الحصر الإدراكي للفضاء الخارق: تقييم لتحول الفضاء في عصر مابعد الحداثة

الأستاذ باسم نشمي جلود الغزاوي

كلية التربية / جامعة القادسية

basim20002002@yahoo.com

basim.neshmy@qu.edu.iq

المستخلص :

يتناول هذا البحث التحول الفضائي الذي إضطلع به فريدرك جيمسون الذي مثل واحدا من أهم محاولات إعادة تقييم الفضاء في عصر مابعد الحداثة. يعتقد جيمسون أن (الفضاء الخارق لعصر مابعد الحداثة) قد أنتج عدم قدرة الفرد سياسيا على تحديد مكانه (مكانها) في العالم. فلقد أوجد جيمسون رابطا بين الفضاء والسياسة ووضع الخارطة. ويعد تشكيل الخارطة الإدراكية صعوبة متصلة تجابة المنظر الذي يتبنى إستراتيجيات تشكيل الخرائط بغية تمثيل الفراغ، لذلك فإن إستخدامه لفضاءعصر مابعد الحداثة الخارق ماهو إلا معاينة الفضاء على إنه وسيلة لتوثيق المشاكل السياسية التي تتصل بتنظيم المجتمع في نهاية القرن العشرين. وتمثل محاولة جيمسون لإعادة تقييم الفضاء حاسمة في مجال النقد الأدبي عامة ونقد رواية مابعد الحداثة على وجه الخصوص. تضطلع هذا البحث بتقصي إصرار جيمسون على إستخدام شكلا جديدا للتشكيل الإدراكي والإستراتيجيات المتبعة ناهيك عن الجدل الذي رافق المسألة، الأمر الذي يؤكد التعقيد والإبهام المستمر الذي يرافق تلكم الإستراتيجيات. وعليه يناقش البحث الحالي محاولات فريدرك جيمسون لتطبيق تحليله الجمالي وكذلك يقدم تقييما لمواطن القوة والضعف التي تتصل بإستراجيات تشكيل الخرائط.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فريدرك جيمسون، التحول الفضائي، فضاء عصر مابعد الحداثة الخارق، تشكيل الخارطة الإدراكية، السياسة

Cognitive Mapping of Hyperspace: An Appraisal of Postmodern Spatial Turn

Prof. Basim Neshmy Jeloud Al-Ghizawi

College of Education / University of Al-Qadisiyah

basim20002002@yahoo.com

basim.neshmy@qu.edu.iq

Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to grapple with Fredric Jameson's 'spatial turn' as one of the most influential reappraisals of space in the postmodern age. Jameson believes that the 'postmodern hyperspace' has led to a politically crippling inability of the individual to locate him/herself in the world. He made an important, albeit controversial, link between space, mapping, and politics. His cognitive mapping highlights the continuous difficulties that face the theorist employing mapping strategies in order to represent spaces; hence, his evocation of 'postmodern hyperspace' demonstrates that his examination of space is a means to document the political problems he identifies in the organization of society in the late twentieth century. Jameson's reappraisal of space is crucial in literary critical practice, especially that relating to postmodern fiction. His insistence on the necessity of a new form of cognitive mapping is explored in order to establish exactly what such a strategy might involve, while the debate surrounding this concept is then discussed, emphasizing the complexity and continuing ambiguity of such strategies. Jameson's attempts to apply his theories in aesthetic analysis are then discussed in order to evaluate both the potential and the pitfalls of mapping strategies.

Key Words: Fredric Jameson, spatial turn, postmodern hyperspace, cognitive mapping; politics

Introduction

> So I come finally to my principle point here, that this latest mutation in space - postmodern hyperspace - has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organise its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world. (Jameson, *Postmodernism* 44)

> This is someone who gets lost in large department stores (Patton 114).

Fredric Jameson's 'spatial turn' is among the most influential of recent critical reappraisals of space. Jameson's earlier work as a Marxist critic had already engaged with the crisis of representation posited by poststructuralism in his 1981 *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. This work was a dramatic attempt to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable and unite the insights of poststructuralist thought under the banner of a revitalized Marxism. However, it is with the publication of the essay "Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" in 1984 that Jameson's 'spatial turn' occurs. Jameson argues that we are living in a postmodern age, in which a new spatial configuration – 'postmodern hyperspace' - has led to a politically crippling inability of the individual to locate himself or herself in the world. This essay, along with 1988's 'Cognitive Mapping,' is revised and extended in his 1991 *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, which I take as a primary text. Jameson's subsequent work has attempted to utilize the slippery notion of 'cognitive mapping' that he proposes to counter the disorientating effects of postmodernism.

Jameson's work has received much critical attention in the years since its publication, with many critics remaining skeptical regarding the links he makes between space, mapping and politics. Paul Patton's comment that "this is someone who gets lost in large department stores" refers to Jameson's famous description of his own feelings of disorientation in the Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles, which he presents as emblematic of the postmodern experience (*Postmodernism* 39-44). Patton finds Jameson's work useful, but uses this comment to summarize the reasons why many critics have found it "tempting to ridicule this analysis". The present analysis of Jameson's views on space and cognitive mapping investigates various critiques of his work in order to further interrogate the connections between space and mapping, domination and resistance.

This paper explores Jameson's work, in particular his concept of cognitive mapping, in order to highlight the continuing difficulties that face the theorist employing mapping strategies in order to represent spaces. Jameson's evocation of 'postmodern hyperspace' demonstrates that his examination of space is a means to document the political problems he identifies in the spatial organization of contemporary society. His insistence on the necessity of a new form of cognitive mapping is explored in order to establish exactly what such a strategy might involve, while the debate surrounding this concept is then discussed, emphasizing the complexity and continuing ambiguity of such strategies. Jameson's attempts to apply his theories in aesthetic analysis are then discussed in order to evaluate both the potential and the pitfalls of mapping strategies.

Jameson's Postmodern Hyperspace

This analysis of Jameson's work begins by summarizing the main points through which a conception of postmodern space is used to exemplify the political problems which necessitate a new system of mapping. As the title of his work suggests, what Jameson terms 'postmodernism' is the dominant cultural form he associates with the age of 'late' capitalism, starting around the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century. This is the era of global multinationalism, in which "not merely the older city but even the nation-state itself has ceased to play a central functional and formal role" in the capitalist process (*Postmodernism* 412). The shift to a global system of capital from earlier forms of "the national market and the older imperialist system" has led to a radically new form of spatial organization to which individuals must respond (50). However, Jameson finds that establishing a historical analysis of this space is problematic in "an age which has forgotten how to think historically in the first place" (ix).

