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Αγεωγράφητος Χώρα

Ελληνικά είδωλα στους
επιστημολογικούς αναστοχασμούς
της ευρωπαϊκής γεωγραφίας



Εκδόσεις
ΠΡΟΠΟΜΠΟΣ



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**Ελληνικά Είδωλα στους Επιστημολογικούς
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Απαγορεύεται η μερική ή ολική αναδημοσίευση του παρόντος έργου καθώς και η αναπαραγωγή του με οποιοδήποτε μέσο χωρίς τη γραπτή άδεια του εκδότη, σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις του Ελληνικού Νόμου (Ν. 1212/1993 όπως έχει τροποποιηθεί και ισχύει σήμερα) και τις διεθνείς συμβάσεις περί πνευματικής ιδιοκτησίας.

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Παράρτημα II: Abstract

AGEOGRAPHITOS CHORA

Geographically illiterate land: Hellenic idols in the epistemological reflections of European Geography

This is a book about the awakening of Geography in Europe, along the Eastern Mediterranean shores, and its development until our days. The slight irony in the smile of the Lemnos Siren on the cover, addressed to travellers lured to lose their way, is a hint about the loss of Geography to Greece or rather henceforth Hellas. The wisdom of ancient cosmologists, astronomers and philosophers illuminating European epistemology and geographical thought, has not motivated their birthplace, Hellas, to sustain Geography as a field of academic knowledge. For at least two millennia after naming Geography for the whole world, Hellas has been relegated to a geographically illiterate land, *Ageographitos Chora*. This gap, in contrast with the scattering of ancient hellenic geographical wisdom to the rest of Europe, constitute the main research questions investigated in this book. Our ambition has been to unveil fragments of ancient "geographical imaginations" (Gregory 1994) which have been scattered in space and time and have penetrated the theories, methods and epistemologies of European Geography. We also attempt to interpret the weakness of Geography in Hellas, its late introduction as a university degree course at the end of the past millenium, and its subsequent regression to positivism and applied science. Finally, we hope to discern where does the future of Geography lie, in the context of a united Europe and the broader globalisation forces.

Our argument goes back to antiquity, when the name of Geography first appeared. After introducing and mapping the main intellectuals of ancient hellenic spatial knowledge and wisdom, in Chapter 1, we start following the epistemological shifts of European Geography in space and time since the 19th century, in Chapters 2-8. In this main corpus of the book, each Chapter is introduced by an "idol", a hellenic philosopher or geographer who has influenced the geographical imaginations of each epistemological school, the theories and methods developed in each Chapter. In a systematic pattern, each Chapter concludes with the presentation of some celebrated concrete examples of geographical models or analyses developed within each paradigm discussed. A kind of postmodern "snapshot approach" is thus carried from the treatment of antiquity as a long moment in time without the follow-up of the middle ages, to the treatment of one epistemology in each chapter which has a place in the palimpsest of the development of European geographical imaginations. This analysis is brought together in Chapter 9. The investigation of selected European "national schools" on the basis of a research project, allows us to interpret the retarded state of Greek Geography with a triplet of national and global forces of restructuring. Finally, in Chapter 10 it is argued that globalisation, the digital revolution, cyberspace and the knowledge society are weakening the "national schools" of European geography

and draw Hellas into a cosmopolitan educational milieu before it ever had the chance to develop its own "national school".

Chapter 1, "From Homer to Ypatia: Sciences and Exploration in Ancient Hellas", is headed by verses from Homer's *Odyssey* where Calypso reveals her technological skills as she launches Odysseus' boat. This chapter sets the scene by expanding on the skills and knowledge of ancient scholars with an emphasis on geographical imaginations. Mapping the birthplaces of ancient astronomers, cosmologists, geographers, philosophers, explorers, discoverers, poets who have contributed to spatial knowledge (Map 1), we have discovered a very interesting pattern, with a primal nucleus. The places of origin of presocratic philosophers form an agglomeration on the Eastern Aegean islands and Asia Minor coasts. Most of the presocratic astronomers and philosophers (Table 1) were born within that limited cradle. After 500 BC, however, Map 1 opens up as the birthplaces of celebrated philosophers, explorers and lesser-known geographers, philosophers and narrators, who contributed in knowledge about the earth, the diversity of its peoples, methods of understanding the world, epistemologies and ontologies about it, scatter to Magna Grecia: westward beyond Massalia (Marseille) and eastward towards hellenic colonies up to the depths of Asia Minor (Table 2). In a narrative that prioritises space over time, i.e. places of origin rather than the customary periodisation of these geniuses of antiquity, we find something similar with today's "national schools", where wisdom about the earth and the universe is passed on from generation to generation in hellenic colonies where, remarkably, most geographers lived and worked (Map 1). By contrast, the mainland known city States of antiquity nurtured philosophers rather than geographers or earth scientists. These scholars held Geography very high and, after Eratosthenes named it as a discipline, the expression "*Ageographitos*", i.e. "geographically illiterate", was used as a metonymy for "illiterate" people in Hellas and its colonies.

