

The Lived Experience of Work and City Rhythms

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The Lived Experience of Work and City Rhythms: A Rhythmanalysis of London's Square Mile

BY

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*This book is dedicated, with love, to the memory of Heather Höpfl, 1948–2014.
Thank you.*

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Preface

When I began to plan the first draft of this book, it was April 2020, and it was estimated that a third of the world's entire population was under lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with families and individuals isolated in their homes and practising 'social distancing' (a pretty much unknown phrase pre-COVID) on the very few occasions when they were able to leave their homes. Perhaps, I thought, by the time this book is published, we will look back at this most surreal of times with a sense of distance and perspective. At the time of writing this introduction, however, in Summer 2021, we in the UK are slowly emerging from a year characterized by periods of lockdown. As we collectively reel from the shock of such sudden and disruptive change to our way of life, it may seem as if the notion of 'work place' has temporarily vanished. Would this book that I was just beginning to write be striking a nostalgic note, I wondered, before it had even seen the light of day? After all, for most of us non-essential workers, our work-places over the past year have been our kitchen tables, living rooms or bedrooms or, if we are exceptionally lucky, our home offices or studies. Often, these work spaces are shared with other family members, including children and domestic pets, and negotiations have been taking place as to who is working where, who needs uninterrupted time, who will look after the children and supervise home-schooling, how the domestic chores will get done and so on, without even factoring in the additional pressures of caring for others in the community or wider family and the time taken to shop for essentials. The places where we routinely worked only a year ago still seem distant to many of us, our familiar offices silent, the daily commute no longer taken and coffee shops where we would pause to gear up for the day ahead lie deserted. The rhythms of our daily lives were drastically altered in a very short space of time. The spatial rhythms have changed – we are having to work in domestic spaces and adapt to other people's use of the space – and the temporal rhythms have changed immeasurably too as we try to adapt to very different patterns in our working days. Those boundaries between home and work, so blurred over recent years due to smartphones and other technological advances, seem to have disappeared altogether. We have lost the ritualised behaviours of 'going to work', and the demarcations between home and work. Yet, some notion still remains of the places where we work as important to defining what we do. Talking to friends and relatives online, and seeing social media comments, people are talking readily and enthusiastically about what they do and relating it closely to where they 'normally' work. For example, one friend writes movingly about her job as a curator in a National Trust property, and how

much she hates seeing it empty; she identifies so strongly with it that it upsets her to think of it desolate and uncared for. I listen to another friend who works in a science park describing how much he misses the small daily routines which make up his working life – talking to the servers in his local coffee shop, the owners of the Italian deli where he buys his lunch, the people he meets in the gym, seeing the streets and landmarks he knows so well and which give structure to his day. For these people, *where* they work and *what* they do are symbiotic and mutually reinforcing. Of course, there are still people going to their normal place of work; not just the frontline health-care workers in the stretched-to-capacity hospitals, but delivery drivers, supermarket cashiers, police, postmen, teachers, refuse collectors; all the workers in all the myriad jobs which make up our essential services. For them, their place of work is currently both familiar and strange. Many of the rest of us are returning to work now, but for shorter and more infrequent periods of time.

Will the pandemic change the way we work, and the places in which we work, for good? In October 2020, it was claimed that nearly three quarters of City firms were reviewing how much office space they really need following the boom in homeworking during the pandemic. Many companies are now experimenting with new and less costly ways of housing employees (Makortoff, 2020). Such a recalibration may have profound implications on not only on working life but by extension on the life of our towns and cities. At the end of the first half of 2021, even with a vaccination programme well underway, it is still too early to say whether this change is absolute; a reasonable guess would be that homeworking will remain a significant part of our working lives, particularly if waves of varying strains of infection, with the need for regular and perhaps multiple vaccines, characterise the coming months. This raises many interesting questions relating to the power of place in our working lives and about how we work and are organised in different environments. Many of these questions have been explored in recent months (e.g. Parker, 2020), as has the potential change to urban environments (Morris and Hassard, 2020; Nathan and Overman, 2020; Reuschke and Felstead, 2020). In all probability, we will return for a significant part of our time, as we are already starting to do, whether it is to offices, schools, shops or restaurants, whether it is city centres or out of town retail parks. And those places will again take up a prominent role in our lives, helping us to define our working selves through *where* we work.