A consequence of this lack of historical thinking is a second crucial factor in Jameson's argument: his insistence that the postmodern age is characterized by a new focus on space. He writes, "it is at least empirically arguable that our daily life, our psychic experience, our cultural languages, are today dominated by categories of space rather than by categories of time, as in the preceding period of high modernism" (16). Most importantly, Jameson understands the dominance of space as a political problem, as space itself is compromised through its saturation by the dominant system of capitalism. Jameson explains this process thus:

> I take such spatial peculiarities of postmodernism 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 capital itself. (413)

Jameson's contention is that these "radically discontinuous realities" occur in a new space in which "the suppression of difference", and "the relentless saturation of any remaining voids and empty places," result in a situation in which the postmodern body "is now exposed to a perceptual barrage of immediacy where all sheltering layers and intervening mediations have been removed" (412-3). It is in this condition that the ability of the individual to locate himself or herself in a "mappable external world" is compromised (44).

The consequences of this situation for postmodern politics are found in the outmoding of "critical distance", a term Jameson uses to describe the possibility of the cultural act which is outside capital and can, consequently, challenge capitalism. He argues:

> distance in general (including 'critical distance' in particular) has very precisely been abolished in the new space of postmodernism. We are submerged in its henceforth filled and suffused volumes to the point where

our now postmodern bodies are bereft of spatial coordinates and practically (let alone theoretically) incapable of distanciation. (48-9)

As such, acts of cultural resistance "are all somehow secretly disarmed and reabsorbed by a system of which they themselves might well be considered a part, since they can achieve no distance from it" (49). Jameson's conception of postmodern hyperspace clearly owes a lot to the work of Jean Baudrillard and his concept of hyperreality (399). Baudrillard proposes that contemporary society is characterized by simulation, or, "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal". In this society, he argues, "it is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real" (Baudrillard 1-2). Baudrillard's position is that the distinction between representation and reality, or signs and the real, has broken down, leaving no possibility of political action that can reinstate this distinction. However, while Baudrillard's argument leads him to reject political commitment, Jameson reworks the concept of postmodern hyperreality to explore the possibilities of overcoming this nihilistic response to the disorientation of the postmodern era. Jameson therefore calls for an entirely new way of representing the system, "in which we may again begin to grasp our positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by our spatial as well as our social confusion" (*Postmodernism* 54). On this basis, he develops a principle of cognitive mapping.

Before analyzing Jameson's cognitive mapping in greater detail, however, it is necessary to interrogate the basis of his theory in a new conception of postmodern hyperspace. Firstly, it is essential to address whether a specifically postmodern space can in fact be distinguished. Jameson is not alone in positing that there are certain traits applicable to late capitalist space. Although Henri Lefebvre, writing in the early 1970s, does not refer to the postmodern era, his concept of abstract space also suggests that twentieth-century capitalism brings with it a form of spatial organization which resists alternative versions and so establishes control (Lefebvre 49-51). Like Jameson, the geographer David Harvey is interested more specifically in differentiating developments in spatial organization and defining them as postmodern. He describes points of time-space compression, or "processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves" (Harvey 240). Such time-space compression occurs when there is an increase in the pace of life, currently demonstrated through the increasingly short shelf-lives of fashions in culture, and an overcoming of spatial barriers, now happening through developing technologies in both transport and media. Harvey identifies the early 1970s as a crucial time of economic change, yet despite their differences in periodization, there are clearly strong parallels between Harvey's concept and Jameson's "barrage of immediacy". Harvey also links these times of change with an 'omnipresent danger that our mental maps will not match current realities" (Ibid 305).

However, just as the emphasis placed by Lefebvre on periodizing systems of spatial organization is subject to criticism, the later thinkers Harvey and Jameson have also been challenged on this basis. In his discussion of Jameson's original essay on postmodernism, Mike Davis notes that the economic periodization that Jameson adopts from the work of Ernest Mandel, which dates late

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capitalism from the immediate post-war period, does not correspond to Jameson's own assigning of postmodern artworks from the 1960s onwards (Davis 107). Jameson successfully answers this problem in the introduction to the revised version of the essay in the 1991 book, arguing that the cultural transformations required will inevitably be predated by economic changes (*Postmodernism* xx). However, it is worth noting that this argument points towards the heterogeneous nature of postmodern phenomena and their various appearances in time and space. Moreover, despite his assertion that it is in the postmodern era alone that disorientation occurs and cognitive mapping is required, there is no evidence to support this claim. Many individuals throughout history have experienced spatial disorientation as a result of slavery or war, for example.

A further criticism of Jameson's vision of hyperspace can be levelled at his tendency to suggest a model of two categories of time and space wherein one is privileged at the expense of the other. His belief that the postmodern age is dominated by space, and that this, in turn leads to a disavowal of history and political challenges, is highly problematic. The predominance of space is famously referred to by Michel Foucault in a lecture originally delivered in 1967, in which he states that "the present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space" (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" 22). However, this statement is best read in conjunction with Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift's contemporary warning: "Foucault's celebrated announcement that the era of space was succeeding that of time needs to be taken with a pinch of salt" (Crang and Thrift 1). Foucault continues by stressing that a focus on space cannot occur at the expense of time for the two are inextricably linked: "space itself has a history in Western experience and it is not possible to disregard the fatal intersection of time with space" (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" 22). His reflections on space throughout the rest of his career continue to be read very much within historical frameworks through his concern to establish genealogies of, for example, the prison, or sexuality. Crucially, Foucault's famous condemnation of the tendency to associate space with "the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile" does not imply any denigration of historical thinking, but rather opens the way for the development of spatio-historical thinking (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 70).

Perhaps the most useful conception of the relationship between the spatial and the temporal is one which refuses to isolate the two as competing ways of thinking about the world. Doreen Massey analyzes Jameson's separation of time from space and challenges his belief that the dominant of postmodern space is necessarily depoliticized. Her belief in "space-time" insists that while the postmodern age certainly brings about a change in spatial relations, this does not rule out the "possibility of politics" which may challenge the social conditions experienced through the spatial (Massey 269). Jameson himself notes of his association of time with modernism and space with postmodernism, "the distinction is between two forms of interrelationship between time and space rather than between those two inseparable categories themselves" (*Postmodernism* 154). On this basis it is possible to read Jameson's attempts to "think the present historically in an age that has forgotten how to think historically in the first place", in conjunction with his call to "raise spatial issues" as a "fundamental organizing concern" (ix; 50).

A second major area of contention in Jameson's spatiality lies in his description of postmodern hyperspace. Central to his thesis is the evocation of the experience of visiting the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, which has subsequently given rise to much critical discussion. Consequently, an examination of both his description and his critics' responses outlines many of the problems associated with Jameson's spatializing. Jameson describes the building, designed by the architect John Portman, as aspiring to be "a total space, a complete world, a kind of miniature city" (40). He notes the difficulty he and other visitors experience in locating the entrances and exits, and the "reflective glass skin", which ensures that "when you seek to look at the hotel's outer walls you cannot see the hotel itself but only the distorted images of everything that surrounds it" (42). Finally, he notes that "it is quite impossible to get your bearings" in the lobby, to the extent that even potential customers are unable to find their way to any of the shops within the hotel (43). It is this experience which he insists is typical of the disorientation experienced by the individual in postmodern hyperspace.

