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# GRASPING THE DYNAMISM OF LIFEWORLD

ANNE BUTTIMER

**ABSTRACT.** Recent attempts by geographers to explore the human experience of space have focused on overt behavior and its cognitive foundations. The language and style of our descriptions, however, often fail to speak in categories appropriate for the elucidation of lived experience, and we need to evaluate our modes of knowing in the light of modes of being in the everyday world. Phenomenologists provide some guidelines for this task. They point to the preconsciously given aspects of behavior and perception residing in the "lifeworld"—the culturally defined spatiotemporal setting or horizon of everyday life. Scientific procedures which separate "subjects" and "objects," thought and action, people and environments are inadequate to investigate this lifeworld. The phenomenological approach ideally should allow lifeworld to reveal itself in its own terms. In practice, however, phenomenological descriptions remain opaque to the functional dynamism of spatial systems, just as geographical descriptions of space have neglected many facets of human experience. There are certain avenues for dialogue between these two disciplines in three major research areas: the sense of place, social space, and time-space rhythms. Such a dialogue could contribute to a more humanistic foundation for human geography.

Let us think for a while of a farmhouse in the Black Forest, which was built some two hundred years ago by the *dwelling* of peasants. Here the self-sufficiency of the power to let earth and heaven, divinities and mortals enter in *simple oneness* into things, ordered the house. It placed the farm on the wind-sheltered mountain slope looking south, among the meadows close to the spring. It gave it the wide overhanging shingle roof whose proper slope bears up under the burden of snow, and which, reaching deep down, shields the chambers against the storms of the long winter nights. It did not forget the altar corner behind the community table; it made room in its chamber for the hallowed places of childbed and the "tree of the dead"—for that is what they call a coffin there: the *Totenbaum*—and in this way it designed for the different generations under one roof the character of their journey through time. A craft which, itself sprung from dwelling, still uses its tools and frames as things, built the farmhouse.<sup>1</sup>

**"DWELLING":** a noun or a verb? a building or a craft? a landscape artifact or a process? If an account like this were published by a geographer, would it earn acclaim or scorn? Strange indeed sounds the language of poets and philosophers; stranger still the refusal of

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," *Poetry, Language and Thought* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), p. 160.

science to read and hear its message. The humanistic geographer, attuned to the voices of scientist and philosopher, cannot afford to dismiss anything which may shed light on the complexities of man's relationship to the earth. Could the notion of "dwelling," in the sense used by Heidegger, offer a valuable perspective for geography today? To dwell implies more than to inhabit, to cultivate, or to organize space. It means to live in a manner which is attuned to the rhythms of nature, to see one's life as anchored in human history and directed toward a future, to build a home which is the everyday symbol of a dialogue with one's ecological and social milieu. It has been easier to describe how people may have lived in the technologically less complex milieux of former times, or to speculate romantically on how we might live today if the wasteland had not come to be, than to wrestle with the question of whether or how "dwelling" may be possible for contemporary man. Our heritage of intellectual constructs seems in many ways inadequate to describe contemporary styles of making a home on the earth.

Humanization of the earth could be seen as a process in which mankind has sought various styles of dwelling in space and time. Human geographers have sketched this record in diverse metaphors which shed light on its land-

scape traces: settlements, circulation networks, land use, and behavior patterns. Recently we have explored the *terrae incognitae* of mind and image. Malaise lingers, however, over the conceptual and semantic rift which separates our understanding of overt behavior and of its latent origins. With many other social scientists, we lack ideas and languages to describe and explain the human experience of nature, space, and time.

Many Western scholars have argued that such an ambitious quest belongs only to the poet, philosopher, or mystic. Social scientists, by definition, should confine themselves to partial, more explicitly limited, tasks. Today, however, the boundaries between disciplines are often traversed; scholars from diverse fields face a common task: to bring our ways of knowing into closer harmony with our ways of being in the world. Elaborate descriptions of (overt) behavior, "explained" in terms of disciplinary models (or philosophical dictum), remain opaque and static; they record facets of experience as emanating from a past, but shed little light on direction or meaning. In confronting this basic dilemma, philosophers and social scientists have much to share. Each could discover new facets of disciplinary identity and value. The rhetoric exchanged between philosophers and scientists in the past appears awkwardly anachronistic in view of the common task we face: a concerted effort to reconcile heart and mind, knowledge and action, in our everyday worlds.

