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# Between Geography and Philosophy: What Does It Mean to Be in the Place-World?

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It was to satisfy man's curiosity concerning the differences of the world from place to place that geography developed as a subject of popular interest.

—Richard Hartshorne (1939, 15)

The spirit of a place resides in its landscape.

—Edward Relph (1976, 30)

A new perspective is not only beginning to recompose the spatial or geographical imagination, it is entering disruptively, if still located on the margins, into the ways we think about historicity and sociality, demanding an equivalent empowering voice, no more but no less.

—Edward W. Soja (1996, 273)

A remarkable convergence between geography and philosophy has become increasingly manifest in the past two decades. It is as if Strabo's celebrated opening claim in his *Geographia* had finally become true two millennia later: "The science of Geography, which I now propose to investigate, is, I think, quite as much as any other science, a concern of the philosopher" (Strabo I, 3). What is new (and not in Strabo) is the growing conviction that philosophy is the concern of the geographer as well, or more exactly that philosophy and geography now need each other—and profit from this mutual need.

Collaboration between the two fields has been evident ever since concerted attention to place began to emerge just over twenty years ago in, e.g., Edward Relph's *Place and Placelessness* (1976) and Yi-Fu Tuan's *Space and Place* (1976). Because of their emphasis on the experiential features of place—its "subjective" or "lived" aspects—such works were natural allies of phenomenology, a form of philosophy that attempts to give a direct description of first-person experience. Both geography and phenomenology have come to focus on place as experienced by human beings, in contrast to space, whose abstractness

discourages experiential explorations. In the case of geography, a primary task has been to do justice to the indispensability of place in geographic theory and practice. So much is this the case that Robert David Sack (1997, 34, 30), a more recent proponent of the importance of place, can claim unhesitatingly that "[in geography] the truly important factor is place and its relationship to space."<sup>1</sup>

In this essay, I will investigate another region of common concern to geographers and philosophers: the nature of the human subject who is oriented and situated in place. I shall call this subject "the geographical self," and I will consider the bodily basis of this self's inhabitation of places in a circumambient landscape. Throughout, I shall presume the importance of the distinction between place and space, taking "space" to be the encompassing volumetric void in which things (including human beings) are positioned and "place" to be the immediate environment of my lived body—an arena of action that is at once physical and historical, social and cultural.<sup>2</sup>

Self, body, and landscape address different dimensions of place in contrast with space. The self has to do with the agency and identity of the geographical subject; body is what links this self to lived place in its sensible and perceptible features; and landscape is the presented layout of a set of places, not their mere accumulation but their sensuous self-presentation as a whole.

For the most part, Western philosophical theories of human selfhood have tended to tie it to awareness, and hence to consciousness. A paradigmatic instance is Locke's ([1690] 1975, 449) view that the self's "personal identity" is entirely a function of the consciousness of its own past through memory: "as far as . . . consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now [as] it was then."<sup>3</sup> For Locke, the self's identity is a matter of linking up one's present consciousness with a past consciousness, and has nothing whatever to do with

place. Place figures only as a parameter of the sheer physical being of something that lacks consciousness altogether.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the quintessential modernist view of the relation between place and self is that *there is no such relation*. Place belongs entirely to the physical world (i.e., the realm of *space*, of which place is “but a particular limited consideration” (Locke [1690] 1975, 171) and the self to the realm of consciousness, and the twain are not supposed ever to meet. Locke’s *Essay*, published in 1690, keeps personal identity and place as far apart as are mind and matter in Descartes’s writings fifty years earlier.

It is a mark of contemporary philosophical thought, especially phenomenology, to contest the dichotomies that hold the self apart from body and place. Contra Descartes, the body is recognized as integral to selfhood, with the result that we can no longer distinguish neatly between physical and personal identity. Against Locke, place is regarded as constitutive of one’s sense of self.<sup>5</sup> Places require human agents to become “primary places,” in Sack’s (1997, *passim*) nomenclature, and these same agents require places to be the selves they are in the process of becoming.

The relationship between self and place is not just one of reciprocal influence (that much any ecologically sensitive account would maintain) but also, more radically, of constitutive coingredience: each is essential to the being of the other. In effect, there is *no place without self and no self without place*. What is needed is a model wherein the abstract truth of this position—which is that of a number of philosophically minded geographers writing today, including Sack—can be given concrete articulation without conflating place and self or maintaining the self as an inner citadel of unimplaced freedom.<sup>6</sup> Just how, then, is place constitutive of the self? How does it insinuate itself into the very heart of personal identity?

## I

To answer a difficult question such as this, it is best to begin with what Heidegger calls the “deficient mode” of any given phenomenon—in this case, the *scattered self* of postmodern society. Let us grant that this deeply distracted self is correlated with the *disarray of place*. Moreover, as places enter further into disarray through experiences of diversion and distraction, they verge on an indifferent state that is reminiscent of nothing so much as space—the very thing that dominated the early modern period from which we are allegedly now escaping. Nowadays, emphasizes Sack (1997, 138; emphasis added), “places become thinned out and *merge with space*.”<sup>7</sup> It is a matter of what has been called “glocalization,” whereby a

given locale is linked to every other place in global space, pre-eminently by the Internet.<sup>8</sup> This is the converse of the premodern situation in which, as Heidegger (1961, 138) remarks, “Bare space is still veiled over. Space has [already] been split up into places.”<sup>9</sup> Our interest is this: what does this partial yet plausible narrative of the move from the premodern to the postmodern tell us about the relation between place and self?

