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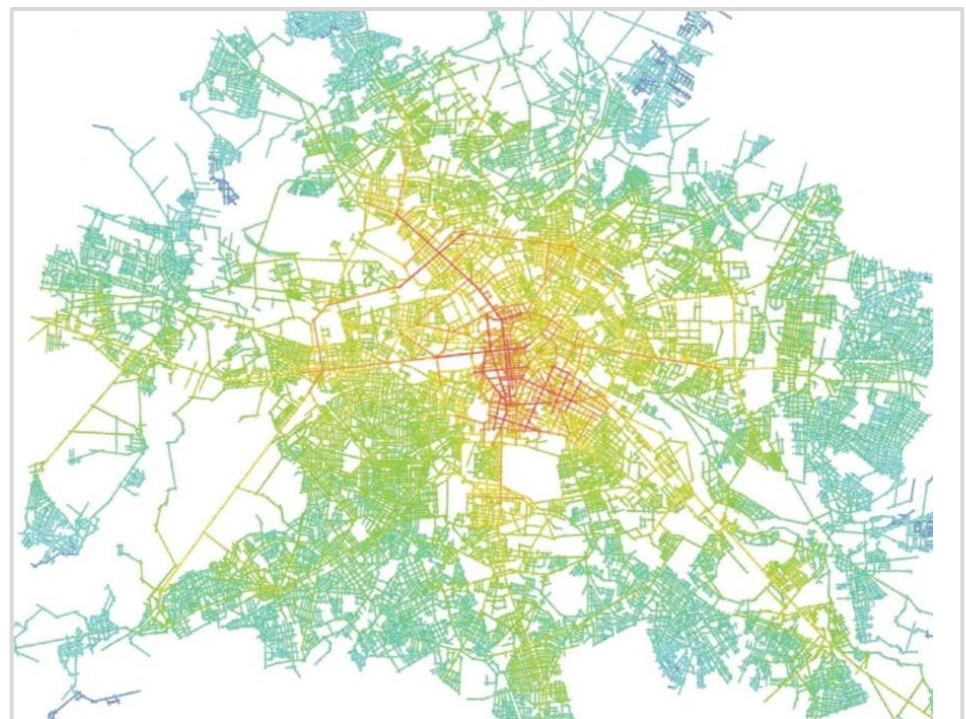
Winter/Spring ▪ 2022

This *EAP* begins 33 years of publication and includes “items of interest,” “citations received,” and five “book notes”: philosopher **Quill R. Kukla’s** *City Living*; phenomenologists **Michael** and **Max van Manen’s** *Classical Writings for a Phenomenology of Practice*; philosopher **Sebastian Luft’s** *Subjectivity and Lifeworld in Transcendental Phenomenology*; philosopher **Jeff Malpas’** *Rethinking Dwelling*; and architects **Akkelies van Nes** and **Claudia Yamu’s** *Introduction to Space Syntax in Urban Studies* [see maps, right].

The issue includes two essays: zoologist **Stephen Wood’s** consideration of becoming familiar with a natural place; and religious-studies scholar **Harry Oldmeadow’s** portrait of the holiness of mountains.

Please remember: We are always looking for contributions, including items of interest, publications, book reviews, and essays. Send them along.

Right: From **Akkelies van Nes** and **Claudia Yamu’s** new introduction to space-syntax research (see p. 14): Citywide integration maps of Berlin, Germany, in 2005 (below); and in 1988 (above), a year before the Berlin Wall was removed [thick purple line in center]. Thinner colored lines indicate varying degrees of street movement, with red indicating streets of most movement, followed by streets marked by orange and yellow; in contrast, green, blue, and violet lines indicate streets of less and least movement. One notes how the wall’s removal markedly shifted the city’s movement patterns: “[T]he street network re-established its old configurational order with regard to the historic street network” (p. 50; maps on p. 52). For a more comprehensive discussion of the shifts in Berlin’s movement patterns, see pp. 14–15 of this *EAP*. Note Kukla’s *City Living* also discusses Berlin.



Items of interest

Because of the continuing COVID-19 situation, we are not providing information on professional conferences in 2022. The situation remains fluid, and readers should check organization webpages. In the past, we have regularly covered the following conferences:

Architecture, Culture, and Spirituality Forum (ACSF);

Back to the Things Themselves! (BT!!!);

Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA);

Interdisciplinary Coalition of North American Phenomenologists (ICNAP);

International Association of Environmental Philosophy (IAEP);

International Human Science Research conference (IHSR);

International Making Cities Livable conference;

Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP);

Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences (SPHS).

The **Serendipity Society** is comprised of researchers examining the complex phenomenon of serendipity from a variety of disciplinary and organizational perspectives. "Given the growing interest among industry and academic institutions in developing spaces for serendipity, our mission is to create and nurture an active network of serendipity researchers." The group will hold an online symposium, *Serendipity and the City*, February 7–11, 2022. For more information, visit the society's website at: <https://theserendipitysociety.wordpress.com/about/>.

Wellbeing, Space & Society is an interdisciplinary journal concerned with the difference that space, place, and location make to wellbeing. The journal welcomes submissions that illustrate the links (potential or theorized) between aspects of society and space and wellbeing. The editors publish papers from a range of disciplines and are particularly interested in policy implications. Methodological plurality and innovation are encouraged. The editors encourage work related to the wellbeing of places. <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/wellbeing-space-and-society>.

Phenomenologies of Religious Experience is a new book series that looks at the relationship between phenomenology and religious experience. Possible topics include clarifications of spiritual and religious experience and connections to art, culture, politics, architecture and so forth. The series is published in coordination with the **Society for the Phenomenology of Religious Experience**; www.sophere.org. Information on the series is available at https://roman.com/Action/SERIES/_/LEXPRES.

David Seamon's *Life Takes Place* (Routledge, 2018) has been translated into Farsi. The Farsi title is

رویداد زندگی نیازمند مکان است: نگاهی پدیدارشناسانه به زندگی و مکان

The translators are Sara Amiri Rigi (سارا امیری ریگی) and Mohammad Saber Bagherian (محمد صابر باقریان).

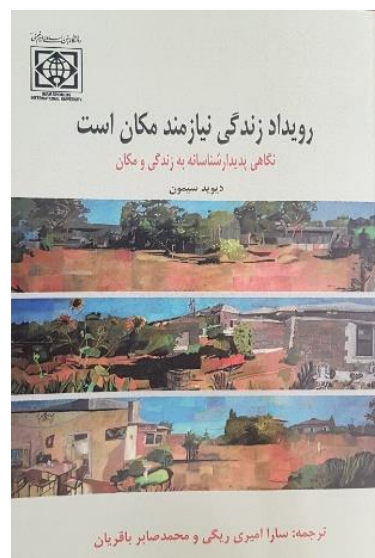
The publisher is Qazvin, Iran's Imam Khomeini International University: ایران، قزوین، انتشارات دانشگاه بین المللی امام خمینی

The full citation in Persian is:

(، رویداد زندگی نیازمند مکان 1399سیمون، دیوید) است: نگاهی پدیدارشناسانه به زندگی و مکان، ترجمه از سارا امیری ریگی و محمد صابر باقریان، انتشارات دانشگاه بین المللی امام خمینی، قزوین

The publisher's website is:

<https://www.digikala.com/product/dkp-4808744>
کتاب رویداد زندگی نیازمند مکان اثر دیوید سیمون انتشارات دانشگاه بین المللی امام خمینی



Phenomenology & Practice, Special issue

The articles in the first 2021 issue of *Phenomenology & Practice* focus on "the everyday, pre-reflective experiences being in the outdoors." Authors consider environmental experiences "for not only those who spend time or work in the outdoors, but also for those who may wish to explore the inherent tensions between the human-built environment and the natural world." The seven articles include **Josie Melton's** "Pre-Service Teachers in the Outdoors: A Phenomenological Exploration"; **Marcus Morse and Sean Blenkinsop's** "Being Outdoors: Lived Experience on the Franklin River"; **Kevin Redmond's** "Experiential Intensity of Exploring Place Abandoned"; and **Tanya J. Behrlich's** "Painting Deep Time: Encountering Landforms' Alterity and Phusis Through Phenomenology and Oil Painting." <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/pandpr/index.php/pandpr/issue/view/1949>.

Christopher Alexander, Special journal issue

Begun in spring, 2019, *The Side View* is a journal privately published in California and edited by **Adam Robbert**. Robbert's aim is to consider "the link between perception and practice." The journal's entries and authors explore "the knowledge and intuition we use to navigate the world." The focus is "learning how to deepen our actual engagement with a complex world."

The current winter 2021 TSV issue gives attention to the work of American architect **Christopher Alexander**; at press time, it is unclear how many articles are included in the issue (since the editor releases a few entries each week). Currently, some of the titles include **James M. Maguire's** "The Role of Being: Philosophical Underpinnings in *The Nature of Order*"; **Nikos A. Salingaros's** "Why Christopher Alexander Failed to Humanize Architecture"; **Matthew David Segall's** "Restoring Architecture's Cosmic Context"; **David Seamon's** "Finding the Center";

Jenny Quillien's "The Zigzag Man: Christopher Alexander's Dual Regard"; and **Joe Norman's** "Generating Wholes."

Additional articles relating to Alexander will be added to the journal's digital version weekly; a paper copy of the journal will be available later in the year, once all the essays have been uploaded in the digital edition. In the sidebar, following, we reprint the opening paragraphs of Jenny Quillien's commentary on Alexander's way of thinking that she describes as both analytic and intuitive. <https://the-sideview.co/>.

"Christopher Alexander as a Janus-headed scholar"

In one direction, he apprehends the world with an analytical mind: focused, linearly logical, comfortable with mathematical formulations and modeling. This mode produced such works as *Notes on the Synthesis of Form*, *BART*, and "A City Is Not a Tree." Alexander's writing style—straight prose—aims for explanation and demonstration. Blunt sentences plod steadily, bullheadedly, forward.

In the other direction, the gaze is intuitive, receptive, phenomenological, embodied, open-ended. We read works such as *The Timeless Way*, *The Foreshadowing of 21st Century Art*, and Book Four of *The Nature of Order*. His writing style becomes personal, discursive, evocative, long-winded, circling around a topic from multiple angles, with an overabundance of examples. The aim is to embrace the diffuse, mysterious, latent, mystical.

To merely observe that Alexander is endowed with both an analytical and intuitive mind would be trivial. Less trivial would be to notice: first, Alexander's predilection for exploring edges of understanding where we do not yet have established language or adequate tooling; second, his peculiar epistemology.

Alexander makes sense of the not-yet-known by tightly zigzagging be-

tween analysis and intuition. The zigzag is sometimes a cooperative horizontal back and forth where the same situation is looked at one way and then the other; sometimes we find longitudinal zigzags.

Very much a ballistic scholar, Alexander moves ever forward but in a way which remains backward compatible. He will investigate a topic as far as possible and then abandon it until the day fresh insights compel him to pick it up again. It is not surprising, for example, to see that a late (2009) essay on harmony seeking computation picks up and further develops early (1964) work on the perception of symmetries.

To reflect on Alexander's signature way of working, I refer to several of his works but also draw from personal conversations I had with him during the 1990s when I was helping with early drafts of Book Two and Four of *The Nature of Order*.

My role as first reader was to be adamantly dim-witted, never feigning to understand what I really didn't, insisting on discussion until the formulations of newly hatched ideas were clear (Jenny Quillien, "The Zigzag Man").

Citations received

Joseph Bedford, 2017. "Being Underground: Dalibor Vesely, Phenomenology and Architectural Education during the Cold War." In Akos Moravánszky and Torsten Lange, eds. *Re-Framing Identities: Architecture's Turn to History, 1970–1990*, pp. 89–104. Basel, Switzerland: Birkhäuser.

A thoughtful discussion of architectural phenomenologist and Czech *émigré* Dalibor Vesely's interpretation of phenomenology as helping to clarify his personal experiences of political, technological, and pedagogical crises, particularly the life-world's increasing oppression by instrumentalist reason. See the sidebar, following, for Bedford's interpretation of how

Vesely, originally a citizen of neo-Stalinist Czechoslovakia (he fled Prague for London in 1968), understood phenomenology.