Phenomenologists have been the most articulate spokesmen for this endeavor. Challenging many of the premises and procedures of positive science, they have posed a radical critique of reductionism, rationality, and the separation of "subjects" and "objects" in empirical research. With existentialists, they herald the liberation plea of lived experience, appealing for more concrete descriptions of space and time, and their meanings in everyday human living. To the enthusiast for scientific rigor, "lived experience" may appear as a phantom on the horizon, still resistant to conquest; a presence nonetheless which threatens to complicate if not divert the charted course of objective science. To some geographers, however, one compelling overall image of phenomenology and existentialism of-

fers promise for a more humanistic orientation within the discipline.<sup>2</sup>

Neither phenomenology or existentialism can provide ready-made solutions to the epistemological problems facing science today, nor do they offer clear operational procedures to guide the empirical investigator. If they are understood as perspectives, however, which point toward the exploration of new facets of geographic enquiry, then our recognition of them could be a valuable and timely development. The effort to bring intellectual knowledge into closer harmony with lived experience is already evident in ethnoscience, humanistic psychology, psycholinguistics, and other fields.<sup>3</sup> It seems appropriate, then, to scrutinize these perspectives a little more carefully, and to assess, as far as possible, their message for geographers.

Each participant in a dialogue needs to become aware of his own stance, and the stance assumed by the other, so that the language for dialogue could emerge, i.e., be jointly created, or at least jointly accepted, by both participants.<sup>4</sup> This essay begins with a fairly succinct description of phenomenology and its definition

<sup>2</sup> Yi-Fu Tuan, "'Environment' and 'World,'" *The Professional Geographer*, Vol. 17, No. 5 (September, 1965), pp. 6-8; "Geography, Phenomenology, and the Study of Human Nature," *The Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 15 (1971), pp. 181-92; *Man and Nature*, Commission on College Geography Resource Paper No. 10 (Washington, D.C.: Association of American Geographers, 1971); *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perceptions, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974); E. C. Relph, "An Inquiry into the Relations between Phenomenology and Geography," *The Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 14 (1970), pp. 193-201; D. Mercer and J. M. Powell, *Phenomenology and Other Non-Positivistic Approaches in Geography*, Publications in Geography (Clayton, Victoria, Australia: Monash University Department of Geography, 1972); and Marwyn S.amuels, "Science and Geography: An Existential Appraisal," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 1971.

<sup>3</sup> Gibson Winter, *Elements for a Social Ethic* (New York: Macmillan, 1963); William Sturtevant, "Studies in Ethnoscience," *Transcultural Studies in Cognition*, edited by A. Kimball Romney and Roy Goodwin D'Angrate, Special Issue of *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 66 (1964), pp. 92-124; A. J. Sutich and M. A. Vich, editors, *Readings in Humanistic Psychology* (New York: Free Press, Collier-Macmillan, 1969).

<sup>4</sup> One gets the impression from recent writing that the social scientist may only enter the discussion if he is willing to use the phenomenologist's language. This might not only fail to yield mutual benefit, but it would be inconsistent with some of the stated premises of phenomenology.

of lifeworld. Next it outlines three major stances assumed by geography and related disciplines on the human experience of "world" to highlight key conceptual issues which phenomenology may help to elucidate. Two notions from phenomenology, "body subject" and "intersubjectivity," and one from contemporary geography, the idea of "time-space rhythms," are potential bases for a dialogue between the two fields. The idea of body subject focuses on the direct relationships between the human body and its world.<sup>5</sup> The idea of intersubjectivity endeavors to construe the dialogue between person and milieu in terms of sociocultural heritage and the social roles assumed in the everyday lifeworld.<sup>6</sup> The idea of time-space rhythms is proposed as one perspective which could yield insight into the dynamic wholeness of lifeworld experience.<sup>7</sup> These ideas, and some personal reflections, suggest guidelines for developing a more experientially grounded type of humanistic thought within geography.

