

## COSMOPOLITANISM AND THE BANALITY OF GEOGRAPHICAL EVILS

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*"The revival of the science of geography....should  
create that unity of knowledge without which all learning  
remains only piece-work"* - Immanuel Kant

*"Without a knowledge of geography gentlemen could not  
understand a (newspaper)"* - John Locke

Cosmopolitanism is back. For some that is the good news. The bad news is that it has acquired so many nuances and meanings as to negate its putative role (most eloquently argued for by Held, 1995) as a unifying vision for democracy and governance in a globalizing world.

Some broad brush divisions of opinion immediately stand out. There are those, like Nussbaum (1996; 1997), whose vision is constructed in opposition to local loyalties in general and nationalism in particular. Inspired by the Stoics and Kant, Nussbaum presents cosmopolitanism as an ethos, "a habit of mind" a set of loyalties to humanity as a whole, to be inculcated through a distinctive educational program emphasising the commonalities and responsibilities of global citizenship. Against this are ranged all manner of hyphenated versions of cosmopolitanism, variously described as "rooted", "situated", "vernacular", "Christian", "bourgeois", "discrepant", "actually-existing" "postcolonial", "feminist", "ecological", "socialist", and so on and so forth. Cosmopolitanism here gets particularized and pluralized in the belief that detached loyalty to the abstract category of "the human" is incapable in theory, let alone in practice, of providing any kind of political purchase even in the face of the strong currents of globalization that swirl around us.

Some of these "counter-cosmopolitanisms" were formulated in reaction to Nussbaum's claims. She was accused, for example, of merely articulating an appropriate ideology for the "global village" of the new liberal managerial class. The famous line in the Manifesto - "the bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country" (Marx and Engels 1952, 42) - could easily be used against her. And it is indeed hard to differentiate her arguments from those rooted in Adam Smith's neoliberal moral subject cheerfully riding market forces wherever they go or, worse still, those embedded in the globalizing geopolitics of US national and

international interests (Brennan, 1997, 25). There is in any case something oppressive, her critics noted, about the ethereal and abstracted universalism that lies at the heart of her cosmopolitan discourse. How can it account for let alone be sympathetic to a world characterized by multiculturalism, movements for national or ethnic liberation, and all manner of other differences? What Cheah and Robbins (1998) call "cosmopolitics" then emerges as a quest "to introduce intellectual order and accountability into this newly dynamic space...for which no adequately discriminating lexicon has had time to develop."

That such a new lexicon is needed is a widely held belief that may well propel us onto new intellectual terrain in times to come. The material conditions that give rise to the need are also widely understood to be those of "globalization" (see Held 1995, 267). These same forces have led other commentators such as Readings (1996) and Miyoshi (1997; 1998) to question prevailing structures of knowledge entirely. Readings, for example, argues compellingly that the traditional University has outlived its purpose. In Europe, the kind of university founded by Wilhelm von Humboldt in Berlin two centuries ago helped guard and solidify national cultures. In the United States, the university helped create tradition, found mythologies and form a "republican subject" able to combine rationality and sentiment and exercise judgement within a system of consensual democratic governance. But globalization (of culture as well as of economies), the rise of transnational powers and the partial "hollowing out" of the nation state (themes all advanced by Held) have undermined this traditional role. So what happens, Readings asks, when the culture the University was meant to preserve goes global and transnational along with everything else? Multiculturalism as a seeming antidote does not do the trick for, as Miyoshi (1997, 202) observes:

"To the extent that cultural studies and multiculturalism provide students and scholars with an alibi for their complicity in the TNC version of neocolonialism, they are serving, once again, just as one more device to conceal liberal self-deception. By allowing ourselves to get absorbed into the discourse of "postcoloniality" or even post-Marxism, we are fully collaborating with the hegemonic ideology, which looks, as usual, as if it were no ideology at all."

Mere reform of knowledge structures, says Readings (1996, 169), risks "blinding us to the dimensions of the task that faces us - in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences - the task of rethinking the categories that have governed intellectual life for over two hundred years."

Nussbaum likewise calls for an entirely different educational structure (and pedagogy) appropriate to the task of rational political deliberation in a globalizing world. On this point both she and her critics as well as a variety of other commentators like Held, Readings, Miyoshi, Brennan, and Cheah and Robbins would all agree. But what kind of knowledge and what kind of educational structure? "Our nation," complains Nussbaum (1996, 11-12) "is appallingly ignorant of most of the rest of the world." The United States is

unable to look at itself through the lens of the other and, as a consequence, (is) equally ignorant of itself." In particular, she argues:

"To conduct this sort of global dialogue, we need knowledge not only of the geography and ecology of other nations - *something that would already entail much revision in our curricula* - but also a great deal about their people, so that in talking with them we may be capable of respecting their traditions and commitments. Cosmopolitan education would supply the background necessary for this type of deliberation." (my italics)

This appeal to adequate and appropriate geographical and anthropological understandings parallels, perhaps not by accident, a more general revival of interest in geographical knowledges within our intellectual universe in recent times. But in Nussbaum's case, she merely follows Kant (without seeming to notice it). For Kant held that adequate geographical and anthropological knowledges provide the necessary conditions of all practical knowledge of our world.

In what follows, therefore, I shall take a closer look at the potential positioning of geographical and anthropological knowledges in any new intellectual order designed to both confront questions of globalization and inform the drive to build a more cosmopolitan ethic as a foundation for cosmopolitan democracy.

## **KANT'S GEOGRAPHY**

I begin with Kant because his inspiration for the contemporary approach to cosmopolitanism is impossible to ignore (I have even heard it said that the European Union is the Kantian dream of a cosmopolitan republicanism come true). I cite perhaps the most famous passage from his essay on "Perpetual Peace":

"The peoples of the earth have entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it is developed to the point where a violation of laws in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*. The idea of a cosmopolitan law is therefore not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international law, transforming it into a universal law of humanity" (Kant,

Now consider Kant's Geography. This work is little known. Whenever I have questioned Kantian scholars about it, their response has invariably been the same. It is "irrelevant", "not to be taken seriously" or "there is nothing of interest in it". There is no published English edition (though there is a translation of Part I as a Master's Thesis by Bolin, 1968) and a French version finally appeared in 1999. There is no serious study of Kant's Geography in the English language other than May's (1970) coupled with occasional forays into understanding his role in the history of geographical thought in the works of

Hartshorne (1939), Tatham (1957), Glacken (1967) and Livingstone (1992). The introduction to the French edition provides materials for an assessment.

In one sense the lack of interest is understandable since the content of Kant's Geography is nothing short of an intellectual and political embarrassment. As Droit (1999) remarks, reading it "comes as a real shock" because it appears as "an unbelievable hodge-podge of heterogeneous remarks, of knowledges without system, of disconnected curiosities." To be sure, Kant seeks to sift the sillier and obviously false tales from those that have some factual credibility but we are still left with an incredible mix of materials more likely to generate hilarity than scientific credibility. But there is a more sinister side to it. Whilst most of the text is given over to often bizarre facts of physical geography (indeed that was the title of his lectures) his remarks on "man" within the system of nature are deeply troubling. Kant repeats without critical examination all manner of prejudicial remarks concerning the customs and habits of different populations. Thus we find:

"In hot countries men mature more quickly in every respect but they do not attain the perfection of the temperate zones. Humanity achieves its greatest perfection with the White race. The yellow Indians have somewhat less talent. The Negroes are much inferior and some of the peoples of the Americas are well below them." (Kant, 1999 edition, 223 - my translation from the French version!)

