Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology

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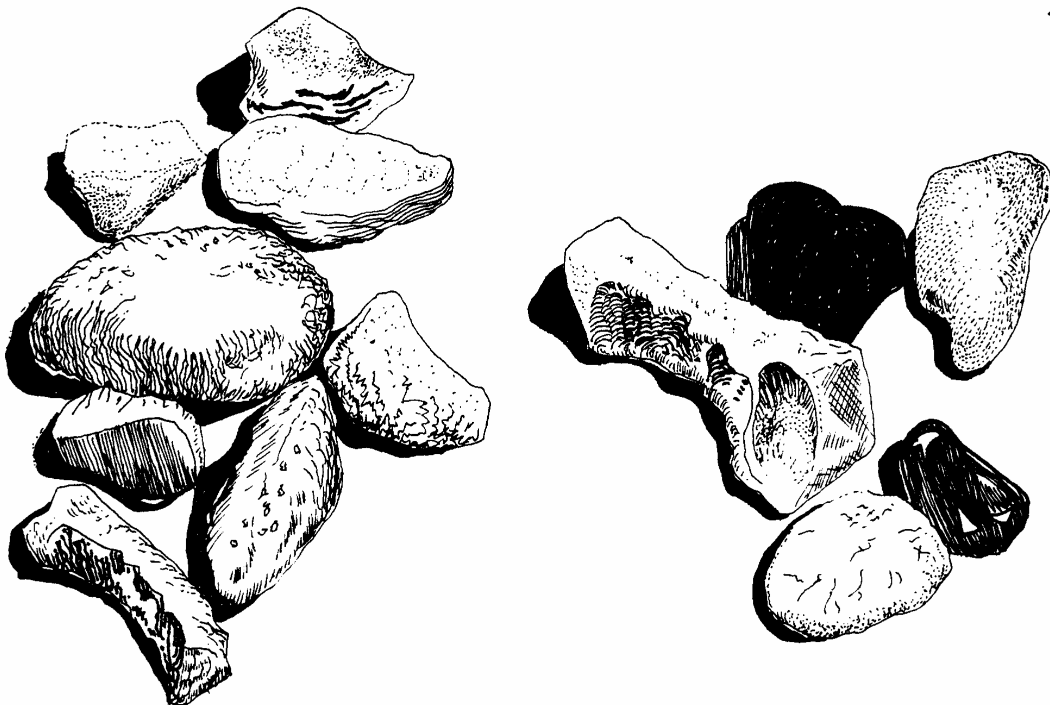
We are grateful to the 101 readers who have renewed their *EAP* subscription. Many readers have provided generous donations (see latest listing, p. 2), and our financial situation is secure for another year.

This issue begins with philosopher Ingrid Stefanovic's critique of J.E. Malpas' *Place and Experience*, which we've given considerable attention to recently because of its provocative consideration of the phenomenon of place. Next, writer and biker Bill Hurrle describes the motorcyclist's environmental and place experience as he knows it riding his BMW R1150GS.

The last two essays deal with the topic of stone, though in somewhat different ways. Psychotherapist Shierry Weber Nicholsen examines British aesthete and art critic Adrian Stokes' understanding of carving stone, while Canadian composer and soundscape scholar R. Murray Schafer describes an observation exercise using stones as a way to facilitate individual and group awareness.

We are running short of material to publish and ask readers to send along potential essays, drawings, poems, commentaries, reviews, or other relevant items. Reader input makes this newsletter, and the fine work received is always gratifying.



Above: Some of the stones used in the attention exercise that soundscape researcher R. Murray Schafer describes in his essay starting on p. 13. Schafer explains in his accompanying letter that he uses this exercise as "a kind of centering and sensitizing of students to the simplest objects in the environment."

More Donors, 2004

We are grateful to the following readers who, since our first listing in the winter issue, have contributed more than the base subscription for 2004. Thank you all.

Michael Branch
Linda Carson
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Items of Interest

The annual **International Human Science** conference will be held 5-8 August 2004 at Brock University in St. Catherine's, Ontario. The conference theme will be "embodiment and its consequences." Tentatively, a special session on "Goethe's Way of Science" is scheduled. The 2005 conference will be held at the University of Bournemouth, England. For the 2004 conference, contact: Maureen Connolly, TH 253A, Brock University, St. Catherine's, Ontario, Canada L2S 3A1; www.brocku.ca.

The **Natural City** symposium will be held 23-25 June at the University of Toronto. A central theme is that "urban and natural environments are not necessarily conflicting notions but must be integrated at many different scales, for sustainable, healthy settlements to occur." Contact: Prof. Ingrid Stefanovic, Director, Division of the Environment, University of Toronto, 33 Willcocks St., Toronto, Ontario. M5S 3E8; http://www.utoronto.ca/divenv/NaturalCity.

The **Nature Institute** will sponsor three courses on Goethean science during summer 2004: "Practicing Goethean Science: Advanced Course," 27 June-3 July; "The World of Light and Color," 25-31 July; and "Reading the Gestures of Life" (seminar for newcomers), 11-17 July. Contact: 518-672-0116; info@natureinstitute.org.

The 15th annual **Environmental Writing Institute,** sponsored by the University of Montana Environmental Studies program, will be held 20-25 May, 2004, in Montana's Teller Wildlife Refuge. Contact: 406-243-2904; www.umt.edu/ewi.

