efficient solution, nor to an easy idea of consensus. Using a transactional rationality the pragmatist planner searches out dissensus, unformulated expression and the critical relation of the planning situation to other spatiotemporal realms. This is not an endless openness as the postmodern planners suggest. It seeks connection through diversity and difference and it is attendant to the situational nature of time and space.

8 Cosmopolitan reason and the global city

In 'The Village of the Liberal Managerial Class' Bruce Robbins (2001) makes a comparison between two Booker-prize-winning novels – Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, both of which feature cosmopolitans who are also aristocrats. In *The Remains of the Day* Lord Darlington out of loyalty to German fellow aristocrats cuts across national identity to produce a fatal complicity with Nazism. In Ondaatje's novel the aristocrat cosmopolite is Lord Almasy, the so-called English patient, who experiences a dream of the desert and a love affair that breaches national borders but is shattered by nationalism and exclusions of the Second World War. Robbins links these treatments to discussions of cosmopolitanism defined as a kind of expertise and rationality, a framework of skills and knowledge that translate anywhere: professionalism as a new form of world aristocracy.

What unites all the main characters in *The English Patient*, Robbins argues, is the love of knowledge. The metaphor of education as exploration is developed through the story of an exploration in the desert, where the boundaries between Europe and Africa have become blurred, but also where there is a freedom from nation, and education and knowledge as erotic adventure. Thus 'Almasy's erotic bond with Katherine Clifton has the same content as his homosocial bond with Madax and the other men: an eroticising of cosmopolitan knowledge' (Robbins 2001: 24; emphasis in original). *The English Patient* suggests for Robbins a 'postpatriotic love' (Robbins 2001: 26).

In *The Remains of the Day* love and professionalism are set against each other. Stevens, the butler, sacrifices love with Miss Kenton for professional duty to his employer. It also extends to his moral failure in backing his employer's support for the Nazis. Lord Darlington convenes a conference of diplomats in 1923 to attempt to ease German reparations. In the following years his anti-Semitism and attempts to stop the war align him with the Nazis. Stevens' moral and personal failure is emphasized by his continuing with his professional duties in serving the diplomats as his father lies dying upstairs. Told of his father's death he responds by saying he is 'very busy just now'.
on what they know but who they know, whereas for cosmopolitans the relationship is reversed.

Cosmopolitans . . . base[d] whatever influence they had on a knowledge less tied to particular others, or to the unique community setting. They came equipped with special knowledge, and they could leave and take it with them without devaluing it . . . they are the ‘new class’, people with credentials, decontextualised cultural capital. (Hannerz 1996: 108)

This knowledge is accompanied by a set of analytics – ‘a culture of critical discourse’ (Gouldner 1979; Hannerz 1990).

A contrasting approach to the discussion of professionalism, rationality and the new middle class is that cosmopolitans demonstrate an openness to difference, that the deployment of their rationality is marked by its sensitivity to difference. Recent writing on cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1996; Dharwadkar 2001; themed issue of *Theory Culture and Society* 2002 vol. 19: part 1/2) seem to stress it ideally being defined by mobility and a sense of openness to otherness.

Of importance for cosmopolitans is openness to the other, as Gilles Deleuze repeatedly puts it, to think towards the horizon; to alter one’s perceptions and to invent new ‘smooth spaces’ instead of building walls, barriers and prisons to conserve one’s interests. (Conley 2002: 131)

Conley (2002) ties this to the type of rhizomatic connections that Deleuze and Guattari postulate. To be a cosmopolite is to occupy a junction in a rhizomatic network where there are only lines of flight to other diverse connections. These connections are themselves only temporary and partial in a way that Deleuze defined as chiasm (cited in Conley 2002: 131).

Dominant contemporary manifestations of cosmopolitanism involve knowledge based on professional competences and transnational connections. The degree to which this is a movement towards a global democracy, or a new transnational exclusivity of elites, is at the core of these debates, as are questions about whether the openness to the other is genuine or a kind of fake, consumption-oriented transnational flaneurism (May 1996; Hage 1997). Also central are questions about the degree to which cosmopolitanism is or is not tied up with cities, especially global cities. It is a form of knowledge and conduct that, in its concentrations and connections, might be associated with certain urban spaces, especially particular districts of global cities (Sassen 2000).

