up

all manner of market bargains, so earning 'the quickest unearned fortune on record' (Davidson and Rees-Mogg, 1988). Capitalists, furthermore, are not averse to using spatial strategies in competition with each other. The struggle between diverse railroad interests in the nineteenth century provides abundant examples of this practice, while Tarbell (1904, 146) depicts Rockefeller 'bent over a map and with military precision [planning] the capture of strategic locations on the map of East Coast oil refineries.' Domination of marketing networks and spaces remains a fundamental corporate aim, and many a bitter struggle for market share is fought out with the precision of a military campaign to capture territory and space. Accurate geographical information (including inside information on everything from political development to crop yields or labour struggles) becomes a vital commodity in such struggles.

For these reasons also, the ability to influence the production of space is an important means to augment social power. In material terms this means that those who can affect the spatial distribution of investments in transport and communications, in physical and social infrastructures, or the territorial distribution of administrative, political, and economic powers can often reap material rewards. The range of phenomena to be considered here is vast indeed – it varies all the way from one neighbour inciting another to help improve local property values by painting the porch, through systematic pressures by land and property developers to put in water and sewer connections that will improve the value of the lands they hold, to the interest of military contractors in exacerbating geopolitical tensions (such as the Cold War) as a means to ensure bigger and better armaments contracts. Influence over the ways of representing space, as well as over the spaces of representation, can also be important. If workers can be persuaded, for example, that space is an open field of play for capital but a closed terrain for themselves, then a crucial advantage accrues to the capitalists. Workers, in conceding greater powers of mobility to capital (see Part II), might be more liable to concede before the threat of capital flight than would be the case if they were convinced that capitalists could not move. If, to take an example from the field of spatial representation, geopolitical threats can be partially manufactured with the help of the appropriate kinds of map projection (which merge the image of an 'evil empire' like Russia with a threatening geopolitical position), then considerable power goes to those who command the techniques of representation. If a picture or map is worth a thousand words, then power in the realms of representation may end up being as important as power over the materiality of spatial organization itself.

Such considerations have long entered in as crucial determinants in

the dynamics of class struggle. We can here, I think, invoke a simple rule: that those who command space can always control the politics of place even though, and this is a vital corollary, it takes control of some place to command space in the first instance. The relative powers of working-class movements and the bourgeoisie to command space had long been an important constituent element in the power relations between them. John Foster, in *Class struggle in the industrial revolution*, for example, recounts several incidents in which local mill owners found it difficult to control their work-force because the local forces of law and order were prone to sympathize (if only through kinship connections) with the militants, and because it was difficult to summon external assistance with the requisite speed. In the massive railroad strike that shook the East Coast of the United States, on the other hand, a different story was to unfold. The railroad owners likewise found themselves facing a local militia reluctant to act. But the telegraph not only allowed federal assistance to be summoned with great dispatch, but also facilitated the transmission of false messages to the effect that workers had returned to work in St Louis or Baltimore, and that the strike was collapsing at different points along the line. Even though the press played an important progressive role during this incident (being rather more pro-labour then than now), the superior power to command space gave the capitalists an added advantage in what was an uneven but tense power struggle.

The differential powers of geographical mobility for capital and labour have not remained constant over time, nor are they evenly available to different factions of capital and labour. When either capitalists or workers have important assets fixed and immobile in space, then neither side is in a good position to use powers of geographical mobility against the other. The skilled roving craft-workers in, say, the iron industry in the early years of the industrial revolution moved far and wide across Europe and used their superior powers of geographical mobility to their own financial advantage. Modern, debt-encumbered homeowners in weak housing market situations, with strong social interests in staying in a particular milieu, are much more vulnerable. While some capitalists are plainly more mobile than others, they are all forced to some degree or other to 'put down roots,' and many can ill afford to change locations as a result. There are, however, various facets of the capitalists' condition that often force their hand. Accumulation provides them with the wherewithal for expansion, and the options are always to expand *in situ* or to set up a branch plant elsewhere. The incentive to go for the latter increases over time simply by virtue of the congestion costs

associated with expansion on original sites. Inter-capitalist competition and the fluidity of money capital over space also force geographical rationalizations in location as part of the accumulation dynamic. Such processes frequently get caught up in the dynamics of class struggle. Gordon (1978) records, for example, cases of suburbanization of industry in New England at the beginning of the century for the direct purpose of avoiding the stronger labour organization in the larger cities. More recently, under conditions of heightened competition, technological change and rapid restructuring, innumerable cases can be cited of industrial relocation decisions taken with an eye to achieving better labour discipline. If capitalists wish to avoid unionization in the United States, a recent consultant's report advised, they should try to split their labour process into components employing no more than fifty workers, and locate the units at least two hundred miles apart from each other. The conditions of flexible accumulation make the exploration of such options more, rather than less, possible.

Prior to the coming of the railroad and the telegraph, the powers of capital and labour in terms of the ability to command space were not radically different. The bourgeoisie plainly feared the revolutionary threat of that power. When, for example, the Luddites took to machine-breaking in many disparate incidents, or agricultural labourers simultaneously took to rick-burning and other forms of protest in many different locales in England in 1830, the bourgeoisie became only too ready to accept the theory that mysterious figures such as Ned Ludd or Captain Swing were passing undetected through the land, fomenting discontent and revolutionary sentiments as they went. The bourgeoisie soon learned to use its superior trading connections and command over space as a means to establish social control. In 1848, for example, the French bourgeoisie used its commercial ties to mobilize a *petit bourgeois* militia from provincial France in order to crush the revolution in Paris (a tactic that was to be repeated with even more horrendous effects in the suppression of the Paris Commune). Selective control over the rapid means of communication was deployed to great advantage to counter the Chartist movement in Britain in the 1840s and to suppress working-class discontent in France after the *coup d'état* of 1851. 'The supreme glory of Napoleon III,' wrote Baudelaire, 'will have been to prove that anybody can govern a great nation as soon as they have got control of the telegraph and the national press.'

The working-class movement, for its part, accumulated similar insights. Not only did the First International seek to unite workers from many different places and industries, working under quite

different social relations, into a common cause, but it also began, in the 1860s, to transfer funds and material aid from one space of class struggle to another. If the bourgeoisie could command space for its own class purposes, then the workers' movement could do the same. And to the degree that the First International appeared to command genuine power, the bourgeoisie had every reason to fear it (as indeed they did) in exactly the same way that they had feared the mysterious roamings of Captain Swing decades before. The capacity to link workers in united action across space has always been an important variable in class struggle. To some degree Marx seemed to believe that the massing of workers in the factories and the cities of industrial capitalism would by itself provide a sufficient geopolitical power base for class action. But the whole thrust of First International geopolitics was to broaden that base in as systematic a way as possible.

It is rare indeed for class action not to have to face up to its specific geographical constraints. In the prolonged miners' strike in Britain in 1984, for example, the so called 'flying pickets' moving quickly from one pit-head to another posed an acute problem for the state powers, which had to devise equally mobile tactics in response. Legislation to outlaw secondary industrial action and flying pickets was designed to curb working-class power over space and to weaken the potential for coherent class action by confining it to place.

The crushing of the Paris Commune, and the 1877 railroad strike in the United States, demonstrated early on, however, that superior command over space would usually lie with the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, the workers' movement persisted in its internationalist vision (though with weak actual organization) up until the eve of the First World War, when the Second International split essentially on the question of loyalty to nation (space) versus loyalty to class (historical) interests. The victory of the former current not only had workers fighting on both sides of what most recognized as a war between capitalists, but initiated a phase of workers' movement history in which proletarian interests always ended up, no matter what the rhetoric, serving at the feet of national interests.

