

NEO-MEDIEVALISM AND THE ANCHORING OF NEW SPATIAL IDENTITIES:

linking new regional and urban identities with medieval memories

Kees Terlouw
Urban and Regional research centre Utrecht
Department of Human Geography & Planning
Utrecht University
Netherlands

k.terlouw@uu.nl

INTRODUCTION

Although the Middle Ages are long gone, the memory of the Middle Ages is still used by academics and politicians. Some academics use their interpretation of the Middle Ages to theorise about the current social and spatial order. Initially the Middle Ages were used as the Dark Ages from which man has liberated himself. Especially modernisation theory regarded the Middle Ages as the archetype of the unchanging traditional society from which man has struggled to liberate himself. After the liberation from these traditional shackles human development could 'take-off' and progress through the different stages of modernisation (Rostow 1960). This linear development model of the modernisation theory was popular after the Second World War, but was challenged by the current period of economic and political problems which started at the end of the 20th century.

This paper starts by discussing some aspects of these economic and political crises which challenge the nation-state. Then attention focusses on the ideas of Immanuel Wallerstein and Saskia Sassen who use the Middle Ages to better understand the current transformations of the societal and spatial order. We then focus on how the legitimisation of the political order centre on the nation-state is challenged through the undermining of national identities due to globalisation and individualisation. We end this paper by discussing how new spatial identities are stabilised through positioning them between the future and the past. This shows how the memory of the Middle Ages is used to strengthen the legitimisation of the political systems in these globalising and individualising times.

THE CURRENT CRISIS OF THE NATION-STATE IN THE MIRROR OF THE MIDDLE AGES

The increased global competitive pressures eroded since the 1970s the centralised welfare state. Neo-liberal solutions were introduced to deregulate the economy and improve the competitiveness of companies on the world market. Decentralisation of political power was one instrument used to confront the challenges of globalisation. The transfer of social and economic responsibilities

reduced the financial and regulatory burdens on the central state. The regional level was also assumed to be better suited to provide companies with tailor made conditions helping them to compete on the world market. New forms of relations between the different levels of government emerged. Not only the hierarchical administrative relations changed through decentralisation and European Integration, but also new cooperative relations of governance were formed with non-state actors. The combination of changing vertical relation and the growth of horizontal linkages constantly create new political spaces and unsettled novel forms of statehood. New regional organisations constantly emerge and their membership, territory and aims frequently change (Brenner 2004; Held, McGrew 2000. Rodriguez-Pose, Sandall 2008; Keating 1999).

To better understand this current crisis of the nation state some academics make comparisons with the Middle Ages. According to Immanuel Wallerstein the current crises signifies the transition from one structural *TimeSpace* to another. This is according to him comparable to the crisis at the end of the Middle Ages which marked the emergence of the current capitalist world-system. Based on an elaboration of Braudel's famous distinction between three forms of time Immanuel Wallerstein distinguishes five different *TimeSpaces* (Wallerstein 1988; 1998). The first type, *eternal TimeSpace*, is characterised by explanations that disregard the specificities of time and space. This search for general laws of behaviour has dominated the social sciences until recently. They conceptualized social change as eternal progress starting in the Dark Middle Ages. The world-systems approach criticizes this search for universal laws, but also seeks to go beyond the analysis of particular events and places of the *episodic TimeSpace*. It therefore focuses on the *TimeSpaces* between these two extremes to analyse the relationship between worldwide developments and specific events. Each world-system forms a *structural TimeSpace*, with fundamentally different operating principles and developmental paths. These structures are quite persistent and change only gradually through successive *cyclico-ideological TimeSpaces*. These cycles of political and economic rise and decline further the more linear development of the *structural TimeSpace* of the current capitalist world-economy. For instance, the ever present competition between states generates cycles with alternating periods of rivalry and peace, which structurally increase state power over time. The transition from one structural *TimeSpace* to another constitutes a *transformational TimeSpace*. These are unique occurrences at the right time and place, when one *structural TimeSpace* succeeds another; these are the rare moments when free will can shape the future organisation of society. For example, the capitalist world-economy was a new *structural TimeSpace* that emerged out of the late Medieval crisis of feudalism in Northwestern Europe. A large scale and expanding division of labour based on market competition replaced the coercion-based local division of labour which characterised the Middle Ages. Wallerstein compares this crises of the Middle Ages from which the modern world-system with its nation-states emerged, with the current crises of the world-system and the nation-states which can result in yet another fundamentally different *structural TimeSpace* (Wallerstein 1988; 1998).

