

Andrew Paterson, apaterso@uiah.fi, <http://mlab.uiah.fi/~apaterso>

RETHINKING SPACE lecture series,
coordinated by Sari Tähtinen
13.1 - 14.4. 2003.

LECTURE DIARY

20.1.03
SERGIO ZILINSKI – INTRODUCTION TO SEMIOTICS

Sorry I don't think there was much to write about this lecture.

However I found the background introduction to semiotics essential and I was happy it was impromptu scripted at the start. Such a multi-disciplinary lecture series attracted people from outside semiotics studies, and although I had experienced many subjects with semiotic analysis in post-modern studies, I did not know the general knowledge and semiotic schools.

27.1.03
JUSSI PARIKKA – THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS – CONTEXTES OF VIRTUAL SPACE

No diary notes.

3.2.03
SARI TAHTINEN - DAVID & GOLIATS: CASEY ON PLACE & BEING

This lecture introduced the theories of Edward Casey, relating his background with a phenomenological understanding of place, and his belief in the need for the promotion of Place, above the terms 'space' and 'time', as a key index for existence.

Casey bases his research upon the premise that the condition of 'Being', existence, presence, perception and experience, is dependent upon it taking place *somewhere*, at some place.

The lecture highlighted that Casey's research, via reference and quote, aims to explore how following the Aristotelian primacy of 'place', the importance or power of 'place' in philosophical discourse diminished through history. Casey reasoned that Aristotle's interpretation of place was too bounded and defined to accommodate development and expansion, so that when thinkers (influenced arguably by Christianity ideals of infinity, absoluteness) considered 'vistas' of space representing such ideals, it was problematic to relate the qualitative, intensive multiplicity of concrete 'real' place, with an endless, homogenous, infinity.

As the expanse is conceptualised as a dimension, measurable, it is coordinated and quantified. Casey opinionated that when place became subordinated by space, and later in philosophical theory when space became subordinated by time during the industrial

revolution, the link between place and time was further removed and diminished from theoretical engagement. However, contrary, Casey thought that time was an “extension of the extensiveness of place”, and sat in an equal position with space, beneath the primacy of place.

So, why all the effort to re-instate the power, or the ‘sense’ of place in critical discourse? Post-modernist life and thought - deconstructing modernist ideologies - has raised questions of identity, power relations, with telecommunications investing an even greater sense of a network society: “place is everywhere” and space and time is compressed to no longer form infinite expanses. To Casey, place supported identity, actively *located* power and is protective of existence, including personal ‘being’, as noted above, mirroring the phenomenological interest in experience through the body. For example, Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological interpretation of the ‘lived body’ and that the first place in the world, the centre-point, is the body. This links with how people perceive, position themselves, and experience an inhabited place, how they relate to it, and what meaning is garnered or invested according to that experience.

Interesting critical points were raised in the lecture regarding Casey’s approach, and indeed in the presentation of his theories. Primarily the use of language, especially the use of quotes, to describe the abstract particular - *the* ‘place’ - *a* ‘place’ - is always from a context. Often, in this case, the context of philosophical thought which Casey moves through to build his interpretation of the ‘fate of place’: Casey was criticised for not highlighting the problematic differences in the contextual meaning of ‘space’, ‘place’, ‘time’; The presentation of Casey’s quotes in a lecture, out-with the context of his writing and examples (I wish I had read already so it wasn’t so I understood what he meant by ‘place’, ‘space’, ‘time’); And the writing I make now of Casey’s ideas coloured slightly by my own ideas, to understand...It is all so abstract.

Place is a particular definition, not an abstract – *here* is a place, *there* is a place. I feel this dialogue only has value when embodied in the real world and with real examples. As if to (perversely or cleverly) emphasise this point, the lecture was presented with images of landscape, city café scenes of a place - Lille, France. Sadly, the pictures only made heavy reading a little more agreeable: the combination of those and the quotes (and sub-quotes) of Casey, without reference to the real locations represented, conceptually turned the scenes of Lille into an abstract: ‘Any-place’, with accompanying view to a sea of endless discourse.