Working-class movements are, in fact, generally better at organizing in and dominating *place* than they are at commanding *space*. The various revolutions that broke out in Paris in the nineteenth century foundered on the inability to consolidate national power through a spatial strategy that would command the national space. Movements such as the Seattle general strike of 1918 (when workers effectively took control of the city for nearly a week), the St Petersburg uprising of 1905, coupled with a long and detailed history of

municipal socialism, community organization around strike action (such as the Flint strike of 1933), through to the urban uprisings of the United States of the 1960s, all illustrate the point. On the other hand, simultaneity of revolutionary upsurges in different locations, as in 1848 or 1968, strikes fear into any ruling class precisely because its superior command over space is threatened. It is exactly in such situations that international capitalism raises the spectre of an international conspiracy, deeply offensive to national interests, and often invokes the power of the latter to preserve its ability to command space.

What is even more interesting is the political response to this latent power of revolutionary and worker mobilization in place. One of the principal tasks of the capitalist state is to locate power in the spaces which the bourgeoisie controls, and disempower those spaces which oppositional movements have the greatest potentiality to command. This was the principle that led France to deny self-government to Paris until the total *embourgeoisement* of the city allowed it to become the fiefdom of Chirac's right-wing politics. This was the same strategy that lay behind Thatcher's abolition of metropolitan governments like the Greater London Council (controlled by a Marxist left during the period 1981–85). It was also manifest in the slow erosion of municipal and urban powers in the United States during the 'progressive era' when municipal socialism appeared as a real possibility, thus making a federalization of state powers more acceptable to the large-scale capitalists. It is in such a context that class struggle also assumes its global role. Henri Lefebvre puts it this way:

> Today, more than ever, the class struggle is inscribed in space. Indeed, it is that struggle alone which prevents abstract space from taking over the whole planet and papering over all differences. Only the class struggle has the capacity to differentiate, to generate differences which are not intrinsic to economic growth ... that is to say, differences which are not either induced by or acceptable to that growth.

The whole history of territorial organization (see Sack, 1987), colonization and imperialism, of uneven geographical development, of urban and rural contradictions, as well as of geopolitical conflict testifies to the importance of such struggles within the history of capitalism.

If space is indeed to be thought of as a system of 'containers' of social power (to use the imagery of Foucault), then it follows that

the accumulation of capital is perpetually deconstructing that social power by re-shaping its geographical bases. Put the other way round, any struggle to reconstitute power relations is a struggle to re-organize their spatial bases. It is in this light that we can better understand 'why capitalism is continually reterritorializing with one hand what it was deterritorializing with the other' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1984).

Movements of opposition to the disruptions of home, community, territory, and nation by the restless flow of capital are legion. But then so too are movements against the tight constraints of a purely monetary expression of value and the systematized organization of space and time. What is more, such movements spread far beyond the realms of class struggle in any narrowly defined sense. The rigid discipline of time schedules, of tightly organized property rights and other forms of spatial determination, generate widespread resistances on the part of individuals who seek to put themselves outside these hegemonic constraints in exactly the same way that others refuse the discipline of money. And from time to time these individual resistances can coalesce into social movements with the aim of liberating space and time from their current materializations and constructing an alternative kind of society in which value, time, and money are understood in new and quite different ways. Movements of all sorts – religious, mystical, social, communitarian, humanitarian, etc. – define themselves directly in terms of an antagonism to the power of money and of rationalized conceptions of space and time over daily life. The history of such utopian, religious, and communitarian movements testifies to the vigour of exactly this antagonism. Indeed, much of the colour and ferment of social movements, of street life and culture, as well as of artistic and other cultural practices, derives precisely from the infinitely varied texture of oppositions to the materializations of money, space, and time under conditions of capitalist hegemony.

Yet all such social movements, no matter how well articulated their aims, run up against a seemingly immovable paradox. For not only does the community of money, coupled with a rationalized space and time, define them in an oppositional sense, but the movements have to confront the question of value and its expression as well as the necessary organization of space and time appropriate to their own reproduction. In so doing, they necessarily open themselves to the dissolving power of money as well as to the shifting definitions of space and time arrived at through the dynamics of capital circulation. Capital, in short, continues to dominate, and it does so in part through superior command over space and time, even

when opposition movements gain control over a particular place for a time. The 'othernesses' and 'regional resistances' that postmodernist politics emphasize can flourish in a particular place. But they are all too often subject to the power of capital over the co-ordination of universal fragmented space and the march of capitalism's global historical time that lies outside of the purview of any particular one of them.

A number of general conclusions can now be ventured. Spatial and temporal practices are never neutral in social affairs. They always express some kind of class or other social content, and are more often than not the focus of intense social struggle. That this is so becomes doubly obvious when we consider the ways in which space and time connect with money, and the way that connection becomes even more tightly organized with the development of capitalism. Time and space both get defined through the organization of social practices fundamental to commodity production. But the dynamic force of capital accumulation (and overaccumulation), together with conditions of social struggle, renders the relations unstable. As a consequence, nobody quite knows what 'the right time and place for everything' might be. Part of the insecurity which bedevils capitalism as a social formation arises out of this instability in the spatial and temporal principles around which social life might be organized (let alone ritualized in the manner of traditional societies). During phases of maximal change, the spatial and temporal bases for reproduction of the social order are subject to the severest disruption. In subsequent chapters I shall show that it is exactly at such moments that major shifts in systems of representation, cultural forms, and philosophical sentiment occur.

17

Time–space compression and the postmodern condition

How have the uses and meanings of space and time shifted with the transition from Fordism to flexible accumulation? I want to suggest that we have been experiencing, these last two decades, an intense phase of time–space compression that has had a disorienting and disruptive impact upon political–economic practices, the balance of class power, as well as upon cultural and social life. While historical analogies are always dangerous, I think it no accident that postmodern sensibility evidences strong sympathies for certain of the confused political, cultural, and philosophical movements that occurred at the beginning of this century (in Vienna for example) when the sense of time–space compression was also peculiarly strong. I also note the revival of interest in geopolitical theory since around 1970, the aesthetics of place, and a revived willingness (even in social theory) to open the problem of spatiality to a general reconsideration (see, e.g., Gregory and Urry, 1985, and Soja, 1988).

The transition to flexible accumulation was in part accomplished through the rapid deployment of new organizational forms and new technologies in production. Though the latter may have originated in the pursuit of military superiority, their application had everything to do with bypassing the rigidities of Fordism and accelerating turnover time as a solution to the grumbling problems of Fordism–Keynesianism that erupted into open crisis in 1973. Speed-up was achieved in production by organizational shifts towards vertical disintegration – sub-contracting, outsourcing, etc. – that reversed the Fordist tendency towards vertical integration and produced an increasing roundaboutness in production even in the face of increasing financial centralization. Other organizational shifts – such as the 'just-in-time' delivery system that reduces stock inventories – when coupled with the new technologies of electronic control, small-batch production, etc., all reduced turnover times in many sectors of pro-

duction (electronics, machine tools, automobiles, construction, clothing, etc.). For the labourers this all implied an intensification (speed-up) in labour processes and an acceleration in the de-skilling and re-skilling required to meet new labour needs (see Part II).

