Understanding Ordinary Landscapes

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13 Unseen and Disbelieved: A Political Economist among Cultural Geographers

After having spent almost two decades in Berkeley, past home of Carl Sauer and John Brinckerhoff Jackson, it is refreshing for me to be asked to comment on cultural geography and landscape studies. Times change hard. I was for many years treated as a viper in the bosom of geography by virtue of my affinity for economic analysis and Marxist theory.[1] This schism between cultural studies and political economy long stood in the way of a vital comingling of ideas. Now that the dam of old intransigences has broken, a fresh flow of ideas is washing over Berkeley geography.[2] More broadly, a new cultural geography is being forged by a generation of scholars—represented in this book by Denis Cosgrove, Deryck W. Holdsworth, and Paul Groth—who are widely schooled in social theory, willing to engage political economy, and who draw inspiration from the maverick cultural materialists within the Marxist camp, especially Raymond Williams.[3] Meanwhile, many of those raised on political economy and Marx have moved in the other direction, giving rise to a renaissance of urban cultural studies.[4]

In current approaches to landscape studies, there is an enormous creative tension between cultural and material studies. In the limnal zones of this encounter lie fertile places, yet it may be hasty to presume that mere declaration of good intent will suffice to warn of the dangers that the collision of theoretical frameworks and interpretative habits poses. My point of departure is Cosgrove's essay "Spectacle and Society: Landscape as Theater in Premodern and Postmodern Cities," Chapter 8 in this volume. Cosgrove's erudite essay, reminiscent of his extraordinary book *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, raises a set of important issues, and his pirouette with David Harvey's *Condition of Postmodernity* hints at some of the difficult problems around which he finds it best to dance lightly.[5] I have organized my remarks around the key themes touched on by Cosgrove.

Theater, Spectacle, and Ordinary Landscapes

Theater is a valuable metaphor and analytic tool by which to understand the creation, display, utilization, and consumption of landscapes.[6] Cosgrove is well in line with recent thinking on the importance of social spectacle and the drama of urban life, an approach that breaks with strictly utilitarian or functional interpretations of landscapes. The icons of urban landscapes operate as common points of reference that are symbolically charged with the power of collective myth and involve history rewritten and futures anticipated.

Yet the current delight in fantastic and singular icons leaves a good deal out of the picture. What is the relation between spectacularly contrived venues and objects—whether piazzas, statues, or buildings—and everyday bits and pieces of the city—the uneventful and humble homes, factories, shrines, and pavements that bulk far larger than the special ones? What strikes me about, say, Orange County, California, is not its postmodern highlights, as elaborated by the iconographer Ed Soja, but the utter banality of yet another stretch of suburbia.[7] Guy Debord, from whom the catch-phrase "society of the spectacle" is taken, would be scathing in his criticism of an iconography that tries to gloss over the banality of everyday life by striking poses about high art or high kitsch.[8] But the interrogation of ordinary landscapes is not easy; it requires a deeper familiarity with the lives of common people and close attention to vernacular clues by humble archeologists of the contemporary. Here John Brinckerhoff Jackson's landscape school has shown the way.[9]

The sort of intellectual history practiced by Denis Cosgrove is perched precariously on the top of the social pyramid. Within the new cultural geography lies an unresolved contradiction between Cosgrove's perorations on grand piazzas and Palladian villas and declarations on the importance of popular culture by Peter Jackson or vernacular cityscapes by Paul Groth.[10] What is the intersection of landscape as high culture with the world constructed by ordinary people?

As Cosgrove points out, the idea of landscape in Europe was first of all a pictorial one that was applied systematically to the production of grand parks and lordly mansions. But not all manifest landscapes have such lofty origins. While the great artist like Claude Lorrain or Andrea Palladio may profoundly alter ways of seeing and conceiving of landscapes, the diffusion of ideas among the intelligentsia (much less the apprehension of ideas by the unlettered) runs an uncertain course that must be teased out from the swirl of ideas, in the manner of

Williams's effort to capture "structures of feeling" among the writers of an era.[11] Similarly, while the mighty burgher or aristocrat may be able to dictate the built form of large swaths of land (or impose a linear system of land survey across a whole country, as did Thomas Jefferson), the bulk of improvement and construction is carried out under lesser masters, yielding the incredible jumble of most ordinary cities and rural lands.

Similarly, one of the limits of the postmodern debate on cities has been an obsession with a form of modern architecture and planning that never triumphed over the vernacular portions of cities.[12] Even David Harvey is taken in by this high-end drift, when he defines postmodernism as "an eclectic mixture of styles, historical quotation, ornamentation, and diversification of surfaces."[13] Despite his awareness of counterflow within the culture of modernism, Harvey seems to forget that a historicist, romantic, eclectic form of urbanism has a long and distinguished presence in North American cities—as suburbia, the prized landscape of bourgeois consumption. As Robert Fishman says, "if . . . we are seeking the architecture that best reveals 'the spirit and character of modern civilization,' then suburbia might tell us more about the culture that built the factories and skyscrapers than these edifices themselves can."[14] An obsession with monumentality and modernity has caused people to overlook the crucial differences between the spaces of business and the spaces of consumption, two landscapes, two bourgeois utopias, often at odds with each other.[15] Suburbia is a landscape heavily infected with class denial with regard to urbanism and its capitalist roots; one did not have to wait for postmodern architecture to discover this streak in bourgeois landscape tastes. This systematic evasiveness in art and landscapes, the vision of absence, makes it doubly difficult to pin down the relations between material and ideational culture or between critique and affirmation of the dominant social order.