#### PHENOMENOLOGY AND LIFEWORLD

Phenomenology is not easy to define. The variety of descriptions reflect the fundamental differences among phenomenologists themselves, and the fluidity of its boundaries with other fields.<sup>8</sup> A core concern of "pure phenom-

<sup>5</sup> M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962); *The Structure of Behavior*, translated by A. L. Fisch (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963); *The Primacy of Perception and Other Essays*, edited by J. M. Edie (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964); and D. Seamon, "The Phenomenological Investigation of Lived Space," *Monadnock*, Vol. 49 (1975), pp. 38-45.

<sup>6</sup> Gabriel Marcel, *Man Against Mass Society* (Chicago: Requery, 1950); A. Schutz, *On Phenomenology and Social Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); and his *The Structures of the Lifeworld*, edited by T. Luckmann (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

<sup>7</sup> T. Hägerstrand, "What about People in Regional Science?", *Papers of the Regional Science Association*, Vol. 24 (1970), pp. 7-21; and "The Domain of Human Geography," *New Directions in Geography*, edited by R. Chorley (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 67-87.

<sup>8</sup> At least three distinct positions are evident among phenomenologists, ranging from the "pure phenomenology" of Husserl through the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, Marcel, and Schutz to the hermeneutical phenomenology of Ricoeur; Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in Q. Lauer, ed., *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* (New York: Harper, 1911), pp. 71-147; Edmund

enology" was the analysis and interpretation of consciousness, particularly the conscious cognition of direct experience.<sup>9</sup> One endeavors to peel off successive layers of a priori judgement and to transcend all preconceptions in order to arrive at a consciousness of pure essences. Such transcendental reflection should probe to the foundations of all scientific enquiry; it should become, in fact, the fundamental attitude from which all scientific enquiry should spring. Phenomenologists have argued that conventional scientific procedures are never self-conscious; they spring from a "naturalistic attitude" which observes, classifies, and "explains" phenomena within the framework of a priori postulates.<sup>10</sup> Such natural thinking presupposes that there is an external world awaiting the knower, and it never stops to examine whether knowledge is really possible at all.<sup>11</sup>

The phenomenological attitude, by contrast, demands a return to the evidence, to the facts themselves as they are given afresh, and a scrutiny of the act of consciousness itself. In the scientific or "naturalistic" mode of knowing, an individual may become so engrossed in the objects of his concern that he overlooks himself and the perspectives he brings to the study of these objects. The phenomenological notion of intentionality suggests that each individual is the focus of his own world, yet he may be oblivious of himself as the creative center of that world. He is, in a sense, an "alienated consciousness."<sup>12</sup> There is no absolutely transcendent standpoint available to man from which he might view himself and his world in relation. Each knower should recognize himself as an intentional subject, i.e., as a knower who uses words—intended meanings—to render his intuitions objective and communicable.<sup>13</sup> An indi-

Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (New York: Macmillan, 1913); Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., footnote 5; M. Natanson, "The Lebenswelt," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, Vol. 4 (1964), pp. 126-240; and N. Lawrence and D. O'Connor, eds., *Readings in Existential Phenomenology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967).

<sup>9</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1907); and P. Petit, *On the Idea of Phenomenology* (Dublin: Scepter Publications, 1969).

<sup>10</sup> Husserl, op. cit., footnote 9, pp. 13-14.

<sup>11</sup> Husserl, op. cit., footnote 9, p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> Petit, op. cit., footnote 9, p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> Husserl (1913), op. cit., footnote 8; and Husserl, op. cit., footnote 9.

vidual could do this in Husserl's famous principle of reduction, which demands that the knower return to the self and to the absolutely evident data. Phenomenology sets out to demonstrate the inadequacy of all naturalistic theories of knowledge, and tries to examine what knowledge is about—to clarify the "essence of cognition."<sup>14</sup> In general terms, then, phenomenology could be defined as a philosophical mode of reflection on conscious experience, and an attempt to explain this in terms of meaning and significance.