Instrumentality and non-instrumentality

Phenomenology had, from the beginning, diagnosed and sought to overcome the imagined autonomy of the subject dirempt from its objects. Its descriptions of "subjective" experience were always intended to reveal how the subject was related to transcendental layers of reality: first to the essences of things; then to being as such; to embodiment; language; and finally, to the world as a whole.

Yet, despite being a holistic discourse that aimed to bridge the divide between subject and object, relating beings to the world as a whole, phenomenology was also seen as a critical discourse that articulated a historical division between the instrumentality of modernity and the non-instrumentality of the premodern world. That is, in critically opposing modernity, phenomenology mirrored modernity's oppositional character (p. 92).

Victor Counted, Richard G. Cowden, and Haywantee Ramkissoon, 2021. *Place and Post-Pandemic Flourishing Disruption, Adjustment, and Healthy Behaviors*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced people throughout the world to shift behaviors and lifestyles. One significant result was that many people's relationships with places was disrupted. These psychologists consider "how the public health crisis has shifted people-place relationships, what our bonds with places might look like after the COVID-19 pandemic, and how connections between people and places can be restored and built again." More broadly, the authors examine "the implications of a public health crisis for our relationships with place [and] how society may recover

and foster positive relations with places after a pandemic.”

Tao DuFour, 2022. *Husserl and Spatiality: A Phenomenological Ethnography of Space*. London: Routledge.

This architect presents a phenomenology of space and embodiment grounded in the work of philosopher Edmund Husserl, not typically associated with corporeal intentionality and awareness. The book examines Husserl’s “phenomenology of space,” including his “analyses of corporeality and the ‘lived body,’” extending to “questions of intersubjective, intergenerational, and geo-historical spatial experience”—what DuFour calls the “environmentality” of space and illustrated through a spatial interpretation of ritual in the Afro-Brazilian religion of Candombié.

Tonino Griffero, 2020. *Places, Affordances, Atmospheres: A Pathic Aesthetics*. London: Routledge.

This philosopher is one of the major researchers of “atmosphere,” which he defines as the affects one feels via “lived space.” His focus is the day-to-day emotions experienced in relation to natural and artificial environments. He draws particularly on the phenomenology of philosophers Hermann Schmitz and Gernot Böhme.

Tonino Griffero, 2021. *The Atmospheric “We”: Moods and Collective Feelings*. Milan: Mimesis International.

Griffero’s latest book, in which he introduces the so-called “atmospheric turn” and examines how atmospheres arise and the power of atmospheric feelings. He considers what a collective atmosphere of “we” is and how it applies to human wellbeing.

Mark David Major, 2021. “Excavating” Pruitt-Igoe Using Space Syntax. *Architecture*

Research Quarterly (ARQ), vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 55–68.

This architect uses a space-syntax analysis “to conduct an exercise in ‘spatial archeology’ concerning the layout of [modernist architect Minoru Yamasaki’s St. Louis 1951 public-housing project] Pruitt-Igoe to investigate the design, planning, and policy of this project (demolished in 1972).”

Major provides a list of the different “causes” identified for “explaining the social failure of the project”: architecture, construction, crime, demographics, design, economy, employment, familial sociology, lighting, maintenance, management, migration, occupancy, policing, politics, public policy, quality assurance, racism, regulations, suburbanization, urban planning, “white flight,” and exclusionary zoning.

Major concludes that all these factors played a role in the project’s failure but emphasizes “a series of design and planning features as contributory factors, directly or indirectly, in the social malaise of Pruitt-Igoe. The provision of space—the quantity—in the layout became a liability as occupancy rates declined. Intelligible dysfunction in the spatial layout implicated the *pilotis* feature [building units lifted off the ground by columns] of the residential towers in facilitating an opportunity and escape in criminal activity ...”

Edward Relph, 2021. *Digital Disorientation and Place. Memory Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 572–577.

This geographer argues that “Digital technologies affect experiences of place in ways that are disorienting because they overwhelm us with information and images, bringing into question what is real and what is fake, confuse real and virtual reality, and exacerbate extreme views about who belongs where.” See the two sidebars, following.

Virtual panopticon

The current phase of capitalism can be characterized as “surveillance capitalism,” in which large tech companies have claimed human experience as free

raw material for translation into behavioral data that can be used to make money. Data from locative devices that record your location ... are particularly voluminous. These data are scoured and recombined by brokers seeking ways to target online advertising to the place where you live. This is facilitated by the pathologically overdeveloped memory of digital media, everything on file, no privacy, and, in the absence of right-to-forget legislation, every Google search remembered into perpetuity.

Digital surveillance is already commonplace in cities. Facial recognition is used in many cities in China, there are thought to be over 600,000 CCTV cameras in London, there are few stores in North America without security cameras. And surveillance capitalism is beginning to be explicitly incorporated into urban development. Sidewalk Labs, a subsidiary of Alphabet, the parent company of Google, proposed a comprehensive digital infrastructure as part of the redevelopment of a waterfront district in Toronto. Smart technologies would assess traffic, housing, health care, GHG emissions, and whatever other “urban data” could be gathered in the city’s physical environment

It is not surprising that groups concerned about privacy vigorously protested this proposal for virtual panopticon, and it has now been abandoned. It would have been a devious disruption to sense of place because like most electronic and digital media it would scarcely be apparent in the urban landscape—there would still be streets, buildings and shops, public spaces and private homes. But for anyone who chose to pay attention and was not distracted by their own device or smart mobs, sense of place would be diminished by a nagging feeling that you were being watched and whatever you did might be a source of data that could be used to exploit you (pp. 575–576).

A partial antidote

[In the last several decades, there have been] substantial disturbances in the ways place is experienced that have unbalanced how we relate to the world. In a single generation, digital media have eroded place-based social connections, turned distinctive localities into phantasmagoric nodes in global networks, promoted fakery, facilitated widespread surveillance, and reinforced the extremism that poisons sense of place. They have sped up and compressed experiences of space and time, and pushed notions of reason, reality, truth, and personal privacy out of what were previously regarded as privileged and secure positions.

Place has been extensively co-opted into these digital disruptions because Wi-Fi, surveillance, locative devices, and increasingly the network of things, operate in and through the home, public spaces, shops, airports, and almost everywhere. Sense of place is not being entirely lost as a result, but it is being buffeted and its character is shifting, made more fleeting, more conflicted, more distracted, more suspicious about possible fakery and more aware of constantly being watched.

In spite of this . . . , I remain sufficiently a print-age materialist to hope that the solid reality of actual places can still serve as at least a partial antidote to the virtual disruptions of digital disorientation (p. 576).

William E. Wallace, 2019. *Michelangelo, God's Architect: The Story of His Final Years and Greatest Masterpiece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

This art historian probes the last two decades of Michelangelo's life, marked by "the peerless artist refashioning himself into the master architect of St. Peter's Basilica and other major buildings." Wallace's focus is the "least familiar part of Michelangelo's career, revealing a creative genius who was also a skilled engineer and

enterprising businessman." See sidebars, following.

His own original forms

One may identify possible sources of Michelangelo's ideas, but in every case, he developed his own original forms. Michelangelo's introduction of broken and redundant pediments, so-called kneeling windows (as seen in the Medici Palace in Florence), and the giant order, with pilaster rising in successive stories (as in the Palazzo dei Conservatori), are widely acknowledged, yet little attention is paid to his similarly innovative use of paired columns. In fact, it was not until Michelangelo's use of the paired column motif that it became widespread—so widespread that we overlook its originality.

Often, Michelangelo's innovations in architecture and architectural ornament were so quickly adopted that we fail to recognize their origins. In some ways, Michelangelo is like Shakespeare. Both were prolific inventors who introduced so many new forms and motifs, words and phrases, that we take them for granted. Their respective innovations in architectural and spoken vocabulary were so quickly absorbed and so widely disseminated that we hardly recognize a time before they existed (pp. 209–210).

A soaring magnificence

St. Peter's is Michelangelo's greatest achievement. He devoted more time, effort, and expertise to this than to any other project of his career. The church, the artist declared, was his best hope for salvation and the forgiveness of his sins.

He recognized the brilliance of Bramante's initial conception and corrected its engineering deficiencies, thereby reinvesting the church with exterior and interior clarity. He had the courage and vision to remove much intervening construction, which demanded enormous faith on the part of both the artist and a succession of papal patrons.

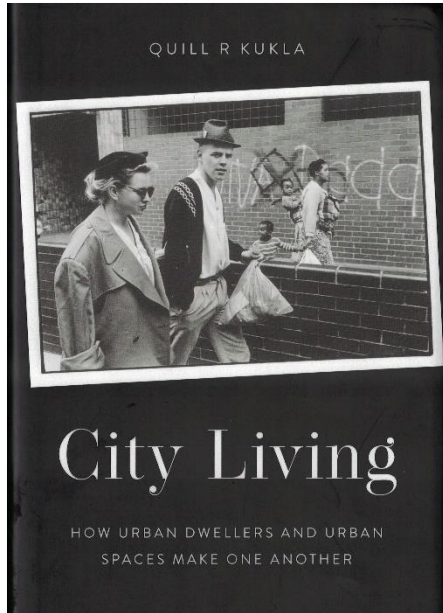
In just seventeen years he corrected what had gone before and largely shaped what came afterward. Despite changes inflicted on the building in its 150-year construction history, St. Peter's is Michelangelo's creation and his masterpiece.

From the outside, the church is a compact sculptural mass; inside it is a luminous, expansive, uplifting space. The building rises from the ground to lantern in one continuous sweep. The vertical ascent is so majestic that only the substantial attic and emphatic cornices counteract the upward surge. The dome both continues and concentrates these vertical forces.

Although he did not live to see it built, the dome is the centerpiece and culmination of Michelangelo's compact design. Its soaring magnificence dominates the skyline of Rome in a manner that its ancient predecessor—the Pantheon—never did. Michelangelo died deeply uncertain of his accomplishment, yet he did, in fact, succeed in bringing the building "to a stage at which my design could not be spoilt" (pp. 239–240).

Book Note

Quill R. Kukla, 2021. *City Living: How Urban Dwellers and Urban Spaces Make One Another*. New York: Oxford University Press.



This philosopher examines the relationship between urbanites and their city: “I am interested in the processes by which spaces shape the agency, behavior, and perceptions of their users, at the same time that users remake spaces in accordance with their needs” (p. 2).

Kukla’s theoretical approach incorporates “a combination of philosophical phenomenology and the humanistic tradition in geography, which seeks to ‘read’ human and cultural phenomena through the lens of spatiality, and in turn takes spatiality to be fundamentally constituted by human place making” (p. 3). Kukla’s central research focus is *ecological ontologies*: “sets of real, concrete things and events that can exist only within an ecological system, made up of a material space and its users in dynamic interaction with one another” (p. 3).

In grounding this conceptual perspective empirically, Kukla studies Berlin and Johannesburg, two places identified as *repositioned cities*—i.e., cities originally created to sustain one kind of sociopolitical order that no longer works, leaving residents to use their city and its various spaces and places in new ways. Kukla selects Berlin and Johannesburg as study sites because they are both “extreme examples of cities in which the material space was designed to support and endorse a specific social order, including specific forms of control and surveillance over how people used and moved through space” (p. 11). In making her argument, Kukla draws partially on **David Seamon’s** concept of “place ballet.”

Following, we excerpt three sections from Kukla’s book.

Welcoming boundaries?

Does living in and among strangers in contact zones, with only porous and fluid privacy from them, enhance loneliness and isolation, and encourage transactional, superficial relationships? Or does it enhance our openness to complexity, the pleasure we take in difference, and the inclusiveness of our spirit? Should we understand good, sustaining communities as bound together by family-like intimacy or, on the contrary, are good communities precisely those that are genuinely inclusive of strangers, with welcoming and porous boundaries?