Ironically, the vernacularists are often just as guilty of rampant elitism and idealism as is the historian of ideas, despite their claim to go forth in sackcloth and ashes through the streets. A common ploy is to ascribe popular building styles to such transcendent notions as "the Jeffersonian ideal" without devoting sufficient attention to the practical bases for the popular acceptance of lofty concepts or the pragmatic constraints under which actual building goes forward.[16] By contrast, an exemplary blending of leading ideals and vernacular influences in landscape analysis is achieved by Fishman's *Bourgeois Utopias,* which traces the suburban form of homes-in-a-park from its origins in late eighteenth-century Britain to twentieth-century North America. While giving the designers John Nash and Frederick Law Olmsted their due, Fishman is careful to integrate these with the collective actions of the English Evangelicals and ultimately the whole class of suburbanizing burghers from Philadelphia to Los Angeles.

Yet even this remains on a fairly lofty plane and needs to be supplemented by studies such as Anthony D. King's *Bungalow,* which fill in essential details about the evolving aesthetics, production, and morphology of ordinary housing.[17] Furthermore, one has to recognize the tension between the suburban ideal and the dystopian effects of property markets, as the calculus of capital investment and speculation in land hems in the suburban dreams of most people trying to carve out humble living quarters.[18] Hence, traces of culture as symbol and sign, tradition, and ethnic signature must give due weight, as Deryck W. Holdsworth reminds us, to such mundane considerations as tenant-landlord relationships, inventories of property and possessions, and the like.[19]

Last, some account must be taken of the relation of residential districts to territories and landscapes of production in the city, as has only recently been taken up by economic geographers.[20] The landscape school has been altogether evasive about such systematic forces of political economy in mainstream capitalist America, and in answering the question of who and what, in fact, create urban and rural environments.[21]

Vision, Text, and the Ideology of Landscape

Cosgrove is surely right to argue for a dialectic of image and text and for taking the visual image seriously, in comparison to the literally textual strategies of so many postmodern commentators. Intellectuals raised on the written word can be mistrustful of other ways of knowing. He singles out Harvey, in particular, for a "distrust of image and faith in text."[22] At the same time, he chides cultural geographers for being spellbound by the purely visual qualities of landscape and for being captive to the dominance of the visual in European culture, tainted by the controlling sweep of an upper class, white, male outlook, or "Gaze."[23]

For landscape studies, visual command of space is of central importance. Cosgrove demonstrates in his book that the emergence of perspectivism in renaissance Italy provided a major axis for the organization of space in the modern world. He ties perspectivism to rationalized methods of survey and mapping appearing under the prod of commercial activity in the quickening European economy of the mercantile era.[24] He further observes that "an important effect of linear perspective is to arrest the flow of history at a specific moment, freezing that moment as a universal reality. Perspective, in structuring and directing universal reality at a single spectator, acknowledges only one, external subject for the object it represents. Thus, a landscape painted in accordance with pictorial rules, or nature observed by an eye trained to look at it as landscape, is in important respects far from being realistic . . . . The claim of realism is in fact ideological."[25]

These are powerful insights, but sweeping judgments about visual dominance and the emergence of perspectivism can whisk away the necessary subtleties of historical interpretation. The play of the visual and textual in European history is difficult to unravel—so difficult that Cosgrove and Anthony D. King (in his essay in this volume) appear to contradict themselves on which is truly dominant.[26]

To begin with, the reading of texts is itself a visual practice that triumphed, with the coming of the printing press, over oral traditions of knowing. Conversely, art historians regularly debate the presence of a textual mode within painting, and Svetlana Alpers even distinguishes between a southern European textuality and a northern ocularity.[27] Nor is the unfolding of perspectivism unproblematic over the course of European painting; Norman Bryson argues that as soon as perspectival painting had been invented, it was tinkered with and taken in unexpected directions; soon multiple perspectives and abstractions of viewpoint were introduced, with stunning and totally original results.[28] Indeed, the contrast between Gentile Bellini's fifteenth-century *Procession in the Piazza di San Marco* and Jacopo Tintoretto's sixteenth-century *Translation of St. Mark's Body,* of which Cosgrove makes much, is a good example of the dramatic manipulation of perspective to gain very different effects (Bellini is decidedly *not* a preperspective painter). So is the work of Claude Lorrain, the seventeenth-century master of the picturesque landscape.[29] Much later, perspective and the whole pictorial mode were ironically toyed with by the impressionists, then shattered fully by the cubists.[30]

David Harvey, elder political economist among the geographers, is keenly aware of the play of visual dominance and disintegration within the modernist stance. Harvey's concern with the capitalist manipulation of urban landscapes and pictorial representations for commercial gain is not, therefore, the same as a dismissal of images and postmodernism as inauthentic, as Cosgrove avers. It is more a question of "authentic for whom?" since images make for authentic profits and propaganda. Indeed, Harvey is at pains to show that postmodern theatrics are—for all their apparent chaos, fragmentation, and playfulness—purposeful constructs for the obfuscation of (and diversion from) urban squalor and class conflict.[31] On this point, Cosgrove should agree, judging by his analysis of the theatrics of Tintoretto, whose painting is full of myth making and melodrama, masking the less pleasant realities of social change in Venice.[32]

As Cosgrove knows full well and has written: "Landscape . . . is an ideological concept. It represents a way in which certain classes of people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature, and through which they have underlined and communicated their own social role and that of others with respect to external nature."[33] Built landscapes are robustly ideological, full of illusion as to their place in systems of power, profit, and passion.