"All inhabitants of hot lands are exceptionally lazy; they are also timid and the same two traits characterize also folk living in the far north. Timidity engenders superstition and in lands ruled by Kings leads to slavery. Ostoyaks, Samoyeds, Lapps, Greenlanders, etc. resemble people of hot lands in their timidity, laziness, superstition and desire for strong drink, but lack the jealousy characteristic of the latter since their climate does not stimulate their passion greatly" (cited in May, 1970, 66)

"Too little and also too much perspiration makes the blood thick and viscous...In mountain lands men are persevering, merry, brave, lovers of freedom and of their country. Animals and men which migrate to another country are gradually changed by their environment...The northern folk who moved southward to Spain have left progeny neither so big nor so strong as they, and which is also dissimilar to Norwegians and Danes in temperament." (cited in May, 1970, 66)

Burmese women wear indecent clothing and take pride in getting pregnant by Europeans, the Hottentots are dirty and you can smell them from far away, the Javanese are thieving, conniving and servile, sometimes full of rage and at other times craven with fear.....and so it goes (as Vonnegut might say).

Of course, it is possible to excuse such thoughts as mere echoes of Montesquieu and other scholars like Buffon (to say nothing of merchants, missionaries and sailors). Many of the fervent defenders of universal reason and of universal rights at that time, Droit (1999) notes, cheerfully peddled all manner of similarly prejudicial materials, making it seem as if racial superiorities and ethnic cleansings might easily be reconciled with universal rights and ethics (though Kant, to his credit, did go out of his way to condemn colonialism). And all manner of other excuses can be manufactured: Kant's geographical information was limited, the course in Geography was introductory, meant to inform and raise issues rather than solve them, and Kant never revised the materials for publication (the text that comes down to us was compiled from Kant's notes supplemented by those of students).

But the fact that Kant's Geography is such an embarrassment is no justification for ignoring it. Indeed, it is precisely what makes it so interesting, particularly when set against his much-vaunted universal ethics and cosmopolitanism. Dismissal in any case does not accord with Kant's own thoughts and practices. He went out of his way to gain an exemption from university regulations in order to teach Geography and he taught the course no less than forty nine times (compared to the fifty four occasions he taught logic and metaphysics - his most important course - and the forty six and twenty eight times he taught ethics and anthropology respectively). Furthermore, Kant considered that geography (together with anthropology) defined the conditions of possibility of all knowledge and that such knowledge was a necessary preparation - a "propaedeutic" as he termed it - for everything else. While, therefore, geography was obviously in a "pre-critical" or "pre-scientific" state its foundational role required that it be paid close attention. It was presumably one of Kant's aims to bring it into a more critical and scientific condition.

The fact that he failed to do so must have some significance. Kant later hinted as to why. He simply could not make his ideas about final causes work on the terrain of geographical knowledge. "Strictly speaking," he wrote (in a passage that Glacken (1967, 532) regards as key), "the organization of nature has nothing analogous to any causality known to us" and this problem was presumably deeply felt as he sought to construct geographical understandings.

It is possible, May (1970) argues, to reconstruct some of the putative principles of geographical knowledge from the general corpus of Kant's writings. Geography was not only a precursor but also, together with anthropology (see Kant, 1974 edition), destined to be the synthetic end-point of all of our knowledge of the world (understood as the surface of the earth as "man's" habitation). The distinction between geography and anthropology largely rested on a distinction between the "outer knowledge" given by observation of "man's" place in nature and the "inner knowledge" of subjectivities that was the focus of anthropological work. Geography organizes knowledge synthetically through the ordering of space as opposed to history which provides a narration in time. Geography is an empirical form of knowledge that is marked as much

by contingency and particularity as by the universality that can be derived from first principles. Spatial ordering therefore produces, according to May, regional and local truths and laws as opposed to universals.

May does not tell us how Kant proposed to relate such local truths and laws to the universals of reason. But if his account is right, then geographical knowledge is potentially in conflict with or disruptive of Kant's universal ethics and cosmopolitan principles. Even if it is accepted, as Kant himself held, that the universality of ethics is immune to any challenge from empirical science, the problem of the application of such ethical principles to historical-geographical conditions remains. What happens when normative ideals gets inserted as a principle of political action into a world in which some people are considered inferior to others while others are indolent, smelly or just plain ugly? Some of Kant's more temporizing remarks on the principles of "perpetual peace" arise precisely when such actual geographical cases present themselves. But it boils down to this. Either the smelly Hottentots and the lazy Samoyards have to reform themselves to qualify for consideration under the universal ethical code (thereby flattening out all geographical differences) or the universal principles operate as an intensely discriminatory code masquerading as the universal good.

This contrast between the universality of his cosmopolitanism and his ethics and the awkward and intractable particularities of his geography is important. If knowledge of the latter defines (as Kant himself held) the conditions of possibility of all other forms of practical knowledge of the world, then on what grounds can we trust Kant's cosmopolitanism if his geographical groundings are so suspect? Yet there is one way to see this as a fruitful starting point for discussion. For while it is possible to complain endlessly at "the damage done by faction and intense local loyalties to our political lives," (Nussbaum, 1997, 8, citing the Stoics) it is also important to recognise how "human passions" (which Kant believed to be inherently aggressive and capable of evil) so often acquire a local and disruptive expression. The nether side of Kant's cosmopolitanism is his clear recognition that "everything as a whole is made up of folly and childish vanity, and often of childish malice and destructiveness" (cited in Nussbaum, 1997, 10). If that is the real geographical/anthropological world we actually inhabit and which cosmopolitanism has to confront and defeat, then the sight of NATO bombs (orchestrated through that new found cosmopolitan republicanism that characterizes the European Union backed by the United States) raining down on Yugoslavia as ethnic cleansing and rape warfare proceeds on the ground in Kosovo comes more sharply into focus. This kind of cosmopolitanism coming to ground geographically is not a very pretty sight.

As several commentators (e.g. Shapiro, 1998) have observed, there is a startling gap between Kant's philosophical and practical geographies. It is, I want to suggest, imperative in the current conjuncture, when Kant's universalism and cosmopolitanism have the purchase they do, to find means to bridge the gap. That task is even more compelling, given that popular geographical knowledge (as opposed to politically corrected academic wisdom) has not advanced much beyond the disorganised and prejudicial state where

Kant left it. Indeed, experience teaching students at elite universities suggests a general state of geographical knowledge (including a prejudicial content) even worse than that given in Kant's Geography. The nobility of Kant's (and our) ethical vision needs to be tempered by reference to the banality of his (our) geographical knowledges (prejudices).

## **FOUCAULT'S LAUGHTER**

In The Order of Things, Foucault records his irrepressible laughter upon reading a passage in Borges concerning a Chinese encyclopedia with a wild taxonomy dividing animals into such disparate categories as 'embalmed', 'frenzied', 'belonging to the Emperor', 'painted with a very fine camelhair brush', and so on. It is a pity that Foucault reserved his laughter for the humorous Borges rather than for the deadly serious Kant. For Kant's Geography is almost as bizarre as any Borges story.

The disruption of meaning signalled in the Borges story led Foucault to reflect upon the "enigmatic multiplicity" and the fundamental disorder to which language could so easily lend itself. There is, he observed :

"a worse kind of disorder than the *incongruous*, the linking together of things that are inappropriate; I mean the disorder in which fragments of a large number of possible orders glitter separately in the dimension, without law or geometry, of the *heteroclite*."

This led him to formulate the concept of "heterotopias" which are:

"disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they make it impossible to name this *and* that. Heterotopias (such as those to be found so often in Borges) desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences."