I suggest that passing interactions with strangers across differences can be powerful tools for rooting us in a substantive, lived experience of community. Place ballets that coordinate strangers can build a real sense of place and belonging. In order for these place ballets to become entrenched, we

need urban spaces that bring diverse strangers together in patterned ways as they move through them; conversely, such place ballets help build urban ecologies that sediment dwellers’ agencies and senses of home. The ongoing tissue of interactions with diverse strangers creates quickly shifting open-ended senses of community and sociality, and a distinctive and robust sense of place identity (pp. 58–59).

Repurposed cities and spaces

I chose Berlin and Johannesburg [for my research sites] because both are *repurposed cities* filled with *repurposed spaces* ... A repurposed city ... is one that was built to support one spatial order with specific economic, social, and political relations, but in which the spatial order has now collapsed, so that the city has to accommodate radically new uses, users, and purposes. In turn, residents have to find ways of using and adapting a material city built for something quite different.

Material urban landscapes are frequently designed (often consciously, sometimes implicitly) to keep some groups of people separate from others, to maintain surveillance over some groups, to “protect” some groups from others, and to keep groups of people flowing through the city along specific routes.

This is accomplished through laws, policies, and norms. But also through highways, fences, plazas, bridges, parks, housing developments, and more. These built features of a city have political, social, and economic purposes. When the socioeconomic order of a city changes, the need for these separations, surveillances, and

flows may become obsolete, but the built environment that includes these features is typically mostly left behind.

As new ways of using the city develop and demographics shift, these leftover forms and spaces must be abandoned, destroyed, or repurposed. In particular, territory will be claimed, contested, and transformed by new kinds of people when this top-down order collapses. The repurposing is never unfettered by the past. Rather, old material scaffolding and infrastructure still shape the life of the repurposed city.

Repurposed spaces are smaller spaces that are used differently from how they were designed to be used. Repurposed cities are particularly full of repurposed spaces, for straightforward reasons, but repurposed spaces can be found in all sorts of cities.

On a small scale, parks intended as middle-class recreation areas may become squatters' camps if the economic fortunes of a neighborhood change; monuments designed to honor and celebrate a now-fallen dictator may turn into focal points for political protest, play structures for teens, or places to walk dogs; abandoned factories of defunct industries may become art galleries.

As a neighborhood changes in ethnic makeup, its fire escapes may become clothes lines and its alleys may become cooking areas (pp. 121–122).

Johannesburg: Divisions by bottom-up segregation

While Jozi [slang South African name for Johannesburg] has ceased to be a legally segregated space, it has turned into a divided space of a different sort. Apartheid was imposed top-down, but the enclaving in current Jozi is built from bottom-up, through a combination of people's self-segregation choices and developers' eager-

ness to commodify, amplify, and capitalize on these desires to self-segregate.

Enclosed, securitized living and entertainment spaces are marketed as both safe and desirable in virtue of their aesthetics of exclusivity. Unlike Berlin, Johannesburg has not rejected segregation, surveillance, and division as tools of city design, but instead just the idea that they should be imposed by the government. The reigning ideology is that government-imposed divisions of space are intolerable, but those driven by personal "preferences" and desires for "safety" are acceptable expressions of individual freedom

Jozi is chopped up into gated communities, walled-off homes rimmed by barbed wire, fortress-style building complexes, and locked-down campuses. Even progressive, relatively open neighborhoods feature rows of barbed-wire-topped high walls. It is disorienting at first to walk down residential streets with no visual access to houses or buildings.

Many gated and guarded complexes strive to be total environments, providing their users with stores, recreational activities, and business services, so no one has to leave. The city's segregationist impulses have given rise to a three-dimensional network of overpasses, underpasses, bypasses, controlled elevators, and bridges that let the middle classes float and flow about the streets without making contact with them

The division, enclaving, and enclosure are largely implemented by private developers, who grab land where it is available, rather than by urban planners. Predictably, therefore, chunks of city space are carved up haphazardly, becoming experientially irrational and hard to resolve as living *places*. Many streets are in the shadow of overpasses, or they are cut off from anything resembling "eyes on the street" because they pass between or around gates and fortresses....

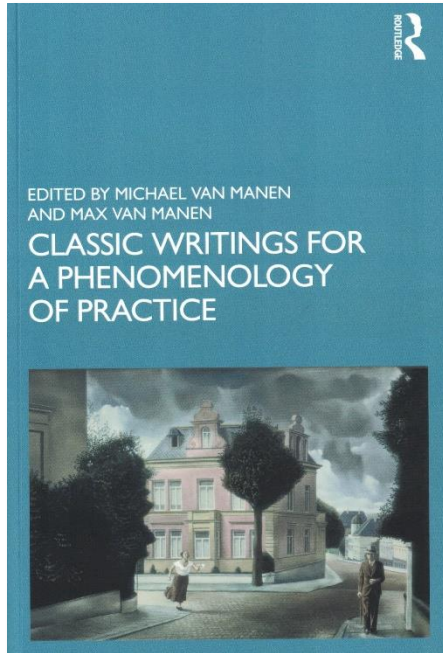
Thus, the enclaves restrict movement not only by keeping people out, but also by disrupting the city's larger organization and flow. It is no surprise that the "leftover" spaces end up unplanned, unwatched, and with little organic character. In turn, they become dangerous, which accordingly heightens the perceived need for segregated and enclosed spaces and passages

The parts of the city that have not been chopped up in these ways are quite the opposite; they lend themselves to an organic flow of street life and fluid movement between indoor and outdoor space. The small "braai" shops (barbecue joints) and spaza shops that line the streets in these neighborhoods are open-fronted, and proprietors and customers hang out on the stoops. Street hawkers line the sidewalks. Squatter camps and shanty neighborhoods draw no sharp distinction between inner and outer space.

In the enclaved areas, spontaneous uses of space are almost impossible, and unexpected interactions with random strangers are rare and tightly controlled. In these other areas, the use of space is constantly improvisational, and bumping up against other people, literally and figuratively, is impossible to avoid (pp. 203–205).

Book Note

Michael Van Manen and Max Van Manen, eds., 2021. *Classic Writings for a Phenomenology of Practice*. New York: Routledge.



Educator **Max van Manen** is one of the premier researchers and writers presenting phenomenology as a method of seeing and understanding. In this edited collection, he and his son, **Michael van Manen**, a pediatrician and medical researcher, introduce a body of work from phenomenologically-inspired professionals broadly known as the Dutch “Utrecht School,” who were active from the 1930s through the 1960s. The editors explain that what these thinkers had in common was that “they were not professional philosophers but rather professional practitioners who had developed deep and personal interests in philosophical phenomenological works ...” (p. 2).

In this set of writings, the editors provide translations of studies by four key figures in the Utrecht tradition: psychiatrist **Jan H. van den Berg** (“The Conversation”); physician **Frederik J. J. Buytendijk** (“The First Smile on the Child”; “The Experience of Compulsiveness”); educator **Martinus J. Langeveld** (“‘The Secret Place’ in the Life of the Child”; “The Thing in the World of a Child”); and psychologist **Johnannes Linschoten** (“On Humor”). The editors write that:

The Utrecht studies were probably among the first to focus on the practice of actually doing phenomenology on mostly ordinary phenomena of everyday and professional life We believe that these writings are challenging and demanding, not only because of their scholarly resourcefulness, but also because of the required talents for perceptive phenomenological insights of these early leading proponents. Readers may benefit from these classic examples for their own interests and for gaining an understanding of these features of insightful inquiry for their own possible phenomenological projects (p. 5).

In the sidebars below, we extract the editors’ comments on “putting phenomenology back into phenomenology”; we also extract portions of Langeveld’s “‘The Secret Place of the Child” in which he describes the importance of “secret places” for children and a child’s understanding of stairs.

Ordinary lifeworld topics

The phenomenological studies in this book differ from other more theoretical and exegetical publications in the literature of phenomenology. So, when newcomers to these classic

writings inquisitively turn to the multitude of other philosophic phenomenological essays in the professional literature, they may be puzzled that so often the more exegetical and critical writings ... evidently lack an interest in focusing on the concrete phenomena of the lifeworld themselves.

We are indeed struck by the uncanny observations made by [phenomenological philosopher and historian] Herbert Spiegelberg who, in his later years, found that so much of philosophical scholarship of phenomenology lacked the vitality of what phenomenology could be. So, our aim is to try to put phenomenology back into phenomenology, by showing how this has been practiced by the Utrecht proponents and how it may inspire our present-day and future phenomenological research projects.

To reiterate, we propose that the classic writings presented in the following chapters demonstrate a way of doing phenomenology of practice on ordinary lifeworld topics. This attention to the lifeworld means doing phenomenology directly on the “phenomena” or on the “things” themselves. We also propose that these studies are guided by a phenomenological attitude aimed to arrive at meaningful insights, sensitive to concrete experience, and proceeding through phenomenological examples

The original texts were written more than half a century ago, yet we suggest that they are especially relevant now and that they may contribute to future projects of phenomenological inquiry. They have exemplary value for the engagement of phenomenology by researchers and practition-

ers in the clinical and academic human science professions, for these classic writings show what it means to be guided by a phenomenological attitude and to *do phenomenology on the phenomena themselves* (p. 20, p. 21).

Hidden and secret places

Children are not formed by schooling alone; they are influenced by their own milieu and their own self-constituted worlds. And for this, children do not need just the formal upbringing of a school curriculum; they also need freedom and openness to pursue what are as yet undetermined and uncertain possibilities

In the lifeworld of the child, there exist “secret” places that permit the child the possibility of experiencing in a normal manner access to strange and unfamiliar worlds. Where does the child find such indeterminate worlds? Words pregnant with the possibilities of new meaningful experiences? Let us take an example and turn to the familiar home of the child where one may encounter fascinating secret places.

Let us watch the child who not only has secret places in his [or her] home but who also knows forbidden places and who therefore knows areas of the house as defined and distinct places. In some homes, the parents’ bedroom or an office provides this forbidden area; in others, it is sometimes the formal living room, the study, the food pantry, or the furnace room downstairs (Langeveld, pp. 102–103).

The stairs

[In terms of secret places for the child], the stairway has its own significance as well. And this significance becomes stronger when we look up the stairs towards where the steps lead into the unknown or unseen.

In case we cannot remember this feeling, we should consult the etching by Odilon Redon, “The Haunted Home,” in which a stairway is shown in a hallway [image below, right]. To the right is the staircase with accompanying spindles and railing. But to the left, towards the underside of the stairs, we only see shadows. There is an air of uncertainty about it, precisely because of the presence of the unknown and the invisible. There dwells the anonymous being, the unperson: Watch out! Soon he will peek over the ramps and look at us.

*Halfway up the stairs
Isn’t up,
And isn’t down,
It isn’t in the nursery,
It isn’t in the town,
And all sorts of funny thoughts
Run round my head:
“It isn’t really
Anywhere!
It’s somewhere else
Instead!”*

—A.A. Milne, *When We Were Very Young* (London: McClelland & Stewart, 1924, p. 81)

Indeterminate space, indeed, that is what the stairs represent because we cannot see where they lead. Of course, staircases can be very familiar and trusted with the exception of

those that lead up to the attic: these always contain an element of mystery. For the attic is the indeterminate space itself.

Sometimes the staircase looks at us through the eyes of a distant piece of furniture, visible from below and which, in spite of its distance, gives us a feeling of trustfulness.

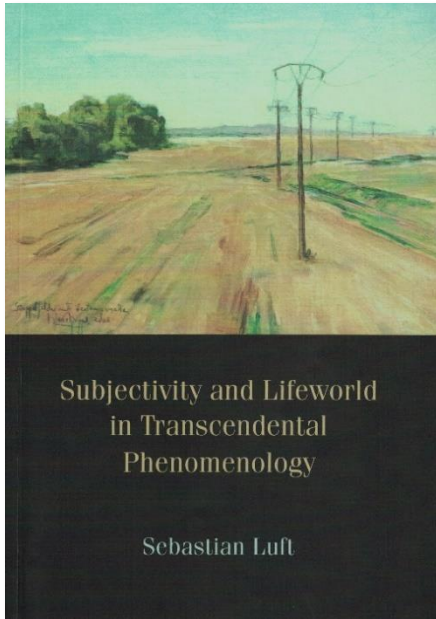
Other times, the staircase is a dark and threatening space precisely because of the peculiar way it is kept bounded by the over-arching roof; yet the unbounded dome of a dark or starlit sky tends to create no fear in us at all.

