



Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

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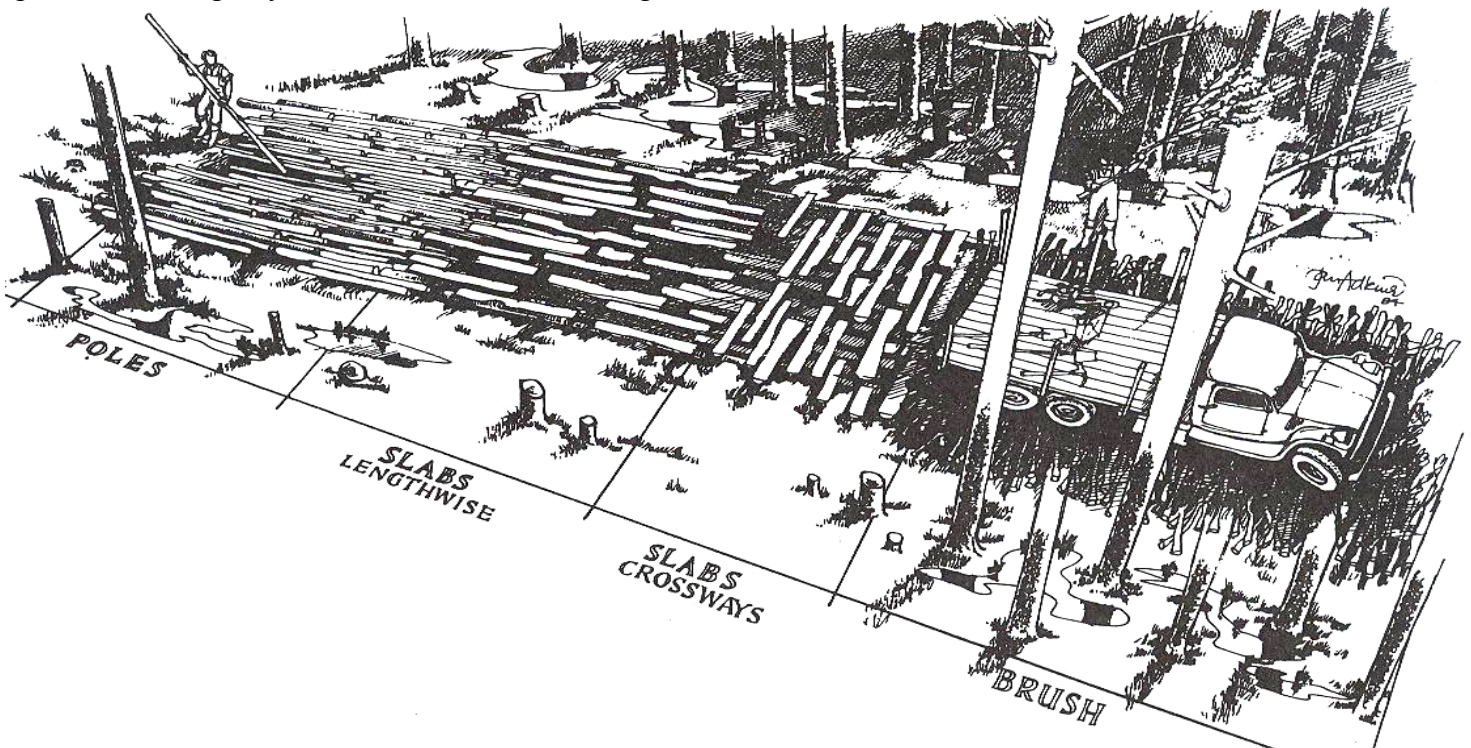
Fall • 2009

1990—2009: Special 20th-anniversary issue!

This *EAP* is a special issue to celebrate our 20th year of publication. It includes essays by four scholars who have made important contributions to environmental and architectural phenomenology. Psychologist **Bernd Jager** explores how the lived nature of thresholds plays an indispensable role in human inhabitation, and philosopher **Karsten Harries** considers architecture as it might sustain physical and spiritual shelter. In turn, philosopher **Jeff Malpas** refutes the criticism of place as possession-based and exclusionary, and geographer **Edward Relph** delineates a “pragmatic sense of place”—a style of reflection and practice that looks inward toward the uniqueness of particular places but recognizes that those places are integrally related outward to the larger-

scale realm of other places and global interconnectedness. Editor **David Seamon** begins this special issue by discussing some key concerns readers have brought forward over the years in regard to the phenomenological efforts promoted by *EAP*.

Below: In the very first issue of EAP, we asked whether there might be a phenomenologically-inspired graphics of places, buildings, and environmental experiences. We reprinted several illustrations, including the one here, from Mary Hufford's One Space, Many Places (Washington, DC: American Folklife Center, 1986). This work is a qualitative study of the “Pinelands,” a distinct natural and cultural region of coastal New Jersey. This drawing illustrates the construction of a traditional Pinelands “crossway”—a pole road enabling woodsmen to haul cedar timber over infirm swampland. Drawing by J. Adkins; used with permission of American Folklife Center.



EAP/IAEP Conference Session

The 2009 meeting of the **International Association for Environmental Philosophy** (IAEP) will be held in Arlington, Virginia, October 31—November 2, immediately following the annual meetings of **SPEP** (Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy) and **SPHS** (Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences). EAP will sponsor a special IAEP Monday-morning session (Nov. 2) on “phenomenological reconsiderations of conventional environmental and ecological conceptions and problems.” Presenters include: biologist Leon Chartrand, geographer Edward Relph, philosophers Robert Mugerauer and Ingrid Stefanovic, and *EAP* editor David Seamon.

www.environmentalphilosophy.org;

www.spep.org;

<http://pages.slu.edu/faculty/harriss3/SPHS/>.

Items of Interest

The conference, **Flesh and Space—Intertwining Merleau-Ponty and Architecture**, will be held Wednesday, September 9, 2009 at the Mississippi State University School of Architecture in Mississippi State, MS. This conference will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Merleau Ponty Circle, September 10—12. The theme of the meeting is **The Experience and Expression of Space**. Contact organizers Rachel McCann or Patricia Locke at: www.caad.edu/merleau-ponty/.

The Third **International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Emotional Geographies** will be held at The University of South Australia in Adelaide, April 5-7, 2010. Papers are invited that “interrogate emotion, society and space from diverse disciplinary and multidisciplinary backgrounds. We are interested in specific case studies as well as theoretical examinations of the nature of connections among these terms.” Contact:

CPCSGlobalisation@unisa.edu.au.

The **Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture (EPTC)** is a Canadian-based international society of academics from various disciplines. EPTC hosts an annual conference at

the end of May or in early June in conjunction with the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities of Canada. In addition, EPTC publishes biannual issues of *PhaenEx*, a peer-reviewed, open-access electronic journal; and a triennial electronic newsletter, *About the Things Themselves*. www.eptc-tcep.net.

News from Readers

We received the following email from Finish architect and phenomenologist **Juhani Pallasmaa** in regard to M. Reza Shirazi’s spring *EAP* essay discussing Pallasmaa’s phenomenological writings on architecture: “Thank you for the latest issue of *EAP*. I read the review of my writings by M. Reza Shirazi. I agree with most of his observations and see no reason to respond [in detail]. Of course, a certain collage-like fragmentation is the very structuring idea of the kind of ‘fragile architecture’ that I write about as opposed to an architecture of ‘strong image’ that aims at domination.

“Some years ago I received an unexpected phone call from the Foreign Ministry in Helsinki with the message that the President of the Constitutional Court of South Africa (who had written the South African Constitution with Nelson Mandela) was on an official visit in Finland and wanted to see me. I did not know the gentleman but welcomed him in my office. As he entered and we greeted, he congratulated me for my design of the new building for the Constitutional Court in Pretoria.

“‘There must be a misunderstanding’, I said. ‘I have lectured in your country three times but never designed anything’. ‘Yes, you have’, he answered. ‘When I was the chairman of the building committee, I read your essay on ‘fragile architecture’ [“Hapticity and Time”] carefully and gave a copy of it to every member of the committee, and we followed your instructions carefully’.

“Before he left my office, he gave me a video tape of the completed Constitutional Court Building, and told me that he himself had been developing a theory of ‘fragile law’.

“This true story may interest you as an example of a rather unexpected consequence of a piece of architectural writing—one of the pieces, by the way, that Mr. Shirazi reads as ‘vague’.”

Twenty Years of EAP

David Seamon, Editor, *EAP*

It is difficult to believe that 20 years have passed since philosopher Robert Mugerauer, interior-design educator Margaret Boschetti, and I met over breakfast at an annual Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA) meeting and envisioned a publication covering phenomenological and related qualitative work exploring environmental and architectural concerns.

At that time, Boschetti and I were colleagues at Kansas State University, and we took on the task of co-editing a newsletter that would be published three times a year. As a way to incorporate the wide range of environmental scales and topics that we wished to include, we eventually settled on the rather lengthy title of *Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology*, or *EAP*, for short.

In the 20 years since that beginning, we have published 60 *EAP* issues that have included some 150 essays; 60 book and film reviews; 130 news from readers; 350 items of interest; 470 publication citations; and 14 poems. Topics discussed have run the gamut from doing phenomenological research to the controversial matter of whether and how phenomenological insights might have pragmatic value for designers and other practitioners.

Having worked with *EAP* from the start (Boschetti retired in 2002, and I became sole editor), I have come to note recurring concerns that arise in discussions with readers and contributors. This special 20th-year anniversary issue offers an opportunity to highlight some of these matters.

Insights Arising from Experience

From the start, Mugerauer, Boschetti, and I agreed that the style of understanding emphasized in *EAP* should involve *existential phenomenology*—i.e., descriptions, interpretations, and claims regarding human experience that are grounded in, arise from, and return to that experience and the lived reality of lifeworld.

In other words, the foundation for conceptual and applied claims should be human experiences, meanings, actions, situations, and events as they hap-

pen spontaneously in the course of daily life. The assumption is that there is no world “beneath” or “behind” the world of lived experience, which means that conceptual understandings and applied actions must be grounded in this lived realm of reality.

Realizing that this relationship between experience and its secondhand depictions can be presented in simpler and more complicated ways, we have tried to offer a continuum of interpretive styles and venues ranging from narrative accounts that read like stories to sophisticated philosophical discussions that require considerable directed effort and attention. Much less successfully, we have attempted to offer graphic presentations that describe phenomenological insights and principles in ways that might appeal to readers uninterested in or disinclined to expend the effort on more cerebral, word-based presentations.

As one might expect, more philosophically inclined readers have sometimes complained that *EAP* entries are not purely or rigorously phenomenological enough, while readers less concerned with academic precision and depth have sometimes complained that *EAP* entries are too “dense” and unnecessarily complicated. We have tried to shape most *EAP* issues in such a way that they offer a range of potential entry points via different modes and tenors of phenomenological expression (with many entries not even mentioning or being aware of “phenomenology”!).

Our key assumption has been that each of us is at a different inner place in our journey to understand with the result that a text resonating for one reader may make little sense or seem unimportant to another. Our hope is that a spectrum of presentations and “levels” allows readers to find some useful points of entry into the possibility of phenomenological insight and understanding.

Theory & Practice Together

Throughout our 20 years of publication, we have attempted to deal with the intimidating topical and readership range generated by an expansive thematic like “environmental and architectural phenomenology.” Though our readership is small (never more

than 150 subscribers per year), personal, occupational, and thematic interests are wide-ranging—from intrigued general readers to researchers, designers, builders, policy makers, artists, artisans, and the like.

One of the most difficult oppositions to hold together for such an eclectic readership is the fragile relationship between theory and practice. Scholars and other intellectually-focused readers may have little concern with how ideas and conceptual arguments might be applied in realms of everyday action, whereas practitioners and readers of a realist bent may feel that *EAP*'s more conceptually aimed entries are arbitrary, subjective, and without lasting value in real life. Again, our device for smoothing differences has been to present a range of themes, styles, and orientations. A central assumption is that how and what we understand is how and what we make; therefore, finding more accurate ways to see and think should in turn strengthen design, planning, policy, and other pragmatic actions attempting to make the everyday world better.

The larger point is the extraordinarily complicated nature of peoples' lived relationships with the worlds in which they find themselves. One of the most significant conceptual contributions that phenomenology offers environmental and architectural concerns is recognition that any talk of a people-environment relationship is intellectually artificial. Existentially, people and environment are not separate and two but indivisible and one. People are inescapably immersed and enmeshed in their world—what Merleau-Ponty called “body-subject” and Heidegger called “*Dasein*,” or “being-in-the-world.” Because of this lived reciprocity between self and world, one cannot assign specific phenomena to either self or world alone.

