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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PLACE IN THE FICTIONS OF RAYMOND WILLIAMS AND IAIN SINCLAIR

The latter part of the twentieth century has seen an increasing concern with questions of local and regional identity expressed in various ways, not least in a wide range of theoretical and more dramatic forms of writing and not least in the British Isles. The aim of this piece of writing is to briefly outline and explore the contribution made to such developments in the work of two writers, Raymond Williams and Iain Sinclair, both, interestingly, born in Wales, and to begin by providing a certain degree of theoretical contextualisation in the form of two pieces of writing, both produced outside of the British Isles, in France.

In an essay entitled *From Space to Place and Back Again*, the urban and cultural geographer David Harvey looks at the significance of place in late twentieth century culture. Echoing Raymond Williams's comments on the word 'culture' in *Keywords*, he notes that

Place has to be one of the most multi-layered and multi-purpose words in our language. (Harvey: 1991, p. 4)

Harvey's main intention in this essay, as in both earlier and subsequent work, has been to find ways in which to characterise and resist, in the name of social justice, the ways in which capitalist social relations create and develop a form of social space which while liberating people from the shackles of ancient traditions in certain respects, exploits them even more ruthlessly and systematically in others. In the essay quoted from Harvey focuses on a dialectical relationship between space and place, relying particularly on the work of the French cultural philosopher, Henri Lefebvre, for significant aspects of his approach. A more conservative attitude to place is represented in the essay by the thinking of the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger. Heidegger's thinking, as presented in the essay, represents a deep distrust of mobility and an emphasis on rooted, emotional relationships to particular places. Harvey notes a marked similarity between Heidegger's view of the significance of place and that expressed in the novels of Raymond Williams, even if there are also marked differences.

Even such a trenchant socialist critic as Raymond Williams saw place as more than 'just the site of an event ... but the materialization of a history which is often quite extensively retracted' (Williams: *Politics and Letters*:276) and wrote a series of novels on the border country of Wales to explore its political and affective meaning. (p.13)

Harvey goes on to suggest that while there are great problems with the Heideggerian argument about place in the form in which it is represented by Heidegger, there are important elements in its approach which need to be taken seriously.

A similar perspective might have been presented on the work of one of Heidegger's contemporaries, Walter Benjamin, whose work on the origins of German tragic drama and on the development of commodity culture, notably in late nineteenth-century urban Paris, provide another powerful, early twentieth century perspective on the development of social space, emphasising the significance of the urban, rather than as in Heidegger's case, the rural. In some respects, just as a very limited parallel can be drawn between Williams' novels and aspects of the philosophy of Heidegger, so can aspects of Benjamin's approach to allegory, history, language and the commodity culture of urban capitalism be usefully related to the novels of Iain Sinclair. It will also be useful, though, to take into account some more recent characterisations of social space and cultural developments, notably those of Henri Lefebvre, previously mentioned as a significant influence on Harvey, but also those of Michel de Certeau, another cultural historian who has emphasised the significance of the relationship between social space, cultural fragmentation and myth.

In 1973, the French philosopher and social and cultural theorist Henri Lefebvre produced a book which was eventually translated into English and published as *The Production of Space*. One of Lefebvre's primary concerns throughout his life was the significance of urban development on modern thinking and behaviour, a concern already expressed in an earlier work, *The Right to the City*. In the later book, Lefebvre begins by questioning the rather loose way in which the term *space* is used in various forms of academic discourse and begins to develop an approach towards a more rigorously interrogative examination of the social significance of space. Moving on from the notion that space is simply a given, a blank space to be filled in by the actions of men and other forms of being, Lefebvre insists on the fundamental and socially produced nature of space, from the very earliest forms of human habitation and socialization, through Greek, Roman and medieval to modern societies and the way in which they produce forms of not merely social but spatial organization which may appear to be advantageous to the majority of members of a society but which in fact repress them in all kinds of ways of which they are not aware. In this respect, Lefebvre has much in common with many of his contemporaries in France; aspects of the work of Barthes, Althusser, Foucault and Deleuze all come to mind, but none of them has focused quite so precisely or consciously on the significance of the notion of space as socially produced. If Deleuze in his

