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Henri Lefebvre: the production of space

Henri Lefebvre's project, culminating in *The Production of Space*, was the result of a long process in which his analyses of various aspects of modernity resulted in his reprioritisation of space as fundamental for understanding capitalism. His analysis of space is complex and challenging and, it will be argued, significant for the theoretical and substantive analysis of space in contemporary social theory. Indeed Lefebvre's role as the key figure in the development of contemporary interest and concern with space provides explanation for the weight given to his work here. Lefebvre's analysis of space will be presented in the context of his work on nature, the city, the urban, and everyday life. Lefebvre's ultimate aim was to demonstrate that space was political. The assertion that "[a]uthentic knowledge of space must address the question of its production" (Lefebvre, 1991: 111) locates his analysis as concerned with the fundamental importance of social relations in historically specific epochs and societies. For Lefebvre, this is an important point: space and time are inextricably linked in processes subsumed under modes of production.¹

Space is nothing but the inscription of time in the world; spaces are the realisations, inscriptions in the simultaneity of the external world of a series of times, the rhythms of the city, the rhythms of the urban population. (Lefebvre, 1970, cited in Kofman and Lebas, 1996: 17)

Lefebvre's theory understands the production of space as emphasising the need to consider space as both a product (a thing) and a determinant (a process) of social relations and actions. This application of dialectics to space and the triad of necessary and inter-linked elements (spatial practices, representations of space and spaces of representation) in understanding space will be considered in detail. Similarly, the centrality of everyday social attitudes to and practices in space will be explored in relation to the importance of the spatial in the social organisation of Lefebvre's conception of the development of the city and the urban.

Space, as Lefebvre makes clear, is also the product of ideological, economic, and political forces (the domain of power) that seek to delimit, regulate and control the activities that occur within and through it. Lefebvre offers an account of space that demonstrates the complexity of a plurality of meanings that can be applied to the investigation of particular social spaces. The intention here, given that Lefebvre developed his analysis over a period of years and in various contexts, is to present an analysis of his theory of 'the production of space' which takes into account a number of aspects which were essential to its formulation.

What follows will be a consideration of Lefebvre's dialectical approach to the analysis of the production of space. The definition of his triadic elements will be clarified by linking spatial practices and socio-spatial organisation to an analysis of planning as an example of the operation of power and ideology in creating representations of space and by the consideration of everyday life as intrinsic in the conceptualisation of spaces of representations. However, a consideration of Lefebvre's analysis of space as a process of development will begin with his work on the rural and the urban. As Lefebvre was well aware, the historical context must be considered as fundamental in any analysis of the development and production of space:

In space, what came earlier continues to underpin what follows. The preconditions of social space have their own particular way of enduring and remaining actual within that space... The task of architectonics [as Lefebvre described his project] is to describe, analyse and explain this persistence, which is often invoked in the metaphorical shorthand of strata, sedimentary layers and so on. (Lefebvre, 1991: 228)

LEFEBVRE'S HISTORY OF SPACE: THE COUNTRY AND THE CITY

For Lefebvre, space is at the centre of a continuing social and historical process, involving conflict and struggle over meanings and values. His analysis, his 'history of space', may be understood as a process, in which different modes of production produce their own space. Lefebvre writes:

What we are concerned with, then, is the long history of space, even though space is neither a 'subject' nor an 'object' but rather a social reality – that is to say a set of relations and forms. This history is to be distinguished from an inventory of things in space... as also from ideas and discourses about space.

It must account for both representational spaces and representations of space, but above all for their interrelationships and their links with social practice. The history of space thus has its place between anthropology and political economy. (Lefebvre, 1991: 116)

Many of the essential concepts that Lefebvre uses in his understanding of the development of the city, the urban and space show indebtedness to the work of Marx. For example, Lefebvre's use of the concept of production as applied to space is an extrapolation of Marx's concept to encompass all of human activity and historical development under capitalism based upon the divisions between town and country, one that Marx saw as the basis of every division of labour. Lefebvre argues

For Marx, the dissolution of the feudal mode of production and the transition to capitalism is attached to a subject, the town. The town breaks up the medieval system (feudalism) while transcending itself...the town is a 'subject' and a coherent force, a partial system which attacks the global system and which simultaneously shows the existence of this system and destroys it. (Lefebvre, 1972, cited in Shields, 2000: 21)

62 Lefebvre's analysis of the town and the country divide identified by Marx (See chapter 1) makes manifest the distinctions between old and new orders, modes of production, ways of life, etc. They are represented as having symbolic resonance both with the romanticisation of nature as a lost idyll and of the idea of the city as a model of enlightened, rational progress. As Lefebvre puts it:

The countryside, both practical and reality and representation, will carry images of nature, of being, of the innate. The city will carry images of effort, of will, of subjectivity, of contemplation, without these representations becoming disjointed from real activities. (Lefebvre, 1996: 87–8)

Nevertheless, the distinction between town and country, for Lefebvre, becomes increasingly erroneous for understanding the produced space and experience of modernity, that is, the space of the capitalist mode of production, whose locus is the city. The city, as *the* site of modernity, is where urbanisation and industrialisation have the fullest effect on the production of space under capitalism but it would not be limited to the city. That is, for Lefebvre:

The inevitable urbanisation of society would not take place at the expense of whole sectors, nor would it exacerbate unevenness in growth or development; it would successfully transcend the opposition between town and country instead of degrading both by turning them into an undifferentiated mass. (Lefebvre, 1991: 55)

However, a consequence of modernity, the 'progress' of scientific rationalism, was not to be viewed as an altogether welcome and positive development:

It is impossible to escape the notion that nature is being murdered by 'anti-nature' – by abstraction, by signs and image, by discourse, as also by labour and its products. Along with God, nature is dying. 'Humanity' is killing both of them – and perhaps committing suicide into the bargain. (Lefebvre, 1991: 71)

Thus, our alienation from nature is, for Lefebvre, evident in our ambivalent understanding of ourselves and our relationship with the environment in which we live. Modern society is created out of our needs, desires and ability to conquer and use 'Nature'. Yet, the 'need' to understand our place in the world involves an appreciation of the 'natural', which we are destroying.

On the one hand it points to the 'human being', the 'human nature' which will emerge and is already emerging from history, which will never be able to separate itself completely from nature as a given. The human being is forced to dwell with anti-nature (abstraction) painfully and long, and is already trying to return to nature, to put down roots, to find meaning in it, and peace of mind. On the other hand, nature designates the origin, what history has emerged from, something which both transforms and reveals itself in the succession of forms taken by action, by abstraction, by the signs that underpin and facilitate action, and by human power. (Lefebvre, 1995: 134)

This understanding is reminiscent of Weber's argument concerning the consequences of the dominance of formal means–end rationality leading to disenchantment. There is also evidence of a distinctly Nietzschean tone in Lefebvre's warning of the destruction and denial of nature. The domination of nature by narratives of science and humanism is viewed as a necessary element in understanding the progress of rational capitalism in the industrial world. However, this new 'common sense' hides the 'will to power' that limits opportunities and possibilities for human practices within a rationalist objectifying ethic. Nature is 'understood', exploited and 'used' as a consequence of this project of rationalism.² Lefebvre investigates the apparent contradictions that exist in relations between nature and culture. The first is that,

In culture and civilisation, there is an initial 'given' – profound, primordial and yet ungraspable as such, obscure, fertile – from which nothing can emerge without being transformed by praxis, which in truth remains part of it. The 'given' we call nature; human power constantly reinvests the abstract forms it has extracted and the structure it has erected from it. ...Labour, technology,

knowledge, concepts – these do not cut the human off from nature, except perhaps when, consciously or not, thought copies understanding and makes the separation analytically. On the contrary, it is through praxis – that is, in everyday life – that particularities and differences which have emerged in art, in symbols, and images, in cultures, in physical fulfilment via the transformation of needs into desires, become explicit. (Lefebvre, 1995: 144)

The second is that, despite this apparent negation of the cycles of the 'natural' and our understanding of our place in the 'grand scheme of things' beyond our making, there are times and events which persist or survive the process of modernisation. An example Lefebvre uses is the perpetuation of a philosophy of nature that dates back to an ancient conception of nature as a fundamental power that operates in cycles of time or partial cycles, which have an importance in the everyday lives and activities of people throughout the ages. Lefebvre uses the survival of Dionysian springtime into modern cultures and cities. In a passage reminiscent of Gurevitch's and Bakhtin's analysis of the Carnival as 'world-upside-down', Lefebvre describes the survival of the month of May as significant in festivals and fairs to argue that the ancient connection "in which the spring festival disrupts the human order of praxis, joining forces with nature to act out a game, a serious game, *repeating* the initial gestures of basic needs (eating, lovemaking) *reanimating* the divine and the cosmic which the logos of the city has lost – *identifying* with the rhythm of the cosmos" (Lefebvre, 1995: 146) is not the same in the modern city. In modernity, the re-identification with Nature is of a different order than in the past. It is constituted within and around the partial re-construction of a sanitised, malleable and useful depiction of nature.³

Modernisation is concentrated in the city, and the subsequent negative consequences for individuals (alienation, disenchantment, anomie, etc.) and groups (class exploitation, disease, overcrowding, etc.) inherent under capitalism are thought ameliorated by access to and enjoyment of a designed and regulated pseudo-nature. Culture and civilisation emerge as being acquired or won from nature, albeit a nature transformed by the application of knowledge, technology and labour, whilst at the same time recognising that we, as part of nature, are not totally detached from it. As Lefebvre puts it, the consequences in modernity of these contradictions and conflicts are that

Nature, destroyed as such, has already had to be reconstructed at another level, the level of 'second nature', i.e. the town and the urban... The town, anti-nature or non-nature and yet second nature, heralds the future world, the world of the generalised urban. Nature, as the sum of particularities which are external to each other and dispersed in space, dies. It gives way to produced space, to the urban. (Lefebvre, 1991: 15)