However, it is clear that Casey can offer a good background to my own research into the changing perspectives of place, at least within philosophical discourse. Phenomenological interpretations, embodying the human subject (into the socio-relative, political and geographical environment) is an increasingly overlapping theme in the reading matter

which I am gathering. I would be interested to learn more on what he has to say about telecommunication challenges to raising notions of place.

10.2.03

TIINA VAINIO - DESIGNING ECONOMY: INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS AND SPACE

Taking economics as a model of theoretical discourse, as an initial vantage point, this lecture went on a journey. Less - in-fact nothing - about the relationship of economic hegemonic practice or discourse to physical real space, how this may affect the critical reader (of space). More a journey about how the discourse of economics as subject of investigation is not only hegemonic, but indifferent to allow space for intellectual manoeuvre and repositioning.

Economics (of the mainstream variety) as an academic and theoretical subject is the legacy of, and supported and backed up by global and 'globalising' institutions - local, national, international and world banks, international trade agreements and organisations etc. It is presented here as an example of eidetic theorising, where concepts are based upon concepts, and in particular for this discipline: Mathematics is the encompassing basis of logic and decision; Leaving little room for 'shake', removing the hold of the ideal equation - as 'what doesn't fit the equation falls out of the system'.

Vainio proposes space as a conception, as a competing image concept for the above. She promotes it as a strategy to 'unstick' a discipline based upon one image, one concept of building blocks for thinking, where there is no obvious discourse to ask questions and critique. Space thus: Making conceptual space, room for thought, repositioning, reordering the 'contents' of the theoretical 'room of knowledge', means you can give more time to appreciate different views. The language used to describe (in the previous sentence) such 'space' made suggests that this notional strategy is at least entrenched in common-sense. But maybe more poignantly, how encompassing and dominant singular, eidetic theorising is that such perspectives are lost in academic and theoretic reading/writing. Derrida, as was particularly noted, would agree with this ninety nine percent but still have objections....

I write this in a nexus of multi-disciplinary thoughts, with a background within the tangential. Under a conceptual tag of an artist, I am quite used to blatantly rearranging the furniture... I have to admit that my own theoretical challenge is to construct a room of conceptual space where all my conceptual objects from different backgrounds, plus their accompanying images, are positioned appropriately to each other. And that doesn't include the 'practice' - the practice of such an activity, and/or the perspective of human experience and perception (to overlap some of these lectures' themes). I agree with the suggestion of the lecture that practice can offer some insight in how it could or should be...arranged.

The difficult part is the hypothesis of what goes well positioned together, *especially* if you do not know the subject deeply to be able to read and understand the critique. The practice of re-changing rooms? It was commented that post-structuralism, leaning as a more pragmatic 'ism', was more willing (or didn't care?) to comprehend the price of the questions it asked for 'going forward', positioning understanding into spaces where "there is nothing". The price for multi-disciplinary 'spatialisation' seems to be that even if the objects look good together in the same space, each relative position has to be itself quizzed for extra-indulgence against the concept decorator's self-determination of knowledge. All said I have to try and keep this in mind - as I appreciate the reminder to try and question the hegemonic understanding of (your own) words that define your concepts.

17.2.03

HARRI VEIVO – ABJECT SPACES

Veivo's lecture related 'abject spaces' – places of exclusion – by initially framing its conceptual definition through inverse semiotics. This technique proved clear and lucid, indicating the gaps in both structuralist and experiential semiotics to indicate the spaces which have no clear function and cannot be defined as an object of study (no necessary sign production) , or it cannot be determined without being schematised.

These were there concretely illustrated with a slide show of landscape/urban photographs he had taken. This method made a refreshing change in comparison to the other lectures so far, and helped greatly in discussion and engagement. Some examples...