This book is an account of researching a place that means something to the people who work there. Examining what it means, and why, helps us to better understand this place which is the everyday workplace of thousands of people, and which exists in the public imagination as a particular geographical location, with a distinctive materiality, a distinctive culture and where distinctive behaviours are manifested. The people I interviewed who work within its bounds called 'an engine', a 'powerhouse', a 'hub', but also a 'monster', a 'casino' and 'hellish'; a place that is 'infinitely rewarding' but also 'a place where there is a lot of unhappiness'. A place set apart by its architecture, its culture, its practices and its rhythms. This is an account of researching the City; a distinct, global, yet peculiarly British, workplace.

Acknowledgements

Most importantly, I would like to thank all the interview participants quoted in this book, who so generously shared their time, thoughts and reflections with me. Their kindness is greatly appreciated. I thought I knew the City well, but spending time with these workers, who showed me hidden back streets, quiet squares and some fantastic coffee shops, was a re-education. Many of our conversations took place against a background of chatter, traffic noise and construction noise, yet they were all unfailingly polite and patient as I asked them to repeat things or to expand on a point, even as they were trying to grab something to eat or make the most of their only slot of free time in a busy working day. Their insights and reflections give this book its local 'flavour', and I am deeply grateful.

I would also like to thank my many colleagues and friends at the University of Essex for their constant support and help, first as I migrated from a non-academic role to studying for my PhD and then eventually to a Lectureship. They showed such willingness to help and would always take the time to explain something or just to check on progress; their kindness is so appreciated. In particular, I am deeply indebted to Melissa Tyler, for her unswerving professional support, encouragement and leadership but also for her company and friendship. I like to think that although she has most certainly seen me at my most frantic, panic stricken and despairing, she has also inspired me to work to the best of my abilities and to never forget to laugh along the way. Other people of particular note from Essex and elsewhere who helped me at various critical points along the way and who I must thank are Christian de Cock, Philip Hancock, Noelia-Sarah Reynolds, Dawn Lyon, Karen Dale, Ceri Watkins, Martin Parker, Mary Phillips and Chris Land. I am also grateful to the people I have met at universities and conferences where I have had the opportunity to present my research, including the University of York and the Centre for Work, Organisation and Society at the University of Essex and *EGOS; Gender, Work and Organisation*; and *International Critical Management Studies*.

Their comments and questions were invaluable.

I am hugely grateful to all at Emerald Publishing, for giving me the chance to write my first book, especially to Fiona Allison and the wider team for their invaluable help and support.

Lastly, the biggest thanks always go to my family, and in particular to James and Katherine, for being my companions through seemingly endless lockdowns, for patiently listening to me talking about this book and for being the best company and support a mother could hope to have, and not forgetting Bertie and Alfie, the super-sized dog and tiny cat, whose comforting presence I could not have done without.

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Introduction: Spatial Settings and Sites of Organisation

Louise Nash

This melancholy London – I sometimes imagine that the souls of the lost are compelled to walk through its streets perpetually. One feels them passing like a whiff of air. (Yeats, 1888)

This is a book about how we can understand more about the experience of everyday working life by paying attention to *where* work takes place, and it sets out to illustrate how a particular type of fieldwork, based on the rhythms of place, can be undertaken. Workplaces are here understood not as individual buildings, but as wider work settings; in particular settings that are often dominated by one industry sector, and therefore conceptualised as business clusters (Porter, 1990), a geographic concentration of interconnected business and associated institutions. This is exemplified in this book by the symbiotic relationship between the City of London, or ‘Square Mile’ (to use its metonym¹), and financial services. These places are often recognised as attracting a certain ‘type’ of person and for having particular social and material characteristics that make them distinct as workplaces. Through its focus on the City, this book explores everyday working life by exploring the feelings and fragilities of belonging (and, conversely, not-belonging) in a particular workplace and asks what this means for how we experience ‘organisation’, and, therefore, being organised, through the places in which we work. It aims to recognise work setting as ‘a dynamic nexus of meaning and materiality in which work is embedded’ (Tyler, 2011, p. 1481), exploring what the culture and history of a place, its built form and its association with a particular industry sector, means for workers who spend their daily lives there. The emphasis is on the symbolic and material significance of place to understanding organisational life, and a rhythm-based methodology for empirically researching