What develops then, for Lefebvre, is a new order of being, of social reality, of space inextricably linked to the growth, development and eventual domination of the urban over all other forms of organisation of social relations. However, Lefebvre is keen not to overplay any apparent division or distinction between nature, country and the environment and the town, culture and the social within an analysis of how forms of urban domination operate within the mode of production.⁴ Thus, the development of the city takes a more accelerated and central role under capitalism. The city is not only the site of political power (as it has been from antiquity) but also becomes the pivot for all economic activity, whether directly as the site of industrial production and consumption, or indirectly as the centre for the circulation and manufacture of ideas, knowledge and ultimately decisions on the conduct of life outwith the purely economic sphere. It is the city that Lefebvre views as the locus for the development and perpetuation of capitalism as a mode of production, for the social relations of production and their reproduction, for organisation and administration. Lefebvre asks what it is that constitutes the city and the urban and how it came to dominate. For Lefebvre,

The urban is not a certain population, a geographical size or a collection of buildings. Nor is it a node, a trans-shipment point or a centre of production. It is all of these together, and thus any definition must search for the essential quality of all these aspects. The urban *is* social centrality, where the many elements and aspects of capitalism intersect in space, despite often merely being part of the place for a short time, as is the case with goods or people in transit. 'City-ness' is the simultaneous gathering and dispersing of goods, information and people... The city was the seat of intellectual development and administration – by necessity given the growing, restless population, given the wealth generated by urban trade, and given the plagues and contagions, which demanded the development, administration and enforcement of forms of quarantine and regulation. All these gave the city-based governments an advantage over those based in the rural hinterlands. From the cities, financial, ideological and governmental control spread out to regiment the countryside. (Lefebvre, 1991: 145, 148)

To describe and analyse the modern urban, it is essential to begin with industrialisation, as it is industrialisation that characterises modern society and by extension, modern cities. Cities have been in existence before industrialisation and modern rational capitalism. The city then for Lefebvre should not be viewed as a simple material product. It is the locus for production, for social relations and thus "production and reproduction of human beings by human beings, rather than a production of objects" (Lefebvre, 1996: 101). They contain monuments and edifices representing the production and consumption of materiality but also

have spaces for entertainment, play, leisure, festivals, etc. This illustrates an important point both in Lefebvre's analysis of the city and the urban but also in his consideration of space. That is the "urban does not simply represent the transformation of space into a commodity by capitalism, but it is also the potential arena of play (festival)" (Lefebvre, 1987: 27).⁵ Capitalism needs spaces for the reproduction of the relations of production as well as those for production. Designs and planning practices must not, for Lefebvre, ignore this dual quality of cities, that of the market but also a place of play, leisure and festival. To do so is to risk the consequences of a rational organisation of the city that loses its human scale and the necessary spaces for social interactions beyond those purely necessary for the accumulation of capital.⁶ It also served an ideological role in the perpetuation of a hegemonic conception of appropriateness in terms of recreation and leisure time. For Lefebvre,

The city must be a place of waste, for one wastes space and time; everything mustn't be foreseen and functional, for spending is a feast. You can't reduce this concept, either the festival disappears and becomes a simple commercial market, or it is something which goes beyond it... But for a festival, you need a rich and free society. (Lefebvre, 1987: 36)

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In the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, there is an apparent contradiction and conflict between what Lefebvre identifies as exchange value (growth, development and economic production) and use value (social and cultural life).⁷ Lefebvre points to this crisis in the city as the result of the rise of industrial capitalism in which the city as a work of art, unique and able to take account and make space and time for play, festival and celebration, was submerged beneath the demands of capital. The 'crisis' of the nineteenth-century city as a result of industrialisation and urbanisation is a well-known phenomenon. What is interesting in Lefebvre's writing on the city, in relation to the production of space is the distinction he makes between the city as a work, as of nature or art, unique and the reproducibility of the urban form as an industrial commodity or product.

We should perhaps introduce here a distinction between the city, a present and immediate reality, a practico-material and architectural fact, and the urban, a social reality made up of relations which are to be conceived of, constructed and reconstructed by thought... Urban life, urban society, in a word cannot go without a practico-material base, a morphology. (Lefebvre, 1996: 103)

The development of an urban system under capitalism, for Lefebvre, represents a fundamental aspect of his analysis of the city, and of

space: "We now come to a basic and essential idea: capitalism is maintained by the conquest and integration of space. Space has long since ceased to be a passive geographical milieu or an empty geometrical one. It has become instrumental" (Lefebvre, 1970: 262, cited in Shields, 2000: 154–5). This instrumentality was evident in what Lefebvre saw as the development of capitalism as a system in which space itself came to be viewed as a scarce resource and was treated as a homogenous and quantifiable commodity, with an exchange value to be traded, like any other commodity on the market.

Space, e.g. volume, is treated in such a way as to render it homogenous, its parts comparable, therefore exchangeable... The subordination of space to money and capital implies a quantification which extends from the monetary evaluation to the commercialisation of each plot of the entire space... Space now becomes one of the new 'scarcities', together with its resources, water, air and even light.' (Lefebvre, 1970: 261–2)

It is in the sense of the logic of capitalism in which ownership, control and organisation of space is achieved through concepts, plans and practices concomitantly affecting everyday life that gives space, for Lefebvre, a highly political character. The following quote bears some remarkable similarities to Simmel's analysis of the city and in his distinction between forms and contents:

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It is also evident that in so-called modern society, simultaneity is intensified and becomes more dense, that the capacities for encounter and assembly become strengthened. Communications speed up to quasi-instantaneity. Ascendant or descendent circuits of information flow are diffused from this *centrality*. This aspect of the 'socialisation of society' has already been emphasised (reservations having been made about the 'reformist' nature of this well-known formulation). It is evident that under the same conditions dispersion increases: the division of labour is pushed to the extreme segregation of social groups and material and spiritual separations. These dispersions can only be conceived or appreciated by reference to the form of simultaneity. Without this form, dispersion and separation are purely and simply glimpsed, accepted, confirmed as facts. Thus form enables us to designate the content, or rather, contents. Movement in its emergence reveals a hidden movement, the dialectical (conflictual) movement of content and urban form: the problematic. The form in which is inscribed this problematic asks questions which are part of it. Before whom and for whom is simultaneity established, the contents of urban life assembled? (Lefebvre, 1996: 138)

Those essential 'necessary elements' identified by Lefebvre for the production of space will be explored below after consideration of Lefebvre's analytical approach, that of the dialectics of space.

LEFEBVRE'S DIALECTICS OF SPACE

The importance of Lefebvre's conceptualisation of the production of space is that it is presented as a critical analysis of the significance of space in modern capitalist society, that is, it is not to be separated from social relations. Lefebvre's understanding and use of the term production detailed in *The Production of Space* is also expressed elsewhere and explicitly reflects his indebtedness to Marx.⁸ His thesis is that space must be considered alongside raw materials, instruments of production and labour power as belonging to the set of productive forces that are the basis for the capitalist mode of production.

What constitutes the forces of production, according to Marx and Engels? Nature, first of all, plays a part, then labour, hence the organisation (or division) of labour, and hence, also the instruments of labour, including technology, and ultimately, knowledge. (Lefebvre, 1991: 69)

Ownership or control of space confers a position in the economic structure by its ability to be used, more or less productively over time (with some shapes of space, volumes, etc. having different uses and therefore market value). Space is not considered as being used up, nor is it reproduced and may be considered as developing, for example, through the conquest of new spaces or the improved use of existing spaces. There is, therefore, a unique quality to space that must be considered in any analysis of capitalist relations of production.⁹

Lefebvre's approach was to apply the dialectical method to space. Dialectics is *both* a statement about what the world is, an ontology, as well as epistemology, a theory of knowledge, a critical study of validity, methods and range, by which one organises the world for the purpose of study and presentation. There is a fundamental dynamism in this dialectical approach as movement, interconnection and interaction of money, people, commodities, etc. occur in and through space. Therefore, how change occurs in the material and social world is fundamental to Lefebvre's project. For Lefebvre, authentic knowledge of space must address the question of its production and "...must account for both representational spaces and representations of space, but above all for their interrelationships and their links with social practice" (Lefebvre, 1991: 116). Lefebvre's spatial dialectic involves the *thesis* that space is a material thing (defined, analysed and quantified according to its fixity, that is its geographical location as defined by Cartesian co-ordinates that locate an object in space). The *antithesis* is that space is a process involving social relations between people and between people and things

in space. His *synthesis* is that capitalist space is produced; it is an object, a thing, whilst simultaneously a process, a means, a tool through which and in which, social relations, and therefore change, can occur. Space then

is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their (relative) order and /or (relative) disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object... Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh actions to occur, whilst suggesting others and prohibiting yet others. Among these actions, some serve production, others consumption (i.e. the enjoyment of the fruits of production). Social space implies a great diversity of knowledge. (Lefebvre, 1991: 73)

For Lefebvre, the fundamental flaw with most theories of space is that space is conceived as a receptacle or frame to be filled by contents. Thus, Lefebvre's fundamental concern in his analysis of space is to try to reconcile what he identified as two distinct and competing conceptions of space. The first was that of a mental or ideological space, the domain of intellectual disciplines, and second, the physical or natural space in which we live. Lefebvre thus develops the concept of *social space* which

is revealed in its particularity to the extent that it ceases to be indistinguishable from mental space (as defined by the philosophers and mathematicians) on the one hand, and physical space (as defined by practico-sensory activity and the perception of 'nature') on the other... such social space is constituted neither by a collection of things or an aggregate of (sensory) data, nor by a void packed like a parcel with various contents, and that it is irreducible to a 'form' imposed upon phenomena, upon things, upon physical materiality... social space is produced and reproduced in connection with the forces of production (and within the relations of production). And these forces, as they develop, are not taking over a pre-existing, empty or neutral space, or a space determined solely by geography, climate, anthropology, or some other comparable consideration. There is thus no good reason for positing such a radical separation between works of art and products as to imply the work's total transcendence of the product. A social space cannot be adequately accounted for either by nature (climate, site) or by its previous history... Mediators and mediations, have to be taken into consideration: the action of groups, factors within knowledge, within ideology, or within the domain of representation. (Lefebvre, 1991: 27, 77)¹⁰