The first annual meeting intended to bring together the **environmental philosophy community** will be held 1-4 June at the Highlands Center, on the border of Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. The meeting is sponsored by the International Association for Environmental Philosophy and the International Society for Environmental Ethics. http://www.highlandscamp.org/retreat_center.htm

The 43rd annual conference of the **Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy** (SPEP) will be held 28-30 October in Memphis, Tennesee. Contact: 206-296-5473; spep@seattleu.edu. Held in conjunction with SPEP will be the annual meetings of the **Society for Phenomenology and the Human Sciences** (SPHS); and the **International Association for Environmental Philosophy** (IAEP). For SPHS, contact SPEP above; for IAEP, contact: maly.kenn@uwlax.edu.

The **Human Science Research Studies Website** provides information on research dealing with work that relates to the phenomenological and hermeneutical traditions, broadly defined. Most of the listings currently deal with psychological topics, though the site hopes eventually to cover other aspects of human experience and meaning as well. Includes a list of web links to other related sites. www.artfulsoftware.com/humanscienceresearch.html.

Adonis Press is a book service highlighting publications presenting a qualitative interpretation of the natural world with an emphasis on Goethean science. A detailed listing of the publications AP carries can be found at: www.adonispress.org.

Citations Received

Note: Because of space limitations, we could not include "citations received" last issue with the result that the list this issue is long. For those less interested in citations, please bear with us! We always appreciate readers sending us notice of their work or of other writings that might be of interest.

Christopher Alexander, 2003. Can you tell me what is good building? In *Center 12: The Good Building*. Austin: School of Architecture, University of Texas.

This short essay includes a striking definition of good building articulated by Alexander as he describes users' reactions to his Eishin University campus outside Tokyo, Japan: "People who go to this place experience the fact that they are there. They feel themselves to be there." Includes a photograph of a stunning blue drinking glass Alexander designed for the Royal Dutch Glass Works in Lardam, near Amsterdam.

Christopher Alexander, 2002. *The Process of Creating Life*. Berkeley, CA: Center for Environmental Structure.

In the second volume of his masterwork, *The Nature of Order,* Alexander lays out a practical means for establishing a "living architecture"—i.e., "an architecture in which every part, every building, every street, every garden, is alive." The key, Alexander claims, is understanding and learning how to make happen "unfolding wholeness" and "structure-preserving transformations." *Important*: make sure to study the first volume before beginning this second volume.

Charles S. Brown & Ted Toadvine, eds., 2003. *Eco-Phenomenology: Back to the Earth Itself.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

The twelve essays of this volume examine "the relevance of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Levinas for thinking through the philosophical dilemmas raised by environmental issues." Contributors include philosophers Edward Casey and Michael Zimmerman.

Matthew Carmona, Tim Heath, Taner Oc, & Steve Tiesdell, 2003. *Public Places, Urban Spaces: The Dimensions of Urban Design*. NY: Architectural Press.

This book is a helpful review of major aspects of contemporary urban design, organized by chapter in terms of six major themes: the morphological, perceptual, social, visual, functional, and temporal. Weak on recognizing the central importance of space syntax but otherwise a thoughtful, well integrated effort.

Jonathan Cole, 2004. *Still Lives: Narratives of Spinal Cord Injury*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

This medical doctor asks twelve people with spinal cord injuries "what it is like to live without sensation and movement in the body." Their responses shape the book into six main sections: "enduring," "exploring," "experimenting," "observing," "empowering," and "continuing."

Barbara Eckstein & James A. Throgmorton, 2003. *Story and Sustainability: Planning, Practice, and Possibility for American Cities*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

This edited volume explores the value of telling and understanding stories for urban planning and environmental design. Included is Karin Franklin's account of what happened in Iowa City when a small group of residents sought to find a way, through New Urbanist principles, to "regain a sense of community and neighborliness in the places they lived."

Mark Francis, 2003. A Case Study Method for Landscape Architecture, *Landscape Journal*, vol. 20, pp. 15-29.

This article presents "a case study methodology…, including its limits and benefits, a suggested methodology and format, and an example case study of New York City's Bryant Park."

Mark Francis, 2003. *Urban Open Space: Designing for User Needs*. Washington DC: Island Press.

Reviews and identifies critical user needs that must be considered in the planning, design, and maintenance of outdoor spaces.

Mark Francis, 2003. *Village Homes: A Community by Design*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

A critical study of Village Homes, one of the few longstanding neighborhood examples of sustainable community design. Research includes interviews with many parties involved with the neighborhood, including residents, designers, and maintenance personnel.

Jeanne Halgren Kilde, 2002. *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth Century America.* NY: Oxford University Press.

A history of the rise and fall of "theatre-like churches," appearing most recently in the Evangelical "mega-churches" of our time. The result is churches that are as comfortable as possible, and a spatial layout that encourages audiences to remain quiet and passive as they focus attention on the "stage."

Susan Handy, Robert G. Paterson, & Kent Butler, 2003. *Planning for Street Connectivity: Getting from Here to There*. Washington, DC: American Planning Association.

A useful overview of efforts by American communities to increase street connectivity, including a helpful discussion of the reasons, for and against, conventional curvilinear street patterns and the traditional gridiron. The authors conclude that "the best of both [street patterns] may be achievable through hybrid street patterns that provide greater connectivity but avoid clear, fast routes for non-local traffic to cut through residential neighborhoods."

Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin, Brendan Bartley, & Duncan Fuller, 2003. *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory and Contemporary Human Geography*. NY: Continuum.

The discipline of Geography has provided some of the most sustained and perceptive research on the person-environment relationship, and this volume is a useful introduction to the discipline's major conceptual and thematic concerns. Includes chapters on "geographies of the body" and "geographies of text." Also includes a useful discussion of the role of humanistic research, including phenomenology.