Kant's Geography, by this definition, is heterotopic. Cosmopolitanism cast upon that terrain shatters into fragments. Geography undermines cosmopolitan sense.

Foucault later sought to give heterotopia a more tangible referent, to take it beyond a mere effect of language and into the realm of material practices. In a lecture given to architects in 1967 (shortly after The Order of Things was published), he reflected on the concept. The lecture was never revised for publication (though he did permit its publication shortly before he died). There is, then, an uncanny resemblance to Kant's unpublished geography (of which Foucault, as translator of Kant's Anthropology, may well have been aware).

But there the resemblance ends. Extracted by his acolytes as a hidden gem from within his extensive oeuvre, the essay on heterotopia (unlike Kant's geography) has become an important means (particularly within postmodernism) whereby the problem of Utopia could be resurrected and simultaneously disrupted.

Foucault appealed to heterotopia in order to escape from the "no place" that is a "placeful" Utopia into sites where things are "laid, placed and arranged" in ways "so very different from one another that it is impossible to define...a common locus beneath them all." This was, of course, a direct challenge to rational planning practices as understood in the 1960s and the utopianism that infused much of the movement of '68. Heterotopia seemed set fair as a privileged means to escape the norms and structures that imprisoned the human imagination (including, incidentally, Foucault's own anti-humanism). Through a study of the history of spaces and an understanding of their heterogeneity, it became possible to identify spaces in which difference, alterity and "the other" might flourish or (as with architects) actually be constructed. Hetherington (1997) thus summarizes the concept of heterotopia;

as spaces of alternate ordering. Heterotopia organize a bit of the social world in a way different to that which surrounds them. That alternate ordering marks them out as Other and allows them to be seen as an example of an alternative way of doing things."

The formulation is superficially attractive. It allows us to think of the multiple utopian schemes that have come down to us through history as not mutually exclusive (feminist, anarchist, ecological and socialist utopian spaces can all coexist). It encourages the idea of what Marin (1984) calls "spatial plays" to highlight choice, diversity, difference, incongruity and incommensurability. It enables us to look upon the multiple forms of transgressive behaviors (usually normalized as "deviant") in urban spaces as important and productive. Foucault includes in his list of heterotopic spaces such places as cemeteries, colonies, brothels, prisons. There are, Foucault assures us, abundant spaces in which "otherness" and, hence, alternatives might be experienced and explored not as mere figments of the imagination but through contact with social processes already in motion.

But Foucault assumes that such spaces are somehow outside of the dominant social order or that their positioning within that order can be severed, attenuated or, as in the prison, inverted. The presumption is that power/knowledge is or can be dispersed into spaces of difference. This idea is tacitly reneged upon in Discipline and Punish and given an entirely different reading in his 1978 interview on "Space, Knowledge, and Power." Furthermore, heterotopia presume that whatever happens in such spaces of otherness is in principle of interest and even in some sense acceptable or appropriate. The cemetery and the concentration camp, the factory and the shopping malls, the Disneyland, Jonestown, the militia camps, the open plan office, New Harmony, gated communities are all sites of alternative ways of doing things and therefore in some sense heterotopic. What appears at first sight as so open by virtue of its multiplicity suddenly

appears as banal: an eclectic mess of heterogeneous and different spaces within which anything "different" - however defined - might go on.

Ultimately, the whole essay on heterotopia reduces itself to the theme of escape. "The ship is the heterotopia par excellence," wrote Foucault. "In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure and police take the place of pirates." I keep expecting these words to appear on commercials for a Caribbean Cruise. But here the banality of the idea of heterotopia becomes all too plain because the commercialised cruise ship is indeed a heterotopic site if ever there was one; and what is the critical, liberatory and emancipatory point of that? Foucault's heterotopic excursion ends up being every bit as banal as Kant's Geography. I am not surprised that he left the essay unpublished.

Yet he obviously sensed that something or other was important in it so that he could not let it die either. He later worried, perhaps with a critique of Kant in mind, at the way "space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile" while "time, on the contrary, was richness fecundity, life, dialectic" (Foucault, 1984, 70). If "space is fundamental in any form of communal life" then space must also be "fundamental in any exercise of power," he argued. So, like Kant, he lets the idea of heterotopia be published but does not take responsibility for its content, leaving it to others to pick up the pieces. And when asked in 1976 by the editors of the newly founded radical geography journal *Herodote* to clarify his arguments, Foucault gives evasive and seemingly incomprehending answers to what, on the whole, were quite reasonable probing questions. By refusing again and again to elaborate on the material grounding for his incredible arsenal of spatial metaphors, he evades the issue of a geographical knowledge proper to his understandings (even in the face of his use of actual spatial forms such as panopticons and prisons to illustrate his themes) and fails to give tangible meaning to the way space is "fundamental to the exercise of power." And his final admission that a proper understanding of geography is a condition of possibility for his arguments - the Kantian propaedeutic once more - reads more like a tactic to get his geographer interlocutors off his back than a genuine thought. In any case, he never made good on the prospect. Nor have any of his followers.

## **GEOGRAPHICUS INTERRUPTUS**

So what, then, are we to make of these two cases of great philosophical figures who failed to pin down geographical knowledge and spatial understandings in any systematic or organised way but who tacitly acknowledged the importance of their failure by allowing their thoughts to be published posthumously and informally? There is one simple answer. If heterotopias are disturbing and undermining of received forms of sense and meaning, and if geographical knowledge is inherently heterotopic (or, as Kant had it, always local, regional and contingent), then geographical and spatial understandings undermine and disturb other forms of rational understanding. Those committed to traditional rationality (in governance, democracy or

anything else) then have a vested interest in suppressing or evading geographical questions (in exactly the way that Foucault did in his 1976 interview). The seeming banality of geographical knowledge makes it an easy enough target for dismissal.

Yet there is also something troubling about geographies. I have long espoused the view that the insertion of space (let alone of tangible geographies) into any social theory (including that of Marx) is always deeply disruptive of its central propositions and derivations (see Harvey, 1984). I see no reason to renege on that view now. This disruptive effect makes space a favored metaphor in the postmodernist attack - inspired, for example, by Foucault's Order of Things - upon all forms of universality. Consider an example that predates the more familiar postmodernist positions. In the field of economics - which is, after all, the most complete of all the social sciences as a "rationalised" form of knowledge/power working from first principles - the problem of spatial ordering produces some deep and seemingly unresolvable paradoxes. In 1957 Koopmans and Beckman published an article that threw "serious doubt on the possibility of sustaining an efficient locational distribution of activities through a price system." The "decisive difficulty," Koopmans (1957, 154) reported, is that the "dependence of one man's (locational) decision criterion on other men's decisions appears to leave no room for efficient price-guided allocation." Throw spatiality into the hopper of economic reasoning and the whole logic falls apart because prices can never do their proper work. Koopmans and Beckman were so distressed by the result that they delayed publication for several years (though, unlike Foucault and Kant, they did at least take responsibility for it).

But now that the issues of spatiality (and to some degree of geography) have been rediscovered and partially reinserted into mainstream theories and practices, what exactly gets done with them?