Accelerating turnover time in production entails parallel accelerations in exchange and consumption. Improved systems of communication and information flow, coupled with rationalizations in techniques of distribution (packaging, inventory control, containerization, market feed-back, etc.), made it possible to circulate commodities through the market system with greater speed. Electronic banking and plastic money were some of the innovations that improved the speed of the inverse flow of money. Financial services and markets (aided by computerized trading) likewise speeded up, so as to make, as the saying has it, 'twenty-four hours a very long time' in global stock markets.

Of the many developments in the arena of consumption, two stand out as being of particular importance. The mobilization of fashion in mass (as opposed to elite) markets provided a means to accelerate the pace of consumption not only in clothing, ornament, and decoration but also across a wide swathe of life-styles and recreational activities (leisure and sporting habits, pop music styles, video and children's games, and the like). A second trend was a shift away from the consumption of goods and into the consumption of services – not only personal, business, educational, and health services, but also into entertainments, spectacles, happenings, and distractions. The 'lifetime' of such services (a visit to a museum, going to a rock concert or movie, attending lectures or health clubs), though hard to estimate, is far shorter than that of an automobile or washing machine. If there are limits to the accumulation and turnover of physical goods (even counting the famous six thousand pairs of shoes of Imelda Marcos), then it makes sense for capitalists to turn to the provision of very ephemeral services in consumption. This quest may lie at the root of the rapid capitalist penetration, noted by Mandel and Jameson (see above, p. 63), of many sectors of cultural production from the mid-1960s onwards.

Of the innumerable consequences that have flowed from this general speed-up in the turnover times of capital, I shall focus on those that have particular bearing on postmodern ways of thinking, feeling, and doing.

The first major consequence has been to accentuate volatility and ephemerality of fashions, products, production techniques, labour processes, ideas and ideologies, values and established practices. The sense that 'all that is solid melts into air' has rarely been more

pervasive (which probably accounts for the volume of writing on that theme in recent years). The effect of this on labour markets and skills has already been considered (see Part II). My interest here is to look at the more general society-wide effects.

In the realm of commodity production, the primary effect has been to emphasize the values and virtues of instantaneity (instant and fast foods, meals, and other satisfactions) and of disposability (cups, plates, cutlery, packaging, napkins, clothing, etc.). The dynamics of a 'throwaway' society, as writers like Alvin Toffler (1970) dubbed it, began to become evident during the 1960s. It meant more than just throwing away produced goods (creating a monumental waste-disposal problem), but also being able to throw away values, life-styles, stable relationships, and attachments to things, buildings, places, people, and received ways of doing and being. These were the immediate and tangible ways in which the 'accelerative thrust in the larger society' crashed up against 'the ordinary daily experience of the individual' (Toffler, p. 40). Through such mechanisms (which proved highly effective from the standpoint of accelerating the turn-over of goods in consumption) individuals were forced to cope with disposability, novelty, and the prospects for instant obsolescence. 'Compared to the life in a less rapidly changing society, more situations now flow through the channel in any given interval of time – and this implies profound changes in human psychology.' This transcience, Toffler goes on to suggest, creates 'a temporariness in the structure of both public and personal value systems' which in turn provides a context for the 'crack-up of consensus' and the diversification of values within a fragmenting society. The bombardment of stimuli, simply on the commodity front, creates problems of sensory overload that makes Simmel's dissection of the problems of modernist urban living at the turn of the century seem to pale into insignificance by comparison. Yet, precisely because of the relative qualities of the shift, the psychological responses exist roughly within the range of those which Simmel identified – the blocking out of sensory stimuli, denial, and cultivation of the blasé attitude, myopic specialization, reversion to images of a lost past (hence the importance of mementoes, museums, ruins), and excessive simplification (either in the presentation of self or in the interpretation of events). In this regard, it is instructive to see how Toffler (pp. 326–9), at a much later moment of time–space compression, echoes the thinking of Simmel, whose ideas were shaped at a moment of similar trauma more than seventy years before.

The volatility, of course, makes it extremely difficult to engage in any long-term planning. Indeed, learning to play the volatility right

is now just as important as accelerating turnover time. This means either being highly adaptable and fast-moving in response to market shifts, or masterminding the volatility. The first strategy points mainly towards short-term rather than long-term planning, and cultivating the art of taking short-term gains wherever they are to be had. This has been a notorious feature of US management in recent times. The average tenure of company executive officers has come down to five years, and companies nominally involved in production frequently seek short-term gains through mergers, acquisitions, or operations in financial and currency markets. The tension of managerial performance in such an environment is considerable, producing all kinds of side-effects, such as the so-called 'yuppie flu' (a psychological stress condition that paralyses the performance of talented people and produces long-lasting flu-like symptoms) or the frenzied life-style of financial operators whose addiction to work, long hours, and the rush of power makes them excellent candidates for the kind of schizophrenic mentality that Jameson depicts.

Mastering or intervening actively in the production of volatility, on the other hand, entails manipulation of taste and opinion, either through being a fashion leader or by so saturating the market with images as to shape the volatility to particular ends. This means, in either case, the construction of new sign systems and imagery, which is itself an important aspect of the postmodern condition – one that needs to be considered from several different angles. To begin with, advertising and media images (as we saw in Part I) have come to play a very much more integrative role in cultural practices and now assume a much greater importance in the growth dynamics of capitalism. Advertising, moreover, is no longer built around the idea of informing or promoting in the ordinary sense, but is increasingly geared to manipulating desires and tastes through images that may or may not have anything to do with the product to be sold (see plate 1.6). If we stripped modern advertising of direct reference to the three themes of money, sex, and power there would be very little left. Furthermore, images have, in a sense, themselves become commodities. This phenomenon has led Baudrillard (1981) to argue that Marx's analysis of commodity production is outdated because capitalism is now predominantly concerned with the production of signs, images, and sign systems rather than with commodities themselves. The transition he points to is important, though there are in fact no serious difficulties in extending Marx's theory of commodity production to cope with it. To be sure, the systems of production and marketing of images (like markets for land, public goods, or labour power) do exhibit some special features that need to be taken into

account. The consumer turnover time of certain images can be very short indeed (close to that ideal of the 'twinkling of an eye' that Marx saw as optimal from the standpoint of capital circulation). Many images can also be mass-marketed instantaneously over space. Given the pressures to accelerate turnover time (and to overcome spatial barriers), the commodification of images of the most ephemeral sort would seem to be a godsend from the standpoint of capital accumulation, particularly when other paths to relieve over-accumulation seem blocked. Ephemerality and instantaneous communicability over space then become virtues to be explored and appropriated by capitalists for their own purposes.

But images have to perform other functions. Corporations, governments, political and intellectual leaders, all value a stable (though dynamic) image as part of their aura of authority and power. The mediatization of politics has now become all pervasive. This becomes, in effect, the fleeting, superficial, and illusory means whereby an individualistic society of transients sets forth its nostalgia for common values. The production and marketing of such images of permanence and power require considerable sophistication, because the continuity and stability of the image have to be retained while stressing the adaptability, flexibility, and dynamism of whoever or whatever is being imaged. Moreover, image becomes all-important in competition, not only through name-brand recognition but also because of various associations of 'respectability,' 'quality,' 'prestige,' 'reliability,' and 'innovation.' Competition in the image-building trade becomes a vital aspect of inter-firm competition. Success is so plainly profitable that investment in image-building (sponsoring the arts, exhibitions, television productions, new buildings, as well as direct marketing) becomes as important as investment in new plant and machinery. The image serves to establish an identity in the market place. This is also true in labour markets. The acquisition of an image (by the purchase of a sign system such as designer clothes and the right car) becomes a singularly important element in the presentation of self in labour markets and, by extension, becomes integral to the quest for individual identity, self-realization, and meaning. Amusing yet sad signals of this sort of quest abound. A California firm manufactures imitation car telephones, indistinguishable from the real ones, and they sell like hot cakes to a populace desperate to acquire such a symbol of importance. Personal image consultants have become big business in New York City, the *International Herald Tribune* has reported, as a million or so people a year in the city region sign up for courses with firms called Image Assemblers, Image Builders, Image Crafters, and Image Creators. 'People make up their minds

about you in around one tenth of a second these days,' says one image consultant. 'Fake it till you make it,' is the slogan of another.

