Cognitive Mapping or, the Resistant Element in the Work of Fredric Jameson: A Response to Jason Berger

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ABSTRACT

The article responds to Berger's (2004) reading of the "resistant element" in Jameson's work on postmodernism. Though Berger provides a rich discussion of how capitalism, following Jameson's line, perpetually produces imaginary resolutions to its crisis tendencies and contradictions, I argue that "spatial de-territorialization" (and its resultant consumer dis-orientation, fragmentation, and schizophrenia) is the central political problem of postmodernism, rather than its potentially resistant element. Jameson offers readers an imaginary resolution to the problem of spatial de-territorialization in the form of a new political-pedagogical concept: "cognitive mapping." Through a Jamesonian interpretation of Jameson's own work on postmodernism, I reveal how the concept of cognitive mapping seeks to re-center a politically resistant subject, attempts to re-legitimize the Marxian category of totality (pedagogically, politically, and institutionally) in light of post-Marxist fashion, and functions as a socialist political strategy that seeks the formation of a new and global class-consciousness. Thus, I highlight the Marxist political unconscious in Jameson's work on postmodernism. Cognitive mapping offers a

number of imaginary resolutions to a series of political problems facing socialist activists, Marxist academics and workers in the period of late-capitalism.

Introduction: Resisting/Totalizing Fredric Jameson

Fredric Jameson's "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" (1998) and "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" (1984) -- two classic Marxist interventions into the postmodern debate -- received much scholarly attention and criticism at the time of their production. Some postcolonial theorists argued that Jameson's postmodern work, by universalizing the particular postmodern characteristics of late-capitalist America and mis-recognizing the uneven temporal and geographical development of postmodern consumer culture, entailed a neo-imperial bias that was typical of discourses produced by metropolitan academics (During 1985). A few sociologists reprimanded Jameson for un-reflexively privileging the aesthetic-intellectual experience of postmodern culture (predominantly, the experience of privileged cultural producers and consumers such as Jameson himself) over an ethnographic inquiry into the everyday uses of postmodern culture by subordinate individuals and groups (Featherstone 1989). And poststructuralists of the Foucauldian variety, always suspicious of the self-interested and oppressive power relations lurking behind various systems of thought that seek to pass as Truth (especially those meta-narratives produced by the revolutionary tradition of Marxism), deconstructed the "discursive violence" of Jameson's purportedly universalizing, bourgeois-humanist, and totalizing neo-enlightenment discourse (Horne 1989; Radhakrishnan 1989).1

Criticisms such as these, when resisting the temptation to caricaturize Jameson's argument and when refusing the discursive violence of postmodern cultural theory (which aggressively popularized an intellectual will-to-de-legitimize more than one-hundred years of diverse Marxist theory and praxis), are valid. Yet, many criticisms of Jameson's postmodern work too often frame it as overly pessimistic and negative, obscuring a more positive reading that explores how Jameson offers readers a narrative of political agency, hope, and resistance. More recently, scholars have interpreted Jameson's work in a much more balanced fashion and provided more careful evaluations of its theory, method, and politics (Burnham 1995; Helming 2001; Homer 1998; Roberts 2000; Wise 1995). The chief shortcoming of most contemporary critical interpretations of Jameson's work, however, is their "failure to totalize, where totalizing would mean, as a minimum, attempting to apprehend Jameson's work as a whole; more generally, it would mean determining the relation between this properly abstracted whole and the historical milieu in which it was produced" (Buchanan 2002: 226).

A recent article published in *Cultural Logic* that seeks to reveal an element in Jameson's work on postmodernism that is capable of resisting or subverting the cultural logics of late-capitalism also suffers from this contemporary inability to totalize Jameson. In "Tethering the Butterfly: Revisiting Jameson's 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society' and the Paradox of Resistance," Berger (2004) argues that postmodernism's spatial de-territorialization and the emergence of a global hyperspace (which Jameson reads off the lobby of the Bonaventure Hotel) results in the disorientation of the consumer, which in turn, potentially disrupts the smooth reproduction of consumption within the hotel. This -- read as postmodernism's potentially resistant element -- exacerbates the crisis

tendencies of capitalist accumulation and requires the hotel management and merchants to resolve these crisis tendencies with cultural resolutions: seductive advertisements and re-inscriptions of capitalist space with signifiers that nostalgically reference territorialized space in modern time.