Toby Israel, 2003. *Some Place Like Home: Using Design Psychology to Create Ideal Places*. NY: Wiley.

This book uses "environmental autobiography" to consider "how places from the past contain the seeds of future choices—for home locations, dwellings and interior design." Includes material from interviews with architects Michael Graves and Andres Duany and architectural critic Charles Jencks.

Holger Koch-Nielsen, 2002. *Stay Cool: A Design Guide for the Built Environment in Hot Climates*. London: James & James.

This book details the design techniques and technologies available for making buildings and landscapes in hot dry or warm humid locales.

Lance LaVine, 2001. *Mechanics and Meaning in Architecture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

This architect argues that, in architecture, today, the technological aspect—how weight is distributed, how heat flow is regulated, and how light is permitted to enter—has been ceded to engineers and other technical experts. He seeks a way to use the "most fundamental architectural technologies—walls, floors, ceilings, columns, beams, and windows—in ways that offer creative responses to the natural world and humanity's place in it." Included are four case studies: a 19th-century Finnish log farm house; Charles Moore's Orinda house; Tado Ando's Wall house; and Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye.

Matthew J. Lindstrom & Hugh Bartling, 2003. *Suburban Sprawl: Culture, Theory, and Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

The 12 chapters and interviews in this volume are said to "provide a multifaceted exploration into the ways that suburban sprawl is being defined, experienced, interpreted, promoted, resisted, and transformed…" The editors conclude that "perhaps the reassertion of locality within the context of the homogenizing tendencies apparent in our culture and economy of creeping globalism can serve as a foundation for recognizing new metropolitan forms for the 21st century."

Ali Madanipour, 2003. *Public and Private Spaces in the City*. NY: Routledge.

This book "examines the constitution of the public and private spheres of society and the relationship between the two spheres, particularly as manifest in city spaces, where spatial and symbolic boundaries render visible a distinction that characterizes human societies across time and space."

Steve Mannheim, 2002. *Walt Disney and the Quest for Community*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

This planner examines Disney's "deep personal concern for the urban 'crisis' of the time and his effort to focus the create genius of his design team on the condition of cities." The main focus is Disney's original conception for the "Experimental Prototype 'Community of Tomorrow," which after his death, became the watered-down EPCOT Center theme park at Florida's Disneyworld.

Ricardo Nemirovsky, 2004. Mathematical Places, in R. Nemirovsky, B. Warren, A. Rosebery, & J. Solomon, eds., *Everyday Matters in Science and Mathematics*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

An article arguing that "using mathematical representations is not a matter of holding correspondences between an outside and an inside but of inhabiting symbolic places that embrace both the symbol user and the world in which she lives." Drawing partly on the phenomenology of place literature, the author explains that "our everyday sense of place is an insightful background to overcome the dichotomy opposing the realms of the physical and the mental because we commonly understand that two people can be next to each other but in very different places, that places are not habitually lived in terms of objective and subjective sides, and that one's life history and circumstances are crucial to what place one is in." Includes perceptive discussion of a classroom exercise in which students attempt to translate the movements of a toy car into graphic and algebraic expressions.

Mike Press & Rachel Cooper, 2003. *The Design Experience: The Role of Design and Designers in the 21st Century*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Makes the claim that "design has yet to realize its potential as a progressive and responsible agent of change that was promised throughout the 20th century" and argues that "tomorrow's designers should find ways of recovering design's sense of radical mission to address the urgent problems facing the world."

Douglas W. Rae, 2003. *City: Urbanism and its End.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Drawing on a careful empirical study of the changing history, politics, and social geography of New Haven, Connecticut, this political scientist provides a vivid portrait of the demise of what he calls "old urbanism"—"the magic of small commitments to place, the value of strangers in ordinary life, the humanity of well-ordered sidewalks" (p. 31). Intriguingly, the author suggests that the ideas of the New Urbanism provide one means to resurrect a similar kind of urbanism in the 21st century. Includes a superb map series illustrating the changing, everyday social and economic geographies of late 19th- and early 20th century New Haven and pointing toward an implicit phenomenology of everyday urban place.

Norbert Schoenauer, 2003. *6,000 Years of Housing*. NY: Norton.

"This encyclopedic book overviews the story of housing around the world from pre-urban dwellings to the present." Some 500 line drawings by the author, who is an architect and town planner.

Paul Shepard, 2003. *Where We Belong: Beyond Abstraction in Perceiving Nature*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

A collections of 14 essays, most of them reprinted, by the influential ecologist and nature writer. The last essay, written shortly before he died, is a moving critique of today's dominant "deconstructivist" perspective on the natural world.

Jonathan A. Smith, ed., 2003. *Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*. Hollywood, CA: Sage.

Helpful chapters on various qualitative approaches and methods, including phenomenology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, and cooperative inquiry.

Beverly White Spicer, 2003. *The Ka'bah: Rhythms of Culture, Faith and Physiology*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Drawing on Mircea Eliade's homology of body/house/cosmos as an interpretive device, this book is an architectural and symbolic study of Mecca's Ka'bah, the "architectural and geographical centerpiece of Islam."

Jaakko Suvantola, 2002. *Tourist's Experience of Place*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

This humanistic geographer examines "travel experience as a change of place." He argues that the travel experience "can reveal something about relationship with places and also about ourselves. What does it mean in the life of a tourist to experience a place?"