An initial quibble with Jameson's analysis is in his use of what is overwhelmingly agreed to be an example of late modern architecture to illustrate his point. However, as Derek Gregory argues, the use of this statement as a "rod to beat Jameson" is unfair: much of Jameson's argument is based on the fact that in documenting his experience in the Bonaventure he is "evoking a postmodern *response*" (Gregory 154). However, a question remains as to whether the invoking of this personal response as a generalized assumption of the postmodern condition is appropriate. Paul Patton observes "Jameson's analysis always seemed a somewhat overblown response to a novel architectural design". Patton continues, "Jameson's postmodern space is an imaginary space in the most banal sense of the term: a made-up image of reality, the invention of an overheated theoretical imagination" (Patton 114). Yet, while Jameson's response is undoubtedly extreme, and presumably at least partly in the interests of rhetorical effect, the effects of postmodern hyperspace which he invokes remain significant. Jameson's point is not to "make-up" an image of reality, but to highlight the difficulties of negotiating the imaginary and the real when the boundaries between the two seem increasingly blurred. Patton notes that Jameson and other theorists of postmodern space posit "imaginary cities": "complex objects which include both realities and their description: cities confused with the words used to describe them" (Ibid 112). As Lefebvre's work has shown, however, any useful analysis of space will have to accept the different levels at which the production of space operates, and the extent to which discourses shape the spaces they describe.

Nonetheless, in using his personal response to a familiar building as a guide to postmodern hyperspace in general, Jameson undoubtedly runs the risk of universalizing his own experience to the detriment of the lived experience of other inhabitants of the city. Critics such as Mike Davis have noted that the Bonaventure is an example of a building designed for the use of "the upper middle classes" which, for a large proportion of LA residents, "might as well have been built on the third moon of Jupiter" (Davis 112). Jameson's use of such an exclusive site raises a number of difficulties, including his own failure to acknowledge its status. Davis suggests "what is missing from Jameson's otherwise vivid description of the Bonaventure is the savagery of its insertion into

the surround city". Davis's argument is that Jameson has homogenized the landscape of Los Angeles, rather than focusing on the way in which it has been polarized into "radically antagonistic spaces" (Ibid 112-3). Jameson's response to Davis is noted in *Postmodernism* with his reference to the role of the disguised entrances in separating the hotel from the city outside (41). However, while he recognizes that the hotel is designed as a "minacity", he never makes explicit that the exclusive Bonaventure is clearly kept more separate from some of the city's inhabitants than others. As Sean Homer observes, the seemingly impenetrable nature of the facade "has as much to do with keeping out the populace - the indigenous downtown Anglenos, the poor, the homeless, the blacks and the Hispanics - as it has with evading modernist Utopian aspirations" (138). The problem is not simply that, as Brian Jarvis suggests, "Jameson's views of landscape often seem to come from *within* the centres of luxury and affluence" (Jarvis 48). Rather, it is his own failure to acknowledge the situated nature of his response that weakens his attempts to universalize his experience into one representative of postmodern spatiality.

Jameson's assumptions regarding the capacity of his experience in the Bonaventure to represent a generalized phenomenon demonstrate a typical pitfall in any attempt to document an imagined experience of a real space. Accusations of elitism in the depiction of postmodern spatiality are not directed at Jameson alone; D. Matless, for example also charges Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre with "mapping out a general ontology from the particular" (43). Matless also observes a tendency among theorists such as Jameson, Soja and Davis to use Los Angeles as a privileged site of postmodern spatiality in what Fincher and Jacobs wryly term "blockbuster urban commentaries" (Fincher and Jacob 10). However, recent discussions of postmodern spatiality have begun to move further afield in their analyses of very different urban centres. In an essay on Bombay as a postmodern city, Jim Masselos asks whether Los Angeles is an appropriate model, given the very different mix of high rise buildings and shanties found in Bombay (Mumbai) and, presumably, other non-Western cities (208). Clearly, Jameson does not suggest that his analysis is the only possible response to the issues of postmodern spatiality, and nor does he state that LA is in any sense a privileged example. What is missing from his account, however, is an acknowledgement of the vastly heterogeneous nature of postmodern spatial experience or of the city in the developing world as an equally representative space of global capitalism.

Moreover, even within a particular postmodern environment, individual experience varies greatly. Doreen Massey remains dubious regarding the extent to which experiences such as Jameson's in the Bonaventure Hotel really reflect late twentieth century life for most people. She observes:

> amid the Ridley Scott images of world cities, the writing about skyscraper fortresses, the Baudrillard visions of hyperspace ... most people actually still live in places like Harlesden or West Brom. Much of life for many people, even in the heart of the First World, still consists of waiting in a bus-shelter with your shopping for a bus that never comes. Hardly a graphic illustration of time-space compression. (163)

Massey's criticism is two-fold: Jameson's tendency to generalize assumes an upper middle-class Western lifestyle which is clearly not appropriate to the majority of postmodern citizens. Moreover, the association of such individuals' spatial confusion with a loss of political agency ignores the lack of agency experienced by other groups: "Those who today worry about a sense of disorientation and a loss of control must once have felt that they knew exactly where they were, and that they had control" (165). The feelings of disorientation and powerlessness that Jameson experiences in postmodern hyperspace are nothing new for many who do not share his race, gender or class position.

The significance of each of these responses to Jameson's conception of postmodern spatiality lies in their capacity to remind the critic of the heterogeneous nature of experiences included in postmodern space. Such criticisms do not refute Jameson's assertions that experiences of disorientation are prevalent, but do require these concerns to be addressed whilst maintaining awareness of the dynamic nature of spatial relations. This is in keeping with Lefebvre's notion of a conflictual space produced by the struggles of various agents. Jameson's documenting of his experience in the Bonaventure Hotel is useful primarily as an attempt to represent a particular condition, rather than as a universalizing statement.

Finally, however, it is important to recall the significance of the format through which Jameson presents his views. Victor Burgin argues that despite the apparent similarities between their evocations of Los Angeles sites, Soja's use of LA as "a field of empirically observable data" differs from Jameson's use of the Bonaventure, which "offers not empirical data but allegorical form, which does not directly 'illustrate' the shape of *future* urban life, but which indirectly 'figures' present power as lived by those submitted to it" (25). Reading Jameson's critique of postmodern hyperspace as allegory allows us to understand it as an interpretation which is knowingly subject to reinterpretation, rather than as attempt to establish a definitive and uncontested statement on postmodern spatiality. Yet in establishing that his work is intended as political critique, he once again encounters the difficulties of representation. In order to establish whether he can reconcile the problems of representation with his calls for a new form of political commitment it is necessary to explore his concept of cognitive mapping.