This fact of lived immersion-in-world has immense significance for design and policy because it suggests that the specific physical constitution of the world contributes to sustaining or undermining human experiences, actions, and well being. A central question that has arisen repeatedly in our 20 years of publication is whether we can recreate self-consciously—through design, planning, policy, and other creative means—places, situations, and experiences that, in the pre-modern past, typically arose unself-consciously and spontaneously, for example, life-

sustaining buildings, robust urban neighborhoods, lively town centers, or healthy, self-sustaining ecosystems. As much as possible, we've tried to present scholarly and applied work that examines whether and how an explicit understanding of human and non-human lifeworlds might assist in making those lifeworlds better.

Allowing Things to Speak

One way that founder Edmund Husserl described phenomenology was “to the things themselves,” by which he meant setting aside cultural, ideological, and conceptual prejudices so that one might be open to the phenomenon and offer it a supportive space in which it can present itself in a way that it most fully and truthfully is. In today's postmodern times (that claim all meaning is relative, multivalent, and shifting), the phenomenological interest in foundational structures like “place” or “lived body” is academically unfashionable. The point of view represented by *EAP* has regularly been criticized by poststructuralists and social constructionists as *essentialist*—i.e., as presupposing and claiming an invariant and universal human condition only revealed when all “non-essentials” like culture, history, and politics are stripped away, leaving some inescapable core of human experience and existence.

I hope that the wide range of topics showcased over the years in *EAP* demonstrates that a thorough phenomenological presentation of environmental and architectural experience requires that, in addition to human typicality, scholarly and practical efforts must and can explore the personal, social, and cultural dimensions of environmental, architectural, and place experiences. Further, I would argue that these people and place portrayals, grounded in the openness of phenomenological method, are often more accurate and more complete than social-constructionist or critical accounts that too often force fit their subjects through some pre-defined set of cultural, political, gender, or socioeconomic filters and thus end in lifeworld misrepresentation and distortion.

Making Better Worlds

As *EAP* Editor, I often receive inquiries from graduate students and other interested parties who wish to know what they should read to familiarize themselves

with phenomenological work on environmental and architectural topics. In writing this commentary, I suddenly realized that this might be a good time to construct a list of useful readings, which follows.

What I have attempted is to include works that not only offer perceptive phenomenological insights but also hold considerable conceptual or practical power—e.g., Edward Relph’s remarkable phenomenology of place; Paul Krafel’s superlative efforts to “shift” perspective and thereby see the natural world in fresh, more accommodating ways; or Christopher Alexander’s superhuman efforts to understand the

nature of making and environmental wholeness. Certainly, there are other important works that could be included, and I will gladly publish in future issues any additional entries that readers forward to me.

I hope the essays of this special 20th-anniversary issue, written by four major figures associated with the phenomenological enterprise, demonstrate the continuing possibilities and vigor of phenomenological work, which offers ways to better see and understand the world and thereby perhaps improve that world through more attuned design, policy, and other practical efforts.

Twenty-five Important Works in Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

This list has been compiled by David Seamon, Editor of Environmental and Architectural Phenomenology. Several of the entries here are not explicitly phenomenological; they are included because they discuss important lived aspects of peoples’ dealings with environments, places, landscapes, buildings, and the natural world. Also note that this list does not include: (1) relevant “first-generation” texts such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of Perception (1945), Gaston Bachelard’s Poetics of Space (1958), Mircea Eliade’s Sacred and Profane (1961), Otto Bollnow’s Human Space (1963), or Martin Heidegger’s writings on building and dwelling; (2) edited collections; (3) discussion of the nature of phenomenology; or (4) phenomenological research methods. For introductions to phenomenology, see D. Stewart and A. Mukunis, The Nature of Phenomenology (Ohio Univ. Press 1990); and L. Embree et al., eds., Encyclopedia of Phenomenology (Kluwer 1997). In regard to “empirical” phenomenological research, one of the best examples remains the four volumes of the Duquesne Studies in Phenomenological Psychology (Pittsburgh: Duquesne Univ. Press, 1971–1983).

1. Christopher Alexander, *The Nature of Order*, 4 vols. (Berkeley, CA: Center for Environmental Structure, 2002–05).

This four-volume masterwork explores the nature of a particular kind of order that Alexander calls *wholeness*, which, whether in nature or human-made, is the “source of coherence in any part of the world.” He argues that, wherever there is wholeness, there is *life*, which involves such qualities as good health, well being, vitality, handsomeness, and beauty.

2. Henri Bortoft, *The Wholeness of Nature* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindesfarne Press, 1996).

This physicist explores the possibility of a qualitative science of nature, drawing on the proto-phenomenological work of Goethe. The book is an essential contribution to a “phenomenology of wholeness” and provides insightful discussion as to

what a phenomenology and hermeneutics of the natural world might entail.

3. Gordon G. Brittan, Jr., “The Wind in One’s Sails,” in M. J. Pasqualetti et al., eds., *Wind Power in View* (NY: Academic Press, 2002).

This philosopher and inventor details his efforts to develop a place-based wind turbine founded in the Heideggerian-inspired thinking of philosopher Albert Borgmann. A valuable real-world example of how the way we understand founds what we make and how we act.

4. Anne Buttimer, “Grasping the Dynamism of Lifeworld,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 66 (1976):277-92.

This geographer provides one of the earliest efforts to identify environmental aspects of the lifeworld—e.g., social space, sense

of place, time-space rhythms, and the lived dialectic between home and horizon. She recognizes that both geographical and phenomenological thinking on the environmental and spatial nature of the lifeworld are incomplete and need integration conceptually and practically.

5. Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1993; 2nd edition, 2009).

This philosopher argues for place as a central ontological structure founding human experience. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty, Casey argues that place is important existentially partly because of our presence as bodily beings: We are “bound by body to be in place.” Also see his ontological history of place—*Fate of Place* (Univ. of California Press, 1997).

6. V. Frank Chaffin, “Dwelling and Rhythm: The Isle Brevelle as a Landscape of Home,” *Landscape Journal*, 7 (1989):96-106.

This landscape architect provides a sensitive phenomenological study of the Isle Brevelle, a 200-year-old river community on Louisiana’s Cane River. Chaffin moves from outside to inside this landscape by presenting its regional history and geography, by interviewing residents, and, finally, by canoeing the Cane river, which he comes to realize is the “focus of the community-at-home-and-at-large.” A valuable model for phenomenologies of real-world places and landscapes.

7. Kimberly Dovey, “The Quest for Authenticity and the Replication of Environmental Meaning,” in D. Seamon & R. Mugerauer, eds., *Dwelling, Place and Environment* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985).

This architect argues that authentic environmental meaning is not a condition of the physical environment but, rather, a situation “of connectedness in the relationship between people and their world.” He asks how buildings and environments today might evoke a stronger authenticity and sense of place.

8. Hassan Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1969).

This Egyptian architect tells the intriguing story of designing from scratch a village for 7,000 displaced Egyptian peasants known as the Gournis. A provocative effort to understand the Gournis’ lifeworld and to design dwellings, public buildings, and village spaces accordingly.

9. Karsten Harries, “Thoughts on a Non-Arbitrary Architecture,” *Perspecta*, 20 (1983):9-20; reprinted in D. Seamon, ed., *Dwelling, Seeing, and Designing* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993).

To circumvent the dilemma of arbitrariness in environmental design, this philosopher calls for a language of “natural sym-

bols”—essential meanings providing identity and orientation in human life, for example, up/down, inside/outside, vertical/horizontal, light/dark, and so forth. Also see his *Ethical Function of Architecture* (MIT Press, 1997).

10. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (NY: Vintage, 1961).

This book could be described as an implicit phenomenology of the city and urban lifeworld, which Jacobs interprets in terms of a small-scaled functional and physical diversity generating and fed by the “street ballet”—an exuberance of place and sidewalk life grounded in the everyday goings-on of many people carrying out their own ordinary needs and activities.

11. Daniel Kemmis, *The Good City and the Good Life* (NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1995).

Drawing on the ideas of Martin Heidegger and Christopher Alexander, this political philosopher considers the idea of urban wholeness and healing as it might have meaning for urban politics and citizenship. A central question is how citizens’ sense of responsibility for their place can facilitate a civilized politics. Also see his *Community and the Politics of Place* (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

12. Paul Krafel, *Seeing Nature* (Burlington, VT: Chelsea Green, 1998).

This book points toward a phenomenology of the second law of thermodynamics, which says that all activities, left to their own devices, tend toward greater disorder and fewer possibilities. As a way to counter the second law, Krafel aims to see the natural world in new ways by shifting perspectives and actions whereby people increase, rather than decrease, the possibilities of the world through intentional, caring efforts grounded in firsthand awareness and understanding.

13. Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred* (NY: Paulist Press, 1988; 2nd expanded edition., Oxford Univ. Press, 2001).

This theologian examines the relationship between place and spirituality through four axioms that he believes will help one “to understand the character of sacred space”: (1) sacred space is not chosen, it chooses; (2) sacred space is ordinary place, ritually made extraordinary; (3) sacred space can be moved through without being entered; and (4) the impulse of sacred space is both centripetal and centrifugal, both local and universal.

14. Jeff E. Malpas, *Place and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999).

This philosopher provides a difficult but well-argued account of “the nature and significance of place as a complex but unitary structure that encompasses self and other, space and time,

subjectivity and objectivity.” Also see his *Heidegger’s Topology* (MIT Press, 2006).

15. Robert Mugerauer, *Interpretations on Behalf of Place* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1994).

In providing an accessible overview of phenomenological, hermeneutical, and post-structural approaches to environmental and architectural concerns, this philosopher focuses on the timely question of “how to have plural meaning and yet a basis for saying that not just anything goes?” Mugerauer finds a partial answer in what he calls “fitting placement”—a style of understanding, design, and policy that respects and responds to social and technological needs but also encourages the emergence of local peoples and places. Also see his *Heidegger and Homecoming* (Univ. of Toronto Press, 2008).

16. Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci* (NY: Rizzoli, 1980).

To develop a phenomenology of the spirit of place, this architectural theorist considers two key questions: (1) What are the generalizable lived qualities of *genius loci*? (2) How are these qualities expressed in particular places? (his examples are Prague, Khartoum, and Rome). An important contribution to understanding how qualities of the physical world contribute to landscape and place ambience and character. Also see his *Concept of Dwelling* (Rizzoli, 1985).

17. Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin* (London: Academy Editions, 1996).

This architect examines how the design aesthetic of Modernist buildings largely emphasize intellect and vision and how a more comprehensive architecture would accommodate an environmental experience of all the senses as well as the feelings. Also see his *Encounters* (Rakennustieto Oy, 2005).

18. Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976).

Still the single most lucid and accessible demonstration of what phenomenology might offer environmental and architectural concerns. Relph’s focus is a phenomenology of place, the lived heart of which he identifies as *insideness*—i.e., the degree to which an individual or group feels a sense of belonging and attachment to a locale or environment, which thereby existentially is transformed into a place.

19. Edward Relph, *Rational Landscapes and Humanistic Geography* (London: Croom Helm, 1981).

This book is a powerful explication of Heidegger’s notion of *appropriation* as a potential vehicle for a lived environmental ethic grounded in respect and care for the natural world—what Relph terms an *environmental humility*.

20. R. Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (NY: Knopf, 1977).

This book provides a history of the changing *soundscape*—the sonic environment. Schafer develops concepts directly applicable to a phenomenology of the soundscape, including *key-notes* (a landscape’s recurring natural sounds) and *soundmarks* (unique sounds that help make a place endearing).

21. Theodor Schwenk, *Sensitive Chaos* (NY: Schocken, 1976).

Using the approach of Goethean phenomenology, this hydrologist examines the character and patterns of water and air in motion, which he depicts in terms of meander, wave, and vortex. “Today,” writes Schwenk, “people no longer look at the *being* of water but merely its physical value.”

22. Eva M. Simms, *The Child in the World* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne Univ. Press, 2008).

This psychologist offers a penetrating phenomenological account of early childhood experience, much of which “precedes articulation.” Simms provides eye-opening chapters on embodiment, coexistentiality, spatiality, things, temporality, language, and historicity. One provocative claim that is effectively demonstrated: “In the young child’s experience there is no *inner* world. There is also no *outer* world.”

23. Ingrid Leman Stefanovic, *Safeguarding Our Common Future* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2000).

In working toward a phenomenology of sustainability, this philosopher explores how place and emplacement might provide a foothold for grounding environmental responsibilities and actions in relation to particular individuals, groups, and localities.

24. Thomas Thiis-Evensen, *Archetypes in Architecture* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1987).

This book is a stunning effort to delineate a phenomenology of architectural experience by exploring how floor, wall, and roof, through the lived meanings of motion, weight, and substance, evoke various degrees of inside-outside continuity or separation. Offers an innovative way to see buildings.