Elite enclaves in global cities are very much part of the infrastructure of what Castells (1996) calls ‘the space of flows’. The space of flows is ‘the material organisation of time-sharing social practices that work through
flows' (Castells 1996: 412) where flows are defined as 'purposeful, repetitive, programmable sequences of exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions held by social actors in the economic, political, and symbolic structures of society' (Castells 1996: 412). The space of flows is supported by circuits of electronic impulses (microelectronics and telecommunications and so on); by nodes and hubs in these networks, of which the 'global city' is a key instance; and by the spatial organization of the transnational managerial elite. The spatial organization of the dominant elites form landscapes of power (Zukin 1991) that provide a seamless environment for work and leisure, all over the world. It involves a symbolic economy that excludes the masses by the enormous amounts of economic and cultural capital required for membership. The symbolic economy is a manifestation of 'good taste' in all aspects of life, from body presentation and deportment, through exercise, diet, desirable residential address, home furnishings – in a set of aesthetic dispositions that are increasingly transnational. Some aspects of this are captured by my work on the gentrification premium (Bridge 2001a, b, discussed in Chapter 6). These elements of lifestyle symbolic capital are supported when cosmopolites are on the move, via airport VIP lounges, exclusive hotels with familiar ambiances and technical and personnel support to facilitate constant communication and a comfortable working environment.

The rationality at work in the space of flows is consistent with the nature of the flows themselves: 'purposeful, repetitive and programmable'. It is the abstraction, the rationality that guides instrumental means to technically efficient ends. It is expert knowledge that claims universality in being applicable, or adaptable throughout the world. Its socio-spatial manifestation is a form of communicative rationality presaged on a desire for status and security in the face of difference (which I explored in the discussion of elite gentrifiers in Chapter 6).

A further aspect of the knowledge of the professional managerial class, originally defined by Ehrenreich (1979), was the management of the reproduction of capitalist social relations. This culminates, in Castells’ terms, as the segmentation and disorganization of the masses. The masses themselves occupy the 'space of place', 'a locale whose form, function and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity' (Castells 1996: 423). The space of place can have positive attributes, in forms of community identity or the reassuring familiarity of a neighborhood. But it can also promote insularity, a limited outlook and disconnection from wider power relations. The form of rationality most associated with the space of place is practical reason. This is the form of common sense, based on local history and social norms, that is limited to community or class (Bourdieu 1977, 1984).

It is possible to think of the global city as consisting of two spaces of rationality: cosmopolitan rationality (increasingly bound up with the knowledge requirements of global capitalism) operating in a space of flows, and 'local' rationality existing in a plurality of different socio-cultural community contexts defined by the space of place. Sassen (2000) sees the financial districts of the global cities of New York, London and Tokyo as city-states: vitally connected to each other across the globe and, at the same time, seemingly disconnected – economically, intellectually and morally – from the rest of the city that surrounds them. Cosmopolitan rationality is detached by its specialized techniques from local concerns just as in The Remains of the Day the butler focuses on his ritual duties to the exclusion of his local relations and emotions.

But what of the version of cosmopolitan reason projected by the protagonists of The English Patient – cosmopolitan knowledge as a sort of postnational love? The relations between the characters cut across difference but they are equivalent in that the particularities of their relationships are sublimated by their love of knowledge. The eroticization of knowledge is the sense of adventure and exploration in the desert. The desert is an extra-ordinary space, the meeting of Africa and Europe, exotic and unexplored, and in these senses separate from the ordinary spaces of everyday life. Cosmopolitan reason is again an elite knowledge at work in a space that allows freedom of exploration. Detachment from local ties is in a form of ritual in The Remains of the Day and mobility in The English Patient.