Robert L. Thayer, Jr., 2003. *LifePlace: Bioregional Thought and Practice.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Drawing on his personal experience of living in California's Sacramento Valley, this landscape architect hopes to "share with you my deepening attachment to my own bioregion—and to encourage you to explore and deeply attach yourself to yours." Includes a "pattern language" to sustain and strengthen the biodiversity of the Sacramento Valley.

Speaking of Place: In Dialogue with Malpas

Ingrid Leman Stefanovic

Philosopher Ingrid Leman Stefanovic is author of *Safeguarding Our Common Future: Rethinking Sustainable Development* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000) and Director of the Division of the Environment at the University of Toronto. ingrid.stefanovic@utoronto.ca. © 2004 Ingrid Leman Stefanovic.

Readers interested in Stefanovic's comments may also wish to study educator John Cameron's "Some Implications of Malpas' *Place and Experience* for Place Ethics and Education," which appeared in the winter 2004 issue of *EAP*. In this commentary, Cameron makes connections between Malpas' and Stefanovic's work. We hope to publish in the fall issue a response to Stefanovic from Malpas.

Twenty years ago, landscape architect Grady Clay (1983) argued that place was nothing more than a passing fad within academic circles. More than a decade later, the term was still around, infuriating thinkers such as environment-behavior researcher Amos Rapoport (1994, p. 32), who bitterly reported that "place is never clearly defined and hence vague; when definitions are found, they are illogical." Despite the controversy and skepticism regarding the longevity and significance of the term, papers and books on the phenomenon of place continue to be published.

From Edward C. Relph's classic *Place and Placelessness* (Relph 1976) to J.E. Malpas' *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography* (Malpas 1999), scholars have wrestled with an evasive but enduring concept that is not unlike St. Augustine's description of time: When no one asks, we know very well what place is. It is only when we are asked to define the term that a specific definition seems to elude us.

Perhaps there is something in the phenomenon of place that escapes standard delimitations of language. Could it be that we require a new language in order to articulate the notion of place?

Rethinking the Limits of Language

As any good philosopher will tell you, the aim of language is to convey meaning. Techniques of persuasion and critical argumentation depend upon a structure of logic and sound reasoning that help to clearly articulate and justify truth claims.

There is much that is defensible in this general aim to elucidate and clarify what may otherwise remain in a state of confusion, chaos or obscurity. In many ways, just as the divine word was an act of creation, our language helps to elicit order from chaos, reasoned judgment from conflicting realities.

As much as language helps to articulate and clarify concepts, however, its very nature frequently demands that reality be circumscribed within delimited boundaries. Basically, the essence of saying implies that lines be drawn around the meaning of a word: this particular word means *this* and *not that*. The structure of logic demands that we be clear about what we mean—and what we do not mean—all of which suggests that definitions of place ideally ought to have fairly legible limits if they are to be rational. Rapoport's point is that, because such definitions do not exist, the concept of place is fairly meaningless.

On the other hand, it is also part of the structure of language that some words exceed neat definitions. The word "is" is a prime example. To be sure, to define something as existing is to deny its non-existence in the sense of *nihil absolutum*. However, as Aristotle already knew, different things *are* in different ways. A table *is* in a different way than an *idea* of the table *is.* Moreover, a lack or a void (such as blindness, for example, defined as a lack of sight) *is*, even though it is not a positively existing entity. As Heidegger (1962, 1977) has shown, the situation becomes complicated once ontology (the question of the meaning of Being itself) enters the picture.

Many of us prefer the security of neatly prescribed limits but, luckily, the richness of life itself frequently exceeds those tidy boundaries. When we speak of place as ontological, we point to an elusive *Ab-grund*, a ground without ground, wherein notions of time, space and world arise. Some people may attempt to circumscribe the notion of place in terms of objective limits (a material container of activities) or of subjective foundations (the experience of bioregional belonging.) Attempts to delimit place in either of these dualistic notions, however, fall short of elucidating the ontological significance of place—a fact that, in some measure, Malpas recognizes in his philosophical deliberations on *Place and Experience* (Malpas 1999).

Malpas' Reflections on Place

Malpas begins his book by acknowledging how thinkers from Heidegger to Proust to Donald Davidson implicitly point to the primacy of place, while managing, to varying degrees, to avoid the trap of reductionist, dualistic subject/object paradigms. "Something like the Heideggerian thinking of *Dasein* as place," writes Malpas, "is what motivates the inquiry in this book." (ibid., p. 33). More specifically, he explains:

> I simply want to establish the idea of place in such a way that it can begin to be seen, neither in terms merely of some narrow sense of spatio-temporal location, nor as some sort of subjective construct but, rather, as that wherein the sort of being that is characteristically human has its ground (ibid.).

The overriding message Malpas wishes to argue for is succinctly summarized when he notes that place "cannot be reduced to any one of the elements situated within its compass, but must instead be understood as a structure comprising spatiality *and* temporality, subjectivity *and* objectivity, self *and* other. Indeed, these elements are themselves only established in relation to each other and so only within the topographical structure of place" (p. 163).

The ontological primacy of place has been advanced not only by Heidegger and Malpas but also by other thinkers such as Edward Casey (1996) and Robert Mugerauer (1994), who struggle to point to the primordial significance of implacement while avoiding the metaphysical traps of dichotomizing, separating, and reducing the notion of place to either a subjective or objective entity.

There is a story that, one evening, Heidegger was with distinguished guests, reflecting on phenomenological issues. At the end, he turned to his wife and asked her how he had done. According to one of these guests, she replied, "Again, Martin, you have been *too metaphysical*!" He agreed, saying that the struggle to avoid metaphysical reductionism is a continuing one for all of us.