Saskia Sassen's (2008) studies on the relation globalisation and the transformation of the nation-state makes a more detailed comparison of the current crisis with the crisis in the Middle Ages. It can help to avoid what Saskia Sassen calls the endogeneity trap of limiting analyses to the subject studied. "(W)e cannot understand the x - in this case globalization - by confining our study to the characteristics of the x itself - i.e., global processes and

institutions.” (Sassen 2008:4). Analyses of globalisation should thus not be limited to the burgeoning worldwide trade, new communication technologies, the emerging global institutions, the growth of transnational corporations, and the decline of the nation state since the 1980s. The local scale and a longer timeframe are necessary to better understand globalisation. To avoid the endogeneity trap one must look beyond simple dualities of scale and time. Studying the different relations between the local and many other scales avoids the scale duality between the national and the global. Studying the period before, during and after the golden age of the nation state, avoids the time duality which contrasts the period of the nation state with the current period of globalisation (Sassen 2008: 394).

The nation state is not a kind of primordial condition which is now challenged by globalisation. There were also important long distance relations before the period of the nation state. This does not suggest that there are no fundamental changes between the 16th and 21st centuries (Wallerstein 1974). Analysing earlier periods gives a much more nuanced and complex picture than “models of current social change, which are typically geared toward isolating key variables to create order where none is seen. (...) Looking at this earlier phase is a way of raising the level of complexity in the inquiry about current transformations.” (Sassen 2008: 11). History is important to understand the continuities and changes of the building blocks on which assemblage the general structure of these periods is based. Saskia Sassen uses the organisation of territories, authority and rights to show how trans-historical components become assembled into different historical formations (Sassen 2008: 4). Each new phase reassembles the constituent elements of the previous period in a new way. To understand globalisation it is therefore important to study the evolution of these building blocks and how these become transformed in different assemblages like the nation state and globalisation (Sassen 2008: 13). She therefore gives a lot of attention to the transformation of the societal and spatial order from the Middle Ages to the nation-state based constellation of territory, authority and rights, to better understand the formation of the emerging global assemblage.

THE ROLE OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE LEGITIMATION OF POLITICAL POWER

One aspect of this societal transformation is the declining role of the nation and national identity in the legitimation of political power. This section discussed the importance of the nation in the legitimation of power. The next section shows how the nation is undermined. This fragmentation results in the formation of newer and ‘thinner’ forms of regional identity. The last section of this paper shows how these thin identities are reinforced through the use of iconic places which are frequently linked to Middle Ages.

Legitimacy is according to David Beetham - a leading political philosopher and political theorist on the legitimation of power - based on the correspondence between the norms prevalent in a community and how power is exercised (Beetham 1991: 8). According to Beetham, legitimacy is based on the coherent but changeable combination of three dimensions: legality, expressed consent and justifiability. Legality refers to adherence to the established rules of acquiring and exercising power. The expressed consent of the population with the power structures in society is either mobilised, through oaths and the participation in

mass events, or results from elections. Justifiability is based on social norms on the source of political authority and the purpose of government. Power "must derive from a source that is acknowledged as authoritative within society; it must serve ends that are recognised as socially necessary, and interests that are general." (Beetham 1991: 149). Justifiability is not only based on the source, but also on how regulation serves a shared communal interest. This socially specific defined common interest should be met by an adequate and efficient performance of the political system (Beetham 1991: 70, 86). This common interest is linked to the values and identity of that community. "(T)he legitimation of power rules is not only the development and dissemination of an appropriate body of ideas, or ideology, but the construction of a social identity by a complex set of often unconscious processes, which make that identity seem 'natural', and give the justifying ideas their plausibility." (Beetham 1991: 78).