Rationality as ritual and mobility is to some extent captured by the idea of transversal rationality. Welsch (1998) identifies a form of cosmopolitan reason as transversal reason, a pure faculty that is based on the 'logic of transition'. It is a way to move between rational spheres. This contrasts with cosmopolitan rationality, which was a logic of identity. Schrag’s (1992) idea of transversal rationality also resonates with this sense of cosmopolitanism. It arises out of community context but involves the capacity to be distant from community norms. Transversality avoids the verticality or hierarchy of traditional rationality as the logic of transition, and the horizontality of an endless play of difference. It cuts across difference obliquely. Schrag calls on Bakhtin’s idea of chronotope as the socio-practical constitution of time and space through dialogue. ‘Rationality is the ability to discern and articulate how our discursive and non-discursive practices hang together in the texture of everyday life’ (Schrag 1992: 94). In the relation with ‘the other’, that key moment of cosmopolitanism, there is claim to ‘convergence without coincidence’ (Schrag 1992: 158).

In contrast to transversalism, the idea of transactional rationality that I have pursued throughout this book involves community knowledge but the encounter with the other as particularity. This cosmopolitan idea of community participation and distance parallels Dewey and Mead’s conceptions of the tension between the ‘I’ and the ‘me’, the creative historical subject and the role-taking member of a community. And here also are the two critical moments of transactional rationality. The Meadian ‘me’ fosters rationality as the anticipation of the reaction of the generalized other, or the entire community. That anticipation hinges on the operation of
shared symbols, most notably in language, that call forth the anticipated response. Unanticipated and non-discursive actions are constitutive of communication, but call forth a response to the particular other in ways that are constitutive of the situation and rely on novel responses. The ability to improvise and to respond to particularity is where role-playing rationality gives way to situational reasonableness. The 'I' is the unpredictable historical agent, the improviser. The 'I' is both affirmed and made uncertain through the absolute alterity of otherness, in the form of subjectivities or objects (all of which, as we have learned from Dewey, are forms of transaction).

Drawing on the orientations from Dewey these communicative spaces are transactional and processual. As well as discursive communication they involve the whole panoply of communicative activities - chronemics, haptics, kinesics, proxemics and vocalics - the ways that everyday performing bodies interact, that defy representation (Langsdorf 2002: 147). Such spaces of communication are transactional but not always co-present. Even where co-present they are often overlooked.

It is in the city, that being together of strangers, that the multiplicity of spaces of communication still has the greatest potential. Whatever the levels of transaction there is at least a sight of difference in the city. The city also provides the background latent capacities against which communicative action can be realized. Counter hegemonic discourses, or subaltern counterpublics, are more possible against the background communicative noise of the city.

These spaces of communication both reproduce larger power discourses but also use strategic competences to their own advantage. They exist within the system rather than being separate from the system. And they are often overlooked because the content of communication is tacit and their potential for change is latent. The transformation from latent to active engagement can be seen in reaction to trauma. Witness the personalized grieving of New Yorkers assembling in crowds and holding up photographs of lost loved ones in the wake of 9/11. In March 2004 there were the scenes of collective silent vigil of eight million Spanish residents in the streets of various cities in response to the 11 March bombings of the trains in Madrid. These are traumatic instances of the communicative latency of the city, but we have also explored more positive instances such as the crowds that gather to watch Sydney Mardi Gras (see Chapter 3).

The examples discussed are very marked instances of collections of bodies, emotions and minds on the streets of the city but the latent potential of the city is built out of communicative exchanges of minute ritual courtesies that are the basis of civitas - of city life. These communicative exchanges have been largely overlooked by the focus on symbolic interaction at the expense of non-symbolic interaction and because instances of minor cooperation are less exciting to report (Lofland 1998). Such situations are often more difficult to research because they are not demonstrative and conspicuous.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND DIFFERENCE

I suggest that ongoing, everyday transactional rationality is part of the life of the urban neighbourhood. MacCannell (1999) critiques the New Urbanism movement in the USA through a comparison with a more ‘ordinary’ urban neighbourhoods. New urbanism or neotraditionalism is the movement to build high-density, middle class suburban developments or urban infill that are designed to resemble a nineteenth century town. Despite their claims to give a renewed sense of community and neighbourliness, MacCannell argues that they are in fact built out of ‘statistical’ ties of equivalent social standing and social homogeneity, rather than any deeper community loyalties. New Urbanism reaches its high tide mark in the town of Celebration in Florida designed to be the perfect community by the Disney Corporation. Here all aspects of community life are legislated for and the ‘panoptical’ houses have clear lines of sights through each dwelling to permit the surveillance from outside. New Urbanism neighbourhoods are based on an explicit and abstract rational contract over neighbourhood conduct. In that sense they are equivalent to the written contracts that control common interest developments, or gated communities (McKenzie 1996).