25. S Kay Toombs, “The Lived Experience of Disability,” *Human Studies*, 18 (1995):9-23.

This philosopher, afflicted with multiple sclerosis, draws on her personal experience to construct a phenomenology of illness. She strikingly demonstrates how an understanding of phenomenological notions like the lived body provides “important insights into the profound disruptions of space and time that are an integral element of changed physical capacities such as loss of motility.” Also see her *Meaning of Illness* (Kluwer, 1992).

Thresholds and Inhabitation

Bernd Jager

Jager is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Quebec in Montreal. Many of his writings (sidebar, next page) are central to environmental phenomenology in that they explore existential dialectics often expressed in spatial and place terms—for example, the lived tensions between dwelling and journey, insider and outsider, house and city, or mundane and festive worlds. For thoughtful commentaries on Jager's work, see: Essais de psychologie phénoménologique-existentielle: Réunis en hommage au professeur Bernd Jager, Christian Thiboutot, ed. (Montreal: CIRP, 2007); this volume includes a bibliography of Jager's writings. The following essay is extracted from a longer paper, "Toward a Psychology of Homo Habitans: A Reflection on Cosmos and Universe," presented at the annual International Human Science Conference held at Ramapo College, Mahwah, New Jersey, June 2008. bernd@ican.net. © 2009 Bernd Jager.

The distinguishing trait of human habitation is that it establishes and honors thresholds that cannot be reduced to relationships of force. A threshold can be crossed only by mutual agreement: It represents a symbolic relationship that has distanced itself from mere instinct, appetite and brute impulse. As such, it constitutes the foundation for prayer and sacrifice as well as for dialogue, love, and friendship.

A threshold embodies the typical and unique ways human beings are linked, both to the Earth and to the heavens and to their earthly and heavenly neighbors. It represents a limit that all at once separates and binds human beings to what surrounds, undergirds, and overarches their existence.

Approached in this way, the threshold constitutes the ultimate foundation of a human world reflected in all building projects from the most primitive cave or hut to the most magnificent palace or city, all of which we might even consider as mere variations on the theme of the threshold, the essential function of which is to hold separate and distinct worlds together.

We think of a cosmos as an inhabited world shaped and ordered by customary limits and divided by hospitable thresholds in such a way that human and divine encounters become possible. The fundamental order of the cosmos is, therefore, a moral order, guided by custom and ritual and governed by a threshold that both separates and symbolically unites human and divine neighbors. To be

a *neah-gebür*, or neighbor, means to be a "near-dweller" who "builds," "farms," and "dwells" (*buan*) "nearby" (*neah*) in such a way that he or she must cross a threshold and perform the proper rituals to come into the presence of other near-dwellers.

The cosmos, understood as a *neighborly* world, is reflected or replicated in all inhabitable structures. A house, temple, or city is not only marked by thresholds. Each also manifests an absolute and material limit made manifest in foundations, roof, and walls. The walls separating one house or town from the next may be understood as representing the memory of a painful, original division overcome through the gate or doorway. This original division cannot ever be completely healed or overcome. It must be accepted as a first condition for building a human life and dwelling in a human way.

We are reminded here of the birth of an infant, understood as a first and painful separation from an all-providing mother. We think here also of the Genesis myth of Eve's creation out of a rib taken forcibly from Adam's chest and of the story of Adam and Eve being chased from Paradise. We find this theme of a fateful, original separation also elaborated in the Aristophanic myth as it is told in Plato's *Banquet*. This myth represents the birth of humankind as the result of a punishment meted out to an earlier non-human race of arrogant giants who refused to maintain neighborly relations with the gods. To curb their arrogance, Zeus cut each of them in half, thereby hoping to make them more responsive to both the gods and to each other.

This operation was at first unsuccessful because the separated halves found no way to mutually interact to form a cosmos and create a human world. They succumbed to loneliness and despair. The gods then reshaped the halves so they could face, talk, and make love to each other. These new creatures could then dwell and relate to each other as neighbors. In this way, so the myth tells us, human beings were born.

Some Writings by Bernd Jäger

- 1971 Horizontality and Verticality: An Exploration into Lived Space. In A. Giorgi et al., eds., *Duquesne Studies in Phenomenological Psychology*, vol. 1 (Duquesne Univ. Press).
- 1975 Theorizing, Journeying, Dwelling. In A. Giorgi, et al., eds., *Duquesne Studies in Phenomenological Psychology*, vol. 2 (Duquesne Univ. Press).
- 1976 The Space of Dwelling. *Humanitas*, 12.
- 1985 Body, House and City: The Intertwinings of Embodiment, Inhabitation and Civilization, In D. Seamon & R. Mugerauer, eds., *Dwelling, Place and Environment* (Columbia Univ. Press).
- 1992 From the Homestead to the City. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 23 (2).
- 1998 Human Subjectivity and the Law of the Threshold. In R. Valle, ed., *Phenomenological Inquiry in Psychology* (NY: Plenum).
- 2001 Psychology and Literature, *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 32 (2).
- 2007 Memories and Myths of Evil: A Reflection on the Fall from Paradise. In *Essais de psychologie phénoménologique-existentielle*. C. Thiboutot, ed. (Montreal: CIRP; ISBN 978-0-9781738-6-9).

Myths about humanity's genesis are at the same time cosmogonic in that they relate the creation of a divine and human cosmos. In light of Biblical and Platonic myths, we come to understand the building of walls and the construction of houses, domains, and cities as acts of material affirmation of an original, divine act of separation that broke a perfect, undivided world apart and opened the prospect of a divided, yet neighborly, cosmos.

If walls express consent to separation, we may think of thresholds as clearing the way to human and divine encounters, to love and friendship, and to the coming into being of a human community. In this sense, the very structure of an inhabitable domain repeats in the building and maintenance of its

walls and thresholds, a cosmogonic narrative that tells of the coming into being of a human world marked by neighborly relations.

Every threshold that guards an inhabited domain repeats the myth of a primordial and perfect unity that preceded the building of walls and the creation of a human world. The walls speak of the disturbance of that unity, while the thresholds speak of the subsequent miracle of love and desire that *ordered* a cosmos and made it a place fit for human and divine habitation.

We should note here that a cosmic or inhabitable space always refers to a space and a time that is inherently dual or plural, insofar as inhabitable worlds or domains necessarily point to *neighboring* ones. Within a house or city, we are never totally enclosed, since walls are interrupted by windows and doors that speak of the surrounding world. An inhabitable domain inevitably makes reference to actual or potential *other* worlds with which it forms a meaningful whole. To inhabit a home means to inhabit at the same time a neighborhood, a city, and a world. We cannot truly inhabit a cosmos without maintaining viable relations with neighbors and neighboring worlds.

An ancient Greek proverb boldly proclaims that it is impossible to be human in isolation from other human beings. “*Eis aner oudeis aner*” can be translated as “one man, detached from all others, ceases to be human.” If we extend the logic of that proverb, we can conclude that a house that offers no pathways to other houses and neighbors ceases to be a place fit for human habitation. That logic also reminds us that, if the Earth were to become detached from the heavens, it would no longer be able to shelter human beings in a human way.

The essential dynamic of a cosmos concerns ongoing relationships between what might be called cosmic or *neighboring* pairs, the first of which is the Earth, understood as the dwelling place of mere mortals; and the heavens, understood as the dwelling place of divine and immortal beings. The heaven-Earth relationship would thereafter be recreated in the bond between mortal and immortal beings or in that of host and guest, man and woman, child and adult, or native and stranger.

When mortals no longer recognize the divine or when neighbors no longer partake in mutual interest, the human world regresses to an archaic, uninhabitable state, and cosmos dissolves into a physical universe. That archaic state can be symbolized by a house without windows or with doors forever shut. To confine one's life to such a place would effectively mean to surrender one's humanity.

We have established that thresholds are symbolic limits embodying the law governing human and divine relations. In contemplating a house, a temple, or a city, we note that portals and thresholds are places of vivid, personal interactions, while walls evoke a silent world of fateful partitions and separate destinies. Together, they create a space of dwelling that fosters community while also according each person a separate, distinct life.

The threshold not only separates and binds human beings; it also marries a private, intimate realm to an outside, public, workaday world. The interior space of a home is like a harbor from which ships sail forth in all directions and to which they return to bring home their gathered treasures.

The threshold that both divides and joins an "inside" and "outside" sets in motion a dynamic of leave-taking and homecoming that inaugurates the temporal rhythm of work and play, of an active and contemplative life. This dynamic inside-outside interaction demonstrates that a home cannot exist apart from the path leading from its doorsteps to the doorsteps of another house and another realm. This pathway interconnects not only neighbor to neighbor but also links a familiar world with unknown surrounds. We reinforce and elaborate such a path when we leave the intimate supportive circle of family and friends to enter the workaday world or to undertake voyages to foreign shores.

In short, an inhabited space, no matter whether it forms house, city, or cosmos, links together separate and distinct worlds that thereby are transformed into a symbolic or cosmic whole. We speak here of a "symbolic" whole because its parts are all at once held apart and kept together by virtue of an interconnecting threshold. The word "symbol" originally referred to a "pledge" or "token" that usually took the form of a coin or a piece of pottery that was broken in pieces at the time friends had to part.

Each would take a part of the whole and guard it as a symbol of their enduring unity. Only an inhabited world that is divided and reunited by walls and thresholds can conceive of symbols, and hence of love and friendship.

From whatever angle we approach the house or city, both reveal themselves invariably as a cosmos, understood as a place where the original, absolute separation symbolized by walls becomes humanized through the addition of windows and portals that grant access to neighboring realms. A house or a city becomes inhabitable by virtue of having joined together an inside and outside, a heaven and Earth, a self and another.

Building a house, a city, or a temple is therefore never solely a question of labor and technical skills. Neither should we understand an inhabitable structure solely as a technical instrument that protects us from the naked elements. The building of houses, temples, and cities should first and foremost be understood as a poetic achievement that repeats the genesis of a human world. As Mircea Eliade forcefully reminds us in *Le sacré et le profane* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), a house is not, in the provocative phrase of Le Corbusier, "*une machine à vivre*" but, on the contrary, "forms a whole that repeats the exemplary creation wrought by the gods, in the form of a cosmogony" (p. 55).

To enter a cosmos means to enter a world that cannot be fully encompassed by a single stance or point of view. It can only be explored through exchanges with others. To disclose the cosmos, we cannot remain stationary but must journey and accept a rhythm of coming and going, of entering and leaving, of living and dying. It is this temporal order that gives the hospitable cosmos its astonishing variety and richness.

This richness cannot be captured by violence and becomes obscured by dreams of total possession and complete understanding. Persons and things make their true appearance only after we have renounced dreams of conquest and after we become reconciled to the fact that cosmic realities are destined to forever escape our categories and elude our grasp. A human and divine cosmos cannot be encompassed or controlled. It can only be embraced.

The Need for Architecture

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“Architecture” names, first of all, the art of building and, second, any structure raised in accordance with the rules of that art. Figuratively, it also refers to anything that has been set on a firm foundation and well constructed.

Philosophers, especially, have found it useful to invoke architectural metaphors, and no one more so than the Frenchman Rene Descartes, who, convinced that reason was sufficient to raise a conceptual edifice that would allow human beings to understand the world and their place in it, compared his method to that used by architects.

But if the edifice his reason raised—his “spiritual architecture,” if you will—remains a presupposition of the science and technology that have shaped our modern world, including our built architecture, his expectation that the progress of reason would provide human beings not only with physical but also spiritual shelter went disappointed. The conviction of the Enlightenment and of its heir, Modernism, that reason would lead humanity toward an ever-brighter future, has been shattered by the horrors of holocaust, war, terror, and environmental catastrophes.

Architecture, too, is caught up in such disenchantment. Do we still expect it to build an environment that will provide not just the body but also the spirit with adequate shelter? How will the world look as our children and grandchildren make their way? No doubt, buildings will still be part of that world: We would have to rid ourselves of our bodies to eliminate the need for physical shelter. But will

there still be a need for architecture? Just what task remains for architecture today?

Even to ask that question is to presuppose that “architecture” is not to be equated with “building.” To be sure, every work of architecture is also a building, but it is more. How is this “more” to be understood? A first answer is suggested by the traditional understanding of architecture as one of the arts. In *The Ten Books on Architecture*, the first and still most famous treatise on architecture, the Roman architect Vitruvius demanded that the architect build “with due reference to durability, convenience, and beauty.” [1]. Ever since, thinking about architecture has tended to take this demand pretty much for granted.

Dreams of Beauty

Consider, for example, the way in which architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner begins his influential *An Outline of European Architecture* with the seemingly self-evident observation: “A bicycle shed is a building; Lincoln Cathedral is a piece of architecture.” What distinguishes works of architecture from mere buildings, according to Pevsner, is that they are “designed with a view to aesthetic appeal.”