The identity of communities is linked to the spaces they inhabit. Traditional identities are strongly rooted in the history of a community in a fixed territory. These identities focus on stability and cohesion rooted in the victories and defeats during their long history, the characteristics of the territory like landscape and iconic buildings, the characteristics of the population, and their political, cultural and economic achievements. These collective identities are based on the interplay between the conceived identity of the inhabitants and the communicated identity of the rulers. Traditional collective identities take many generations to solidify into thick identities like national identities. They are rooted in a long political history linked to the development of the nation state. In the modern age the nation has become the community on which legitimate power is based (Beetham 1991: 75). The "political conception of the general interest becomes confined to the boundaries of the nation state." (Beetham 1991: 250). The nation was more a normative ideal than an empirical reality. "The idea of 'identity', and a 'national identity' in particular, did not gestate and incubate in human experience 'naturally', did not emerge out of that experience as a self-evident 'fact of life'. That idea was forced into the Lebenswelt of modern men and women - and arrived as a fiction. It congealed into a 'fact', a 'given', precisely because it had been a fiction." (Bauman 2004: 20).

The national community was imagined to unite the hierarchy of traditional local and regional communities (Bauman 2004: 77). Their identities were not erased, but transformed into a layered national identity. Some local and regional characteristics were uploaded to the national level in the construction of a national identity (Graham et al. 2000: 85, 182). Those characteristics of local and regional identities which corresponded with the desired national identity were emphasised to create a national identity discourse stressing the national unity in the diversity. The communication of a British identity for instance highlighted local elements like iconic buildings in London whose architecture embodied the British destiny of empire and the Arcadian south-eastern countryside which exemplified more the long historic roots of industrious labour and homeliness (Driver and Gilbert 1996; Gilbert 1999; Lowenthal 1991). The nation state communicated a new overarching national identity by the selective uploading of elements of traditional local identities in their representations of national identity.

But the construction of national identities was more than a simple widening circle of identification or a simple uploading of some aspects of local and regional identity to the national level. This involves more than a simple imposition of new identity using static local elements. There is a discursive interaction between regional discourses of regional uniqueness and discourses of

national unity. For instance in 19th century Germany the concept of *Heimat* was initially used by local elites in their ideological opposition to modernisation which threatened the traditional local social and ecological structures going back to the Middle Ages. They wanted to protect their traditional rural way of life against industrialisation and urbanisation. Initially they focussed on preserving their local heritage, like old medieval buildings, city walls and monuments. They were not only concerned with the beautification of their townscapes, but the romanticised beauty of the unspoiled nature was also an important part of the identity of the different *Heimats*. Their opposition to modernity became after the end of the 19th century an important component of an increasingly dominant conservative interpretation of German nationalism. The initial opposition between individual *Heimats* and modernity in general was transformed into hostility between the German national identity and the Western European variant of modernity. The German nation was conceptualised as a mosaic of different *Heimats* where the general German culture was rooted in historically grown specific regional identities. Regional *Heimat* identities thus increasingly reinforced German national identity (Applegate 1990; Cremer, Klein 1990; Ditt 1990; Spohn 2002). Thus the initial opposition between the local *Heimat* and Germany's national development was transformed by using these *Heimats* in the construction of a German national identity and the articulation of a national path to modernity in opposition to other especially West European nations (Conze 2005; Spohn 2002). "For the incomplete nation of 1871, the invented traditions of the *Heimat* bridged the gap between national aspiration and provincial reality. These efforts might be called federalist, in the sense that *Heimat* enthusiasts celebrated German diversity. They supported national cohesion without necessarily showing any enthusiasm for its symbols or for its agents, Prussia and the national government." (Applegate 1990: 13).

THE UNDERMINING OF TRADITIONAL COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES

These forms of identity are based on stable regional communities with collective identities which are passed on to the next generations. This is now undermined by the scaling up of social and economic relations. The position of regions in the international division of labour becomes more changeable. The rapidly changing functional shape of regions undermines regional institutionalisation. Transformations of the state organisation, through for instance the creation of new regions by changing administrative borders and the emergence of new forms of administrative cooperation, further undermine established regions. There is less and less time for regional identities to become established in the population. Globalisation also dramatically extends the reach of social networks. Together with the individualisation of society this transforms social networks and identity formation. 'We replace the few depth relationships with a mass of thin and shallow contacts.' (Bauman 2004: 69). The small stable local networks in which individuals were bound together with multiple bonds of kinship, friendship, work, church and mutual care disappear. These social ties are still important for individuals, but these ties become more separated from each other. Individuals increasingly choose with whom they have what kind of relation. The bonds in these individual centred social networks are weaker and more changeable. These individual networks are larger than traditional networks and the overlap between these individual networks decreases. The stable collective network is broken up into many changeable individual networks. Individual choice, rather than