Lefebvre's thesis may thus be articulated as a spatialised rendition of Marx's conception of fetishism. He considers that the social relations necessary for the existence, that is the production, of space are masked or hidden by the emphasis given to space as simply existing outwith the means and mode of capitalist production. For Marx, commodity

fetishism was the process by which commodities as material things mask the underlying and specific social relations that create them by the dominance of the market and the emphasis on exchange as opposed to use value. Lefebvre's emphasis on the unique qualities of space must be considered as holding the potential not only for a radical spatial reconceptualisation of the mode of production in modernity, but also for having practical and political significance in contesting dominant categorisations or representations of space. This is because:

Space is not merely economic, in which all parts are interchangeable and have exchange value. Space is not merely a political instrument for homogenising all parts of society. On the contrary...Space remains a model, a perpetual prototype of use value resisting the generalisations of exchange value in the capitalist economy under the authority of the homogenising state. Space is a use value...[similar to]...time to which it is ultimately linked because time is our life, our fundamental use value. (Lefebvre, 1978, p. 291, cited in Shields, 2000: 168)

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Therefore, since commodities are processes that take material form, however "unlike other commodities or products, space has both a material reality and a formal property that enables it to constrain other commodities and their social relations. It continually recreates or reproduces the social relations of production" (Shields, 2000: 159). Social relations are thus hidden in the reified world of material goods, as space itself becomes fetishised. Lefebvre seeks to make clear this application of Marx's concept to social space.

The *ideologically* dominant tendency divides space up into parts and parcels in accordance with the division of labour. It bases its image of the forces occupying space on the idea that space is a passive receptacle. Thus, instead of uncovering the social relationships (including class relationships) that are latent in spaces, instead of concentrating our attention on the production of space and the social relationships that are inherent to it – relationships which introduce specific contradictions into production so echoing the contradiction between the private ownership and the means of production and the social character of the productive forces – we fall into the trap of treating space as space 'in itself', as such. We come to think in terms of spatiality, and so fetishise space in a way reminiscent of the old fetishism of commodities, where the trap lay in exchange, and the error was to consider 'thing' in isolation, as 'things in themselves'. (Lefebvre, 1991: 90)

Lefebvre's aim was to uncover the social relations involved in the production of space and the significance this has for a comprehensive knowledge of space, that is, the consequences for our understanding of space as fundamental for understanding modernity and the possibility

or potential for liberation from the alienation inherent in modern rational capitalism.

Once brought back into conjunction with a (spatial and signifying) social practice, the concept of space can take on its full meaning. Space thus rejoins material production: the production of goods, things, objects of exchange... It also rejoins the productive process considered at a higher level, as the result of accumulated knowledge... Lastly, it rejoins the freest creative process there is – the signifying process, which contains within itself the seeds of the 'reign of freedom'. (Lefebvre, 1991: 137)

Lefebvre's insistence on the interplay of different elements in the production of space necessarily includes social relations, activities and movement. Place is the delimited order of inter-related elements that are prescribed in a distinct location, which defines that place through these inter-relationships. A space, on the other hand, exists only when mobile elements (implying direction, velocity and time) intersect, and it is this relationship of movements that produce space. The qualification between space and place is a reminder that abstracted notions need to be grounded in the everyday world of social practices which are conceived as taking place in the material landscape as produced, localised place. These landscapes become imbued with meaning that highlights the dialectical analysis of space itself by exploring the contradictions and conflicts that exist in relation to social practices in place.¹¹

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The implications of this for the analysis of social space will be demonstrated later but will be shown to reside in the control, organisation and design of space for different functions and practices. Who owns and ultimately regulates the activities that can occur or are allowed in space is rooted in a process that enhances the contradictions and conflicts inherent in its production. There are many public spaces where such conflicts and contradictions between different conceptions and practices are focussed in specific locations. The contradictions between notions of space as neutral and objective and those that consider space to be the product of historically situated processes (including that of ideology and power) is, as Lefebvre argues, fundamental for understanding its production:

there is no getting around the fact that the bourgeoisie still has the initiative in its struggle for (and in) space... The state and each of its constituent institutions call for spaces – but spaces which they can then organise according to their specific requirements... here we see the polyvalence of social space, its 'reality' at once formal and material. Though a product to be used, to be consumed, it is also a *means of production*; networks of exchange and flows of raw materials and energy fashion space and are determined by it. (Lefebvre, 1991: 56, 85)

Lefebvre goes even further in his criticism of perspectives on space that do not consider the role of dominant ideologies in our understanding of how space is produced and used:

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

72 The underlying nature of Lefebvre's project, which is exposed by his emphasis on the state and concomitantly on how class struggle becomes inscribed in space, is to use his understanding of space, to provide a theoretical analysis that can contribute "to the dismantling of existing society by exposing what gnaws at it from within" (Lefebvre, 1991: 420). There is in Lefebvre's analysis the attempt to produce a theoretical analysis of space that has within it the potential for radical political action. His aim is to present an understanding of space that can then be used to subvert or challenge the authority of the hegemonic concepts and practices in space, and to propose alternatives that have practical advantages that can rescue us from the alienating consequences of capitalism. For Lefebvre, knowledge of space involves the interrelation between three spatial elements, a threefold dialectic within spatialisation. Form, structure and function individually cannot provide a comprehensive understanding or knowledge of space. The dynamic interaction between all three shows the complexity and polyvalence of the concept of social space as simultaneously a means of the social relations of production as land, property (the economic base) and as an object to be consumed, an element of social struggle in which space is a political instrument. Knowledge, of social space, that is its full meaning, for Lefebvre "must account for both representational spaces and representations of space, but above all for their interrelationships and their links with social practice" (Lefebvre, 1991: 116). It is these necessary elements for the production of space that will now be considered.

LEFEBVRE'S THREE NECESSARY ELEMENTS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE

spatial practices

Spatial practices refer to the physical and material flows (of individuals, groups or commodities), circulations, transfers and interactions that

occur in and across space, structured in such a way as to assure social life is produced and reproduced. That is, specific places and spatial compositions or arrangements are necessary and appropriate to the organisation or structuring of social relations. This includes the use of particular types of buildings, the form and structure of the urban landscape and areas set-aside for specific purposes or functions: for example, sites for housing, industry, commerce, shopping or, leisure and recreation. Spatial practice for Lefebvre

embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance... The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytical standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed in the deciphering of its space... It embodies a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routines) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure). This association is a paradoxical one, because it includes the most extreme separation between the places it links together. The specific spatial competence and performance of every society member can only be evaluated empirically... A spatial practice must have certain cohesiveness, but this does not imply that it is coherent (in the sense of intellectually worked out or logically conceived). (Lefebvre, 1991: 33, 38)

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In other words, a person's understanding of their social reality conditions their usage of space in respect of how they interact with others in specific places for particular reasons (i.e. for work, leisure, consumption, etc.). This understanding also includes how one negotiates the spaces between sites, for example areas to avoid at different times of the day or night, routes to work or favourite places, or family and friends' homes. We make sense of our daily actions by having an understanding of how things and social relations are structured in space. Spatial practice is the experience of the circulation of goods, people, money, labour power, information, etc. which associates the ownership, use and designation of land within a hierarchy of administrative and organisational divisions of space, with an intrinsic element of social control (policing and surveillance). This link between spatial practice and the cohesiveness of social organisation will be developed later. However, it is clear that Lefebvre's use of the term 'spatial practices' refers to the production of spatial forms and structures and, specifically in the urban context of spatial relations, how space is implicated in processes of habituation, of people, places and practices. As Merrifield

puts it, "[s]patial practices structure daily life and a broader urban reality and, in so doing, ensures societal cohesion, continuity and a specific spatial competence" (Merrifield, 1993: 524). Therefore, for conceptual clarity in later discussions of Lefebvre's 'necessary' elements, it is perhaps more appropriate to refer to this factor/experience of space as 'production'.

representations of space

Representation de l'espace is the dominant space in society and is "tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes and to 'frontal' relations" (Lefebvre, 1991: 33). It may also be thought of as discourses on space, regimes of analysis, and they are as Shields puts it, "the logic and forms of knowledge, and the ideological content of codes, theories, and the conceptual depiction of space linked to production relations" (Shields, 2000: 163). For Lefebvre representations of space are:

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Conceptualised space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic sub-dividers and social engineers, and of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent – all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived... This is the dominant space of any society (or mode of production). (Lefebvre, 1991: 38–9)

This is the realm of expert knowledge in which space is conceptualised and discursively constructed by

professionals and technocrats such as planners, engineers, developers, architects, urbanists, geographers and those of a scientific bent. This space comprises the various arcane signs, jargon, codifications, objectified representations used and produced by these agents... it is always a conceived and abstract space since it subsumes ideology within its practice. (Merrifield, 1993: 523).

Therefore, it is argued by Lefebvre that those who control how space is represented control how it is produced, organised and used. The development of planning as a professional discipline with an inherent ideology of space, Lefebvre views as significant in terms of control of representations of space and, concomitantly, the application of spatial practices that impinge upon everyday life. Planning, as an ideology and a practice will be explored later in relation to Lefebvre's conception of the politics of space.

spaces of representation

Espaces de la representations may be described as discourses on space in that they

are mental inventions (codes, signs, 'spatial discourses', utopian plans, imaginary landscapes, and even material constructs such as symbolic spaces, particular built environments, paintings, museums, and the like) that imagine new meanings or possibilities for spatial practices (Harvey, 1990: 218–19).