At the very least, it tells us that certain habitual patterns of relating to places have become attenuated to the point of disappearing altogether. I refer to the micropractices that tie the geographical subject to his or her place-world, one instance of which is the “work-world” (*Werkwelt*) that is Heidegger’s focus in a remarkable discussion of being ready-to-hand (*Zuhandensein*) in *Being and Time*.<sup>10</sup> For Heidegger, place and the self are intimately interlocked in the world of concrete work. Not only are tools literal “instruments” that have a functional purpose of their own—e.g., a hammer to drive in nails—but they create works or products that allude to the person who will make use of them: “the work is cut to [the consumer’s] figure; he ‘is’ there along with it as the work emerges” (Heidegger 1962, 100).<sup>11</sup> Not just the abstract figure of the consumer, however, but the very form of the self is at stake in the work-world. When Heidegger (1962, 101) remarks that “our concerned absorption in whatever work-world lies closest to us has a function of discovering,” he means that this absorption helps us to discover our own being-in-the-world and not just the external destination—e.g., the market—for what we create in the work-place. It helps us to grasp the particular place we are in as the particular person who we are.<sup>12</sup>

In such a circumstance, place and self are thoroughly enmeshed, without, however, being fused with each other in a single monolithic whole. The articulations Heidegger finds in the situation—including the “towards-which” of serviceability, the “for-which” of usability, and the various “assignments” or references that are part of the work-world (itself only an exemplification of any technological milieu)—indicate that the place/self relation is here as highly ramified as it is intimate.<sup>13</sup>

It would follow that thinned-out places are those in which the densely enmeshed infrastructures of the kind Heidegger discerns are missing. Not only do such places not *contain* strictly, as on Aristotle’s model; they do not even *hold*, lacking the rigor and substance of thickly lived places—in contrast once again with the ethereality of pure space, which cannot properly hold anything. Their very surface is perforated, open to continual reshaping and reconnecting with other surfaces. Think of the way in which programs on television or items on the Web melt away into each other as we switch channels or surf

at leisure. In such circumstances, there is a notable *lability of place* that corresponds to a fickle self who seeks to be entertained: the “aesthetic self,” as Kierkegaard might call it. The collapse of the kind of surface that is capable of *keeping something within it*—e.g., the circumambient surface, the stable “surrounder” (*periechon*) of the Aristotelian model of place—correlates with a self of infinite distractibility whose own surface is continually complicated by new pleasures: in short, a self that has become (in Deleuze and Guattari’s [1983, part 1] term) a “desiring machine.”

Not that all is lost. As Merleau-Ponty (1962, 171) said trenchantly, “[N]o one is saved and no one is totally lost.” The point applies to place as well as to the self. Places can never become utterly attenuated. They may become increasingly uniform and unable to engage our concerned absorption, without, for all that, ceasing to exist altogether as places for us—places in which we orient ourselves and feel at home. In particular, places will not “merge with,” much less *turn into*, space. To posit any such merger is to confuse two orders of being that are, in principle, separate. Place is indeed situated in physical space, but then so is everything else, events as well as material things; it has no privileged relationship to that space, by way of either exemplification or representation. Nor can it be derived from it by some contrived genealogy. To believe in such a genealogy is to buy into the modernist myth that the lived world is made of pure extended space, and that anything less than such space, including place, follows from it by derivation or delimitation.<sup>14</sup>

The same is true of the self, which can certainly become more superficial yet will always retain traces of personal identity of the most minimal sort (e.g., the ability to say “I” or “me”)—even under the direst of diremptions. Leveled-down places of the sort with which we are surrounded today put the self to the test, tempting it to mimic their tenuous character by becoming an indecisive entity incapable of the kind of resolute action that is required in a determinately structured place such as a workshop or a public forum.

This is not to say that the self is merely enfeebled by nonrobust places. It can also make a virtue of the circumstance by becoming more responsive to differences between places—for example, by venturing beyond one’s natal place so as to appreciate and savor other places and peoples. Such is the ambiguous moral of Tuan’s *Cosmos and Hearth* (1996): the skeptical cosmopolite, for all of his or her unsettledness, does at least learn about the larger world and may become more sensitive to cultural diversity than does the person who refuses to leave the hearth.<sup>15</sup> This is not to advocate cosmopolitanism; it is to consider a possible virtue in the postmodern nomadism

of constantly changing place, whether in actual or virtual space. The ease with which this now happens compared to former times does not mean the simple degradation, much less the loss, of the self that travels.

At stake here is what we might call “the compensatory logic of loss.” All too often, we presume that a different logic is at work when it comes to matters of place and self—the logic of a complementary series, whereby the more of one thing, the less of the other with which it is paired. Thus, it might be thought that the stronger the self becomes—the more autonomous, self-directive, and so on—the less important place should be, as we might infer from Tuan’s claim. Should not a stronger self be less reliant on particular places?<sup>16</sup> And, by the same token, should not a stronger link to a given place—e.g., a hearth—bring with it a weaker self, a self that is so able to count on the security of home as to have no “mind of its own,” much less be capable of “thinking [in] the reflective, ironic, quizzical mode” (Tuan 1996, 188)?

I believe that, rather than a logic of *more from less* (and, equally, *less from more*), what we in fact find in the place-self relationship is a logic of *more with more*. The more places are leveled down, the *more*—not the less—may selves be led to seek out thick places in which their own personal enrichment can flourish. Two contemporary examples point to this logic of unsuspected abundance.

1. The proliferation of movies on video—in itself a proliferation of virtual space—has not meant the end of public movie theaters, but has appeared to intensify the desirability of such theaters as real places with their own sensuous density and interpersonal interest.
2. The striking success of Amazon.com in bookselling—an enterprise that unabashedly advertises itself as “Earth’s biggest bookstore: 2.5 million books in stock”—has not meant the simple demise of ordinary bookstores (though certainly many smaller such stores have suffered). Its rapid growth has accompanied and paralleled the equally remarkable success of Borders and Barnes and Noble bookstores—i.e., actual places in which to browse for books. Leaving aside the dubious hegemonic tendencies of these enormous book chains, the fact is that bookselling—and, hopefully, bookreading—have flourished in recent times. More has meant more. Place, actual place, persists, and is strengthened rather than diminished by the challenge posed by virtual space.