Berger's interpretation is a welcome alternative to overly pessimistic and negative readings of Jameson's postmodern work. It also offers a theoretically rich discussion of how capitalism, following Jameson's line, produces imaginary cultural resolutions to its crisis tendencies. However, Berger's interpretation doesn't go far enough to relate the resistant element discovered in the pages of "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" to Jameson's work as a whole. Nor does it attempt to relate Jameson's postmodern work to the historical and political conditions in which it was originally produced and in effect, responding to. Berger's failure to totalize results in an occlusion of the most significant and elusive political concept (and potentially resistant element) in Jameson's work on postmodernism: *cognitive mapping*.

Only by accounting for the conjecturally specific political and theoretical problems that Jameson's postmodern work attempts to reconcile and move beyond, will it be possible to reveal how cognitive mapping functions as the potentially resistant element to the postmodern cultural logics of late-capitalism. Jameson's work -- as a socially symbolic act that performs imaginary resolutions to the real conflicts, crisis and contradiction of the period -- will thus by interpreted according to the methodological prescriptions and analytical tactics that are regularly employed by Jameson himself.2

As will be argued, cognitive mapping responds to and seeks to move beyond three distinctly postmodern political problems. First, in response to postmodernism's de-centering subject-effects (the consumerist dis-orientation generated by global hyperspace, for example), cognitive mapping seeks to re-center a political subject capable of resisting capitalism. Second, in response to (and as an attempt to resist) the anti-systemic and anti-totalizing claims of anti-Marxist post-structuralist theories, cognitive mapping attempts to legitimize the Marxian effort to totalize capitalism as a global system. Third, in response to the problem of global class fragmentation, cognitive mapping potentially functions as a socialist political strategy that facilitates the formation of a global class-consciousness. Cognitive mapping is symptomatic of Jameson's Marxist political unconscious: the concept performs a number of imaginary resolutions to concrete political and historical problems and crisis facing socialist activists, Marxist academics and fragmented working classes in the period of global capitalism.

Jameson's Marxism

Anderson (1998) describes Jameson's intellectual project as a "materialist symbolism" (130) that seeks to reveal and critique the relationship between transformations in the capitalist mode of production as it unfolds across various historically and geographically conditioned social formations and the historical and spatial conditions of possibility that facilitate transformations in the production and reproduction of cultural forms. With beautifully crafted dialectical sentences, Jameson has consistently attempted to reveal the highly mediated relationship between the historical transformations of the capitalist mode of production and the aesthetic or socially-symbolic transformations in the sphere of culture. Connecting the style of figuration in modernist literature to the state of working class formation and consciousness, articulating the mechanically produced pop art of Andy Warhol to postmodern amnesia, and linking the compressed micro-narratives in the previews of Hollywood films to the time-and-space compressive movements of finance

capitalism are but a few of the ways by which Jameson has enacted this materialist symbolism.

Jameson's work on postmodernism, following his materialist symbolist trajectory, seeks to connect and relate postmodernism as a cultural dominant to broader transformations in the capitalist mode of production. As Jameson (1991) writes: "It is essential to grasp postmodernism not as a style but rather as a cultural dominant: a conception which allows for the presence and coexistence of a range of very different, yet subordinate features" (4). But postmodernism is not only a cultural dominant used by Jameson to designate emergent features. It is also periodizing concept. Jameson (1998a) states: "postmodernism does not designate a particular style, but rather is a periodizing concept which serves to correlate the emergence of new formal features in culture with the emergence of a new type of social life and a new economic order" (3). Jameson (1998b) argues that postmodernism must be "grasped as a symptom of the deeper structural changes in our society and its culture as a whole, or in other words, in the mode of production" (50).

Jameson's periodization of postmodernism rests on the broader political-economic analysis posited by the historical-materialist Mandel (1972) in *Late Capitalism* and (many years later) by the world-systems theorist Arrighi (1994), in *The Long Twentieth Century*. Jameson (1991) takes Mandel's account of the end of Fordist-era production and the collapse of inter-imperial rivalries between national-states to signal the emergence of a post-industrial, consumerist, and late or multinational period of capitalist expansion. Jameson (1998d) interprets Arrighi's account of the unleashing of finance capital from the fetters of the post-WWII Keynesian/Bretton Woods arrangement by means of new communication technologies and neo-liberal political regimes to signal a new era.