Representational Space, as Nicholson (1991) translates it, is directly lived space, the space of everyday life in contrast to the domination of the conceived, ordered, regulated space of hegemonic force. Spaces of representation then are subject to rationalisation, codification, measurement, intervention, and usurpation. Nevertheless, they also contain the potential for challenging dominant spatial practices and perceptions by the imaginative use of space. For Lefebvre, representational space is

Space as directly *lived* through its associations and images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who *describe* and aspire to do no more than describe. His is the dominated – and hence passively experienced – space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs. (Lefebvre, 1991: 39)

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Spaces of representation, then, are the spaces of everyday life where a complex of dichotomous factors, mental and social interact. For example, attraction/repulsion, access/denial, fear/desire, familiarity/unfamiliarity, open/closed and public/private. They are thus the imagined or utopian spaces produced from cultural and social forces and associated with ritual, symbol, tradition, myth, desire, dreams, etc. Everyday life is a fundamental factor, one leg of the tripod, in which Lefebvre's conception of the production of space rests. As such Lefebvre's use of everyday life will be considered below.

SPATIAL PRACTICE AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Lefebvre's argument is that "[a]uthentic knowledge of space must address the question of its production" (Lefebvre, 1991: 111) and therefore must take "account for both representational spaces and

representations of space, but above all for their interrelationships and their links with social practice" (Lefebvre, 1991: 116). A dynamic relationship, a simultaneity, exists between material form, social function and hierarchical structures that recognises the fundamental importance of social activity or practices within space. It is recognition of the multiplicity of meanings that can exist in relation to social spaces. This inter-dependence, in which the relative dominance of one aspect over the others at any one time, has the potential for liberating, that is the appropriation of differentiated spaces by popular use and practice, or for the domination of sites by the hegemonic forces of capital. This has important implications for Lefebvre in that

Once brought back into conjunction with a (spatial and signifying) social practice, the concept of space can take on its full meaning. Space thus rejoins material production: the production of goods, things, objects of exchange... It also rejoins the productive process considered at a higher level, as the result of accumulated knowledge... Lastly, it rejoins the freest creative process there is – the signifying process, which contains within itself the seeds of the 'reign of freedom'. (Lefebvre, 1991: 137)

76 This dynamic relationship of all three necessary elements in which one dominates relative to the others was for Lefebvre the means by which historically specific spatialisations were socially produced:

spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production in question, and according to the historical period. (Lefebvre, 1991: 46)

Lefebvre's project is to present space as a means as well as a medium through which different historical periods and modes of production have created spaces indicative of and necessary for their survival and expansion. Indeed, *The Production of Space* may be read as an attempt by Lefebvre to understand and explain the role of space in the perpetuation of and expansion of the capitalist mode of production. He writes

what has happened is that capitalism has found itself able to attenuate (if not resolve) its internal contradictions for a century, and consequently, in the hundred years since the writing of *Das Capital*, it has succeeded in achieving 'growth'. We cannot calculate at what price, but we know the means: by occupying space, by producing a space. (Lefebvre, 1976: 21. Italics in original)

The importance of Lefebvre's analysis in relation to social space lies in the consideration of space as neither a 'subject' nor an object but is a social reality of relations and forms that include possibilities and potentials

for social interaction as, "any space implies, contains and dissimulates social relationships – and this despite the fact that a space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things (objects and products)" (Lefebvre, 1991: 82–3). Space is part of the social relations of production as well as one of the forces of production, and therefore the need to consider the spatial organisation of society is essential. Lefebvre is emphatic in this: "The main point to be noted, therefore, is the production of a social space by political power – that is by violence in the service of economic goals. A social space of this kind is generated out of a rationalised and theorised 'form' serving as an instrument for the violation of an exiting space" (Lefebvre, 1991: 151–2). There is then in Lefebvre's work the attempt to synthesise the urban and everyday life, through his conception of the production of space, as experience, conception and practice in which 'nature' has been colonised and put to use, leading to its virtual destruction.¹² Lefebvre's aim is to uncover, using his concept of social space, how this has come about, how it exists and operates in the world. Thus he writes

What exactly is the mode of existence of social relationships? ... The study of space offers an answer according to which the social relations of production have a social existence to the extent that they have a spatial existence; they project themselves into a space, becoming inscribed there, and in the process producing that space itself. Failing this, these relations would remain in the realm of 'pure' abstraction – that is to say, in the realm of representations and hence of ideology: the realm of verbalism, verbiage and empty words. (Lefebvre, 1991: 129)

The spatial structure and social relations within urban industrial society must be viewed as a dynamic process in which "spatial structure is now seen not merely as an arena in which social life unfolds, but rather as a medium through which social relations are produced and reproduced" (Gregory and Urry, 1985: 3). The spatial organisation of society is for Lefebvre a fundamental social factor.¹³ As argued previously, space may be considered as part of the forces of production, the means by which the mode of production functions, but it is also a commodity to be used for various functions. It can be compartmentalised and 'designed' for various planned functions, such as housing, industry, commerce or leisure. To that extent space can become a scarce resource with potential for conflict over control:

Also threatened with destruction are the 'elements', as they were called in classical philosophy; water, air and daylight... Now, not in every country, but virtually on planetary scale, there is an abundant production of these formerly scarce goods. Nonetheless, new scarcities, such as water, air, daylight

and space, emerge and there is an intense struggle over them. (Lefebvre, 1977: 344–5)¹⁴

Lefebvre argues that potentially a political economy of space is possible, in which the spatial organisation of social relations represents a physical manifestation of social hierarchies through which power is displayed, oriented and organised. This is evident in the organisation and process of government:

The state and each of its constituent institutions call for spaces – but spaces which they can then organise according to their specific requirements... here we see the polyvalence of social space, its ‘reality’ at once formal and material. Though a product to be used, to be consumed, it is also a *means of production*; networks of exchange and flows of raw materials and energy fashion space and are determined by it.” (Lefebvre, 1991: 85)

This political element to the production and control of space is expressed in earlier writings by Lefebvre:

78 Space has become for the state a political instrument of primary importance. The state uses space in such a way that it ensures its control of places, its strict hierarchy, homogeneity of the whole and the segregation of parts. It is thus an administratively controlled and even policed space.” (Lefebvre, 1978: 288 cited in Gortdiener, 1985: 46)

The hegemony of capitalism then is carried out in and through space to ensure the segregation and the ordering of society by the intervention and control of the structure and design of predominantly urban spaces. Therefore, it is possible to view class and other social segregations and divisions as the operation of a dominant spatial structure and organisation. It is in this skewed relationship where abstract perceptions of space are prioritised over the practices and spaces of representations that has led to the space of the everyday becoming constrained, regulated, framed, ordered and thus dominated by the economy and the authority and power of the state. This then becomes normalised and elite representations of space function as technologies of control, discipline and power.

It is in the realm of the body that Lefebvre considers this exercise of the power of spatial technologies and conceptions to operate in the everyday life of the inhabitants of the modern urban world. Lefebvre, it may be said, prioritises the body in his analysis of how power is effected in the spatial organisation of society: not only economic and political power creating, ordering and using space, but also the dominance of male power in space.¹⁵ Such a perspective posits a reading of space as part of a political and

geographical project in which the interaction between each element in his triad of perceived – conceived – lived is emphasised and illustrated.

Dominated space and appropriated space may in principle be combined – and ideally at least, they ought to be combined. But history – that is to say the history of accumulation – is also the history of their separation and mutual antagonism. The winner in this contest, moreover, has been domination. ... [and]... the reappropriation of the body, in association with the reappropriation of space... [is] a non-negotiable part of its agenda. (Lefebvre, 1991: 167, 168)

The dominance of abstract conceived space, in which capital, money, commodities and phallogentrality are the fundamental forces, over the social space of everyday lived experience denies or subjugates the sensual experience and traditions of play. Therefore, Lefebvre sees class and social struggle as central to this domination of homogenising abstract space. The emphasis returns to Lefebvre’s political analysis and project of viewing space as the medium and means for social struggle:

As for the class struggle, its role in the production of space is a cardinal one in that this production is performed solely by classes, fractions of classes and groups representative of classes. Today, more than ever, the class struggle is inscribed in space. Indeed, it is that struggle alone which prevents abstract space from taking over the whole planet and papering over all differences. (Lefebvre, 1991: 55)

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For Lefebvre, the body is “at the very heart of space and of the discourse of power is irreducible and subversive. It is the body which is the point of return” (Lefebvre, 1991: 89). Spatial practices function as technologies of power, as disciplinary technologies for producing useful and docile bodies. A discussion of Foucault’s conception of disciplinary spaces will follow later (see Chapter 5), but the intention here is to highlight the similarities with Lefebvre’s perspective on the production of space within socio-historical processes and regimes of power. The everyday lived experience in social space is thus replete with the operation and representation of technologies power, in and through space. Thus, “[l]iving bodies, the bodies of ‘users’ are caught up not only in the toils of parcelised space, but also in the web of images, signs and symbols. These bodies are transported out of themselves, transferred and emptied out, as it were, via the eyes” (Lefebvre, 1991: 98). Space may thus be viewed as produced or created, organised and regulated to facilitate the needs and demands of capitalism: the good, moral ordering of the city and society for the benefit of accumulation of surplus value. Thus, spatial practices derive their effect from social life only through how the structure and organisation of the social operates. That is, they take on

their meanings under specific social relations (of class, gender, community, ethnicity, or race, etc.) that are historically specific.