¹The City of London is one of the few places in the United Kingdom where its name (and its metonym) refers to both industry sector and geographic location, another example being the Potteries in the Midlands; see Sarsby (1988), in relation to the Potteries, and also Strangleman (2001), for an example of occupational communities and their relationship to a sense of place.

places of work is outlined, arguing that analysing rhythms brings together ‘the often taken-for-granted spatial and temporal dimensions of the social world ... rhythmanalysis makes possible different forms of analysis and critique of everyday life’ (Lyon, 2018, p. 102). Through the focus on rhythm, this book provides a framework for how to carry out immersive research into the sensory aspects of workplaces (Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2009) and shows how we can empirically research, analyse and apprehend the sites where work and organising take place, helping us to better understand the experience of everyday work within business clusters and, more widely, helps us to understand why *where* we work matters to *how* we work.

One of the biggest challenges for researchers interested in the places where we work is how to actually conduct fieldwork. How can we try to understand the sensory and temporal experiences of work settings which are usually urban in character and often spread across geographically large areas? What are some of the practical challenges involved? And how, as academic researchers, can we best represent in writing the embodied, visceral and affective qualities that characterise people’s daily experiences and relationships with the places where they work? This book is an attempt to outline a method, or more accurately a collection of methods, that might be useful to ethnographers and qualitative researchers who wish to try to capture a sense of place and its relationship to working lives.

If the aim is to show how the settings in which we work can be researched, then the research – the planning, the fieldwork, the analysis – is centred upon the notion of *place*. If place is not to be considered merely a neutral backdrop to our working lives, but rather is part of the framework of what could be described as our ‘workselves’, then how does association with particular types of organisations shape the places in which work is embedded? If places constitute the material setting within which social relations take place, then it has been argued (Tuan, 1977; Cresswell, 2013) that people develop attachments to particular places and produce meaning within them. Yet a sense of place can also be shaped by the opposite, by a sense of *not belonging* (Tyler, 2011). This book explores what a socio-material analysis of place, that is an approach which recognises both the social and the material as not only symbiotic but mutually constitutive, can tell us about who, and about which behaviours, are deemed to be acceptable, and ‘in place’ in the spaces in which we spend out working lives. How might organisational place be perceived, sensed and experienced? We are told that the places in which employees work ‘do something to them’ (Hirst and Humphreys, 2013, p. 1524). What does the City of London *do* to the people who work there?

The City,² the heart of the UK financial services sector, is documented throughout its history as being the preserve of men (McDowell, 1997), yet it nevertheless presents itself as meritocratic, modern and gender neutral; ‘a great place of opportunity’, as one of the interview participants in the study on which this book is based describes it. As the financial and business hub of one of the leading

²The City of London employs approximately 400,000 people, mainly in the financial services industry (Squaremile.com, 2018).

global cities, the City is still perceived as a place where certain people ‘fit’. What the particular rhythms of place mean for who, and what, is acceptable and fit for purpose in the City is one of the themes of this book.

Daily working life is usually considered to be contained within the walls of a particular organisation. Yet as Hirst and Humphreys (2013) remind us, in their study of edgelands as organisational space, the assumption that organisation is contained in this way leads to a neglect of where organisations are placed. Paying attention to the ‘non-contained’ leads to more focus on what constitutes an organisation, a theme that this book develops in relation to how City workers identify with their wider place of work and its locale, rather than to their individual organisations. In this way, the City becomes not merely a setting in which organising takes place, but an organising force in its own right, and it is via the rhythms of place, this book argues, that a better understanding of how these ‘organizing places’ are sensed, and how shared meanings are accrued.

Why Research the City?

For the vast majority of working people in the United Kingdom, their work setting is urban in character. Given the complexities of contemporary cities, and their place in a multitude of networks – what has been described as ‘spatial flows’ (Jacobs, 2012, p. 412), meaning that they are relational or sites of relations with elsewhere – researching them can be difficult. Are they to be approached simply as bounded geographical territories, or as sites of interconnecting networks (local, national, global), or both? And what does this mean for the kinds of methods that can be employed by researchers of organisation interested in cities as sites where work and organisation takes place? How can we immerse ourselves in places when we do not work in them every day? What similarities and differences might there be with qualitative research in a geographical area and research where the unit of analysis is an individual building or organisation? These questions led to an exploration of how urban sites of organisation might be researched, and the subsequent development of a research method centred on apprehending the rhythms of place, which will be extensively discussed throughout this book. It is important to emphasise that the research presented here is not based on a traditional case study of a particular organisation or selection of organisations; instead, the aim is to ask what we can understand about the everyday experience of work by exploring the wider setting within which it takes place.

