

Metaphorically and genealogically speaking, our guiding images may be seen as forms of cultural maps. Such guiding images “naturalize” our orientations to the physical and social world, the steps we take in everyday life and our anticipated future journeys (2005, p.1).

Hutchinson sees maps as sites of cultural politics and argues that developing critical awareness of how context determines what is possible, and how map and context are self-referential artifacts, is an important critical task. Thinking of futures as a spectrum of possibilities running along a critical continuum suggests that thinking shamanically about context allows critical agency to become contextually aware. For Hutchinson this would mean finding pathways of practical hope, “From a critical futurist and peace education perspective, it is important to attempt to negotiate pathways of practical hope rather than make a labyrinth of cynicism, fatalism or despair convincing” (Hutchinson, 2005, p.10).

CLA’s potential is enlarged when it is understood as a map that performs a number of specific tasks:

1. It generates pathways of practical hope through its process orientation
2. It maps epistemological context
3. It problematizes a given moment and thus returns agency to those in context
4. It contains the energy of the rhizome, harnessing it to an understanding of context and transformation

The following section illustrates the cartographic possibilities for CLA when it rhizomically intersects with Deleuze and Guattari’s thinking on the map.

The Map: a Rhizomic CLA?

Deleuze and Guattari describe the map as follows:

The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways; in this sense, the burrow is an animal rhizome, and sometimes maintains a clear distinction between the line of flight as a passageway and storage or living strata (cf. the muskrat). A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back “to the same”. The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged “competence” (1987, pp. 12-13).

It is not too difficult to see how CLA fits with this description of a rhizomic map. Firstly, CLA allows for the heterodox and transgressive. Secondly, it generates a space of possibility rather than dictating what goes in the space. Thirdly, it

identifies loci around which meaning in the passing–partial–present aggregates, yet it avoids definition—allowing instead for those within the CLA “burrow–rhizome” to define themselves. Fourthly, it can be asserted that hybrids like CLA are rhizomic by nature/definition. The hybrid CLA fulfils its map potential while not exhausting it or being confined to it. This section will demonstrate these assertions by unpacking the above statement from Deleuze and Guattari.

- *The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious* (all bullet point statements are from the above quotation).

CLA validates the mythic, metaphorical and unconscious/preconscious dimensions of culture by representing this level as foundational. This level provides the energy that motivates human cultural creativity; when enacted face-to-face the process of CLA invites participants to generate–identify–reconfigure their own myths. In this way the unconscious drives of a social-institutional context are made “visible” not as “things”, but as processes and urges that emerge and dissolve as the CLA process unfolds. The present becomes contingent, agency returns as the unconscious along with the conscious self, which in turn becomes contested and open for reconstruction. When applied epistemologically CLA maps by analogy, suggestion, inference and association. Thus as Inayatullah points out:

The project here is to show that the real has come about for various reasons and that the coming about of a specific “present” means the non-realisation of other “presents”. Thus, in any given moment, *what-is* is an imposition, a silencing of various ways of thinking, of doing, and a realisation of other ways of thinking (2004, p. 71).

The autopoiesis of the individual becomes that of the social; and the autopoiesis of the social becomes that of each individual. The lines of flight available within any context are potentially infinite. The unconscious is like a deep cave and the conscious provides tracings on the wall.

CLA locates these conscious tracings, offering genealogy, deconstruction and meta-reflexive opportunities that are fractal in their engagements with the social/individual nexus. Hence the “tracings”, are simple etchings on the cave wall, while CLA offers a rough approximation to the cave. Such a cavernous space is hinted at in Picasso’s evocative painting of the Minotaur (Figure 3) in which a bodiless pair of hands beckons or perhaps seeks to repel. They have not yet made themselves. In one sense they represent Deleuze and Guattari’s Body without Organs (BwO) (1987, p.149), the constant possibility of the reconfiguration of desire through the binding presences of organism, significance and subjectification (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.159). From the perspective of CLA they can be read as the human intersection with the mythic meta-self. They bind and unbind; beckon and repel. They are the conscious and the unconscious as they are both figurative and suggestive. CLA maps the conditionality of our social world. It produces a critical agency by offering us a possible way to construct the “unconscious” conditions that bring coherence to the social–individual dialectic.