At other times, we may have the feeling that the stairs lead into nothingness: the Jacobs’ ladder and the ladders without end are familiar dream themes (Langeveld, pp. 106–107).



Book Note

Sebastian Luft, 2011. *Subjectivity and Lifeworld in Transcendental Phenomenology*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press [published in softcover 2021].



Though first published in 2011 in hardback, this book has only appeared in softcover in 2021. The fact that such an important work is only accessible at a reasonable price ten years after its original publication points to one of the troubling enigmas in academic publishing today.

Luft's study includes valuable discussion of phenomenologist **Edmund Husserl's** understanding of lifeworld, homeworld, and natural attitude. In his introduction, Luft emphasizes that the crux of Husserl's philosophy is "Enlightenment," referring broadly to the Western philosophical tradition but, in Husserl's case, pointing to a more direct effort for knowledge that Luft describes as "the project of becoming enlightened, or to stay with the metaphor of light, to reach the state of absolute transparency. This transparency pertains to an illumination

about *what and who one is*" (p. 9). Luft continues:

To become illuminated with respect to who and what one is and does ... is inseparably linked to my self's other, which I shall call, in one word, world, as the totality of all situations. Enlightenment, then, is the project of becoming illuminated about myself in my inseparable relation and enmeshment with the world. I cannot define and understand myself without the world and my relation to the world of which I am part, and vice versa; there is no comprehension of the world without a comprehension of the world in relation to me. "I" and "world" are just two infinitely distant poles of what I shall call One Structure.

Just as I know that the world does not depend on me, that I do not create it, that I am just one object in the world among others, I equally know that the only way to experience the world is from my own perspective. It is through my own eyes ... that I see the world, though this seeing "does nothing to" the world, does not "harm" it. The two viewpoints are not mutually exclusive, but compatible as statements following from two different views on what I call the One Structure (pp. 9–10).

For non-philosophers, Luft's most pertinent chapter is the first, "Husserl's Phenomenological Discovery of the Natural Attitude," which is a penetrating explication of lifeworld, natural attitude, and homeworld. Luft points out that "all pre-phenomenological philosophy has unconsciously remained on the ground of the natural attitude" so that one does not readily understand "how central [Husserl's] concept of natural attitude must be" (p. 37). Luft phrases the chapter's key question as follows:

What exactly is this natural attitude? How is it characterized and what does it mean to overcome it? If this natural attitude is so fundamental that all philosophy before Husserl overlooked it ..., how does it become explicit in the first place? (p. 37).

Luft explains that "being in the natural attitude, I am unaware of being in this attitude. Hence, this is exactly the reason why this attitude is *natural*. The natural attitude is hidden to itself; thematizing this attitude ... means already being in another attitude, namely the philosophical attitude..." (p. 39).

Related to the natural attitude is the *homeworld*, "the sphere in which we feel 'most natural', at home and at ease" (p. 43). The homeworld is intersubjective in that it is a world of others as well as me—"a world of tradition, culture, religion..., and collective values. It is the world we are, literally, *accustomed to*" (p. 43).

In the sidebars below, we reprint Luft's opening explication of the natural attitude and comments on the homeworld and its inner correlate that Luft names "home attitude."

An attitude hidden from itself

If the natural attitude is in one way or another a title for our everyday life, and if thematizing this attitude already means being in *another* attitude, then it can be said that the natural attitude is constituted precisely by the fact that it is not thematical *in or by* the natural attitude. In other words, being in the natural attitude, I am unaware of being in this attitude. Hence, this is exactly the reason why this attitude is called *natural*.

The natural attitude is hidden from itself; thematizing this attitude ...

means already being in another attitude, namely the philosophical attitude [It is] perfectly right to call the natural attitude a “transcendental notion” because it only ever *becomes* a philosophical notion, that is, it only becomes thematic, if one stands in the philosophical (read: transcendental) attitude. It only becomes thematizable to the philosopher who is defined precisely by the fact that he stands outside of the natural attitude.

This, the first of the *three* main constitutive factors on the methodic meta level making up the full concept of the natural attitude, I shall call *naturalness*, alluding to the name Husserl gave to the phenomenon [Luft later identifies the other two factors as *naïveté* and *normality*]. I want to pin down the term “natural” to its etymological root from the Latin *nasci*, “to be born,” “to grow”: the everyday life we live, as it were, naturally, that is, dealing in a “straightforward” way with other human beings, animals, plants, things, making plans, performing actions, pursuing interests, and so on. Myself, my surroundings, and the people I deal with are all just common and natural.

To call this “situation” natural would be absurd for someone living in the natural attitude yet making this mode of daily life explicit and thematic requires that we are no longer in it. The term “natural” thus gives a thematic description of our life as it is carried out “naturally,” but the fact that this is so can only become explicit in *another* attitude (p. 39).

Homeworld and home attitude

Being in the home attitude, I live through concrete special attitudes, which correlate to specific concrete horizons, and these horizons are essentially open horizons. This means that the horizon of the homeworld is principally not limited; it can be expanded *in infinitum*. Because this

homeworld-horizon is the only horizon to the home attitude, it is “absolute.” The horizon might be limitlessly expandable, but it will still be understood in terms of the homeworld of or for the home attitude.

Hence, the naïveté of the natural attitude not only consists in the fact that being in the natural attitude I do not know of being in it, but also in the fact that, since I do not know of it as an attitude, I live in the belief that it is the only possible “way of life.”

In fact, my home attitude is only one of many other attitudes constituted in the same manner. Every individual sociality (family, people, nation) has its home attitude, but there are many different socialities, with their own sets of subattitudes, with their own customs, traditions, myths, and rules, and so on. This applies to all factual and possible socialities.

This does not mean that one home attitude perceives itself as the only existing attitude, but as the only *home* attitude for itself. All other forms of life it will view as naïve, or as primitive, or as simply *alien* ...

To set the home attitude as absolute means that no other attitude becomes understandable as a *home* attitude, but only as an alien attitude correlating to an alienworld (pp. 43–44).

Home attitude as naïve

[T]he natural home attitude is *in itself* naïve. Daily life consists of a certain “casualness” concerning its way of carrying itself out; daily life deals with things as artifacts, with human beings as friends, foes, or strangers; it is practical and not theoretical

Daily life in this sense is, as Husserl says alluding to the Greek term, dogmatic. It is made up of certain relative opinions or beliefs These beliefs make no claim to be “absolutely” true. From a theoretical (scientific) perspective, from the attitude of *epistémé*, these beliefs might well be

wrong: before Copernicus no one questioned the “fact” that the world was a plane and not a sphere—which in fact turned out to be a “pure belief.”

Thus, daily life consists of a set of opinions, including certain forms of knowledge that do not even make the claim to be exact and *absolutely* true: to drive a car (to “know” how to drive it) I need not know the chemical reactions going on inside the motor, and so on. These beliefs are mere “*dóxai*” they are not, and *need* not be, subject to an epistemic investigation.

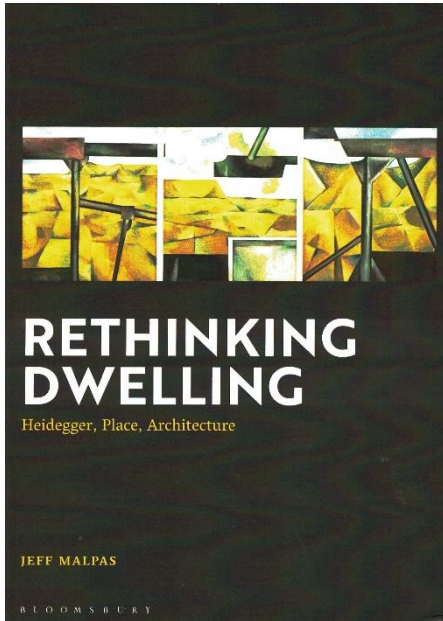
The naïveté of this daily life, its naïveté within its home attitude, thus consists in a limitedness or finitude with respect to its doxic beliefs. Even though the horizon of the home attitude is endless in principle, it at the same time reveals in this structure its own finitude: in extending the horizon this attitude will always understand new, “incoming” entities in its usual style.

This style of understanding entities will be biased or, literally, presumptuous. This style will continue in a (homeworldly) concordance ... with what is familiar. Thus, the naïveté consists in daily life’s setting of its doxic style of understanding entities as absolute. The *dóxa* sets as absolute that which is in fact only relative. It does not realize that its beliefs are *mere* beliefs that could be wrong or perspectival, inadequate, or biased.

Hence, we now have introduced the second constitutive element of the natural attitude: its *naïveté*, which is but the flip side of naturalness. Again, the same meta-structure as in naturalness can be employed to clarify this: seeing the natural attitude as naïve may already mean having left it, but in a way that is *not* naïve. The term “*doxa*” only makes sense in opposition to *epistémé*” (pp. 44–45).

Book Note

Jeff Malpas, 2021. *Rethinking Dwelling: Heidegger, Place, Architecture*. London: Bloomsbury.



Philosopher Jeff Malpas is a major figure in Heideggerian and place studies. This book is a judicious reconsideration and reinterpretation of Heidegger's seminal essay, "Dwelling Building Thinking," given as a lecture in German in 1951 and published in English translation in 1971. In highlighting the book's central aim, Malpas writes that

Rethinking dwelling means not only looking again to the account Heidegger offers in "Building Dwelling Thinking" but also exploring the way a rethought understanding of dwelling, which really means a re-thought understanding of place—and so, too, of space, relationality, identity and other such key notions—plays out in relation to issues in contemporary architecture" (p. 72).

Part I of Malpas' book reinterprets "Building Dwelling Thinking," emphasizing especially that the word "dwelling" was poorly chosen by the English translator Albert Hofstadter because, in English, "dwelling" refers to a mode of being that seems poetic and out of touch with the mundane "everyday living" that Heidegger inferred via the German word *Wohnen* ["residing" or inhabiting" in an everyday way]:

Its use to translate Heidegger's Wohnen, although not unreasonable, nevertheless results in the transformation of a term that is ordinary in German into something out of the ordinary in English. Immediately, 'dwelling' becomes something special and even rather strange—the very word suggesting a return to something archaic (p. 33).

Instead, Malpas emphasizes that dwelling for Heidegger is "not a matter of closed-off containment with a secure and self-sufficient domain, but an engagement in the world in its complexity and multiplicity" (p. 67). For architecture and design, the implication is that the "project is opened up in the original responsiveness that is involved in dwelling and in letting-dwell—which is to say, through an original responsiveness to the character of human life and being as always placed, always standing in relation to home, and so also through a responsiveness to place as such" (p. 77).

In Parts II and III of the book, Malpas examines in more detail relations between Heidegger's thinking and architecture. Chapters focus on "Design and the Human" (chapter 4), "Architecture and Truth" (chapter 5), "Building and Memory" (Chapter 6), "The Line and the Hand" (chapter 7), "Place and Parametricism" (Chapter 8), "Verticality and the

Street" (chapter 9), "Space and Interiority" (chapter 10), and "Rethinking Architecture" (epilogue). In the sidebars below, we excerpt three passages from Malpas' book.

Architecture and human being

Heidegger's inquiries in "Building Dwelling Thinking" are both ontological and ethical at one and the same time, and they are such inasmuch they aim to address the basic conditions of human being in the world and the implications for human being, which is to say, for the way human beings engage in the world that follows from this ...

It is this question of the relation between architecture and human being that is perhaps the most important underlying question pursued through the chapters that follow ... (pp. 10–11).

Design responding to building and living

On the basis of Heidegger's account, one can view design as operating within a domain opened for it out of the active engagement in the world that is building, and as standing in a close relation to the mode of living in the world.