At the time of the flowering of ancient Geography, "Europe" was named in a mythical narrative (Leontidou 2004) embracing the Mediterranean shores (Map 2). This "sea in the midst of land" (Braudel 1993) was the epicentre of Europe throughout Roman times (Map 3), but during the next millennium, explorations moved its core from the South towards the Northeast (Map 4), carrying geographical wisdom along with it. Geography declined in the middle ages and was resurrected in the Renaissance city States (Frame 4) but especially around the 15th century, as a precondition for explorations. Finally, the advent of capitalism moved development and wisdom to the main urban centres of the core of Europe (Map 5). Geographical concepts gradually crystallized, from Aristotle (Frame 6) up to the present: city, environment, territory, region, neighbourhood, location, distance, chora, milieu, and especially space and place (Massey 2005).

Ancient intellectuals introduced in Chapter 1 then tread on subsequent Chapters as idols which have inspired the different geographical imaginations involved in each of the Chapters 2-8. The idol of an ancient geographer is connected with the epistemological school, the theories and methods developed in each Chapter. And in a similar manner, each Chapter concludes with the presentation of some celebrated concrete examples of geographical models or analyses developed within each of the epistemological or theoretical traditions.

In Chapter 2, "The awakening of the first Natural and Human Science: From Deter-

minism to Anarchist Geography", the figure who inspires our analysis of determinism, is Hippocrates –the first "darwinist" long before Darwin wrote his own theories– a healer and traveller, with abstracts from his work on the relationship of people with air, water, climate. He compares people's health in regions which he names as Europe, Asia, Africa. Hippocrates introduces us to the social darwinism of "classical" Geography, if not to the rigid German version which has distanced geographers from geopolitics since then. There is also a relation with classical Geography in references to the Aristotelian theory of the State. Geography in modern Europe is then shaken by the clash between 19th-century determinism with the possibilist geography of the early 20th century. The influential French school of regional Geography rises and is contested by anarchist geographers, especially Reclus and Kropotkin (1974 edn). The most vivid example of the clash between determinism and possibilism has been articulated later in the USA: the connection of ecology with human communities, spatial competition and adaptation, has been elaborated by the Chicago School of Human Ecology. It is interesting that Park and his colleagues (1967 edn) were in fact influenced by European sociologists and their theories later returned to Europe as an influential method for the study of urban sociology and geography. The second Chapter closes with a discussion of the first ecological urban models –concentric, sectoral, polycentric– and filtering (Figures 6, 7, 8).

Chapter 3, "The 'Quantitative Revolution' and Logical Positivism in Geography", is introduced by infidel Thomas, the disciple who sought empirical evidence for the resurrection of Christ. Some concepts from epistemology are clarified in this Chapter before we turn to the analysis of the advent of empiricism but especially the "quantitative revolution" in the 1960s. Anglo-American geographers were inspired from a mainly European positivist epistemology with such enthusiasm, that they misinterpreted T. Kuhn (1981 trsl) as a positivist. The "quantitative" paradigm is studied in the context of Fordism, new computer technology, physical planning and the spatial determinism it entailed, and other socio-economic developments which led to this major shift. The introduction of multidisciplinary affected the fragmentation of Geography, and the fluid definitions of this discipline involved contrasting couplets (Table 7). The Chapter ends with several examples of geographical modelling with traditions ranging from interwar Germany to postwar Anglo-American models: Central Place Theory (Figure 9), the Alonso model (Figure 10), Urban Life Cycles (Figure 11), the Rank-Size Rule (Figure 12) and Urban Primacy with an original diagram for Hellas, 1951-91 (Figure 13), are presented.

Sapho as seen by Elytis opens **Chapter 4, "Landscapes of the Mind, Poetics of Space: Return to Humanism"**, with a reference to the brave intervention of her lyrical verses in a period when epic poetry predominated. This Chapter focuses upon what we call "transitional" paradigms, which partly criticize positivism but can not yet break off from its embrace. The first criticisms by Firey (1947) and Jones (1956, 1960) introduced subjectivity –or rather the tension between structure and agency– interdisciplinarity and humanism against the *homo economicus* in Geography. The most influential trends emerging are Behavioural Geography, Humanistic Geography, and Liberal Geography which Harvey (1973) counterposes to Radical Geography. Examples discussed include applied geographies and the intellectual basis of urban and regional planning projections (Frame 8) in the context of Behavioural Geography, mental maps and the image of the city (Maps 14, 16, 17) in the

context of Humanistic Geography, and Time-Geography seen as the intersection of the two paradigms (Figure 15). Original research findings about mental maps of various social groups in the Athens squatter settlements during the 1970s are presented here (Maps 18, Leontidou 2001 in hellenic).