It has always been the case, of course, that symbols of wealth, status, fame, and power as well as of class have been important in bourgeois society, but probably nowhere near as widely in the past as now. The increasing material affluence generated during the post-war Fordist boom posed the problem of converting rising incomes into an effective demand that satisfied the rising aspirations of youth, women, and the working class. Given the ability to produce images as commodities more or less at will, it becomes feasible for accumulation to proceed at least in part on the basis of pure image production and marketing. The ephemerality of such images can then be interpreted in part as a struggle on the part of the oppressed groups of whatever sort to establish their own identity (in terms of street culture, musical styles, fads and fashions made up for themselves) and the rush to convert those innovations to commercial advantage (Carnaby Street in the late 1960s proved an excellent pioneer). The effect is to make it seem as if we are living in a world of ephemeral created images. The psychological impacts of sensory overload, of the sort that Simmel and Toffler identify, are thereby put to work with a redoubled effect.

The materials to produce and reproduce such images, if they were not readily to hand, have themselves been the focus for innovation – the better the replication of the image, the greater the mass market for image making could become. This is in itself an important issue and it brings us more explicitly to consider the role of the 'simulacrum' in postmodernism. By 'simulacrum' is meant a state of such near perfect replication that the difference between the original and the copy becomes almost impossible to spot. The production of images as simulacra is relatively easy, given modern techniques. Insofar as identity is increasingly dependent upon images, this means that the serial and recursive replications of identities (individual, corporate, institutional, and political) becomes a very real possibility and problem. We can certainly see it at work in the realm of politics as the image makers and the media assume a more powerful role in the shaping of political identities. But there are many more tangible realms where the simulacrum has a heightened role. With modern building materials it is possible to replicate ancient buildings with such exactitude that authenticity or origins can be put into doubt. The manufacture of antiques and other art objects becomes entirely possible, making the high-class forgery a serious problem in the art collection business. We not only possess, therefore, the capacity to pile images from the past or from other places eclectically and

simultaneously upon the television screen, but even to transform those images into material simulacra in the form of built environments, events and spectacles, and the like, which become in many respects indistinguishable from the originals. What happens to cultural forms when the imitations become real, and the real takes on many of the qualities of an imitation, is a question to which we shall return.

The organization and conditions of labour prevailing within what we might broadly refer to as the 'image production industry' are also quite special. An industry of this sort has to rely, after all, upon the innovative powers of the direct producers. The latter have an insecure existence, tempered by very high rewards for the successful and at least a semblance of command over their own labour process and creative powers. The growth of cultural output has in fact been phenomenal. Taylor (1987, 77) contrasts the art market condition in New York in 1945, when there were a handful of galleries and no more than a score of artists regularly exhibiting, and the two thousand or so artists who practised in or around Paris in the mid-nineteenth century, with the 150,000 artists in the New York region who claim professional status, exhibiting at some 680 galleries, producing more than 15 million art-works in a decade (compared to 200,000 in late nineteenth-century Paris). And this is only the tip of an iceberg of cultural production that encompasses local entertainers and graphic designers, street and pub musicians, photographers, as well as the more established and recognized schools for teaching art, music, drama, and the like. Dwarfing all of this, however, is what Daniel Bell (1978, 20) calls 'the cultural mass' defined as:

> not the creators of culture but the transmitters: those working in higher education, publishing, magazines, broadcast media, theater, and museums, who process and influence the reception of serious cultural products. It is in itself large enough to be a market for culture, purchase books, prints and serious music recordings. And it is also the group which, as writers, magazine editors, movie-makers, musicians, and so forth, produce the popular materials for the wider mass-culture audience.

'This whole industry specializes in the acceleration of turnover time through the production and marketing of images. This is an industry where reputations are made and lost overnight, where big money talks in no uncertain terms, and where there is a ferment of intense, often individualized, creativity poured into the vast vat of serialized and recursive mass culture. It is the organizer of fads and

fashions and, as such, it actively produces the very ephemerality that has always been fundamental to the experience of modernity. It becomes a social means to produce that sense of collapsing time horizons which it in turn so avidly feeds upon.

The popularity of a work like Alvin Toffler's *Future shock* lay precisely in its prescient appreciation of the speed with which the future has come to be discounted into the present. Out of that, also, comes a collapse of cultural distinctions between, say, 'science' and 'regular' fiction (in the works of, for example, Thomas Pynchon and Doris Lessing), as well as a merging of the cinema of distraction with the cinema of futuristic universes. We can link the schizophrenic dimension to postmodernity which Jameson emphasizes (above, pp. 53–5) with accelerations in turnover times in production, exchange, and consumption that produce, as it were, the loss of a sense of the future except and insofar as the future can be discounted into the present. Volatility and ephemerality similarly make it hard to maintain any firm sense of continuity. Past experience gets compressed into some overwhelming present. Italo Calvino (1981, 8) reports the effect on his own craft of novel writing this way:

> long novels written today are perhaps a contradiction: the dimension of time had been shattered, we cannot live or think except in fragments of time each of which goes off along its own trajectory and immediately disappears. We can rediscover the continuity of time only in the novels of that period when time no longer seemed stopped and did not yet seem to have exploded, a period that lasted no more than a hundred years.

Baudrillard (1986), never afraid to exaggerate, considers the United States as a society so given over to speed, motion, cinematic images, and technological fixes as to have created a crisis of explanatory logic. It represents, he suggests, 'the triumph of effect over cause, of instantaneity over time as depth, the triumph of surface and of pure objectivization over the depth of desire.' This, of course, is the kind of environment in which deconstructionism can flourish. If it is impossible to say anything of solidity and permanence in the midst of this ephemeral and fragmented world, then why not join in the [language] game? Everything, from novel writing and philosophizing to the experience of labouring or making a home, has to face the challenge of accelerating turnover time and the rapid write-off of traditional and historically acquired values. The temporary contract in everything, as Lyotard remarks (see above, p. 113), then becomes the hallmark of postmodern living.

But, as so often happens, the plunge into the maelstrom of ephemerality has provoked an explosion of opposed sentiments and tendencies. To begin with, all sorts of technical means arise to guard against future shocks. Firms sub-contract or resort to flexible hiring practices to discount the potential unemployment costs of future market shifts. Futures markets in everything, from corn and pork bellies to currencies and government debt, coupled with the 'securitization' of all kinds of temporary and floating debts, illustrate techniques for discounting the future into the present. Insurance hedges of all kinds against future volatility become much more widely available.