Cognitive Mapping

Jameson's response to the postmodern hyperspace he sees being produced by multinational capitalism is to call for a new form of cognitive mapping, "in which we may again begin to grasp our positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by our spatial as well as our social confusion" (*Postmodernism* 54). The inspiration for the principle of cognitive mapping comes from Kevin Lynch's 1960 study, *The Image of the City*. Lynch analyses maps drawn by inhabitants of different areas in American cities and observes that the more economically disadvantaged the area in which the subject lives, the more partial and minimal the map. Jameson explains that his concept of cognitive mapping "involves an extrapolation of Lynch's spatial analysis to the realm of social structure, that is to say,

in our historical moment, to the totality of class relations on a global (or should I say multinational) scale" (416). This occurs on the basis that:

> the incapacity to map spatially is as crippling to political experience as the analogous incapacity to map spatially is for urban experience. It follows that an aesthetic of cognitive mapping in this sense is an integral part of any socialist political project. (416)

Jameson therefore posits cognitive mapping as an essential component of resistance to the dominant system of multinational capitalism, as it allows the totality of the current system to be reconceptualized.

Mapping, for Jameson, remains a process of representation. He stresses:

> The problem is still one of representation, and also of representability: we know that we are caught within these more complex global networks, because we palpably suffer the prolongations of corporate space everywhere in our daily lives. Yet we have no way of thinking about them, of modeling them, however abstractly, in our mind's eye. (127)

In his discussion of cognitive mapping he continues the project, begun in *The Political Unconscious*, of incorporating the observations of poststructuralist thought within a revitalized Marxism. While he readily admits that cognitive mapping "clearly raises the very central issues of representation as such", he denies that poststructuralist critiques can demolish such a model. Rather, he argues, "The cognitive map is not exactly mimetic in that older sense; indeed, the theoretical issues it poses allow us to renew the analysis of representation on a higher and much more complex level" (*Postmodernism* 51). Jameson links Lynch's conclusions to Louis Althusser's redefinition of ideology as "the representation of the subject's *Imaginary* relationship to his or her *Real* conditions of existence" (51). He contends that this is "exactly" the purpose of cognitive mapping: "to enable a situational representation on the part of the individual subject to that vaster and properly unrepresentable totality which is the ensemble of society's structures as a whole" (51). Cognitive mapping is a process of mediation, through which the otherwise "unrepresentable" totality can be understood. Jameson recognizes the obvious problems inherent in a project to represent the unrepresentable, and in his early discussion of cognitive mapping in the essay of the same name he admits "I have observed that I am, myself, absolutely incapable of guessing or imagining its form" ("Cognitive Mapping" 356). In his conclusion to *Postmodernism* he reveals that cognitive mapping "was in reality nothing but a code word for 'class consciousness'" (418).

Jameson's cognitive mapping has been discussed widely by critics both sympathetic and unsympathetic towards his project. However, as much of this discussion centres on the question of cognitive mapping as an attempt to represent the totality, it is first necessary to explore the background to this aspect of Jameson's theory and examine the concept in his earlier work. The concept of totality is a feature of a Western Marxist tradition which argues that the whole of the

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capitalist system must be envisaged in order to allow resistance to this system (Jay). Jameson's argument is that the experience of postmodern hyperspace is politically crippling as it leaves the individual unable to map the global relations which produce capitalist spaces. In order to represent and challenge these social and spatial relations, a cognitive map must be able to represent the totality of that experience.

Jameson's insistence on the need for cognitive mapping to represent the totality of experience brings him into direct confrontation with poststructuralist critiques of totalizing theories. Martin Jay makes a plausible argument that "if one had to find one common denominator among the major figures normally included in the post structuralist category [...] it would have to be their unremitting hostility towards totality" (514-5; Lyotard, "War on Totality" 82; Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulaton*; Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*). Jameson himself notes that "the rhetoric of totality and totalization that derived from what I have called the Germanic or Hegelian tradition is the object of a kind of instinctive or automatic denunciation by just about everybody" ("Forward" xix). Bruno Bosteels' discussion of cartographic models notes the opposition centred on a concept "fiercely beleaguered by poststructuralists yet indispensable to marxists, namely, the representability of knowability of 'totality' as the promise if not also the premise of any critical-Utopian project" (120). This hostility to totality is based on the refuting of the premise that a knowledge can be invoked which is beyond representation and, therefore, its poststructuralist critique. Jameson's application of poststructuralist theories, including his acknowledgement of the critique of representation are therefore vital concerns in his own continuing insistence on the need to map the totality.

Jameson's desire to embark once again on a quest for totality is a reaction to a postmodern age which he understands as a product of the dominant capitalist system. Jean-François Lyotard famously terms the postmodern condition that in which the "breaking up of the grand Narratives", renders theories such as Christianity and Marxism, which attempt to explain the totality of experience, obsolete (15). However, Lyotard also notes the consequent difficulty of legitimating one representation of the world at the expense of others, asking "Where, after the metanarratives, can legitimacy reside?" (xxv). In his foreword to Lyotard's work, Jameson explains his attempts to reclaim the metanarrative of Marxism on the basis that "the great master narratives here are those that suggest that something beyond capitalism is possible, something radically different; and they also 'legitimate' the praxis whereby political militants seek to bring that radically different social order into being" ("Forward" xix). For Jameson, mapping the totality is necessary in order to re-establish agency against a dominant capitalist system of spatial organization.

Jameson outlines his conception of the totality in *The Political Unconscious*, in which he attempts to incorporate Althusser's critique of the Hegelian Marxist totality into his own revised format. Totality is rescued through his dialectical reading of Althusser and previous theories of totality, together with the added twist of Lacan's concept of the Symbolic. Reading the Symbolic alongside the Althusserian system of Imaginary and Real allows Jameson to conceptualize a history

which cannot be directly apprehended but is knowable through the mediation of narrative. Jameson argues:

> history – Althusser's 'absent cause,' Lacan's 'real' - is not a text, for it is fundamentally non-narrative and nonrepresentational; what can be added, however, is the proviso that history is inaccessible to us except in textual form, or in other words, that it can be approached only by way of prior (re)textualization. (82)

In this way, Jameson later attempts to deflect the representational problems facing cognitive mapping through the assumption that the totality is not "unknowable", but "unrepresentable" (*Postmodernism* 53).

This distinction has not always convinced critics of Jameson's work. John Frow suggests that Jameson's insistence that history is non-representable, yet is accessible through textual form, "is surely a case of having one's referent and eating it too". Frow adds, "if history is accessible only through discursive or epistemological categories, is there not a real sense in which it therefore has only a discursive existence?" (39). In this case, Jameson's mediations of history will not be immune from the critiques he recognizes in application to other representational strategies. As Robert Young explains, "if the Real is also a discursive construction it cannot function as a ground outside that enables a leverage of the inside" (109). In short, Jameson's use of mediation as an attempt to escape the problems of representation associated with poststructuralist theory is not convincing. Despite his claim to engage with structuralist and poststructuralist theorists, many critics have noted what Dominick LaCapra terms the "highly selective approach" Jameson adopts (88). In particular, his assertion that Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* is "very much in the spirit of" *The Political Unconscious* has come under criticism (Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* 22; Homer). In each case, critics have pointed to Jameson's inability to position his work outside the boundaries of a representational critique which he himself acknowledges.