By this compensatory logic, the self stands to gain as well. For it is now able to move between virtual space and actual places—i.e., a space that does not require full



engagement versus places that do—and with a leeway that, even if not exhibiting the absolute freedom dreamed of in high modernism, nevertheless enjoys that modicum of choice which is necessary (if not sufficient) to account for the relationship between self and place in any era. The compensatory model allows us to imagine that both self and place may paradoxically prosper in the very desert of the postmodern period, the experience of each being enhanced, rather than simply undermined, in the wasteland of a dried-out life-world. Despite an affinity for thick places, the contemporary self can flourish even in spaces that are disembodied, virtualized, and notably thin.

## II

Whether this quasimeliorist reading of our present predicament will prove to be right, no one can claim to know for sure. We can make progress of a more certain sort if we attempt to answer the quite basic question: What ties place and self together? What ensures that these terms are genuinely coconstitutive and not forever dichotomous? Here we seek a missing term that brings place and self together in any circumstance, whether premodern, modern, or postmodern. To hold outright that place qua place constitutes self qua self (or vice versa) is only to deepen the mystery, not to clarify it. To be deeply ingressive in each other is to suggest that place and self are mediated by a third term common to both, a term that brings and keeps them together.<sup>17</sup> What, in short, is the mediatrix of place and self?

The most adequate answer is: *habitus*. I take this term from Pierre Bourdieu in his *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), where it serves as a figure of the between: above all, between nature and culture, but also between consciousness and body, self and other, mechanism and teleology, determinism and freedom, even memory and imagination. *Habitus* is not mere routine but something improvisational and open to innovation. It is an “immanent law, *lex insita*, laid down in each agent by his earliest upbringing” (Bourdieu 1977, 81). A given *habitus* qua settled disposition or “habitude” is thus the basis for action in any given sphere—indeed, in any given place.

Here I want to propose that *habitus* is a middle term between place and self—and, in particular, between lived place and the geographical self. This self is constituted by a core of *habitudes* that incorporate and continue, at both psychological and physical levels, what one has experienced in particular places.<sup>18</sup> Although Bourdieu does not invoke place specifically, it is everywhere present in his discussion of *habitus*. Indeed, it lies at both ends of the quasidiachronic model he proposes in *Outline of a*

*Theory of Practice*. It is there at the start as the scene of inculcation, the place of instruction that embodies “the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g., the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition)” (Bourdieu 1977, 72). It is present at a later point when a given *habitus* has been fully formed and is continually re-enacted in similar circumstances—that is, when durable dispositions are “lastingly subjected to the same conditioning, and hence placed in the same material conditions of existence” (85; emphasis added).<sup>19</sup> A given *habitus* is always enacted in a particular place and incorporates the features inherent in previous such places, all of which are linked by a habitual bond.

*Habitus* is also mediational in its capacity to bring together the placiality of its ongoing setting and the temporality of its recurrent re-enactment. Despite Kant’s dogmatic effort to keep time out of geography and to confine it to history,<sup>20</sup> whenever the geographical subject is at stake, time and history alike have to re-enter geographical consideration. They do so most effectively in the form of *habitus*, which is as ineluctably temporal as it is placial in its formation and consolidation. Thus the very idea of *habitus* leads us to merge what Kant wanted to keep strictly apart: history and geography. This is all the more the case if the schemes operative within *habitudes* are placial as well as temporal.<sup>21</sup> And they must be if *habitus* is truly to mediate between place (primarily but not exclusively spatial) and the self (primarily but not only temporal). The generativity of habitual schemes is at once placial and temporal, and because of this double-sidedness the geographical subject is able to insinuate himself or herself all the more completely into the life-world of ongoing experience. Were it not so, were *habitus* exclusively one or the other, this subject would be schizoid within and alienated without, unable to complete the cycle that place and the self continually reconstitute thanks to the habitual basis they so deeply share.<sup>22</sup> In other words, this subject would be precisely the self-riven early modern subject described by Descartes and Locke in their tendentious descriptions of human selfhood.

A corollary of this last line of thought is that if places can become attenuated in certain historical moments such as our own, this can only mean that these places have begun to lose the habitual density whereby they are implicated within the selves who experience them. *The thinning-out is primarily of the habitus linking places and selves*—or more exactly, a replacement of one set of *habitudes* (more apt for lasting, lively engagements with robust places) with another habitual set (geared to leveled-down places or “sites”).<sup>23</sup> The consequence can only be a desiccation of both self and place, the diminishing of both,

a common failure to find “a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions [that] makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks” (Bourdieu 1977, 82–83). This doubly denuded circumstance, this diminution of habitual thickness, is a situation of *less with less*, less place, less self, an inversion of a positively compensatory logic of *more with more*, more place, more self. If the attenuation leads to this inversion itself and is not the prelude to a significant reinvestment in place and self, then we are left with the sobering prospect of a redoubled loss: loss of place, loss of self.

### III

Human beings act on the basis of habitus, and action is something that is both lived (i.e., consciously experienced) and intentional (i.e., involves an aim even if this is not explicitly formulated). The value or virtue of a given habitus resides in the actuality of its enactment, its skillful application—not in its being a solidified deposition of past actions or a mere disposition to future actions. Whatever its antecedent history and subsequent fate, a habitus is something we continually *put into action*. Moreover, we do so by means of concrete behaviors that follow various plans and projects of a self who actively intends to do something in the dense “common-sense world,” the life-world that is the product of “the orchestration of habitus” (Bourdieu 1977, 80). Given that this world presents itself to us as a layout of places, the activation of habitus expresses an intentional and invested *commitment to the place-world*. Even if it is the internalization of social practices in its origin, in its actual performance a given habitus is a reaching out to place, a being or becoming in place.