Design is predicated, and indeed arises out of, that more fundamental mode of orientation. The question is whether this is something to which humankind attends—either in terms of attending to the larger context in which a particular design task is situated, or to the broader dependence of design that is also at issue here. Attending to that dependence means

adopting a different attitude to design—one that sees design as responding to the task of building and living as that takes on a singular and concrete form.

The measure of design cannot be simply an aesthetic or technical one. It cannot ... be one of mere economy. The only real measure comes ... from the mode of living within which any specific design is embedded. In this respect, design in general must be understood ... to have a fundamentally “ethical” function ... This is all the more so if proper attention is given to the idea of the ethical as concerned with the realm of human action as it shapes human living, with human action as always standing within a certain *ethos* (and so also a certain bounded place or *topos*) (pp. 86–87).

Truth operating architecturally

It is precisely in relation to the *topological* character of built form that one finds the primary sense in which truth operates architecturally—and this reflects Heidegger’s claim that truth as unconcealment or opening, truth as itself topological, is the fundamental sense of truth that makes possible even truth as correctness.

All architecture can be understood as standing in an essential relation to truth in this sense, since all architecture stands in an essential relation to place and to the opening of place, but not all architecture opens in the same way, and not all architecture engages with place in a direct or explicit way or understands its own topological character.

To some extent, this might be understood as itself reflecting the character of truth (and of place) as an unconcealing or revealing that is specific to its place—always taking the form of a bounded clearing. The point is not to overcome the boundedness within which truth arises, which is

impossible, but rather to understand the fact of that boundedness, to be attentive and responsive to it.

In this respect, truth, like dwelling, is not simply achieved, but is instead a constant demand, a task that always lies before (p. 103).

An untethering from place and humanness?

[P]lace and the human are inextricably bound together. Human existence is always an existence *in place*, and not merely in the sense that it is spatially located. Human existence is first of all relational, which means that it is constituted through the multiple ways in which it is connected, causally, affectively and rationally, with respect to the internality of the self, the commonality of others and the externality of things. Such relationality does not ramify in some unbounded and homogeneous space but arises only within the bounded but open heterogeneity of place.

The world, as it is open to human engagement in all its multiplicity and alterity, begins in that place, and in the placed-ness that belongs essentially to the human. Just as place resists any reduction to the quantitative, the numerical or the merely spatial, so, too, does the human also resist such reduction.

For this reason, the more parametric [design] is tied to the quantitative, the numerical and the spatial, the more it is untethered from any genuine connection either to place or to the human. It should be no surprise, then, to find many parametrically oriented designers focused on forms of design that seem to operate independently, not only of the complexities of “human habitation” but even of human capacity or of human scale (design comes to be a matter of pure form unrelated to *any* scalar frame, including the human) (p. 146).

Implicating being-placed

[Heidegger’s] aim was not merely to uncover the character of contemporary building and dwelling—how building and dwelling currently are—but also to derive conclusions about what building and dwelling may properly be said to be, which is just the question of how they *ought* to be.

As is often the case in Heidegger, however, the way he aims to achieve this is by means of an exploration of the *topos* within which our thinking already moves—the place into which what is at issue already draws us as thinkers.

In the case of “Building Dwelling Thinking,” that involves an exploration of the place within which building and dwelling appear as phenomena that are familiar even prior to giving explicit thought to them

All thinking has this character of a movement back into its place, or an orienting and reorienting to that place (which means that *all* thinking is, in a sense, a *rethinking*). And all thinking, when directed at things ... is a thinking of the place of those things. It is thus that thinking always looks to the elucidation and articulation of things in their relatedness, and so as they participate withing a larger landscape.

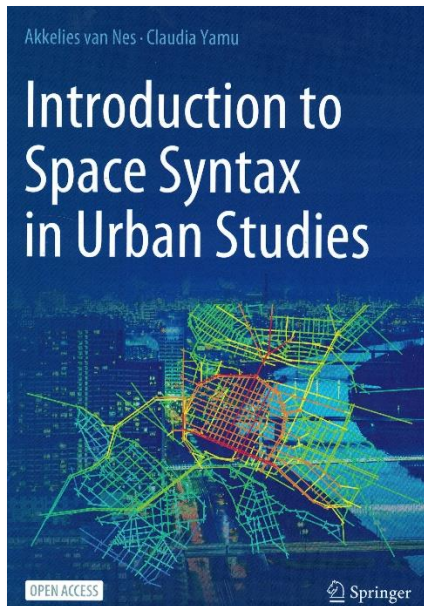
In “Building Dwelling Thinking,” Heidegger’s aim is to turn back to the *topos* to which building and dwelling belong and so to turn back the *topos* to which architecture belongs also—which means to *think* that *topos*, to re-think, to recollect, and remember.

But this turn toward the *topos*, or place, of architecture, which is an ontological turn just as it is topological, is necessarily a turn in which the *telos* of architecture is implicated too.

Telos here does not mean “purpose” or “aim” It is instead that to which something is oriented—and so again implicates a sense of place and being-placed—and in being oriented, is configured according to that orientation (p. 182).

Book Note

Akkelies van Nes and Claudia Yamu, 2021. *Introduction to Space Syntax in Urban Studies*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer. An open-access book: <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/50404>.



Written by two architects, this open-access textbook is a comprehensive introduction to space-syntax theory and method, mostly as it can be applied to urban environments. The volume is funded by OAPEN (Open Access Publishing in European Networks), though it is unclear what agency or institution generously provided the large sum of money to sponsor such a project (probably several thousand dollars).

The authors explain that the book's main purpose is "to present and explain the basic elements of the space-syntax method as applied to the analysis of the built environment at different scales, from buildings and streets to larger metropolitan areas." The book is comprised of seven chapters, beginning with an introduction to space syntax, followed by

chapters on various space-syntax techniques, including integration, connectivity, angular-segment analysis, agent-based modelling, and so forth. The last chapter illustrates space syntax's practical design and planning value.

The authors include a plethora of well-chosen tables, charts, photographs, maps, and other graphics that clarify verbal and computational claims. The book is a major contribution to the space-syntax literature and should work to introduce a much larger academic and professional audience to the considerable conceptual and practical possibilities of space syntax. The book will particularly appeal to architects, planners, urban designers, landscape architects, and other practitioners and professionals who often are more comfortable with visual, graphic-grounded explications rather than word-based, theoretical explanations.

Particularly important in this regard is the book's last chapter that illustrates how space syntax can be applied in urban practice. The authors cover several design results of space syntax including the rehabilitation of London's Trafalgar Square; the design of a new road connection in Leiden, the Netherlands; a plan for residential densification in Bergen, Norway; and a regional plan for North Holland, the Netherlands.

More broadly, the authors describe nine "spatial principles for designing vital and safe public realms"—for example, plan new streets to go through a neighborhood rather than around; connect many local streets to major pathways rather than only a few; orient buildings' doors and windows to the street to facilitate natural surveillance. Interestingly, these principles arise from space-syntax research but also resonate with earlier urban-design work—for example, Jane Jacobs' *Death*

and Life of Great American Cities (1961); Christopher Alexander's *Pattern Language* (1977); Oscar Newman's *Community of Interest* (1980); and Ian Bentley's *Responsive Environments* (1985).

In the sidebar below we excerpt a portion of the authors' space-syntax interpretation of the two integration maps of Berlin, before and after Germany's reunification in 1989. The two maps referred to are reproduced on the front page of this *EAP* issue. We also include two illustrations relating to the authors' explication of "point-depth analysis, which pictures the relative distance of all pathways in a place to one specific pathway or place.

Berlin, 1988 and 2005

[The maps on the front page of this *EAP*] illustrate the urban change of Berlin between 1988 and 2005 by applying the measure of integration [a space-syntax index of relative movement on each street in an urban system]. The 1988 integration analysis depicts Kurfürstendamm and Tauentzienstraße as the most integrated streets in West Berlin, and Alexanderplatz as the most integrated for East Berlin [these streets are marked by the reddest lines].

Alexanderplatz is located at the intersection of the highly integrated streets Frankfurter Allee and Greifswalder Straße, and this was the urban centre of East Berlin. Kreuzberg and Wedding are segregated areas in the analysis, indicated by green and blue axial lines, suffering from the isolated position caused by the Berlin Wall ...

The integration analysis of reunified Berlin in 2005 reveals that the

central urban core has shifted to Friedrichstraße. Friedrichstraße and Potsdamer Platz were the most integrated areas of unified Berlin as far back as the 1930s, but during the era of the wall, they were segregated areas [i.e., areas not well connected to the city's wider movement]. The citywide, integrated Friedrichstraße is currently Berlin's high street, comparable to Oxford Street in London.

Active land uses like shops are sensitive to shifting centralities, and Berlin is clearly an example. Friedrichstraße and Potsdamer Platz are currently Berlin's urban main centres, and the former urban main centres Alexanderplatz and Kurfürstendamm flourished during the period of the wall, while the other two centres around Friedrichstraße and Potsdamer Platz faded during this period and flourished again after the wall came down.

At present, Kurfürstendamm is a high-end luxury shopping street. Interestingly, luxury brands are often located in streets with high connectivity to their vicinities. These luxury brands avoid streets with the highest integration values, with the purpose of reducing the flow of random customers from mainstream society. Most of the mainstream customers just come and look but cannot afford to buy....

The Berlin example showcases the twofold challenge with citywide integration analysis. First, the urban fringe and the suburbs are highlighted as very segregated areas close to the system's boundary, which is referred to in the analysis as the so-called "edge effect" Second, many cities consist of several centres, ranging from the city's main centre to local neighbourhood shopping streets.

Citywide integration analysis highlights the city's main centre, whether the centre is a car-based shopping mall or a pedestrian-friendly high street with adjacent streets. Local sub-centres tend to be poorly highlighted in a citywide integration analysis (p. 51).

Point-depth analysis

As illustrated in the figures below, point-depth analysis pictures the topological relationship between one pathway in a pathway system and all other pathways. The schematic map below conceptualizes the degree of connectedness between street 0 and six other streets; obviously, street 6 is least linked topologically to street 0, since it is farthest to get to "turn-wise" (though close in terms of pure physical distance).

The point-depth map, bottom, illustrates how the measure can be used to identify the relative ease of access of urban amenities such as transit stops or shopping streets. This map is of Rotterdam and illustrates relative ease of access for the city's railway stations (marked by black dots). Red lines indicate streets with best accessibility; one notes that the southwestern portion of the city has poor rail access, indicated by the violet, blue, and dark green lines.



Intertwining with Nature

Taking a Walk around the Lake at Lunchtime—1

Stephen Wood

Wood is an independent researcher in phenomenology and the environment. He has a PhD in systematic zoology from the University of Cambridge and has held fellowships in the Theoretical Physics Research Unit at London's Birkbeck College; and at the Nature Institute in Ghent, New York. Wood is a frequent contributor to EAP; see his "A Fishkeeper's View of Animal Welfare," in the winter/spring 2021 EAP. s.w.wood.88@cantab.net © 2022 Stephen Wood.

In this essay, I work to understand a particular place in Provence, France. The unlikely source of inspiration is a busy motorway exit near the sprawling shopping center of Avignon Nord. The essay may challenge preconceptions about how nature might be experienced in a suburban setting and give a message of hope that wildness can be found in unlikely places. In recounting my journey, I address the following questions:

- How long does it take to get to know a place and its wildlife?
- What is the right attitude to have?
- Is it easy or difficult to maintain this attitude?
- Is getting to know a place a lonely task, or are other human beings helpfully involved?
- What are the different processes intertwining human being and place that allow this "getting to know" to be successful?

Getting to know the lake

During 2018 and 2019, I worked as a contract software developer for the company that manages the motorway network in the south of France. The company's headquarters are situated at the Avignon Nord exit of the A7 motorway at the confluence of the towns of Le Pontet, Sorgues, and Vedène. Despite the unpromising corporate setting, I was surprised by how attractively the corporate campus had been landscaped, with flowers, shrubs, and

trees that provide habitats for a variety of animals.