In the light of that distinction, our initial question could be rephrased: What need will there be for functional buildings that also succeed as aesthetic objects? For many, this revised question is answered by the very conception of the aesthetic object as that which gives pleasure simply because it is what it is, not because it is good for anything. Prize-winning writer, critic, and philosopher William Gass illus-

trated this point of view when he celebrated the way one of Peter Eisenman's houses turns its back on the world and the everyday cares and concerns of individuals:

Thank God, I thought. This house has no concern for me and mine, over which it has no rights, but displays in every aspect and angle and fall of light the concern for the nature and beauty of building that is the architect's trust and obligation [2].

But does such an aesthetic response provide us with a key to the responsibility of the architect or do justice to either beauty or architecture? Human beings have always dreamed of a more beautiful world. The urge to decorate dwellings and tools—indeed the human body—is as old as humanity. But the goal was rarely to create beauty for beauty's sake. Across centuries and cultures, human beings have yearned to experience the presence of spirit in the things that surrounded them in order to feel at home in the world. Ornament had an animating function. When experienced as just an aesthetic addendum, decoration loses this aura.

The aura that gives a building such as England's Lincoln Cathedral its special weight is threatened as soon as architects take their primary responsibility to be the creation of aesthetic objects. For what is "aura"? German critic and philosopher Walter Benjamin understood the experience of aura as an experience of spirit incarnate in matter. The observer's identification with something, say a coconut with the look of a human face, gives it a special aura, lets it appear as more than just mute matter. But is this ever more than an appearance, an illusion, read into things by the observer?

Is the experience of aura then, at bottom, self-deception? A child may experience rocks and animals as animate, endowed with the power of speech, and fairy tales preserve traces of an older magical experience of the aura of all things. But the commitment to objectivity that is a presupposition of our science and technology banishes spirit from matter. To us moderns, things do not speak, except perhaps as echoes of our own voice. Such echoes leave us alone and homeless. Has what we today call "beauty" not lost the aura beauty once possessed? Our answer depends on how much we allow

our commitment to objectivity to limit our understanding of what deserves to be called "real."

Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's answer to the question "What is the beauty of a building today?" speaks to this threatened loss: "The same as the beautiful face of a woman lacking spirit: something mask-like." His metaphor helps us better understand his distinction between two different kinds of beauty: When the subject is a human being, we can more readily distinguish a beauty that is still experienced as the incarnation of spirit in matter from a made-up, mask-like beauty—even if this latter beauty may be more "perfect" in its presentation.

Crucial here are the different ways that beauty relates to what is beautiful. The first beauty invites the metaphor of a veil that conceals even as it calls attention to what lies beneath, be it face, body, or something sacred. Such a veil does not want to be appreciated for its own sake but as a boundary and a bond with what remains concealed—a threshold both separating and linking the sacred and the profane, the inner and the outer, the spiritual and the material. The second beauty would have us forget what is beneath. Such superficial beauty gains special importance in a world in which all too much invites such forgetting. This beauty offers an escape from reality into a world of simulacra.

Returning to our example of Lincoln Cathedral, do we capture its special aura when we understand it as a functional building overlaid with aesthetic intentions? The beauty of this church allowed the building to speak of life on this Earth, of death, of community, and of the promise of happiness—the profound issues that mattered most to those who built it. Into the ground of everyday buildings, the cathedral inserted a figure of utopia. This form of beauty provided spiritual shelter. In stark contrast, beauty that is enjoyed only for beauty's sake lets us forget the burdens of our everyday existence.

Nietzsche's remarks on the beauty of architecture appear in a section of *Human, All Too Human* bearing the title: "Stone is more stone than it used to be" [3]. But are not stones what they always were? Of course, the earlier reference to our modern commitment to objectivity already intimated what has changed.

The contrast Nietzsche had in mind would seem familiar to all of us and to hold not only for architecture: Perceived meaning often veils the materiality of the things we encounter. To better understand this, consider some printed page. Matter, in the form of ink on paper rather than stone, is meant to communicate. And when we get caught up in some story, we may hardly be aware of the paper or the ink blackening our fingers. Our mind is focused on the ideas communicated by the printed words and our reactions to them. Here, in an obvious way, meaning veils matter.

And do not buildings, too, have meaning in this sense, meaning that allows us to liken them to texts? When we enter a railroad station or a bank, what we see is not an assemblage of stones but shapes and surfaces that suggest the purpose or importance of the place and invite a certain behavior. In all architecture, meaning veils the materiality of the material of which buildings are made.

The stones of architecture thus speak to us, though we may want to add that it is really human beings who endow these stones with meaning as both those who build and those who live in and with these buildings bring to them expectations and understanding of what purposes buildings should serve and what they should look like. In that sense, buildings cannot help but speak to us. But how then to understand Nietzsche's claim that "stone is more stone today than it used to be"? In what sense had the buildings of his day lost their ability to speak?

Nietzsche was thinking of Neo-Gothic churches and Neo-Renaissance city halls, of apartment houses given the look of Baroque palaces, of banks built in the image of Greek temples. In the way they appropriated past styles, such buildings did still speak, but the original significance of the styles that were appropriated could no longer be understood.

The architecture of the second half of the 19th century offers ready illustrations of the mask-like beauty Nietzsche had in mind. Functional buildings were dressed up aesthetically with borrowed ornament, whose former spiritual significance was no longer understood. In the first decades of the 20th century, just about every progressive architect, critic, or writer shared Nietzsche's dislike of such architecture. This sense that architecture had become a masquerade provoked many a Modernist to demand a more honest architecture that was responsive to our modern reality and, in particular, to our science and technology.

But have we today not returned to the "decorated sheds"—to borrow a term from the authors of *Learning from Las Vegas*—of the 19th century, if in a new key? [4]. Consider Frank Gehry's Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis (1991-93; photo, lower left). I would not deny this museum's distinctive beauty. But almost self-consciously, with its folded façade of brushed stainless steel, this architecture brings to mind Nietzsche's remark on the mask-like beauty of today's architecture, here made conspicuous by the loose fit between glittering cladding and a quite ordinary shed. Whenever such a building lifts or drops its mask, the material beneath presents itself all the more insistently as the mute material it is, in this case terra-cotta-colored brick and concrete.

Does the aesthetic approach not demand of the architect attention to certain visual qualities that help make his or her work aesthetically appealing—if not beautiful, then at least interesting? Such concern with aesthetic appeal, however, denies architecture the aura that once belonged to it. As Nietzsche explains:

Originally everything on a Greek or Christian building had a meaning, with an eye to a higher order of things:



this aura of an inexhaustible significance surrounded the building like a magical veil [5].

Our modern approach to architecture is governed by a very different understanding of the task of the architect: The architect is asked, among many other requirements, to create buildings that succeed as aesthetic objects—but the more successful the practitioner is in this regard, the more completely does the aesthetic object ornament and finally smother the building itself, transforming it into a mega-sculpture. The resultant beauty is experienced as but a mask, leaving what lies beneath pretty much untouched—and leaving us dreaming of a very different kind of architecture.

Dreams of the Complete Building

That architecture has difficulty rising to the purity found in modern painting or sculpture is evident. Reality, with its own demands, places too many restraints on the architect. This shows itself in the disjointed appearance of countless decorated sheds. But should great architecture not overcome that tension by embracing that reality more completely, instead of hiding it beneath some beautiful mask?

Valéry's definition of poetry as "an effort by one man to create an artificial and ideal order of a material of vulgar origin," the material in this case being ordinary language, invites application to architecture: Architecture is an effort by one individual to create an artificial and ideal order out of a material of vulgar origin, the material now furnished by all the requirements of building [6].

Frank Lloyd Wright's dream of an organic architecture that would make it "quite impossible to consider the building as one thing, its furnishings another and its setting and environment still another" points in this direction: "The very chairs and tables, cabinets and even musical instruments, where practicable, are of the building itself, never fixtures upon it" [7]. Residents of such a house would be expected to behave, perhaps even to dress and eat in ways that would preserve the integrity of the aesthetic whole.

Such dreams invite an aestheticization of life, and because the physical and social environment, too, are to be incorporated into the aesthetic whole, an aestheticization of politics. Architects and theo-

rists have long dreamed of architectural concepts that might gather some multitude into a genuine community. As religion proved less and less able to offer effective spiritual shelter, such dreams gained a new actuality: Why should some genius not be able to create a city that would once again allow individuals to discover their vocation as parts of a greater whole? Presupposed is the conviction, articulated by Nietzsche, "that the human being has value, meaning only in as much as he is a stone in a great building" [8].

Nietzsche knew this kind of dream is likely to strike many as a nightmare. We are too committed to the autonomy of the individual, too preoccupied with the self, to furnish suitable material for such an architecture. But this does not mean that we do not dream of it now and then. Those spiritually at sea may well long for some architecture strong enough to bind or crush freedom. (In the absence of Moses, they may call for Aaron and the golden calf.)

This dream has seduced many Modern architects. Walter Gropius invited Bauhaus students to see themselves as part of a new elite, from which would grow a new belief, "a universally great, enduring, spiritual-religious idea," that would find an architectural expression worthy to take its place beside the great cathedrals. Projecting the "miracle of the Gothic cathedrals" into the future, Gropius envisioned an architecture that once again was "the crystalline expression of man's noblest thoughts, his ardour, his humanity, his faith, his religion!" [9].

We may wonder whether architects like Paul Ludwig Troost and Albert Speer did not come closer to realizing the dream of a new cathedral than did the Bauhaus, although, like German philosopher Martin Heidegger, Nazi architects preferred the paradigms furnished by the Greek temple, transposed into a cold monumentality that reduces the individual to insignificance. As long as nostalgia looks to architecture to furnish human beings with spiritual shelter, it will also feed dreams of Babel's tower. All dreams of the complete building are shadowed by that tower.

Dreams of Freedom

Does the kind of edifying architecture represented by Lincoln Cathedral still have a place in our mod-

ern world? Does it not belong, as German philosopher Friedrich Hegel insisted, to a never-to-be-recovered past—where Hegel would have us affirm the death of architecture in its highest sense as part of humanity's coming of age, no more to be mourned than the loss of the magic the world held when we were children? Perhaps the only spiritual shelter that can adequately protect us moderns is a conceptual architecture raised by reason.

The French writer Victor Hugo suggested that the printing press killed the cathedral. Has the car not similarly rendered the place-establishing city obsolete, where the car is but one manifestation of a way of life that has brought us physical and spiritual mobility and, thus, a freedom that by now seems an inalienable right? How will the electronic revolution and all it stands for transform our sense of space and the need for architecture?

Many today dream of a post-architectural future. And with good reason: Must an ever more vigorous commitment to freedom of the individual not make us suspicious of all place-establishing architecture? In aesthetics, the shift from the beautiful to the sublime testifies to that change, where beauty has long been linked to the establishment of bounded wholes, while the sublime demands open space. Freedom, democracy, and the promise of open space go together. There is tension between the call for a place-establishing architecture and the value placed on freedom. French writer George Bataille was not alone in suspecting a prison in every work of architecture [10].

Similarly, this desire for freedom will rebel again and again against the rule of reason. In his short novel *Notes from Underground*, Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky succinctly portrays this seemingly deep-rooted need to oppose modern society's reliance on the authority of reason. One of his characters acknowledges that:

Twice-two-makes-four is, in my humble opinion, nothing but a piece of impudence. Twice-two-makes-four is a farcical, dressed-up fellow who stands across your path with arms akimbo and spits at you. Mind you, I quite agree that twice-two-makes-four is a most excellent thing; but if we are to give everything its due, then twice-two-makes-five is sometimes a most charming little thing, too [11].

Recent manifestations of such contrarian thinking can be found in the architectural movements known as “deconstructivism” and “anarchitecture.” Influenced by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, the former has liked to challenge well-established expectations about what a work of architecture should look like by playing with fragmentation, distortion, dislocation of familiar architectural elements, and surprising geometries, where the computer has greatly facilitated such play. By now, such gestures have descended from elite architecture into the vernacular and become a familiar part of everyday postmodern building practice.

The neologism “anarchitecture” suggests buildings that rise without the architect's art. It's not a wholly new concept: Austrian architect Bernard Rudofsky's *Architecture Without Architects*, published in 1964, was a “frankly polemical” celebration of Old World vernacular building. But in the work of architectural historian Robin Evans and architects Gordon Matta-Clark and Lebbeus Woods, the word speaks with a different, more oppositional voice: For them, anarchitecture is not a product of anonymous builders supported by the collective wisdom of generations in tune with the rhythms of nature, but very much the expression of individuals responsive to our rapidly changing cyber-world, ever on the verge of slipping out of our control.

Anarchitecture here means cuts, ruptures, insertions, and intrusions into the body of architecture that challenge its often all-but-overlooked rule over our lives, inviting more thoughtful consideration of architecture and its ruling ethos. Anarchitecture invites us to fantasize about very different environments, very different ways of life. (Gordon Matta-Clark, on the occasion of the 1973 dedication of the Twin Towers, in fact, called for their erasure, unable to even suspect that terror would all too soon realize what was meant only as a thought-provoking comment. Of course, 9/11 has made words such as deconstruction or anarchitecture more difficult to use and invites weightier and more difficult reflections concerning the future of architecture.)