There are volumes of critique, nuance, and elaboration on this extremely elusive goal. There are also fundamental dilemmas, not least among which are the claims for becoming a superscience of essences on the one hand, and the repeated insistence on the uniqueness of individual (subjective) experience on the other.<sup>15</sup> Confusing, too, are the cross currents between phenomenology and existentialism, for existentialists in many ways undermine the idealistic premises of pure phenomenology.<sup>16</sup> Existentialists have been more concerned with issues of life—*anxiety, fanaticism, despair, fear and hope*—than with problems of knowledge and mind. Most disclaim the possibility of generalization, are harshly critical of rationality, and enjoy, it seems, the quagmire of ambiguity which surrounds human existence.<sup>17</sup> Existential phenomenologists have trod a winding and poorly lit passage as they have endeavored to adapt the phenomenological method to elucidate the lived world. The social scientist is drawn to the accounts of these explorers when he endeavors to discover the message of phenomenology. Traditional phenomenologists have recognized that man, the cognizing being, is anchored in a phys-

ical and social world, and that this "world" situation influences the meanings and intentionality of his consciousness. Existential phenomenologists have tried to use the phenomenological method to penetrate this lived world context within which experience is construed. They have recognized, too, that lived experience involves more than cognitive understanding, and have explored the vast variety of preconscious, organic, and sensory foundations which precede intellectual knowledge *per se*.<sup>18</sup>

There are difficulties, however, in relating the notion of "lived world" to geographic language and endeavor. In their quest for universals in human experience, phenomenologists have focused almost exclusively on individuals, and social experience and interaction have been construed primarily in the context of interpersonal rather than intergroup relations. In describing the human experience of "world," space, and time, too, there tends to be an emphasis on human subjects as the primary initiators and determinants of experience. "World" and milieu have been construed by many as passive, as a stage upon which, and over against which, subjects create their life projects. Geographers are aware of the active role of milieu—physical and cultural—in shaping experience, and hence their use of the terms "space" and "world" is different. Finally, social scientists who have adopted a phenomenological approach have tended to disentangle, to separate out, and to categorize distinct types and levels of experience in space and time. The everyday world, however, presents itself in dynamic unity, and it is experienced in a holistic way until thought begins to reflect on it.

It is in the spirit of the phenomenological purpose, then, rather than in the practice of phenomenological procedures, that one finds direction. There should be no inevitable conflict between ways of being and ways of knowing. Phenomenology invites us to explore some of the unifying conditions and forces in the human experience of world. Assuming that such unifying conditions may reside in the routinely given facets of everyday life (*lebenswelt*), this notion offers a good beginning for a dialogue between geography and phenomenology.

<sup>14</sup> Husserl, *op. cit.*, footnote 9, p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> Husserl "solved" this problem with the Transcendental Ego, whose "subjectivity" could eventually reach perfect objectivity, based on the intuition of essences. Many contemporary phenomenologists have abandoned this position.

<sup>16</sup> Stephen Strasser, "Phenomenologies and Psychologies," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, Vol. 1 (1965), pp. 80–105; M. Warnock, *Existentialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); and H. Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1960).

<sup>17</sup> Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, translated by D. F. Swenson (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1941); and Jean Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method*, translated by H. E. Barnes (New York: A. A. Knopf, Inc., 1963).

<sup>18</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *op. cit.*, footnote 5 (1962); and J. A. Kokelmans, "Merleau-Ponty's View on Space Perception and Space," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, Vol. 4 (1964), pp. 69–105.