Deeper questions of meaning and interpretation also arise. The greater the ephemerality, the more pressing the need to discover or manufacture some kind of eternal truth that might lie therein. The religious revival that has become much stronger since the late sixties, and the search for authenticity and authority in politics (with all of its accoutrements of nationalism and localism and of admiration for those charismatic and 'protean' individuals with their Nietzschian 'will to power') are cases in point. The revival of interest in basic institutions (such as the family and community), and the search for historical roots are all signs of a search for more secure moorings and longer-lasting values in a shifting world. Rochberg-Halton (1986, 173), in a sample study of North Chicago residents in 1977, finds, for example, that the objects actually valued in the home were not the 'pecuniary trophies' of a materialist culture which acted as 'reliable indices of one's socio-economic class, age, gender and so on,' but the artefacts that embodied 'ties to loved ones and kin, valued experiences and activities, and memories of significant life events and people.' Photographs, particular objects (like a piano, a clock, a chair), and events (the playing of a record of a piece of music, the singing of a song) become the focus of a contemplative memory, and hence a generator of a sense of self that lies outside the sensory overloading of consumerist culture and fashion. The home becomes a private museum to guard against the ravages of time–space compression. At the very time, furthermore, that postmodernism proclaims the 'death of the author' and the rise of anti-auratic art in the public realm, the art market becomes ever more conscious of the monopoly power of the artist's signature and of questions of authenticity and forgery (no matter that the Rauschenberg is itself a mere reproduction montage). It is, perhaps, appropriate that the postmodernist developer building, as solid as the pink granite of Philip Johnson's A'T' & T building, should be debt-financed, built on the basis of fictitious capital, and architecturally conceived of, at least on the outside, more in the spirit of fiction than of function.

The spatial adjustments have been no less traumatic. The satellite communications systems deployed since the early 1970s have rendered the unit cost and time of communication invariant with respect to distance. It costs the same to communicate over 500 miles as it does over 5,000 via satellite. Air freight rates on commodities have likewise come down dramatically, while containerization has reduced the cost of bulk sea and road transport. It is now possible for a large multinational corporation like Texas Instruments to operate plants with simultaneous decision-making with respect to financial, market, input costs, quality control, and labour process conditions in more than fifty different locations across the globe (Dicken, 1986, 110–13). Mass television ownership coupled with satellite communication makes it possible to experience a rush of images from different spaces almost simultaneously, collapsing the world's spaces into a series of images on a television screen. The whole world can watch the Olympic Games, the World Cup, the fall of a dictator, a political summit, a deadly tragedy ... while mass tourism, films made in spectacular locations, make a wide range of simulated or vicarious experiences of what the world contains available to many people. The image of places and spaces becomes as open to production and ephemeral use as any other.

We have, in short, witnessed another fierce round in that process of annihilation of space through time that has always lain at the center of capitalism's dynamic (see plate 3.2). Marshall McLuhan described how he thought the 'global village' had now become a communications reality in the mid–1960s:

> After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary and mechanical technologies, the Western World is imploding. During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electronic technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned.

In recent years a whole spate of writing has taken this idea on board and tried to explore, as for example Virilio (1980) does in his *Esthétique de la disparition*, the cultural consequences of the supposed disappearance of time and space as materialized and tangible dimensions to social life.

But the collapse of spatial barriers does not mean that the significance of space is decreasing. Not for the first time in capitalism's history, we find the evidence pointing to the converse thesis. Heightened competition under conditions of crisis has coerced capitalists

into paying much closer attention to relative locational advantages, precisely because diminishing spatial barriers give capitalists the power to exploit minute spatial differentiations to good effect. Small differences in what the space contains in the way of labour supplies, resources, infrastructures, and the like become of increased significance. Superior command over space becomes an even more important weapon in class struggle. It becomes one of the means to enforce speed-up and the redefinition of skills on recalcitrant work forces. Geographical mobility and decentralization are used against a union power which traditionally concentrated in the factories of mass production. Capital flight, deindustrialization of some regions, and the industrialization of others, the destruction of traditional working-class communities as power bases in class struggle, become leitmotifs of spatial transformation under more flexible conditions of accumulation (Martin and Rowthorn, 1986; Bluestone and Harrison, 1982; Harrison and Bluestone, 1988).

As spatial barriers diminish so we become much more sensitized to what the world's spaces contain. Flexible accumulation typically exploits a wide range of seemingly contingent geographical circumstances, and reconstitutes them as structured internal elements of its own encompassing logic. For example, geographical differentiations in the mode and strengths of labour control together with variations in the quality as well as the quantity of labour power assume a much greater significance in corporate locational strategies. New industrial ensembles arise, sometimes out of almost nothing (as the various silicon valleys and glens) but more often on the basis of some pre-existing mix of skills and resources. The 'Third Italy' (Emilia-Romagna) builds upon a peculiar mix of co-operative entrepreneurialism, artisan labour, and local communist administrations anxious to generate employment, and inserts its clothing products with incredible success into a highly competitive world economy. Flanders attracts outside capital on the basis of a dispersed, flexible, and reasonably skilled labour supply with a deep hostility to unionism and socialism. Los Angeles imports the highly successful patriarchal labour systems of South-East Asia through mass immigration, while the celebrated paternalistic labour control system of the Japanese and Taiwanese is imported into California and South Wales. The story in each case is different, making it appear as if the uniqueness of this or that geographical circumstance matters more than ever before. Yet it does so, ironically, only because of the collapse of spatial barriers.

While labour control is always central, there are many other aspects of geographical organization that have risen to a new prominence under conditions of more flexible accumulation. The need for accurate information and speedy communication has emphasized the role

of so-called 'world cities' in the financial and corporate system (centres equipped with teleports, airports, fixed communication links, as well as a wide array of financial, legal, business, and infrastructural services). The diminution of spatial barriers results in the reaffirmation and realignment of hierarchy within what is now a global urban system. The local availability of material resources of special qualities, or even at marginally lower costs, starts to be ever more important, as do local variations in market taste that are today more easily exploited under conditions of small-batch production and flexible design. Local differences in entrepreneurial ability, venture capital, scientific and technical know-how, social attitudes, also enter in, while the local networks of influence and power, the accumulation strategies of local ruling elites (as opposed to nation state policies) also become more deeply implicated in the regime of flexible accumulation.

But this then raises another dimension to the changing role of spatiality in contemporary society. If capitalists become increasingly sensitive to the spatially differentiated qualities of which the world's geography is composed, then it is possible for the peoples and powers that command those spaces to alter them in such a way as to be more rather than less attractive to highly mobile capital. Local ruling elites can, for example, implement strategies of local labour control, of skill enhancement, of infrastructural provision, of tax policy, state regulation, and so on, in order to attract development within their particular space. The qualities of place stand thereby to be emphasized in the midst of the increasing abstractions of space. The active production of places with special qualities becomes an important stake in spatial competition between localities, cities, regions, and nations. Corporatist forms of governance can flourish in such spaces, and themselves take on entrepreneurial roles in the production of favourable business climates and other special qualities. And it is in this context that we can better situate the striving, noted in Part I (pp. 88–92), for cities to forge a distinctive image and to create an atmosphere of place and tradition that will act as a lure to both capital and people 'of the right sort' (i.e. wealthy and influential). Heightened inter-place competition should lead to the production of more variegated spaces within the increasing homogeneity of international exchange. But to the degree that this competition opens up cities to systems of accumulation, it ends up producing what Boyer (1988) calls a 'recursive' and 'serial' monotony, 'producing from already known patterns or molds places almost identical in ambience from city to city: New York's South Street Seaport, Boston's Quincy Market, Baltimore's Harbor Place.'