In relation to much of urban public and social space in the contemporary landscape of the city as both a relic of the nineteenth century and as newly produced space, it may be said they were produced according to the 'habitus', that set of 'classificatory practices' and 'ultimate values' belonging to the dominant political and social order of the day, namely the political, mercantile, financial and administrative elite.¹⁶ There is within these dominant spatial practices an inherent exercise of power through the operation of procedures that seek to limit, regulate and control movements, choices, behaviours, etc. through their design and ornamentation. The aim was and is to imbue the landscape of city with symbols of power so that those who use it come to internalise the civilising bourgeois values of those who designed them. Thus the flow and circulation of people through the streets is not only about efficient transportation or circulation, it is also concerned with controlling movement along allowed routes replete with symbols of power. The interconnectedness of spatial and social practices and the potential for the former to destroy the latter are for Lefebvre part of the inter-relatedness of the three elements:

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For everything (the 'whole') weighs down on the lower or 'micro-level, on the local and the localisable – in short, on the sphere of everyday life. Everything (the 'whole') also depends on this level: exploitation and domination, protection and – inseparably – repression. The basis and foundation of the 'whole' is dissociation and separation, maintained as such by the will above; such dissociation and separation are inevitable in that they are the outcome of a history, of the history of accumulation, but they are fatal as soon as they are maintained in this way, because they keep the moments and elements of social practice away from one another. A spatial practice destroys social practice; social practice destroys itself by means of spatial practice. (Lefebvre, 1991: 366)

The attempt here is to link Lefebvre's first element of his triad to the relationship between spatial practice and social organisation. The relevance of this concept is obvious both for an appreciation of Lefebvre's dialectics of space but also for understanding how Lefebvre's dialectic of space has provided a starting point for other theorists of space. The following will similarly seek to draw out Lefebvre's second element, representations of space, by an examination of planning as an ideology.

THE POLITICS AND POWER OF SPACE

There is in Lefebvre's work a clear understanding of the historicity of the development of concepts of the city, and his criticisms of other urban

theories bemoan their lack of acknowledgement of the ideological element in these concepts. For example, he stresses that "[a]ny representation is ideological if it contributes either immediately or 'mediately' to the reproduction of the relations of production. Ideology is therefore inseparable from practice" (Lefebvre, 1976: 29). Thus ideologies have the practical effect of maintaining the dominance of particular class interests: "It is the role of ideologies to secure the assent of the oppressed and exploited" (Lefebvre, 1968: 76). Thus, hegemony is a dynamic relationship in which the 'dominant' must continually strive to maintain their position in the face of opposition and alternatives.¹⁷ Hegemony is therefore not simply outright domination or coercion but involves an element of leadership in attempting to inculcate or educate those values, meanings and 'norms' that are considered important to the reproduction of relations of capital. It is in this sense that Lefebvre describes planning as part of the hegemonic practice of power and the politics of, in and over space.

For Lefebvre, the ideology of planning became expressed in the development of practices that conceived urban space as a means by which it could be represented, homogenised, divided up for sale as a commodity, and parcelled out for specific functions. Lefebvre views concepts of the city as

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made up of facts, representations and images borrowed from the ancient pre-industrial and pre-capitalist city, but in a process of transformation and new elaboration. In practice, the urban core (an essential part of the image and the concept of the city) splits open and yet maintains itself: overrun, often deteriorated, sometimes rotting, the urban core does not disappear... Until now we have shown how the city has been attacked by industrialisation... The ruling classes or fractions of the ruling classes intervene actively and voluntarily in this process, possessing capital (the means of production) and managing not only the economic use of capital and productive investments, but also the whole society, using part of the wealth produced in 'culture', art, knowledge, ideology. Beside, or rather in opposition to, dominant social groups (classes and class fractions), there is the working class: the proletariat, itself divided into strata, partial groups, various tendencies, according to industrial sectors and local and national traditions. (Lefebvre, 1996: 7)

Lefebvre views the development of planning as an ideology, and as particular practices, as originating at a specific time in history that is, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is important to clarify the point that Lefebvre is here concerned with planning as an organised and instituted discipline. Clearly, planning as designed interventions in the physical, social and spatial infrastructure of the urban sphere has a longer history than that to which Lefebvre refers. This he views as the

result of a process, the progress of an instrumental rationality (Zweckrational to use Weber's term) into urban organisation as it had into all other spheres of society. However, Lefebvre concedes that

there is in fact no single or unitary approach in planning thought, but several tendencies identifiable according to this operational rationalism... It begins from a most detailed methodical analysis of elements – productive operation, social and economic organisation, structure and function. It then subordinates these elements to a finality... Finality is an object of decision. It is a strategy, more or less justified by an ideology. Rationalism that purports to extract from its own analyses the aim pursued by these analyses is itself an ideology... The city as chaotic confusion in which organisational rationalism seeks to solve. This is not a normal disorder. How can it be established as norm and normality? This is inconceivable. This disorder is unhealthy. The physician of modern society sees himself as the physician of sick social space. Finality? The cure? It is coherence. (Lefebvre, 1996: 81, 82)

82 Lefebvre considered town planning to be subsumed by an implicit but rarely expressed ideology that was composed of three elements. Town planning approximated to (a) a consistent activity with a scientific and technical approach that, (b) engaged in a methodical examination of the discipline with the aim of establishing an epistemology for it that (c) could use this body of knowledge, to claim to be a science of space involved at the micro or macro level of social activity. The development of planning as ideology developed more and more precise definitions:

To study the circulation, of the conveying of orders and information in the great modern city, leads to real knowledge and to technical applications. To claim that the city is defined as a network of circulation and communication, as a centre of information and decision-making, is an absolute ideology... This ideology has two independent aspects, mental and social. Mentally, it implies a theory of rationality and organisation whose expression date from around 1910, a transformation in contemporary society... It is then that socially the notion of space comes to the fore, relegating into shadow time and becoming. Planning as ideology formulates all the problems of society into questions of space and transposes all that comes from history and consciousness into spatial terms. It is an ideology which immediately divides up. Since society does not function in a satisfactory manner, could there not be a pathology of space? Within this perspective, the virtually official recognition of the priority of space over time is not conceived of as an indication of social pathology, as symptom among others of a reality which engenders social disease. On the contrary, what are represented are healthy and diseased spaces. The planned should be able to distinguish between sick spaces and spaces linked to mental and social health which are generators of this health. As physician of space, he should have the capacity to conceive of an harmonious social space, normal and normalising. Its function would then be to grant to this space (perhaps identical to geometrical space, that of abstract topologies) pre-existing social realities." (Lefebvre, 1996: 98–9)

For Lefebvre the object 'par excellence' of this science was space not time and the hidden understanding behind its ideology was that

planned space was objective and 'pure'; it was a scientific object and hence had a neutral character. Space, in this sense, passes as being innocent or, in other words, apolitical... Indeed, if this science is the science of formal space, of spatial form, it implies a rigid process and this science would consist of nothing more than the sum total of the physical constraints placed in the living environment of the affected population. (Lefebvre 1997: 340)

In a sense Lefebvre's critique appears directed at the element of environmental determinism he identifies in the ideology of planning as a discipline and of concepts of the city. The lack of engagement with or acknowledgement of ideology denies the politics inherent in space. This is a central argument in his understanding of the production of space. Space cannot be thought of or understood as a passive, neutral, objective object. It does not exist in a vacuum but is part of the history of society in which processes and interactions exist between various spheres. Thus, the social, the economic and the political act on, in and through space and vice versa. For Lefebvre, what is necessary is to place the political element of space, what the ideology of planning sublimated or denied, at the core of his understanding of the production of space. Space as both a product and a process means that Lefebvre emphasises his critique of apolitical theories of space, such as those of the planning profession, as recognition that spatial forms are politically created and serve political functions:

Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology or politics; it has always been political and strategic. If space has an air of neutrality and indifference with regard to its contents and thus seems to be 'purely' formal, the epitome of rational abstraction, it is precisely because it has already been occupied and used, and has already been the focus of past processes whose traces are not always evident in the landscape. Space has been shaped and moulded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies. There is an ideology of space. Why? Because space, which seems homogeneous, which seems to be completely objective in its pure form, such as we can ascertain it, is a social product. The production of space can be likened to the production of any given particular type of merchandise. (Lefebvre, 1977: 341)

Planning therefore represents a profession in which ideologies are acted out, explicitly or implicitly, in representations of space. How a space is perceived, subjected to logic, codes, theories, etc. is the realm of expert knowledge in which it is abstracted and put to use. Space needs to be considered as political because how a space is represented has implications

for how it is to be used: for what purposes, by whom, when and why. Gregory thus refers to representations of space as “constellations of power, knowledge, and spatiality – in which the dominant social order is materially inscribed (and, by implication, legitimised)” (Gregory, 1994: 403). This has implications therefore for the control and domination of one group by another by limiting contact or interactions by segregation or isolation. The potential for conflict over control of representations of space is thus in the arena of potential conflict between social classes or class fractions. Mitchell, in his analysis of the conflict over different understandings of what constitutes public space, is clear in his assessment of the ideological element of representations of space as used by planners and developers:

Imposing limits and controls on spatial interaction has been one of the principal aims of the urban and corporate planners during this century. The territorial segregation created through the expression of social difference has increasingly been replaced by a celebration of constrained diversity. The diversity represented in shopping centres, ‘megastructures, corporate plazas and (increasingly) in public parks is carefully constructed... a space of social practice that sorts and divides social groups according to the dictates of comfort and order rather than to those of political struggle... The strategies of urban and corporate planners classify and distribute various social strata and classes (other than the one that exercise hegemony) across the available territory, keeping them separate and prohibiting all contacts – these being replaced by signs (or images) of contact. (Mitchell, 1995: 120)