Anarchitecture can be seen as a recent species of “fantastic architecture,” which has long communicated the tension between the generally accepted function of architecture (to provide physical and

spiritual shelter by bounding space) and our unruly imaginations that, moved by desire, fear, pleasure, or disgust, give birth to fanciful apparitions, fictions, and dream visions, none of which rests on solid ground.

Fantastic architecture belongs with utopia, this land that lies somewhere beyond our all-too-familiar earthbound world with its place-assigning order. Utopia, in fact, possesses two faces: Eutopia, that imaginary realm where reason coexists with freedom and happiness; and dystopia, a realm where pain drowns freedom and mocks pretentious reason. Visions of paradise, Jerusalem, or the City of God—realms where human beings, no longer bound by the spirit of gravity, are finally free to fly and where buildings will seem to float, immaterially, in boundless space—are thus shadowed by versions of the labyrinth, Babel, or hell—dark suffocating spaces in which lurk minotaur and devil. The seductive appeal, not just of eutopic visions but also of dystopic ones (think of Piranesi's *Carceri*) invites consideration: While it does not lead to an architecture fit for earthbound mortals, it should make our building more thoughtful.

Dreams of Nature

Suspicion of architecture has attended thinking about architecture from the very beginning: In paradise, there was no need for building; in this garden, Adam and Eve were at home. And might artifice not recover what pride is supposed to have lost? Both English philosopher Francis Bacon and Descartes thus dreamed of paradise regained on the basis of science and technology.

We are not done with that dream. Our architecture shows that the Cartesian promise that reason will render us the masters and possessors of nature was not idle. But the history of the 20th century demonstrates that the possession of such power has not brought us wisdom. The shadow of Babel's tower, which today so easily blurs with the shadow cast by fascist architecture, darkens many a Modernist dream of architecture and invites very different thoughts. Was it not Cain who built the first city? Convinced that our true home is not to be established by human artifice, painters thus liked to place the Nativity in some fantastic ruin.

The same distrust of an architecture ruled by an all-too-human reason let the painter Friedensreich Hundertwasser call "the air raids of 1943 a perfect automatic lesson in form; straight lines and their vacuous structures ought to have been blown to pieces, and so they were." He admonishes us to "strive, as rapidly as possible for total uninhabitability and creative mouldering in architecture" [12]. In this connection, the decision by architects of the 18th century to actually build ruins deserves consideration, as does the related decision by Romantic painters to represent still-intact buildings as ruins.

Related is the dream of buildings in the image of the architecture of animals. Juhani Pallasmaa has suggested that what makes their architecture so beautiful "is its total integration into the life pattern of its builder and to the dynamically balanced system of nature" [14]. Its beauty figures what is denied to us: a dwelling completely at home in nature, in tune with its rhythms.

Today, such dreams have gained weight and been given a special urgency by ever-more-pressing environmental concerns. Green architecture has become much more than just a slogan: It is demanded by a still expanding humanity on a collision course with finite natural resources.

How should environmental problems, of which the energy crisis is only the most visible manifestation, affect the look of the built environment? How will they transform our still prodigal use of space? Will there be gardens on the roof of every building? Everyone who builds, no matter how modest the work, bears responsibility for how those who come after have to live with it. To meet that responsibility, architects must be able to meet the challenges presented by the environment and by the needs of still-unborn generations.

Common sense tells us that, in light of these environmental pressures, much of what we call development today is in fact irresponsible. Not just this country but the entire world remains caught up—despite numerous warnings, prophecies of doom, and modest efforts to remedy the effects of waste and pollution—in a process that, if not checked by a changed attitude to this Earth, will lead to disaster or, rather, disasters.

The list is long and sobering: a deteriorating environment that will make clean water, air, and soil—not to mention relatively unspoiled nature—a thing of the past; wars over dwindling resources; mass starvation; and moral disintegration that could lead to the self-destruction of humanity itself. To ensure a livable environment for future generations, we must learn to consider physical space a scarce resource; to develop different, much denser settlement patterns; and to imagine a less oppositional relationship between architecture and nature.

Such efforts, however, are unlikely to be successful without a change of heart. If shortsighted, selfish interests are allowed to continue to shape the built environment, we can only expect its further deterioration. Also needed is what German poet and philosopher Friedrich Schiller called an aesthetic education. Decisions to give a high-rise the look of a turning torso, as Santiago Calatrava did in Malmö, or an apartment building the look of a dancing couple, as Frank Gehry did in Prague, may lead to interesting aesthetic objects but make no contribution to such an awareness.

Needed is architecture that transforms our understanding of how we should live. A high standard of living measured by per capita income does not necessarily mean a high quality of life. What kind of life do we want for our children and our children's children? A greener architecture is needed, not just to address ever-more unavoidable environmental problems but, more fundamentally, to help bring about a change of heart.

The Architect's Responsibility

William Gass called “concern for the nature and beauty of building” the architect’s “trust and obligation.” Much depends here on how the nature of building and its beauty are understood.

In the late 1950s the philosopher Paul Weiss, writing very much in the orbit of aesthetic Modernism, defined architecture as “the art of creating space through the construction of boundaries in common-sense space” [15]. Like William Gass, he thought it important that the architect’s creativity not be fettered by “judges, critics, clients, and problems relating to engineering, city planning, and

scales.” So he called on architecture schools to encourage students:

to experiment with the building of all sorts of space, in all sorts of ways, with all sorts of material. They should have periods in which they do not care that their work may not interest a client or that no one may ever build it or that it may not fit in with prevailing styles. Not until they take seriously the need to explore the possibilities of bounding spaces in multiple ways will they become alert to architecture as an art, as respectable, revelatory, creative, and at least as difficult as any other [6].

But while such thinking has led to the creation of countless striking aesthetic objects, their often undeniable beauty resists inhabitation and contributes little to the creation of a successful built environment. Like all aesthetic objects, such works invite admiration simply for what they are. If we demand that architecture provide both physical and spiritual shelter, the creation of such aesthetic objects fails to meet the architect’s special responsibility. Instead of shelter, it offers distractions. A different kind of beauty is needed.

Benjamin’s understanding of aura intimates such a beauty. Why does aura matter? An answer is suggested when Benjamin links the experience of aura to the experience of a person as a person:

Looking at someone carries the implicit expectation that our look will be returned by the object of our gaze. Where this expectation is met (which, in the case of thought processes, can apply equally to the look of the mind and to a glance pure and simple), there is an experience of the aura to the fullest extent [17].

To experience the distinctive aura of the other is to experience an incarnation of spirit in matter so complete that there is no distance between the two. Although Benjamin is describing an interaction between two people, something of the sort is present in every experience of aura.

Benjamin claimed that works of art have to lose their aura in the age of mechanical reproduction. Does this not also hold for works of architecture? Jean Nouvel points to what awaits us:

From the moment an office building is made on the basis of an existing typology, whose technology and price and the conditions for its realization are known, we can duplicate the building and have it constructed without paying for a new design” [18].

In the same conversation, French social theorist Jean Baudrillard said this about the then still-standing Twin Towers: "These two towers resemble two perforated bands. Today we'd probably say they're clones of each other, that they've already been cloned" [19]. To experience a work of architecture as a simulacrum is to experience it as unbearably light. (This observation of their design, of course, does not in any way take away from the unbearable weight we feel for the destruction of these towers and the subsequent loss of so many lives.)

In this age of the computer, the very concept of aura may seem to betray nostalgia for something that lies irrecoverably behind us. But without some experience of aura, we feel alone and homeless. That is what makes the increasing loss of aura in the age of technical reproduction so frightening: Are not even human beings today in danger of losing that special aura that distinguishes persons from their simulacra? What in principle distinguishes a person from a robot with a computer brain? The loss of an experience of aura threatens the loss of our humanity.

That threat is recognized by Baudrillard when, in his discussion with Nouvel, he takes the task of art today to be that of tearing away the masks that aesthetics and culture have placed over our suffocating artificial world, where the virtual threatens to displace the real. Art, he insists, should preserve the "enigmatic side" of things, should break open modern culture, which today is

everywhere... a homologue of industry and technology... A work of art is a singularity, and all these singularities can create holes, interstices, voids... in the metastatic fullness of culture [20].

Why such emphasis on singularity? At issue is the distinction between what artifice can produce and what is given. Whatever artifice can produce can, in principle, be reproduced. But the simplest thing, say a rock or a leaf, is infinitely complex, a unique given that resists full comprehension and therefore reproduction.

What is at issue is related to the question: Why does aura matter? What allows us in this age of the technical reproducibility, not just of works of art, but increasingly of everything, to hold on to a fun-

damental distinction between the aura of human beings, works of art, and natural objects?

The threat that reproduction poses to our experience of the aura of things is also a threat to our own human essence. This makes it important to open windows in the conceptual architecture raised by reason, windows to dimensions of reality that resist comprehension and therefore cannot be reproduced. A successful work of art should have something of the enigmatic presence we experience in the face of a person. That, it seems to me, is a test that architecture, too, must meet if it is to continue to provide us with spiritual shelter. At stake is nothing less than our humanity.

Endnotes

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8. F. Nietzsche, "Streifzüge eines Unzeitgemässen," *Götzen-Dämmerung* 11.
9. [W.] Gropius, [B.] Taut, and [A.] Behne, "New Ideas on Architecture," in *Programs and Manifestos*, 157.
10. See D. Hollier, *Against Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).
11. *The Best Short Stories of Dostoevsky*, (NY: Random House, 1955), 139.
12. Hundertwasser, "Mould Manifesto against Rationalism in Architecture," in *Programs and Manifestoes*, 157.
13. Cf. H. Sedlmayr, *Verlust der Mitte* (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1959), 77.
14. J. Pallasmaa, *Animal Architecture* (Helsinki: Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1955), 11.
15. P. Weiss, *Nine Basic Arts* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1961), 69.
16. Ibid., 84.
17. W. Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," 188.
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19. Ibid., 4.
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Place and Human Being

Jeff Malpas

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One of my favorite descriptions of sense of place is poet Seamus Heaney's discussion of English romantic poet William Wordsworth. Referring to the Westmoreland landscape that figures in Wordsworth's poem "Michael," Heaney writes that the landscape is both "humanized and humanizing" [1]. The landscape or, more generally, the place, is thus seen as itself having a human character, while it also makes human those who live within it.

The mutuality between place and human suggested by Heaney has been a fundamental theme in much of my work, and, if we take it that such mutuality is a real feature of the relation between places and persons, it goes a long way in explaining why it is that place and the sense of place take on so much importance in human life and experience.

Of course, we don't need to turn only to poets to know the importance of place in our lives. As a philosopher who frequently talks to both academic and popular audiences about place and the sense of place, I am struck by how readily ideas of place strike a chord in just about everybody. We all have our own stories about the places that matter to us, and about the ways in which our lives have been affected, and even shaped, by the places in which we live.

In Tasmania, where I now live and work, this is particularly evident, and the island seems somehow imbued with a stronger or more self-evident sense of place than anywhere else I have been (a phe-

nomenon undoubtedly connected both with the character of Tasmania as an island as well as the darkness of much of its history).

Putting Place in Question

Although it seems an obvious, though not uncontested, fact that place is important and appears easily recognizable as a key element in our lives, it remains a question as to why this should be so. Is our connection to place merely a contingent—an accidental feature of human life and experience? Is our connection to place merely a residue of the way human beings used to live—tied to a particular town, village or locality, and often having little or no experience of the world outside a certain narrow region?

Perhaps in the globalized contemporary world, in which air travel brings everywhere to within little more than a day's journey, and in which the electronic media can connect us with just about anywhere, the idea that we have a special connection to place will come to seem rather old-fashioned, and the very notion of a special sense of place merely another form of nostalgia for a past that is no longer relevant or real.

If our connection to place is indeed merely contingent and so can change as the circumstances of human life change, then much of the discussion of place and sense of place may well have to be viewed as of only passing interest and as really a

discussion that belongs to the past rather than to the present or to the future.

This possibility is a significant challenge in itself. Those of us who think that place matters, even in the era of globalization and commodification, must be able to provide an account of the nature and significance of place that is grounded in more than just our own individual experiences or responses, no matter how widely they may be shared. What is needed is an account that gives insight into the necessary character of place itself and that allows the connection to place to be seen as a necessary part of what it is to be human.

In the absence of such an account, it will always be possible that the significance of place may be open to question. And more than that, in the absence of such an account, we cannot be certain whether our positive evaluation of place and of the sense of place is itself legitimate, or whether it may even be misleading or dangerous.