The Dominant Cultural Elements of Postmodernism

Working from the political-economic referential frame devised by Mandel and Arrighi, Jameson attempts to come to terms with the dominant cultural elements of postmodernism. Imperial Hollywood produces and distributes nostalgia films that simulate historical events in a vulgar pastiche while de-referentializing their depth, meaning and contextual complexities.[3] The postmodern market annihilates markers of social class difference by simulating and packaging ethno-cultural "group" differences as marketable lifestyle identities.[4] The money form is de-materialized into trillions of digital codes, de-territorialized and transferred across planetary geographies at historically unprecedented speeds and then made subject to speculation in the seemingly free-floating sphere of global cyber-space.[5]

The global media-market blends entertainment with the conventions of advertising and seduces audiences with re-invented Reagan-era ideologies of consumer sovereignty (which sadly have their market-populist analogue in so much of today's audience-centered cultural studies).[6] The media spectacle fetishistically erases traces of production and mystifies the labor process while turning commodities into affective simulacrum and audiences into commodity exchange-values for the advertising-dependent television networks. Distinctions between high and low art are erased through delicate aestheticizations of commodities previously relegated to the vulgar tastes of the commercial world: popular commodities are increasingly included in the world's most prestigious art galleries. All of these elements and processes are dominant cultural elements of postmodernism and register the world transformed by global capitalism.

De-Territorialized Global Hyperspace and the End of History

Jameson (1991) locates the most profound transformation in a global mutation and an altogether new subjective experience of social space (365). Addressing how each historical period of capitalist production -- industrial, monopoly or imperial, and late or multinational -- produces a distinct form of spatiality, which in turn, produces a particular mode of aesthetic figuration, Jameson (1991) states: "the three historical stages of capital have each generated a new type of space unique to it, even though these three stages of capitalist space are obviously far more profoundly interrelated than are the spaces of other modes of production. The three types of space I have in mind are all the results of discontinuous expansions or quantum leaps in the enlargement of capital, in the latter's penetration and colonization of hitherto un-commodified areas" (348). The new postmodern hyperspace of multinational capitalism is reminiscent of Baudrillard's (1983; 1988) hyperreality: the depth and materiality of the real world seems to implode into an endlessly differentiating play of affective surfaces, commodity seductions and auto-referential simulacra, all which suppress distance and relentlessly saturate vacant places and postmodern bodies with a mind-numbing sensorial barrage (Jameson 1991: 412).

The emergence of this postmodern hyperspace unseats History from its previous position of ontological and epistemological authority. "Postmodernism" writes Jameson (1991), "eschews temporality for space" (134) and if temporality has a place left in a postmodern world, "it would be better to speak of the writing of it than any lived experience" (154). As result, the subject's experience of time and history is deadened and begins to wane. Jameson (1998a), commenting on the experiential end of history and present-mindedness, states: "the disappearance of a sense of history, the way in which our entire contemporary social system has little by little begun to lose its capacity to retain its own past, has begun to live in a perpetual present and in a perpetual change that obliterates traditions of the kind which all earlier social information have had, in one way or another, to preserve" (20).

Historical experience and its richly affective structures of feeling collapse into a perpetual present of consumer-driven intensities that make it impossible for people to connect the depth of the past with the circumstances of their present. Postmodern hyperspace seems to neutralize people's ability to imagine a different future. Its "swerving, stammering flux precludes either cathexis or historicity. [. . .] the typical polarities of the subject run from the elation of the commodity rush, the euphoric highs of spectator or consumer, to the dejection at the bottom of the deeper nihilistic void of our being, as prisoners of an order that resists any other control or meaning" (1991: 317). Thus, history (including the emancipatory historical-materialist meta-narrative of History), appreciations of aesthetic depth, and the unifying theme of critical distance, all residual elements of progressive modernity, are dissolved by postmodern hyperspace.

Jameson as the Disoriented Subject in the Lobby of the Bonaventure Hotel

Global hyperspace has damaging implications for the political subject. Jameson (1998a), commenting on the death of the (modern) subject, states: "The modernist aesthetic is in some way organically linked to the conception of a unique self and private identity, a unique personality and individuality, which can be expected to generate its own unique vision of the world" (6). "Yet today," continues Jameson (1998a), "this kind of individualism and personal identity is a thing of the past; [. . .] one might even describe the concept of the unique subject and the theoretical basis of individualism as ideological" (6). Jameson (1991), contemplating the death of the subject, states: "the

spatial peculiarities of postmodernism are symptoms and expressions of a new and historically original dilemma, one that involves our insertion as individual subjects into a multidimensional set of radically discontinuous realities, whose frames range from the still surviving spaces of bourgeois private life all the way to the unimaginable de-centering of global capital itself" (412). Thus, the de-centering or death of the modern political subject is, for Jameson, largely an effect of global postmodern hyperspace.