The primary way in which the geographical subject realizes its active commitment to place is by means of *habitation*. I use “habitation” in a sense capacious enough to include nomadic life as well as settled dwelling. Either way, the self relates to the place of habitation by means of concerted bodily movements that are the activation of habitual schemes, their explicitation and exfoliation in the inhabited place-world. In the word “habitation,” moreover, we hear not only living somewhere in particular and not just the concretization of habitus but also, more particularly, the verbal root of “habitation” itself: namely, *habère*, Latin for “to have, to hold.” Both of these latter verbs are performative and transitive in character and thus adumbrate the ongoing engagement that is always at stake in the place/self cycle, especially in its habitational modes. When I inhabit a place—whether by moving through it or staying in it—I *have* it in my ac-

tional purview. I also *hold* it by virtue of being in its ambience: first in my body as it holds onto the place by various sensory and kinesthetic means, then in my memory as I “hold it in mind.” This is how the durability of habitus is expressed: by my tenacious holding onto a place so as to prolong what I experience beyond the present moment. In this way, place and self actively collude.

In the end, we need to do justice both to the factor of habitus and to the facticity of habitation. It is a matter of what Husserl liked to call “activity in passivity” (Husserl 1973)—of the activity of habitation and the receptivity of habitus. If habitus represents a movement from the externality of established customs and norms to the internality of durable dispositions, habitation is a matter of re-externalization—of taking the habitus that has been acquired and continually re-enacting it in the place-world. Just as there would be no habitus without the pre-existing places of history and society, so there would be no habitation without the habitudes that make implacement possible for a given subject.<sup>24</sup>

Thus we must acknowledge the importance of a genuine “thirdspace,” to adopt Edward Soja’s (1996) suggestive term for what I have been calling “place-world,” a world that is not only perceived or conceived but also actively *lived* and receptively *experienced*. Inspired by Henri Lefebvre, Soja maintains that such thirdspace is at once social and historical—and, just as much, spatial. The spatiality (not merely the “space,” a term better reserved for the cosmic continuum) is a lived and experienced spatiality, which is what Bourdieu neglects and Soja (1996) celebrates in his “real-and-imagined” “journeys to Los Angeles.”<sup>25</sup> Indeed, in any journey through the place-world, we live out our bodily habitudes in relation to the changing spatiality of the scenes we successively encounter.

### IV

What, then, is the vehicle of this lived and lively thirdspace—this mediatrix between place and self—that is neither simply material nor sheerly mental in character, a domain that we find and experience both actively and passively, both through habitation and habitude? The enactive vehicle of being-in-place is the *body*. The body is indispensable here not just as a “practical operator” of habitual schemes or as the “body schema” that is the format or receptacle of such schemes.<sup>26</sup> Its role is much more basic. In matters of place, as Lefebvre (1991, 194) claims, “the body serves both as point of departure and as destination.”<sup>27</sup> But how can something that is normally beneath our notice be the pivot of the place-world?

This happens in at least two ways, which I shall label “outgoing” and “incoming.”

1. *Outgoing*. The lived body encounters the place-world by *going out to meet it*. It does this in myriad ways, including highly differentiated and culturally freighted ways, such as racial or class or gender identity, the focus of so much recent writing on the body. It also goes out in one primary way in which all more particular ways share: I refer to the “spatial framework”<sup>28</sup> whereby it links up most pervasively with the place-world. By means of this framework, the three inherent axes of the body, each defined by a binary opposition (i.e., up/down, front/back, right/left), lead into the primary dimensions of any given place (i.e., verticality, frontality, and horizontality) as well as the implicit directionality of that place (e.g., upward or downward, forward or backward, verging to the right or to the left).<sup>29</sup> It is not a matter of sheer fit—as if body and place were each, in advance, already fully formed, with the result that they cohere like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Neither body nor place is a wholly determinate entity; each continually evolves, precisely in relation to the other. The place-world is energized and transformed by the bodies that belong to it, while these bodies are in turn guided and influenced by this world’s inherent structures.
2. *Incoming*. But the body not only goes out to reach places; it also bears the traces of the places it has known. These traces are continually laid down in the body, sedimenting themselves there and thus becoming formative of its specific somatography. A body is shaped by the places it has come to know and that have come to it—come to take up residence in it, by a special kind of placial incorporation that is just as crucial to the human self as is the interpersonal incorporation so central to classical psychoanalytic theory. The reverse is also true: places are themselves altered by our having been in them.<sup>30</sup>

It is the former action—whereby the body is in effect placialized—that I designate as “incoming.” Moreover, this *coming in* of places into the body—their inscription there—is a matter both of tenacity and subjection.

- a. *Tenacity*. Places come into us lastingly; once having been in a particular place for any considerable time—or even briefly, if our experience there has been intense—we are forever marked by that place, which lingers in us indefinitely and in a thousand ways, many too subtle for us to name. The inscription is not of edges or outlines, as if place were

some kind of object; it is of the whole brute presence of the place. What lingers most powerfully is this presence and, more particularly, *how it felt to be in this presence*: how it felt to be in the Crazy Mountains that summer, how I sensed the lower East Side during January. Proust points out that the essence of a place can be compressed into a single sensation, which, being reawakened, can bring the place back to us in its full vivacity. There is an *impressionism of place* by which the presence of a place remains lodged in our body long after we have left it; this presence is held within the body in a virtual state, ready to be revived when the appropriate impression or sensation arises (see Rawlinson 1981).