Certainly, there are many contemporary theorists who would argue that, if the advent of globalization does imply a loss of any real sense of place, then this is no bad thing and that the sooner we can discard the idea of a special connection to place, the better. In fact, for some, the idea that place has a special importance in human life, and that particular places have a special role in making us what we are, is itself one of the most dangerous and pernicious ideas in the whole of human history [2].

The Danger of Place?

The argument for the inherent danger of place often proceeds by historical example: There are countless instances in which the idea that some individual or group has a special connection to some particular place, whether village, town or region, is the basis for acts of violence and exclusion, of varying degrees, against those who are seen as *not* of that place—as “other.”

The examples are easy to cite: In the Middle East, the conflict between Israeli and Palestinian is centered around the claim that each makes to the same “homeland” and in which the city of Jerusalem is the central focus for intractable disagreement and division; in the Balkans, the conflict in Kosovo is only the most recent example of a long history of

conflict in which notions of land and identity play a crucial role; in Nazi Germany, the event that is the great horror of the 20th century—the Jewish Holocaust—was enacted on the basis of an ideology of “blood and soil” and the pre-eminence of the German “homeland.”

Even in Australia, we have seen recent attempts to defend particular areas by violent means against those who come from “outside,” the most striking example being the Cronulla beach riots of December 2005 [3]. The idea of a sense of place, some might say, is thus not just the vestige of a past we have outgrown but is also the root cause of inhumanity, conflict, violence and much suffering.

Occasionally, one finds that this claim is reinforced, not merely by reference to examples, but also by a set of conceptual considerations that, in general form, run as follows:

1. Consider what is implied by the idea of a special sense of place. For many people it means that the place “speaks” to them, that it has a significance for them, and usually this means that the place plays a role in either reflecting something of their own sense of themselves or else that it actually shapes or is a part of that sense of self. Thus, when we say that we feel we belong to a place, we really mean that the place is part of who and what we are.

2. Think of what it might mean for this sort of special relationship between place and self to hold. If the relationship is one that plays a role in shaping my sense of self or in determining who and what I am, then one might suppose that the relationship must be one that is somehow peculiar to me or to people who share a similar sense of identity and self—otherwise the relationship would not have any special sense for me, nor could it serve to shape my identity, as distinct from that of others.

3. Yet if the relation between my self and the places that are important to me is a relationship that serves to shape my identity and so to give me a sense of self that distinguishes me from others (or at least from *some* others—from those, let’s say, who are not part of my community), then it must also serve to shape my sense of who is *other* just as much as it shapes my sense of who is *not* other.

Now sometimes the reasoning seems to stop at this point, as if it were enough to demonstrate the dangerous nature of place simply by demonstrating the way in which place can be seen to underpin the opposition of self and other, friend and stranger, compatriot and foreigner. Yet, clearly, this is not enough to substantiate the claim that the sense of place is itself a dangerous or pernicious notion. Our connection to place may be part of what makes for the possibility of identity and so also of difference, but neither the fact of identity nor difference need be problematic in themselves. Something more must be added here [4].

4. What seems to provide the necessary additional consideration, although it is seldom made explicit, is the idea that maintaining a sense of identity through connection to place necessarily implies the violent exclusion of others from that place. In essence, so this idea seems to run, my belonging to place must always be based in the belonging of that place to me and only to me (or to my community). Place and the sense of place is thus seen to be dangerous and pernicious because the relationship to place is always a relationship of *ownership*, even if often of *disguised* ownership.

If place is as dangerous as sometimes claimed, then it must be because violence and exclusion are part of the very idea of place—are already implied in the very notion of a connection to place. But this would seem to be so only if our belonging to place is indeed understood to mean the belonging of place *to us*. And certainly it is hard to see how one could advance the line of reasoning that concludes in such a negative valuation of place without relying on this idea.

Moreover, when we turn to the examples that are so often cited to support the claims of the negativity of place, we find that what characterizes those examples is precisely a tendency to assert sovereignty, authority, or control over the places to which belonging is claimed. The question that now emerges is this: Is it really the case that the assertion of our connection to place is merely another way of asserting control over place?

Indigenous Notions of Place

This question can be seen as returning us to the challenge that I referred to near the beginning of this discussion: Since the claim in question concerns the necessarily exclusionary character of place, that claim can only be substantiated or refuted by looking to an account of the nature of place and our connection to it that is based, not in the contingent or the individual, but in the necessary structure of place as such. Yet before we take up this matter in more detail, it is worth considering one way in which the idea of our connection to place is expressed that seems to stand as a direct counter to the idea that such connection is always authoritarian and controlling.

The idea of an intimate connection between place and human being is a widespread, if not universal, feature of Indigenous life and culture. This idea was given popular expression in Bruce Chatwin's *The Songlines* (London: Penguin, 1987), which focused on the importance of place in “nomadic” cultures, both the cultures of Aboriginal Australia and of the North African Bedouin, but it has also been the focus for many other works, both popular and scholarly, and it is an idea that is often taken as marking off Indigenous modes of life from the non-Indigenous.

Significantly, those who would argue for the dangerous and pernicious character of place seldom direct their critique at Indigenous conceptions. One might view this as purely a consequence of political sensitivity, but given the argument I set out above, there may be a more fundamental reason for this.

Indigenous conceptions of place assert an essential belonging of human beings to the places they inhabit. In Aboriginal Australian culture, for instance, one's very identity, one's totemic and kinship relations, are inseparable from one's country and the landmarks—the rocks, trees, waterholes, and so on—that make it up.

Yet leaving aside the complications introduced by European notions of land ownership, there is no sense of this belonging to place in an Indigenous context that entails proprietorship or authority over the places to which one belongs. There may well be a sense of the importance of protecting and preserving those places—a sense, one might say, of guardi-

anship—but this need not entail, except in the case of some ritual places, the complete exclusion of others.

Moreover, for many Indigenous cultures, including that of Aboriginal Australia, the relationship to place is established and sustained, not through the exercise of authority over the place—through ensuring one’s own exclusive access to it—but rather through journeying across it and through the stories that such journeying embodies and expresses. The relation between place and human being is thus explicitly seen to be one in which human beings are indeed shaped by place and, while human beings may have a responsibility to respect and care for place, and so there is indeed a measure of mutuality here, it is human beings who stand under the authority of place, rather than the other way around.

Place “Topographically”

Although, as I noted above, the intimacy of the connection to place within many Indigenous cultures is sometimes taken to be part of what marks off the Indigenous from the non-Indigenous, I take the Indigenous understanding of the human connection to place to provide important insights into the real nature and significance of place for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The sense of place that I referred to at the start of this discussion—the sense of place that Heaney describes in terms of the landscape as “humanized and humanizing”—is a sense that I would argue should be understood much more on the model of Indigenous modes of thought than by assimilation to any disguised form of ownership or control.

Indeed, the whole point of Heaney’s emphasis on the importance of the sense of place is precisely to direct attention to the mutuality of the relation between place and human being—that while we may affect the places in which we live and so may take responsibility for them, those places also affect us in profound and inescapable ways.

Much of my work on place has aimed at meeting the challenge of providing an account of our connection to place that understands it as more than just an accidental feature of human psychology. In other words, my approach has been *philosophical* in

character (philosophy being understood as the mode of inquiry that looks to uncover the fundamental nature and significance of things). As such, the account is grounded in a detailed analysis of the underlying character of human being as well as the character of place. Significantly, it is also an account that mirrors key features of Indigenous conceptions of place.

Indigenous accounts of place emphasize the way in which place is formed and sustained through journey and movement, pathway and track. Not only does this suggest that our relationship with place is always one of active engagement with place and with that which is found within it, but it also means that place has to be understood as itself a dynamic and relational structure in which we are already embedded, rather than some static object over which “ownership” can simply be asserted.

I have tried to capture this idea through an analogy with old-fashioned methods of topographical surveying in which one comes to understand a landscape or stretch of country, not through mere observation from a distance, but rather through one’s engagement with that landscape as one undertakes repeated triangulations between landmarks, measuring distance and angle, as one traverses the distance from one landmark to another. The place that is the entire landscape is thus grasped as made up of a network of places, joined by the paths between, while those places are themselves made what they are through the way they are located in relation to each other within that larger landscape.

On this account, then, place has to be understood as essentially relational in character, and our own connection to place—our “sense of place”—is seen as emerging through our active engagement with that place and our embeddedness in the relations that make it up. Both these features clearly connect with features evident in Indigenous accounts of place.

Here we have the beginnings of a way of making sense of the underlying nature and significance of place that can help us to see why the connection to place is not merely a contingent or outmoded feature of human being. But just as this account mirrors key elements of Indigenous understandings of place, so we can also see why our connection to

place cannot be construed on the model of our ownership of, or authority over, place.

Place has an essentially relational structure, and our connection to place is such that we are always already embedded within that structure. As a result, place cannot be grasped as some possession over which we can take hold. Moreover, while our connection to place operates through our engagement with and movement through place—and in so doing we allow the character of places to appear—we are ourselves inevitably shaped by those places, and so stand under their sway.

We are, one might say, “owned” by place in a way that is quite different from any ownership we might attempt to exercise over particular places. Yet there is a mutuality here that is captured in Heaney’s description of the Wordsworthian landscape as “humanized and “humanizing.” It is through our engagement with place that our own human being is made real, but it is also through our engagement that place takes on a sense and a significance of its own.

“Owning up” to Place

There is no doubt that we can and do make claims of ownership with respect to places, regions, and so forth. But this assertion of ownership operates at a very different level from that of our proper belonging to place. Just as Indigenous conceptions of belonging may co-exist (if not always comfortably) with non-Indigenous notions of ownership so, too, may the idea of a human connection to place co-exist with ideas of proprietorship and sovereignty.

The mistake is to conflate these two very different notions. It is precisely their conflation and not the idea of place as such that underpins the violent and exclusionary responses to place that we see exemplified in the Middle East, in Kosovo, in Nazi Germany, and even in contemporary Australia.

When we fail to understand the real nature of our connection to place and refuse to understand that connection other than in terms of ownership and control, then not only have we misunderstood ourselves, but we have also lost any real sense of place as such. To have a sense of place is not to own but rather to be owned by the places we inhabit; it is

to “own up” to the complexity and mutuality of both place and human being.

Endnotes

1. See Seamus Heaney, “The Sense of Place,” *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968–1978* (London: Faber & Faber, London, 1984), p. 145. I also discuss this passage in the “Introduction” to *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999).

2. Perhaps the best example of such a view is in the work of the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas—see especially his “Heidegger, Gagarin, and Us,” in *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*, trans. Séan Hand (London: Athlone Press, 1990), pp. 231–34.

3. These riots, which spread beyond Cronulla to encompass an area of Sydney’s southern beachside suburbs known as “the Shire,” were sparked by the attempt on the part of some residents to defend themselves against what they viewed as the incursion of “outsiders” who were mainly of Middle Eastern, especially Lebanese, background. At a different level, but still within an Australian context, many would view the immigration and border protection policies of the Howard Government (which can themselves be seen as part of the larger context that gave rise to the tensions evident at Cronulla) to be based around a xenophobic desire to defend Australia from those who supposedly do not “belong.”

4. One might suggest, of course, that there is already a basic human propensity to fear those who are different and to try to exclude others from what is our own, and that this is the only additional element required. Whether there is such a basic propensity has no bearing, however, on the question of place as such, since if there were such a propensity, this would mean that the conflict and suffering that is sometimes associated with claims to place is a consequence of a quite general feature of human psychology—it would not be a feature of the human connectedness to place in particular.

From Malpas' *Place and Experience* (1999)

In [recent] discussion, place... has been viewed with a great deal of suspicion as a romantic affectation or as arising out of some sedentary conservatism. But, if the arguments of the preceding pages are taken seriously, then place can neither be dismissed in this way nor can it be unproblematically taken to give support to any particular form of conservatism.

The complex structure of place, its resistance to any simple categorization or characterization, its encompassing of both subjective and objective elements, its necessary interconnections with agency, all suggest that the idea of place does not so much bring a certain politics with it, as define the very frame within which the political itself must be located. It is only from out of a grasp of place within which the political can arise that we can even begin to think about the possibility of a politics that would do justice to our existence as fundamentally an existence in and through place (p. 198).

A Pragmatic Sense of Place

Edward Relph

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The flexibility of the word “place” allows it to encompass a rich range of possibilities. It can refer to social context but more generally implies something about somewhere. No definition is needed to understand what it means when we say, for instance, “Save a place for me” or “Victoria—the place to be” (as license plates claim), or even when it is suggested by philosopher Thomas Nagel that “the world is a big, complex place” [1].

On the other hand, this range of uses suggests that a place can be pretty much whatever we want it to be. I agree with John Cameron that “the breadth of the notion of place... is both a strength and a weakness” and that ways have to be found to avoid its being so inclusive that it means all things to all people [2].