MacCannell contrasts the neighbourhoods of New Urbanism with the seemingly drab anonymity of the more run-down neighbourhoods that are revealed by the reality TV show Cops. Following the activities of the cops on their raids, or giving assistance to domestic problems, is breaking the rule against sudden incursion deep into domestic space. What these visits do, according to MacCannell, is reveal the differences that exist within what initially appears as a drably homogeneous urban space. A pursuit through a series of back gardens, and the minute details of domestic arrangements, reveal an unanticipated degree of variation in lives. MacCannell also notes the ability of people to normalize neighbours, however different. Called to a disturbance at a house, police find a wild pig on the premises. In questioning the neighbours they discover that the pig is often at large in the neighbourhood, accompanied by a dog, both treated by those residents questioned as occasionally annoying neighbours.

For MacCannell the Cops neighbourhoods are symbolically rather than statistically mediated.

Not every house or apartment in Cops is 'the same' as the one beside it, but they are invariably equivalent in the moral totallisation of the 'neighbourhood'. This moral homogeneity appears to be based on contractual and quasi-contractual agreements. This is not just a matter of demographics, of lending policies, zoning laws, residential inspection practices and the like. And it is certainly not a matter of centralised rules governing the color of curtains, or parking for pick-up trucks. Local tolerance of disorder and noise levels, the appearance of front yards, behaviour of children and dogs, even pigs, of what are taken to be 'appropriate' ways
of appearing to be different, of the local limits of difference; all of this must be worked out between neighbors as a living agreement. It is precisely the capacity to arrive at this kind of agreement with one's neighbors which has been denied by the New Urbanism.

(MacCannell 1999: 120)

MacCannell argues that 'the enormous variation of neighborhoods in America are the laboratories in which new cultural arrangements are being created by people ... culture guarantees human intelligence by not offering any guarantees on human interaction' (MacCannell 1999: 120). We saw in chapter 4 from Chauncey's work how proximity of different communities and the non-discursive and discursive interactions helped forge the range of gay identities in the emergence of the gay community in New York.

Neighbourliness involves elements of closeness and distance and neighbourly relations are a good example of an ongoing transactional rationality that is both discursive and non-discursive. Neighbourhoods are full of tacit communications that together make up the neighbourly ambiance. They also involve particular tacit accommodations between neighbours. Tacit activities of this kind are full of communicative import as the game theorist Schelling noted.

If my neighbor's fruit tree overhangs my yard and I pick exactly all the fruit on my side of the line, my neighbor can probably discern what my 'proposal is, and has a good idea of what he has acquiesced in for the future if he does not retaliate. But if, instead, I pick that same amount of fruit from both sides of the line haphazardly or pick some amount that is related, say, to the size of my family, he is less likely to perceive just what I have in mind. (He may also be more obliged to resist or retaliate if I pick only part of the fruit on my side of the line than if I pick it all, since I have failed to demarcate the limit of my intentions).

(Schelling 1980: 104, fn)

Neighbourly relations are full of these discursive and non-discursive rational negotiations.

Much of neighbourhood interaction is tacit, or at the edges of discursive communication, what de Certeau (1984) called the 'phatic' aspect (see Chapter 3). Neighbourly interaction has that quality of constantly settling the terms of interaction through rituals of greeting and signals of the degree of openness to further interaction. Neighbours engage on a daily basis in a range of discursive and non-discursive rituals that communicate the degree to which they are 'available' for further communication. An incline of the head, or tap of the watch, or facial gesture of exhaustion, signal that the participant wants to keep walking. A check in the step, the raising of eyebrows, a more open body aspect can suggest availability for conversation. These ritual and daily negotiations can have greater significance in thinking about communication in public. As Young (2000) has noted, rituals of greeting are critical in setting the tone and conditions for fuller communication in public (which I discussed fully in Chapter 5).