The stairwell and ways in the centre of the city, which are normally passed through to work, on the journey to somewhere else, have some rubbish lying around. But what about when you stop and hang around, or sit down, or sleep there...Or the small side-road, which leads off the motorway leaves a triangular space in-between, a rough manipulated patch of nature, with no text, signs or any other indicator to suggest it was good for a picnic. Different theories of space filter out different interpretations of how space is perceived, such as the archaeological, the phenomenological. The view from the stair passageway in the morning is beautiful if you wait for the sun to rise. The scrub grass by the motorway is patchy due to the number of hitchhikers who constant rub their feet against it and dump their rucksack, but has been associated with good luck by those in the know.

Who decides what is an abject space? Non-claimed, and un-interesting to the socio-economic force it is free for subjective interpretation and reflection; seen as 'up-for-grabs' blessing in a landscape where there is little non-codified space. Who may be interested in it, and for what reason? It is matter of perspective if the space/place is recognised as a

relevant sign, text etc. However, it was argued that abject space may be indirectly 'created' by the semiotic strategies of the socio-economic dominant forces – capitalism – to emphasise its' attractions. The vast, empty, non-descript car park, situated outside of the shopping mall is a favourite example.

I enjoyed this lecture, and plan to read Marc Auge's 'Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity' as further study.

24.2.03

ALTTI KUUSAMO – THE PRESENTATION OF SPACE & THE MONUMENT

This lecture was concerned with the representation of monuments in public space, and drew upon examples from the last 100 years of outdoor sculpture. While the first example was of medieval datum: a public well structure, which had the functional value of of-course accessing water in the city, and the symbolic value of water from below, Earth, all other examples were taken from certain 'periods' of modern art history.

Common to all, disregarding context of installation for the sake of argument, was that the public sculpture represented an autographic, unique, authentic, durable and stable (with the exception of the environmental art works) landmark. Its positioning was strategic – in a public square in the city, in a landscape park in the wilderness, or situated among high capitalist business buildings – to arouse attention to a specific space, to act as a focal point, a symbolic gesture. Depending upon the era of modernist 'progression' and the expansion of art into public space, it symbolised the heroic figure, the architectural monument, the 'monumentalisation' of the everyday. There lay within a paradox, that although they (the sculptor, the sculpture, the commissioner) aimed to create a focal point for social memory, they also dream of an invisible presence...so ingrained that they almost become invisible, its symbolic message embedded into the fabric of the city or landscape.

This lecture aroused much for me to argue, against the presentation. I found the emphasis on only modernist public sculpture problematic and like some of the examples, self-referential. All examples were permanent and durable, and so existent outside time and transient change. Contrast would have included public sculpture such as Andy Goldsworthy's 'Snowballs' in the summer 2000 – huge snow balls made of snow from the Lowlands of Scotland and stored for 6 months in freezers, were placed to melt in the centre of the City of London, to melt leaving residues of melt water, red clay and twigs on the pavement. The huge scaffold-structure sponsored by Redbull energy drink existed for 3 days complete, and brought the event of stunt snowboarding to Helsinki Kauppatori. Monuments (that may only represent events in History for 2 or 3 days) disappear and fade away, leaving only memories of them among the people who experienced them as they passed by. The question needed to be asked, did Kuusamo focus on permanent, durable

monuments, to emphasise their continued importance in post-modern society, to focus (urban and natural) space into place? Yes, was the answer.

However, even the 'heroic' sculptures were not considered in relation to their political and ideological reason for existence. Public sculptures are commissioned often *by* an organisational power *for* the public, *with* agenda. Consider the sculpture of the poet, the Czar, and the javelin thrower. Consider the idealised geometric courtyard in a developing country, the geometric girder-form outside the central bank, the enhanced ring of plastic surrounding an island. All have an ideological or political message. And what is its relation or dialogue to the community? Who is it for?