Jameson (1998a) illustrates the de-centering experience of postmodern hyperspace by re-narrativizing his individual tour through the Bonaventure Hotel's massive lobby complex. The lobby, "which aspires to be a total space, a complete world, a kind of miniature city" (11), "figures fourth the end of modernist architectural utopia" (13). After commenting on how the lobby escalator represents the technological obsolescence of the modern promenade, Jameson (1998a) glumly recalls his inability to locate himself within the lobby's hyperspace: "Hanging streamers indeed suffuse this empty space [. . .] to distract systematically and deliberately from whatever form it might supposed to have; while a constant busyness gives the feeling that emptiness is here absolutely packed, that it is an element within which you yourself are immersed, without any of that distance that formerly enabled the perception of perspective or volume. You are in this hyperspace up to your eyes and your body" (14). Jameson's (1998a) disorienting narrative stroll through this postmodern hyper-space leads him to briefly contemplate the notorious dilemma of the Bonaventure's merchants, which Berger (2004) interprets as postmodernism's resistant element.

"It has been obvious" recalls Jameson (1998a), "since the very opening of the hotel in 1977, that nobody could ever find any of these stores, and even if you located the appropriate boutique, you would be most unlikely to be as fortunate a second time; as a consequence, the commercial tenants are in despair and all the merchandise is marked down to bargain prices" (15). Certainly, dazed and confused hotel clients don't always make for efficient consumers (in most instances, however, the market preys on disorientation and impulsiveness; advertising requires consumers to act irrationally). The bargain prices that Jameson observes here are likely caused by the over-production of commodities, which, following the doctrine of crisis theory, leads to under-consumption and a falling rate of profit that in turn, compels capitalist producers to slice wages and presses distributors to undersell or outsell competitors by slashing prices or stimulating demand with more advertising. But late-capitalism's notorious dilemma of accumulation (if there indeed is one) is temporally (and temporarily) managed and resolved by spatial fixes, by credit cards, by money markets, and indeed, by more marketing. The notion that consumers may be dis-oriented by postmodern hyperspace, and as result, slow down the reproduction of consumption, forcing the Bonaventure to spend more money on pseudo-territorialized advertising mirages, is a limited conception of resistance. Furthermore, this conception of resistance to postmodernism glosses over Jameson's deeper understanding of postmodernism's core political problems and the socialist political practice he offers in response.

Growing "New Conceptual Organs": A Political Problem in Postmodern Times

As discussed earlier, postmodern hyperspace de-centers and overwhelms the human subject, making it tremendously difficult for it to connect the past to the present and to locate or situate itself in relation to this new space. Jameson (1998a) states: "we ourselves, the human subjects who happen into this new space, have not kept pace with that evolution; there has been a mutation in the object, unaccompanied as yet by any equivalent mutation in the subject; we do not yet possess the perceptual equipment to

match this new hyperspace" (11). Indeed, "this latest mutation in space," argues Jameson (1998a) "has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and to map cognitively its position in a mappable external world"(16). Postmodern hyperspace makes it tremendously difficult for us "to map the great global, multinational and de-centered communicational network in which we find ourselves caught as individual subjects" (1998a: 16).

The incapacity of human subjects to conceive of their particular spatial and historical situation within (and perhaps as an effect of) the global capitalist system is a political problem (and I will account for this more thoroughly in the concluding section of this article). To resolve this problem -- to become capable of representing and locating ourselves in relation to the global capitalist system as a whole -- Jameson (1991) argues we first need to grow "new conceptual organs" (39). Rather than moralizing about postmodernism, Jameson (1999e) calls for "a genuinely historical and dialectical analysis of such phenomena [. . .] to assess the new cultural production within the working hypothesis of a general modification of culture itself with the social restructuring of late capitalism as a system" (30). Thus, Jameson requires new conceptual organs to work through the de-centering effects of postmodernism.

The conceptual organs offered by Jameson as a solution to the political problem of the de-centered subject come in the form of aesthetic-pedagogical practice called cognitive mapping. Cognitive mapping is derived from Kevin Lynch's study *The Image of the City* and appeals to Jameson for two reasons. First, Lynch's description of the disorienting experience of the alienated city by its residents -- their inability to subjectively map their position within and in relation to the urban totality -- is comparable to Jameson's formulation of the de-centered subject of postmodernism, which is unable to subjectively map its position within and in relation to global hyperspace.

Second, Lynch's cognitive mapping bears a striking resemblance to Lacan's Symbolic, to the extent that both terms mediate between the Real and the Imaginary. At the same time, Jameson interprets Lynch's cognitive mapping -- in practice -- as analogous to Althusser's account of Ideology-in-general: "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence"(1991: 53-54). Jameson thus adapts Lynch's notion of cognitive mapping (an urban political-aesthetic strategy for coping with the urban totality), transcodes it through a Marxian referent system, and then posits it as a subject's way of coping with, or figuring fourth, their imaginary relation to global capitalist hyperspace. Here is the potentially resistant element in Jameson's work on postmodernism.