Chapter 5, "Reflection on Uneven Spatial Restructuring and the crystallisation of Critical Geography", opens up with a quotation from Herodotus' *Clio*, where he considers the movement of uneven development in space, among city States, as inevitable. This refers to both the movement among geographical paradigms, which continues throughout the 20th century, and the advent of new methods in the understanding of uneven development, which Critical Geography elaborates. The critique by radical geographers against positivist stereotypes as detailed in Johnston (1983, 1997) is first taken up in the socio-political context of urban social movements after May 1968 in France. A new generation of geographers then attacked positivist paradigms, spatial fetishism and the "ecological fallacy", fragmentation of Geography and the elegance of spatial models which had so little to say about changes in the real world. They counterposed a new approach, stressing interaction between society and space (Frame 9, Massey 1984, 2001 trsl), a new relationship with nature and ecology, via Marxism, and the return to Eco-Geography (Frame 10, Swyngedouw 2000). A series of examples from analyses in the Critical Geography paradigm follows. New theories and methods for the analysis of global uneven development beyond "indicators" (Maps 19, 20) have been elaborated. In the analysis of uneven development in urban space, we observe the passage from quantitative "factorial ecology" (Figure 21) to a structural analysis, which does not defy indicators such as the "Location Quotient" (Frame 11), but is sensitive to struggles for space in every interpretation of urban spatial patterns (Leontidou 1990). Examples from the Mediterranean city are discussed (Frame 12), with Athens as the core (Map 22), and squatting is considered as a major intervention by human agency in the construction of urban space globally (Map 23) and in local transformation (Maps 24, 25).

Plato's metaphor of the cave has been repeatedly used by Critical Realists as an inspiration for their epistemology and method in social science and Geography more generally. Long abstracts from Plato's text open **Chapter 6, "Critical Realism and the Political-Economy Approach"**. The Chapter focuses on theory in Critical Realism and on methods of "unpacking" through iterative processes of intensive and extensive research (Table 13, Figure 26, Sayer 1992). In this context, the shift of analysis from modes of production and social formations to regulation theory is extensively discussed, the structure / agency question is posed, and the political-economy approach is introduced. Flexibility, informalisation and peripheral Fordism are discussed, before the shift to flexible accumulation and just-in-time production is introduced, with an emphasis on Southern rather than Western accumulation regimes. As in every chapter, examples of spatial divisions of labour (Massey 1984) are discussed with the successful metaphor of the game of cards (Figure 27, Gregory 1989) and an emphasis on post-fordist landscapes in the Mediterranean, on notions of embeddedness and indigenous development.

Chapter 7, "Postmodernism and Local Narratives" is introduced by Heraclitos, the "dark philosopher" whose work has been lost and fragmented, known only through the deconstruction of works of others. The uneven and contested trend of postmodernism

has fascinated geographers because of its emphasis on space rather than time (Harvey 1989, Soja 1989), of the resurrection of spatial differentiation, of innovative methods such as deconstruction and appreciation of local narratives, of the cityscapes it envisages (Leontidou 1993b), and other aspects, as argued in this chapter. Postmodernity dwells in several couplets (Table 14), despite the fact that it seeks to deconstruct dualities and insert in-between spaces (Leontidou 1996, 1997). Examples of geographical analysis are taken from writings on urban landscapes (Frame 15), urban competition and the entrepreneurial city in the core of Europe (Maps 28, 29, and Frame 16), but also in its periphery (Frame 15, Bailly et al. 1996; Craglia et al. 2004).

Chapter 8, "The Cultural turn", is introduced by Strabo's abstract on Geography as Philosophy. The concept of culture is examined, from its variation in the hellenic language (Frame 17) to its scope in European cultural studies. Intersubjectivity, positionality and cultural identity are then discussed and the network society is analyzed with reference to the tradition in social anthropology and human geography. Networks are counterposed to the neighbourhood community idea (Figures 30, 31), up to the new theories of embeddedness, interaction, trust and networking in economic transactions. Original research findings about social networks of various social groups in the Athens squatter settlements during the 1970s are also presented (Figure 32, Leontidou 2001 in hellenic). Three examples of analyses in the context of the "cultural turn" are outlined, one economic –on embeddedness and the "learning region"– +, one cultural, on "reading" the cultural landscape –and one socio-political on social networking, movements, and the "right to the city".