Such questions reminded me of the example of the recent public sculpture commissioned for Castlemilk housing estate, on the outskirts of Glasgow, a notoriously deprived estate which has in recent years been rejuvenated by EU regeneration money. An artist was commissioned to make a sculpture, sited on a hill overlooking the city, and so in his trademark style of 'warm but blank' realism, designed a life size figure of a boy, wearing baseball cap and looking through binoculars outwards over the city.

It was accepted and installed at the location. However, as the figure was made of cream-coloured resin, the figure became literally a blank canvas for the teenagers of the area to graffiti using black and other coloured ink markers. Cartoon eyes were written on the binocular lens', football scarves of Glasgow Celtic and Rangers alternatively, signs on the baseball cap and other such 'defacement'. Such behaviour was not appreciated by the artist, nor the commissioners, and so the artist was further contracted to repaint the figure blank (to its original state) on several occasions. The point is, that the community, the young people of the area, for whom it could be argued the sculpture was representing (signified of future hope) were indeed engaging with it, and relating to the figure in the way they knew how, although technically damaging, by assimilation, identification, and appropriation, integrating it into the environment. By removing such identification, repeatedly wiping the canvas clean, it is obvious who the commissioners' thought the public sculpture was for, and what it represented.

10.3.03

HILLE KOSKELA – WILD SPACE/SUPPRESSED SPACE – THE CITY OF EMOTIONS

The concept of space presented here is that of human interaction, everyday interaction, influenced by emotional and gender-related interpretations of the city. What was noted was that the space is read as a sign and produced as a sign at the same time. Different conceptual models or metaphors of space were presented to explore empirical cases of social issues.

'Elastic Space' related to how gendered identities are formed in certain areas where prostitution is a street issue in a red-light district. The point made was that according to the gender of viewer and the changing temporal and environmental context: different time of day or night, who passes by, if it is a residential area etc., different readings of the people populating the space are made. Power and objectification relations Is that man here looking for sex? Is that woman a prostitute? Serious issues were raised by the misinterpretations of signifiers that may happen between the male and female viewer. I could relate to this issue - When living in Middlesbrough, where there is problem of teenage prostitution in residential areas, I found the environment produced 'blurry' interpretations of teenage girls dressed up, walking the streets in the evening mixed disturbingly in this social issue.

Meanwhile 'Wild Space/Tamed Space' elaborated the map made in an individual's mind to indicate areas fear and danger, as they move through and live in the city. Areas or routes where you may be too afraid, for fear of violence – underpasses, empty streets, bars etc. Different perspectives if you are male or female...violence from the known, violence from the unknown respectively. I remember that I always had more trouble in the small towns where I grew up, and people knew who I was, where I come from (territorial), than the bigger cities where I was more anonymous. Maybe it was just that I was within a certain age threshold among males...Such a condition draws upon an ontology of emotion: knowledge of what happens, or has happened in the past (story, news, experience), intuition – a feeling or mood of the space, and memory of what has happened before. The 'taming' of urban space involves re-appropriating, re-claiming, taking back with confidence, and spatial confidence produces further confidence..."write themselves onto the street"; Reasoning fear out of the mind, with reference to statistics, tactics (crossing the street) and body language.

I appreciated the approach of defining conceptual models of space. It proved useful in discussion and avoids a universal or meta-language such as that offered by Edward Casey for example. Starting from the real context of social issues, and applying emotional or phenomenological interpretations gave, as Tiina Vaino said, conceptual 'space' to shake and apply your own thoughts and experience as reference to the model.

17.3.03

SERGIO ZILINSKI – THEATRICALITY OF LIFE – A SEMIOTIC APPROACH

Zilinski presents in this lecture an interpretation of the 'theatrical', relevant to his research on semiotical analysis of architectural space.