Consider, first, how a disruptive spatiality worms its way into critical examination of cosmopolitanism. Connolly (1995, 137), for example, argues (correctly in my view) for "a more cosmopolitan, multidimensional imagination of democracy that distributes democratic energies and identifications across multiple sites." But when faced with the obvious next step of identifying what "a more multiplicitous spatialization of democratic energies" might mean, he reviews other political theorists only to conclude that "through the optic of political nostalgia" (and by implication through the optic of political theory) it is impossible to identify "the *place* that might, if not supplant loyalty to the state, compete with it so that sometimes a new "we" finds itself bestowing allegiance on constituencies and aspirations in ways that contest the state's monopoly over political allegiance" (Connolly, 1995, 159). Connolly (1998) later accepts the disruptive consequences for political theory in general (and Kant's cosmopolitanism in particular) of rapidly shifting spatialities (appealing to Virilio's concept of speed) but seeks this time to interpret time-space compression as an ambivalent opportunity for a new kind of "rhizomatic" and "fragmented" cosmopolitanism in which the internet figures large as a vehicle for democratic possibility.

What Connolly needs to complete his project is some sense of how spatialities and geographies (the actual places he is looking for) are actively produced and with what consequences. He fails to register, for example, that "speed-up" in modern culture has been produced by a capitalist-military alliance as a means to preserve and enhance specific class and territorial powers and that the internet has no liberatory potential whatsoever for the billion or so wage workers who, according to the World Bank, are struggling to eke out an existence on less than a dollar a day. It is at the point where tangible geographical knowledge is essential that the political theorizing breaks off. We get no further with key concepts of "site", "spatiality", "speed" and "place" than their use as convenient metaphors to disrupt received political wisdoms. Such concepts remain untheorized even though Connolly's is preeminently a sophisticated theoretical work. The disruptions of spatialities merely provide a means to argue for a broad-based political pluralism and a multidimensionalism of difference. In the tracks of Foucault, questions of real geography and even the production of space are evaded.

Shapiro (1998), to take another example, sets out to explore the Kantian ethics of global hospitality in the midst of global difference. He points out that Kant "envisioned a world in which an enlarged ethic of hospitality would diminish the significance of the bordered world" but that he did so in a way that "effaces much of the difference that the Kantian ethics of global hospitality is designed to appreciate."

"Because Kant's moral map enclosed states as abstract 'societies of men', he lacked a sensitivity to peoples and nations that were not organized in the form of states. Kant's practical map is strictly geopolitical, recognizing no nations that are not also states.....Recognizing a plurality of 'islands', Kant sought a means for creating a peaceful milieu, a tranquil sea within which these islands could become a harmonious archipelago. 'Peace', for Kant is, therefore, primarily a relationship between state entities. Although he advocated a hegemony-resisting form of republican governance within states, his notion of war did not recognise contested terrains - for example, the struggles between settlers and indigenous peoples - within states" (Shapiro, 1998, 701).

Faced with the dilemma of how to reconcile Kant's philosophical and practical geographies, however, Shapiro merely resorts to a self-referential study of the variety of spatial, geographical and territorial metaphors deployed by the usual suspects (Derrida, Foucault and Lyotard - though, interestingly, Deleuze and Guattari get passed over) again leaving the active terrain of production of space and of geographies entirely to one side (as if the only thing that matters is getting the metaphors right rather than investigating the material geographical and social processes whereby human populations get disaggregated and differentiated). Had Shapiro read Kant's *Geography* he might have worried more about Kant's recorded "sensitivities" to people and places. As it is, it is all very learned (and interestingly so) but sadly deficient in understanding the contingencies that arise "from the interactions of space and discourse" within the contemporary political economy of globalization.

And it is not too helpful either simply to dismantle Kantian universals into local and contingent meanings as, for example Walzer (1983, 314) does in formulating a "radically particularist" theory of justice in which "every substantive account of distributive justice is a local account." Like Foucault's heterotopia, this sounds all very noble until confronted with the realities of conflicting senses of justice which pit the militia movement and the KKK against immigrants and "non-caucasians" (whoever they are). The sense of justice varies from neighborhood to neighborhood in most cities (I know a neighborhood where incest and homophobia are strongly accepted as social norms) and such differences often become a manifest source of serious political and juridical conflict. What Elster (1992) calls "local justice" is a fact of geographical as well as of institutional life and a fact that deserves close attention. Theoretically this seems to pose an intractable dilemma. We are caught between a relativism that suggests "that for each cultural group there is some theory of justice that captures its ethical intuitions" and "moral universals" that may be just as unpalatable even if they can be defined. But because justice (as Walzer argues) may be "rooted in the distinct understandings of places, honors, jobs, things of all sorts, that constitutes a shared way of life" it does not follow that "to override those understandings is (always) to act unjustly." The cosmopolitan temptation is, of course, to revert to Zeno's dream of a "well-ordered and philosophical community" where we should not be "divided from one another by local schemes of justice," but regard all human beings as "fellow citizens" (cited in Nussbaum, 1997, 6).

Such arguments ignore how places and localized ways of life are relationally constructed by a variety of intersecting socio-ecological processes occurring at quite different spatiotemporal scales (see Harvey, 1996, 350-52). No attention is paid to historical-geographical processes of place and community construction. To ignore these processes and build a particularist theory of local justice with respect to places and cultures as embodied *things* is to advocate a fetishistic politics that would try (fortunately against all odds) to freeze existing geographical structures of places and norms for evermore. The effect would be as dysfunctional as it would be oppressive. Compared to that, Kant's cosmopolitanism as a norm for intervention in an unsatisfactory and violent world of geographical difference appears positively liberatory.

Consider, now, this same problem from a different disciplinary direction. Kant, recall, saw anthropology and history as necessary complements to geography as the basis for a holistic and synthetic understanding of the world. While Kant's formal distinctions have been rendered somewhat porous with the passing of time, it is stunning to contemplate the purchase they still have upon professional disciplinary distinctions. The focus on subjectivities (identities) in anthropology still contrasts with the object stance often taken in geography. History and geography still separate from each other along the lines of narration versus spatial ordering even though we have been urged again and again to see the world in more unified spatio-temporal terms. The blurring of the boundaries between anthropology and history achieved by the subaltern studies group in India seems, however, to flout these conventions. So how is geography treated?

Deshpande (1998) provides one example. He investigates the relations between globalisation, conceptions of the Indian nation, and the construction of "Hindu-ness" (or "Hindutva") as a locus of distinctive identity and meaning. He sees the history of these relations as "closely and crucially intertwined with a geography." Nehru's secular developmental model depended, for example, upon a "privileged pan-Indian elite that could, by and large, afford to cut loose its regional moorings." It entailed a distinctive spatial logic (the history of which "has yet to be written") of "multi-dimensional relations of domination established along the inter-regional, rural-urban, and city-megacity axes." The effect was to construct of a distinctive social geography within the Indian national space. But its corollary was to spawn a variety of regional-ethnic movements. Hindutva, as an oppositional movement, exploits "the ideological vulnerability of the placeless universalism of the Nehruvian nation-space" and seeks "to rekindle a personalised commitment to particular places that are nevertheless embedded within the abstract social space of hindutva." Hindutva appeals to "the sedimented banalities of neighbourliness - the long-term, live-in intimacy of residential relationships among persons and families and between them and their local environment."

The terms are interesting; it is the *banality* of mundane everyday local experiences that define truths that acquire the status of "self-evident common sense." This forms the basis for a politics (including pathological expressions of inter-communal violence) that is far-removed from Kant's cosmopolitanism. The "banalities" of local geographical loyalties disrupt the cosmopolitan ideal of Nehruvian developmentalism. This seems a productive line of enquiry until Deshpande turns to Foucault for enlightenment:

"One way of understanding spatial strategies is to think of them as ideological practices involved in the construction of heterotopias. This is the sense in which spatial strategies attempt to tie an imagined space to a real place in such a way that these ties also bind people to particular identities and to the political/practical consequences they entail."