Chapter 9, "Geographical 'national schools' and Heterotopias in European Universities" is introduced with Isocrates' famous phrase about the definition of Hellenes by education rather than nature –a much-quoted anti-racist slogan. This corresponds to our exploration of the poverty of Geographical education in Hellas at the same time as the wisdom of ancient Hellenes has been incorporated in European geographical knowledge –even if only as an introduction. This Chapter traces the global influence of certain geographical "national schools" with a discussion of the spatial relocation of innovation in Geography among certain European nation States (Table 18), which advanced the discipline as an academic field since the 19th century. Among the many schools which have influenced most countries and especially Hellas, we focus on Germany, France, the UK and Italy. The weakness of hellenic Geography is then presented through findings of a research project (Leontidou ed. 2000, ΕΠΕΑΚ funded by the hellenic Ministry of Education), as well as of participant observation by the author in hellenic and UK Universities. The research project has formed part of the author's efforts to help establish Geography at University level since the 1980s –by submitting reports (Leontidou 1986a in hellenic), taking up the first Chair and Senate membership (1997-8) of the first degree-awarding Department of Human Geography in Hellas, at the University of the Aegean (Figure 34), re-naming it into Department of Geography (1997) after curriculum upgrading (Frame 19). Before this, there were some scant Geography courses in hellenic Universities, especially in Architecture and Engineering, in Geology and Economics, and some research activity: since the first postwar period, foreign –especially French–geographers have been arriving to study hellenic regions before and during the dictatorship, while at the same time graduates of foreign universities have been returning to Hellas, since Geography was not taught at University level.

Instead of creating flexibility and cosmopolitanism, however, these polyphonies of European but also American and Canadian traditions of Geography clash on hellenic territory. Instead of helping Hellenes to understand the diversity of Geography, they have had the opposite effect: living on borrowed consciousness has resulted in hybridity. The Foucaultian (1986) concept of "heterotopia" is introduced here for the analysis of Geography in Hellas, or rather of various Geographies in discord. Not only various schools", but also diverse epistemologies have been reshuffled in a sort of a Babel tower, along with politics of "gatekeepers" and "tribes" seeking control of academic "territories" (Becher & Trowler 2001) –in Hellas and around Europe. Evidence is presented to argue that after a long period of absence of Geography in hellenic University education, heterotopia has accompanied it since its creation in the 1990s and a bias toward positivism, empiricism (GIS) and "applied" Geography. The argument here comes to highlight the title of the book, "Ageographitos Chora". Hellas, the place where ancient wisdom flowered in the past and which actually named the discipline (Geography - writing the earth), has remained outside of or at best marginal to the trajectories of European geographical knowledge and the epistemological pathways of European Geography, because of a triplet of forces introduced at this point: the place of Hellas in Colonial Europe; the neglect of reform and spatial planning by the state and civil society; and heterotopias in academic cultures.

The last **Chapter 10, "Geographical imaginations of Globalisation"**, begins with abstracts from Iliad, wherein the God Hephestus carves Achilles' shield with images of his cosmological and geographical imaginations. This last chapter of the book attempts to deconstruct the double pessimism of hellenic provinciality on the one hand, and traps of the Janus-faced concept called globalisation, on the other. After discussing the ambiguity of globalisation, which is in fact both an "objective" economic and technological process (Map 36), "the new imperialism" (Harvey 2003), and a sinister or propagandistic concept which, however, is contested by progressive social movements globalised via the cyberspace, we analyse three areas of major geographical change induced by cosmopolitanism, the network society, and the importance of cyberspace. The first analysis deals with territorial borders, which are volatile in the EU (Map 37, Table 20) and especially in Hellas (Map 38). The second one studies migration, which receives new forms and origins/ destinations and poses new challenges (Figure 39), as well as diaspora which changes with globalisation (Frame 21). The third analysis turns to education, which embraces Open and Distance Learning as the cyberspace expands, and inevitably abandons the notion of "national schools".

This book thus constitutes a combination of a research monograph and a textbook. Research findings are presented: on antique geographical imaginations, on modern university education in Geography and the impact of technological and social change on the discipline, as well as on a triplet of interpreting the backwardness modern Greek Geography. These are included in a narrative of the major shifts of Geography as a product of European culture. Today geographical knowledge expands enormously in Europe (Figure 40), and the global knowledge society may draw hellenic Geography into its flow, despite the fact that no "national school" has developed here. A European outlook is inevitable in the future. Besides, we propose that there are aspects of the hellenic landscape and its *genius loci*, which tend to re-possess what hellenic Universities have lost, leaving the country geographically illiterate, "Ageographitos Chora"...