Applying the premise that semiotic theory provides – particular cultural activity can be understood as particular sign production and interpretation systems – theatre, and by extension, the presentation of 'theatricality' *re-organises* and *re-presents* pre-existing

'signs' in cultural usage. Theatre, at least in its conservative sense, is literally constructed from objects, materials, site, humans, pre-existing in an everyday world outside of 'theatre-space'.

In particular, Zilinski states that as these signs are chosen *for* representation in theatre, they in fact take the form of 'icons': the signifier is perceived as *resembling* or imitating the signified, i.e. recognizably looking (or sounding, feeling, tasting, smelling) like it, and being similar in possessing some of its qualities. The example given was the choice of an actor's costume (looking like a long brown raincoat, from the distance of the audience) represents the idea of an old raincoat. Indeed, considering Ecco's order of sign's, the presence of the icon in theatre itself indicates its significance, rendering the hierarchy 'on stage' between 1st order and 2nd order signs as flat.

Following further traditional examples from theatre, a performance consists of a variety of elements (as elaborated by Erika Fischer-Lichte in "The Semiotics of Theatre"): transient and longer-lasting signs, acoustic and visual signs, actor-related signs such as the costume example above, and space-related signs. The space-related signs, being the supposed focus of the lecture determine and define the relations between the 'stage' and the 'audience', i.e. how the space is divided between the actor and spectator, including the elements of fixed space that construct it. Continued dialectics are suggested: stage/off-stage, visible/invisible, verbal/non-verbal, explicit/implicit. The performance may be interpreted according to the "situated action" within that happens between these spaces and points.

Zilinski referred mostly to classical examples of theatre spaces – Greek amphitheatres, the city theatre houses of the 19th and 20th Century, and by implication the situated actions within them could be argued to be conservative, in regards to more contemporary examples of site-specific performance; Alternative venues come to my mind which re-inscribe and re-appropriate space with new signification and meaning...

Factories and other industrial buildings, landscaped sites and ruins of other times...As an example, the theatre performance of ancient 'Gododdin' by Welsh company Brith Gof in 1998, was situated in the abandoned Rover car factory site in Cardiff; a potent symbol of economic decline and urban decay. By situating the performance (highly physical theatre) and the audience in such a location, parallels were made between the temporality and context of the space/place, and the epic story of fighting-against-the-odds and loss, which 'Gododdin' portrays.

On the event of Beltane, the Celtic festival marking the coming of Summer/Spring, the night of the 30th April, several thousand people gather on Calton Hill in the centre of Edinburgh, among the Royal Observatory buildings overlooking the city. They are there to witness a performance depicting the Earth Goddess and the Green Man, which begins with

a staged start on the un-complete coliseum structure on the hill, turning into a snaking procession, that ends in the lighting of a large bonfire. Performers, playing the role of blue and red devils, mingle with the crowd as the audience celebrates the occasion intoxicated with drink or other substances and often dances to the sound of drums or sound system. The hill becomes a temporary autonomous zone, re-appropriated space in the centre of the city, in which the dialectics of stage and audience, visible and invisible etc. increasingly blurs throughout the night, celebrating the spectacle. This year the event has been cancelled on Calton Hill due to the council refusing to grant a public safety certificate for the occasion.

Such above examples interest me, and makes the following phrase: "the presentation of 'theatricality' that *re-organises* and *re-presents* pre-existing 'signs' in cultural usage" meaningful: signs that are located somewhere in social-economic context and situated in time. I am informed by Mike Pearson's book 'Theatre/Archaeology', stating: Where at site, no traditions of theatre exist, but traces of other uses create a friction between past and present. Where its current or former usage can directly inform the dramatic structure, and where performance can reveal, manifest, celebrate or confront the location. The location may have an institutionalised setting for the "watchers and the watched" or allow the "the construction of a new architecture, imposing another arrangement, floor plan, map or orientation which confounds everyday hierarchies of place and patterns of movement".