discussion of Leibniz in *The Fold* looks not for 'the perspective of truth' but 'the truth of perspectivity', Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* looks not for 'spatial truths' but for 'the truth of space' (p.132). Lefebvre traces the way in which societies move from a natural space to the excretion of social space, emphasizing that 'A social space is not a socialised space'(p.192). He is particularly interested in the way that western European societies have moved towards an increasingly abstract space in which the visual is dominant and the other senses are less active and in which the possibility of difference is increasingly removed by processes of homogenization. The fourth chapter of the book describes the transition from *absolute* space to *abstract* space, from sacred or accursed places deep with meaning to a modern, abstract space which becomes increasingly predominant from the time of the Renaissance. Lefebvre characterises abstract space as global, fragmented and hierarchical, on the one hand, and, in another sense, geometric, optical and phallic. It is not itself homogeneous but aims at homogeneity, at the separation and control of all specificities.

This kind of approach to the significance of the socially produced nature of space, in many ways comparable with Foucault's approach to the panoptic nature of modern social organisation (in works such as his *Discipline and Punish*, which appeared two years after Lefebvre's book) has had a considerable influence on the work of a number of British and American geographers, notably David Harvey and Edward Soja but also other geographers who have emphasised the influence of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory as much as Marxist theories of history and capitalist accumulation on Lefebvre's work.

In 1984, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, the English version of another French cultural philosopher and historian, Michel de Certeau, made its appearance in the English-speaking academic world and had a more or less immediate effect on Anglo-American cultural thinking. As the title of the English version of the book indicates, one of Certeau's major preoccupations is with the practical cultural politics of everyday life and

... the ways in which users – commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rules – operate.(p.xi)

The central section of the book, entitled *Spatial Practices*, focuses, in a way akin to the approach of Lefebvre, on the movement of individuals in the city. Certeau, like Lefebvre, is interested by the way in which people operate in territories which are not theirs, which are dominated and controlled by others. To this end, he makes a working distinction, in the third essay in the section, between 'spaces' and 'places'. A place, in this context, is characterised, by 'the law of the 'proper', where everything has its proper place and no two things occupy the same location. This '... implies an indication of stability.' (p.117). A space, on the other hand, '... is composed of intersections of mobile elements', produced by what people do in a particular place. As with Lefebvre, there is a concern to indicate the ways in which users of places organised and dominated by the gaze of others nonetheless can and do use them to their own ends.

Certeau makes, earlier in the book, a distinction between the 'strategies' of those who plan social space and the 'tactics' of those who occupy and use a space which is not controlled by them.

While the approaches of Lefebvre and Certeau contain aspects of similarity, they are by no means the same. Certeau's writing embodies the tactical nature of the users' operations in socially and culturally ordered places, his style and approach are elusive and evasive, whereas Lefebvre's is more directly and totalisingly confrontational and much more suspicious of any literary or linguistic approach to questions of the social production of space.

There is not room here to further investigate and elucidate the approaches of these two writers, but I offer this characterisation of a difference between their approaches, as well as their shared concerns, since it may be of relevance in considering the fictions of Williams and Sinclair, which, while sharing a focused concern with questions of space and place, also exhibit a comparable difference in approach.

Raymond Williams, while better known as a literary and cultural theorist than as a novelist, did in fact produce seven volumes of published fiction during his lifetime. These might be characterised as falling either into two or three phases. The first two novels *Border Country* and *Second Generation* both appeared in the early sixties and might be described as relatively traditional in form. The first is set in the border country between mid-Wales and middle-England, the area in which Williams himself was born and grew up. Its chapters alternate between a present-day and past setting. A university lecturer, now settled, though not, perhaps, comfortably settled, visits his home village in order to see his father who has just suffered a heart attack. The novel alternates between describing his renewal of contact with his home community and the story of his father's life and the lecturer's own upbringing.