collective conventions and spatial proximity now determine social networks (Blokland 2003; Bauman 2004; 2001). Liquefaction takes place of social frameworks and institutions. Stable collective identities are replaced by chosen, fluid and temporary individual identities. 'In the brave new world of fleeting chances and frail securities, the old-style stiff and non-negotiable identities simply won't do.' (Bauman 2004: 27). Discussing and communicating identities becomes more important while in the current phase of liquid modernity identities are undermined. Identities are sometimes temporarily fixed, but are lighter than tradition identities and can be changed more easily (Bauman 2004: 13-46). Especially conflicts can temporarily strengthen communities. Shared identities are usually mobilised when interdependencies cause problems, like for instance economic restructuring affecting specific areas (Amin and Thrift 2002, p. 30; Savage et al. 2005, p. 56; Donaldson 2006). Despite the decline in the localised nature of social networks, residents are still in many ways interdependent. Living together in space makes them interdependent for their quality of life (Blokland 2003: 78-79). Proximity, propinquity (Amin, Thrift 2002), or throwntogetherness (Massey 2005), are the basis of many temporary spatial identifications. Shared interests in a specific place and at a specific moment can create a new, but transitory, regional identity. The relation between identity and space, which has never been straightforward, is thus now further complicated through individualisation, migration, economic changes and political rescaling.

These new forms of transient regional identities emerge not only spontaneously, but are also intentionally created to mobilise support. Especially new forms of regional cooperation lack institutionalised power and depend more on voluntary support from regional stakeholders. Occasionally they can mobilise support based on existing established regional identities, but this is usually very problematic. First of all, established regional identities are now being undermined by globalisation and individualisation. Secondly, the spatial shapes of these new forms of regional cooperation hardly coincide with established regions. Thirdly, these new regions are so new and unstable that they don't have the time to institutionalise and develop a distinct traditional regional identity. Fourthly, the multitude of partially overlapping and competing new regions hinder the development of their identity. For instance the larger Dutch municipalities participate in dozens of different forms of regional cooperation. In contrast to historically grown and culturally based traditional regions with broad and stable identities fixed to a given territory, these new regions have more fluid identities linked to specific policies.

FROM THICK TO THIN REGIONAL IDENTITIES

To better understand and analyse the relation between these fluid new forms of regional identity and the more traditional forms of regional identity we make an ideal typical distinction between traditional 'thick' and new 'thin' forms of regional identity. Weberian ideal types are analytical concepts which in their purity do not exist in the complex reality. Ideal types are not constructed to describe reality in its complexity, but to better understand the different mechanisms which form reality. Ideal types incorporate these different aspects in their logically pure form (Weber 1980).

Thin and thick are sometimes used as metaphors to characterise these changing social relations. Anton Zijderveld (2000) uses them to analyse the changing role of institutions and networks. 'Today thick, greedy and closed

institutions, conditioned by a heavy handed, often religiously and magically tabooed, coercive tradition, have been superseded by thinner, more voluntary, more open, and looser institutions which in the behaviour of people are often alternated or temporarily suspended by flexible networks.' (Zijderveld 2000: 128). The distinction between thick and thin identity is also sometimes made. Thick identity is more based on a shared culture and community relations. Thin identity is more related to a specific problem and requires less direct involvement with other individuals. Thick identities have a normative aspect, while thin identities are more practical and utilitarian (Shelby 2005; Hinman 2003). Thick identities are more fixed and rooted in culture and history, while thin identities are more fluid and based on dialogue (Delanty, Rumford 2005: 68-86).