To be sure, as Heidegger himself knew, it is an enormous challenge to avoid reifying being-in-the-world. The tendency of our language to *name* and delimit concepts within bounded rationality means that, in the end, we can only be marginally successful at capturing the full richness of such a term as place. Malpas wants to remain true to this vision of implacement as the ontological condition of experience but, like Heidegger, he has difficulty sometimes avoiding the very dualism that he hopes to escape.

Consider some of these quotations from Malpas' *Place and Experience*. Place, he tells us, "is not founded *on* subjectivity, but is rather that *on which* subjectivity is founded" (p. 35). While Malpas does not explicitly put it in so many words, I find it difficult to envision place in such a description as anything other than an objective foundation for subjectivity—"that *on which* subjectivity is founded."

Perhaps the problem is that Malpas continues to rely upon the language of subjectivity and objectivity throughout his book. There was a reason that Heidegger eventually abandoned these metaphysical constructions altogether, finding them to be ontologically restrictive. Malpas wishes to show the belonging of experience and place, but his language sometimes risks distorting his message.

"The grasp of subjective space cannot be completely independent of the grasp of space as objective," he writes (p. 99). While true in many ways, it is also the case that continuing to rely upon notions of subjectivity and objectivity implies an underlying metaphysical dualism. "The idea of subjectivity," Malpas explains, "provides no [independent] ground, since subjectivity is to be understood as established only through forms of agency and activity that themselves call upon forms of both subjective

and objective spatiality" (p. 137). If "something like Heideggerian thinking" is driving Malpas' project, one wishes that he could try to convey his message here, without relapsing into what Heidegger himself characterized as dualistic, epistemological constructs.

An Ontology of Implacement

My comments here may sound far more harsh than I intend them to be. Malpas' book is certainly a valiant attempt to explore the ontological meaning of place while also dealing with the nitty-gritty topics of human agency and self-identity. The phenomenon of place has made its way into a range of writings, from the geographical to the psychological and, in many ways, the conversation requires more serious philosophical deliberation, such as Malpas offers here.

But Malpas himself recognizes an important point: "in many of the most basic respects, our dependence on place is something that always remains implicit or else can only be explicated with great difficulty" (p. 177). The challenge still remains to find new ways to describe the ontology of implacement without lapsing either into the comfort (but ultimately, arbitrary speculation) of metaphysics or into vague, poetic, musings that provide little guidance or direction.

Which way to go? My view is that there is still more to Heidegger's reflections on language than we think–but that is the subject for another paper!

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Home & Journey: Two Wheels

Wm Hurrle

Bill Hurrle is a contractor with specialties in efficiency and renewable energy. He is also a small farmer and gardener selling organic veggies and culinary herbs to chefs, and a writer in the small press world. His likes are "freedom, the essay form, and riding my BMW R1150GS." 1wmh@centurytel.net. © 2004 Wm Hurrle, including photograph.

Home is inside, secure, private, and quiet, a controlled place. Outside are risk, exposure, and the potential for wildness. The contrast is especially strong if you are outside on two wheels. Bikes create an intimate relationship with outside and with the geography that surrounds home.

A push bike's two wheels can cover terrain, especially if the pusher is in condition. At 20 mph for five hours, or 12 mph for three, miles unfold, and push bike fiends can spin off 50 miles before breakfast. But motorcycles are the real road omnivores. At 65-75 mph significant geography unspools in levels of detail that range from grand vistas to swirling clouds of mating gnats.

A motorcycle has few limits. A rider is free as long as gas and stamina last, and that for a wise rider is about two hours in the saddle. Iron butts go much, much longer but for most, two hours. Motorcycles require more effort than four wheel cages. Body and mind, experience and existence, are united by the risks, sudden and severe, that lurk for the inattentive rider, by riding's intensity. Being and doing are one in the now or else!

Keeping awareness at survival levels takes enough energy that a break after two hours, even if bladder or gas tank are not asking, limits one-sit range to 100-120 miles and a full day covers 300-350 miles. It's ridiculous and illegal to push bike on the super slab. There are motorcycles such as

Honda's Gold Wing and other heavy weight cruisers more or less designed for them, but it is not much fun to dice it out with aggressive 18-wheelers at 80 mph. These moving walls obscure road surface, a critical consideration, and leave unpleasant wakes of buffeting winds. Besides the I-slab is boring, a straight line diminishment of intimacy.

So, there are motorcycle roads, usually two-lane state and well-paved county highways. They often follow older tracks going back to horse and wagon days and before that follow rivers and wind their way through hills. Riding the twisties is fun on a bike. Riding is like flying over landscapes at a low level, and flying around curves is a biker's delight. He or she is on a machine that demands consciousness and is designed for maneuverability and variable speed. Cars and interstate highways are designed for semi-conscious, constant-speed travel.

On a one-day ride, 100-200 miles out and back, a motorcyclist covers the routes available spoking out from his or her hub city many times in a season. The center-margin pattern develops a sense of place in geography. A rider gets to know the terrain, feels geography in the seat of his or her pants, more precisely in the common center of human-bike gravity. Risk shared is risk lessened so riders often pack up and also talk with endless enthusiasm about rides. Motorcycling, a solitary act, is a shared experience, a brotherhood.

Longer rides extend environmental knowing to regions. Weekend rides of 400-600 miles that loop through the countryside, with a different return route from the going out run, strengthen the sense of place. From where I live in Green Bay, Wisconsin, long rides go to Chicago, Minneapolis and the Mississippi River, Duluth and the shores of Lakes Superior and Michigan, the Lake and the Upper Peninsula. A 10-day ride might go around Lake Superior, to the Black Hills, the East Coast, the Appalachian Mountains, Montreal, or Denver and the Front Range.

