Maastricht University

Mapping Israel, mapping Palestine : how segregated landscapes shape scientific knowledge

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PROPOSITIONS

appended to the dissertation

Mapping Israel, Mapping Palestine:
How Segregated Landscapes Shape Scientific Knowledge

by Jess Bier

1. In order to better understand scientific and technological practices, it is necessary to analyze the *geographic production of knowledge*.

2. *Traveling ethnographies*, which reflexively and materially alter the circumstances of the researcher, can help to address material and economic power imbalances that set limits on the conditions of possibility for the production and dissemination of knowledge.

3. Palestinian and Israeli maps are distinctive, but not mutually exclusive, and neither represents an exception to scientific rationality. Instead, both are integral parts of international networks of scientific and technological practices.

4. By leaving specific areas blank in his attempts to erase Palestinians from Israeli population maps, Roberto Bachi circumscribed the scope of his research. Furthermore, he actually ensured the charting of Palestinians through their clearly delineated absence from the map.

5. British and Israeli colonial legacies disproportionately limit the *stasis*, as well as the mobility, of Palestinian researchers and institutions. As such, it is essential to support and seriously engage with Palestinians' innovative attempts to forge new passages for knowledge production.

6. Researchers' geographic positionings have extensive, and intricate, effects upon field data collection. For example, the Israeli settlements in the West Bank are located differently depending upon whether observers view settlements from *within* or *without* when they look.

7. The illusion of objective knowledge is an effect, not a cause, of scientific practices. However, knowledge does not need to be objective in order to be effective and interesting.

8. As a discipline which functions in between traditional academic hierarchies, Science and Technology Studies (STS) makes possible original types of research that are hardly feasible elsewhere.

9. The professional successes of wayward academics are made possible in part by the Dutch Ph.D. system, where Ph.D.'s are hired as faculty members. This system should be expanded, not eroded, because its benefits to knowledge are extensive, if perhaps unquantifiable.

10. Everyday life in Palestine, Israel, and beyond, is replete with contradictions that do not disappear simply because they are illogical. In such situations, humor is often the best survival mechanism.

11. When it comes to writing, stopping can be just as difficult as starting. In this respect, the animal park by the Maastricht city walls provided invaluable therapeutic benefits.

Rotterdam, 31 January 2014