Given these difficulties, it is important to recognize why Jameson continues to invest so heavily in the concept of totality. His quest to rehabilitate this concept is based on his insistence that capitalism itself is totalizing and it is only on these grounds that it can be resisted. However, these grounds remain insufficiently theorized within the text. He acknowledges, in the opening pages of *Postmodernism*, that any attempt to describe a totalizing system is liable to suffer from a "'winner loses' logic", in which the theorist succeeds in presenting a vision of the total system only to emphasize the extent to which any resistance to that system is ineffective (5). Despite this, however, he insists that the cultural dominant of postmodernism can only be addressed through an invocation of its features, in order to conceptualize "the mission of political art" (6). Jameson cites Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* as the "obvious" example of "winner loses" logic, and does not engage explicitly with the concept of resistance Foucault explores in his work. However, in the concluding comments of *Postmodernism*, Jameson asserts that "a mode of production is not a 'total system' in that forbidding sense; it includes a variety of counterforces and new tendencies within itself, of

'residual' as well as 'emergent' forces, which it must attempt to manage or control" (406). His conception of capitalism may be totalizing, but on this reading, it also contains "counterforces" which work in a similar way to Foucault's concept of resistance, presumably of the type which allow Jameson himself to attempt to resist the system which saturates the world around him. Foucault is clearly opposed to any attempts to reconstruct a totality, and Jameson here distinguishes cognitive mapping from Foucault's conception of the system, yet reading Jameson alongside Foucault allows for a concept of resistance which exists despite the dominance of the system, a concept which is not fully explained in Jameson's own work.

Ultimately, Jameson's aim in *Postmodernism* is to propose a political art which will:

> hold to the truth of postmodernism, that is to say, to its fundamental object -
> the world space of multinational capital - at the same time at which it achieves
> a breakthrough to some as yet unimaginable new mode of representing this
> last. (54)

The key point to note here is that Jameson does not offer any suggestions as to how a representation of the totality can itself hope to escape that totality. By his own indirect admission, he cannot fully escape the representational problems that ensue from any attempt to mount a critique of a totalizing system. To accept these criticisms of Jameson's quest to conceptualize the totality does not, however, invalidate his attempt. In his "A Misreading of Maps," Bosteels suggests that Jameson's use of the cartographic image is productive, in that he "acknowledges and dialectically exploits the structural incompleteness of cartography", in which "blind spots or unresolved social contradictions [...] resist the ideological formations and thereby register the historical effects of the 'real'" (124). Bosteels is suggesting that the value of Jameson's conception of cognitive mapping lies in his refusal to relinquish the possibility of resistance within new representational forms. This, then is the most productive aspect of cognitive mapping: its emphasis on a continually developing process of representing the world.

The closing pages of *Postmodernism* express Jameson's awareness of the limitations of cognitive mapping:

> A new sense of global social structure was supposed to take on figuration and
> to displace the purely perceptual substitute of the geographical figure;
> cognitive mapping, which was meant to have a kind of oxymoronic value and
> to transcend the limits of mapping altogether, is, as a concept, drawn back by
> the force of gravity of the black hole of the map itself (one of the most
> powerful of all human conceptual instruments) and therein cancels out its own
> impossible originality. (416)

The image of "the black hole of the map" is a potent one, suggesting that all is drawn back to the dead-end of representation, which is ultimately a void in which political agency is impossible to establish. However, an alternative reading of this "black hole" can focus on the potential for infinite

re-evaluation of mapping and maps. Jameson's political commitment insists on the need to continue attempting to map the totality in order to enable political action, yet his theory leaves the door open for alternatives through this infinite re-evaluation. However, this need for continual reinterpretation must also be extended to Jameson's own analysis, as a survey of critical responses to cognitive mapping demonstrates.

An initial problem lies in Jameson's extrapolation of Kevin Lynch's work in the field of urban planning. Robert Young argues:

> a comparison with London shows the tenuousness of the analogy; even cab drivers who have trained for months to learn 'the knowledge' cannot carry the entire contents of the A-Z Map of London in their heads; moreover, the map which Londoners do use as a mental map is that of the Underground, which famously bears little correspondence to the layout of the city above. (117)

Similarly, Kirby notes that Jameson's feelings of disorientation in the Bonaventure are presumably not shared by those who work in the hotel. She suggests, "surely if he visited this site frequently, as a shop girl or maintenance man, he would gain a working knowledge of it, much as he might also come to detest it" (57). Both critics are observing that simply knowing your way around an environment is no guarantee of obtaining political control. Both hotel workers and taxi drivers may regularly come into contact with others, such as businessmen and women and political figures, who receive more benefits from the dominant system, despite their lack of spatial awareness in a particular locale. However, these claims do miss the point somewhat: Jameson's concept of cognitive mapping depends on the individual's ability to relate his or her personal environment to that of the larger global economic system. This is not in any way to denigrate forms of local knowledge, but rather to argue that such knowledge alone is not sufficient to challenge the dominant space of late capitalism within and through which each locale operates. Young's over-literal reading also affects his comments regarding the map of the London Underground which is no less a map for all its non-realist qualities. Jameson's linking of spatial and political orientation is appropriate on the grounds that control over territories and their inhabitants has long been achieved through the mapping, or representing of spaces.

However, specific critiques of cognitive mapping highlight the extent to which Jameson is unable to overcome problems associated with the reabsorption into the dominant of his own attempts to represent the totality. Homer relates these difficulties already considered in relation to his evocation of postmodern hyperspace from within a position of privilege, asking "who is the 'we' being appealed to here?" (139). Similarly, Kirby raises the question of whether cognitive mapping will be available to all. She problematizes the nature of the cognitive mapping in which Jameson apparently "assumes that cognitive maps will reintroduce a common ground of perception and understanding". However, as Kirby enquires, "will a standardization in theorizing spaces exclude, once again, the concerns of subjects who don't fit the model of 'universal' subjectivity?" (62). Such a situation is clearly contrary to Jameson's stated political aims, yet even his

commitment to radical politics can be accused of universalizing his own concerns at the expense of others.