"World" to the phenomenologist is the context within which consciousness is revealed. It is not "a mere world of facts and affairs, but . . . a world of values, a world of goods, a practical world."<sup>19</sup> It is anchored in a past and directed toward a future; it is a shared horizon, though each individual may construe it in a uniquely personal way. Once aware of lifeworld in personal experience, an individual should then aim to grasp the shared world horizons of other people and of society as a whole. Broadly speaking, *lebenswelt* could be defined as the "all encompassing horizon of our individual and collective lives."<sup>20</sup>

In everyday life, one does not reflect upon, or critically examine, such horizons: the notion of lifeworld connotes essentially the prereflective, taken-for-granted dimensions of experience, the unquestioned meanings, and routinized determinants of behavior. To bring these precognitive "givens" into consciousness could elicit a heightened self-awareness and identity and enable one to empathize with the worlds of other people. More insight into the nature of lifeworld is necessary in order to appreciate the alienating influences of technology and science on lived experience.<sup>21</sup>

#### THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF SPACE

Geographers, heirs to a long tradition of concern for the varieties of human experience, may find much phenomenological discourse on lifeworld "déjà vu." Only in relatively recent times have we engaged in modes of analysis and conceptualization which are so harshly criticized in phenomenology. Many geographers have reflected on the experiential meaning of earth occupation, although not the act of consciousness

<sup>19</sup> Husserl, op. cit., footnote 9, p. 93.

<sup>20</sup> J. Lyons, "Edmund Husserl," *Revised International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 7 (1968), p. 31; Husserl's treatment of *lebenswelt* appears most clearly in his later works, e.g., *The Crisis of European Philosophy* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964).

<sup>21</sup> Two essential features of lifeworld are recognized by phenomenologists: its physical (time space) character, and its social (intersubjective) nature. The first was explored explicitly by Merleau-Ponty and Scheler, and the second by Schutz and Marcel; Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., footnote 5 (1962); Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*, translated in 1970 by Hans Meyerhoff (New York: The Noonday Press, 1928); Schutz, op. cit., footnote 6; and Marcel, op. cit., footnote 6. I will consider the work of Merleau-Ponty and Schutz.

itself. Sauer advocated a naive approach to landscape description, and was skeptical about the use of a priori models.<sup>22</sup> Granö noted the importance of different senses in the perception and cognition of environment.<sup>23</sup> Subjective experience, fantasy, and taste influence the character of places.<sup>24</sup> Rarely, however, has a geographer made a phenomenological investigation of his own perceptions. Recent research on the cognitive, organic, and symbolic foundations and correlates of particular kinds of perception has relied on psychological or ethological models; this research could be described as "scientific" in phenomenological language.<sup>25</sup> The question, then, is whether or how phenomenology may help in elucidating the human experience of space. Two points deserve attention. Conceptually, it is helpful to consider the distinction between lived space and representational space, and methodologically, it is instructive to consider the phenomenological attempt to transcend the dualism between "subjective" and "objective" modes of understanding experience.

#### *Lived and Representational Space*

Positivists have argued that scientific notions of space are ultimately grounded in experience. The use of Euclidean geometric concepts has been identified in spatial perception among children.<sup>26</sup> Most conventional geographic procedures assume a Newtonian concept of space as a container in which physical objects and events

<sup>22</sup> Carl O. Sauer, *The Morphology of Landscape*, University of California Publications in Geography, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1925), pp. 19-54.

<sup>23</sup> J. G. Granö, *Reine Geographie: Eine methodologische Studie beleuchtet mit Beispielen aus Finnland und Estland*, Acta Geographica No. 3 (Helsingfors: Finnish Geographical Society, 1929).

<sup>24</sup> D. Lowenthal, "Geography, Experience, and Imagination: Towards a Geographical Epistemology," *Annals*, Association of American Geographers, Vol. 51 (1961), pp. 241-60; and Tuan, op. cit., footnote 2.

<sup>25</sup> M. J. Bowden, "The Perception of the Western Interior of the United States, 1800-1870: A Problem in Historical Geography," *Proceedings*, Association of American Geographers, Vol. 1 (1969), pp. 16-21; D. Lowenthal, "Environmental Perception and Behavior," *Environment and Behavior*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (September, 1972); and D. Stea and R. Downs, "Cognitive Representations of Man's Spatial Environment," *Environment and Behavior*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March, 1970).