Cognitively Mapping as Totalization

Jameson recommends that subjects cognitively map their imaginary relation to global capitalist hyperspace as a political response to postmodernism's de-centering effects. But how is cognitive mapping a potentially resistant political act and what political practice is cognitive mapping interested in? The answers to these questions are found in two interrelated concepts that Jameson, in all of his work, has fought to legitimize: totality and totalization. Though many scholars have problematized the notions of totality and totalization (Laclau and Mouffe 1984; Jay 1984), Jameson contends that these concepts are absolutely necessary for both analytic and political purposes. If the globalization of capitalism is a totalizing process through which all different and particular (i.e., non-capitalist) social relations are increasingly subsumed by the expanding logics of commodification, then an equally totalizing abstraction is needed to conceive of this as a

new global condition of existence. For Jameson, global capitalist totality provides contemporary Marxism with this abstraction and acts as the object that critique and socialist political struggle seeks to negate.

More importantly, global capitalist totality is the analytic precondition for *totalizing*, which, in Jameson's usage, does not refer to some brutal Stalinist totalitarian impulse or oppressive desire to reduce all difference to sameness and heterogeneity to homogeneity.7 Jameson's desire to totalize resides in his contention that each particular social element, political-economic process, and cultural formation is in some small way, relationally yet relatively autonomously, connected to and over-determined by other social elements, political-economic processes, and cultural formations. Thus, if postmodernism involves the fragmentation, dispersion, and implosion of life and meaning, totalization means little more than making connections between different elements, political-economic processes, and cultural formations, and the wider historical and geographical conditions of possibility that condition and over-determine their existence (Jameson 1991: 402). For Jameson, to totalize is to relate and connect, to situate and interpret each object, phenomena, or event -- whether it be a credit card, a Nike shoe, or terror war -- in relation to the wider relations and forces, structures, and determinations that limit and enable their sensual and concrete historical existence.

Jameson (1991) does not suggest, however, that totalization can produce a full aesthetic picture of the global capitalist totality, nor an objective, complete and unmediated representation of the world as it is out there: "if the word totality sometimes seems to suggest that some privileged bird's eye view of the whole is available, which is also the Truth, then the project of totalization implies exactly the opposite and takes as its premise the impossibility for individual and biological human subjects to conceive of such a position" (Jameson 1991: 332). But though such a bird's eye conception of the global capitalist totality is impossible, this does not mean that attempts to represent it from our particular localities is politically futile. Rather, "the global totality extends beyond knowledge and is a product of knowledge power; it is not available for representation but needs to be" (Hardt and Weeks 2000: 23). Thus, cognitive mapping the global capitalist totality -- the social practice of representing, locating and imagining ourselves in relation to the globally expanding capitalist system -- is totalization, or, the political and aesthetic solution to the problem of postmodernism: "The political form of postmodernism, if there ever is any, will have as its vocation the invention and projection of a global cognitive mapping, on a social as well as a spatial scale" (1991: 54).

Cognitive Mapping as Three Conditions of Possibility for Political Resistance

In the final section of *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Jameson responds to the question of what form of cultural politics is the most effective for resisting postmodernism. He proposes two cultural strategies of resistance. The first is a homeopathic strategy, an attack on the spectacular image society of late-capitalism from within by using its imagistic resources for counter-hegemonic cultural practices: by "undermining the image by way of the image itself and planning the logic of the simulacra by dint of ever greater doses of simulacra" (1991: 409).8 Cultural jamming, resistant meaning-making practices, and struggles over the use of commodity sign-values all fit into this first, homeopathic strategy of cultural resistance. The second strategy of cultural resistance to postmodernism is cognitive mapping, which Jameson clearly privileges over the first: "what I have called cognitive mapping may be identified as a more modernist strategy, which retains an impossible concept of totality whose representational failure seemed for the moment as useful and productive as its

(inconceivable) success" (1991: 409). Why does Jameson take cognitive mapping, with its totalization and impossible desire to represent the global capitalist totality to be politically useful? Cognitive mapping provides imaginary resolutions to three concrete political problems facing Marxist academics, socialists, and globally fragmented workers in the period of late-capitalism. By doing so, cognitive mapping attempts to facilitate three conditions of possibility for resistance to capitalism.