Moreover, Jameson's conclusion that cognitive mapping "was in reality nothing but a code word for 'class consciousness'" highlights not only his continuing commitment to Marxism, but a potential excluding of other concerns (*Postmodernism* 418). As Homi Bhabha argues, "Jameson's urgent and admirable vigilance is not in doubt. It is the value invested in the visible difference of class that does not allow him to constitute the present moment as the insignia of other interstitial inscriptions of cultural difference" (223). Jameson's privileging of class prevents him from paying due attention to other issues, such as race, gender or sexual preference. R. Radhakrishnan comments, "Jameson's discourse is virtually silent on a whole range of formations such as feminism, ethnic studies, discourses of sexuality, etc., and yet makes total and global claims". As such, he argues, "one cannot but help noticing how, in the name of non-equivocal political engagement, Jameson's 'cognitive map' blocks out 'other spaces' that are working out 'other' destinies based on 'other' desires" (322). Jameson states quite explicitly that he "strongly endorse[s]", for example, feminists', African-American and third world struggles in an afterword to the volume in which Radhakrishnan's essay appears ("Afterword" 385). However, he is also dubious about what he terms "the problem of micropolitics" (*Postmodernism* 17), desiring to unify the proliferation of possible identity politics based on gender, ethnicity, sexuality and so on, under the banner of class-based politics. Jameson argues that his call for cognitive mapping "proposed the need for class consciousness of a new and hitherto undreamed of kind", yet the details of this process remain unexplained ("Afterword" 387). It is dubious whether those motivated primarily or additionally by issues other than class would or should accept a mapped totality based solely on class consciousness. This is not to suggest that Jameson's insistence on the importance of class relations is misplaced, and it is certainly not the intention of the critics discussed to advocate the primacy of other forms of identification *over* class politics. Rather, it is the purpose of such arguments to highlight the multiple forms of struggle which must be incorporated in any cognitive mapping which makes global claims.

Jameson's tendency to overlook other forms of struggle leads to the danger of his own radical politics failing to escape the fate of previous political interventions, which he observes are "all somehow secretly disarmed and reabsorbed by a system of which they themselves might be considered a part, since they can achieve no distance from it" (*Postmodernism* 49). Essentially, the problem remains that which he himself observes in creating a principle which:

> will have to hold to the truth of postmodernism, that is to say, to its fundamental object - the world space of multinational capital - at the same time at which it achieves a breakthrough to some as yet unimaginable new mode of representing this last. (54)

Jameson cannot fully differentiate his concept of cognitive mapping from the representational pitfalls which have afflicted previous conceptions of mapping, thus rendering his attempts to map the totality incomplete.

Nonetheless, Jameson's strategy of cognitive mapping remains productive. His aligning of spatial awareness and political agency is critical for mapping projects which aim to challenge dominant representations of spaces. Focusing on class at the expense of other aspects of power relations compromises his cognitive mapping, but highlights the importance of considering mapping a process rather than a completed project. Analysis of cognitive mapping demonstrates that representing the totality is neither possible nor a desirable aim. However, an examination of the ways in which Jameson applies cognitive mapping in the aesthetic field offers alternative methods which focus on charting the more productive area of 'counterforces' within the dominant system of spatial organization.

Reading Jameson's Mappings

> the truth of our social life as a whole - in Lukács's terms, as a totality is increasingly irreconcilable with the possibilities of aesthetic expression or articulation available to us. (Jameson, "Class and Allegory" 54)

Jameson continues to attempt to represent the totality through the medium of cognitive mapping in art criticism. He applies his concept in a variety of contexts from the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s and suggests that cognitive mapping is applied both within postmodern artworks themselves, and in his criticism of such works. In *Postmodernism* he calls for the creation of a newly politicized art, which will exemplify mapping strategies. An essay on third world literature identifies mapping strategies in such works. From the beginning of the 1990s, his work moves away from literary analysis to film studies; these are investigated in order to establish further developments of the strategy of cognitive mapping. Analysis of these readings is helpful in establishing the implications of cognitive mapping, both as a method of reading and as an aspect of artworks themselves. While Jameson's readings confirm the potential of his theory of cognitive mapping, they also demonstrate the persistence of the theoretical problems highlighted in the previous section.

Jameson begins by using literature not as a form of cognitive mapping, but in order to stress the need for mapping strategies in the original version of "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism". Central to Jameson's thesis is the conception of postmodernism "not as a style but rather as a cultural dominant", which occurs on the basis that "aesthetic production today has become integrated into commodity production generally" (56). It is on this basis that postmodernism cannot simply be rejected, but must be encountered on its own fragmented terms. Jameson therefore celebrates the postmodern novels of E. L. Doctorow, in particular *Ragtime*, precisely because "he has had to elaborate his work by way of that very cultural logic of the postmodern which is itself the mark and symptom of his dilemma". *Ragtime* is set in New York in the early 1900s, and intermingles the narratives of characters from all social classes, mixing real historical detail and persons with fictional ones. The novel focuses on issues of oppression and

struggle, depicting incidents of racism, the plight of recent immigrants and the working class, and the struggles of revolutionary movements. Jameson argues that the mingling of real historical figures with fictional characters, together with "a rigorous principle of selection in which only simple declarative sentences (predominantly mobilized by the verb 'to be') are received" are features which inscribe "the crisis of historicity" in the novel. He concludes, "this historical novel can no longer set out to represent the historical past; it can only 'represent' our ideas and stereotypes about that past" (*Postmodernism* 70-1).

Linda Hutcheon's readings of postmodern writing have challenged Jameson's views, and a partial reply to her critique appears in the 1991 *Postmodernism*. Hutcheon argues "it is just as easy to argue that," in *Ragtime*, "the historical referent is very much present - and in spades" (89). In raising the problematic issue of the representation of history, she argues, a writer such as Doctorow is refuting any attempt to impose a single dominant interpretation of history. She is critical of Jameson's "lament that all fiction today can do is 'represent' our ideas and stereotypes about that past,'" and suggests that novels such as Doctorow's "reply that this is all they have ever been able to do, and that this is the lesson of the entire crisis of contemporary historiography" (212). Hutcheon therefore concludes that Jameson "does not want the contradictions and paradoxes; he does not want questioning. Instead he wants answers, totalizing replies - which postmodernism cannot and will not offer" (214).

In response, Jameson writes, "that *Ragtime* has political content and even something like a political 'meaning' seems in any case obvious", and includes a lengthy quotation, "expertly articulated" by Hutcheon, to this effect (*Postmodernism* 22). However, he continues, "this is what the novel would have meant had it not been a postmodern artifact" (22). The novel is a prime example of a postmodern work, in that it refers to a historical period, yet refuses to offer an explanation of social relations of that time which is not immediately challenged. *Ragtime*, Jameson suggests, "not only resists interpretation, it is organized systematically and formally to short-circuit an older type of social and historical interpretation which it perpetually holds out and withdraws" (23).