That's a lot of different places. The dominant bio-region is the eastern hardwood forest and farmland, but the great boreal forest of the North American continent and the special region close to the shores of the Great Lakes are large, too. The prairie is vast. In Wisconsin there are many rivers to cross or follow. Here are farms, forests, glaciated and unglaciated—the Driftless Region—and many villages, cities and metropolitan areas. You can ride for hours in Chicago's sprawl, cutting through hungry ghetto, the Loop's power, and exurban posh.

Summer festivals are destination excuses. They often celebrate ethnicity or regional history, further uniting a rider with place. Motorcycle camping pins place tightly in the fabric of geography too. Sipping by a campfire after a day's ride, loons laughing on a northern lake in the long summer twilight, cathedral white pines rising into the stars—hey, it's a place.

Weather matters and is keenly experienced. North-south patterns mean an 80 degree sunny day in Madison can become 45 degrees and rain in the North Woods. You remember riding for hours in cold rain, especially when the day started sub tropically, a brass sun in blue sky.

Biker aesthetics taken to the max are a naked rider-machine, no windscreen, no fairing, no helmet; only functional machinery, dark glasses and a leather jacket between rider and environment. A rough-love, intensely sensual intimacy inhaled at speed, a force feeding of what is, whatever it is. In a cage you watch the movie; on a bike you are in it.

Big bikes hunger for speed and miles of road. They are aggressive about wanting them, "motosauruses," and will eat a rider who doesn't control their appetite. The rational mind must always be there, not only controlling the monster machine, but there to experience the beauty and wonder of this place, our Mother Earth, flowing by as the rider journeys, introspective and free, around home center.

Adrian Stokes on Carving, Modeling, and Stone

Shierry Weber Nicholsen

Shierry Weber Nicholsen is a Seattle psychotherapist in private practice. Her *The Love of Nature and the End of the World: The Unspoken Dimensions of Environmental Concern* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002) was reviewed in the spring 2003 *EAP*. She writes: "The ideas behind *EAP* are right up the alley of my own environmental and aesthetic interests, which right now are primarily taking the form of making links between psychoanalytic process and the arts and Greek tragedy."

Address: 1103 E. Republican #1, Seattle, WA 98102. © 2004 Shierry Weber Nicholsen.

The great virtue of stone is that unlike other hard materials it seems to have a luminous life, light or soul.
—Adrian Stokes, *Stones of Rimini*

Blind Native American sculptor Michael Naranjo was given permission by the Pope to touch, indeed climb on, Michelangelo's gigantic marble statue of Moses. A documentary film shows him exploring the curves of Moses' body and face with his hands, and on a later journey running his fingertips over the nose and around the eyes of Michelangelo's statue of David and resting them on David's lips as though listening. The marble has become soft like flesh, he says.

All of us who have run our hands over stones have, I think, an intuition of how stone can feel organic, like flesh. This is part of the reason so many of us harbor a secret fantasy of working in stone. Adrian Stokes' conception of carving articulates the way stone can become like a living body.

Stokes grew up in England and as a young man traveled across the Alps to Italy. What he saw in Italy was an evenly lit landscape of luminous limestone architecture. (Limestone is rock sedimented from the sea; marble is a form of limestone.) The contrast between this vision of Italy and the gloom of England was Stokes' fundamental aesthetic intuition.

He elaborated this intuition in a series of books on art and architecture. In the 1930s, he was in analysis with Austrian psychotherapist Melanie Klein. For a number of years and afterward, he used an implicit Kleinian framework to articulate his aesthetic ideas. Although not a clinician himself, Stokes was a member of the Imago group in London, a group of analysts and non-analysts who met to use psychoanalytic ideas to illuminate non-clinical dimensions of life.

Stokes' distinction between carving and modeling is simple. Carving cuts away; modeling builds up. Art uses both processes, but Stokes is particularly interested in exploring the meaning of carving. Carving, he says, involves enlivening the medium one is using, whereas in modeling the medium is no more than "suitable stuff": "A figure carved in stone is fine carving when one feels that not the figure, but the stone through the medium of the figure, has come to life" (all quotations are from Stokes 1972).

Stone is the preeminent material for carving. Not even primarily for its durability, says Stokes, but rather for its translucent (rather than reflective) quality: "I am thinking of the equal diffusion of light that, compared to most objects, even the hardest and darkest stones possess; I am thinking of hand-polished marble's glow that can only be com-

pared to the light on flesh-and-blood." This inherent luminescence is for Stokes one symbol of life.

Carving as Stokes conceives it is essentially an interaction both psychic and sensory between sculptor and stone. The stone is the mother's body that the baby explores and the lover caresses; the stone is the matrix of mind into which the psyche projects: "The sculptor is led to woo the marble. Into the solidity of stone, a solidity yet capable of suffused light, the fantasies of bodily vigor, or energy in every form, can be projected, set out and made permanent." The interaction is ongoing; if the fantasies enliven the stone, the stone's evolving form elicits a further elaboration of the fantasies.

From the imaginative point of view, the motion of carving is not so much a cutting as a rubbing, a stroking: "It will readily be understood that in the carving of stone's hard, luminous substance, it suffers all the stroking and polishing, all the definition that our hands and mouths bestow on those we love." Michael Naranjo's fingers exploring the face of Michelangelo's *David* evokes the infant's exploration of the mother's face. If mobility is another indicator of aliveness, then the motions of the sculptor's, or the baby's, or the lover's hand, help to endow the stone, the mother's face, the body caressed, with aliveness.