- b. *Subjection*. In contrast with Kant’s view that we construct space by a formal transcendental activity, we are not the masters of place but prey to it; we are the subjects of place or, more exactly, *subject to place*. Such subjection ranges from docility (wherein we are the mere creatures of a place, at its whim and in its image) to appreciation (by which we enjoy being in a place, savoring it) to change (whereby we alter ourselves—our very self—as a function of having been in a certain place). In every case, we are still, even many years later, *in the places to which we are subject* because (and to the exact extent that) *they are in us*. They are in us—indeed, *are us*—thanks to their incorporation into us by a process of somatization whose logic is yet to be discovered. They constitute us as subjects. To be *homo geographicus* is to be such a subject. To be (a) subject to/of place is to *be what we are as an expression of the way a place is*. The body is the primary vehicle of such expression, precisely in Leibniz’s sense of a condensed and often tacit representation: the body expresses its place-world much as a monad expresses the universe. Such expression is tantamount to deep reflection; in its subjection to place, a body “reflects its region.”<sup>31</sup>

Thanks to the inscriptive tenacity and expressive subjection of the body, places come to be embedded in us; they become part of our very self, our enduring character, what we enact and carry forward. Neither habitus nor habitation, for all their importance, captures completely this factor of *persistence of place in body*. Habitus is the socially encoded core of our bodily self; habitation is the activist commitment of the same self. To such socialism and activism we need to add a third ingredient, idiolocalism. Where habitus internalizes the collective subject of customary and normative structure, and habitation calls for the intentional subject of concerted action, idiolocal-

ity invokes the subject who incorporates and expresses a particular place, more especially its *idios*, what is “peculiar” in both senses of this last word. And the bearer of idiolocality is none other than the lived body, the proper subject of place. Only such a subject can be subject to place in its idiosyncrasy; this subject alone can carry the peculiarities of place in its very flesh, keeping them there in a state of *Parathaltung*, a condition of readiness to reappear at the flash of a mere impression.<sup>32</sup>

This is not to say that we have to do with three subjects here—any more than Soja or Lefebvre would maintain that there are three separate spaces to contend with in their trialectic typologies.<sup>33</sup> There is only one subject of place, one body-subject, one embodied self who experiences, expresses, and deals with place by means of habitus, habitation, and idioloalization. Place is shared out among these three modalities; it is a matter of “the betweenness of place,” in Nicholas Entrikin’s (1991) striking phrase, which I interpret as referring to the pervasiveness of place, its permeation into every crevice of the body-subject in its habitual, habitational, and idioloal actions. Just as Entrikin (1991, 134) argues that we need not make an exclusionary choice between existential and naturalistic conceptions of place but should address both “from a point in between” that does not exclude either, so I would maintain that the three aspects of the body-in-place that I have here singled out should be treated inclusively, without any forced choice having to be made between them. We owe no less to place and to the body that at once bears, preserves, and transforms it.

## V

To pursue what it means to be *homo geographicus* is to be led, therefore, to the body in at least three basic modalities. By the same token, it is to be led back to the self. The self of the place-self cycle from which we always begin is what Barbara Hooper calls a “body/self.”<sup>34</sup> Only such a self can be implaced; there is no subject of place except as embodied. Descartes and Locke are here both undone: personal identity entails body (not just consciousness) and a body-in-place (rather than an unimplaced self). *The body is the heft of the self that is in place*, whose very “extensity”<sup>35</sup> calls for a massive and thick corporeal subject to be equal to the demanding task of existing in the place-world.

Just as there is no implaced self except as a body/self, there is no place either without such a self. There may well be space and location in the absence of an embodied self, but in the presence of place there can be no subject other than a bodily subject capable of possessing habitus,

undertaking habitation, and expressing the idiolocality of place itself.<sup>36</sup>

Yet the body is not the last word when it comes to an expanded sense of the geographical self. It does come first, and is even first among equals when it comes to philosophical (and specifically phenomenological) meditations on geography. Requisite as well, however, is *landscape*. I want to end with some brief observations on this basic term, the importance of which has been signaled by the seminal work of J. B. Jackson, W. G. Hoskins, Edward Relph, Denis Cosgrove, and others.

If it is true that the geographical self is *deepened* by the body—drawn down into it—then it is equally true to say that place is *broadened* in landscape. As Relph (1976, 123) writes, “Landscape is both the context for places and an attribute of places.” In fact, body and landscape are the concretization and exfoliation, respectively, of the initially indefinite dyad of self and place. For this dyad is abstract as it stands, as is the Pythagorean indeterminate dyad (*aiostos dyas*) of same and other, like and unlike, odd and even.<sup>37</sup> The empty armature of place-cum-self needs to be fleshed out, in two opposed but complementary directions: downward into body and outward into landscape. I say “needs to be” because both body and landscape are so thoroughly ingredient in the experience of the human subject as often to pass unnoticed. The presence of the body is “pre-reflective,” as Merleau-Ponty (1962, part 1) liked to say; the surrounding landscape is mostly “invisible,” as Erwin Straus (1963, 318–23) has argued, a matter of “spirit” in Relph’s (1976, 30) word. All the more reason, then, to bring both factors into our reflective awareness—to make both as focal as possible. To do so is to take a crucial step toward a geography that is responsive to the material conditions of the place-world.

Landscape is a cusp concept. It serves to distinguish place and space (whose difference I have been taking mostly for granted);<sup>38</sup> it is even the point of their most salient difference. There is no landscape of space, though there is landscape both of place and region. It is important to stress this difference, since it is easy to think of landscape as a mere middle term between place and space—as the transition between the two. Phrases such as “wide open spaces” that we apply unthinkingly to landscape only confuse the issue. However, just as attenuated places do not merge into space, so an open landscape does not fade into space. A landscape may indeed be vast; it can contain an entire region and thus a very large set of places. Yet it will never *become* space, which is something of another order altogether. No matter how capacious a landscape may be, it remains a composition of places, their intertwined skein. It may constitute a



*cosmos*—that is, a place-world—but never a *universum*, space as an endless, infinitized totality.