Jameson's reply to Hutcheon, however, cannot diminish the extent to which Hutcheon's concept of "historiographic metafiction", written by Doctorow, Rushdie and others, challenges conventional methods of interpretation precisely by positing an alternative method. As Hutcheon suggests, to problematize interpretation is not to deny it, and this stance in itself produces highly politicized writing. The opening pages of *Ragtime* present a stable, white, bourgeois world in which "There were no Negroes. There were no immigrants". By the next page, however, the real-life revolutionary Emma Goldman has spoken against this view and "Apparently there *were* Negroes. There *were* immigrants" (Doctorow 11-3). In highlighting the different ways in which the environment can be represented, Doctorow's novel makes clear the extent to which such representations have political consequences, without attempting to exonerate his own work from such partiality. Nonetheless, this position remains problematic: Doctorow's novel clearly has particular political sympathies, yet in accepting the partial nature of any interpretation of history, he

is unable to offer a normative position against which his own political sympathies can be verified as preferable.

This is a central dilemma of poststructuralist thought, which continues to be played out in both theory and fictional works. It is also, of course, precisely the problem which Jameson both acknowledges and explores. Hutcheon is correct to observe that while "the problematized histories of postmodernism have little to do with the single totalizing History of Marxism," nonetheless, "they cannot be accused of neglecting or refusing engagement with the issues of historical representation and knowledge" (57). However, her claim that Jameson "does not want the questioning" that is characteristic of postmodernism is countered by the focus of his work, which centres on precisely these questions. The relative weakness of Jameson's assessment of individual postmodern works as disassociated from real historical referents, therefore, does not compromise the strength of his continuing refusal to elide the problems such works raise for his own theory.

The weaknesses of Jameson's analysis lie largely in his terminology, which denies a novel such as Doctorow's a place within his system of cognitive mapping. It is important to recall that despite his description of the novel as "the weakest of the newer cultural areas", at least in its Western form, Jameson praises Doctorow's novel not in spite of, but *because* of its status as a postmodern work (*Postmodernism* 298). Elsewhere Jameson states that cognitive mapping "presupposes a radical incompatibility between the possibilities of an older national language or culture (which is still the framework in which literature is being produced today) and the transnational, worldwide organization of the economic infrastructure of contemporary capitalism." ("Class and Allegory" 54). However, this comment is included in an analysis of the film *Dog Day Afternoon*, described by Jameson as "an indecisive aesthetic and cultural phenomenon" which nonetheless "takes on the values of a revealing symptom". This occurs as Jameson believes it is necessary "to interrogate the artistic production of our own time for signs of some new, so far only dimly conceivable, collective forms which may be expected to replace the older individualistic ones (those either of conventional realism or of a now conventionalized modernism)" ("Class and Allegory," 54). Contemporary literature and film, therefore, raise the issues of representation and legitimation with which Jameson's theoretical work is concerned and share the ambivalence of his own attempts to redescribe the world. A more useful application of cognitive mapping would be to include works such as Doctorow's, which illustrate the need for new systems of mapping, as a foundational step in that mapping itself. If we understand cognitive mapping as a continuing struggle with these issues rather than a rejection of their relevance, then Jameson's strategy remains useful.

A central feature of Jameson's mapping strategy is that it is necessary as a response to an increasingly globalized environment. While *Postmodernism* focuses primarily on American artworks, an examination of Jameson's readings of fiction from outside the Western world highlights a greater difficulty in the application of cognitive mapping. The debate surrounding his 1986 essay, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism", emphasizes the problems suggested by the tendency of cognitive mapping to subsume other forms of resistance. Controversy has arisen over Jameson's use of the category of "Third-World Literature" to speak for

the problems of the area designated the "Third World", or "a range of other countries which have suffered the experience of colonialism and imperialism" (67). Jameson argues in favour of an increase in the amount of literature taught in American universities from the third world and the essay includes detailed analyses of works by one Chinese and one Senegalese writer, suggesting that these works demonstrate a "new mapping process" (73). However, in what he admits is "a sweeping hypothesis", he claims "all third-world texts are necessarily, I want to argue, allegorical, and in a very specific way: they are to be read as what I will call *national allegories*". This comes about through the omission of one of the fundamental splits in Western (in Jameson's terms "First-World") culture:

> one of the determinants of capitalist culture, that is the culture of the Western realist and modernist novel, is a radical split between the private and the public, between the poetic and the political, between what we have come to think of as the domain of sexuality and the unconscious and that of the public world of classes, of the economic, and of secular political power: in other words, Freud versus Marx. (69)

 Literature produced in the third world, reasons Jameson, does not reflect that split and will consequently allegorize personal relations to reflect nationalist concerns.

    A notable critic of Jameson's stance is Aijaz Ahmad. Ahmad argues that the "binary opposition" created between first and third worlds is not supported in fact, and that it ignores the many contradictions within and between these groupings (101). Certainly, it is clearly inappropriate to equate writing from one area of the third world with another which may be wholly different in terms of geography, culture and economics. Meanwhile, within first world literature, Ahmad points out, there are groups who identify far more strongly with third world positions: African-American and feminist writers in the United States are a possible example here. Sean Homer's observation that Jameson's analysis of Western postmodern writing excludes authors such as Toni Morrison is highly pertinent as a reminder of the narrowly selective and insufficiently substantiated nature of his view (117). Similarly, Jameson offers no suggestions as to how the growing number of "migrant intellectual" writers, such as Rushdie and Ondaatje, whose writing contains influences from and references to both the first and the third worlds, are to be considered in this paradigm.

    Moreover, defining the third world through the experiences of colonialism and imperialism denies these nations, as Ahmad argues, a history out with that of "externally inserted phenomena" (00). Robert Young suggests that postmodernism, "in which the old imperial maps have been lost, is the condition not just of late capitalism, but also of the loss of Eurocentrism" (117). Elsewhere, Jameson locates the beginnings of this process in the "radical otherness of colonial life, colonial suffering and exploitation, [and] the structural connections between that and this, between no space and daily life in the metropolis" (*Nationalism* 12). This disorientation is then associated with the emergence of modernism. In this respect, then, Jameson appears to be ignoring his own anti-colonial historicism by returning to a previous version of capitalist expansion, in which the East is

defined by the West. Ahmad also points out that as the third world is within the global capitalist system, then it must also experience the consequences Jameson associates with that system. Therefore, "one must conclude also that the separation between the public and the private, so characteristic of capitalism, has occurred there as well". This is particularly the case "among the urban intelligentsia which produces most of the written texts and is itself caught in the world of capitalist commodities" (107). Texts are then produced which reflect the alienation of the capitalist entity and which are consequently not the type of allegory that Jameson suggests.