(This is equally so whether they are the unified vision of an architect or the disparate art of many hands whose coherence is the unintentional result of common ways of imagining and living.) The city and its monuments are an unending procession of spectacle, high drama, low farce, and play of representations upon the rude stones—fraud on the grandest scale—from classical Athens to Islamic Cairo or from Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann's Paris to Frank Gehry's Los Angeles. The urban fabric is a record of repeated efforts by the ruling classes to bring their kind of order and design to bear against the apparently inchoate patterns of myriad city-dwellers, involving a struggle between high art and low, the power-serving and the playful, and the monumental and the living tissue of the vernacular.

The play of image and text espoused by Cosgrove simply does not go far enough in pursuit of the antimonies of this accumulated urban symbolism and landscape ideology. Neither the false objectivism of positivist science nor noncommittal deconstruction of representational games is sufficient to uncover the play of consciousness and material life in the making of territories deeply instilled with cultural meaning and ideology.

Critical theory, by contrast, calls for the deconstruction of ideology by means of all available powers of analytical abstraction, given that prevailing representations are partial, distorted, and misleading manifestations of the full sweep of social life and material practices.[34] Harvey is well justified in saying that the argument of the eye is less trustworthy than that of the mind (in Cosgrove's paraphrase); one needs insight, a feeling for structure, and the hard work of critical deconstruction directed at a given discourse, painting, or landscape to reveal its many facets and levels of significance. An exemplary reading of the juncture of visual and textual modes of representation is that of John Barrell, dealing with the age of agricultural improvement and landscape aesthetics in England. He attends closely to the way literary strategies enact structures of feeling embedded in specific forms of agriculture and spatial organization and teases out the oppositions of viewpoint between and within class positions—whether the writer is the modernizer Arthur Young or the critical poet John Clare.[35]

To their credit, John Brinckerhoff Jackson and the old cultural geographers tried hard to educate the blind eye of the American public to the landscapes around them. But one must, as a part of ideology critique, denaturalize the everyday, not just appreciate it. Doing so requires a critical stance toward the disturbing social forces, from racism to capital accumulation, at work in the molding of contemporary material culture.[36] Deryck W. Holdsworth is correct to take landscape writers to task for this failing and to argue the necessity of penetrating the images of the landscape to reveal less obvious economic and political forces at work behind the immediate field of objects and representations.[37] Decoding the ideology of landscape and stripping away the cultural veil over the hard machin-

ery of political economics is not easy, however, and a bracing dose of Marxist theory cannot do the job alone.[38] What is needed, again, is a sophisticated cultural materialism.

From Pillar to Post: In Search of the Modern

Cosgrove takes a postmodernist turn in his paper, adopting the grand narrative of premodern-modern-postmodern; but what is the analytic purchase of the concept of modernity on the landscape history he studies?[39] Grave errors can arise from hasty conclusions about the rise and fall of modernity without regard to the complications of internal class struggles, contending political positions, and uneven development. The difficulties can be suggested by a series of questions.

How substantial a break in visualization and landscape formation occurred with the emergence of a landscape way of seeing around 1500? Cosgrove presents as evidence for Venice the contrast between the extended narrative form of the Bellini painting and the focused drama of Tintoretto. Although we can clearly distinguish between the eyewitness spectacle of Bellini and the mannerist theatrics of Tintoretto as different forms of representational art,[40] it is harder to see a vast sea-change in the ideological relation of the art to the city it serves: both paintings are ideologically charged portraits, confirming the social order of the city through its leading icons. Cosgrove argues that one is more a participant in the Bellini type of urban panorama,[41] but that depends very much on one's position in the social hierarchy and ideological constellation. While Bellini's panoramic landscape is less individualistic and distanced than the Tintoretto, it takes its meaning no less from the observer's sense of command and participation in the spectacle. The key political difference is that his participants still include the small tradesmen and craft workers integrated through the corporatist system of the *Grand Scuole*.[42]

Is sixteenth-century Venice a valid case of emergent capitalism and an attendant move toward modernization? Cosgrove's essay gives the barest mention of Venice's changing social battleground, but his book is more explicit about "arrested capitalism in Renaissance Italy."[43] A feudal involution took place against the background of a disintegrating commercial empire, with the richest burghers investing in landed estates of the Veneto while the once-formidable corporate system of smaller masters and merchants of the *scuole* were economically decimated and politically marginalized. Despite an initial impulse toward agriculture improvements, agrarian capitalism did not break through in Italy as it did in the north.[44]

What is the relation of the Renaissance to the rise of capitalism? Cosgrove is quite aware of the mixed parentage of renaissance humanism, which, while undoubtedly stimulated by the commercial advances of Italy, in many ways represented a high tide of feudalism.[45] We have to be careful not to adopt the bourgeois stance of Adam Smith and his followers whereby cities and commerce are wholly alien bodies within the feudal system, birthplace of capitalism. To do so is to rob the past (the cavernous, vacuous premodern) of its history, dynamism, and human achievements.[46]

Are theater and spectacle strictly modern (let alone postmodern) phenomena? Surely not, as Cosgrove's work illustrates. Fifteenth-century Venice was saturated with pageantry, spectacle, and pastiche of an elaboration, richness, and calculation that put most puny postmodern efforts, such as Baltimore's Harbor Place, to shame. People still flock by the millions each year to view one of the greatest assemblages of urban icons on earth. The surviving landscape of Venice is the testament of a confident commercial class and probably the largest urban renewal effort before Hausmann's Paris.[47]