Figure 3. Minotaur and the Mare before the Cave (Picasso)

- *It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency.*

CLA acts in a similar way to Deleuze and Guattari's plane of consistency. The former acknowledges layers while the latter strata (1987, p.69). The terrain mapped by both is paradoxically indeterminate yet Inayatullah allows, in fact, *insists* on a normative dimension to CLA.

I argue for an eclectic, integrated approach to methodology. The approach is not based on the idiosyncratic notions of a particular researcher. Nor is it a turn to the postmodern, in that all methods or approaches are equally valid and valuable. Hierarchy is not lost and the vertical gaze remains. But it challenges power over others and divorces hierarchy from the feudal/traditional modes... How myth, worldview, and social context create particular litany problems remains foundational (2004, pp.2-3).

Both however, trace connections and use them freely to develop concepts, and associations, and expose ruptures and asymmetries. Deleuze and Guattari write so poetically that their metaphors collide and tease: they have strata but no hierarchy; their plane of consistency can easily be read as a plane of inconsistency. Yet they offer the map as a rhizomic system that is fluid, eclectic and transgressive. It has, as they suggest above, the potential to create the 'maximum opening' for BwO, or as Inayatullah would have it, identity categories. Within CLA such categories are constantly disrupted and problematized, new stories and connections emerge and then destabilize: this is a map of potentiality as much as a method for the reterritorialization of identity and agency. In this way it corresponds in process, content and intention to what Deleuze and Guattari say of the plane of consistency:

What it comes down to is that we cannot content ourselves with a dualism or

summary opposition between the strata and the destratified plane of consistency. The strata themselves are animated and defined by relative speeds of deterritorialization; moreover, absolute deterritorialization is there from the beginning, and the strata are spin-offs, thickenings on a plane of consistency that is everywhere, always primary and always immanent (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 70).

- *It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation.*

CLA is open: it can be, and regularly is, applied to any working or theoretical context. It moves across the social, rhizomically connecting, linking, disconnecting with context and subjectivity. In this sense it is the ultimate map. But it has the uncanny ability, not unlike Jack Sparrow's compass² in the movies *Pirates of the Caribbean*, to take us to where we wish to be: hence its normative base. Yet, despite the avowals of relativity, the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari is motivated by the same desire Inayatullah has to destabilise and problematize regimes of truth in order to release the creative potential that a good map contains. The implicit normativity of the rhizome is contained in their commitment to extract:

...from chaos the 'people to come' in the form that art, but also philosophy and science, summon forth: mass-people, world-people, brain-people, chaos-people—nonthinking thought that lodges in the three (art, philosophy and science), like Klee's nonconceptual concept and Kandinsky's internal silence (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.218).

The rhizomic qualities of CLA, its ability to morph and shift context and identity are rooted in its chameleon-like ability to acquire meaning when in context. In the absence of an object CLA is nothing. Like a map it needs a territory to chart, coordinates and compass; and a purpose for going on the journey.

- *It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation.*

CLA, like all maps, is an analogue for the Real but not in the mimetic sense, rather as an abstract representation or a symbol that condenses the properties (the marks, contours, forms) of reality into a system of signs. Inayatullah presents it, projecting it on the wall, via the analogue of the iceberg. This image alerts us to how little of the Real we see. It reminds all involved with the CLA process that much behind the litany of day-to-day issues is unclear, uncharted and inaccessible. Much of the litany is under writ by what Deleuze and Guattari characterise as "A silent dance" (1987, p.69), a dance on alien terrain; a dance over a symbolic map such as that performed by Pueblo Indians (Sando, 1998).

As a map CLA also reminds us that the dance is with a multitude, people from the past and from distant lands, people also from the future; and not just people! We are dancing in and with the Cosmos. CLA is a work of art and of heart: it is, as Leonard Cohen notes in his great poem "Dance Me to the End of Love", a dance with a burning violin; a dance beyond fear in which "We're both of us beneath

our love, we're both of us above..." And the politics behind it all is libratory and designed to expose power/knowledge coagulations through the hermeneutic of a cultural space constructed to open up possibility rather than close it down.