In this essay, I argue that a pragmatic sense of place must be an essential component in the development of effective ways to cope with 21st-century environmental and social challenges. If place can mean whatever we want, this argument would be a vacuous exercise, so I will begin with some clarifications and restrictions.

Place & Placelessness

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz suggests that culture consists of webs of significance woven by human beings, in which we are all suspended [3]. Places occur where these webs touch the earth and connect people to the world. Each place is a territory of significance, distinguished from larger or smaller areas by its name, by its particular environmental quali-

ties, by the stories and shared memories connected to it, and by the intensity of meanings people give to or derive from it.

The parts of the world without names are undifferentiated space, and the absence of a name is equivalent to the absence of place. Conversely, where communities have deep roots, it seems that their named places fuse culture and environment, and this fusion is then revealed in striking cultural landscapes. There is a scale implication here because, when the term “place” is used geographically (as in the expression, “The place where I live is...”), the reference usually seems to be to somewhere about the size of a landscape that can potentially be seen in a single view—for example, a village, small town, or urban neighborhood.

This sense of focus is, I think, a core notion of place corresponding closely with ideas of community and locality. I stress, however, that, since in ordinary language a place can be at any scale from the world down to a chair, large places must be loosely comprised of smaller ones, and smaller places are nested within larger ones [4]. In other words, while place may be spatially focused at the scale of a landscape, it is not spatially constrained.

The antithesis of place is *placelessness*, a sort of non-place quality manifest in uniformity, standardization and disconnection from context. If a place is somewhere, placelessness can be anywhere [5]. It is tempting to see place and placelessness as opposite types of landscape—to contrast, for instance, the distinctiveness of a small town on the Costa Brava with a placeless industrial suburb of

Toronto—and to assume that place is good and placelessness is somehow deficient.

But this oppositional thinking is simplistic. Rather, place and placelessness are bound together in a sort of geographical embrace so that almost everywhere contains aspects of both. Place is an expression of what is specific and local, while placelessness corresponds to what is general and mass-produced. Thus, even the standardized uniformity of placelessness always has some unique characteristic, such as the arrangement of buildings.

And no matter how distinctively different somewhere may appear, it always shares some of its features with other places—for example, red tile roofs and white walls are a common feature of Mediterranean towns. These sorts of similarities make exceptional qualities and meanings comprehensible to outsiders.

In a world of unique places, travel would be enormously difficult because nothing would be familiar; in a perfectly placeless world, travel would be pointless. It is helpful, therefore, to think of place and placelessness arranged along a continuum and existing in a state of tension. At one extreme, distinctiveness is ascendant and sameness diminished; at the other extreme, uniformity dominates and distinctiveness is suppressed. Between these extremes there are countless possible configurations. Theoretically, at the midpoint they are equal, but in actual landscapes such a balance is probably impossible to identify [6].

In short, things are rarely straightforward. For instance, distinctive identities can be borrowed, plagiarized, or contrived. At least two towns in the North American Rockies have reinvented themselves as Bavarian communities, and there are gondolas in Las Vegas and on Lake Ontario. This geographical borrowing of strong place identities is not uncommon, and where it occurs the qualities of place distinctiveness have been made placeless.

Spirit & Sense of Place

“Spirit of place” is a translation of the Latin *genius loci*. The Romans believed in a pantheon of gods, many associated with specific places. Each house, town, grove, and mountain was possessed by its own spirit that gave identity to that place by pres-

ence and actions. Though elements of a belief in sacred spirits of place persist—for example, in geomancy and feng shui—spirit of place now generally refers to a mostly secular quality, either natural or built, that gives somewhere a distinctive identity.

In this “profane” meaning, spirit of place is understood as an inherent quality, though subject to change. When a settlement is abandoned, as has happened with many Canadian prairie towns, buildings collapse and spirit of place fades. Alternatively, as somewhere is built up and lived in, spirit of place grows. In this way, even an initially placeless suburb gradually acquires its own identity, at least for many who live there.

Sometimes “sense of place” is used to refer to what might more accurately be called “spirit of place”—the unique environmental ambience and character of a landscape or place. I prefer to keep a distinction between sense of place and spirit of place, though clearly they are closely connected.

As I understand it, sense of place is the faculty by which we grasp spirit of place and that allows us to appreciate differences and similarities among places. Spirit of place exists primarily outside us (but is experienced through memory and intention), while sense of place lies primarily inside us (but is aroused by the landscapes we encounter). From a practical perspective, this lived difference means that, while it is possible to design environments that enhance or diminish spirit of place, it is no more possible to design my sense of place than it is to design my memory.

Sense of place is a synaesthetic faculty that combines sight, hearing, smell, movement, touch, imagination, purpose, and anticipation. It is both an individual and intersubjective attribute, closely connected to community as well as to personal memory and self. It is variable. Some people are not much interested in the world around them, and place for them is mostly a lived background. But others always attend closely to the character of the places they encounter.

Exclusion & Extensibility

A strong sense of place appears to be partly instinctive but can also be learned and enhanced through

the careful practice of comparative observation and appreciation for what makes places distinctive [7]. The deepest sense of place seems to be associated with being at home, being somewhere you know and are known by others, where you are familiar with the landscape and daily routines and feel responsible for how well your place works.

There are two crucial qualifications regarding responsibility for place. First, while it is mostly a positive attitude that contributes to social and environmental responsibility, sense of place can turn sour or be poisoned when it becomes parochial and exclusionary. NIMBY-ism and gated communities are familiar examples of negative place attitudes, but far more serious is ethnic cleansing [8]. This exclusionary tendency is always latent in sense of place. It can, however, be deliberately countered through the self-conscious development of a cosmopolitan perspective that grasps similarities and respects differences among places.

Second, sense of place varies over time. Thomas Homer-Dixon notes that, until about 1800, most people lived in rural areas, met, in their lifetimes, only a few hundred people, communicated by speech and walking, and rarely traveled more than a few miles from their birthplace [9]. A century later, this situation still applied to my grandfather, who lived most of his life in a village in South Wales where he ran a small construction firm and built the house in which he died 30 years later. Such a geographically-focused life must have led to profound place associations, where each person, house, field, road, and custom was familiar and known by name. In some remote areas and in nostalgic beliefs, this intimate familiarity lingers into the present, but it is mostly a pre-modern experience.

In dramatic contrast, our sense of place at the start of the 21st century is spread-eagled across the world. My daily 25-kilometer commute to work in Toronto is farther than probably most residents in my grandfather's village traveled in their lifetimes. Conferences on the other side of the world, vacations in distant places, emails to colleagues on other continents—all are commonplace.

In less than a century, both direct and vicarious place experiences have been enormously expanded. For large numbers of people today, it is normal to

visit hundreds of places and meet thousands of people in a lifetime. The geographer Paul Adams uses the term “extensibility” to depict the unexceptional fact that lives now extend easily among many places across scales from the local to global [10]. Modern networks of communication allow and even require that we continually situate ourselves in wider contexts and make comparisons with distant places, many of which we may have visited or at least seen on television.

In short, sense of place today is far more diffuse and distributed than even two generations ago. As a result, sense of place must, in some ways, be shallower. I simply have not spent long enough living in one place to develop the deep associations that, for my grandfather, must have been taken for granted. I do not mean to suggest that the current extended sense of place is weak or deficient—only that it differs from pre-modern, rooted experiences.

Indeed, some familiarity with different places facilitates an appreciation of the lives of others and provides an antidote for a poisoned, exclusionary sense of place. Familiarity with other places is also essential for grasping the connections between global processes and challenges and their manifestations in particular places.

Emerging Challenges

The 20th century began with optimistic expectations that social and environmental problems caused by industrialization would be corrected through technological innovation and political reform. There were remarkable improvements in productivity and standards of living, but there were also genocidal wars, technologies of annihilation, irresponsible environmental damage, and a remarkable failure to reduce global poverty. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that the 21st century began pessimistically with numerous expressions of concern that our civilization is generating insoluble problems usually characterized as global because they are widespread. What strikes me, however, is that their consequences will manifest locally, synergistically, and probably unpleasantly in the diverse places of everyday life. Attempts to deal with these consequences will need to be at least partially grounded in a carefully articulated sense of place.

In her *Dark Age Ahead*, Jane Jacobs suggests that “we are rushing headlong into a dark age.” Among other causes, she blames the decline of scientific objectivity, systems of taxation remote from local problems, and demise of community [11]. Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal, discusses the challenges posed by climate change, terrorism, and possible technological error. He gives our civilization no more than a fifty percent chance of surviving to the end of the century [12].

Yet again, Thomas Homer-Dixon speculates that the problems we have created might exceed our capacity to solve them [13], while Howard Kunstler argues that we are sleepwalking into a future of converging and mutually amplifying catastrophes [15]. It is possible, of course, that such pessimistic predictions will amount to nothing. Critics highlight previous dire predictions that turned out to be wrong. This time, however, there are many interconnected, large-scale challenges arising simultaneously. The key message of commentators like Jacobs and Rees is that our responsibility to coming generations requires that we take action *now*.

The consequences of these challenges are uncertain, but even brief reflection suggests they will be locally varied and will, at least in part, require place-based strategies for their mitigation. For example, climate change is global but its consequences will be as locally varied as the weather. As droughts, floods, and hurricanes intensify and become more commonplace, one realizes that the infrastructure of both agriculture and cities—water supply, storm drains, flood walls, and so forth—has been designed for the weather of the past and is rapidly becoming obsolete. This shift suggests that, regardless of the causes of climate change, substantial modifications to existing farms and cities will be needed to keep them productive and habitable. If they are to be effective, these modifications must be founded in the specifics of places, since the changes in weather patterns and environmental risks are regional or local [16]. Adaptations to protect New Orleans against more intense hurricanes have little relevance for dealing with longer droughts in Sydney or Melbourne.

The challenges of climate change will be exacerbated by rising costs of energy. It is widely antici-

pated that oil and gas supplies will peak globally in the next few years and decline thereafter, precisely as Chinese and Indian economic growth drives demand rapidly upward. Energy costs will rise dramatically, and the spatially distributed ways of modern life will be seriously compromised. In the reduced energy economy of the future, it is inevitable that, for most people, high energy and travel costs will motivate an everyday life much more locally focused than currently.

Living with Differences Locally

Since the early 1970s, a demographic imbalance has developed with rapid population growth in the Third World and stagnation or decline in the First World. The economic disparities associated with this imbalance have been contributing factors to major migrations from developing to developed nations. One result has been the emergence of what Leonie Sandercock calls “mongrel cities”—cities with racially and culturally mixed populations.

Sandercock argues that a major challenge for 21st-century urban planning is to find ways “for stroppy strangers to live together without too much violence”—in other words, to find ways to deal with ethnic conflicts and the politics of difference [16]. Sense of place is very much at stake here because of the extensibility of immigrants’ experience back to their home countries and because immigrants must establish connections with places originally built by cultures often vastly different from their own. One likely result will be tensions among different cultural groups.

The solutions to these tensions, Sandercock claims, will need to be worked out at the local level so that different groups can find ways to express their identities in neighborhoods that are neither ghettos nor zones of exclusion. For this, she suggests, there is no appropriate general theory. Instead, the need is a continuous process of place making that is curious about spirit of place, learns from local knowledge, and respects diversity.

Global & Local Together

International migrations are one component of globalization—the integration of the world into a single economic system connected by supply chains

and flows of people, capital, and information. These global flows are controlled and monitored through a network of some 100 “world cities” such as Tokyo, London, New York, Sydney, and Singapore [17]. World cities are characterized by hub airports, stock exchanges, corporate headquarters, international institutions, and facilities for media production.

In many ways, these world cities are infused with placelessness in that they are oriented more to the global marketplace than to their region or nation. But these global cities also incorporate a local aspect. While transnational offices and manufacturing facilities can bring jobs, kudos, and economic prosperity, they can also be abruptly relocated to other world locations where labor costs are lower or circumstances more profitable. When this happens, local communities suffer as jobs move away, people lose income, and inequities intensify [18].

Municipalities everywhere, but especially world cities, must find ways to protect themselves against such sudden shifts in the global economy over which they have little or no control. Even Thomas Friedman, a journalist with an unalloyed enthusiasm for globalization, suggests that such shifts pose a major challenge for finding a healthy balance between preserving a sense of local identity, home, and community, yet doing what is necessary to survive in a global economic system [20]. In other words, the need is a clear sense of place that also acknowledges the spatially-extended character of the economic systems underpinning our lives.

Climate change, the end of cheap energy, globalization, ethnic tensions in mongrel cities, and other complex challenges have arisen as pressing issues only in the last 25 years. The impacts of these challenges have a global reach, but their individual and combined consequences will be very different in *quartiers* of Paris, villages of Somalia, suburbs of Las Vegas, exurbs of London, skyscrapers of Shanghai, or *favelas* of São Paulo.