The formulation is, as usual, superficially attractive. It also has theoretical cache. But it ends up flattening an otherwise interesting argument into a conceptual world whose banality is no better than the "sedimented banalities of neighborliness" that it interprets. Deshpande soon discovers that the full implications of heterotopia crucially depend upon "the context of its mobilisation for some larger than everyday activity or campaign" (i.e. it is dependent upon some non-local source of power). Nehru had his steel mills and hindutva has its symbolic centers. Both are equally heterotopic sites. And so what? Is there no better theoretical handle than this to deal with geography and spatiality?

## **THE BANALITY OF GEOGRAPHICAL EVILS**

How, then, are we to understand the geographical racisms and ethnic prejudices of Kant's Geography, the eclectic and a-moral heterotopia of Foucault, and the failures of theorists of all stripes to confront the banal

problematics of materialist geographies as opposed to delighting in the conveniently disruptive metaphors of spatiality? It is exactly at this juncture, that the imposing figure of Heidegger looms so large. For if there is any theorist of rootedness in locality who really takes it all the way then surely Heidegger is it. His attachment to "dwelling" and "place" coupled with his thorough rejection of all forms of cosmopolitanism (capitalist, socialist, modernist) seem to place him in polar opposition to Kantian ethics. And Heidegger attracts as much if not more attention among the scholarly elite as does Kant. The battle between those two philosophical titans and the traditions they have spawned will doubtless rage for the next millenium in much the same way that the founders of Greek philosophy (both Kant and Heidegger drew heavily for inspiration on different strains of pre-Socratic thought) defined major intellectual schisms in the past.

There is one aspect to this debate that strikes me as odd. For Heidegger, it is the phenomenological experience of objects, places, spaces, time and cultures (languages and myths) that counts. But these are largely deployed as metaphysical concepts. He avoids the world of actual time-deepened material geographical experiences (though his affiliations to the Germanic cultural and linguistic tradition are evident). Like Foucault, he fails to connect to the material circumstances of a lived geography. The most famous exception is Heidegger's (1971) invocation of the traditional Black Forest farmstead as a site of "dwelling" and "being" in the world. But his presentation is romanticised. Heidegger accepts that the conditions he describes are not material qualities of the contemporary world and that this particular "heimat" is not something to which he or we can return. This has left his followers struggling with the question of how to define the "authentic" qualities of "real places" and what the "rootedness" of a work of art might mean - in short, how to give more tangible meaning to Heidegger's abstractions. We also have to struggle to comprehend Heidegger's support for National Socialist ideology (and its active political practices). What do such cultural and political attachments have to do with his philosophical arguments about "dwelling" in "place"?

It was Hannah Arendt (19 ), whose long-time and abiding attachments to Heidegger have also proved a puzzle, who coined the phrase "the banality of evil" as she watched the Eichmann trial in Israel. The connections here may seem far-fetched or even bizarre (though no more so than the intimacy of the Arendt-Heidegger relationship). For what if Arendt's characterization of evil has some subterranean connection to the banalities of "dwelling" of "place" and of "heimat" as social constructs essential to the human condition? What if Deshpande's "sedimented banalities of neighborliness" are so fundamental to the human condition (as even Foucault ended up acknowledging of space) that they form the preconditions - the Kantian propaedeutic - for all knowledge of and action in the world (including those of Eichmann)? From this perspective, would it not be true that Heidegger gives a metaphysical foundation, a philosophical voice, to Kant's Geography?

Such a possibility gets evaded in contemporary discussions. Heidegger rates only one entry, for example, in Cheah and Robbins' Cosmopolitics even though the frequent appeals to some sort of "rooted" cosmopolitanism are loud and recurrent throughout the book. But the one entry for Heidegger is telling: the citation reads: "nationalism is not overcome through mere internationalism; it is rather expanded and elevated thereby into a system." It is that thought which leads Jonathan Ree (see Cheah and Robbins, 1998, 78) to comment on:

"a fateful slippage in Kant's transition over the years from the idea of cosmopolitanism to that of perpetual peace. In the process the shining ideal of world citizenship was reduced to a grudging concession that we ought always to allow foreigners to travel among us unmolested, provided they do not stay around too long - an obligation Kant derived from a "right all men have...founded upon common possession of the surface of the earth, whose spherical form obliges them to suffer others to subsist contiguous to them." Apart from this depressing reflection on human sociability, *Perpetual Peace* allows cosmopolitan rights to be swallowed up again by the old patriotisms they were originally meant to supplant."

The argument is exactly the opposite of Shapiro's. The rootedness of peoples in place (the geographical rootedness of the nation state in particular) draws us rather awkwardly back to Kant's actual geographical world characterized by folly and aggression, childish vanity and destructiveness, the world of prejudice that cosmopolitanism must counteract or actively suppress in the name of human progress. It takes but a small step then to see geographies and spatialities (and local loyalties) not only as disruptors of order and of rational discourse, but as undermining universal morality and goodness. They become, as with Kant's *Geography*, the fount of all prejudice, aggression and evil. Even the knowledge of that geography (as with that of Kant) must be suppressed. Heidegger's uncompromising honesty takes us precisely to the metaphysical root of what that particular "evil" (both intellectually and politically) might be about. East Timor, Ruanda-Burundi and Kosovo tell us what it might mean on the ground.

But what if this is only half of the story? Heidegger certainly did not believe himself to be peddling the metaphysics of inherent evil. His acolytes would find the equation of the banality of evil with his metaphysics unacceptable. From this perspective the evil (if such it is) arises out of the dreadful cosmopolitan habit of demonizing spaces, places and whole populations as somehow "outside the project" (of market freedoms, the rule of law, of modernity, of a certain vision of democracy, of civilized values, of international socialism, or whatever). What if Heidegger is right in insisting that cosmopolitanism is always rooted and situated? Isaiah Berlin (199 ) for one was prepared to see Kant as "an unfamiliar source of nationalism," going on to remark how the Kantian ideal of autonomy of the will when blended with the doctrines of Herder and Rousseau "led to terrible explosions" and "pathological" forms of nationalism. The peculiar version of US cosmopolitanism then makes sense. It is based on "an Americanism distinct from

patriotism yet also jealously supportive of an American imperial myth about the portable ethos of the United States as an idea and (with some modifications) an honorable longing" (Brennan, 1997, 308). But the myth cannot be sustained without emphatic denunciations and demonizations of "evil empires" (one of Reagan's favorite phrases) and resistant spaces - Cuba, Iran, Libya, Serbia or, for respectable suburbanites, "the inner city" (with all its racial codings).

This tension points to an intellectual impasse in our dominant representations (the whole collection of commentaries on Nussbaum's piece reeks of it). An awful symmetry defines the two positions. And the symmetry is secured because we cannot deal with "the banality of evil" (as manifest in East Timor, Ruanda-Burundi, Yugoslavia, and in intercommunal violence in south and southeast Asia (see Das, 1990; 1995), or even the periodic eruptions of disorder on our own cities) because, in turn, we cannot deal with geographical difference itself. Nussbaum, for example, inveighs against the collapse of values and the indifference to cosmopolitan goals in the United States:

"Nor is it only in America that cosmopolitanism seems to be in grave jeopardy. The state of things in very many parts of the world gives reason for pessimism; when, two hundred years after the publication of Kant's hopeful treatise, we see so many regions falling prey to ethnic and religious and racial conflict; when we find that the very values of equality, personhood and human rights that Kant defended, and indeed the Enlightenment itself, are derided in some quarters as mere ethnocentric vestiges of Western imperialism; when, in a general way, we see so much more hatred and aggression around us than respect and love."