The ideal typical opposition between thick and thin regional identities can also be linked to other differences between traditional and new regions. Jones and MacLeod (2004: 435) differentiate between spaces of regionalism and regional spaces. Spaces of regionalism are culturally based political movement which want to increase the political autonomy of traditional territories. Regional spaces are the institutional context which influences regional economic development. Thick regional identities value the region as a political goal in itself, while thin regional identities are more based on a utilitarian legitimation of the effectiveness of especially economic policies. Thin regional identities are more functional and linked to sectorial policies and special interests, while thick regional identities are more integrative. Balancing the different interests of all inhabitants of a territory and integrating different policies in a given territory is based on sharing a stable thick regional identity. Thin regional identities focus on only a few, mostly economic characteristics, while thick regional identities cover a broad range of cultural, social, political, environmental and economic characteristics. Table 1 gives an ideal typical overview of the differences between thick and thin regional identities.

Table 1 The difference between thick and thin regional identities

ASPECT	Ranging from thick:	to thin:
Spatial form	Closed	Open
	Territorial	Network
Organisation	Institutionalised	Project
Participants	General population	Administrators and specific stakeholders
Purpose	Broad and many	Single
	Culture	Economy
Time	Defensive	Offensive
	Historical oriented	Future oriented
	Stable	Change
	Old	New
Scale focus	Local and National	Global

Source: Terlouw 2009

Legitimation is always based on a combination of backward-looking rights and forward-looking provision of public interests (Beetham 1991:137). Max Weber makes a similar distinction, but relates this to his theoretical distinction between traditional and bureaucratic types of legitimation (Weber 1980: 20, 822). Traditional and bureaucratic legitimation forms ideal typical dualities which although logically distinct are combined in the politics of the nation state. Traditional legitimation is based on the idea of a historically based just rule. Its high moral value is based on its long-established rule. Whereas traditional legitimation is based on morality (*werttraditional*), bureaucratic legitimation is based on efficiency (*zweckrational*). The bureaucratic legitimation is based on the impersonal rule of law to achieve agreed upon ends. Thus while traditional legitimation is based on past success, bureaucratic legitimation is based on future results (Weber 1980:124).

These backward looking traditional and forward looking bureaucratic types of legitimation can be linked to the above discussed thick and thin regional identities. Many traditional established regions, like Catalonia and Scotland, link their thin future oriented regional identity with a thick identity rooted in history. Newer forms of regional cooperation, like the Ruhr area or the Randstad, try to thicken their thin economic regional identity by referring to the glorious past before the administrations in these regions started to cooperate. They do this to widen their support base and legitimation from policy makers to the general population (Terlouw 2011). Regional administrations sometimes use different regional identities for different audiences. Thin regional identities focusing on economic competitiveness are used to attract outside investors, while thick regional identities are used to conceal the drawbacks of these neoliberal policies for the general population by using an ideology which focuses on the shared interest of all members of a territorial community (Cox 1999). New policies are easier legitimised using thin identities, but need to be linked to the thicker regional identities conceived by the population.

BACKWARD AND FORWARD LOOKING ICONIC PLACES: HERITAGE SITES AND FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

Administrations justify their policies by connecting different types of identities focussing on different spatial scales. They especially try to connect new (inter)national formulated policies to the more limited scales with which the population identifies with. Widely known and valued iconic places can create important links between these layers of identities. Iconic sites are not a separate scale level, but are an element of the identities of multiple scales (Cidell 2005). Iconic sites link identities across scales and are part of a multilevel identity. Iconic places were important for the partial incorporation of established regional identities into the emerging national level. Historically, national icons start their careers as local icons in important cities where holders of economic or political or culture-ideology power were based." (Sklair 2006: 40). Specific places within a region are very important for the formation of these shared feelings of belonging. These places can become icons representing the characteristics of the whole regions and the values of the whole community. "Iconic places tell us where we are, at a glance." (Sklair 2006: 40). Iconic places are both well-known landmarks and have a special symbolic significance. These can be a stereotypical place representing general characteristics of a nation or a unique place which

expresses a special meaning and incorporates important values for a specific community in a specific period linked to a particular region (Sklair 2006; 2010). These iconic places make regions recognisable for its inhabitants and others. They strengthen the link between space and community. Iconic places also incorporate and communicate the values of that community. Iconic places are not just important cultural spaces, but can also be important in the legitimation of power.