**TRANSACTIONAL RATIONALITY AND COSMOPOLITAN URBAN SPACE**

Dewey had reservations about the growth of a technical professional class. He was sceptical of the role of experts in democratic communities; 'as if there is a group of individuals by virtue of their "scientific" expertise better able to make the types of judgements and decisions required in our everyday lives' (Bernstein 1998: 149). 'A class of experts is inevitably so removed from common interests as to become a private class with private interests and private knowledge' (Dewey 1927: 148–9). The distanced professionalism of the butler in The Remains of the Day, is mirrored by the social and spatial separation of the professional/managerial elite in the global city.

In contrast to expert knowledge is Dewey's idea of social intelligence, which in its highest form is based on openness, fallibility, experimentation, ongoing criticism and imagination of whole community. That comes out of the diversity of communication in different socio-cultural contexts. This seems to sit well with an idea of transversal rationality, a logic of transition, a circulatory rationality that is able to move between rational spheres whilst still being articulated from socio-cultural difference. It also resonates with certain claims for postmodern urban spaces. These see the city as surface, centred, with no overall logic, a play of difference, polyvocal, a pastiche (Dear 2000; Gibson and Watson 1995; Soja 1989). The city can be seen as an assemblage of effects (human and non-human), a place of 'present becoming' (Deleuze and Guattari 1998). Space is relational and horizontal, disrupting hierarchy, and denying fixed meaning as an interplay of diverse discourses.

The 'Deweyan' city is indeed processual, emergent and radically perspectival. Yet there are, I argue, certain orderings still at work. They are not the singular orderings of one rationality, or one public realm, or even the city. There are the orderings of power discourse that imbue actors with certain habits of action or dispositions towards action. These disciplinary spaces of the city have been the subject of acute analysis and critique by urbanists (Davis 1990; Harvey 2000; Mitchell 2003). Yet within and beyond these disciplinary spaces are the myriad space-times of communication between and within socio-cultural contexts. They are often mundane, sometimes imperceptible, often overlooked, but they represent a kind of background hum of the city. This comprises socio-spatial realms of communication, of varying intensities and durations, which overlap and are linked to other communicative realms in a complex network of communicative action. These are not formless and ever-becoming but involve conflict and dissensus within and between discursive communities. Through forms of argumentation
and interpretation, mutual claims are examined and their validity assessed. There can be non-communication and the silence of social division. But as we saw in Chapter 3, 'On the street', even the most self-limiting forms of social interaction are leaky and suggestive of other communicative import.

These spheres of communication are constitutive of time and space. This is not the modernist city — a flat Cartesian plane linked by points and lines that result from the ordering of a singular instrumental rationality from above. Nor do we have the endless becoming, fragmentation, liminality and thirdness (Soja 1989, 1996) of postmodern urban spaces. Rather we have a myriad of time-space spheres of communication and articulation where claims are negotiated between socio-pragmatic situations (rather than appealing to a universal or singular public sphere). The city is more like a complex of bilaterals where the faculties of interpretation at work are themselves constitutive of time and space. And the reason that connection is possible across difference is that disensus goes all the way down, into communities as well as between them, within voices and discourses as well as between them. It is also possible because interpretation goes on all the time, even in the most mundane spaces of everyday life. Extending the insights of the ethnographers, all situations have to be construed in communication rather than being set time and space backdrops for action to commence.

Ethno-methodologies — the social competences and conventions that people use to get by in everyday interaction — nevertheless have ritual functions that might limit other-regarding communication. Often these conventions are inscribed on the body as communication, involving tacit knowledge (or class disposition in Bourdieus’s terms). What we have learned in the course of the exploration of Dewey’s thought (especially in Chapter 2) is that this body, tacit or ‘had’ knowledge is not necessarily a default position of communication to allow conventions to run smoothly, but is itself a form of ongoing intelligence, heavily influenced by prior habit but not confined to it. The other side to this is that situations are not always clear-cut — slippages and other infelicities in communication occur frequently. Rationality here is the re-establishment of some form of consistency of expectation via mutual self-control. But it is important to remember that problematic or unexpected situations can lead to communicative action that starts to lead in another direction, either because of the agency of the ‘i’, or the need to coordinate on a new ‘me’ or community norm.