   Most powerfully, as a citizen of Pakistan, Ahmad objects to the feeling he has that Jameson appears as, "in his own opinion, my civilizational Other" (96). The conclusion of his essay summarizes the ways in which Ahmad explodes the binary opposition within which Jameson works. He argues that "the ideological conditions of a text's production are never singular but always several", citing the various possible interest groups to which any individual might belong. He concludes:

> I want to insist that within the unity that has been bestowed upon our globe by the irreconcilable struggle between capital and labour, there are more and more texts which cannot easily be placed within this or that world. Jameson's is not a First World text; mine is not a Third World text. We are not each other's civilizational Others. (122)

Thus, it appears that despite Jameson's obvious sympathy for the troubles of the third world, his use of mapping strategies to itemize these in a first world context serves rather to appropriate these discourses. The divisions that he perceives between these worlds are further intensified, while exactly the sort of alternative discourses he seeks to promote are negated. Santiago Colás observes, in his reading of Jameson's work:

> the 'Third World' is, therefore, a Utopian space within Jameson's theory in the full sense that it no longer exists, it has been abolished, it is a no-place, and at the same time provides us with a site of resistance in the sense of a representation of a qualitatively different form of social organisation. (258)

However, that this site of resistance appropriates the experience of the third world removes the space from precisely the sort of local struggle which may be successful in resisting some elements of the dominant. Jameson's attempts to document a 'new mapping process' appears at this point very much, 'disarmed and reabsorbed' by the dominant system it purports to resist. That this stems from his designation of texts as first world or third world is a warning that cognitive mapping cannot function as a means of resistance when it is based on such a fixed point of reference.

This difficulty reappears in Jameson's work on film from the early 1990s. *The Geopolitical Aesthetic* continues the process of cognitive mapping: "the films discussed here have been selected

with a view towards an unsystematic mapping or scanning of the world system itself" (1). To this end, he divides his book into two sections, the first of which analyses conspiracy narratives from American cinema as attempts "to think a system so vast that it cannot be encompassed by the natural and historically developed categories of perception with which human beings normally orient themselves" (2). In the second section of the book, examples from non-US cinema are investigated as allegories for the inadequacy of the nation state in the new geotopical, or worldwide, spatial system. Perry Anderson points to Jameson's celebration of non-US cinema, including works by French directors as well as third world examples, over US film, arguing "it would be hard to think of sympathies less Eurocentric [sic] than these" (124). However, while Anderson may well be correct as to Jameson's *sympathies*, his theory does continue to essentialize both non-Western and Western artistic production in a way which excludes the heterogeneous nature of this art. The difference in the ways in which US and non-US films are addressed is clearly problematic, as Victor Burgin suggests: "the implicit hierarchical effect of Jameson's distinction between the Hollywood films in part 1 and the non-US films in part 2 is to attribute a global perspective to America and a more narrowly national perspective to the rest" (305). Such problems with Jameson's application of cognitive mapping strategies do not invalidate the entire project, but continue to emphasize a need for vigilance against the production of theoretical maps which reproduce the power relations which they aim to oppose.

Despite the reappearance of this problem with cognitive mapping, however, Jameson does develop his theory in a manner which suggests a more responsive form of mapping. He writes:

> Critics and theorists have shown enthusiasm for the proposition that figures
> and narratives can bear many different meanings at the same time, and know
> distinct, sometimes even contradictory functions. They have been less eager to
> make an inventory of some of the specific meanings in question, something I
> try to do here. (*The Geopolitical Aesthetic* 2)

Described in this way, cognitive mapping becomes a heterogeneous grouping of interpretations, which allows for the conflictual nature of these meanings. Jameson retains the notion of totality, which continues to pose difficulties for his theories, however. He states that he attempts to make an inventory of "some of the specific meanings in question", yet the admission that only "some" of these meanings can be explored denies any claim of mapping the totality. Moreover, it is not clear at what point a full inventory of such meanings could be reached, or who would be qualified to make such a decision. Jameson's study of conspiratorial allegory suggests that he accepts the partial nature of his own cognitive maps, suggesting "it needs to be marked as imperfect in order to serve as a cognitive map", which, "it would be disastrous to confuse with reality itself" (9). Perhaps, then, it is best to conceive of cognitive mapping as a necessarily imperfect process, which aims for a Utopian projection of the social totality, but must continually be reappraised and rewritten.

Jameson's own readings can be seen to reflect this conception of cognitive mapping. Analyzing the film *The Parallax View*, he argues that in the illustrating of a journalist's attempts to infiltrate a

conspiracy in which he soon becomes mysteriously and fatally involved, "resolution is not even presupposed in advance". As a consequence, "the representational dilemma is inscribed in the text and thereby acknowledged, rather than repressed or resolved". Finally, "the very problem of representability now becomes in some sense its own solution - the thing being done, as it were, by showing it cannot be done in the first place" (55-6). In highlighting the film's foregrounding of the problem of representability, Jameson returns to the conclusions reached through his reading of Doctorow's *Ragtime*, which he also celebrated for representing the problems of representation. It appears, therefore, that Jameson's cognitive mapping continues to find productive the depiction of the "representational dilemma", even as he strives to transcend it.

Jameson's own cognitive mappings raise issues consistent with those discussed in my analysis of his postmodern spatializing and in the theory of cognitive mapping. His work on postmodern hyperspace highlights the extent to which spaces are produced through social relations, and stresses the political significance of representations of space. Moreover, his emphasis on mapping demonstrates, against some of his own implications, that spatial analysis is politically committed, while his insistence on considering the global environment is timely. The problems that appear throughout his work are also useful reminders of the need for vigilance in the search for alternatives. His tendency to universalize his US experience makes clear the need to consider the heterogeneous nature of spaces and of individuals' experience of them. The essentializing of first and third worlds and the subsuming of non-class based forms of resistance emphasizes the need to constantly re-evaluate mapping strategies in order to avoid the reassertion of dominant ideas in the name of resistance. Although Jameson cannot free himself from the poststructuralist problematizing of representation, and his aim to map the totality is never realized, his work is extremely productive in continuing to pursue political concerns. My analysis of his application of mapping strategies in film and literary criticism demonstrates that his principles are most successful in highlighting the representational problems of current artworks. Although Jameson never makes this explicit, to raise such issues is very much to understand such works as political. While Jameson's aim to invent new forms of representation which go beyond current constraints remains Utopian, his insistence on pursuing mapping strategies allows him to continue to engage with the central political problems of space and representation.

This paper has identified the central concerns of Jameson's mapping strategies in theoretical work; such strategies are also seen in contemporary fiction. Mapping strategies are used to emphasize the extent to which maps, as representations of space, help to construct the territories they depict. Spaces, as Lefebvre suggests, are socially produced, and both theoretical and fictional works demonstrate that the power relations within a society create conflicting definitions of spaces, some of which will inevitably come to dominate others. Identifying the constructed and variable nature of these dominant maps of space also challenges their seeming neutrality. However, while both theory and fiction can help to highlight the political significance of the production of space, writing resistant representations of space proves more problematic. Each of the theorists discussed has confronted the problematizing of representation itself, a process central to postmodern fiction.

Mapping strategies remain ambiguous, as Jameson's work in the field demonstrates, through the risk of reproducing the very structures of dominance that they seek to disarm. Fictional representations of spaces parallel Jameson's process of cognitive mapping in explicitly foregrounding the tensions that exist between the need to map spaces and the challenge of representing resistant understandings of space.

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