I Cognitive Mapping and the Re-centering of a Representing Subject

Jameson (1991) takes the postmodern terrain of ideological struggle to have "migrated from concepts to representations" (321). As mentioned earlier, postmodernism radically de-centers and fragments the human subject, denying it a sense of time and bewildering its spatial coordinates. Here, the political subject becomes a dis-oriented and apolitical schizophrenic that is incapable of making coherent aesthetic "representations of its current experience"(1991: 21). The world is made (non)sense of through media simulations and a debased commercial hyperreality, which cripple political agency and the desire for social change. For Jameson, the typical postmodern subject has no means to represent who they are, where they come from, and where they are in the world. Postmodern subjects cannot develop the political capacities to critically think about or struggle to change the world.

Cognitive mapping is Jameson's imaginary resolution to the postmodern political problem of a de-centered subject that is no longer capable of representing itself in the world. Indeed, the purpose of cognitive mapping is to enable "a situational *representation* on the part of the individual subject to that vaster and properly un-representable totality which is the ensemble of society's structures as a whole" (1991: 51). By enabling historically and geographically situated subjects with a way to construct partial representations of their particular place and experience, cognitive mapping is an aesthetic mode by which the subject can re-center itself in a space and ground itself in historical time. Thus, cognitive mapping attributes political agency, creativity and purpose to the human subject in a period in which the subject is no longer supposed to exist, let alone be interested in a revolution. From this first interpretation, cognitive mapping is a conceptual apparatus that human subjects develop in relation to postmodernism and the precondition for their political resistance to capitalism.

II Cognitive Mapping and the Academic Legitimization of Marxism

The legitimacy and illegitimacy of various disciplines and discourses, academia, and academic knowledge production and circulation constitute a terrain of political struggle that Jameson, as an unapologetic Marxist academic, consciously occupies. And given that Jameson is a Marxist academic with revolutionary aspirations, it follows that he is engaged in a struggle to defend, preserve and teach Marxism, despite the neo-liberal and neo-conservative intellectuals that wish to destroy this theoretical and political tradition.[9] This preservation and perpetuation of Marxist theory and practice, however, has become more arduous since the postmodern cultural turn, when many radical culturalists and post-structuralists waged a deconstructive war against Marxian concepts such as mode of production, totality, and system, and also, trashed the politics of working-class struggle and goal of socialist revolution. A postmodern interest in absolute heterogeneity, difference, and disjuncture, and a literary politics of deconstruction often replaced and took precedence over the totalizing and systematizing analytic strategies and revolutionary political goals of Marxism.

With cognitive mapping, Jameson attempts to save bits and pieces of Marxism from the chopping block of post-structuralism. Cognitive mapping is totalization in disguise. By disguising totalization as cognitive mapping, Jameson guilefully moves anti-Marxist academics away from the "totalization as Stalinist totalitarianism" jargon. At the same time, the concept retains Marxism's attempt, despite the poststructuralist effort to disaggregate and reify social reality into incommensurable fragments, to think capitalism as a global system and a totality. In his first essay on cognitive mapping, Jameson (1988) states: "I have found myself obliged, in arguing for an aesthetic of cognitive mapping, to plot a substantial detour through the great themes and shibboleths of post-Marxism, so that to me it does seem possible that the aesthetic here may be little more than a pretext for debating those theoretical and political issues" (347). And in the conclusion to *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Jameson (1991) reveals the goal of his work:

> The rhetorical strategy of the preceding pages has involved an experiment, namely, the attempt to see whether by systematizing something that is resolutely unsystematic, and historicizing something that is resolutely ahistorical, one couldn't outflank it and force a historical way at least of thinking about that. 'We have to name the system': this high point of the sixties finds an unexpected revival in the postmodernism debate. (418)

Cognitive mapping is Jameson's solution to the political problem of a dominant poststructuralist qua liberal-pluralist academic discourse[10] that seeks to marginalize Marxian attempts to totalize social reality and think capitalism as a global system. On the terrain of institutional struggle over the legitimacy of academic discourses and practices, Jameson's cognitive mapping (in his work on postmodernism) re-legitimizes the categories of totality and totalization to counter the postmodern camp's deconstructive war against these concepts (and Marxism in general). Given that Marxism in the only discourse (if, following the neo-Foucauldians, we wish to reduce it to one ideological discourse among many in the global shopping mall of contemporary cultural theory) that has the capacity and political will to interpret and change the world (specifically by understanding and moving beyond the social relations of capitalism), Jameson's cognitive mapping, by preserving an element of Marxian theory and legitimizing Marxian critique in light of postmodern fashion, is, on the institutional terrain of academic production and consumption, resistant to the cultural logics of global capitalism.