Is the formal landscape a product of the bourgeoisie and its form of modern rationality? Formal landscapes, whether of urban regimentation or Arcadian countryside, bear more than a whiff of aristocratic posturing, state authoritarianism, and rationalist intellectual arrogance, none of which is, strictly speaking, reducible to the modern or bourgeois. Baroque city plans were strongly associated with the Counter-Reformation in Rome, absolutism in northern Europe, and Federalist politics in America. Cosgrove has provided a wonderful analysis of the baroque arts as a species of romantic reaction to the Renaissance and Reformation, which one might say is politically akin to the romanticism in post-Napoleonic Europe or postmodern America today.[48] Even within renaissance humanism contradictions abound: Leone Battista Alberti had the same hubris as René Descartes, a kind of secularization of Divine Reason as the genius of a few Great Men (city planners and architects). Is this absolutist mentality essential to modernity, or does it represent a failure to go very far beyond the pious certainties of medieval Catholicism?[49]

How strong was the commonality across Europe in the modern landscape way of seeing? Cosgrove, in his book, is forced to negotiate his way through a shifting history of uneven development, as the center of mercantile capital shifted from Italy to the Low Countries, thence to Britain, and later to the United States. Dutch landscape paintings (and cities) of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show little of the pretentious idealism and aristocratic domination of the Italy of Alberti and Palladio, let alone that of Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini's Rome. While many English and Scots burghers shared the same Puritan and Leveler tastes as the Dutch, the gentrified bourgeoisie and commercialized aristocracy of eighteenth-century Britain looked further south to the Italians (or, rather, to French and Italian mythologized portrayals of the Baroque era by Claude Lorrain, Nicholas Poussin, and Salvator Rosa) for inspiration in organizing the "pleasing prospects" around their burgeoning country estates. A further twist in the shift from Italy to

Britain was that the urbanization of the countryside became the ruralization of the city, with the ultimate dominance of the Arcadian landscapes of suburbia. Italian rationalism in landscape imagination did not resonate deeply in the north, despite a few Georgian terraces and new town plans, and romantic tastes in wild landscapes carried the day.

Then there are the French, who have never given up on urban culture or their preference for formal gardens. And, despite the rationalist tenor of the U.S. cadastral survey, Jeffersonian revolutionary enlightenment soon became weighed down by land speculation and the romantic sensibilities of nineteenth-century America.[50] One can easily read too much homogeneity into these divergent histories, and too much political economy into their cultural variety.

Landscapes of Conflict: The Uneasy Marriage of Materialism and Culture

The engagement between political economy and cultural studies is unavoidable by the nature of the tug of war in human life between material restraint and popular creativity, between structure and agency, and between production and appropriation. Unfortunately, most of the participants in this engagement have treated it more as a war of good and evil, taking sides instead of working out the hard intellectual problems.[51] In the 1980s the culturalists were in the ascendant, and political economy became a dirty word in certain academic quarters. I am a bit uneasy, therefore, about Cosgrove's postmodernist drift back toward the old idiographic and romantic sins of cultural geography, even as he attempts to revive the field in several recent books.

I am equally uneasy about the relabeling in the currently fashionable postmodernist terminology—instability of meanings, disparity between signifiers and signified, representations, and all that—of the perfectly serviceable Marxist concept of ideology.[52] I grow more concerned when Cosgrove waxes rhapsodic over John Ruskin as prefiguring today's postmodern sensibilities—though he is perfectly aware of Ruskin's Tory colors and idealizations of mythological, idealized pasts.[53] I am further dismayed when Cosgrove begins to distance himself from John Berger and Raymond Williams's alleged "Marxist stratigraphy of economic base and cultural superstructure," as if that were all there were to cultural materialism.[54] And I simply cannot accept that a person of his analytic skills could conclude that "from such a postmodern perspective landscape seems less like a palimpsest whose real or authentic meanings can somehow be recovered with the correct techniques, theories, or ideologies, than a flickering text displayed on the word-processor screen whose meaning can be created, extended, altered, elaborated, and finally obliterated by the merest touch of a button."[55] Cosgrove cannot miss the meaning of my flickering text when I say that this is hogwash. Meanings are not merely the whisper of bats in the night; they cohere into flocks to sleep in the caverns of social thought and reemerge in thunderous flight to ignite a million imaginations together. These things can be understood and tracked, and that is the work of social science.

Arguments over culture and political economy, the particular and the universal, and necessity and resistance, have been considerably muddied, from a geographer's point of view, by their conflation with a quite different dialectic, that of the local and the global. Cultural geography has not come to grips with the ineluctable tension between the diversity of particular peoples and the universalizing embrace of global forces of the market, industrial technologies, and finance capital. The danger of essentialism in the Marxist tradition, much decried by the postmodernists, is particularly glaring at a moment of global recomposition that has left communism in shreds, capitalist industries in tatters, and the peoples of the world in new migratory and territorial alignments. As Anthony D. King indicates in "The Politics of Vision," the revival of interest in culture and multicultural visions has everything to do with these changes.[56] Yet these globe-straddling upheavals demand powerful and sweeping concepts to match their processes and consequences, concepts that political economy is prepared to offer. It is not sufficient to retreat into the fragments and to declare them to be all that is certain or all that is worthy against the tide of global integration.[57]

Especially contentious is the consumer realm—the encounter between commercialized selling, the expression of human desires, and the realization of human needs—where culture studies and political economy come together with a bang.[58] Marxists such as Harvey can be extremely distrustful of the manipulations of capitalist consumer culture, as Cosgrove points out, and thereby place themselves in odd juxtaposition to the Sauerian refusal of modernity in all its forms. Scholars of the landscape school, by contrast, have made a point of defying high-minded critics in their embrace of ordinary commercial and residential landscapes. Certainly, landscapes of consumption are much more than scenes of fleeting desire, manipulated fashion, and the shallow play of images, though they are that, too; they are sites of prodigious labor, creative human activity, and oppressive relations of gender and age, as well as vigorous engagement, playful and serious, with the commodities brought home from the abundant capitalist market.