As in most of Williams' novels, in one form or another, there is a focused concern to trace the course and meaning of a life in the context of the community and area in which it is led and the relation of that life to those of previous generations. Soon after arriving in his home village, the main protagonist, Matthew or Will Price (his two first names, one preferred by the father, one by the mother, one used in London, the other in his village, expressing both the division in his identity and perception of the world and mirroring the juxtaposition of time-schemas in the novel) wakes to discover on his pillow the book on the history of the area he had been reading the night before. His own research work is an attempt to trace the significance of moving from one place to another, an aim which an academic, statistical approach is only very partially successful in achieving. Waking in the morning, after the first night of his stay in the village, Price returns to the book he had been reading the night before, a history of the area:

That the church at Glynmawr is distinguished by its relics, including a gown and brooch of Jane Latimer, reputed mistress of Robin de Braose. That there is an interesting font, and in the Norman porch an illegible

fragment of a Saxon tomb. The whole book in this style: the county history. That there is a Norman roodscreen and an ancient camp and the bloodiest of the border castles and the Stone of Treachery and the gown of the reputed mistress of Robin de Braose. Yesterday the pictures in the train and now this; the pieces of past and present that are safe to handle. Here, in this living country. (p.69)

The pictures in the train refer to a rail-map inside the train looked at by Price on his journey down on the previous evening. In both cases there is a dissatisfaction expressed with representations of place, whether historical or geographical, which sever the past from the present, leaving them disconnected and thus without real life. The rest of the novel is consequently concerned with dramatically connecting the lives of two generations, those of Price and his father, in order to make those lives and the place in which they are lived, meaningful.

This approach is continued from a different perspective but with a similar approach in Williams' second novel, *Second Generation*. Here the main body of the action takes place in England, in a university town with an industrial as well as an academic population, where the main characters are involved in coming to terms with their move from Wales to England. In both novels questions relating to migration, the organization of production and its relation to the shaping and meaning of the lives of individuals and communities are portrayed and analysed in rigorously searching detail.

Williams did not publish another novel until 1978 but the next phase of his fiction signals a move away from the conventional novel towards the more popular form of the political thriller. *The Volunteers* uses a disaffected radical political journalist as its first-person narrator to trace the history behind another political and industrial confrontation, again set in Wales. *The Fight for Manod* again uses some of the main characters of the earlier, sixties novels to produce a drama which sees Price, now an older man, trying to understand and develop the plans for a new town to be set in his home area and being forced into confrontation with more powerful forces, based at a distance, in London and in Europe, though with important connections in the area.

The struggle that develops is one between various perspectives; those of locally indifferent commercial capital whose only interest is in their plans, regardless of the damage done to the local community, those of local groups, often incapable of seeing the relation of their personal needs and a viable future for the area and its community in a broader perspective, or purely in terms of personal gain, and those of embittered and hardened radicals who are not prepared to enter into a sufficiently productive dialogue with the prime movers of the scheme. The novel, though short and, like *The Volunteers*, relatively schematic in its approach, has, as perhaps the most perceptive commentator on the significance of Williams' fiction, Tony Pinkney (Pinkney 1991), has pointed out, a remarkably gothic as well as tragic feel to it. Price, at the centre of the various forces of confrontations, succumbs, like his father before him, and like Williams himself, to a heart-attack in the final stages of negotiation.

Williams' next novel, *Loyalties*, continues in the thriller mode, though the book is longer and has the feel of a broader sense of history to it. Again there is a juxtaposition and comparison of regional—Welsh and metropolitan—English locations and characters. This time the fictional mode combines a spy thriller with questions of historical and political development. The central character, Gwyn Lewis, is again one who is faced with the task of coping with the responsibility of a divided sense of identity and of a complex past. He belongs to two places and, in this case to two fathers, again one English and one Welsh. The English father, his real father in the blood sense of the term, is Norman de Braose, an intellectual based in English academia. The father he chooses to see as his real father, Bert Lewis, the man who is married to his mother and has brought him up and to whom he remains ultimately loyal, is a working man from Wales who physically fights in wars against fascism as opposed to working in intelligence. Towards the end of the novel Gwyn confronts both of them in attempt to comprehend where he stands and where he should stand, though his most memorable interview is perhaps with his mother, also Welsh. His mother, Nesta, is, among other things, a painter and in the penultimate section of the book she shows her son, also an intellectual, two paintings, one of Norman de Braose in earlier days and one of Bert created not long after he receives a serious and ugly wound to the head during World War II. The scene takes place after Bert has died, many years later. The painting, like the wound Bert receives, the price he pays for what he considers to be worth fighting against, is powerful and grotesque; Gwyn recognises its power but expresses his recognition in terms of beauty.

‘What did you say?’ she asked, in a low voice

‘I said that the painting is intensely beautiful, it is –’

Nesta screamed suddenly. He stared at her, bewildered. She pushed him hard away.