III Cognitive Mapping and the Formation of a Global Class Consciousness

The globalization of capitalism -- the outsourcing of jobs to sweatshop factories, the criminalization of unions by neo-liberal state policies, and the international diffusion of production -- has not necessarily been accompanied by a global working class politics, nor the emergence of some transnational kind of revolutionary class consciousness (Marx's class-for-itself). Global capitalism and postmodern culture both conspire against and create new conditions of possibility for the emergence of a globe-spanning revolutionary working-class subject. This signals a political opportunity and problem for Jameson (1991):

> I'm convinced that this new postmodern global form of capitalism will now have a new class logic about it, but it has not yet completely emerged because labour has not yet reconstituted itself on a global scale, and so there is a crisis in what classes and class consciousness are. It's very clear that agency in the Left is not in those older forms but the Marxist

> narratives assures us that some for of agency will reconstitute itself and that is the sense in which I still find myself committed to the Marxist logic. (31)

The new (and old) dynamics of capitalism also pose a tremendous challenge for socialist organizations (even unions) that seek to mobilize globally situated working-class constituencies against neo-liberalism. The cultural logic of postmodernism only heightens the challenge of socialist politics and exacerbates the neutralization of a radicalized class-consciousness by conflating cultural and economic fields and supplanting class politics with market-friendly lifestyle politics. Jameson (1991), commenting on socialism's notorious global political dilemma, states: "since the crisis of socialist internationalism and the [. . .] difficulties of coordinating local and grassroots of neighborhood political actions with national or international ones, such urgent political dilemmas are [. . .] functions of the enormously complex new space in question" (413).

Jameson illustrates socialism's new globally spatialized political dilemma with a discussion of Marvin Surkin and Dan Georgakis's *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, a film that documents the political rise, city-struggles, and demise the League of Black Revolutionary Workers in the 1960s. Though the League made remarkable achievements early in the battle, their overall political strategy, laments Jameson (1991), was ultimately "shackled to the city form itself" (414). The major challenge for the League was thus spatial: "how to develop a national political movement on the basis of a city strategy and politics" (414). The League's leadership spread the revolutionary word across other American cities and even other parts of the globe, and struggled to network and align itself with other constituencies. The League's great and debilitating political challenge, suggests Jameson (1991), was "how to represent a unique local model and experience to people in other situations" (414).

Though *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying* marks the political failure of the League, Jameson takes its narrative of the League's city-struggles to be politically instructive, even exemplary of the contemporary challenge facing socialist activists and globally dispersed working classes. The narrative enacts the challenge of aesthetically representing the local political experiences workers to the political experiences of workers in other, global situations. The film's narrative of political defeat, argues Jameson (1991), "causes the whole architectonic of postmodern global space to rise up in ghostly profile behind itself, as some ultimate dialectical barrier or invisible limit" (415). The League's local experience and its global challenge -- to connect, relate, and mobilize in a way that transcends the city, even the national political form -- represented by *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, performs "what is meant by the slogan of cognitive mapping" (415).

As a cognitive map, the film not only represents the task of international socialism to one day transcend the municipal or national political form, but also, attests to the political necessity of cognitively mapping global capitalism from local situations and then connecting the resultant imaginary representations with those imaginary representations crafted by globally situated others: "an aesthetic of cognitive mapping in this sense is an integral part of any socialist political project" (Jameson 1991: 416). The global potentialities of cognitive mapping, and the class politics it may result in, are of utmost importance to Jameson (1991): "cognitive mapping was in reality nothing but a code word for developing a class-consciousness -- only it proposed the need for class consciousness of a new and hitherto undreamed of kind [. . .] in the direction of that new spatiality implicit in the postmodern" (418).

Thus, cognitive mapping is an internationalist mode of political communication that seeks to represent and share the local experiences of particular socialist and worker struggles with those of global others. Cognitive mapping is Jameson's political prescription for international socialism. From this third interpretation, then, the potentially resistant element to postmodernism is cognitive mapping's practical political effect: a global working-class consciousness and globally organized movement against capitalism.

Conclusion: Cognitive Mapping for Resisting Global Capitalism

Marxists such as Jameson have done much to understand how the cultural logic of postmodernism legitimizes, reinforces, and reproduces the economic imperatives and ideological discourses of global capitalism. To the question as to whether there is also a way within postmodernism to change or resist the cultural logics of global capitalism, asked by Jameson in 1983 and again by Berger in 2004, there may be no singular or definitive answer. But by totalizing Jameson, by interrogating the political unconscious of Jameson's postmodern narrative, by subjecting Jameson's work to the Jamesonian mode of critique, I revealed how cognitive mapping, as a socially-symbolic conceptual act, responds to and performs imaginary resolutions to many postmodern political problems in the period of global capitalism.