- *Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways; in this sense, the burrow is an animal rhizome, and sometimes maintains a clear distinction between the line of flight as a passageway and storage or living strata (cf. the muskrat). A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back 'to the same'.*

The emptiness of CLA means that it is the ultimate rhizome—all is connection, movement, with direction linked to intention. As with the compass of Johnny Depp's Jack Sparrow character in *Pirates of the Caribbean* CLA is a tool for reaching a more optimal place – a desired “end” – that is still open to new interventions. This allows for a creative, non-prescriptive flexibility that allows agency to move across the layered/discursive fields of the CLA–rhizome–map. Responsibility, in the practical context also shifts, as Inayatullah points out:

[W]ho solves the problem/issue also changes with each level. At the litany level, it is usually others—the government or corporations. At the social level, it is often some partnership between different groups. At the worldview level, it is people or voluntary associations, and at the myth/metaphor it is leaders or artists (2007, p. 57).

- *The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged “competence”.*

Finally, unlike “tracing” that tends methodologically to be descriptive, analytical and constitutive, CLA is a map-method that is committed to forms of anticipatory action learning that challenge power structures, offer alternative ‘archaeologies’ of the present (Foucault, 2005), and question the foundational assumptions that are often unconsciously accepted by both individuals, groups and epistemic communities (academics) as incontestable. CLA's performativity is linked to context, and demonstrated rather than mandated *in situ*. Certainly, the normative basis for CLA's application—the intention of generating inclusive social pedagogies of resistance and re-enchantment that increase levels of institutional, social and individual agency is a significant guarantor for such a positioning.

Constructing a Method of the Multiple

Shamanic futures thinking seeks to understand agency as a relational expression within context. CLA as a rhizomic and hybrid map of context is well placed to facilitate this process. Hybridity defines the process nature of the life-world as it is the product of rhizomic encounter.

Through an exploration of the work of Deleuze and Guattari CLA has been shown to be a useful vehicle for understanding the rhizomic process of becoming that these philosophers describe. In CLA the heterotopic, the immanent, the intercivilizational and the transdisciplinary all meet and are integral to its nature and process. In this way CLA clearly meets the criteria identified by Deleuze and

Guattari for a method for attaining the multiple:

To attain the multiple, one must have a method that effectively constructs it; no typographical cleverness, no lexical agility, no blending or creation of words, no syntactical boldness, can substitute for it (1987, p.22).

CLA's hybrid and heterotopic nature constructs such a method. It thus facilitates critical analysis that is productive of conditions that expand life's possibilities and generates the kind of critical agency necessary for vibrant social learning. To further demonstrate the degree of alignment between CLA and Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomic thinking, time was spent in this paper exploring how CLA functions like the map that these philosophers describe as a tool for both constructing and theorizing the multiple. As a map CLA moves beyond taxonomic and schematic method to a process theory of being/becoming. In this it offers a way to think about critical agency pragmatically, in context, as part of a pedagogic process of possibility (Bussey et al, 2012) committed to expanding the emancipatory politics at the heart of the critical project.

Conclusion

This paper has explored CLA through comparison with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizome. Concepts have effects and therefore we can understand them best through application and reflection (Bussey, 2014). CLA's uses can be in the analytic sphere as taxonomy or in the applied sphere of process method in which it functions pedagogically as a critical facilitator of liberatory consciousness and the social learning this fosters. Thus it treats any singular projection of reality with suspicion, instead embracing the plural as the creative inversion of given context. In this way structure becomes flexible and open to transformation whilst agency finds itself located in structure so as to critique and influence it in ways that make it more reflective of optimal current and future possibilities.

CLA can be understood to function as a *map of process*. This process functions rhizomically, context is thus always unique and constructed with infinite variety, yet is made legible through CLA. In this way CLA acts as a method of the multiple and as a process theory for rethinking social learning. CLA as a method deepens futures thinking by (1) revealing the role that context has in shaping meaning and (2) the role people have in shaping context. Thus CLA works the interface between agency and structure where intelligibility shapes individual and social existence. It is this ability to engage process—how agency and structure generate meaning interactively—that makes CLA an appropriate social learning tool.

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Notes

- 1 This is a paradox! They argue that we need a method while declaring that the rhizome is an anti-method. CLA by offering sites for rhizomic process thus acts like a bottle for an unstable chemical.
- 2 Jack Sparrow is the anti-hero of the movie *The Pirates of the Caribbean*. In this movie his compass keeps pointing in the direction of that which he most desires, with comic results when he falls for his best friend's girlfriend.

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