He staggered slightly as he went back. Nesta screamed again.

‘Mam’, he said. ‘Mam, what is it?’

She was staring at him, angrily. Her face and body seemed twisted with sudden pain.

He was bewildered because he had never seen her in even ordinary anger. She had always been so contained and quiet and pleasant, always younger than her age, self-possessed and slightly withdrawn.

‘*It is not beautiful!*’ she screamed, in a terrible, high voice. (p.347–8)

In what is an arrestingly simple as well as dramatic scene, the meaning of lives in relation to lived values derived from communities of belief reach a notably intense pitch. The novel is not concerned with outlining the particularities of a particular place but with attempting to gauge the significance and integrity of the lives of ‘ordinary’ people in relation to those of sophisticated, articulate and powerful individuals. One of Williams most celebrated essays, *Culture is Ordinary* (Williams 1989 (a)) finds him, at the beginning of the essay, standing at ‘the bus-stop outside the museum’ and later, at Cambridge, as a student

voicing his disagreement with the confident assertion of his teachers that there is no longer any such thing as neighbourliness.

In what proved to be his last work of fiction, *People of the Black Mountains*, Williams returned to the area of the border country in which his first novel is set and fully involved. The form of the novel is perhaps more challenging than that of any of the others. It aims to cover a span of approximately 25,000 years, though its approach is in many ways a development of the method used in previous works. A young intellectual, Glyn, based in the south of Wales, comes to visit his mother and grandfather. His relationship to his grandfather is markedly similar to that of Gwyn to Norman Braose in *Loyalties*. In this section, the grandfather has gone missing and Gwyn begins a long walk in the darkness to search for him.

As the climb became steeper he made a conscious effort to regulate his breathing, and when he was walking more easily he began to call. 'Taid!' 'Taid!' The old Welsh name for his grandfather had become warm and singular, going back to early childhood. It was now so much a part of him that in some sense it defined his life. He could remember his father only as a distant and static figure, a dark shape lifting him and staring narrow-eyed into his face. He was now, as it happened, encountered in footnotes: J.W. L. Parry, historian: the brilliant young man who had gone, trailing his first book, to Pittsburgh; who had found another job there, another woman; who had never, except for business, come back. He died in an air crash when Glyn was ten: a distantly reported death, felt only in Megan's then surprising grief. His real fatherly relationship was with Elis, 'Taid'. Edwin Sayce, when he visited with Megan, was polite and professionally interested: a politician set on his dealings in a powerful contemporary world. As he got older Glyn noticed that though Sayce was kind and loving to Megan he was almost openly embarrassed by Elis, taking his enthusiasms as obsessions, his excited talk for garrulity, his intense local interests for simple nostalgia, another name for backwardness. Glyn himself, with his well-certificated education, would, it was implied, soon do very much better than that. (p.9).

People of the Black Mountains offers an alternative history to the official, academically respectable version of Parry and Sayce. Glyn's directed and familiar wanderings frame a series of forty stories or dramatic scenes which attempt to connect the past dramatically with the present by means of Glyn's and Williams' familiarity with the landscape and its history, a history of struggle with both natural and human forces.

While Williams' fictions tend to focus on the maintenance and development of a non-metropolitan space outside of the capital, the fictions of Iain Sinclair explore the possibilities of challenging the domination of abstract space within London, though the approach employed is also very different in kind from that of Williams.

The first significant landmark in Sinclair's work is his essay, *Nicholas Hawksmoor, His Churches*, which appears in *Lud Heat*, first published in 1975. Here Sinclair produces his first major prose piece in relation to a fascination with ancient, in Lefebvrian terms, absolute spaces which pre-date the modern, enlightened view of the city developed by Christopher Wren and others. Hawksmoor was one of the architects involved in Wren's project of building a modern city dedicated to overcoming the forces of darkness and Sinclair quotes his own view of such a project:

we have noe City, nor Streets, nor Houses, but a Chaos of Dirty Rotten Sheds allways tumbling or taking fire, with winding crooked passages (scarce practicable) Lakes of Mud & Rills of Stinking Mire Running through them ... They had so favourable an opportunity to Rebuild London ye most August towne in ye world & either have Kept it to its old Dimention, or if it was reasonable to let it swell to a Larger, they ought for ye Publick good to have Guided it into a Regular & commodious form & not have suffered it to Run into an ugly inconvenient self destroying unweildly Monster. (Sinclair:1995)