I was particularly drawn to the lake, constructed on lower-lying land at the south end of the campus. Going to lunch, my colleagues and I would pass the lake on the way to the office canteen. They would comment on the water level, boosted by heavy rains or low after dry weather. Sometimes, my colleagues and I sat at a table with a lake view.

Soon I developed the habit of taking a walk after lunch, before returning to my screen. My colleagues welcomed this eccentricity, my return inside being greeted by a discussion of the weather or the changing seasons, or by comments on my bravery for confronting the strong, cold *mistral* winds that reach gusts of 60 mph as they funnel down the Rhône valley. At the same time, these winds produce the clear, pure air and cloudless, blue skies of Provence.

This after-lunch walk took in the far side of the lake, where I stopped to watch the visiting mallards and moorhens. Day by day, I came to appreciate that contact. The lake became "my" place, "my" refuge, where I re-grounded myself and forgot worries.

Leaving the lake, I took the long way back to my office, returning by the main north entrance. Along this path were many trees often filled with songbirds. Having grown up by a canal, I knew the lake's water birds well but could not identify birds singing in the trees. I shifted my

looking and listening to absorb the overall quality of the moment, sensitive to the different sounds, the movement and smell of the air, the intensity of the light. I tried to ignore the motorway traffic but to listen carefully as if I were walking through a quiet wood.

As the months passed, I noticed changes. In the winter, the male mallards displayed their resplendent breeding plumage, their heads a bright iridescent blue or green. With their mottled brown feathers, the females merged completely into the background of weeds and rushes. The first signs of spring were the many violets in the grass and the slight rustlings in the undergrowth. As temperatures rose, wall lizards emerged to sun themselves before darting back to safety. In late spring, the water lilies spread to produce flowers of delicate shades of pink and yellow blending with white. Our walks to the canteen were greeted by a loud chorus of croaking frogs.

Taking a position about three-quarters of the way around the lake, I scanned the water surface, alert for signs of movement. Some moorhens making their way among the water weeds caught my attention. Disturbed by my approach, they made their curious low flight, feet treading the surface of the water into the safety of the waterlilies. I loved to watch these birds picking their way with their long toes across the lily pads. I sat on one of the rocks on the grassy bank and watched

dragonflies over the water, glinting in the sun.

If the mallards were sunning themselves on the far bank, I unwittingly disturbed them as I approached my usual observation post. To assure themselves of safety, they swam to the middle of the lake and waited until I passed. So near the busy shopping center, they still retained their wildness, alert and wary. I even glimpsed that most private of wild animals, the red squirrel as it stole into the pine trees separating the campus from the motorway. With the sound of cars and trucks driving past, this was a most unlikely place to encounter wildness.

Sharing the unexpected

In my second year at the company, I noted a shift in my awareness of the lake. I remember stopping at my usual spot and noticing an unusual movement: a bird had just swooped over the water. I knew this bird was not a duck, a moorhen, or small songbird. Its flight pattern was unlike any I had seen before. I watched with curiosity as it took its perch on a branch overhanging the opposite bank. Eventually, the bird flew across the lake, revealing silvery-blue iridescent wings and a striking rich red-brown breast. This bird was a kingfisher, a creature I had seen only once before.

I was so pleased by this rare gift from nature and wanted to share my sighting with my colleagues, but few were interested. At one point, two colleagues saw me returning from my lake walk, and I was happily surprised they were curious to know what I had seen. One told me that herons could be seen on the lake. I had not realized that the lake held any fish for herons to eat, but she said yes, she had seen fish too. Another colleague was envious of my encountering the kingfisher. She later told officemates how lucky I was, only to find herself teased. The kingfisher is “fishing martin” in French (*martin pêcheur*). One team member was called

Monsieur Martin, so colleagues joked that I had simply seen him fishing.

Through these conversations, I witnessed other people’s awareness of nature. It was striking to be met with indifference, even disbelief, for the lake’s inhabitants—a lake that employees saw and passed every day. How could it be that some did not see or did not want to see, preferring to belittle those who did?

One morning, a colleague came to me excitedly and asked if I’d seen the ducklings on the lake. Usually, I would be busy at my desk all morning, but this time I made an exception and walked down past the canteen. Settling at the far side near the reeds, I saw nothing at all. Suddenly I made out a duckling near the water’s edge. It was so tiny that rather than swimming through the water weeds, it climbed over them! I turned to see several of its siblings, plus the mother duck. They had been before me all along, but I could not see them until the movement of the one nearest caught my eye.

After my colleague told me that herons visited the lake, I was keen to see them. On windy days, when the cold northwest *mistral* wind blew, I saw few if any signs of life on the lake. On one such day, however, a grey heron crouched at the lake’s far side, its pincer beak darting down now and then to catch a fish. When the sun returned warm and strong after the cold winds, I was determined to see these fish for myself. The sun was warming a shallower part of the lake close to the far bank, so I thought, this is where fish would gather. I was right and deciphered several fish-shaped silhouettes, both large and small, against the lake bottom.

Thanks to my colleagues, I had seen the sweet, tumbling ducklings and the heron and fish. These two colleagues and I formed a small community of nature lovers, open and curious as to what the lake offered. Within that community, my perceptions widened in unexpected ways. A brotherhood of common interest motivated us to see more and to see better.

Looking with kindness

I welcomed these gifts of nature, even if offered a short time. After its first appearance, the kingfisher reappeared a few days later, but I never saw it again. The heron I saw only on that blustery day, although later, I saw one flying away from the campus, its neck folded in typical heron posture. Both birds I had seen elsewhere, but they were still special, as I had never seen their sort in this place. My appreciation of the place was enriched, given more substance by these encounters. Each occurred against a background of familiarity, which allowed me to notice something unusual happening and to wait long enough for the previously unseen bird to appear.

In the first year I unconsciously registered the patterns of occurrences and the changing qualities of the place, receiving impressions and developing an appreciation of inhabitants’ varying gestures. I came to the place without expectations, drawn to it, seeking repose. Spontaneously, I adopted an attitude of attentive, sensitive openness. My aim was to look and to listen always with the freshness and sense of wonder felt when I first saw the place. Then new things that were out of the ordinary drew my attention and broke the normal pattern. I would hardly have been able to notice these new elements of the place without the background experiences built up gradually over time.

Sometimes I would recognize an impatient grasping to know more, especially with the songbirds I knew only superficially. This led to a frustration that I would never “get anywhere” or learn anything. Patiently returning to the same place, day after day, even if for a short time, opened the door to surprising encounters and discoveries. In the light of the unexpected, I realized how much I had learned. I allowed the natural world to speak in its own time with the result that it taught me something of its richness.

Intertwining

Over the two years of association with the lake, I became intertwined with the place. I became part of the lake's daily goings-on, and the place part of me. Two full turns of seasons brought recognition of the regular, cyclical pattern of nature's activity and sensitivity to the unusual and the rare. It was only gradually that my bewilderment at nature's complexity turned to some small understanding. Despite bursts of impatience, I needed time to open to the place—to see what was actually there and not what I expected to be there. In a world obsessed by speed and rapid access to “information,” effort to *know* this place was incompressibly slow.

I believe we can tease out qualities of how this intertwining unfolded over time by considering the six triadic processes described by British philosopher J.G. Bennett (1961, 1993) as developed by David Seamon in his *Life Takes Place* (Seamon 2018). Regularly walking around the lake, I gained an intensified contact with the place, which became part of my habitual activities during my time at work. This *interaction* with place was central to my intertwining, setting the foundation for later, more intense experiences. A first result was a sense of *identity* with the place. The lake became *my special place*, and I experienced a fondness and attachment mostly unknown by my colleagues who also walked by every day.

In the first year, I learned to recognize seasonal changes and the most frequent lake visitors. I experienced the *order* of the place, its stable rhythms and enduring character, an order that I could rely on and trust. This constancy offered reassurance and comfort. I was glad to know the lizards would announce their emergence at

winter's end and rustle again. I was glad to know the water lily's flowers would unfurl once summer beckoned.

Getting to know this order, I slowly came to an understanding of the lake's characteristic patterns. In the second year, the understanding I gained allowed a greater sensitivity to the place and brought forth fresh, unexpected insights. I experienced the *freedom* of the place via the discovery of the rarer visitors—birds unusual for the place and entirely new to me. Each discovery brought feelings of joy and delight.

By placing myself humbly before the place as a learner, I was opened to a process of *concentration*. My curiosity, patience and study were rewarded as the place, more thoroughly seen and understood, came “alive” more strongly in me. At the same time, there was a process of *expansion* whereby I worked to overcome weaknesses—impatience, grasping, rushing to conclusions. I submitted to what the place told me about itself. Through these two processes of concentration and expansion, my understanding of the lake became clearer and more appropriate, more attuned to the lake's particularities and possibilities.

Understanding place

I have identified here six different actions via which a person comes to see, know, and particularize what a place *really* is. Through *concentration*, a person gains strength to act toward a place with integrity and clarity of purpose. Through *expansion*, she abandons ways of unhelpfully relating to the place and thereby sees the place more appropriately. She becomes “tuned in” to what the place is and what it needs, herself transformed in the

process. This *mutual adjustment* between people and place might provoke sensitive, relevant, practical changes to place. Such mutual adjustment propels a caring, empathetic understanding essential to successful place creation. Mutual adjustment “attenuates the tensions” between people and place (Bennett 1961, p. 50). It forestalls conflicts of interest. Reaching such a people-place state of affairs is predicated on a selfless human attitude toward place and a personal and communal commitment to doing for that place what is best *for it*.

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The Holy Mountain

Harry Oldmeadow

Oldmeadow was formerly Coordinator of Philosophy and Religious Studies at La Trobe University Bendigo in southeastern Australia. His principal interests are the perennial philosophy, the East-West spiritual encounter, critiques of modernity, and traditional understandings of the natural world. His books include Journeys East: 20th Century Western Encounters with Eastern Religious Traditions (2004), Frithjof Schuon and the Perennial Philosophy (2010), and Black Elk, Lakota Visionary (2018). This essay was originally included in a collection of writings by Oldmeadow and scientist and philosopher Brian Coman, entitled The Realm of Splendour and released in 2021. The book is published by Carbarita Press and available in open access at the following link: <https://www.carbaritapress.com/the-realm-of-the-splendour/>. Photograph captions on p. 23. Text and photographs © 2022 Harry Oldmeadow.

John Ruskin proclaimed that “Mountains are the beginning and end of all natural scenery” [1]. It was not always so. Indeed, it was not until the early 19th Century that mountains were perceived as “scenic,” now imbued with what came to be called the Romantic Sublime, an imaginative synthesis of Beauty, Grandeur, and Terror—“an aesthetic of the Infinite” as it has been called [2].

Edmund Burke wrote of the Sublime in these terms: “Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is any sort terrible ... is a source of the sublime, that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling” [3].

By Burke’s time, the European Alps excited just such an emotion in many who came to see their soaring walls, jagged ridgelines, and glistening peaks. On his first visit to Chamonix, Shelley was moved to exclaim, “I never knew—I never imagined—what mountains were before. The immensity of the aerial summits excited, when they suddenly burst my sight, a sentiment of ecstatic wonder not unallied to madness” [4].

And here is Hilaire Belloc, a later traveler surveying the Alps, linking the Sublime with “the glory of God”:

I saw between the branches of trees in front of me a sight in the sky that made me



stop breathing ... a great promise of unexpected lights beyond ... Here were these magnificent creatures of God, I mean the Alps ... they occupied the sky with a sublime invasion ... Their sharp steadfastness and their clean uplifted lines compelled my adoration ... the great peaks made communion between that homing creeping part of me which loves vineyards and dances and a slow movement among pastures, and that other part which is only properly at home in Heaven. I say that this kind of description is useless, and that it is better to address prayers to such things than to attempt to interpret them

for others. These, the great Alps, seen thus, link in some way to one’s immortality ... from the height of Weissenstein I saw, as it were, my religion. I mean, humility, the fear of death, the terror of height and of distance, the glory of God, the infinite potentiality of reception whence springs that divine thirst in the soul ... [5].

