

Spatial Divisions of Labour

Also by Doreen Massey

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SPACE, PLACE AND GENDER

Spatial Divisions of Labour

Social Structures and the Geography of Production

SECOND EDITION

Doreen Massey

palgrave
macmillan

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FOR
NANCY AND JACK
*with many thanks
and much love*

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Preface to the First Edition

This book has been a long time in the making. It began life as a contribution to a debate within the branch of geography known as 'industrial location theory' – as what I hoped would be a trenchant critique of all, or pretty much all, that had gone before, together with a second half which would present 'an alternative approach'. A number of things have happened in the period since then. I got bored with the critique. The second 'half' became the length of a book in itself, and it also changed its nature. From being a schematic outline it became increasingly grounded in what was going on in Britain and in other advanced capitalist countries.

But more than anything else I became increasingly convinced of the importance of the issues involved and of the fact that they should have a wider audience. My basic aim had been to link the geography of industry and employment to the wider, and underlying, structures of society. And one of the things I do in the book is present an approach which, I hope, makes that possible. The initial intention, in other words, was to start from the characteristics of economy and society, and proceed to explain their geography. But the more I got involved in the subject, the more it seemed that the process was not just one way. It is also the case – I would argue – that understanding geographical organisation is fundamental to understanding an economy and a society. The geography of a society makes a difference to the way it works.

If this is true analytically, it is also true politically. For there to be any hope of altering the fundamentally unequal geography of British economy and society (and that of other capitalist countries, too), a politics is necessary which links questions of geographical distribution to those of social and economic organisation. Effectively to confront the spatial inequality in Britain today means taking on much the same battles – and much the same social strata – as is necessary to win any wider progressive change. But it is equally true that any wider national political strategy must be sensitive to the variations in economic structure, in occupations, in political tradition and in the fabric of day-to-day life which exist between different parts of the country.

I have had a lot of help and support during the production of this book. Most of the book was written while I was the SSRC Fellow in Industrial Location Research, and I should like to thank the SSRC and its staff. The development of the ideas and arguments has been aided and stimulated by many friends and colleagues over a number of years. It would be impossible to mention everyone by name. What has been best about the process has been the gradual development of a practice which at least tries to argue without scoring points, and to criticise by being constructive. For their help, particularly in the final stages, however, I should like to thank Michael Ball and Huw Beynon, who read the manuscript, Nancy Massey for typing it magnificently, and a number of times, Richard Meegan, my co-worker for many eventful years, and Ron Martin.

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Preface to the Second Edition

When the idea of a second edition of *Spatial Divisions of Labour* was first suggested to me, some time ago, I was reluctant initially to take it up. Above all I was unsure of the form which it should take.

The first edition of the book was stimulated in part by empirical changes, by the great shifts which began to take place in regional (i.e. sub-national) economic and social geographies in the first world, from about the middle years of the 1960s. Such changes were important – they affected the lives of people in cities and regions across large parts of the world. But the message I wanted to draw from those changes was most importantly theoretical. The idea was to communicate *a way of understanding uneven geographical development*, rather than to advance an interpretation of the shape of the world at some particular moment. The latter was important too but it was, as much as anything, a vehicle for a more general message. The arguments concerned, above all, the way in which we conceptualise economic and to some extent more general social space, about how we understand the differences and structures of inequality within it, and about how we might begin to think of the economic identities of unique places.

These issues, it seems to me, remain important. Much of the argument of *Spatial Divisions of Labour* has been widely accepted among geographers. But there remain ambiguities and (as they seem to me!) misunderstandings. Moreover, since the time of the first edition there has been wide-ranging debate, discussion, not to say controversy, in part sparked by the book itself, in part originating elsewhere but within which the book has nevertheless become embroiled. As Ann Markusen and Ron Martin point out in their recent assessments of the book and its career (*Progress in Human Geography*, 1993), some of its ways of arguing foreshadowed issues only now emerging more broadly on to the agenda of intellectual debate. They are, moreover, issues which go way beyond the discipline of geography to engage with currents of argument – about spatiality, location and place, about uniqueness, contingency and modes of theorising – now preoccupying a wide range of the human sciences.

It therefore seemed appropriate for a second edition to be focused on these debates, and on an exploration of the theoretical argument of the book in the context of some of the discussions of which over the last decade it has been part and in the light of subsequent theoretical developments. The body of the book, from Chapter 2 to the original 'Postscript', therefore remains unchanged except for the correction of some minor typographical errors. However, both the first and last chapters of this edition are new and, as well as considering recent changes in the nature and form of uneven development, most centrally take on this task of making more explicit the key theoretical arguments and methodological stances of the book and of setting them in the context of wider current debate. The new first chapter reassesses the purpose and broad form of the book and pulls out the issues which are most important and which have become foci of subsequent debate. The new last chapter provides a detailed commentary on the text under these major headings. It is hoped that this will clarify some of the book's positions and intentions and set them in a wider context, that in particular it will make the book more helpful for teaching purposes (by tracing threads of argument as they appear – as theoretical statement or in concrete use – in different parts of the book), and that it will provoke yet further discussion on issues which remain of central importance.

I should like to thank my publisher Steven Kennedy for goading me into this, and for his continued advice and cheerful encouragement. I should also like to thank John Allen, Allan Cochrane and Andrew Sayer for helpful comments and much discussion. In the ten years since I wrote the first edition of *Spatial Divisions of Labour* I have been working at the Open University. It is a place which has a perhaps unique and certainly very collaborative and cooperative way of working. My colleagues there, most particularly in Geography, have been a constant source of new ideas and of intellectual stimulation, and I am grateful for that. I should further like to thank Doreen Warwick and Margaret Charters, also of the Open University, for typing the material for this second edition.

DOREEN MASSEY

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List of Abbreviations

AUEW	Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
BLMC	British Leyland Motor Corporation
BSC	British Steel Corporation
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CDP	Community Development Project
CIDA	Cornwall Industrial Development Association
CPSA	Civil and Public Services Association
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DEA	Department of Economic Affairs
EAG	Economists Advisory Group
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	Economic Development Council
EEC	European Economic Community
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
IDC	Industrial Development Certificate
ILAG	Inquiry into Location Attitudes Group
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRC	Industrial Reorganisation Corporation
LOB	Location of Offices Bureau
MP	Member of Parliament
NALGO	National Association of Local Government Officers
NCB	National Coal Board
NEB	National Enterprise Board
NEDO	National Economic Development Office
NUFLAT	National Union of Footwear, Leather and Allied Trades
NUGMW	National Union of General and Municipal Workers
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NUTGW	National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development

PBR	Payment By Results
REP	Regional Employment Premium
ROSE	Rest of South East
SET	Selective Employment Tax
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
TGWU	Transport and General Workers' Union
TUC	Trades Union Congress