This is where the studies of youth subcultures of the Birmingham School strike a resonant chord, providing a vibrant model for cultural geography, as Peter Jackson indicates. In the cultural analysis of Paul Willis, for example, contemporary subcultures are not simply victims of the homogenizing tendencies of capitalism, against which they cling to traditional values, but are capable of appropriating and revising dominant cultural terms and artifacts into unexpected

avenues of self-assertion and solidarity.[59] Cultural geography need not be a celebratory encounter with the practices of modern consumption, however. On this score John Brinckerhoff Jackson and friends have often been too respectful in the face of the crass and disagreeable, indeed ugly, habits of the common folk. Populism can be either conservative or progressive, and respect for common people is not the same as adulation.[60]

Yet the old cultural geography had a healthy respect for the evidence of material culture, which is in danger of slipping away in the reinvention of the field. Peter Jackson repudiates the study of common landscape artifacts, refusing to indulge in the "obsessional interest in culture-as-artifact of the Berkeley School."[61] While artifacts must be seen in dialectical relation with the ideational side of cultural practices, it strikes me as hopelessly idealist, and insubstantial, to try to grasp culture without considering the objects it uses and produces. This is not just a matter of collecting evidence[62] but of recognizing the process of human development itself, which depends on the objectification of consciousness for the further evolution of ideas.[63]

Consider the potential unleashed by mass consumption, given the access to produced objects it has made possible. These spawn of the capitalist market are not mute objects but themselves representations, in both body and surface, from which may be crafted further representations, styles and fashions, high and low arts, where imagination, time, free spaces, and money are in supply. They are also material bearers of ideology and the dominant cultures of modern globalism. On this crucial point of the dialectics of consumption, I must chide all round: the landscape school for an overly static (and often antimodernist) view of culture, new cultural geographers for a reversion to cultural idealism, and political economists for a dismissive view of consumer cultures.

Conclusion: A Word on Style

Unlike people of a literary wit and theatrical cast, such as Denis Cosgrove and Catherine Howett, I am one of those mundane analytic types who want principally to know how things work, not how they strike the sensibilities. Of course, I am not fool enough to think that human beings labor without imagination and that materialism can be shorn of the dialectics of consciousness and action. Yet I have a jaundiced eye for the way the high-powered sensitivities of many academics in the culturalist camp can be used to convert the least bit of combustible material into billows of smoke spreading across the intellectual landscape. I become easily irritated with the posturing of the postmodernist and the mannered style of discourse that glibly condemns the linear, logical, and evidentiary essay in favor of fragments of literary allusion and freely tossed Lacanian

word salads, which leave a faint and convoluted trail of simulacrumbs for the poor reader to follow.

I note Denis Cosgrove's reference to "soft metaphors" in place of "technical analogies" with some apprehension, therefore, because it continues a long habit of splitting what cannot be split in human reason.[64] Metaphor and the play of imagination are not something that only humanists and postmodernists can lay claim to: they are, in fact, essential to all mental activity and "reasoning." The creative mind is, at the same time, engaged in constant self-discipline, boundary drawing, stereotyping and logical sorting.[65] We are both humanists and scientists in the bud, and the divisions between the cultural and materialist turns of mind among intellectuals have more to do with divisions of labor in academia than with absolute and indelible schisms within human life. I therefore end with a plea for overcoming false dualisms in geography and neighboring disciplines, and for the promiscuous mingling and mutual education of cultural geographers and political economists.

to Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana, 1984), 20.

19. George Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

20. Roland Robertson, "The Sociological Significance of Culture: Some General Considerations," in *Theory, Culture and Society* 5 (1988): 3–24.

21. Stuart Hall, "Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms," in Tony Bennet et al., Graham Martin, Colin Mercer, and Janet Wollacott, eds., *Culture, Ideology and Social Process* (London: Batsford, 1987), 19–38.

22. Jackson, *Maps of Meaning*, 16–17.

23. See *Public Culture: Bulletin for the Center of Transnational Cultural Studies* (Philadelphia: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1988–1993; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993–).

24. Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill, and Bryan S. Turner, eds., *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* (London: Penguin, 1988), under "ethnic group," 90.

25. Seymour-Smith, *Macmillan Dictionary of Anthropology*, 95 (under "ethnic group"); *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, under "ethnic."

26. Seymour-Smith, *Macmillan Dictionary of Anthropology*, 95.

27. Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Construction of Peoplehood: Racism, Nationalism and Ethnicity," *Sociological Forum* 2:2 (1987): 373–86, 385.

28. Dell Upton, ed., *America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups That Built America* (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1986).

29. Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global; Globalization and Ethnicity," in Anthony D. King, ed., *Culture, Globalization, and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

30. See Anthony D. King, "Identity and Difference: The Internationalization of Capital and the Globalization of Culture," in Paul Knox, ed., *The Restless Urban Landscape* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992), in which I refer to five such approaches: world-systems, globalization, postmodernism, postcolonialism, and postimperialism. See also Preface to the revised edition of King, *Culture, Globalization, and the World-System* and Peter J. Taylor, "On the Nation-State, the Global, and Social Science," *Environment and Planning A* 28 (1996), with commentaries by fourteen scholars currently writing on issues of globalization.

31. Anthony D. King, *Global Cities: Post-Imperialism and the Internationalization of London* (London and New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1990); Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

32. Anthony D. King, "Worlds in the City: Manhattan Transfer and the Rise of Spectacular Space," *Planning Perspectives* 11 (1996): 97–114.

33. I owe this insight to Immanuel Wallerstein.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. An excellent discussion of how this has happened and how vernacular activity has transformed many streets is Mike Helm and George Tukel, "Restoring Cities from the Bottom Up: A Bi-Coastal View from the Street," *The Whole Earth* (Spring 1990).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

My thanks to Paul Groth for inviting me to participate in the *Vision, Culture, and Landscape* conference, to T. J. Clark for correcting my most egregious errors in art history, and to Todd W. Bressi for close editing.

1. The great exception to this blinkered attitude was Clarence Glacken, a marvelous and gentle man who warmly accepted this newcomer into the fold and who guided me to many valuable texts in cultural studies.

2. See, for example, Allan Pred and Michael Watts, *Reworking Modernity: Capitalisms and Symbolic Discontent* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992); Roderick Neumann, "The Social Origins of Natural Resource Conflict in Arusha National Park, Tanzania" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, Department of Geography, 1992); George Henderson, "Regions and Realism: Social Spaces, Regional Transformation, and the Novel in California, 1882–1924" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, Department of Geography, 1992).

3. See, for example, Denis Cosgrove, "Towards a Radical Cultural Geography" *Antipode* 15 (1983):1–11; Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, eds., *The Iconography of Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Denis Cosgrove and Peter Jackson, "New Directions in Cultural Geography," *Area* 19:2 (1987): 95–101; Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Deryck W. Holdsworth, "Evolving Urban Landscapes," in Larry Bourne and David Ley, eds., *The Changing Social Geography of Canadian Cities* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 33–51.

4. For example, David Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); Edward Soja, *Post-Modern Geographies* (London: Verso, 1989); Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso, 1990); Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx and the City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Michael Sorkin, ed., *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Hill and Wang/Noonday Press, 1992).

5. Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1984); David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989)

6. John Brinckerhoff Jackson "Landscape as Theater," *Landscape* 23:1 (1979); Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theatre in Anglo-American Thought, 1550–1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

7. Edward Soja, "Inside Exopolis: Scenes from Orange County," in Sorkin, *Variations on a Theme Park*, 94–122.

8. Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black and Red Books, 1983)

9. For example, John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *American Space, The Centennial Years: 1865–76* (New York: Norton, 1972); John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Thomas R. Vale and Geraldine R. Vale, *U.S. 40 Today: Thirty Years of Landscape Change in America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983). A personal favorite is Phil Patton, *Open Road: A Celebration of the American Highway* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986).

10. Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning*; Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

11. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973). Also, Peter Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

12. For an attempt at a balanced assessment, see Edward Relph, *The Modern Urban Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1987).

13. Harvey, *Postmodernity*, 42.

14. Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 3.

15. Michael Heiman, "Production Confronts Consumption: Landscape Perception and Social Conflict in the Hudson Valley," *Society and Space* 7:2 (1989): 165–78. Cf. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780–1950* (London: Penguin, 1963); Hugh Prince, "Art and Agrarian Change, 1710–1815," in Cosgrove and Daniels, *Iconography*, 98–118. Davis, in *City of Quartz*, successfully weaves the two themes together.

16. I recall debating Peirce Lewis over the origins of the upright-and-wing house in upstate New York in the age of the Erie Canal, where I insisted on rooting Jeffersonian agrarianism in free-soil and small-town prosperity in the brimming 1830s.

17. Anthony D. King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984); Anthony D. King, ed., *Buildings and Society: Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980); Michael Doucet and John Weaver, *Housing the North American City* (Montréal: Queens-McGill University Press, 1991); Deryck W. Holdsworth, "House and Home in Vancouver: Images of West Coast Urbanism, 1886–1929," in G. Stelter and A. Artibise, eds., *The Canadian City* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1984), 187–209.

18. As treated by Richard Walker, "A Theory of Suburbanization: Capitalism and the Construction of Urban Space in the United States," in Michael Dear and Allen Scott, eds., *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Societies* (New York: Methuen, 1981), 383–430; David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985); John Logan and Harvey Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

19. Deryck W. Holdsworth, "Landscape and Archives as Text," Chap. 3 in this volume.

20. For example, Allen Scott, *Metropolis* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988); Michael Storper and Richard Walker, *The Capitalist Imperative: Territory, Technology and Industrial Growth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1989).

21. Not to mention a lack of critique of embodiments of patriarchy in the built environment. Cf. Leslie Weisman, *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Deryck W. Holdsworth, "'I'm a Lumberjack and I'm O.K.: The Built Environment and Varied Masculinities," in Carter Hudgins and Betsy Cromley, eds., *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994).