My particular interest in the ‘Square Mile’ was ignited by the years I spent working there, in a variety of different organisations and roles. I became interested in its history and the narratives of resilience and endurance which permeates much writing about the City but also by its distinct geographical boundaries, its architecture and its sense of particular culture; in summary, you simply *know* when you are in the City, even if you do not consult a map or a guidebook. Some years later, and pursuing the idea of a research degree in Organisation Studies, I vividly remembered my City days, and began to wonder why this sense of the City as such a particular locale endures, and what this might mean to people working there; do they identify with their work setting, as opposed to their individual

organisations, as I did (answering ‘I work in the City’ to questions about what I did for a living), and if so, what does this mean for how they experience their working lives? What shapes this particular culture, and can anyone and everyone become a City insider? What role do the performances of gender play, and what, or who, can be said to truly belong in this place? Who, or what, is excluded, and why? In summary, what is it that gives the City its ‘distinctive patina?’ (Thrift, 1996, p. 238). And what does this mean for our understanding of where organisations are geographically located and embedded, and what does it mean for those who work there?

Although I worked there for periods during my 20s and 30s, my first introduction to the City was probably through film. As a child devotee of the film *Mary Poppins* (Walsh et al., 2009 [1964]), and subsequently watched again, many times, with my own children, I knew it as the site of ‘The Bank’ and St Paul’s cathedral long before I had ever been to London. Ideas about the City being a place of organisation in its widest sense were inculcated long before I understood what grown-up work actually was. In the film, the children’s father, Mr Banks, sets out the fundamental characteristics of the banking industry, and, by extension, the City, as tradition and discipline and order (all of which are, of course, subsequently overturned by his children and their magical Nanny). This image of City institutions as being rational, orderly places, indeed of the City as a fortress or bastion of financial rigour and prudent business sense, endures. Not only does the City present its own story as a coherent history of overcoming crises (the Great Fire, the Blitz bombing in the Second World War and recurring financial crises), as narrated by tour guides and in published histories, but the institutions themselves (e.g. the Bank of England and the Museum of London) recount a linear history of the City as being dominated by the imposition of order upon chaos. This theme will be more fully explored in Chapter 1.

The City is, of course, the site of the ‘original’ London, which expanded around it, and was founded as a civilian town by the Roman army several years after the invasion of AD 43. The old Roman city is still visible; in fact, walking around the City today, there is a palpable sense of the past. For a district which is home to some of the largest financial institutions in the world, many of them housed in the most modern steel and glass structures, the City feels very much like a palimpsest, with visible traces of its earlier forms constantly erupting. The material City is a blend of Roman, medieval, imperial/Victorian and modern architecture; in fact, as a landscape, it is constituted as much by its past as by its present. This presents further opportunities and challenges for researchers; there are so many Cities, and so many ways in which the people who work there make describe it, relate to it and make sense of it. Part of the joy of the research project on which this book is based was talking to people; delving into their personal stories of how they feel in relation to his workspace, whether they feel they belong, whether they love it or hate it. One thing that was common to most conversations was the point at which the research participant would say to me: ‘And did you know such and such about the history here? Did you know that this happened, or about what they’ve dug up just around the corner?’ Or: ‘Do you know what I found out recently ...’. The past endures in the City and shapes the associations that workers have with it today.

Having revived my interest in the City and the patterns of its working life, I began to explore how best to research the setting. First, I aimed to discover what it is that makes the City distinct; does geography matter to how it is perceived and experienced as a work setting, and, if so, how does a place such as this accumulate shared meanings? As part of this question, can understanding and paying attention to the *rhythms* of specific workplaces help us to better understand the experience of working in this place, the connections between the social and the material and the way in which the human actors perceive and sense it? Second, what can we discover about how it is perceived, and who, or what, is in place (and vice versa); as the City has been historically documented as being the preserve of men, what does this mean for the performances of gender here? Can the City be said to be a ‘performative’ place, and what does this mean for who, and what, is included, or ‘in place’ in the City, or otherwise? Lastly, I wanted to investigate what the expectations of the place are, and what the conditions of membership are; if it is perceived and experienced as a distinct and performative place, then what might the price of belonging be in the City?