But what kind of geographical knowledge is presupposed here? How easy it is to justify from this perspective those NATO bombs on Serbia as a grand effort to eradicate a particular geographical evil in the name of Kantian ethics? It is even possible to support State Department threats against Serb authorities for crimes against humanity while supporting the US refusal to sign the international convention against such crimes in order to protect Henry Kissinger and his innumerable colleagues from indictment.

It is precisely at this point that Nussbaum needs to follow Kant all the way into the nether regions of what his Geography is all about and there, perhaps, confront the metaphysical foundation given to that Geography by Heidegger. The only way out of the impasse, to break the awful symmetry around which politics has rotated so fearfully for two centuries or more, is to press for that "revival of the science of geography" that will not only "create that unity of knowledge without which all learning remains only piece-work" but also better equip us to deal with the palpable but seemingly intractable problem of the banality of geographical evils on the ground.

But within that question lurks another: what kind of geographical knowledge is adequate to what kind of cosmopolitan ethic? Failure to answer that deeper question condemns cosmopolitanism of any sort to

remain an abstracted discourse with no tangible meaning other than the ad hoc, pragmatic and often opportunistic application of universal principles to particular geographical instances (the devastating hallmark of foreign policy habits in the United States). So what kind of geographical knowledge do we now possess and is it adequate to Nussbaum's task?

### **A SHORT HISTORY OF MODERN GEOGRAPHY AS A DISCIPLINE**

Kant's teaching was not without immediate effects. Perhaps the most interesting way to look at this is through the careers of the brothers Humboldt, both of whom were directly and deeply affected by Kant. Wilhelm was drawn to the inner life. He became a logician, linguist and historian, the founder of the University of Berlin as a model for the modern university. As Wilhelm's cosmopolitanism became diluted by ethnic influences and allegiances, so knowledge production within that university became more and more subservient to state interests (Readings, 1996). And that was the model that was carried elsewhere (for example, to The Johns Hopkins University). This is the model that Readings regards as now defunct.

Alexander was inspired by Kant's Geography. He took to an outer life of exploration, of travel and scientific observation, culminating in a glorious attempt at Kantian style synthesis of geographical understandings in a massive scientific work entitled, appropriately enough, Cosmos. His intellectual center of gravity was Paris rather than Berlin. Interestingly, his relations with his brother became more and more tangential - "we have diverged like two opposite poles" wrote Wilhelm (May, 1970, 78). Alexander drew heavily upon an older tradition that, beginning with the Renaissance, produced a massive explosion in geographical knowledge and geographical sensibilities, exercising some of the finest mathematical minds (Mercator, Gauss) and some of the most powerful of Enlightenment and political thinkers (Montesquieu, Rousseau, Adam Smith as well as Kant). No matter how oddly and bizarrely formulated, geographical knowledge during this period permeated everything else. It was implicated in the construction of all manner of other knowledges (see Glacken 1967).

Alexander was enamoured of this tradition and revelled in its excitements. He was, Zeldin (1995, 198-202) argues:

"a pioneer of global thinking, without concealing that his purpose was not merely to understand the universe in its entirety, but no less to avoid the pain caused by the tragedies it constantly produces. His *Views of Nature* (1808) is dedicated to "minds oppressed with care...(needing) to escape from the storm of life"."

In order to grapple with such evils, Alexander had to do something else with the encyclopedic knowledge he amassed. He:

"tried to extract a new way of life from his researches, abstract though some of them might seem. This is rare, because it conflicts with the rules of specialisation, which require one to keep one's mouth shut on subjects on which one is not a trained expert; and since nobody can be an expert on the art of life, it has become dangerous to speak about it. Intellectuals have increasingly been limiting themselves to lamenting the lack of values in modern times. The importance of Humboldt is that he dared to make a link between knowledge and feeling, between what people believed and do in public and what obsesses them in private."

There is, in this, a peculiar irony. Alexander moves closer to being the real and thoroughly informed cosmopolitan, an interdisciplinarian sensitive to the pain of the world by virtue of his geographical understandings while his brother, who began as the ethical cosmopolitan, succumbs to national interests elevated into internationalism (cf Heidegger's complaint cited above).

Not everything was well with Alexander's geography of course. It retained its eurocentrism (and much of the prejudice that went with it), was enmeshed in documenting resources and populations open to commercial exploitation and was adept at shaping geographical knowledge towards the interests of patrons (locating the gold mines of Mexico for the King of Spain in return for research funding, for example). But it also managed to transcend these interests and give a more systematic and scientific as well as humanistic grounding to the materials that Kant had left so disordered. It pointed the way to a thorough geographical foundation for Kant's cosmopolitanism. But Cosmos, as May remarks, "fell still born from the press" and that for two compelling reasons.

First, there was little space or place for Alexander's exertions in the kind of University structure that Wilhelm had pioneered. Knowledge got carved up and fragmented into distinctive professionally organized disciplines as the nineteenth century wore on. This "disciplinary carve up" produced a pattern of knowledge that had everything to do with pursuit of national interests such as Empire and military power, national identity and solidarities, internal administration, etc. As the word discipline only too directly announces, knowledge production was increasingly policed and put under surveillance by a whole apparatus of group identifications and evaluations that seem to set themselves more firmly in concrete with the passing of time. The Renaissance tradition of geography got squeezed out. It was forced to buckle down, administer Empire, map and plan land uses and territorial rights, and gather and analyse useful data for purposes of business and state administration. The founding of Geographical Societies throughout Europe exactly mirrored the rise of administrative concerns about Empire (Capel, 1981; Livingstone, 1992, chapter 7). Caught between Durkheimian sociology and the historians, for example, the French geographers were left with hardly anything of substance to chew upon even as the historians appropriated ideas from geographers like Vidal de la Blache to found the celebrated Annales School (which laudably retains its geographical groundings to this day). Caught, in the United States, between geology and the social sciences,

Geography either battled for a niche through concepts of landscape and the particularities of region or, as with Isaiah Bowman, sought a role as geopolitical advisor to the US national interest (Smith, 1984; Smith and Godlewska, 1994).

But there was another deeper intellectual problem with Alexander's work. He accepted the Kantian distinction between history as narration and geography as spatial ordering and displayed little interest in dynamics. He argued in Cosmos that "the mysterious and unsolved problems of development do not belong to the empirical region of objective observation, to the description of the developed, the actual state of our planet" (cited in May, 1970, 78). This proved a fatal error. Alexander's work could be celebrated as a product of one of the last great Renaissance thinkers. But it was destined to be swept aside by the Darwinian revolution in which evolution and process (and by implication time and history) took precedence over pattern and form (space and geography) in every branch of knowledge production including, of course, the social sciences.

Geographers of various stripes struggled towards the century's end to give their geography a more evolutionary and emancipatory twist. The social anarchists - geographers like Elisee Reclus and Kropotkin - invented a version of the geography of freedom (Fleming, 1988) which has remained influential as a subversive strain of thought to this day, but for obvious reasons it suffered marginalization from the main stream (except in the refracted versions in the urban and regional planning of Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford). Friedrich Ratzel took the innovative step at the turn of the century of collapsing Kant's inner and outer distinctions into something called "Anthropogeographie" but unfortunately got so lost in organic metaphors (of the state in particular) and social Darwinism as to be later regarded, unfairly as it turns out, as the founder of Nazi geopolitical thought. This kind of Darwinian geopolitical and imperialist geography (which had its Anglo and French counterparts in Mackinder and Demangeon) along with environmental determinism (the other major strain of independent geographical thinking) lost respectability even as it struggled to retain some semblance of Humboldtian synthesis. When the Readers Digest condemned "the hundred geographers behind Hitler" in the midst of World War II, professional geographers suffered all the indignities that Heidegger was later to experience without having any of the deeper intellectual resources needed to defend themselves. Geographers for the most part retreated into the safety of mere description of spatial orderings.