24.3.03

PENTTI MÄÄTTÄNEN – THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE & SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

In this lecture, from what I understood, the theories of Henri Lefebvre, namely 'The Production of Space', were re-interpreted from the stance of 'Peircian' (Charles Peirce) pragmatism. Lefebvre's work was presented with emphasis being on the combination of natural, mental and social space: 'spatial practice', and 'representational space', which I try to summarise from the lecture (It was not so easy to follow without examples, i.e. in abstract):

The concept of social space is projected onto natural (physical) space, in which you move around, inhabit, gain experience of, and live in over time. Because of this lived experience of the space, it is embodied with meaning rather than being empty of meaning, in which case all space experienced can convey a spatial system of meanings, or a spatial 'code'. Further, social space "incorporates" social action.

Spatial practice is related to the production and reproduction of social relationships – 'how society works' – in which different places are used for different activities according to routine (daily, weekly, yearly). For example, a daily local walk round the corner to buy bread, visiting the market in Hakaneimi each Saturday for shopping, attending an anti-war

demonstration in the Senate Square...each social practice is spatial, as it takes place in social space.

Representational space, meanwhile, is a similar conception of space as directly lived, overlying the physical space, "making symbolic use of its objects". It is the result of society (and often the dominant order of capital, law, and the nation-state) that strives to distil its organising symbolism into public space, buildings...For example banks, shopping malls, courts, and national monuments. But it may also apply to larger urban systems - village, towns - as a unified subject.

For Määttänen such definitions expressed their foundation upon Cartesian (and Saussurian) dialectics, and preferred to apply a more pragmatic approach, based upon Charles Peirce's semiotics: Meaning, and by extension, social space, changes according to changing temporal aspects, and changing habits of (social) action. So that the objects in lived, representational space, such as the bank, has different meanings according to different layers of action: To the old age pensioner who regularly visits as they have deposited money in their account there for the last 40 years it means their life savings and security; To the bank robber, it will be a quick and opportunist encounter in the space, that may not offer security in the long term, unless emigration is the next move...

Määttänen, then continued in the lecture to discuss "hard and soft" facts of social reality, and so space. Established symbolic effort in constructing social habits, often influenced by power relations, produces 'hard' meanings...such as the dominant importance of money in establishing the space of a bank, with thick-walls, safes, CCTV cameras etc. as being synonymous with security and longevity. While 'soft' facts are social and cultural habits that are more individual in symbolic construction: the bank-robbers interpretation of the same space was fantastical, opportunist and anarchistic. However, if 'soft' meanings are supported by many, or there is collective imagination of such an interpretation, it may be institutionalised as a 'hard' habit of social action: To continue the example, often at times of economic or social crisis, collective looting of banks occurs.

What I appreciated from this lecture was the acknowledgement that space is experienced to be meaningful through practice, over a period of time. It is dynamic and the result of ongoing practice. I had identified Henri Lefebvre's 'Production of Space' previous to my current research interests as important, and so appreciated the temporal dimension presented on this occasion. However I found again that I wished for an extended example to help me through the abstraction. I hope to read the book in the near future.

31.3.03

SARI TÄHTINEN - THE SPACE OF FLOWS

The 'Space of flows', as introduced and developed by Manuel Castells, builds upon the work of Lefebvre as it also interprets space as the "material support of time-sharing social practices". The material support was technology which allowed the possibility of articulation and exchange of information in simultaneous time between different locations, in-other-words, the telecommunications revolution and the Internet. While traditionally social practices and the meaning constructed as a result was based on proximity, so that time ruled over space, the new information society flipped the relation so that space now organised time.