What follows is a complex cocktail of mythological and literary reference charting the way in which Hawksmoor's churches set up their own fields of force within the existing natural chaos of centuries of human existence in the east-end of London, a psychic geography of London's darker side which includes references to the work of William Blake and Thomas de Quincey, the mythology of the Egyptians and Romans, who, it is pointed out saw the eastern side of London 'not as a place for the living but as a necropolis for the dead.' (p.27) and the more recent modern urban mythologies relating to killings such as those of the Ratcliffe Highway Murders and Jack the Ripper. The principal approach is one of fascination with the psychic forces contained within the various geometries of architecture and the way that they emanate from and within the space of the city. The reference to a necropolis perhaps can connect us to Lewis Mumford's great work, *The City in History* (Mumford:1960) which from the more rural-based perspective of the town planning of the earlier part of the century, developed by figures such as Patrick Geddes and Ebenezer Howard, warns of the dangers of a metropolis which becomes overdeveloped into a necropolis; he cites the example of Rome in its later, dying stages:

Parasitopolis had become Pathopolis; and even further, Pathopolis had turned into Psycho-pathopolis, with a Nero or a Caligula as absolute ruler. That Pathopolis was beyond saving, even when it turned to Tyrannopolis, and sought to achieve security and continuity by fixed status and fixed residence. The mere momentum of habit, the inertia of numbers, increased the velocity of its downward descent '*Sauve qui peut!*' Only one further stage of city development remained, and came soon: Necropolis, the city of the dead. (p.272).

Sinclair's work does present a psycho-pathology of everyday metropolitan life, so to speak, a city at the edge of apocalypse, but the tone and approach of his work is one of exhilarating energy; an energetic space is derived from an apparently dying place.

In subsequent suites of poems and prose and in the fictions of the late eighties and nineties, these explorations into the psychic geography of a post-imperial metropolis which has become the site for the schemes of international venture capitalism notably encouraged by the free-market orientated policies of Mrs Thatcher's governments, are developed further, with an increasing tendency towards a baroque, mock-epic style of grotesque comedy. Like the fiction of Williams' the move here is towards an alternative form of history than the standard, guide-book approach. Unlike Williams, though there is a much greater tendency to push towards the limits of chaos and energy rather than to maintain and develop a movement towards a humanistic socialism. Sinclair would appear to be interested in developing a cultural politics of eccentricity or ex-centricity within the centre of the metropolis, one which is aided by an exploration of the way absolute spaces exude an energy which defies the financially-motivated abstractions of modern property developments.

Subsequent to the two volumes of poetry and prose, *Lud Heat & Suicide Bridge* (Sinclair 1995), Sinclair produced three novels which, like the essays and poetry combine his own wanderings and experience of various forms of work in the city with an exploration of the darker and more occult forces available to him in architectural and literary production and interpretation. *White Chappell: Scarlet Tracings* (Sinclair 1988), followed by the more ambitious and complex *Downriver* (Sinclair 1991). Sinclair's approach in these fictions bears numerous resemblances to the approach of Walter Benjamin both in his work on the origins of German baroque drama and his explorations of the relationship between the urban and the commodification of culture in the Arcades Project. The wanderings which the characters in the novel make are through a necropolis of ruined buildings and areas and a cacophony of conflicting semiotic systems. The narrator and many of his acquaintances are often themselves both ruins and collectors, treating literature as material whose only value is as a material antique to be found and re-sold for profit. Thus *White Chappell: Scarlet Tracings* opens with a picture of four book-dealers in various states of decrepitude, roaming England in search of the ultimate find –

The four horsemen were outside Steynford, and they were about to take the town. (p.16)

Darkly comic references to the apocalypse are a constant feature of the approach as are references to American literature and its emphasis on search and travel, as in the work of writers such as Melville, Twain or Kerouac, though always strongly parodied. Thus by the end of the chapter one of the dealers has found what he has long been looking for:

The febrile and inhumanly sharpened and quickened brain of Nicholas Lane had perfect recall of every catalogue, article, book he had ever had through his hands. 'Nettley' was a spelling that didn't exist in any known version of the text. He had, once again, uncovered a piece of history, a true splinter of the 1880s. And this was it, this was the big one, the reason why we're all in the game: he'd brought it in finally, the ultimate score. And it was for sale. (p.26).