Attempts to treat the borders between geography and anthropology (in the work of Daryll Forde, Carl Sauer and Kroeber, for example) or between history and geography (Arnold Toynbee, Paul Wheatley and Donald Meinig, for example) as porous indicated the possibility of cross-disciplinary fertilization but remained isolated endeavours in an increasingly segmented and professionalized world of knowledge production. From time to time, geographers of a more academic persuasion tried to resurrect the power of their Renaissance origins by waving the flag of "synthesis" (usually with a little help from Kant). But the

disciplinary carve-up of the late nineteenth century remains powerfully with us, entrenching itself ever more deeply as it becomes less and less relevant. Geography as a formal discipline lost its appetite for synthesis. The Humboldtian inspiration was largely lost.

### **A SHORT HISTORY OF MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGES**

The marginalization of the discipline of Geography did not diminish the significance or power of geographical understandings. No society, after all, can do without a working knowledge of the distribution and organization of those conditions (both naturally occurring and humanly created) that provide the material basis for the reproduction of social life. No social group can subsist without a working knowledge of the definition and qualities of its territory, of its environment, of its "situated identity" in the world, of the spatial configurations of actually existing and potential uses (including symbolic and aesthetic as well as economic values) essential to its existence. No social order can afford to turn its back upon the powers to produce space, place, and environments according to its own vital needs, desires and interests. Every individual and social group possesses, therefore, a distinctive "geographical lore" and "geographical praxis" codified into some loosely structured body of knowledge and experience about matters geographical. The social transmission of that knowledge is vital to the perpetuation or transformation of any social order. It is a vital aspect of power and an object of political and social struggle.

Geographical knowledges therefore flourished in subterranean environments not open to critical scrutiny: the Pentagon, the State Department and the CIA. A wide array of practices (including geographical technologies like Geographical Information Systems and remote sensing for espionage and missile targetting) have been devised to secure military and tactical advantages. But it is only a certain kind of geographical knowledge and praxis that flourishes in these environments. Organized from the standpoint of the geopolitical survival of the United States, it is oriented to military, economic and cultural control of the world (it was mobilized as a tool of Cold War politics, as also happened with fractious consequences within Anthropology). This kind of geography exhibits a deliberate and brutal ignorance of and deep lack of respect for local traditions, meanings and commitments except and insofar as such knowledge provides means to manipulate and deceive. It demonizes spaces and places for political purposes. This geography was and is every bit as "evil" as that constructed by the hundred geographers behind Hitler, but is protected from critical and ethical judgement by an aura of benevolently conceived national and global security interests. When this knowledge leaks out into fields like international relations or strategic studies, its role is well understood. Academic think tanks (appropriately financed) and even whole university departments flourish with clear signs that say "No admittance except on the business of the national interest". This geography reflects a distinctively US based cosmopolitanism (cf Brennan's characterization cited above). Free spirited critics are kept out or actively repressed, as happened most spectacularly during the McCarthy years (see e.g. Newman's 1992 account of the life and times of the geographer/historian Owen Lattimore).

This is not the only place where geographical knowledges flourish. In all of the major institutions engaged in the geopolitics of political-economic development (from the World Bank and the OECD to the boardrooms of large corporations and into the proliferating mass of NGOs working towards a variety of ends), certain kinds of geographical understandings have operated as critical undergirdings for policy formulation and political-economic strategizing. Developers and real estate interests, financiers and supermarket chains, marketing organizations and the tourist industry, all produce geographical knowledge through their pursuit of commercial advantage and political-economic power. Popular magazines, the producers of commercial travelogues and brochures, films and television programs, the nightly news and documentaries, set up systems of representation of geographical information that give a powerful ideological cast (in which the interests of dominant classes and the nation state brook large) to our understanding of the world. Beset by their own interminable banalities and thoroughly filtered through the media (even sometimes with a benevolent aim, as for famine relief) the effect is to produce ideological representations and images of the world that harbor all manner of tacit or in some cases explicit expressions of geographical, racial, ethnic, cultural or political difference with more than a hint of class or ethnic superiority attached. When assembled as a collective power, these geographical visions produce what Smith (1998) calls "the satanic geographies" of contemporary globalization. Is this the kind of geographical knowledge Nussbaum has in mind as basic preparation for her cosmopolitan ethic?

When cast as a pragmatic handmaiden to the pursuit and maintenance of political-economic power, the subversive and potentially emancipatory side of geographical science (of the sort that Humboldt pioneered and the social anarchists tried to perpetuate) gets lost. But the need for geographical understandings has welled up from the political-economic base to permeate all manner of zones of knowledge production where it has been less easy to control. It suffuses international relations, certain areas of sociology and economics and, above all, appears explicitly in history and anthropology (the other half of the Kantian propaedeutic, with its emphasis upon localities, cultures, inner identifications, symbolic meanings, local knowledges and "thick" descriptions of a fragmented and unevenly developed world). Geographical systems of representation have, mainly courtesy of cultural studies, become common grist for discussion in the humanities. Postcolonial writings most notably of the sort that Guha (1983; 1997) and others pioneered coupled with the prominence of Said's (1978) work have opened a vital door to a broad-based critical geographical sense in several disciplines. Environmental and ecological contradictions have similarly opened up a massive terrain of debate about matters geographical (of the sort that both Kant and Humboldt would have appreciated) that demand close attention across multiple fields of ecology, zoology, hydrology, epidemiology, and the like. All of this has been paralleled by the vigorous growth of radical and critical perspectives within the marginalized discipline of Geography itself.

Nussbaum's appeal for more adequate geographical and anthropological understandings occurs, therefore, in the context of a general revival of interest in geographical knowledges within our intellectual universe.

Issues such as the role of spatiality in social and political life, attachments to place, the possibilities and pitfalls of cartography and mapping, coupled with the extraordinary proliferation of spatial, cartographic and geographical metaphors as tools for understanding the fragmentations and fractures evident within a globalizing world are all signs of this revival. Geographical knowledges are vaster, more sophisticated and more multiplicitous than ever in their detailed and specialised manifestations. But they remain fragmented, undertheorized and often beyond systematic consideration. Geography as a whole is declared dead (for who could possibly be interested, let alone place their emancipatory hopes in "dead" space, given the fecundity and richness of everything temporal?) even though its multiple parts constituted across many disciplines are more vigorous than ever.

But if Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism is to become anything other than a pious hope, nothing short of a modern day Humboldtian synthesis (of the Alexander sort) will do. The fragmented pieces of geographical knowledge cannot fit the bill because they collectively fail to match the universality of the cosmopolitan ideal. Cosmopolitanism, in short, is empty without its Cosmos. But here is the irony, neatly symbolized within, of all places, the University of Chicago itself where the Kantian identifications and dualisms evidently still exert their hidden powers. A professor of law and ethics in that University, drawing (like Wilhelm von Humboldt) upon all the resources of the inner life fuelled by deep studies of ancient and modern texts, can only complain helplessly about the collapse of cosmopolitan values and the banality of all those geographical evils that beset the outer world, while the tradition of Alexander von Humboldt is laid to rest through the decision to close down rather than revolutionize its Geography Department.