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THE EVERYDAY IN LEFEBVRE'S PRODUCTION OF SPACE

Lefebvre is concerned with investigating the significance and details of everyday life. In many aspects of his works on the city and space, he examines how changes wrought by modernisation have affected the patterns and routines of daily life. What he seeks to emphasise is the loss of control and sense of belonging to a community that has accompanied the transition to a more materialistic, individualistic society. Shields considers this concern with alienation as the unifying theme throughout Lefebvre's work:

What unites all his work – from his first to his most mature works – is his deeply humanistic interest in alienation... It is not technological progress, the absence of war, or ease of life, or even length of life, but the chance for a *fully lived life* that is the measure of a civilisation. The quality of any society lies in the opportunity for the unalienated and authentic life experience that it gives all its members. Grounded in anything else, democracy falls short of what it could be. In cultural terms, this quality supersedes historically imposed measures of

beauty or elegance. In political and economic terms, it is an index of liberty. (Shields, 2000: 2)

Lefebvre's analysis of the production of space centres on the interplay of everyday experience and interactions within historical modes of production, specifically capitalism, with the development of technologies and conceptions of space (spatial practices and representations of space). This dynamic equilibrium between three complex compounds (combinations of elements) produces space. Ownership of space is not only the exercise of monopoly rights over a physical territory. It also involves how space is conceived and represented, which reflects the dominant, hegemonic forces operative within and over it. There is then an inherent element of control and regulation of space and concomitantly of the practices that are allowed or sanctioned, permitted or proscribed within it. But, as Lefebvre emphasises, space is produced and shaped for economic production and for social reproduction, and as “[s]pace is permeated with social relations: it is not only supported by social relations but is also producing and produced by social relations” (Lefebvre, 1991: 286). There is thus a reciprocal relationship between the elements involved in its production. That is, everyday practices are not only dominated by spatial practices and the representations of space preferred or imposed by practitioners such as planners, state officials, academics, etc., but also impose their own meanings, values and understandings of space by the routine practices and techniques of everyday life.

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Command over space, for Lefebvre, is thus a fundamental and ubiquitous basis of power in everyday life and in society. Those who create and define the meanings, forms and practices in space (as well as time) can set the rules by which that space is used: when, by whom, for what purposes. The ideological and political forces that constitute hegemony in society seek to control the material context of everyday social experience. In this context the control over the representations given of space and the meanings attached to them are significant for understanding how power employs and is employed in and through space, how it manifests and inscribes in space meanings and ideologies that belong to the dominant hegemony. Harvey eloquently sums up the point: “If a picture or map can paint a thousand words, then power in the realms of representation may end up being as important as power over the materiality of spatial organisation itself” (Harvey, 1990: 233). Lefebvre defines everyday life as:

made of recurrences: gestures of labour and leisure, mechanical movements both human and properly mechanic, hours, days, weeks, months, years, linear

and cyclical repetitions, natural and rational time, etc.: the study of creative activity (of *production*, in its widest sense) leads to the study of reproduction or the conditions in which actions producing objects and labour are reproduced, re-commenced, and re-assume their component proportions or, on the contrary, undergo gradual or sudden modifications. (Lefebvre, 1971: 18)

Shields attempts to clarify Lefebvre's use of the term 'everyday life'¹⁸ distinguishing between *le quotidien* (everydayness) as the banal repetitive routinisation of life under capitalism and *la vie quotidienne* (daily life) the ordinary, habitual, routine nature of day-to-day living. Lefebvre's use of *la vie quotidienne* is an attempt to 'marry' daily life to the alienated concept of everydayness. Lefebvre is proposing that there is a need to reconsider the symbiosis of the two ideas. They are not separated into one alienated, bad, everyday whilst the other is special, good, unalienated 'moments'. The two meanings overlap in that the alienated everyday has the potential for extraordinariness, and therefore his use of the concept of everyday life is to encompass this potential for unreserved participation. The aim of Lefebvre's use of the term is to highlight how consciousness can be transformed by changing the material components and everyday routines of daily life and vice versa.

86 Lefebvre attempts to present an understanding of modernity through this concept of 'everyday life' in which knowledge of the meanings and practices of the experience of modern urban life under capitalism is crucial. Lefebvre argues that

everyday life and modernity, the one crowning and concealing the other, revealing and veiling it. Everyday life is a compound of insignificances united in this concept, responds and corresponds to modernity, a compound of signs by which our society expresses and justifies itself and which forms part of its ideology." (Lefebvre, 1971: 24)

Central to this concept, in Lefebvre's definition, is how ideologies are constructed and applied to and within everyday life. The importance of Lefebvre's concern with the ideological content and control of everyday life is extended to his understanding of the production of space. Knowledge of space must account for the socio-historical and the economic basis by which it is produced, and this includes an ontological perspective based upon ideology but also a focus on the means, practices and uses of space.

Thus everyday life, the social territory and place of controlled consumption, of terror-enforced passivity, is established and programmed; as a social territory it is easily identified, and under analysis it reveals its latent irrationality beneath an apparent rationality; incoherence beneath an ideology of coherence, and sub-systems or disconnected territories linked together only by speech. (Lefebvre, 1971: 197)

Therefore, views of the city, landscapes, facades, plans, etc., that is, representations of space, become the essential condition or requirement for the superiority of ruling elites (whether as sovereigns, the local or national state, or planners) in their control over space, over the city and over people. Lefebvre highlights this visual dominance in order to demonstrate the hegemony of elite views of the city. As Lefebvre argues:

To put art at the service of the urban does not mean to prettify urban space with works of art... Rather, this means that time-space becomes works of art and that former art reconsiders itself as source and model of *appropriation* of space and time. Art brings cases and examples of appropriate 'topics' of temporal qualities inscribed in spaces... Let us not forget that gardens, parks, and landscapes were part of urban life as much as the fine arts, or that the landscape around cities were the works of art of these cities... Leaving aside representation, ornamentation and decoration, art can become *praxis* and *poiesis* on a social scale: the art of living in the city as work of art. Coming back to style and to the oeuvre, that is, to the meaning of the monument and the space appropriated in the *fete*, art can create 'structures of enchantment'. (Lefebvre, 1996: 173)

Lefebvre also cites the selective construction of monuments and other public sculpture to represent the ideologies of the dominating histories of a specific, that is elite culture. They thus represent in material form a privileged spatial practice. Who selects what subject or historical event as worthy of public representation, and where it is located, is politically incumbent. Monuments and public art carry with them, whether implicit or explicit, meanings and messages from those who have the power, capital or authority to erect them.¹⁹ As Harvey makes clear:

Spatial and temporal practices are never neutral in social affairs. They always express some kind of class or other social content, and are more often than not the focus of intense social struggle... Time and space both get defined through the organisation of social practices fundamental to commodity production. (Harvey, 1990: 239)

But there is the possibility of other aspects of the experience of space that have the potential to undermine or subvert this planned and dominating picture. De Certeau (1984) for example presents the possibility of reconstituting the regulated 'plan' of the city through everyday practices, such as walking, that create new trajectories and routes that have the potential for empowerment. Lefebvre counterposes the bases of social needs as between the need for security, predictability and certainty with the desire for adventure, unpredictability and the freedom to explore possibilities that present themselves as open. Thus, there is a need for the organisation of work, of play, time and space for self-reflection as well as interaction. Indeed, Lefebvre emphasises the fundamental

need for play as an essential quality of human well-being, something that has been overlooked or underestimated in concepts of and attempts to organise, plan and regulate the city:

The human being has the need to accumulate energies and to spend them, even waste them in play. ... To these anthropological needs which are socially elaborated ... can be added specific needs which are not satisfied by those commercial and cultural infrastructures which are somewhat parsimoniously taken into account by planners. This refers to the need of creative activity, for the *oeuvre* (not only of products and consumable material goods), of the need for information, symbolism, the imaginary and play. Through these specified needs lives and survives a fundamental desire of which play, sexuality, physical activities such as sport, creative activity, art and knowledge are particular expressions and *moments*, which can more or less overcome the fragmentary division of tasks. Finally, the need of the city and urban life can only be freely expressed within a perspective which here attempts to become clearer and to open up the horizon. Would not specific urban needs be those of qualified places, places of simultaneity and encounters, places where exchange would not go through exchange value, commerce and profit? Would there not also be a need for a time for these encounters, these exchanges? (Lefebvre, 1996: 147–8)

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Lefebvre argues that the satisfaction of social needs exist outwith those spaces designed and planned for overtly commercial or production purposes, that is spaces of exchange. Lefebvre is thus alerting us to the need for a more holistic understanding of everyday life in which the production of space for purposes not specifically concerned with the production of capital, but with the reproduction of the relations of capital in which, for Lefebvre, play is an essential part. Lefebvre's argument is an appeal for the continuance of spaces within the modern city for activities that do not serve strictly productive functions:

Fairs, collective games of all sorts, survive at the interstices of an organised consumer society, in the holes of a serious society which perceives itself as structured systematically and which claims to be technical. As for the old places of assembly, they are largely devoid of meaning: the fete dies or leaves it. That they should find a meaning again does not preclude the creation of places appropriate to the renewed fete fundamentally linked to play ... The space of play has coexisted and still coexists with spaces of exchange and circulation, political space and cultural space. Projects within quantified and accounted 'social space' which lose their qualitative and differentiated spaces relate to a schizophrenia which is concealed under the veils of precision, scientificity and rationality. Thus, conceived social spaces are related to social times and rhythms that are prioritised. One understands more clearly, how and up to what point in urban reality elements distribute themselves over a period of time. It is the truth of urban time which lucidly reclaims this role. To *inhabit* finds again its place over habitat. The quality which is promoted presents and represents as *playful*. By *playing* with words, one can say that there will be *play* between the parts of the

social whole (plasticity) – to the extent that *play* is proclaimed as a supreme value, eminently solemn, if not serious, overtaking use and exchange value by gathering them together. (Lefebvre, 1996: 171–2)