22. There are points at which Harvey, in *Condition of Postmodernity,* slips into a flattened perception of images and their production, but this is not the gist of his contribution. One wonders what Cosgrove makes of his fellow postmodernist cultural geographer James Duncan, who argues that one must read the landscape as text. James Duncan, *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandya Kingdom* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

23. See Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 27–33, on the "visual bias" in geography. His principal target is a static visualization of landscapes that eliminates social processes at work. For a wider perspective, see Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

24. Cosgrove, *Social Formation;* see also Harvey, *Postmodernity.*

25. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 15.

26. Compare King's reference, in "The Politics of Vision" (Chap. 10 in this volume), to "the privileging of vision in Western culture" to his allusion to "the scriptocentric West."

27. Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

28. Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). Catherine Howett, in "Where the One-Eyed Man Is King" (Chap. 7 in this volume), speaks of "increasing delight in the manipulation of perspectival vistas" during "the great age of Baroque architecture and urban design" without any sense of contradiction with her notion of a rigid perspectival order.

29. John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730–1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), chap. 1.

30. T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life* (New York: Knopf, 1985); Robert Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880–1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983). There is considerable irony in the way Haussmann's linear boulevards and theatrical vistas bred a generation of painters who undermined such ways of seeing on canvas, and how the ability to command space by modern means of transportation and communication influenced the dismantling of pictorial forms by the cubists.

31. Harvey, *Postmodernity,* esp. chap. 4. Cf. Davis, *City of Quartz.* This point is missed by Harvey's critics, such as Rosalind Deutsch, "Boy's Town," *Society and Space* 9:1 (1991): 5–30. What Harvey argues of postmodernist architecture is true with regard to all ideology: it is not a coherent and imposed discourse but fragmented and riven with contradiction. Ideology is "scarred and disarticulated by its relational character; by the conflicting interests among which it must ceaselessly negotiate"; it is not "the founding principle of social unity, but rather strives in the teeth of political resistance to reconstitute that unity at an imaginary level." Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991), 222.

32. This suggests more contiguity than opposition between Cosgrove, who hints at "an old debate whose connections with the Modern are complex and historically deep" ("Spectacle and Society: Landscape as Theater in Premodern and Postmodern Cities," Chap. 8 in this volume) and Harvey, who is at pains to argue that "there is much more continuity than difference between the broad history of modernism and the movement called postmodernism." Harvey sees that latter as a "particular kind of crisis within the former, one that emphasizes the fragmentary, the ephemeral and the chaotic." Harvey, *Postmodernity,* 116. Certainly, the critique of the landscapes of high modernism, Stalinism, and fascism did not wait for the declaration of postmodernism in the 1970s.

33. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 38, quote at 26. Cf. Williams, *Country and the City,* and Barrell, *Idea of Landscape.* Oddly enough, Cosgrove goes on to say that landscape no longer carries the "moral significance attached to it during the time of its most active cultural evolution" (*Social Formation,* 2). This is almost certainly false, as the contemporary iconography of national parks illustrates; see Neumann, *Social Origins.*

34. Eagleton, *Ideology.* There is a discordance between the introductory section of Cosgrove's "Spectacle and Society," which discusses image and text, and the subsequent discussion of portrayals of Venice, in which Cosgrove uses the term *ideology* quite freely. See my comments below on his postmodernist drift.

35. Barrell, *Idea of Landscape.* Cf. Clark, *Painting of Modern Life,* for another good example of art criticism, applied to urban landscapes of nineteenth-century Paris.

36. Cf. Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning,* for such a critical program for geographers.

37. Holdsworth, "Landscape and Archives as Text."

38. Cf. Holdsworth's comment that, in understanding the construction of the built environment, "the Marxist critique has sharpened the scholarly agenda," ibid.

39. His book, *Social Formation,* by contrast, is an eloquent brief for the explanatory power of the Marxian sequence of feudalism to capitalism. His commitment to political economy has diminished over the conservative decade of the 1980s.

40. Cf. Bryson, *Vision and Painting.*

41. Cosgrove, "Spectacle and Society"; also *Social Formation,* 87–98 and 111–12.

42. On the play of social position and prestige in the "panoramic pictures," see Patricia Brown, *Venetian Narrative Painting in the Age of Carpaccio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

43. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 80–82.

44. Rather, there was a refeudalization of the countryside and greater hold of the countryside over the once supreme city, comparable in consequence to the Second Feudalism of Central and Eastern Europe around the same time. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 155–60. Robert Brenner, "The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism," *Past and Present* 97 (1982): 16–113.

45. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 82–83.

46. On the dynamism of Europe before this time, see Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism: The Sources of Social Power* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986)

47. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 114–15. Yet within renaissance Venice, the architectural

handling of the different morphological areas of the city is striking: St. Mark's Square and the Doge's Palace were made over in Roman revival style around 1500, while the commercial heart of the city, the Rialto, was never rebuilt, despite plans by Palladio and Fra Giocondo after the Fire of 1514; the Arsenal, in fine absolutist military style, was encircled by a blind wall. Cosgrove, *Social Formation,* 114–17. See also Manfredo Tafuri, *Venice and the Renaissance* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

48. Tafuri, *Venice and the Renaissance,* 157–60.

49. On Descartes, see Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: Free Press, 1990).

50. Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias.*

51. As exemplified by some reactions to Harvey's *Condition of Postmodernity;* see Deutsch, "Boys Town" and David Harvey, "Postmodern Morality Plays" *Antipode* 24:4 (1992): 300–326.