The intrinsic difference between place and space is nowhere more evident than in the role of a primary feature of landscape, its *horizon*. Every landscape has a horizon, yet space never does.<sup>39</sup> The horizon is an arc within which a given landscape comes to an end—an end of visibility, of presence, of availability. A place as such has no horizon, only an enclosure or perimeter. Only when places are concatenated in a landscape is there anything like a horizon, which is the undelimited limit—or, better, the *boundary*—for the landscape as a whole. As a boundary, the horizon does not merely close off the landscape; it opens it up for further exploration, that is, for bodily ingression and exploration. As Heidegger (1971, 154; emphasis in original) puts it, “A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something *begins its presencing*.”<sup>40</sup> The horizon is the boundary that surrounds the particular places making up a landscape. The outward movement of landscape—a movement out beyond any particular place and beyond any body in that place—reaches its bounded end in the horizon.

Other features of landscape include its *sensuous display*—the panoply of features sensed on its surface that make it into a variegated scene of perception and action—and its *atmosphere*, the combination of air and light that gives to a landscape its special luminescence or radiance.<sup>41</sup> Ingredient as well are the *ground*—the subtending layer, which need not be earth but can be sea or even asphalt—on which the concrete *things* of a given landscape repose: where “things” may be humanly constructed as well as engendered by nature. I first described these various factors in a discussion of “wild places,” and it is significant that they hold up as descriptive terms of landscape in general, whether wild or cultivated.<sup>42</sup> But wilderness qua “wildscape” remains paradigmatic for the outreach of landscape, its openness, its uncontrollability—even as a cityscape is emblematic of its complex historicity, intentional order, cultural diversity, and social layeredness. The extensity and power of landscape may be such that all we can do is to glance at it, take parts of it in, and let the rest of it go.<sup>43</sup>

A landscape is nothing if not expansive. Where the lived body of the geographical self characteristically *draws in* the place-world around it, ingesting it in schematized bodily behavior and lingering body memories, the landscape *draws out* the same place-world, sometimes to its utmost limit. It is rare, if not impossible, to experience an entirely isolated place: a place without relation to any other place, without imbrication in a region. Landscape is the scene wherein the assemblage of the places

making up a region arises; it is the matrix of places without us, hence the antipode of habitus as the matrix of schemes within us.

“In a landscape,” says Straus (1963, 319), “we always get to one place from another place.” This echoes the first epigraph of this essay: “It was to satisfy man’s curiosity concerning the differences of the world from place to place that geography developed as a subject of popular interest” (Hartshorne 1939, 15). The curiosity to which Richard Hartshorne refers is also a curiosity about landscape, for only in a coherent and continuous landscape can we go from place to place, whether this be on land or sea or even in the air.<sup>44</sup>

## VI

In short summation: landscape and the body are the effective epicenters of the geographical self. The one widens out our vista of the place-world—all the way to the horizon—while the other literally incorporates this same world and acts upon it. Without landscape, we would be altogether confined to the peculiarities of a particular place, its insistent idioclocalism; without the body, even this one place would pass us by without leaving a mark on us, much less inspiring us to act toward it in novel and constructive ways. Because we have a body and are ensconced in a landscape, place and self alike are enriched and sustained, enabling us to become enduring denizens of the place-world to which we so fatefully belong.

## Notes

1. In what follows, I am taking this book as a representative recent contribution to the geography of place in relation to space.
2. For a systematic account of the difference between place and space, see my two studies, Casey (1993) and Casey (1997).
3. Also, “as far as any intelligent being can repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far it is the same personal self” (Locke [1690] 1975, 451).
4. Not only is place not part of personal identity, but even in the realm of the purely physical it serves, not to identify something, but to distinguish it from other things that are otherwise entirely alike: “When we see anything to be in any place in any instant of time, we are sure (be it what it will) that it is that very thing, and not another, which at that same time exists in another place, how like and undistinguishable soever it may be in all other respects; and in this consists identity [of a thing] . . . For we [are] never finding, nor conceiving it possible, that two things of the same

kind should exist in the same place at the same time” (Locke [1690] 1975, 439).

5. Concerning this matter, Sack rejoins the philosophers. He (1997, 132) says emphatically that “place and self help construct and activate each other.” See also his statement (1997, 131) that “the formation of personality [is] directly connected to the formation of place.” This is a recurrent theme in Sack’s book: “Places need the actions of people or selves to exist and have effect. The opposite is equally true—selves cannot be formed and sustained or have effect without place” (1997, 88; see also 127).
6. This forthright proposal avoids two extreme positions. A first extreme conflates the self with place, as in certain pre-modern societies in which the self is nothing but the reflection of its immediate milieu. (Such is Sack’s [1997, 137; see also 136] claim concerning the Bakongo and the Northern Aranda, both of which involve “the fusing of place and self through mythical/magical thought.”) This is the placial equivalent of Freud’s theory of personal identity, whereby the early human self is the product of primary identifications with parents, along with later secondary identifications with friends, teachers, lovers, and so on. In any such view, there is *no choice but to be the residual expression of such identifications, whether these are with people or with places.*