We thus approach the central paradox: the less important the

spatial barriers, the greater the sensitivity of capital to the variations of place within space, and the greater the incentive for places to be differentiated in ways attractive to capital. The result has been the production of fragmentation, insecurity, and ephemeral uneven development within a highly unified global space economy of capital flows. The historic tension within capitalism between centralization and decentralization is now being worked out in new ways. Extraordinary decentralization and proliferation of industrial production ends up putting Benetton or Laura Ashley products in almost every serially produced shopping mall in the advanced capitalist world. Plainly, the new round of time–space compression is fraught with as many dangers as it offers possibilities for survival of particular places or for a solution to the overaccumulation problem.

The geography of devaluation through deindustrialization, rising local unemployment, fiscal retrenchment, write-offs of local assets, and the like, is indeed a sorry picture. But we can at least see its logic within the frame of the search for a solution to the overaccumulation problem through the push into flexible and more mobile systems of accumulation. But there are also a priori reasons to suspect (as well as some material evidence to support the idea) that regions of maximum churning and fragmentation are also regions that seem best set to survive the traumas of devaluation in the long run. There is more than a hint that a little devaluation now is better than massive devaluation later in the scramble for local survival in the world of severely constrained opportunities for positive growth. Reindustrializing and restructuring cannot be accomplished without deindustrializing and devaluing first.

None of these shifts in the experience of space and time would make the sense or have the impact they do without a radical shift in the manner in which value gets represented as money. Though long dominant, money has never been a clear or unambiguous representation of value, and on occasion it becomes so muddled as to become itself a major source of insecurity and uncertainty. Under the terms of the postwar settlement, the question of world money was put on a fairly stable basis. The US dollar became the medium of world trade, technically backed by a fixed convertibility into gold, and backed politically and economically by the overwhelming power of the US productive apparatus. The space of the US production system became, in effect, the guarantor of international value. But, as we have seen, one of the signals of the breakdown of the Fordist–Keynesian system was the breakdown of the Bretton Woods agreement, of convertibility of US dollars to gold, and the shift to a global system of floating exchange rates. The breakdown in part occurred

because of the shifting dimensionalities of space and time generated out of capital accumulation. Rising indebtedness (particularly within the United States), and fiercer international competition from the reconstructed spaces of the world economy under conditions of growing accumulation, had much to do with undermining the power of the US economy to operate as an exclusive guarantor of world money.

The effects have been legion. The question of how value should now get represented, what form money should take, and the meaning that can be put upon the various forms of money available to us, has never been far from the surface of recent concerns. Since 1973, money has been 'de-materialized' in the sense that it no longer has a formal or tangible link to precious metals (though the latter have continued to play a role as one potential form of money among many others), or for that matter to any other tangible commodity. Nor does it rely exclusively upon productive activity within a particular space. The world has come to rely, for the first time in its history, upon immaterial forms of money – i.e. money of account assessed quantitatively in numbers of some designated currency (dollars, yen, Deutsch Marks, sterling, etc.). Exchange rates between the different currencies of the world have also been extremely volatile. Fortunes could be lost or made simply by holding the right currency during the right phases. The question of which currency I hold is directly linked to which place I put my faith in. That may have something to do with the competitive economic position and power of different national systems. That power, given the flexibility of accumulation over space, is itself a rapidly shifting magnitude. The effect is to render the spaces that underpin the determination of value as unstable as value itself. This problem is compounded by the way that speculative shifts bypass actual economic power and performance, and then trigger self-fulfilling expectations. The de-linking of the financial system from active production and from any material monetary base calls into question the reliability of the basic mechanism whereby value is supposed to be represented.

These difficulties have been most powerfully present in the process of devaluation of money, the measure of value, through inflation. The steady inflation rates of the Fordist–Keynesian era (usually in the 3 per cent range, and rarely above 5 per cent) gave way from 1969 onwards, and then accelerated in all the major capitalist countries during the 1970s into double-digit rates (see figure 2.8). Worse still, inflation became highly unstable, between as well as within countries, leaving everyone in doubt as to what the true value (the buying power) of a particular money might be in the near future.

Money consequently became useless as a means of storing value for any length of time (the real rate of interest, measured as the money rate of interest minus the rate of inflation, was negative for several years during the 1970s, so dispossessing savers of the value they were seeking to store). Alternative means had to be found to store value effectively. And so began the vast inflation in certain kinds of asset prices – collectibles, art objects, antiques, houses, and the like. Buying a Degas or Van Gogh in 1973 would surely outstrip almost any other kind of investment in terms of capital gain. Indeed it can be argued that the growth of the art market (with its concern for authorial signature) and the strong commercialization of cultural production since around 1970 have had a lot to do with the search to find alternative means to store value under conditions where the usual money forms were deficient. Commodity and general price inflation, though to some degree brought under control in the advanced capitalist countries during the 1980s, has by no means diminished as a problem. It is rampant in countries like Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Israel (all with recent rates in hundreds of per cent), and the prospect of generalized inflation looms in the advanced capitalist countries, where it is in any case arguable that the inflation of asset prices (housing, works of art, antiques, etc.) has taken over where commodity and labour market inflation left off in the early 1980s.

The breakdown of money as a secure means of representing value has itself created a crisis of representation in advanced capitalism. It has also been reinforced by, and added its very considerable weight to, the problems of time–space compression which we earlier identified. The rapidity with which currency markets fluctuate across the world's spaces, the extraordinary power of money capital flow in what is now a global stock and financial market, and the volatility of what the purchasing power of money might represent, define, as it were, a high point of that highly problematic intersection of money, time, and space as interlocking elements of social power in the political economy of postmodernity.

It is, furthermore, not hard to see how all of this might create a more general crisis of representation. The central value system, to which capitalism has always appealed to validate and gauge its actions, is dematerialized and shifting, time horizons are collapsing, and it is hard to tell exactly what space we are in when it comes to assessing causes and effects, meanings or values. The intriguing exhibition at the Pompidou Centre in 1985 on 'The Immaterial' (an exhibition for which none other than Lyotard acted as one of the consultants) was perhaps a mirror image of the dissolution of the material repre-

sentations of value under conditions of more flexible accumulation, and of the confusions as to what it might mean to say, with Paul Virilio, that time and space have disappeared as meaningful dimensions to human thought and action.

There are, I would submit, more tangible and material ways than this to go about assessing the significance of space and time for the condition of postmodernity. It should be possible to consider how, for example, the changing experience of space, time, and money has formed a distinctive material basis for the rise of distinctive systems of interpretation and representation, as well as opening a path through which the aestheticization of politics might once more reassert itself. If we view culture as that complex of signs and significations (including language) that mesh into codes of transmission of social values and meanings, then we can at least begin upon the task of unravelling its complexities under present-day conditions by recognizing that money and commodities are themselves the primary bearers of cultural codes. Since money and commodities are entirely bound up with the circulation of capital, it follows that cultural forms are firmly rooted in the daily circulation process of capital. It is, therefore, with the daily experience of money and the commodity that we should begin, no matter if special commodities or even whole sign systems may be extracted from the common herd and made the basis of 'high' culture or that specialized 'imaging' which we have already had cause to comment upon.