This combination of German and American gothic approaches to the city combining sceptical materialism with mystical fascination is continued to an even greater degree in *Downriver* which is comprised of twelve loosely related narratives, themselves subdivided into a number of loosely connected narrative strands – again the significance of fragmentation, as in the work of Benjamin, is emphasised. To take one example, the seventh tale in the book, entitled *Art of the State (The Silvertown Memorial)*, itself a heading with Benjaminian overtones – state of the art image–production reproducing the aestheticisation of the political in late twentieth century London., begins with the depiction of a grotesque cinematic–fantasy figure whose political position bears an obvious resemblance to that of Mrs Thatcher and her espousal of Victorian values. 'The Widow' is neither Mrs Thatcher nor Queen Victoria but a monstrous combination of the two with added touches of comic gothic horror.

The Widow was a praise fed avatar of the robot–Maria from *Metropolis*; she looked like herself, but too much so ... She was a prisoner of the rituals she alone had initiated. If she ever appeared in her original skin the underclass would riot and tear her to pieces. And so she suffered the stinking baths of electrified Ganges mud (bubbling like Malcolm Lowry's breakfast), the horse–sized 'hormone replacement' shots ... The eyedrops, the powder, the paint: she censored the morning radio bulletins. Not a breath of criticism, nor a whisper of forbidden names: all was analgesic 'balance', the cancellation of energy. (p.220)

Sinclair's prose is itself a repudiation of the 'cancellation of energy' but its restlessly and knowingly allusive complexity is combined with a sense that knowing the endless multiplicity of codes does not provide any form of redemption, any way out, other than self–reflection. In this sense the book can be seen as something of a late–twentieth century Dunciad (and it is perhaps worth noting here the way in which Patrick Brantlinger (Brantlinger 1996) traces a line of scepticism in British writing from the eighteenth century to the present day towards modern forms of belief or (financial) credit. Sinclair's consumers of do find ways of operating, to use de Certeau's term, in a place dominated by the gaze of powers greater than they and the emphasis of the writer's approach on the power generated by older, forgotten places, absolute space as opposed to abstract space, in Lefebvre's terms, bears a resemblance to Benjamin's interpretation of baroque allegory, even in its rejection of any obvious form of

redemption. We are faced with the horrors of the present, not the romance of a lost past.

The final novel in this trilogy, *Radon Daughters*, more conventional, less fragmented in its narrative form, moves more in the direction of romance. The one-legged Ahab-like figure of the third-person rendered Todd Sileen, briefly appears and disappears in *Downriver*, like all but a handful of close associates of the narrator, a society of artist-companions, rather than the more organic community of Williams' characters, (though it might be noted that Williams' *People of the Black Mountains* also functions by means of the presentation of a series of fragmented visions connected only by the linking memory figure of Glyn). In *Radon Daughters*, Sileen reappears as main character, pursuing not only an obsessional quest for an ultimate open space, depicted in 'The House on the Borderland', which leads him to Ireland and to destruction, but also a romance of sorts with the principal female character, Helen/Isabel, who is intimately involved in his questionably redemptive downfall.

While Sinclair's novels indicate a focused concern with issues of place and the fragments of memory in contestation with the homogenising tendencies of a commodifying abstract space, which is comparable in certain respects to the approach of Williams, the novels of the two writers are clearly exhibit more differences in approach than they share similarities, though the overlap of concerns and the divergence of tactics are, I would want to argue, worthy of considerable and further examination, not only in terms of the differences and similarities between these two writers but also between writers who can be compared to them; the numerous contributors to a fictional exploration of issues of space and place in relation to London, such as Michael Moorcock, Penelope Lively, Peter Ackroyd, Salman Rushdie and others, immediately comparable to Sinclair, and writers who focus on areas beyond the capital such as George Mackay Brown, Glyn Hughes, Pat Barker or even John Berger. Worthy of examination too, as I have briefly and rather cryptically tried to indicate here, is their relation to more theoretical and academic explorations of the relation between space, place and socio-cultural as well as political organization.

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