Mountains, Belloc claimed, reveal two great truths: They make the human individual aware of their own insignificance but, at the same time, they free the “immortal Mind” in us.

In the preceding centuries, European folklore had peopled mountains with evil spirits, ogres, dragons, and other terrifying creatures, a realm mysterious, ugly, and menacing, places to be avoided. Petrarch's famous (and possibly apocryphal) ascent of Mont Ventoux in 1336 notwithstanding, mountain climbing as a pastime was virtually unknown.

Post-medieval European perceptions were often a degenerate form of earlier religious understandings of mountains that have occupied a central place in the symbolic vocabulary of many traditions around the world. Consider a severely attenuated list of holy mountains from all parts of the globe: Olympus, Parnassus, Helikon, Gerizim, Ararat, Sinai, Zion, Tabor, Horeb, the Mount of Olives, Calvary, Athos, Etna, Carmel, Monsalvat, Hira, Qaf, Haraberezaity, Kilimanjaro, Denali, Arunachala, Chomolungma (Everest), Macchapuchere, Kangchenjunga, Nanda Devi, Meru, Kailas, Sri Pada, Tai Shan, Hua Shan, Fuji, Koya-san, Hiei, Cuchama, Uluru, Taranaki, Machu Picchu.

Since time immemorial, mountains have played a central role in the religious imagination of humankind and have forever conjured our highest aspirations, our deepest fears, our most poignant yearnings, our most noble meditations. They irresistibly suggest the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* of which the Sublime is a kind of echo in a desecralized world.

When Rudolf Otto described this mystery in his influential book, *The Idea of the Holy* (1919), he might well have been describing the stupefaction that many have felt in the face of a great mountain:

The mystery is not something merely to be wondered at but something that entrances him; and beside that in it, which bewilders and confounds, he feels a something that captivates and transports him with a strange ravishment, rising often enough to a pitch of dizzy intoxication; it is the Dionysiac element in the numen [6].

Mountains figure prominently in the mythology and the scriptures of traditional peoples, and alpine imagery saturates mystical literature from all parts of the globe. Even the annals of mountaineering (dating back only to the

mid-19th century, and then only to be found in Europe) are replete with rhapsodic paean to the beauty of mountains and accounts of extraordinary experiences which, in some cases, can properly be labelled as spiritual and mystical.

Many mountaineers are hard-bitten, taciturn characters for whom actions speak louder than words. But quite a number find themselves so transported by the grandeur of the resplendent peaks that they are moved to speak and write of them in reverential terms. The leader of the 1953 Everest Expedition, John Hunt, was a soldier, a "Hard Man" and "thruster" not given to easy sentimentalities. Around a campfire at Thyangboche (near Everest), in characteristically terse fashion, he remarked to his companions, "I don't mind admitting that mountains make me pray" [7]. For a representative specimen of the more lyrical flights of mountaineering literature, one might turn to Gaston Rebuffat's elegant *Starlight and Storm* (1954).

Mountaineering is often seen not only as a physical and psychological test *in extremis*, but also as a crucible in which a moral identity might be forged. The German climber Kurt Maix wrote that "Climbing is the most royal irrationality out of which Man, in his creative imagination, has been able to fashion the highest personal values" [8]. And Ed Hillary: "It is not mountains that we conquer but ourselves."

Then too, there are those who quite consciously merged the pursuit of mountaineering and the spiritual journey at large. One of this company's most striking representatives is Marco Pallis (1895–1989), of Greek and British background, adventurer, mountaineer, musician, author and perennialist. His *Peaks and Lamas* (1939) recounted his several transformative sojourns in Tibet in its last days as one of the few remaining bastions of Tradition in an increasingly profane and crepuscular world.

Later, Pallis was to write two of the deepest and most beautiful books about Tibetan Buddhism, *The Way and the Mountain* and *A Buddhist Spectrum*. In the title essay of the former, Pallis expounds the many ways in which mountain climbing may be symbolically assimilated with spiritual wayfaring. René Daumal (1908–

1944) employed this symbolic affinity as the governing principle of his mystical and wonderfully titled novel, *Mt Analogue: A Novel of the Symbolically Authentic Non-Euclidian Adventures in Mountain Climbing* (the novel was unfinished and only published some fifteen years after Daumal's early death from tuberculosis).

My own encounters with mountains started at the age of five when I was sent to boarding school in Mussoorie, an old British hillstation in the Himalayan foothills of northern India. Woodstock School, where I was a pupil, sat on a south-facing slope. On those days when the vista was not shrouded in dust or rain, the vast Gangetic plains seemed to stretch away into infinity. Above the school, situated on a ridge, was Landour, a straggle of shops and homes.

During the debilitating Indian summer, my parents would journey up to Landour and I would be released from boarding school for several weeks. From Landour, looking northward, one could see the mighty Himalayan range, a chain of glittering snow-clad peaks stretching right across the horizon. On a clear day, one could see Nanda Devi, the highest mountain in India, first climbed by a small expedition led by legendary mountaineers Eric Shipton and Bill Tillman [9].

One year, I suppose it was 1958, we joined up with another missionary family to trek to Nag Tiba, a modest peak to the north of Mussoorie. Accompanied by various "coolies," we were out in the mountains for several days, sleeping in the humble huts of villagers along the way, hearing from them something of the religious mythology surrounding our destination. It was my first great outdoor adventure and altogether exhilarating.

Perhaps this is where my lifelong obsession with mountains originated. In adult life, I was to go on no less than six extended treks in the majestic Himalayan ranges of Nepal, as well as visiting Himalchal Pradesh in connection with my researches into the life of Swami Abhishiketananda.

On the second of my Nepal expeditions, in 1998, I read Maurice Herzog's *Annapurna*, a book that launched me on a ten-

year journey through the vast literature of mountaineering, including many classics of the genre by such heroic figures as Lionel Terray, Herman Buhl, Heinrich Harrer, Fosco Maraini, Walter Bonatti and Bill Tillman, and, in more recent years, David Roberts, Jon Krakauer, Jennifer Jordan, and Joe Simpson. I also lingered over the astonishing mountain photographs of great landscape photographers like Vittorio Sella, Ansel Adams, and Peter Drombovskis.

I was not physically attracted by the perils of mountain climbing; I've never affixed a crampon nor gripped an ice axe. I was content to experience the ever-present hazards of mountaineering from the comfort of an armchair. But I did become a keen trekker and a relentless photographer of alpine landscapes in Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Canada, and USA.

Nothing could match the awesome splendor of the Nepali Himalaya, nor the religious ambience of its human culture. The ranges are full of *chortens* (small wayside shrines), temples, monasteries, hermitages, walls, and stones painted with mantras, mandalas, and the radiant figures of the great Bodhisattvas, prayer flags fluttering in the wind, carrying the devotions and supplications of the people to Heaven, the lovely sounds of small temple bells and the smell of incense rippling through the air.

The clean mountain atmosphere is perfumed by a piety that emanates a benign influence on all, human beings and beasts alike. One incident I remember clearly was on a trek in 1998. We were heading for Muktinath, a traditional pilgrimage site for both Hindus and Buddhists. As we walked up through the Kali Gandaki Valley, I noticed a change in the mood of our two porters, simple mountain men of reserved temperament, shy and taciturn. The day before we had climbed up to Muktinath.



I mentioned this change in mood to my Nepali friend Pratap, our *sirdar* for the trip. "Have these chaps been on the *raksi* [the local flame-throwing alcoholic beverage]?" I asked. "No," said Pratap. "Well, they seem more animated than usual, even a bit agitated. What's going on?" "Oh, that's because they are excited about visiting the holy places in Muktinath."

To circumambulate the temples, spin the prayer wheels, intone the prayers, make offerings of flowers—these were the highlight of the trip for them. Simple faith, a sense of proportion, a sense of the sacred. How much we could learn from these people! Mountains, mysterious and endlessly fascinating, have figured prominently in both my outer and inner lives. But let us turn to the place of sacred mountains in traditional cultures the world over.

The mountain is a multivalent symbol with a more or less inexhaustible reservoir of meanings. Among the significations traditionally apprehended, we may here mention a few of the more universal: the mountain as Center; as the meeting place of Heaven and Earth; the *axis mundi* that runs through the three worlds; the abode of the gods and *devas*;

the symbol of transcendence; the Immutable made manifest; the sacred place in which God communicates with His people; a conduit for cosmic energies and powers; the pivot of the universe; the refuge of hermits and sages; the natural habitat of monasteries and shrines; the destination of arduous pilgrimages; the site of transfiguration [10].

Jesus' most exalted teaching comes in the Sermon on the Mount. Indeed, the mountain is often the supreme symbol of the Absolute, of God Himself. Thus Thomas Merton:

The great, gashed, half-naked mountain is another of God's saints. There is no other like him. He is alone in his own character; nothing else in the world ever did or ever will imitate God in quite the same way. That is his sanctity... [11].

Or, as Lama Anagarika Govinda observed in *The Way of the White Clouds*, his captivating book about his pilgrimage in Western Tibet:

There are some [mountains] of such outstanding character and position that they become symbols of the highest aspirations of humanity, as expressed in ancient civilizations and religions, milestones of the

eternal quest for perfection and ultimate realization, signposts that point beyond our earthly concerns The power of such a mountain is so great and yet so subtle that, without compulsion, people are drawn to it from near and far, as if by the force of some invisible magnet; and they will undergo untold hardships and privations in their inexplicable urge to approach and to worship the center of this sacred power. Nobody has conferred the title of sacredness on such a mountain, and yet everybody recognizes it; nobody has to defend its claim, because nobody doubts it; nobody has to organize its worship, because people are overwhelmed by the mere presence of such a mountain and cannot express their feelings other than by worship [12].

In the same volume, Govinda observes that “To the religious man the mountain is a divine symbol, and as little as he would put his foot upon a sacred image, so little would he dare to put his foot on the summit of a sacred mountain.” I first read Govinda’s book during my first trek in Nepal, in 1974, with my friend Richard Stanley. The trek was thrilling; no other word will do. Walking along the ridges in the sharp mountain air, bumping here and there into a herd of goats or a donkey train coming from Mustang, every few hours coming across the scattered huts of a village, all the while in a state of mild intoxication at the spectacle all around us.

After a few days of hard walking, we settled in for a restful interlude at the village of Chomrong. Here, with the huge vultures and choughs floating on the airstream high above the valleys, I sat under a tree on a grassy slope and read *The Way of the White Clouds*, a heart-churning and mind-bending book to which I have returned several times over the years.

In traditional worlds, mountains are part of a larger sacred geography. Frithjof Schuon:

The sacred mountain, seat of the Gods, is not to be found in space, though it is visible and tangible. It is the same with Benares, or the Ganges, or the Kaaba, or Sinai, or the Holy of Holies, or the Holy Sepulcher or other places in this category.

He who finds himself there is as it were gone out of space and, in a virtual sense, reintegrated in the formless Prototype of the sacred spot. Touching holy ground, the pilgrim really “walks” in the formless and in it he is purified. Hence the washing away of sin in these places For the man of the golden age a mountain was in very truth an approach to the Principle [13].

In the remote mountain ranges of the world, made inaccessible to all but the most intrepid, Virgin Nature can still be experienced directly. To receptive souls she, in whatever guise, is always a source of spiritual rejuvenation. As Schuon observes,

Wild Nature is at one with holy poverty and also with spiritual childlikeness; she is an open book containing an inexhaustible teaching of truth and beauty. It is in the midst of his own contrivances that man most easily becomes corrupted, it is they that make him covetous and impious; close to virgin Nature, who knows neither agitation nor falsehood, he had the hope of remaining contemplative like Nature itself. And it is Nature, quasi-divine in her totality, who will have the final word [14].

The French Benedictine monk, Fr Henri le Saux (1910–1973), who spent the last twenty-five years of his life in India where he became known as Swami Abhishiktananda, fell under the sway of mountains in two spiritually vibrant locations, Mt Arunachala in the south and in the north the Indian Himalaya of Uttarkhand, a region often locally referred to as *Devabhumi*—“land of the Gods.” We may take Abhishiktananda’s writings as representative of much of the mystical literature on mountains.