The annihilation of space through time has radically changed the commodity mix that enters into daily reproduction. Innumerable local food systems have been reorganized through their incorporation into global commodity exchange. French cheeses, for example, virtually unavailable except in a few gourmet stores in large cities in 1970, are now widely sold across the United States. And if this is thought a somewhat elite example, the case of beer consumption suggests that the internationalization of a product, that traditional location theory always taught should be highly market-oriented, is now complete. Baltimore was essentially a one-beer town (locally brewed) in 1970, but first the regional beers from places like Milwaukee and Denver, and then Canadian and Mexican beers followed by European, Australian, Chinese, Polish, etc. beers became cheaper. Formerly exotic foods became commonplace while popular local delicacies (in the Baltimore case, blue crabs and oysters) that were once relatively inexpensive jumped in price as they too became integrated into long-distance trading.

The market place has always been an 'emporium of styles' (to quote Raban's phrase) but the food market, just to take one example,

now looks very different from what it was twenty years ago. Kenyan haricot beans, Californian celery and avocados, North African potatoes, Canadian apples, and Chilean grapes all sit side by side in a British supermarket. This variety also makes for a proliferation of culinary styles, even among the relatively poor. Such styles have always migrated, of course, usually following the migration streams of different groups before diffusing slowly through urban cultures. The new waves of immigrants (such as the Vietnamese, Koreans, Filipinos, Central Americans, etc. that have added to the older groups of Japanese, Chinese, Chicanos, and all the European ethnic groups that have also found their culinary heritage can be revived for fun and profit) make a typical United States city such as New York, Los Angeles, or San Francisco (where the last census showed the majority of the population to be made up of minorities) as much an emporium of culinary styles as it is an emporium of the world's commodities. But here, too, there has been an acceleration, because culinary styles have moved faster than the immigration streams. It did not take a large French immigration to the United States to send the croissant rapidly spreading across America to challenge the traditional doughnut, nor did it take a large immigration of Americans to Europe to bring fast-food hamburgers to nearly all medium-sized European cities. Chinese takeaways, Italian pizza-parlours (run by a US chain), Middle Eastern felafel stalls, Japanese sushi bars ... the list is now endless in the Western world.

The whole world's cuisine is now assembled in one place in almost exactly the same way that the world's geographical complexity is nightly reduced to a series of images on a static television screen. This same phenomenon is exploited in entertainment palaces like Epcot and Disneyworld; it becomes possible, as the US commercials put it, 'to experience the Old World for a day without actually having to go there.' The general implication is that through the experience of everything from food, to culinary habits, music, television, entertainment, and cinema, it is now possible to experience the world's geography vicariously, as a simulacrum. The interweaving of simulacra in daily life brings together different worlds (of commodities) in the same space and time. But it does so in such a way as to conceal almost perfectly any trace of origin, of the labour processes that produced them, or of the social relations implicated in their production.

The simulacra can in turn become the reality. Baudrillard (1986) in *L'Amérique* even goes so far, somewhat exaggeratedly in my view, to suggest that US reality is now constructed as a giant screen: 'the cinema is everywhere, most of all in the city, incessant and marvellous

film and scenario.' Places portrayed in a certain way, particularly if they have the capacity to attract tourists, may begin to 'dress themselves up' as the fantasy images prescribe. Mediaeval castles offer mediaeval weekends (food, dress, but not of course the primitive heating arrangements). Vicarious participation in these various worlds has real effects on the ways in which these worlds get ordered. Jencks (1984, 127) proposes that the architect should be an active participant in this:

> Any middle class urbanite in any large city from Teheran to Tokyo is bound to have a well-stocked, indeed over-stocked 'image bank' that is continually restuffed by travel and magazines. His *musée imaginaire* may mirror the pot-pourri of the producers but it is nonetheless natural to his way of life. Barring some kind of totalitarian reduction in the heterogeneity of production and consumption, it seems to be desirable that architects learn to use this inevitable heterogeneity of languages. Besides, it is quite enjoyable. Why, if one can afford to live in different ages and cultures, restrict oneself to the present, the locale? Eclecticism is the natural evolution of a culture with choice.

Much the same can be said of popular music styles. Commenting on how collage and eclecticism have recently come to dominate, Chambers (1987) goes on to show how oppositional and subcultural musics like reggae, Afro-American and Afro-Hispanic have taken their place 'in the museum of fixed symbolic structures' to form a flexible collage of 'the already seen, the already worn, the already played, the already heard.' A strong sense of 'the Other' is replaced, he suggests, by a weak sense of 'the others.' The loose hanging together of divergent street cultures in the fragmented spaces of the contemporary city re-emphasizes the contingent and accidental aspects of this 'otherness' in daily life. This same sensibility exists in postmodern fiction. It is, says McHale (1987), concerned with 'ontologies,' with a potential as well as an actual plurality of universes, forming an eclectic and 'anarchic landscape of worlds in the plural.' Dazed and distracted characters wander through these worlds without a clear sense of location, wondering, 'Which world am I in and which of my personalities do I deploy?' Our postmodern ontological landscape, suggests McHale, 'is unprecedented in human history – at least in the degree of its pluralism.' Spaces of very different worlds seem to collapse upon each other, much as the world's commodities are assembled in the supermarket and all manner of

sub-cultures get juxtaposed in the contemporary city. Disruptive spatiality triumphs over the coherence of perspective and narrative in postmodern fiction, in exactly the same way that imported beers coexist with local brews, local employment collapses under the weight of foreign competition, and all the divergent spaces of the world are assembled nightly as a collage of images upon the television screen.

There seem to be two divergent sociological effects of all of this in daily thought and action. The first suggests taking advantage of all of the divergent possibilities, much as Jencks recommends, and cultivating a whole series of simulacra as milieux of escape, fantasy, and distraction:

> All around us – on advertisement hoardings, bookshelves, record covers, television screens – these miniature escape fantasies present themselves. This, it seems, is how we are destined to live, as split personalities in which the private life is disturbed by the promise of escape routes to another reality. (Cohen and Taylor, 1978, quoted in McHale, 1987, 38)

From this standpoint I think we have to accept McHale's argument that postmodern fiction is mimetic of something, much as I have argued that the emphasis upon ephemerality, collage, fragmentation, and dispersal in philosophical and social thought mimics the conditions of flexible accumulation. And it should not be surprising either to see how all of this fits in with the emergence since 1970 of a fragmented politics of divergent special and regional interest groups.

But it is exactly at this point that we encounter the opposite reaction that can best be summed up as the search for personal or collective identity, the search for secure moorings in a shifting world. Place-identity, in this collage of superimposed spatial images that implode in upon us, becomes an important issue, because everyone occupies a space of individuation (a body, a room, a home, a shaping community, a nation), and how we individuate ourselves shapes identity. Furthermore, if no one 'knows their place' in this shifting collage world, then how can a secure social order be fashioned or sustained?

There are two elements within this problem that deserve close consideration. First, the capacity of most social movements to command place better than space puts a strong emphasis upon the potential connection between place and social identity. This is manifest in political action. The defensiveness of municipal socialism, the insistence on working-class community, the localization of the fight against capital, become central features of working-class struggle

within an overall patterning of uneven geographical development. The consequent dilemmas of socialist or working-class movements in the face of a universalizing capitalism are shared by other oppositional groups – racial minorities, colonized peoples, women, etc. – who are relatively empowered to organize in place but disempowered when it comes to organizing over space. In clinging, often of necessity, to a place-bound identity, however, such oppositional movements become a part of the very fragmentation which a mobile capitalism and flexible accumulation can feed upon. 'Regional resistances,' the struggle for local autonomy, place-bound organization, may be excellent bases for political action, but they cannot bear the burden of radical historical change alone. 'Think globally and act locally' was the revolutionary slogan of the 1960s. It bears repeating.