Lefebvre's understanding of the importance of everyday life in the production of space has broad implications for providing a theoretical framework for analysing specific urban places whether they are for production, circulation, exchange or are formal and informal spaces of leisure and recreation, of association or collective engagement and interaction. We need to investigate the form, structure and function of such spaces that are intimately related to everyday life but not necessarily with production per se, as in 'work', but in the reproduction of the relations of production through the regeneration, the re-creation, of the labour force through preferably, the healthy use of leisure time. Cities as planned and managed spaces include such intervention in their structure and organisation and in the everyday life of their population to provide leisure and recreational opportunities. The need for such interventions became more essential as the consequences of modernisation, urbanisation and industrialisation took their toll on the physical environment as well as the physical, mental and moral health of the population. As Lefebvre writes, "[t]he stress of 'modern life' makes amusements, distractions and relaxation a necessity" (Lefebvre, 1971: 53). This is neatly echoed by Harvey: "[t]he social spaces of distraction and display become as vital to urban culture as the spaces of working and living" (Harvey, 1986: 256). This has implications for a spatial reading of the urban in which everyday activities can potentially conflict with the designed intentions of urban and city planners. What is allowed, prescribed, when and where and by whom are essential questions as to the real, as opposed to the hypothetical, 'freedom' that public space implies. Conflicts in and over space are a reflection competing meanings and values invested in the use and appropriation of space by individuals and by groups. This raises questions as to the 'ownership' of public space and is pertinent in highlighting Lefebvre's plea for openness as a 'right'. Lefebvre considers that the 'right to the city' becomes more essential in modern cities as it "manifests itself as a superior form of rights: right to freedom, to individualisation in socialisation, to habitat and to inhabit. The right to the *oeuvre*, to participation and *appropriation* (clearly distinct from the right to property), are implied in the right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1996: 173–4). The right to the city is defined by Lefebvre as:

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not a natural right, nor a contractual one. In the most 'positive' of terms it signifies the rights of citizens and city dwellers, and of groups (on the basis of

social relations) constitute, to appear on all the networks and circuits of communication, information and exchange... To exclude the *urban* from groups, classes, individuals, is also to exclude them from civilisation, if not from society itself. The *right to the city* legitimates the refusal to allow oneself to be removed from urban reality by a discriminatory and segregative organisation. This right of the citizen (if one wants, of 'man') proclaims the inevitable crisis of city centres based upon segregation and establishing it: centres of decision-making, wealth, power, of information and knowledge, which reject towards peripheral spaces all those who do not participate in political privileges. Equally, it stipulates the right to meetings and gatherings; places and objects must answer to certain 'needs' generally misunderstood, to certain despised and moreover transfunctional 'functions': the 'need' for social life and a centre, the need and the function of play, the symbolic function of space. (Lefebvre, 1996: 195)

90 However, as Lefebvre indicates, the 'right' to the city, and therefore its public spaces, implies the potential for conflict between different groups over meaning and values as well as uses and practices. Thus, Lefebvre's plea is for knowledge not only of the production of space that includes understanding and acknowledging the ideology subsumed within concepts, plans and designs, but also the rights of the urban public to 'own' by use, attachment of meanings, symbols and understandings of space. That is, to replace the prioritisation of space for exchange with that of the use value of space. However, Mitchell makes clear, in his analysis of the role and function of contemporary public spaces, that potential conflict resides within competing and often mutually exclusive visions of what is public space:

Whatever the origins of any public space, its status as 'public' is created and maintained through the ongoing opposition of visions that have been held, on the one hand by those who seek order and control and, on the other, by those who seek places for oppositional political activity and unmediated interaction... Public space is the product of competing ideas about what constitutes that space – order and control or free, and perhaps dangerous, interaction – and who constitutes the 'public'. (Mitchell, 1995: 115)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LEFEBVRE'S PRODUCTION OF SPACE

Lefebvre's central thesis in *The Production of Space* is that space is a fundamental element in the operation and organisation of society within historical modes of production. However, space must be considered as a unique factor in that it is at the same time, one of the forces of production and also the medium through which social relations occur and is the outcome of this process. It is a causal element in the relations

of production but also produced by the relations that occur within and through it. Space, for Lefebvre,

is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object... Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh actions to occur, whilst suggesting others and prohibiting yet others. Among these actions, some serve production, others consumption (i.e. the enjoyment of the fruits of production.) Social space implies a great diversity of knowledge. (Lefebvre, 1991: 73)

Lefebvre's concept of social space encompasses a critical analysis of urban reality and everyday life, an inseparable concatenation, which simultaneously is a product and a process:

The analysis is concerned with the whole of practico-social activities, as they are entangled in a complex space, urban and everyday, ensuring up to a point the reproduction of relations of production (that is, social relations). The global synthesis is realised through this actual space, its critique and its knowledge... At the centre, recognised here and elsewhere, is the process of *reproduction of relations of production*, which unfolds before one, which is accomplished with each social activity, including the most ostensibly anodyne (leisure activities, everyday life, dwelling and habitat, the use of space) and which has yet to be the subject of a global study. (Lefebvre, 1996: 185, 187)

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His approach to understanding the production of space, 'true knowledge of space', is outlined in his triad of necessary elements. Thus, spatial practices, representations of space and spaces of representation may be said to provide a framework for understanding social spaces in the context of their production within particular societies and historical periods. His analysis takes account of the need to produce spaces for economic production *and* for social reproduction. The significance of Lefebvre's conceptualisation of the production of space lies not least in its recognition of the need to analyse spaces specifically involved in processes of social reproduction, which as Hayden argues

ranges over different scales, including the space in and around the body (biological reproduction), the space of housing (the reproduction of the labour force), and the public space of the city (the reproduction of social relations). Here he links the physical to the social in decisive ways... Lefebvre suggests that space is a medium through which social life is produced and reproduced. (Hayden, 1997: 114)

Merrifield also makes a useful link between Lefebvre's analysis of the production of space and the investigation and analysis of particular places:

The space-relations identified by Lefebvre, then take on meaning through, and are permeated by, historically defined social relations (and vice versa)...space represented the realm of flows of capital, money, commodities and information, and remained the domain of the hegemonic forces in society. From this viewpoint, place comprises the locus and a sort of stopping of those flows, a specific moment in the dynamics of space-relations under capitalism. Place is shaped by the grounding (the 'thingification' if you will) of these material flows, though it concomitantly serves to shape them too by way of social and class struggle over place necessitating, for example, that abstract space takes a particular physical and social form in place...It is the realm of dispassionate 'objects' rationally 'ordered in space'; a deracinated space where representation is simply the representation of the ruling groups, just as ruling ideas were for Marx. Here knowledge and power attempt to reign supreme and impose what they know onto lived sensual and sexual experience. Correspondingly, everyday life becomes a practical and sensual activity acted out in place...Life is place-dependent, and hence the Lefebvrian struggle to change life has to launch itself from a place platform...everyday life in place is 'the supreme court where wisdom, knowledge and power are brought to judgement'. (Merrifield, 1993: 525)

92 Lefebvre's warning then is that, "[s]o far as the concept of production is concerned, it does not become fully concrete or take on a true content until replies have been given to the questions that it makes possible: 'Who produces?', 'What?', 'How?', 'Why and for Whom?'" (Lefebvre, 1991: 111, 69). This would seem an appropriate and essential set of questions necessary for the investigation of any social space in which a complex of factors has contributed to their production, representation and the uses to which they are put. Similarly, investigating how social activities are structured and experienced there is a spatial context that also needs to be understood. As Harvey puts it:

Symbolic orderings of space and time provide a framework for experience through which we learn who or what we are in society...The common sense notion that 'there is a time and a place for everything' gets carried into a set of prescriptions which replicate the social order by assigning social meanings to spaces and times. (Harvey, 1990: 214)

Lefebvre's contribution to the social theory of space is important because it provides a valuable framework for understanding the importance of space in the analysis of modern urban capitalism, its survival and its perpetuation. Lefebvre provides a theoretical foundation that takes into account the interplay between a number of crucial elements, a complex of dynamic interactions provides a framework, for analysing

how conflicts over design, form and function become entwined with social class and spatial segregation. That is, if 'true knowledge of space' is to be achieved by a consideration of the dynamic triad of necessary elements, there is a need to investigate, illustrate and substantiate how space is produced, how it is represented in diverse discourses, as well as how everyday meanings and uses affect and are affected by it.

Lefebvre's 'Production of space' is a complex analysis of the fundamental importance of space in the survival and perpetuation of capitalism that provides essential concepts, insights and perspectives for a meaningful understanding of social space. The interlinked necessary elements of his triadic analysis of spatial practices, representation and use provides a structure for the analysis of the space of modern, increasingly urban capitalism, that is essential for incorporating an understanding of the diverse factors salient to the experience of contemporary social activities. However, a criticism of Lefebvre's analysis is that it does not provide sufficient illustrative and substantive detail of the operation, the workings, of each of his dynamic elements. It is an abstract theoretical analysis that identifies a number of macro and micro social factors without specific consideration of the implications and application of each of his elements. The significance of Lefebvre's work is that it reprioritises and radicalises the role of space in social relations and provided a theoretical and conceptual foundation from and through which other social theorists have sought to analyse and investigate the importance of space for social relations and the formations in which they are found.

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NOTES

1 As Shields writes: "Rather than simply discussing the philosophical status of space – 'how many dimensions exist', or is space a 'thing' or 'void between things'? – Lefebvre investigates social attitudes towards space, all the while not neglecting to emphasise the integral importance of physical dimensions and spatial categories such as boundaries and regions in everyday life." (Shields, 2000: 5–6).