Both Arunachala and the Garwhal-Gangotri Himalaya were intimately associated with Lord Siva, the awe-inspiring god of creation and destruction. For many devotees, Mount Arunachala is Siva in one of his manifold forms, and the theophanic mountain has been a pilgrimage site since ancient times. At its foot is the vast Arunachalesvara temple, itself another cosmic symbol and sanctuary. Abhishiktananda was attracted to Arunachala by one of the

most luminous figures in the whole Hindu tradition, Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950). Following an extraordinary encounter with the sage, described in *The Secret of Arunachala*, the French monk spent an extended period in solitary retreat in one of the many caves on the holy mountain:

Arunachala is like a lover with an irresistible appeal. I have found something there which no other place and no other being has ever been able to give me.... Never in my life have I felt so much at peace, so joyful, so near to God, or rather, one with God, as on this mountain. Arunachala drew me into himself and taught me the secret song of silence, that which underlies all that is sung by men or by the created world, the essential hymn which no song uttered by human lips can ever adequately express [15].

And in poetic form:

*Arunachala is a symbol
and Arunachala is a Reality,
a high place of the Dravidian land,
all ruddy, āruna, in the rays of the rising
sun,
where he is worshipped in the līnga of
fire,
the elemental sign of the Living God,
he who appeared to Moses in the burning
bush
and on the summit of Mount Horeb,
Fire that burns and Fire that gives light,
Deus ignis consumens,
Lux mundi,
Param-jyoti,
Phos hilaron,
the joyful light of the immortal glory
of the Blessed One,
Bhagavān! [16]*

After several years in a Christian ashram in southern India, Abhishiktananda became a *sannyasin*, an itinerant renunciate, wandering all over the sub-continent but spending his final years in Uttarkashi in the Gangotri region, living in a tiny hutch on the banks of the Ganges.

In Hindu tradition, the “permanent abode” of Siva is said to be located in the Himalaya at the source of the Ganges. The Ganges doesn’t have a single source but three, so the precise location of Siva’s

abode is, perhaps appropriately, not altogether clear and fixed. But the area bounded by the holy cities of Gangotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath includes the sources of the three rivers that merge to form the holy river.

Badrinath, associated with the great Advaitin metaphysician Shankara, sits at the foot of Neelkanth (“Blue Throat”), also known as Siva’s Mountain. The whole region is therefore charged with sacred power and is home to temples and shrines that mark the end of the traditional pilgrimage route from Haridwar and Rishikesh. My own visit to this region remains among the most unforgettable experiences of my life. Of the Gangotri region, Abhishiktananda writes:

It is right and proper for the Christian, more than any other, to come and meditate here on earth’s ascent towards heaven through her snow-clad peaks, and on the descent from heaven of the life-giving waters in the form of dark rain-clouds—and so of the meeting of both in the mystery of those high peaks, which seize and hold on their flanks the water of heaven and then pour it out in blessing on the earth [17].

Such passages in Abhishiktananda’s writing, and indeed in the vast literature of so-called “nature mysticism,” can only be fully understood if we grasp what Schuon calls the “metaphysical transparency” of the natural world. Abhishiktananda provides us with a key to the relationship of the spiritual and material “dimensions” of Reality in his remarks

about the *transcendence* and *immanence* of the Absolute, here expressed in Christian and Hindu terms but easily transposed into the language of other traditions:

The transcendence of God is the very source of his immanence; transcendence and immanence being no more than two of man’s words by which he tries to indicate simultaneously the beyond-ness and within-ness of the supreme mystery, both the rupa [form] and a-rupa [Formlessness] of being [18].

The mountain is an incomparably rich and resonant symbol of this mystery.

Notes

1. Edwin Bernbaum, *Sacred Mountains of the World*, <https://lib.icimod.org/record/10131>.
2. Mircea Eliade, *Symbolism, the Sacred and the Arts*, 1988, 5.
3. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), quoted in Robert McFarlane, *Mountains of the Mind*, 1974, 75 (italics mine).
4. Shelley, quoted in Fergus Fleming, *Killing Dragons: the Conquest of the Alps*, 2000, 83.
5. Hilaire Belloc, *The Path to Rome* (internet).
6. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, 1956, 31.
7. Quoted in Wilfrid Noyce, *South Col*, 1954, 17.
8. Kurt Maix, quoted in Heinrich Harrer, *The White Spider*, 1983, 31.

9. Recounted in Bill Tillman’s characteristically understated *The Ascent of Nanda Devi* (1938).

10. See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 37–42.

11. Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 31.

12. Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds*, 1980, 197.

13. Frithjof Schuon, *Spiritual Perspectives and Human Facts*, 1969, 45–46.

14. Frithjof Schuon, *Light on the Ancient Worlds*, 84.

15. Abhishiktananda, *The Secret of Arunachala: A Christian Hermit on Shiva’s Holy Mountain*, 50, 36; see also James Stewart, *Swami Abhishiktananda: His Life Told through His Letters*, 1990, letter of 21.8.52 on p. 57.

16. Abhishiktananda, *The Secret of Arunachala*, 53. (The full poem, in translation, can be found on pp. 53–55.)

17. Abhishiktananda, *Mountain of the Lord: Pilgrimage to Gangotri*, 1974, 21–22.

18. Abhishiktananda, *Guru and Disciple*, 1974, 8.

Photographs (by author)

p. 19: Annapurna, Nepal

p. 21: Dhaulagiri, Nepal

Questions relating to environmental and architectural phenomenology (from *EAP*, 2014 [vol. 25, no. 3, p. 4])

Questions relating to phenomenology and related interpretive approaches and methods:

What is phenomenology and what does it offer to whom?
What is the state of phenomenological research today? What are your hopes and concerns regarding phenomenology?
Does phenomenology continue to have relevance in examining human experience in relation to world?
Are there various conceptual and methodological modes of phenomenology and, if so, how can they be categorized and described?
Has phenomenological research been superseded by other conceptual approaches—e.g., post-structuralism, social-constructionism, critical theory, relationalist and non-representational perspectives, the various conceptual “turns,” and so forth?
Can phenomenology contribute to making a better world? If so, what are the most crucial phenomena and topics to be explored phenomenologically?
Can phenomenological research offer practical results in terms of design, planning, policy, and advocacy?
How might phenomenological insights be broadcast in non-typical academic ways—e.g., through artistic expression, theatrical presentation, digital evocation, virtual realities, and so forth?
What are the most important aims for future phenomenological research?
Do the various post-structural and social-constructionist criticisms of phenomenology—that it is essentialist, masculinist, authoritative, voluntarist, ignorant of power structures, and so forth—point toward its demise?

Questions relating to the natural world and environmental and ecological concerns:

Can there be a phenomenology of nature and the natural world?
What can phenomenology offer the intensifying environmental and ecological crises we face today?
Can phenomenology contribute to more sustainable actions and worlds?
Can one speak of a sustainable lifeworld?
What is a phenomenology of a *lived* environmental ethic and who are the key contributors?
Do the “sacred” and the “holy” have a role in caring for the natural world? For places? For lifeworlds broadly?
Can phenomenology contribute to environmental education? If so, in what ways?

Can there be a phenomenology of the two laws of thermodynamics, especially the second law claiming that all activities, left to their own devices, tend toward greater disorder and fewer possibilities? Are there ways whereby phenomenological understanding of lifeworld might help to reduce the accelerating disordering of natural and human worlds?

Questions relating to place, place experience, and place meaning:

Why has the theme of place become an important phenomenological topic?
Can a phenomenological understanding of place contribute to better place making?
Can phenomenology contribute to a generative understanding of place and place making?
What roles do bodily regularity and habitual inertia play in the constitution of place and place experience?
What are the lived relationships between place, sustainability, and a responsive environmental ethic?
How are phenomenological accounts to respond to post-structural interpretations of space and place as rhizomic and a “meshwork of paths” (Ingold)?
Can phenomenological accounts incorporate a “progressive sense of place” argued for by critical theorists like Doreen Massey?
Can phenomenological explications of space and place account for human differences—gender, sexuality, less-abledness, social class, cultural background, and so forth?
Can phenomenology contribute to the politics and ideology of place?
Can a phenomenological understanding of lived embodiment and habitual inertia be drawn upon to facilitate robust places and to generate mutual support and awareness among places, especially places that are considerably different (e.g., different ethnic neighborhoods or regions)?
Can phenomenology contribute to mobility, the nature of “flows,” rhizomic spaces, the places of mobility, non-spaces and their relationship to mobility and movement?

Questions relating to architecture and environmental design and policy:

Can there be a phenomenology of architecture and architectural experience and meaning?
Can phenomenology contribute to better architectural design?
How do qualities of the designable world—spatiality, materiality, lived aesthetics, environmental embodiment etc.—contribute to lifeworlds?

What are the most pertinent environmental and architectural features contributing to a lifeworld’s being one way rather than another?
What role will cyberspace and digital technologies have in 21st-century lifeworlds? How will they play a role in shaping designed environments, particularly architecture?
What impact will digital advances and virtual realities have on physical embodiment, architectural design, and real-world places? Will virtual reality eventually be able to simulate “real reality” entirely? If so, how does such a development transform the nature of lifeworld, natural attitude, place, and architecture?
Can virtual worlds become so “real” that they are lived as “real” worlds?

Other potential questions:

What is the lived relationship between people and the worlds in which they find themselves?
Can lifeworlds be made to happen self-consciously? If so, how? Through what individual efforts? Through what group efforts?
Can a phenomenological education in lifeworld, place, and environmental embodiment assist citizens and professionals in better understanding the workings and needs of real-world places and thereby contribute to their envisioning and making?
Is it possible to speak of human-rights-in-place or place justice? If so, would such a possibility move attention and supportive efforts toward improving the places in which people and other living beings find themselves, rather than focusing only on the rights and needs of individuals and groups without consideration of their place context?

Questions relating to Covid-19:

Will demands of Covid-19 have a lasting impact on physical places and bodily sociality?
Can social media and virtual realities effectively replace face-to-face presence and physical places?
Will human beings return to physical place and firsthand intercorporeality once the pandemic ends?
Can human life really survive if people lose their direct lived relationships with other human beings and an entrenched physical involvement in real-world places?
Does the crisis of Covid-19 demonstrate the central phenomenological principle that human beings-are-inured-in place? If that inurement collapses, is human life in risk?



Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

Published digitally twice a year, **EAP** is a forum and clearing house for research and design that incorporate a qualitative approach to environmental and architectural experience, actions, and meanings.

One key concern of **EAP** is design, education, policy, and advocacy supporting and strengthening natural and built places that sustain human and environmental wellbeing. Realizing that a clear conceptual stance is integral to informed research and design, the editor emphasizes phenomenological approaches but also gives attention to related styles of qualitative research. **EAP** welcomes essays, letters, reviews, conference information, and so forth. Forward submissions to the editor.

Editor

Dr. David Seamon,
Architecture Department
1088 Seaton Hall, 920 17th Street
Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506-2901 USA
tel: 785-317-2124; triad@ksu.edu

Mailing address

300 South Delaware Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502 USA

Exemplary Themes

- The nature of environmental and architectural experience;
- Sense of place, including place identity and place attachment;
- Changing conceptions of space, place, and nature;
- Home, dwelling, journey, and mobility;
- Environmental encounter and its relation to environmental responsibility and action;
- Environmental and architectural atmospheres and ambiances;
- Environmental design as place making;
- Sacred space, landscape, and architecture;
- The role of everyday things—furnishings, tools, clothing, interior design, landscape features, and so forth—in supporting people's sense of environmental wellbeing;
- The progressive impact of virtual reality on human life and how it might transform the lived nature of "real" places, buildings, and lifeworlds;
- The practice of a *lived* environmental ethic.

For additional themes and topics, see the preceding page, which outlines a series of relevant questions originally published in the 25th-anniversary issue of **EAP** in 2014 (vol. 25, no. 3, p. 4). Beginning in 2016, **EAP** is digitally open-source only. Current and back digital issues of **EAP** are available at the following digital addresses:

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