By re-centering the political subject and attributing it with an aesthetic mode of working through postmodern fragmentation, by re-legitimizing Marxism's attempt to totalize capitalism as a global system in light of postmodern chaos (pedagogically, politically, and institutionally), and by functioning as an internationalist socialist political strategy that seeks to represent and articulate together a new global class-consciousness, cognitive mapping is Jameson's conceptual condition of possibility for the real emergence of political resistance to global capitalism. Jameson's cognitive mapping -- as symbolically performed by so many of his lectures, articles, and magisterial books -- certainly reflects the essence of Marxist *praxis*, of the dialectic of thought and action, of theory and practice, of historical interpretation and socialist transformation.

Endnotes

1 Best (1989) provides a useful summary the dominant criticisms leveled against Jameson's Marxist work: "Poststructuralist critiques have charged Marxism with the following discursive crimes -- crimes in which Jameson is frequently implicated: (1) humanism, which believes in a human essence and a founding subject; (2) geneticism, which seeks ultimate origins; (3) teleology, which asserts direction, rational purpose, and pre-ordained goals in history; (4) historicism , which adheres to a linear and evolutionist conception of historical time; and (5) reductionism, which subsumes difference and plurality to a false unifying scheme and center" (336).

2 In *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson (1981) argues that cultural texts (namely literary texts) are socially symbolic acts that intervene in concrete historical situations and attempt to resolve specific contradictions and problems with imaginary resolutions. These imaginary resolutions to real contradictions are also facilitated by architecture. In the "The Brick and the Balloon," Jameson (1998c) states: "the premise is that, at least in this

society (under capitalism), and individual building will always stand in contradiction with its urban context and also with its social function. The interesting buildings are those which try to resolve those contradictions through more or less ingenious formal and stylistic innovations. The resolutions are necessarily failures, because they remain in an aesthetic realm that is disjoined from the social one from which such contradictions spring; and also, because social or systemic change would have to be total rather than piecemeal" (177).

3 See, for example, Jameson (1991: 67-97).

4 See, for example, Jameson (1991: 318-30; 340-356).

5 See, for example, Jameson (1998b).

6 See, for example, Jameson (1991: 260-79).

7 Many critics have accused Jameson's theoretical desire to totalize as engendering Stalinist totalitarianism! Jay (1984), summarizing the anti-totality position inspired by post-structuralist thinkers states: "as Marxism of whatever variety still insisted on the category of totality it was complicit with the very system it claimed to oppose" (520). Hutcheon (1989), conflating the analytic practice of totalization with real violence, argues: "The function of the term totalizing, as I understand it, is to point to the process (hence the awkward 'ing' form) by which writers of history, fiction, or even theory render their materials coherent, continuous, unified-but always with an eye to the control and mastery of those materials, even at the risk of doing violence to them" (62).

Jameson (1993), responding to critics of his use of totalization, states: "the fundamental anti-Marxist stereotype [. . .] Totalization -- namely some kind of totalitarian and organic homogenization to which the Marxists are supposed to subject all forms of difference. In Sartre, however, this originally philosophical term simply meant the way in which perceptions, instruments, and raw materials were linked up and set in relationship to each other by the unifying perspective of a single project (if you don't have a project or don't want one, it obviously no longer applies)" (30).

8 On another occasion, Jameson (1989) calls for theorists to "undo postmodernism homeopathically by the methods of postmodernism: to work at dissolving the pastiche by using all the instruments of pastiche itself, to re-conquer some genuine historical sense by using the instruments of what I have called substitutes for history" (59)

9 Jameson (1975) notes "that to teach Marxism and tirelessly to demonstrate the nature of capitalism and of its consequences is a political act which needs no apologies" (35); and that it is the "first business of a Marxist teacher [. . .] to teach Marxism itself" (1979).

10 In *Marxism and Form*, Jameson (1971) addresses the failure of liberal-pluralist academic practice to make connections: "The method of such thinking, in its various forms and guises, consists in separating reality into airtight compartments, carefully distinguishing the political from the economic, the legal from the political, the sociological from the historical, so that the full implications of any given problem can never come into view; and in limiting all statements to the discrete and immediately verifiable in order to rule out any speculative and totalizing thought which might lead to a vision of social life as a whole" (367-368). This liberal-pluralist tendency to reify,

separate, and befuddle, seems to have re-established itself through the back door of post-structuralist theory.

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