Heritage sites are widely used to symbolise the durability and legitimacy of the nation state through their roots in a glorious past (Harvey 2008; Smith 2006; Graham et al. 2000). The interpretation of the glorious past focusses on those values which are useful for the legitimation of the current regime based on tradition. Heritage sites are frequently transformed to this purpose. The passage from the ordinary world to the heritage site is demarcated through for instance signs and fences. The removal of new elements further strengthened the experience of visiting the past in the present. Especially the mysterious world of the Middle Ages is very attractive for the post-modern individual. The trips to heritage sites are also a distraction or refuge from the monotony of everyday life (Smith 2006: 30-31, 82; Harvey 2008; Lowenthal 2005: 82).

Heritage sites not only link the present with the past but the timeline is frequently linked to the future. The Janus face like looking back and looking forwards in time using both a mythical history and the promise of a bright future is a common feature of nationalism (Hobsbawn 1990; Smith 1986; Nairn 1975; Flint, Taylor 2011). Especially heritage sites which are linked to the poverty of the past or important innovations are part of a discourse of national development. The national path of development is extended from a poor past, through the wealthy present, to an even better future. The memory of the medieval 'Dark Ages' is an important element in this discourse of national development.

The past is interpreted to legitimise future oriented policies. "Heritage is used with an eye to the future" (Harvey 2008, 19), or "heritage is a view from the present, either backward to a past or forward to a future." (Graham et al 2000, 2). In the next paragraph they however define "heritage as the contemporary use of the past" (Graham et al 2000, 2). This at best partial attention to the future is however still linked to historic sites. Thus although the social functions of heritage and even the view of the future is incorporated in the analysis of how heritage is presented is now the focus of most heritage studies, the old heritage sites are still the objects studied. Other sites have a similar legitimating function as traditional heritage sites. The function of the backwards time travel of heritage sites away from ordinary daily life (Smith 2006, 72-74, 82) can be mirrored to a time travel forwards through visiting recently built flagship projects. The better future already visible in flagship projects provides administration with a bureaucratic legitimation by showing the population how its rule will further improve daily life in the future. Bureaucratic legitimation focusses on efficiency and future results. They mobilise public approval by communicating their vision of the future through the construction of flagship projects where the better future of tomorrow is already visible and visitable today (Terlouw 2010).

Figure 1 shows the relations between the present and the past of heritage sites and the relations between the present and the future of flagship projects. Present political power is legitimised through both the historiographical interpretation of the past and the imagined future communicates in policy scenarios. Heritage sites are the result of both the preservation of old artefacts

and the interpretations from the present. Contemporary political power is legitimised in a historiographical discourse in which the preservation and interpretation of heritage sites is embedded. Bureaucratic legitimation mirrors traditional legitimation in its use of the future. Administrations use scenarios in policy documents to present the ideal future in which long term policy goals like the transition towards more sustainable forms of development are realised. Flagship projects are conceptualised by looking back from this long-term ideal future, to the short term of the construction of projects in the present. Flagship projects are legitimised from the ideal future formulated by the administration. But flagship projects themselves are also used to legitimise the ideal future presented in policy scenarios by linking them to the present political situation where the established identities of the population are an important source for legitimacy. Viewed from the future, flagship projects are very similar to heritage sites. Whereas heritage sites mark important historic events, flagship projects mark recent policy changes towards a different future. Viewed from the ideal future presented in policy documents, the construction of flagship projects are important markers of the transition towards the future. While heritage sites present a selective interpretation of the past to legitimise current policies, flagship projects are based on the selective imagination of the future to legitimise new policies.