52. Cosgrove and Jackson, "New Directions," 98; Cosgrove and Daniels, *Iconography,* 7.

53. Cosgrove and Daniels, *Iconography,* 5. Cf. Williams, *Culture and Society;* Wilson, *Sphinx in the City,* chap. 9.

54. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Viking, 1973); Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: New Left Books, 1980).

55. Cosgrove and Daniels, *Iconography,* 7–8.

56. King "Politics of Vision."

57. A position shared by conservative cultural geographers, traditional left laborites, and radical cultural nationalists. It shows up in the essays by Howett and King in this volume. Howett follows Kenneth Frampton, "Toward a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance" in H. Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983) into the dead-end of lionizing an "architecture of resistance" directed toward "overcoming the 'universalization' that destroys indigenous cultural traditions and regional diversity." (She later contradicts this in her closing quote from McLuhan that "the aspiration of our time [is] for wholeness, empathy and depth of awareness.") King is more adept at catching the interplay of common cultures of large-scale economic systems and more localized, dissimilar common cultures, and calls, most sensibly, for "the historical and empirical charting of universality and difference" (see "The Politics of Vision"). He notes that ethnicities—like subcultures—are very largely constituted in reaction to the hegemonic intrusions of capitalist and Euro-American modes of life. Yet his view of a collision between local and global is almost as bleak as Howett's.

58. For example, Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989); Sorkin, *Variations;* Peter Jackson, "Social Geography and the Cultural Politics of Consumption," *Nordisk Samhallsgeografisk Tidskrift* 9 (1991): 3–16; Stewart Ewan, *Captains of Consciousness* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976); Roger Miller, "Selling Mrs. Consumer: Advertising and the Creation of Suburban Socio-spatial Relations," *Antipode* 23 (1991): 263–306.

59. Jackson, *Maps of Meaning;* Paul Willis, *Common Cultures* (Boulder, Colo., and San Francisco: Westview, 1990).

60. Cf. King's remark on the two faces of culture, in "The Politics of Vision."

61. Jackson, *Maps of Meaning,* 19.

62. Although, as Holdsworth observes, there is often too little evidence in the landscape of the lives of common people, whose humble edifices disappear all too quickly, while those of the rich and powerful continue to haunt the present.

63. Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

64. The principal blame no doubt lies with the Cartesian philosophers, including Kant and the Enlightenment philosophes, and carrying right down to the twentieth-century logical positivists, who have made quite outrageous claims for a denatured rationality, of human minds operating like analytic machines. See Toulmin, *Cosmopolis.*

65. George Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. If vision is indeed so privileged, then scholars are lamentably incompetent in making use of it. Vision's great power to frame and to define seems to be lost between eye and pen. Consequently, scholarly analysis of visual evidence remains curiously descriptive and inarticulate.

2. Anthony D. King, "The Politics of Vision," in *Vision, Culture and Landscape: Working Papers from the Berkeley Symposium on Cultural Landscape Interpretation* (Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, Center for Environmental Design Research, 1990).

3. Kirk Eugene Savage, "Blood and Stone: The Memorialization of Two American Nations in Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Virginia" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1991); Catherine W. Bishir, "Landmarks of Power: Building a Southern Past, 1885–1915," *Southern Cultures* (1993): 5–45.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Pierre Nora, "L'ère de la commemoration," in Nora, ed., *Les lieux de mémoire, Les France,* vol. 3: *De l'archive à l'emblème* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).

2. Joanna Morland, *New Milestones: Sculpture, Community and the Land* (London: Common Ground, 1988); Sue Clifford and Angela King, eds., *Local Distinctiveness: Place, Particularity and Identity* (London: Common Ground, 1993); Sue Clifford and Angela King, eds., *From Place to PLACE: Maps and Parish Maps* (London: Common Ground).

3. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962); David Lowenthal, "Awareness of Human Impacts: Changing Attitudes and Emphases," in B. L. Turner II, et al., *The Earth as Transformed by Human Action* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 121–35.

4. Joshua Fishman, "Nationality-Nationalism and Nation-Nationalism," in Joshua Fishman, Charles A. Ferguson, and J. D. Gupta, eds., *Language Problems of Developing Nations* (New York: Wiley, 1968), 41.

5. Simon Riser, quoted in David Toop, "Going down to Eavis's Farm," *The Times* (London), 25 June 1993: 37.

6. Quoted in Sally Brompton, "Seeing Red across the Village Green," *The Times* (London), 29 Aug. 1990: 16.

7. British Rail advertisement for a first-class seat from London to Bristol; John Hopkinson, director, British Field Sports Society, quoted in John Young, "Green Policies May Harm Wildlife," *The Times* (London), 18 Aug. 1990: 7.

8. Howard Newby, "Revitalizing the Countryside: The Opportunities and Pitfalls of Counter-urban Trends," *Royal Society of Arts Journal* 138 (1990): 630–36.

9. Stanley Baldwin, "The Classics" (1926), in his *On England* (London: Philip Allan, 1926), 101.

10. Quoted in Hunter Davies, "After the Banknote, Where's the Book?" *Independent on Sunday* (London), 29 Sept. 1991: 23.

11. Timothy Hornsby, introductory speech, Royal Society of Arts, Future Countryside Programme, Seminar 1: "A Stake in the Country" (29 Sept. 1989).

12. Pierre-Jakez Hélias, *The Horse of Pride: Life in a Breton Village* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 335–36.

13. William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton, 1991).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. The Institute of British Geographers, for example, now has no less than seventeen study groups. It holds an annual conference at which these groups conduct their own concurrent