If the primordial Mediterranean art is stone architecture, the stone provides a house, a shelter, a container. Stone for the sculptor, says Stokes, is a matrix. "And just as the cultivator works the surfaces of the mother earth so the sculptor rubs his stone to elicit the shapes which his eye has sown in the matrix." Stokes asserts that the matrix must remain implicitly present in the sculpted form: "the carved form should never, in any profound imaginative sense, be entirely freed from its matrix" because "carving is an articulation of something that already exists in the block."

How does the idea of "sowing," essentially the notion of psychic projection, accord with the idea that carving regards and enlivens the inherent nature of its medium? Here we are in the realm of images for generativity. At the end of *Oresteia,* Athene argues that the child is not related to the mother because she is merely the field in which the seed has been sown! The metaphor of sowing in a field is perhaps not the best one to articulate the inherent resonance of what is implicit in the matrix and what is projected by the wooer.

A more suggestive image, to my mind, is that of unfurling, similar to the development of an embryo and eventual birth from the womb. Stokes notes that softer stones like marble tend to be carved away to greater thinness than harder stones and such figures suggest the unfurling of something that has been folded up inside the matrix:

> Their curves ... will be more capable of a varied palpitation in their defining of forms. Such definition of form by whittling and polishing marble, so that in representational art the figures themselves tend to be flattened or compressed, as if they had long been furled amid the interior layers of the stone and now were unburdened on the air, were smoothing the air, such thinness of shape appears to me to be the essential manner of much stone carving.

What is so fascinating in this image is the notion of something coming to light—its own light—and into the air, bearing the form of a collaborative process whereby both stone and hand play the role of mind. I recently visited the Musee Rodin in Paris, where many of the sculptures are visibly sheltered by the marble matrix from which they have emerged. But the carving that struck me most was one done late in Rodin's life, a sculpture of two hands emerging from the stone matrix. The title of this piece is "The Secret."

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The Stones

R. Murray Schafer

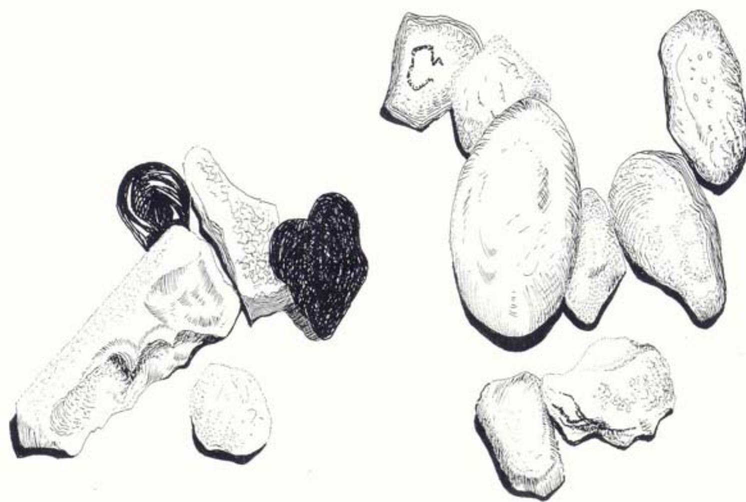
R. Murray Schafer is a Canadian composer and author of the seminal *The Tuning of The World* (1977), a history of sound in the environment. One of his major professional interests is listening education. His essay describes "an exercise I do quite regularly with classes to train them in observation. It works well in countries with languages I don't know because I don't have to use many words to set it up or run it. In fact, the fewer words the better." Address: R.R.2, Indian River, Ontario K0L 2B0. © 2004 R. Murray Schafer, including drawings.

The man arrived at the airport as arranged, and they were glad to see him standing on two feet, as they had heard he had not been well lately. After all, he was getting on in years and had been known to cancel engagements unpredictably. He seemed happy, and that made everyone happy.

They put his bag into the trunk of the car and drove quickly to the class. Once or twice he mentioned that he didn't like fast car rides and the driver reduced the speed momentarily. After all, they had been traveling at over 120 kilometers per hour. It was not that the driver was careless. Sometimes other cars, traveling at even greater speeds, would pass, especially when the man was explaining that traveling at high velocity made it difficult for him to appreciate the beautiful and, for him, exotic scenery through which they were passing. But the class was waiting and they promised him that on his return to the airport there would be more time to relax and enjoy the view.

They had asked him what equipment he needed for the seminar. It was known that he usually worked without special equipment or resources. Usually an empty room was all he asked for, one with movable chairs. He had also requested that the number of participants be kept to forty, which had caused the organizers some concern since they had larger expectations. But they had respected his wishes, hoping that perhaps on a future occasion he might be persuaded to return for a longer period so that more people might become acquainted with his ideas.

In any case they intended to video the seminar and he had had no objection to that. He had a certain reputation that seemed to expand with the distance he traveled from his own home and country, where he was not taken very seriously. In this strange land, far from home, everyone was waiting with expectancy, particularly since, when they had asked him how the participants might prepare themselves for the seminar, he had told them merely to bring a stone to class, one that they particularly liked, or one that in outline, density or texture they thought resembled themselves.



At last the car arrived in the city and passed through streets lined with tall buildings, coming to a stop before a very imposing building that had recently been renovated for cultural activities. They went up a flight of wide steps and down a corridor to a large room where many people were milling about talking, casting sideways glances at the man who had asked them to bring stones to school. They entered the room. Everyone sat down and took out their notebooks. The man was introduced.