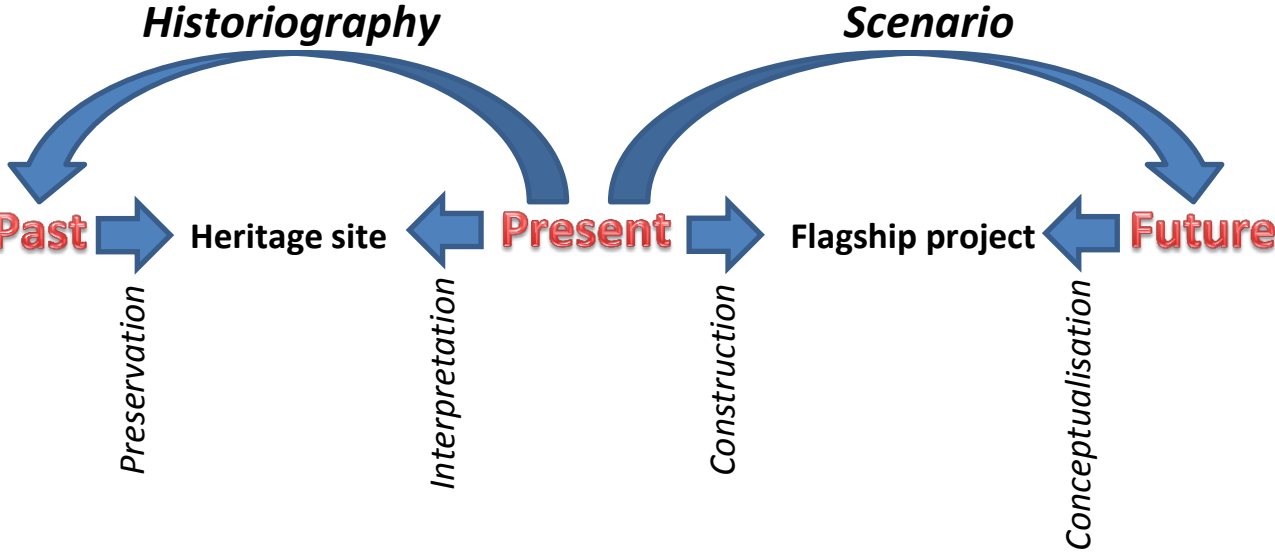


Figure 1 Legitimation trough backward and forward selectivity of iconic sites

(Note: Looking backwards from the future is partially based on Dirk Spennemann (2007) ideas on selecting new objects as the heritage in the future.)

CONCLUSION

The memory of the Middle Ages is frequently used to better understand and legitimise the new political order in which the power of the nation-state is challenged from above by globalisation and from below by regionalisation and individualisation. Some like Wallerstein and Sassen focus on comparing the fundamental transformation from Medieval society to modern society, with the current societal transformation linked with globalisation. Especially Sassen compares the current political fragmentation with the situation in the Middle Ages. Both in the Middle Ages and in the current political systems one has to deal with complex and multiple competing and overlapping sources of power. In both periods cities and regions have considerable autonomy over central state authority. This centrifugal forces challenge the legitimacy of the political system based on the coherence between collective identity and political territory. New forms of spatial identities are needed to legitimise and stabilise this fragmenting political system. Regions become more numerous and important and rely more and more on future oriented thin regional identities. But in order to legitimise their political decisions they have to link these thin identities with the historically rooted thick identities. Iconic place connecting the past, on which thick identities are based, and the future, on which thin identities are based, help to legitimise the current spatially fragmented political structures. The memory of the Middle Ages is thus used to strengthen the identification with the political system in these globalising and individualising times.

REFERENCES:

Amin, A., Thrift, N. (2002). *Cities: reimagining the urban*. Cambridge: Polity.

Applegate, C. (1990) *A nation of provincials: the German idea of Heimat*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bauman Z. (2001), *The individualized society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bauman, Z. (2004), *Identity: conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*. Cambridge: Polity.

Beetham D. (1991), *The legitimation of power*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Blokland T. (2003) *Urban bonds*. Cambridge: Polity.

Brenner, N. (2004), *New state spaces: urban governance and the rescaling of statehood*. Oxford: University press.

Cidell, J. (2006), The place of individuals in the politics of scale, *Area* 38, 196-203.

Conze, V. (2005), *Das Europa der Deutschen: Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung (1920-1970)*. München: Oldenbourg Verlag.

Cox, K.R. (1999). Ideology and the Growth Coalition. In: A.E.G. Jonas & D. Wilson (eds.) *The Urban Growth Machine: Critical Perspectives, Two Decades Later*. New York: SUNY press, 21-36.

Cremer, W., Klein, A.(eds.) (1990) *Heimat: Analyses, Themen, Perspektiven*. Bielefeld: Westfalen Verlag.