As well as ongoing ‘mundane’ interactions there are a whole range of space-times of communication. There are long and thin reaches of instrumental or strategic action. Here space-times are ordered, put together in causal chains in which the means or the ways through these ordered situations are given emphasis. Pursuing strategic goals necessarily means that agents are more blinkered to the full range of communicative action that is available in each time-space situation they pass through. However, this closing down is never complete. Instrumental goals tend to be highly cognitive and so can be thrown off course by other cognitive agents (the stuff of strategic interaction and game theory). Strategic chains of time-space can also receive shocks via the intrusion of alterity (such as disease) or as a result of messages received from the ongoing sensory intelligence of transactional bodies. Projects can encounter occasions of situational excess (giving birth, bereavement, ‘falling’ in love) and these lead to the more intense and evaluative space-times of communicative action. And then there are the shocks to the system, or the moments of epiphany that have traditionally been represented through aesthetic communication, the extraordinary immediacy and vibrancy of ‘world-disclosing’ situations. The point is that these space-times are not individual experiences or via universal representations (such as neutral bodies or rational minds) but are situational transactions of bodies.

This more horizontal and perspectival spatiality might seem to support ideas that subjectivity is now dispersed, or weak (Amin and Thrift 2002). Transversal rationality too follows a logic of displacement and transition, rather than identity and ego. As I see it the strength of subjectivity is strongly associated with the web of overlapping power networks in which the subject is located (Bridge 1997b; Bridge and Watson 2002). Rather than a weakening of subjectivity I suggest that it is just becoming distributed across more diverse networks. We have seen this in the idea of ambage (or circuitousness) from White’s work on networks and developed by Emirbayer and Shaw and Shearer (1997) in thinking about the public realm (which I discuss in Chapter 5).

It is here that I think there is a deepening as well as horizontalizing of space. There is another possible aspect of a rationality that stands under a multiplicity of perspectives, that it is a logic of transition of the self. If disensus does indeed go all the way down, within voices as well as between them, that can be manifest in the competing thoughts, emotions and body inclinations in what we might call the self. Rationality for Dewey is involved in a reconstruction of the community and the self. For the self it involves ‘an ongoing process of learning from and restructing one’s concrete self’— in the fullness of its emotions, drives, desires, beliefs, purposes and aspirations — in the process of adjusting to the other (Rosenthal 2002: 216). It implicates ‘a vague sense of thick agency’ (Rosenthal 2002: 213) that comes from the body as well as the mind (body-mind). It permits speech acts that are innovative, expressive of the ‘i’, rather than always being accompanied by the ‘me’ of community validation.

We can see this logic of transition of the self by returning to the idea of cosmopolitanism. For Dewey cosmopolitanism came out of situation rather than mobility or transition. Rationality is an aspect of the concrete human being in its entirety (Dewey 1922; Rosenthal 2002). It was about having to live with difference, rather than just moving between different contexts. In these conditions rationality was being fully lived. This was suggested in the work of Mary Parker Follett whose pioneering efforts in the social centres of the Progressive Era I considered in Chapter 5. Follett thought that the urban
neighbourhood with its mixing of difference was the best example of a cosmopolitan space. This form of provincialism made local people more interesting than ‘cosmopolitan people’ who sought out homogeneous social situations (Mattson 1998: 96). Follett explained: ‘Why are provincial people more interesting than cosmopolitan [people], that is, if provincial people have taken advantage of their opportunities? Because cosmopolitan people are all alike – that has been the aim of their existence and they have accomplished it’ (Follett, 1918: 195, cited in Mattson 1998: 96). It was in the urban neighbourhood, not the gemeinschaft community or through transnational connections, that people had to face up to heterogeneity and where democratic spirit has the potential to emerge.

Truly cosmopolitan reason is not confined to elite knowledge or separate transnational spaces. It emerges in the urban neighbourhood in which difference is a daily reality and a negotiation at the very least at the ‘phatic’ edges of communication. This gives some prospect of a city that is not divided between cosmopolitan rationality of the global district and the practical rationality of the surrounding ‘provincial city’. Rather it is a form of cosmopolitan rationality that comes from location, rather than transition, and that is beyond community. It is in the burgeoning transnational neighbourhoods of the global cities that the best prospects of cosmopolitanism are to be found: cosmopolitanism as a form of reason lived daily in the city of difference.

References


References


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