“The chairs are in our way,” he said. “I’d like to have them moved out.” Everyone stood up and turned to pick up the chair they had been sitting on. “Just a moment,” said the man. “I hadn’t finished my sentence. I’d like to have them moved out of the room without making a single sound. Let’s begin again and try that.” Everyone sat down and then rose as quietly as possible. “But there is still too much sound,” said the man with a smile. “Perhaps the last person out of the room will be the quietest. Take lots of time and try again.”

Slowly, very slowly, the chairs rose and were carried out of the room. Everyone returned on tip-toe. The man motioned for them to sit down on the floor in a circle.

“A circle is a special figure. Everyone is united in a circle. No part of it is dominant. It is a symbol of wholeness, of perfection. At the same time it divides what is within from what is without. The interior is precious, sacred, the exterior is profane, confusing. For the next hour let’s imagine that our circle is sacred.

“A sacred space needs ritual objects. That’s why I asked you to bring the stones. Take your stone in your hands and look at it. Many colors, changing with the light and shadow.

“Close your eyes and feel the stone. Turn it in your hand feeling the textures and shapes. Gradually your hands are warming the stone, releasing its energy. Feel the energy of the stone entering your hands and traveling up your arms. The stone energy is entering your body. At the same time your body energy is entering the stone. You are beginning to have a silent dialogue with the stone.

“Press the stone to your heart. Let it feel your heartbeat. Can you feel the heartbeat of the stone?

“Now let the stone touch your forehead. Try to enter the mind of the stone and understand its thoughts. Have you any special thoughts for the stone? Let your brain waves connect in a moment of meditation…”

The man spoke these words very calmly and slowly with long pauses. Now he was silent for some minutes as the class meditated with the stones. Then he spoke again.

“Now take your stone and without opening your eyes pass it to the person on your right.”

After a few moments he asked the class to pass the stones, again to the person on the right. The class continued to pass the stones, taking time to get acquainted with each new stone as it was presented. Then the man told the class to open their eyes, to place all the stones in a circle and contemplate the arrangement. After a few moments the man asked them to close their eyes again, saying that whoever he touched on the shoulder should go to the center alone and arrange the stones in a new pattern.

He touched someone and they rearranged the stones. The class was asked to open their eyes and regard the new arrangement for a few moments, then close their eyes again while another person rearranged the stones. One heard the sounds of the stones on the marble floor while they were being rearranged.

“Let the stones speak as you rearrange them,” said the man. “Let them speak or whisper or cry or sing.” Various people rearranged the stones in dif-

ferent patterns while the class listened, eyes closed, then opened their eyes to admire the new pattern. Perhaps everyone in the room was given a chance to rearrange the stones. There was no way of telling, since the stones were moved in darkness. One listened to the concert of their movement then regarded the new arrangement in silence. All this was done without haste so that for the best part of an hour the class sat, alternately listening and looking. Perhaps the man had a little bell to tell people when to open and when to close their eyes.

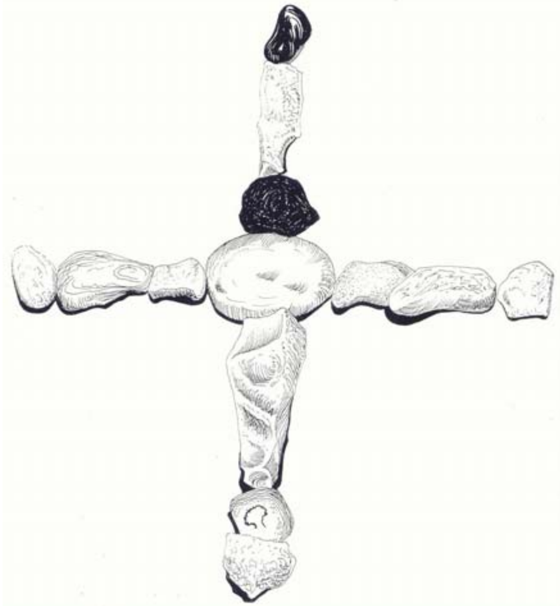
Finally the man asked everyone to stand and go to the center to recover their stone. When this had been done he asked them to silently thank the stones for the beautiful experience they had provided.

There was a garden outside the room. The man asked everyone to take their stone out into the garden and to find a place there for it to remain, a special place where the stone might like to be, then return to the circle for a final discussion.

When they returned the man talked to them about simplicity. He discussed the Japanese Tea Ceremony, which he had once experienced in Kyoto where the simple drinking of a cup of tea had occupied an entire afternoon.

He spoke to them also of the ceremony called "Listen to the Incense" (*Ko wo kiku*) in which bowls with different incenses are passed from one person to another, each bowl being given a distinctive title, either a moment in Japanese history or a suggestion of a scene, so that as one lifted the bowl one imagined the event, a kind of synaesthesia combining smell, image and sound, for one also listened to the incense burning by holding it close to the left ear before passing it on. This ceremony too was conducted slowly and quietly.

Perhaps the greatest inspiration of Japanese culture was to have learned to create something out of nothing, or out of very little. Could we learn something from that? Couldn't we also invent serene ceremonies out of the free and simple objects that lay about us waiting to communicate their beauty and originality?



It was time to return to the airport. In fact it was rather late and the car was waiting. As they sped along the highway, the organizers wondered how much of the event would be visible or interesting on the videotape. The scenery flashed past in a blur. The airport was filled with people in a hurry. The man said goodbye, promised to come back another time, and slowly walked down the passage to the waiting plane.