2 Katz and Kirkby argue that this is a fundamental feature of capitalism itself: "Since the Enlightenment, the narratives of science have been embedded in the social relations of capitalism within which projects are constructed in particular ways, unmistakably tied to the manipulation of nature. The exploitation and domination of the latter by agents of capital is continuous with the social relations through which labour is exploited and subaltern groups are dominated. Embracing the separation between society and nature, capitalist hegemony is predicated as much on the notion of external or primordial nature as it is on the decisions of class, gender, race, ethnicity and age. Our comprehension of this link is muddled by our invocation of objective science and romanticised conceptualisation of nature and society, but also by the fact that human beings exist in contradictory relation to

nature. At the basis of the contradiction lies the recognition that humans are 'of nature' but are also capable of objective reason and thus possess "second nature". (Katz and Kirkby, 1991: 263)

3 Lefebvre describes how this reconstruction of nature comes about:

And now men – the most 'cultivated' men at first, people from the towns, and then the masses – rediscover the spring. They are amazed by it. They rediscover nature, long forgotten by their ancestors and their fathers. But this spring is no longer the springtime which breaks the laws of the city. It is springtime which has already been controlled and appropriated. The life of nature no longer unfolds before their eyes, something beyond them, an absurd and ludicrous spectacle, its exuberant blossoms threatening death, a dangerous, turbulent, elemental disorder, a wild bestial frenzy. At the same time as it resumes its place in the cycle of nature, spring – though still ruled by the law of cycles – becomes subsumed in the cycle of social living. It regains a meaning, but slowly; a few ancient traditions live on – notably despite the contradiction, the consecration of the month of May to virginity. Bit by bit a symbolism will be imposed upon this new-found springtime, a system of meanings and significations it does not possess as a fact of nature. Through songs and poetry, popular or scholarly, culture re-establishes contact with nature, thus resolving a partial but deep-rooted conflict. People use these songs and poems to appropriate nature again, and to reconstitute a lost symbolism. Nature and history are not made to coincide, but they are no longer separate. Springtime is a festival again, a meeting point, a moment of accord. Nature and history have not become fused, but they are not dissociated either. (Lefebvre, 1995: 148)

4 Again, Lefebvre highlights and emphasises that the distinction between town and country, nature and culture, etc. can result in too overly rigid dichotomies of conceptions:

A theme which has been used and over-used, hyper-inflated and extrapolated, namely, 'nature and culture', originates from the relations between town and country and deflects it... What is important is the complex movement by which the political city uses this sacred-damned character of the ground, so that the economic (commercial city) can desecrate it... In industrial countries, the old exploitation by the city, centre of capital accumulation, of the surrounding countryside, gives way to more subtle forms of domination and exploitation, the city becoming [the] centre of decision-making and also apparently of association. However that may be, the expanding city attacks the countryside, corrodes and dissolves it. (Lefebvre, 1996: 118–19)

5 It is this double role or function of cities that Lefebvre uses as a rejoinder to criticisms of his own theoretical perspective on space and the city. For example, "...Castells does not understand space. He sets aside space. His is still a simplistic Marxist schema, as is Preteceilles'. They are very reductionist because all they see is land speculation, the price of land. They aren't wrong – what they say isn't absolutely false – but is only one part of a new and immense reality, that one more or less examines." (Lefebvre, 1985: 31).

6 The consequences for the physical, social and moral health of cities and their populations when rapid economic growth outstrips the necessary infrastructure to sustain it is a theme developed in David Harvey's work on the political economy of space (see Chapter 4).

7 Saunders notes that

The basic contradiction in the production of space is between the necessity for capital to exploit it for profit and the social requirements of those who consume; in other words, the contradiction between profit and need, exchange value and use value. The political expression of this contradiction is found in the constant political struggle between individualistic and collectivistic strategies. It is this contradiction and this struggle that lies at the heart of Lefebvre's concern with the urban question. (Saunders, 1981: 154)

8 The term production acquires a more forceful and wider significance, when interpreted according to Marx's early works (though still bearing *Das Kapital* in mind); production is not merely the making of products: the term signifies on the one hand 'spiritual' production, that is to say creations (including social time and space), and on the other material production or the making of things; it also signifies the self-production of a 'human-being' in the process of historical self-development, which involves the production of social relations. Finally, taken in its fullest sense, the term embraces re-production, not only biological (which is the province of demography) but the material reproduction of the tools of production, of technical instruments and of social relations into the bargain (Lefebvre, 1971: 31).

9 Gregory sums up Lefebvre's overall aim thus:

Lefebvre wants to elucidate the specificity of the capitalist mode of production of space, to understand how the production of space came to be saturated with tonalities of capitalism. He attempts to do so by sketching out, in different but overlapping texts, what he eventually called "the long history of space" ... The task of his genealogy is thus to provide a history of space that will show how this constellation of power-knowledge – this supposedly 'true space' – is an artificial construction that privileges mental space, marginalises social space and compromises lived experience. (Gregory, 1994: 359, 365)

10 Merrifield states that: "Lefebvre strove for a unity theory of space, a rapprochement between physical space (nature), mental space (formal abstractions about space) and social space (the space occupied by 'sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias'" (Merrifield, 1993: 522).

11 See Merrifield 1993 for a discussion of the possibilities of using Lefebvre's spatialised dialectic as a framework for investigating the relationships between space and place. As Merrifield states:

Lefebvre's maverick non-dogmatic *spatialised* reading of Marx's materialist dialectic (a project he termed *spatiology*) offers the most fruitful route for broaching the problematic of place... that of reconciling the way in which experience is lived and acted out in place, and how this relates to, and is embedded in, political and economic practices that are operative over broader spatial

scales... Consequently, space internalises conflictual and contradictory social forces and social conflict is thereby 'inscribed in place'. This conflict arises from the inextricable tension between the usage and appropriation of place for social purposes and the domination of place (and space) as a productive and commercial force through private ownership... It follows here that place is not merely abstract space: it is the terrain where basic social practices – consumption, enjoyment, tradition, self-identification, solidarity, social support and social reproduction etc. are lived out. As a moment of capitalist space, place is where everyday life is situated. And as such, place can be taken as practised space. (Merrifield, 1993: 517, 522)

12 This is a point Shields emphasises:

Because Lefebvre is referring to not only the empirical disposition of things in the landscape as 'space' (the physical aspect) but also attitudes and habitual practices, his metaphorical *l'espace* might be better understood as the *spatialisation* of social order. In this movement to space, abstract structures such as 'culture' become concrete practices and arrangement in space. Social action involves not just a rhythm but also geometry and spacing. Spatialisation also captures the processual nature of *l'espace* that Lefebvre insists is a matter of ongoing activities. That is, it is not just an achieved order in the built environment, or an ideology, but also an order that is itself always undergoing change from within through the actions and innovations of social agents. In short, all 'space' is social space. (Shields, 2000: 155)

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13 Massey sums up the importance of the interaction of the spatial in analysing the organisation of society:

Understanding the spatial organisation of society, then, is crucial. It is central to our understanding of the way in which social processes work out, possibly to our conceptualisation of some of those processes in the first place, and certainly in our ability to act on them politically... If the spatial is not autonomous from the social, can the social be theorised autonomously from its spatial form, requirements and implications?... Part of what is fundamentally at issue here is the reassessment of our definition of necessary relations within the social sciences. (Massey, 1985: 17, 18)

14 This is a point that Shields also stresses:

Space... is treated in such a way as to render it homogenous, its parts comparable, therefore exchangeable... The subordination of space to money and capital implies a quantification which extends from the monetary evaluation of each plot of the entire space... Space now becomes one of the new 'scarcities', together with its resources, water, air, and even light. (Shields, 2000: 180)

15 As Lefebvre writes somewhat prosaically:

Metaphorically, it symbolises force, male fertility, masculine violence. Here again the part is taken for the whole; phallic brutality does not remain abstract,

for it is the brutality of political power, of the means of constraint: police, army, bureaucracy. Phallic erectibility bestows a special status on the perpendicular, proclaiming a phallocracy as the orientation of space, as the goal of the process. (Lefebvre, 1991: 287)

16 Lefebvre argues that

Bourdieu provides a clarification. He explains how 'a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions' can at one and the same time be put to work flexibly to 'achieve infinitely diversified tasks' while at the same time being 'in the last minute' (Engel's famous phrase) engendered out of the material experience of 'objective structures', and therefore 'out of the economic basis of social formations in question'. The mediating link is provided by the concept of 'habitus' – a 'durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations' which 'produces practices' which in turn tend to reproduce the objective conditions which produced the generative principle of habitus in the first place. (Lefebvre, 1991: 219)

It is perhaps pertinent to also reflect Bourdieu's principle in his own words:

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

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17 The definition given by Williams of hegemony as a lived process, involving resistance and conflict over meanings and values (ideology) as well as practices and expectations over the whole of the experience of life, not only a static structured system of domination between states or social classes is useful in this context.

Gramsci made a distinction between 'rule' (*dominio*) and 'hegemony'. 'Rule' is expressed in directly political forms and in times of crisis by direct or effective coercion. But the more normal situation is a complex interlocking of political, social and cultural forces which are its necessary elements... What is decisive is not only the conscious system of ideas and beliefs, but the whole lived social process as practically organised by specific and dominant meanings and beliefs. (Williams, 1977: 108–9)

18 It is worth distinguishing carefully between everyday life and the concept 'the everyday' in order to clarify its meaning. The term 'everyday life' in Lefebvre's books means 'banal and meaningless life', not daily life. In French, there is a certain interchangeability between the idea of banal activities and daily tasks. While 'everyday life' in the sense of daily tasks is an amorphous set of more or less usual and unremarkable activities, 'the everyday' always means the ordinary, banal and repetitive (Shields, 2000: 69).

19 See Deutsche (1998) for a critical discussion of the use of public art in creating a dominant urban aesthetic.