Understanding the relationship between space, place and work is important because, as Linda McDowell (1997, p. 5) has noted, in one of the few studies focussing exclusively on the City of London, more critical attention needs to be given specifically to ‘*where* things take place’. With this in mind, the underlying aim of this book is to explore the role of place in shaping perceptions and experiences of organisational life there. My aim is to emphasise that, as organisations are ‘performative and processual’ (Beyes and Steyaert, 2012, p. 47), they are also situated within a particular place, and that the particularities of their situation are important to understanding the organisational performances and processes enacted within them.

As Tyler (2019, p. 48) explains, in her ethnographic study of working in sex shops in London’s distinctive Soho area, place is deeply important in shaping the identities of workers and customers:

When we think about how different types of work sectors and settings are experienced in this way, how they are both narrative and performative, we can see the extent to which, as McDowell puts it, place matters.

This book draws on Tyler’s research by drawing attention to how a particular place shapes the experiences and identities of people working within it. It has a similar focus in that the research is concerned with the organisational geography of a district, although, as previously stated, the key aim of this book is to show how using a particular collection of methods enabled the research.

Before starting to consider the ways in which the City ‘matters’ to those who work there, this introduction will present an overview of the relationship of place to work and how it has been conceptualised by scholars of organisational life and will also offer a brief introduction to the work of Henri Lefebvre, whose theories underpin this book.

Spaces, Places and Cities

Disentangling the relationship between space and place, and the relationship of the urban to working life, is an essential first step in understanding how urban workplaces are experienced. Space is generally conceived in terms of abstract geometries (distance, direction, size, shape and volume), therefore detached from material form. The distinction between space and place and its epistemological consequences has formed debates stretching back millennia. In ancient Greece, the *khora* was the territory outside the city and the term was used by Plato to describe a receptacle or an interval in time. *Topos*, on the other hand, referred to a specific named place. Place is generally considered as relating to the particular, rather than to the abstract (Creswell, 2013, p. 8). For Tuan (1977, p. 6), space is connected to movement, and place to pauses in that flow:

What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value ... The ideas 'space' and 'place' require each other for definition. From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom and threat of space, and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place.

The difference between 'space' and 'place', then, has to do with the extent to which human beings have ascribed meaning to a specific area. This conceptualisation of space as fluid but place as pause in that movement, however, means that place is fixed and static. For Merrifield (1993, p. 525), space is both flow *and* place, in that it is simultaneously a process and a 'thing': 'Place is shaped by the grounding (the "thingification", if you will) of these material flows'. So here too is the aspect of place as static material form as opposed to flow. But importantly for Merrifield (1993), 'place is where everyday life is *situated*. And as such, place can be taken as *practiced space*' (p. 522).

In this way, place as the situation of everyday life is intimately and always connected with the human and the social. Without naming, or some sort of identification by people, a space cannot be a place; 'places ... are built or in some way physically carved out' (Gieryn, 2000, p. 465). They are also interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood and imagined (Soja, 1996). Places are not (just) geometrically conceived as a mere part of space but can be understood phenomenologically as a distinct coming together in space of human agency and social practices (Agnew, 2011). Gieryn (2000, p. 467) identifies three defining features of place as location, material form and meaningfulness:

Place is, at once, the buildings, streets, monuments, and open spaces assembled at a certain geographic spot *and* actors' interpretations, representations, and identifications. Both domains (the material and the interpretative, the physical and the semiotic) work autonomously *and* in a mutually dependent way. (original emphasis)

A sense of place is not only, therefore, the ability to locate things cognitively but also evolves from the way that meaning is given to a particular location (Rotenberg and McDonogh, 1993). This attribution of meaning means that fundamental social classifications are built in to everyday material places:

Place sustains difference and hierarchy both by routinizing daily rounds in ways that exclude and segregate categories of people, and by embodying in visible and tangible ways the cultural meanings variously ascribed to them. (Gieryn, 2000, p. 474)

In other words, places are fundamentally imbued with power that is not necessarily connected to the people or organisations that occupy them; this power to control or dominate comes through the location, built form and symbolic meanings of a place. The materiality of place cannot, then, be ignored when considering the social practices which operate within them.