For Castells the 'flow' of the new power arrangement in space was the purposeful, sequential exchange process that maintained the dominant social practice (capitalism), and organised the hierarchy and institutions that did so. Spatial configurations of hardware and technological infrastructure are claimed thus to reflect the social practice. The following dialectics are presented: Concentration of decision-making and knowledge skill, on the one hand, and dispersion of labour, raw material and production, on the other. The conception of hubs and nodes, using a borrowed metaphor from network computing, is now a popular notion to describe a specific place with well-defined characteristics and strategic value. The most cited example being 'World Cities' as cultural and financial epicentres. Further, a symbolic environment of cosmopolitanism and homogeneity is on offer...The networked society has received criticism that it is reconfiguring and challenging our idea about 'place' - distinctiveness and 'genius loci' – the spirit of the place. Globalisation of the economic-production axis means that products made from all over the world, or worse, the same brands to buy in the shop everywhere, the same music, the same movies etc. raises strong impressions of cultural imperialism...And then think about the immense multi-cultural origins of the objects in your home and kitchen...

Leaving behind the un-networked, fragmented, and marginalized other. Although, it would be fair to point out that the notion of regional or peripheral centres has challenged at least the cultural dominance of the hierarchal centre, with increased transport and info-structural change of space gain over time, the marginalized will continue to exist. Maybe further away, harder to see, without the economic means to travel, access computers etc.

Tähtinen notes the underlying base of such theory in dialectical materialism, with presumptions of economy and production being the structural base of society. In particular the networked society, with its nodes and hubs, is examined as the result of the structure reflecting the interests of the dominant elite (of economy-production). It leaves questions of how are the networks of other organising forces – politic, religion – structured? Are these subsumed in the economic order? What about the network structures of the anti-capitalist movement that has grown in the recent years, such as the Social Forum, when international activists gather each year in Brazil, using similar spatio-organising philosophies as the dominant elite? Has it adapted the dominant order against

itself to counteract hegemony, or been subsumed as a variant banging the same drum in the similar but opposite rhythm? Can Castells' dialectics still apply to this fuzzier logic?

7.4.03

PANU LEHTOVUORI – THE CITY HAPPENS

Missed this lecture due to week-long workshop in Muenchen, Germany.

14.4.03

HENRI BROMS – THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE

After the previous lecture in which the distinctiveness of the place is questioned by the 'space of flows' and the networked society, Broms emphasised the aspects of a certain location, area, which may still act as a sign to represent that place: The landscape (and its natural features), words and language, gestures and behaviours, clothes and style. History, both individual and collective – the lived experience, recalling Lefebvre – that guards, upholds and maintains tradition. The myths and tourist representations of History: places of battle, death, birth and literature. He spoke of different codes of interpretation, "a scientific breakdown" of a place...for example the fantastic – the city of dreams, and the symbolic - the city of festivals - or the tactile – the objectification into monument etc.

Personally I found this lecture mixed up and hard to follow. However there was an interesting discussion at the end regarding when the spirit of a place is embodied in material form, and that is lost to the people. What happens to material objects of tradition that are destroyed and there are no traces left? For example after war and destruction (Baghdad came to mind). Suggestion: If meaning is embodied in the lived experience of space, the memory of tradition and spirit lives on, as long as people continue to live in the space and remember...However, haunted lands remain...

SUMMARY

In general I found the lecture series an interesting, though often abstract mix, introducing texts, which I aimed to be aware of critically or casually in my own research. The strand of Lefebvre's text 'The Production of Space' mirrored in several of the lectures re-enforced the importance of social practice in the construction of a place's meaning, and how that constant practice or lived experience offers the potential to re-appropriate and re-inscribe it with other meaning. The performance aspect of that potential touched me in one of the lectures and reminded me of the need for real context and example to describe this. I felt that the lecture series lacked with example from the temporal side of life, as it was only really referred to in the abstract. Rhythm, routine (in everyday life) and temporality of

urban cities/landscape contribute much to how a space is understood and perceived. For example an archaeologist would have much to say about the changing meaning and sign of a space. Though in some of the lectures space had 'triumphed' over time, it is still a relevant aspect of space, and would have rounded the arguments presented overall.