The assertion of any place-bound identity has to rest at some point on the motivational power of tradition. It is difficult, however, to maintain any sense of historical continuity in the face of all the flux and ephemerality of flexible accumulation. The irony is that tradition is now often preserved by being commodified and marketed as such. The search for roots ends up at worst being produced and marketed as an image, as a simulacrum or pastiche (imitation communities constructed to evoke images of some folksy past, the fabric of traditional working-class communities being taken over by an urban gentry). The photograph, the document, the view, and the reproduction become history precisely because they are so overwhelmingly present. The problem, of course, is that none of these are immune from tampering or downright faking for present purposes. At best, historical tradition is reorganized as a museum culture, not necessarily of high modernist art, but of local history, of local production, of how things once upon a time were made, sold, consumed, and integrated into a long-lost and often romanticized daily life (one from which all trace of oppressive social relations may be expunged). Through the presentation of a partially illusory past it becomes possible to signify something of local identity and perhaps to do it profitably.

The second reaction to the internationalism of modernism lies in the search to construct place and its meanings qualitatively. Capitalist hegemony over space puts the aesthetics of place very much back on the agenda. But this, as we have seen, meshes only too well with the idea of spatial differentiations as lures for a peripatetic capital that values the option of mobility very highly. Isn't this place better than that place, not only for the operations of capital but also for living in, consuming well, and feeling secure in a shifting world? The construction of such places, the fashioning of some localized aesthetic

image, allows the construction of some limited and limiting sense of identity in the midst of a collage of imploding spatialities.

The tension in these oppositions is clear enough but it is hard to appreciate their intellectual and political ramifications. Here, for example, is Foucault (1984, 253) addressing the issue from his own perspective:

> Space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power. . . . I recall having been invited in 1966, by a group of architects, to do a study of space, of something that I called at the time 'heterotopias,' those singular spaces to be found in some given social spaces whose functions are different or even the opposite of others. The architects worked on this, and at the end of the study someone spoke up – a Sartrean psychologist – who firebombed me, saying that *space* is reactionary and capitalist but *history* and *becoming* are revolutionary. This absurd discourse was not at all unusual at the time. Today everyone would be convulsed with laughter at such a pronouncement, but not then.

The proposition the Sartrean critic offers is, though crude and oppositional, nowhere near as laughable as Foucault avers. On the other hand, postmodernist sentiment definitely leans towards Foucault's position. Whereas modernism looked upon the spaces of the city, for example, as 'an epiphenomenon of social functions,' postmodernism 'tends to disengage urban space from its dependence on functions, and to see it as an autonomous formal system' incorporating 'rhetorical and artistic strategies, which are independent of any simple historical determinism' (Colquhoun, 1985). It is precisely this disengagement that permits Foucault to deploy spatial metaphors so extensively in his studies of power. Spatial imagery, liberated from its roots in any social determination, becomes a means to depict the forces of social determination. It is a short step, however, from Foucault's metaphors to reinforcement of a political ideology that sees place and *Being* with all its associated aesthetic qualities as a proper basis for social action. Geopolitics and the Heideggerian trap come not too far behind. Jameson (1988, 351), for his part, views the

> spatial peculiarities of post-modernism as symptoms and expressions of a new and historically original dilemma, one that involves our insertion as individual subjects into a multidimensional set of radically discontinuous realities, whose frames range from the still surviving spaces of bourgeois private life all

> the way to the unimaginable decentering of global capitalism itself. Not even Einsteinian relativity, or the multiple subjective worlds of the older modernists, is capable of giving any adequate figuration to this process, which in lived experience makes itself felt by the so-called death of the subject, or, more exactly, the fragmented and schizophrenic decentering and dispersion of this last. . . . And although you may not have realized it, I am talking about practical politics here: since the crisis of socialist internationalism, and the enormous strategic and tactical difficulties of coordinating local and grassroots or neighborhood political actions with national or international ones, such urgent political dilemmas are all immediately functions of the enormously complex new international space I have in mind.

Jameson exaggerates somewhat with respect to the uniqueness and newness of this experience. Stressful though the current condition undoubtedly is, it is qualitatively similar to that which led to Renaissance and various modernist reconceptualizations of space and time. Nevertheless, the dilemmas which Jameson depicts are exact and capture the drift of postmodern sensibility as to the meaning of space in contemporary political and cultural as well as economic life. If, however, we have lost the modernist faith in becoming, as Foucault's Sartrean critic argued, is there any way out except via the reactionary politics of an aestheticized spatiality? Are we sadly destined to end up on the track that Sitte began with, in his turn to Wagnerian mythology as support for his assertion of the primacy of place and community in a world of changing spaces? Worse still, if aesthetic production has now been so thoroughly commodified and thereby become really subsumed within a political economy of cultural production, how can we possibly stop that circle closing onto a produced, and hence all too easily manipulated, aestheticization of a globally mediatized politics?

This should alert us to the acute geopolitical dangers that attach to the rapidity of time–space compression in recent years. The transition from Fordism to flexible accumulation, such as it has been, ought to imply a transition in our mental maps, political attitudes, and political institutions. But political thinking does not necessarily undergo such easy transformations, and is in any case subject to the contradictory pressures that derive from spatial integration and differentiation. There is an omni-present danger that our mental maps will not match current realities. The serious diminution of the power of individual nation states over fiscal and monetary policies, for example, has not been matched by any parallel shift towards an international-

ization of politics. Indeed, there are abundant signs that localism and nationalism have become stronger precisely because of the quest for the security that place always offers in the midst of all the shifting that flexible accumulation implies. The resurgence of geopolitics and of faith in charismatic politics (Thatcher's Falklands War, Reagan's invasion of Grenada) fits only too well with a world that is increasingly nourished intellectually and politically by a vast flux of ephemeral images.

Time–space compression always exacts its toll on our capacity to grapple with the realities unfolding around us. Under stress, for example, it becomes harder and harder to react accurately to events. The erroneous identification of an Iranian airbus, ascending within an established commercial flight corridor, with a fighter-bomber descending towards a targeted US warship – an incident that resulted in many civilian deaths – is typical of the way that reality gets created rather than interpreted under conditions of stress and time–space compression. The parallel with Kern's account of the outbreak of World War I (cited above, p. 278) is instructive. If 'seasoned negotiators cracked under the pressure of tense confrontations and sleepless nights, agonizing over the probable disastrous consequences of their snap judgements and hasty actions,' then how much more difficult must decision-making now be? The difference this time is that there is not even time to agonize. And the problems are not confined to the realms of political and military decision-making, for the world's financial markets are on the boil in ways that make a snap judgement here, an unconsidered word there, and a gut reaction somewhere else the slip that can unravel the whole skein of fictitious capital formation and of interdependency.

The conditions of postmodern time–space compression exaggerate in many respects the dilemmas that have from time to time beset capitalist procedures of modernization in the past (1848 and the phase just before the First World War spring particularly to mind). While the economic, cultural, and political responses may not be exactly new, the range of those reponses differs in certain important respects from those which have occurred before. The intensity of time–space compression in Western capitalism since the 1960s, with all of its congruent features of excessive ephemerality and fragmentation in the political and private as well as in the social realm, does seem to indicate an experiential context that makes the condition of postmodernity somewhat special. But by putting this condition into its historical context, as part of a history of successive waves of time–space compression generated out of the pressures of capital accumulation with its perpetual search to annihilate space