An Introduction to Space and Place Within Organisation Studies

The spaces and places that management ‘happens in and through’ (Taylor and Spicer, 2007, p. 325), had been portrayed as relatively neutral containers or settings, yet Soja (1989, 1996) has argued that the spatial turn in the social sciences has ended the modern privileging of time over space and aids the reassertion of space into social theory. There has certainly been something of a burgeoning literature on organisational space over recent years (Kornberger and Clegg, 2003, 2004; Dale, 2005; Halford, 2005; Dale and Burrell, 2007; Herod et al., 2007; Taylor and Spicer, 2007; Tyler and Cohen, 2010; Beyes and Michels, 2011; Beyes and Steyaert, 2012; Wasserman and Frenkel, 2015; Beyes and Holt, 2020). Taylor and Spicer (2007, p. 326) argue that although there is a rich understanding of spatiality, ‘it is problematic in developing an understanding of management and organization as fundamentally spatial activities’. They posit that part of the reason that it is difficult to aggregate research into organisational space is due to the variety and size of the vocabulary used to define it:

Terms in use include: space, place, region, surroundings, locale, built environment, workspace, environments (fixed, semi-fixed, ambient), private/public space, building, territory and proximate space. (Taylor & Spicer, 2007)

We might argue that this is because an adequate theory of space also needs to account for multiple levels and *scales* of space. This also includes more attention to place as well as to space, since places are where organisational events unfold; in other words, bringing to the forefront of management research the ongoing debate regarding the differentiation and relationship between space and place, including the wider context of organisational setting.

Forms of Organisational Space

Just as planned towns such as Port Sunlight or Bourneville in the UK were potent expressions of workforce control, so in the twentieth-first century, it has been argued (English-Lueck, 2000) that Silicon Valley can be viewed as a version of this nineteenth-century ideal, ‘where organizational norms leak into non-work space and the sociocultural order of the region is conditioned by work organizations’ (Taylor and Spicer, 2007, p. 330). I argue here that the City of London is such a place. As well as materialising power relations *within* the workplace, large-scale spaces may also be seen as materialisations of power. Analysts of social geography (King, 1990; Sassen, 1991; Amin and Thrift, 2002) suggest that the concept of the city itself is a large-scale materialisation of organisational power, in that the entire infrastructure provides capitalism with a ‘spatial fix’ that ensures the circulation and reproduction of capitalism (Harvey, 1990), because privatisation and fortification become the primary forces shaping modern urban development, and businesses themselves often become tightly controlled citadels (Bremner, 2000). This has relevance to large-scale organisational settings, such as the City, which define themselves as leading global economic powerhouses.

Thinking about the meanings that are ascribed to spaces, it is fair to say that the symbolic and aesthetic dimensions of people’s responses to organisational space are increasingly recognised as central to understanding them. There are multiple spatial scales which are worthy of analysis both in and, importantly, around organisations, so that we look beyond an analysis or case study of an individual organisation, towards an understanding of the multiplicity of spatial scales within which organising and managing takes place. With this in mind, conceptualising organisational space and settings as *spatially produced* provides an empirically comprehensive means of bringing space back in (Kornberger and Clegg, 2004).

The Importance of the Theories of Henri Lefebvre to Researching Organisational Space

Much of the organisational literature discussed above draws directly on the writing and theorisations of Henri Lefebvre (1901–1991) as a conceptual lens through which to view the social and organisational production of space. In order to examine space as a social product, Lefebvre (1991), using the concept of space as socially produced, rather than something that can be understood or imagined as an independent material reality, posits a theory that understands space as fundamentally bound up with social reality and with our lived experience of the world. As Watkins (2005, p. 211) puts it, he moves space ‘from the realm of the mental to become the foundation of our engagement with the world’. Space cannot therefore exist in itself but is produced by human actors. Lefebvre does not understand space and time as material factors, or as pure, a priori concepts, but both are understood as being integral aspects of social and therefore spatial practice and can only be understood in the context of a specific society.