### **GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGES AND MILLENNIAL NEEDS**

Geographical knowledges, it turns out, are not so banal as they look. Geographical concepts, like space, speed, site, place, environment, and the like, are far from simple. But they can be theorized in ways that integrate, albeit in a transformative way, with social, literary and ecological theory (see Brenner, 1998; Gregory, 1994; Harvey, 1996). Spatiality and geography do not necessarily betoken total disruption of all received wisdoms (though they do challenge and transform their meanings and modes of expression). Nor are they necessarily the locus of inherent evil. They are, however, such a vital aspect of brutalizing geopolitical power that they are often deliberately held apart from critical interrogation. Depicting them as banal helps foster ignorance and disinterest even as space after space gets opportunistically demonized or sanctified as a justification for political action. To hold geographical knowledges in such a state provides a license to pursue narrow interests in the name of universal goodness and reason. The last two centuries have seen plenty of that.

But the effect, as Henri Bergson long ago complained, is to permit a hidden spatiality and geography to control our lives. For space and geography are omnipresent in everything we do even no matter how

emphatically they may be ignored or dismissed as analytical categories open to question. The palpable shock of recognition that occurred when it was finally recognised that knowledge might be geographically situated (a fairly obvious and banal idea in itself) is a case in point. Yet geographical knowledges have proven essential in any quest to dominate nature and other peoples, to build and perpetuate distinctive power structures (such as a capitalist class system) or social identities (such as the nation state or an imperial system). By the same token, they can be used critically to construct some alternative social ordering through the transformation of physical and social environments, the production of space-relations and places, uneven geographical developments, and their received representations and meanings.

So what kind of geographical knowledge will fit with what kind of cosmopolitanism? The two issues are, in the final instance, mutually determining, dialectically intertwined. Some form of geographical knowledge is presumed in every form of cosmopolitanism. "Almost any uses of "cosmopolitanism" implies," writes Wilson (1998, 352), "some embedded geopolitical allegory." The reluctance to reveal or even acknowledge what that knowledge or allegory might be about (signalled at the very outset by the refusal to bring Kant's cosmopolitanism into dialogue with his geography) is both a moral failing and a political liability. Cosmopolitanism bereft of geographical specificity remains abstracted and alienated reason, liable, when it comes to earth, to produce all manner of unintended and sometimes explosively evil consequences. Geography uninspired by any cosmopolitan vision is mere heterotopic description. Liberating that dialectic seems a critical propaedeutic to the formation of any radically different way of thinking and acting in the world.

If the frozen structures of knowledge production desperately need to be reformed (Nussbaum) or revolutionized (Readings) to cope with contemporary conditions and needs, then the reconstitution of geographical knowledges in a dialectical relation to cosmopolitanism must be central to that effort. The need is plainly there. One does not have to accept the more hyperbolic statements about globalization (including those of Readings) to know that there are multiple confusions over how spaces and places are being constituted, how whole ecologies of life are being overturned and displaced, how social relations are being sustained or transformed, how new geographies are daily being produced. The hidden spatialities and containers of our thinking, being and acting in the world have been breaking down.

Abundant resources and opportunities to reconstitute geographical knowledges now exist. Some of those resources lie within the discipline of Geography itself, as it increasingly escapes its ghettoised marginalisation through the rise of a powerfully articulated critical geography (see, e.g. Peet, 1997; Gregory, 1994; Harvey, 1996). But geographical knowledge is too broad and too important to be left to Geographers. Its reconstruction as a preparation for a civilized life and its synthesis as an endpoint of human understandings depends on overcoming the old Kantian distinctions between History (narration) and Geography (spatial ordering) and between Geography (the outer world of objective material conditions) and

Anthropology (the inner world of subjectivities). It would probably require the reconstitution of some new structure of knowledge (perhaps the Anthropogeography that Ratzel prematurely sought to establish). Imagine powerful institutes dedicated to getting the conditions of all knowledge - the Kantian propaedeutic - exactly right! The "rethinking" of "the categories that have governed intellectual life for the last two hundred years" which Readings deems essential is possible because it is necessary. Kant and Alexander von Humboldt may not have gotten it right. But in their presumption that full and appropriate geographical knowledge was a necessary condition for cosmopolitan being in the world they set a goal that has never yet been met. A hefty dose of geographical enlightenment, from whatever source, now as then, continues to be a necessary condition for any kind of peace, perpetual or otherwise, in the millenium to come. It must be central to the reconstructions that Nussbaum and Readings have in mind.

But to argue for opening up the dialectic between the cosmopolitan tradition and geographical knowledge and thereby getting the Kantian propaedeutic right is far too vague. The unfolding of that dialectic depends on the underlying nature of the political project and is bound to be penetrated by political power. The revolutionary tradition of geographical thought (Reclus and Kropotkin) with its emphasis upon the geography of freedom is open to reconstruction. The workers of the world (who Marx and Engels erroneously thought of as ideal cosmopolitan subjects because they "had no country") can still seek to unite and overthrow global bourgeois power (with its distinctive form of cosmopolitanism) though this time they too must be far more mindful of uneven geographical developments (the dialectic between socialist internationalism and geography has never functioned freely if at all). Environmentalists may likewise seek to challenge bourgeois power for other reasons and in so doing construct a new ecological cosmopolitanism articulated through appropriate bioregional structures and sustainable communities organised across the surface of the world according to thoroughly grounded geo-ecological principles.

This brings us back to all those hyphenated cosmopolitanisms with which we began. But now we see them differently. Many of them disappear as irrelevant because to open the dialectic between cosmopolitanism and geography is immediately to see that there can be no universality without particularity and vice versa, that both are always implicated in (an "internal relation of") the other. To pretend, then, that we have to make some choice between "universal" and "rooted" cosmopolitanism (or even, in the end, between Kant and Heidegger) is a false characterization of the problem. Learning to see cosmopolitanism and geography as internal relations of each other radically reconstitutes our framework for knowledge of the world.

But some of the hyphenated versions of cosmopolitanism still stand. For a critical history shows that "Western" cosmopolitanism these last two hundred years has either been infected by bourgeois sensibilities, pieties and "feel good" justifications for their hegemonic project of global domination of the world market, or been held captive (as in American political life) to local interests capable of articulating

supposedly noble universalistic claims (this habit began most emphatically when revolutionaries in Paris proclaimed the universal rights of man). Modern versions of cosmopolitanism cannot evade such connections. Thus Held's (1995) eloquent plea for a new form of cosmopolitan governance and democracy has as much to do with making the world safe for capitalism, market freedoms and social democracy as with any other conception of the good life. Political connections of this sort are both inevitable and necessary even though, for obvious reasons, the promulgators of such universalisms often take as many pains to fudge or obscure their political underpinnings as to hide their geographical presuppositions and implications.

A meaningful cosmopolitanism does not entail some passive contemplation of global citizenship. It is, as Kant himself insisted, a principle of intervention to try to make the world (and its geography) something other than what it is. It entails a political project of transformation of living, being and becoming in the world. This obviously requires a deep knowledge of what kind of geographical world we are intervening in and producing, for new geographies get constructed through political projects, while the production of space is as much a political as a geographical fact. The way life gets lived in spaces, places and environments is, like the Kantian propaedeutic itself, the beginning and the end point of political action. The cosmopolitan point is, then, not to flee geography but to integrate and socialize it. The geographical point is not to reject cosmopolitanism but to ground it. The political point is not only to understand the world but to change it.

## **END GAME**

"I have enjoyed this discussion with you because I've changed my mind since we started...Now I can see that the problems you put to me about geography are crucial ones for me. Geography acted as the support, the condition of possibility for the passage between a series of factors I tried to relate. Where geography itself was concerned, I either left the question hanging or established a series of arbitrary connections....Geography must indeed necessarily lie at the heart of my concerns."

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