In contrast with this lies the equally extreme view that place is only a setting or backdrop for the self, decidedly not part of its constituent identity. This quasidramatic view allows for degrees of influence and identification, and thus a measure of choice, in the determination of the self’s differential destiny vis-à-vis place. Such a view is set forth vigorously by Sartre, who makes place into one of the major “situational” factors in terms of which human freedom (and thus the self who is the agent of this freedom) must operate: “[T]here is freedom only in a *situation*, and there is a *situation* only through freedom” (1966, 599; emphasis in original). Freedom and situation, self and place, here remain distinguishable if not entirely separable, entering into uneasy alliances. If the first extreme leaves too little room for choice and difference, the second, though providing for just this kind of room, fails to capture the full force of place as it impinges on personal identity; it fails insofar as place, belonging to the “in-itself,” remains external to the self as “for-itself.”
7. On this theme, see also Sack (1997, 9–11).
8. “With the sudden but subtle ‘inflation of the present,’ of a present globalized by teletechnologies, present time occupies center stage not only of history (between past and future) but especially of the geography of the *globe*. So much so that a new term has recently been coined, *glocalization*” (Virilio 1997, 135, emphasis in original; see also 144). Virilio describes in temporal terms what has become true in spatial terms.
9. Heidegger is speaking here of the “region” (*Gegend*) that gathers the ready-to-hand implements of our concrete life—gathers them in terms of “totalities of significance” that are not yet subject to modernist reductions.
10. It is not often noticed that this discussion comes immediately after Heidegger (1962, 100) has compared the geographer and the poet: when the natural world is regarded as merely present-at-hand, he says, “the Nature which ‘stirs and strives,’ which assails us and entralls us as landscape, remains hidden [in modern geography] . . . the ‘source’ which the geographer establishes for a river is not the ‘springhead in the dale.’” Edward Relph cites this same passage (1976, 5). The reference appears to be to the objective or “physical” geography advocated by Kant and still regnant in Germany in the 1920s.
11. Heidegger (1962, 100) adds, “The work produced refers not only to the ‘towards-which’ of its usability and the ‘whereof’ of which it consists: under simple craft conditions it also has an assignment to the person who is to use it or wear it.” For further discussion, see Pickles (1985, 160–68).
12. The notion of “pre-ontological understanding of the world” occurs in Heidegger (1962, 102): “Does not Dasein have an understanding of the world—a pre-ontological understanding, which indeed can and does get along without explicit ontological insights?” A given work-world has for its “for-the-sake-of-which” (*Worum-willen*) the Being of Dasein itself, i.e., its being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1962, 116–17).
13. Concerning the towards-which of serviceability and the for-which of usability, see Heidegger (1962, section 18). On the character of reference at stake in the workplace, see Heidegger (1962, section 17, “Reference and Signs”).
14. This does not prevent thinned-out places from becoming something *similar* to space, thanks to taking on certain of the predicates of space, such as planiformity, isotropism, isometry, homogeneity, and so on. However, this is a far cry from *becoming* space.
15. Such a situation “can link us both seriously and playfully to the cosmos—to strangers in other places and times; and it enables us to accept a human condition that we have always been tempted by fear and anxiety to deny, namely, the impermanence of our state wherever we are, our ultimate homelessness” (Tuan 1996, 188). Sack (1997, 138) claims, similarly, that “thinned-out places with permeable boundaries help us see through the veils of culture.” He (9) also points out that “thinned-out places work well when they do not intrude on our consciousness and thus allow us to attend to the things that should take place in the world. This is how routinization of complex life is constructed.” However, the latter is a purely functional point, and the former advantage carries with it, by Sack’s (138) own admission, this price: “in seeing through more clearly, the weight of making sense of the world falls on our shoulders, and for many this is too heavy a burden.” Even Heidegger, let it be noted, insisted that at the very center of being-at-home is an uncanny unhomeliness: *Unheimlichkeit* lurks within *Heimlichkeit*. See Heidegger (1962, section 40: “The Basic State-of-Mind of Anxiety as a Distinctive Way in Which Dasein is Disclosed”).
16. This way of thinking colors Tuan’s neo-Kantian model of the cosmopolite, whose freedom to range over many places on earth reflects its greater self-reliance: “Rather than immersion in the locality where we now live, our mind and emotion are ever ready to shift to other localities and times . . . Having seen something of the splendid spaces, he or she . . . will not want to return, permanently, to the ambiguous safeness of the hearth” (Tuan 1996, 188). Tuan’s argument here is closely affiliated with the view expressed in Tuan (1982): namely, that the more differentiated a society comes to be, the more opportunities there are for the development of a deeper reflective self.
17. I am not alone in calling for a mediating term between place and self. The “relational framework” set forth by Sack in *Homo Geographicus* (1997) is one in which there are at least three mediating terms: nature, meaning, and social relations. These overlap in turn and are interconnected by various loops, thus constituting a matrix of common involve-