Mitigation strategies will need to be founded in the particularities of places because there the consequences will be most acute. But there is another, more philosophical, reason why place will be central to future planning strategies: There has been a deep epistemological shift away from the rationalistic assumptions of modernism—assumptions that

promoted universal, placeless solutions to environmental and social problems—to an acknowledgment of the significance of diversity.

Some Writings by Edward Relph

- 1970 An Inquiry into the Relations between Phenomenology and Geography, *Canadian Geographer*, 14:193-201.
- 1976 *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion.
- 1977 Humanism, Phenomenology and Geography, *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, 67:177-79.
- 1981 Phenomenology. In M. Harvey & B. Holly, eds., *Themes in Geographic Thought*. London: Croom Helm.
- 1981 *Rational Landscapes and Humanistic Geography*. London: Croom Helm.
- 1984 Seeing, Thinking, and Describing Landscapes. In T. Saarinen, D. Seamon, & J. Sell, eds., *Environmental Perception and Behavior*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago: Dept. of Geography Research Paper No. 209.
- 1985 Geographical Experiences and Being-in-the-World: The Phenomenological Origins of Geography. In D. Seamon and R. Mugerauer, eds, *Dwelling, Place and Environment*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- 1987 *The Modern Urban Landscape*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press.
- 1993 Modernity and the Reclamation of Place. In D. Seamon, ed., *Dwelling, Seeing, and Designing*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- 1997 Sense of Place. In S. Hanson, ed., *Ten Geographic Ideas that Changed the World*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- 2001 The Critical Description of Confused Geographies. In P. Adams, S. Hoelscher, and K. Till, eds., *Textures of Place*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.
- 2004 Temporality and the Rhythms of Sustainable Landscapes. In T. Mels, ed., *Reanimating Places*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- 2008 Sense of Place and Emerging Social and Environmental Challenges. In J. Eyles, and A. Williams, eds., *Sense of Place, Health and Quality of Life*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Deep Epistemological Change

Sandercock celebrates the demise of scientific objectivity because she sees it as a repressive instrument of powerful groups with vested interests [20]. In contrast, Jane Jacobs considers its demise to be one cause of a potential dark age [21]. What both thinkers agree on is that scientific objectivity is in retreat, a view supported by many philosophers of science. Stephen Toulmin, for example, notes that

early 20th-century scholars shared a confidence in scientific method but then declares: “How little of that confidence remains today” [22]. In 1989, Thomas Nagel suggested bluntly that “objectivity... is just one way of understanding reality” [24]. Modernist, rationalistic ways of thinking (which prevailed for 400 years and underpinned the development of industrial civilization) have lost their impetus as we enter a period of postmodernity.

It is difficult to assess the depth of this epistemological shift, not least because it is partly masked by the persistence of elements of the modernist paradigm locked into habits of thought, legislation, and established practices. Nevertheless, the shift is revealed in increasing political and legal challenges to those practices, in the importance given to heritage preservation (modernism swept aside everything old), in the widespread acknowledgement of the merits of differences of all kinds (modernism celebrated uniformity), and in the empowerment of women, Indigenous peoples, and minorities (modernism was patriarchal and colonialist).

In postmodernity, no single approach, including scientific objectivity, is arrogated above others. Instead, there are multiple discourses to be heard and considered. Scientific objectivity has, of course, proven to be a particularly effective way of dealing with the world, and Jacobs is right to suggest it should not be quickly dismissed.

One can no longer assume, however, that scientific objectivity is the single best way to understand the world. The postmodernist position demands that every situation be grasped in its own terms; every action—scientifically based or not—can be contested. Whereas modernist planning aimed to provide comprehensive solutions to what were considered universal problems, postmodernity requires negotiated strategies adapted to specific individuals, groups, and conditions. In other words, in both theory and practice, postmodernity is oriented to diversity and therefore to place.

A Practical Sense of Place

There has always been a practical aspect to sense of place whereby it might be translated into buildings, landscapes, and townscapes. This transformation involves not just construction but all means of de-

sign, planning, making, doing, maintaining, caring for, restoring, and otherwise taking responsibility for how somewhere appears and works.

Until the 19th century, a practical sense of place was mostly unself-conscious as towns, villages, and farms were made without much attention to place as an identifiable phenomenon of human existence. Builders presumably followed some combination of experience, necessity, tradition, and sensitivity to site. This local distinctiveness (which we now admire as tourists or as devotees of place) developed in large measure because it was difficult and expensive to move building materials very far. Traditions arose for the use of whatever was locally available.

Industrialization and modernism undermined these local practices, partly through the use of placeless materials like iron, concrete, metal, and glass; partly through the invention of cheap means of transport; and partly through the invention of styles that were self-consciously international. Guiding design principles were efficiency and standardization.

The outcome was an “International Style”—be it office buildings, multi-family housing, or interiors—that could fit almost anywhere. This largely placeless approach to design peaked in the 1960s and has faltered since, as modernism lost momentum. Today, the more dominant approach is that the diversity of communities and places should be emphasized rather than minimized in design. How this is to be done, however, is not entirely clear, although heritage preservation, ecosystem planning, and a critical reinterpretation of earlier regional traditions are some of the ways offered.

What is clear is that a postmodern approach to diversity cannot be based in a simple return to a pre-modern sense of place. Postmodernism may celebrate diversity in design and appearance, but air travel, electronic communications, and standardized technologies are invaluable for reasons of efficiency, safety, and convenience. A postmodern sense of place is simultaneously local and extended.

I have already suggested that, although the 21st century will present social and environmental challenges at a global scale, the individual and combined effects will be locally diverse. A practical sense of place will need be an essential aspect of

any strategy to mitigate the global challenges. This practical sense of place must reflect the extensibility of postmodern life and grasp the broader, global aspects of the challenges it confronts.

What is needed is a “pragmatic sense of place” that integrates an appreciation of place identity with an understanding of extensibility. A central aim would be to seek appropriate local actions to deal with emerging, larger-scale social and environmental challenges.

Pragmatism

Over a century ago, William James wrote that pragmatism is “the attitude of looking away from first things, principles, ‘categories’, supposed necessities; and of looking towards last things, fruits, consequences, facts” [24]. Pragmatism is an attitude that acknowledges change and variety: “The world we live in exists diffused and distributed in the form of an indefinitely numerous lot of ‘eaches’, coherent in all sorts of ways and degrees” [25].

In founding pragmatism as a philosophical movement, James and his contemporary, Charles S Peirce, declared that it should not be merely practical. Rather, they saw it potentially as a philosophical means of resolving logical and methodological confusions in science and philosophy.

Today the philosophical understanding of pragmatism has changed. Scientific research is a corporate and state-aided activity expected to get practical results—a development occurring at the same time rational, scientific arguments have lost much of their epistemological authority. One consequence is that neo-pragmatic philosophers like Stephen Toulmin and Richard Rorty now associate a tone of commonsense practicality with pragmatist philosophy. In the absence of a firm foundation for choosing between courses of action, these philosophers suggest the best strategy is to attend to James’ realm of consequences and facts. “We have to return to the world of where and when,” writes Toulmin, “to get back in touch with the experience of everyday life, and manage our affairs one day at a time” [26]. Rorty proposes that critical thinking must now involve playing off various concrete alternative strategies against one another rather than testing them against criteria of rationality [27].

The relevance of pragmatism to a postmodern sense of place is clear. In postmodernity, diversity is acknowledged in all its forms, and places are the diverse contexts of everyday life. Since there is no longer an overarching ideology that justifies scientific approaches as better than other points of view, new building developments and other place changes are almost always contested. It is nevertheless essential to get things done and respond to challenges like climate change and cultural conflict that, if nothing is done, will undermine the quality of life.

A pragmatic approach may be able to accomplish this task through careful assessment of facts and consequences, engaging people in discussions of the place and reaching imperfect but workable agreements in regard to which strategies are most appropriate for dealing with the challenges as they impact particular places.

A Pragmatic Sense of Place

A pragmatic sense of place combines an appreciation for a locality’s uniqueness with a grasp of its relationship to regional and global contexts. It is simultaneously place-focused and geographically extended. It is not a new way of thinking—in fact, aspects of it have always been a part of place experience but are now widely latent.

A pragmatic sense of place is apparent in contrasting contexts like the designation and restoration of World Heritage sites, locally inspired artworks and festivals that awaken sense of place, supermarket chains that sell local produce, and advocates of the slow-food movement and regional cuisine.

More generally, everyday life involves concerns such as health, education, pollution, and new development—all local, practical concerns that are part of place familiarity and affection. At the same time, everyday life involves distant travel and economic and electronic connections around the globe. In short, a firm basis for a pragmatic sense of place is to be found in the experience of place and in the background of contemporary everyday life.

It will not be easy to make explicit what many people know implicitly and to turn this knowledge into consistent actions. To resist the poisonous place temptations of parochialism and exclusion, a pragmatic sense of place requires the difficult exercise

of what might be called “cosmopolitan imagination,” which can grasp both the spirit and extensibility of places, seeing them as nodes in a web of larger processes.

Cultural conflicts, climate change, water shortages, and the effects of escalating energy costs will not fade magically into the background, nor is it enough to hope that muddling through will be sufficient to deal with the problems. Strategies based on finding technical or political fixes may be possible but are hardly wise, given that new problems will almost certainly arise from unintended consequences of new technologies. Furthermore, there is no way to push the epistemological genie of post-modernism back into the hermetically sealed bottle of rationalism, so there can be no question that rationalistic, top-down solutions will be deeply contested.

Perhaps the most hopeful, reasonable strategy for dealing with emerging social and environmental challenges is to find ways to mitigate their effects in particular places. This strategy requires that every locality, place, and community must adapt differently. A pragmatic sense of place can simultaneously facilitate these adaptations, contribute to a broader awakening of sense of place, and reinforce the spirit of place in all its diverse manifestations.

Endnotes

1. Peter Watson, *The Modern Mind: An Intellectual History of the 20th Century* (NY: Perennial Books, 2001), p. 674.
2. John Cameron, ed., *Changing Places: Re-imagining Australia* (Sydney: Longueville Books, 2003), p. 309.
3. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (NY: Basic Books, 2000), p. 5.
4. An account of this nesting and the way in which places open out to larger sets of places is given in Jeff Malpas, *Place and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), p. 105.
5. Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976).
6. Yi-Fu Tuan, in *Cosmos and Hearth: A Cosmopolite's View* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1996), suggests that individuals are oriented either to a localist or cosmopolitan perspective. He argues that, although aspects of both are combined in our experiences of the world, they cannot be perfectly balanced, so individuals fall to one side or the other. He identifies his own orientation as cosmopolitan.
7. See, for example, Peter Hay, “Writing Place: Unpacking an Exhibition Catalogue Essay,” in Cameron, *Changing Places*, pp. 272–85.
8. This idea of a poisoned sense of place is developed in Edward Relph, “Sense of Place,” in Susan Hanson, ed., *Ten Geographical Ideas that Changed the World* (Rutgers, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1997).
9. Thomas Homer-Dixon, *The Ingenuity Gap* (NY: Knopf, 2000), p. 25.
10. Paul Adams, *The Boundless Self* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2005).
11. Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead* (NY: Random House, 2003).
12. Martin Rees, *Our Final Hour: A Scientist's Warning how Terror, Error and Environmental Disaster Threaten Humankind's Future* (NY: Basic Books, 2003).
13. Homer-Dixon, *The Ingenuity Gap*.
14. James Howard Kunstler, *The Long Emergency: Converging Catastrophes of the 21st Century* (NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005).
15. The UN-based Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is currently exploring ways to facilitate local strategies for adaptation to climate changes. One example is the IPCC Expert Meeting on Integration of Adaptation and Mitigation and Sustainable Development, La Reunion, February 2005; go to: www.ipcc.ch/activity/workshops.htm (accessed June 16, 2009).
16. Leonie Sandercock, *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities of the 21st Century* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 3.
17. See the numerous reports at the Globalisation and World Cities website of the University of Loughborough; www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/ (accessed June 16, 2009).
18. See, for example, David Ranney, *Global Decision, Local Collisions: Urban Life in the New World Order* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple Univ. Press, 2003).
19. Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (NY: Anchor Books, 2000), p. 42.
20. Sandercock, *Cosmopolis II*, p. 3.
21. This is a major theme in Jacobs' *Dark Age Ahead*.
22. Stephen Toulmin, *Return to Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2001), p. 1.
23. Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), p. 26.
24. William James, “What Pragmatism Means,” in *Pragmatism and Other Essays* (NY: Washington Square Press, 1967 [originally 1906]), p. 27.
25. William James, “Pragmatism and Humanism,” in *Pragmatism and Other Essays*, pp. 114–16.
26. Toulmin, *Return to Reason*, p. 213.
27. Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1982), p. 164.