Delanty, G. & Rumford, C. (2005). *Rethinking Europe: social theory and the implications of Europeanization*. London: Routledge.

Ditt, K.(1990), Die deutsche Heimatbewegung 1871-1945. In: W. Cremer, A. Klein (eds.) *Heimat: Analyses, Themen, Perspektiven*. Bielefeld: Westfalen Verlag, pp. 135-154.

Donaldson, A. (2006). Performing regions: territorial development and cultural politics in a Europe of the Regions. *Environment and Planning A*, 38, 2075-2092.

Driver, F., Gilbert, D. (1998), Heart of Empire? Landscape, Space and Performance in Imperial London, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 16, 11-28.

Flint, C., Taylor, P.J. (2011), *Political Geography: world-economy, nation-state and locality*. Harlow: Pearson.

Gilbert, D. (1999) London in all its glory-or how to enjoy London': guidebook representations of imperial London, *Journal of Historical Geography* 25, 279-297.

Graham, B., Ashworth, G., Tunbridge, J. (2000), *A geography of heritage: power, culture and economy*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Harvey, D. (2008), The history of heritage. In: B. Graham, P. Howard (eds.), *The Ashgate research companion to heritage and identity*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 19-36.

Held, D., McGrew, A. (2000), *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hinman, L. (2003), *Ethics: A Pluralistic Approach to Moral Theory*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

Hobsbawn, E. (1990), *Nations and nationalism since 1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jones, M. & G. MacLeod (2004). Regional spaces, spaces of regionalism: Territory, insurgent politics and the English question, *Transactions IBG* 29, 433-452.

Keating M. (1998), *The new regionalism in Western Europe: territorial restructuring and political change*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Lowenthal, D. (1991), British National Identity and the English Landscape, *Rural History* 2 ,205-230.

- Lowenthal, D. (2005), Natural and cultural heritage. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 11 81-92.
- Massey, D. (2005). *For space*. London: Sage.
- Nairn, T. (1975), The Modern Janus, *New Left Review* 94, 3-30.
- Rodríguez-Pose A., Sandall R., (2008), From identity to the economy: analysing the evolution of the decentralisation discourse, *Environment and Planning C* 26 54-72.
- Rostow, W.W. (1960), *The stages of economic growth: a non-communist manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sassen, S. (2008), *Territory, Authority, Rights: from medieval to global assemblages* (Updated edition). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Savage, M. et al. (2005), *Globalization and Belonging*. London: Sage.
- Shelby, T. (2005). *We Who Are Dark: The Philosophical Foundations of Black Solidarity*. Harvard: University Press.
- Sklair, L. (2006), Iconic architecture and capitalist globalization, *City* 10, 21-47.
- Sklair, L. (2010), Iconic architecture and the culture-ideology of consumerism, *Theory, Culture & Society* 27, 135-159.
- Smith, A.D. (1986), *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Smith, L. (2006), *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge.
- Spennemann, D.H.R. (2007), On the Cultural Heritage of Robots, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 13, 4-21
- Spohn, W. (2002), Continuities and changes of Europe in German national identity. In: M. Malmborg, B. Stråth (eds.), *The meaning of Europe: variety and contention within and among nations*. Oxford, Berg, 285-309.
- Terlou, K. (2009). Rescaling Regional Identities: Communicating Thick and Thin Regional Identities. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 9, 452-464.
- Terlou, K. (2010). Charisma and Space, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 10, 335-348.
- Terlou, K. (2011), From thick to thin regional identities? *Geojournal* 77 (5), 707-721.
- Terlou, K., Weststrate, J. (2013), Regions as vehicles for local interests: the spatial strategies of medieval and modern urban elites in the Netherlands, *Journal of Historical Geography* 40, 24-35.

Wallerstein, I. (1974), *The modern world system: capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world economy in the sixteenth century*. New York: Academic press.

Wallerstein, I. (1988), The inventions of TimeSpace realities: towards an understanding of our historical systems, *Geography* 73, 289-297.

Wallerstein, I. (1998), The time of space and the space of time: the future of social science, *Political geography* 17, 71-82.

Weber, M. (1980). *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*. Tübingen: Mohr.

Zijderveld, A.C. (2000). *The institutional imperative: the interface of institutions and networks*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.