- ment for self and place: the mediator is itself mediated, thrice over! See especially figures 2.1 and 4.1 in Sack (1997).
18. Notice that habitus is the basis for “the distribution of activities and objects within the internal space of the house” (Bourdieu 1977, 21). In short, a home-place is the scene of the orderly but open improvisation effected by habitus—in contrast with, say, agrarian rituals, which are “strictly regulated by customary norms and upheld by social sanctions” (Bourdieu 1977, 21). Like Heidegger’s work-place, the home-place allows for innovation within regulation.
  19. The full statement reads: “The habitus is the product of the work of inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those products of collective history, the objective structures (e.g., of language, economy, etc.) to succeed in reproducing themselves more or less completely, in the form of durable dispositions, in the organisms (which one can, if one wishes, call individuals) lastingly subjected to the same conditioning, and hence placed in the same material conditions of existence” (Bourdieu 1977, 85).
  20. “Description according to time is History, that according to space is Geography . . . History differs from Geography only in the consideration of time and area. The former is a report of phenomena that follow one another and has reference to time. The latter is a report of phenomena beside each other in space” (from Kant’s *Lectures on Physical Geography*, as cited in Hartshorne 1939, 135).
  21. Not surprisingly, Bourdieu finds the inner working of habitus to lie in various “schemes” wherein it condenses its operations and holds them ready for employment. The heart of habitual action is found in “the generative schemes incorporated in the body schema” (Bourdieu 1977, 167). Ironically, the idea of *scheme* stems from Kant’s idea of the “schematism of the understanding,” whereby categories such as causality or substance or co-existence are given temporal specificity, e.g., as “succession,” “permanence,” “simultaneity,” and so on. (See Kant [1781] 1965, Book II, chapter 1.) If Kant is right, Kant is wrong: if the geographical subject depends on a repertoire of schematized habitus, then the experience of the geographic world will be undeniably temporal, hence historical.
  22. Thus we must amend Bourdieu’s (1977, 82) claim that “the habitus, the product of history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history” to a formulation more like this: the habitus, the product of geography and history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history and geography, in accordance with the placial and temporal schemes engendered by both.
  23. For further discussion of site as degenerate place, see Casey (1993, 65, 141, 177–78, 258–60, 267–70) and Casey (1997, 183–84, 232–34, 299–300, 334, 336).
  24. However, the place-world in which this progress ends is not the same as the social world from which it begins. For Bourdieu (1977, 83; emphasis in original), the latter is ineluctably an “*objective event* which exerts its action of conditional stimulation calling for or demanding a determinate response.” Precisely this collective and historical objectivity contrasts with the habitus as “a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions” located within the sphere of the individual. But more than contrast is at stake here. The objectivity of the one calls for the subjectivity of the other: only as internalized as the basis for habitual ac-
- tions can social structure become efficacious at the level of the individual.
25. Soja (1996, 31; emphasis in original) defines thirdspace as
    - a knowable and unknowable, real and imagined lifeworld of experiences, emotions, events, and political choices that is existentially shaped by the generative and problematic interplay between centers and peripheries, the abstract and concrete, the impassioned spaces of the conceptual and the lived, marked out materially and metaphorically in *spatial praxis*, the transformation of (spatial) knowledge into (spatial) action in a field of unevenly developed (spatial) power.
 In this statement, “lifeworld” is best construed as “place-world” and “spaces” as “places.” On thirdspace as not just perceived or conceived, see Soja (1996, 10ff).
  26. For these two notions, see Bourdieu (1977, 116–19 and 167, respectively). Henri Lefebvre speaks similarly of the “practico-sensory body,” as in this statement: “the moment the body is envisioned as a practico-sensory totality, a de-centering and recentering of knowledge occurs” (1991, 62). The idea of body schema derives from Paul Schilder in *The Image and Appearance of the Human Body* (1923) and was developed further by Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962).
  27. Consider also Lefebvre’s (1991, 40) statement that “the relationship to space of a ‘subject’ who is a member of a group or society implies his relationship to his own body and vice versa.” Still more succinctly, “the whole of (social) space proceeds from the body” (405).
  28. I take this term from the writings of Nancy Franklin and Barbara Tervsky, e.g., their groundbreaking essay, “Searching Imagined Environments” (1990, 63–77). I have explored the relevance of the spatial framework to implacement in Casey (1993, 102–3, 110).
  29. As Franklin and Tervsky say, the body’s spatial framework thus renders “certain directions more accessible than others, depending on the natural axes of the body and the position of the body with respect to the perceptual world” (Franklin and Tervsky 1990, 74). What the authors call “the perceptual world” I am inclined to call “the place-world.” Note that Lefebvre had already envisioned the importance of the spatial framework in 1974: “A body so conceived, as produced and as the production of a space, is immediately subject to the determinants of that space: symmetries, interactions, and reciprocal actions, axes and planes, centers and peripheries, and concrete (spatio-temporal) oppositions” (Lefebvre 1991, 195; cf. also 199).
  30. As Elizabeth Grosz (cited in Soja 1996, 112) says, “The City is made and made over into the simulacrum of the body, and the body, in its turn, is transformed, ‘citized’, urbanized as a distinctively metropolitan body.”
  31. I take this phrase from the title of Wallace Stevens’s late poem, “A Mythology Reflects Its Region.” For Leibniz’s notion of monad, see his *Monadology*.
  32. I borrow the term *Parathaltung* from Roman Ingarden (1973), who employs it to describe the heteronomy of the literary work, whose various levels require vivification by the reader.
  33. In Lefebvre’s case, I refer to his triple distinction between spatial practices, representations of space, and representational spaces, as developed at length in Lefebvre (1991, 33 ff). For Soja, the trialectic is that of perceived/conceived/lived (see 1996, 70–82).



34. "A body/self, a subject, an identity: it is, in sum, a social space, a complexity involving the workings of power and knowledge and the workings of the body's lived unpredictabilities" (Hooper, "Bodies, Cities, Texts: The Case of Citizen Rodney King," her emphasis; cited in Soja 1996, 114). Bruce Wilshire (1983) uses the closely analogous term "body-subject."
35. This is Bergson's term for lived space, in contrast with homogeneous "extension"; it is the spatial equivalent of duration in the realm of time. See Bergson (1960: chapters 2 and 3), as well as Bergson (1991: chapters 3 and 4).
36. It should be added that the self so conceived is not restricted to the *human* self. Animals, perhaps even plants, possess their own equivalents of embodiment and implacement. Just as we must resist an exclusively individualistic model of the human subject, so we must resist a humanocentric paradigm of implacement.
37. On the indefinite (*to apeiron*) as a principle (*archē*), see Plato (*Philebus* 23c–26d). On the indeterminate dyad as Plato's material principle, see Aristotle's commentary in his *Metaphysics* (1081a and 1099b).
38. I should make it clear that by "place" I mean something very close to what Soja (1985, 91–127) calls "spatiality." Like spatiality as interpreted by Soja, place is neither physical space nor the mental representation of space (see Soja 1985, 93–94). I prefer the language of "place" because of its higher degree of contrast with "space," a contrast I treat at length in Casey (1997, parts 1 and 2). I thank David Delaney of Amherst College for urging me to clarify this contrast and for bringing Soja's essay to my attention.
39. As Straus (1963, 319) says, tellingly, "In a landscape we are enclosed by a horizon; no matter how far we go, the horizon constantly goes with us. Geographical space has no horizon."
40. Heidigger (1971, 154) adds, "That is why the concept is that of *horismos*, that is, the horizon [as] the boundary."
41. On atmosphere, see Böhme (1998, part 1).
42. In Casey (1993, 202–22), I give a much more complete description of a somewhat different list of basic features.
43. On cityscape and the glance, see Casey (1994).
44. On the anomalous—and revealing—case of traveling in the air, especially the upper stratosphere, see Virilio (1997).
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