<sup>26</sup> D. Harvey, *Explanation in Geography* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969); and Relph, op. cit., footnote 2.

are assigned a place. This representational space is an attempt to describe and analyze the experience of space through scientific, logical, and mathematical categories. Time becomes atomized into units of equal duration to facilitate generalization and theory: space is a three-dimensional grid with coordinates stretching endlessly along each of its axes, each coordinate point equal in its position, and equal lengths representing equal distances. No point is preferred to any other, but alternative zero-points can be chosen by simple transformations in the grid systems. Thus, lived experience is objectified. In the phenomenological view, however, space is a dynamic continuum in which the experiencer lives and moves and searches for meaning. It is a "lived horizon along which things and persons are perceived and valued."<sup>27</sup> Describing space merely in terms of its geometry is an inadequate approach to the understanding of human experience:<sup>28</sup>

For us, space cannot be reduced to geometric relations: relations which we establish as if, reduced to the simple role of spectators or scientists, we were ourselves outside space. We live and act in space, and our personal lives, as well as the social life of humanity, unfolds in space. Life spreads out in space without having a geometric extension in the proper sense of the word. We have need of expansion, of perspective, in order to live. Space is as indispensable as time in the development of life.

### *Ways of Knowing Experience*

Paralleling these distinctions between inner (personal) experience and outer behavior in space is the distinction often made between subjective and objective modes of knowing. Phenomenology tries to transcend this Cartesian dualism, and proposes a mode of knowing which recognizes the validity of both modes, but is identical with neither. Its initial criterion is the creation of a climate which makes it psychologically safe for the other person, event, or phenomenon to reveal its internal frame of reference: it seeks to encounter, rather than master, the object to be known. Whereas the subjective mode concentrates on unique individual experience, and the objective mode seeks generalization and testable propositions concerning

aggregate human experience, the "intersubjective" or phenomenological mode would endeavor to elicit a dialogue between individual persons and the "subjectivity" of their world. Generalizations (the "third person mode") should derive from a more basic relationship between the actors (first and second persons) within the drama of the life world.

How does this approach differ from conventional scientific methods of investigating experience? The essential difference lies in the distinction between behavior and experience, which is clarified in the phenomenological critique of two issues: the relation of body and mind, and the relation of person and world. Both are exemplified in Merleau-Ponty's critique of perception. "Our experience of the world is not first as science described it," he wrote, "we need to get behind such explanations in order to describe human behavior."<sup>29</sup>

One must shrink from models inspired by physics, or the human mind, and consistently return to direct experience. The primary data for perception are taken from the direct contacts between body and world. Neither of the two main currents of thought in Western science—empiricism and idealism—has satisfactorily explained experience and perception. The empiricist approach has failed because it attempts to explain the human experience of world as science explains the physical world. Neither has the idealist position yielded an explanatory account of experience. In claiming that consciousness constitutes the meaning of world, one has to assume, among other things, that perception coincides with understanding, which in experience is not always so.

The empiricist is an observer of a world from which he can separate himself, whereas the idealist sees world as an object of consciousness. Both imply some absolute truth external to the knower, or an absolute consciousness. Neither leaves room for the finiteness of human existence, and this is the crucial task. Merleau-Ponty suggested that we might approach the precognitive givens of experience, defined not in terms of our knowledge of them, but by our behavior in relation to them. He identified this as the study of perception, which takes place in an already patterned world, or one which is in

<sup>27</sup> C. G. Schrag, *Experience and Being* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 55.

<sup>28</sup> Eugene Minkowski, *Lived Time: Phenomenological and Psychopathological Studies* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1933), p. 400.

<sup>29</sup> Merleau-Ponty (1962), op. cit., footnote 5, pp. 3-22.



process of becoming.<sup>30</sup> One must reject any scientific cause-effect models of subject and object, and conceptualize the relationship between body/subject and world as reciprocally determining one another. Focusing on the relationship between body and world raises a number of philosophical and methodological questions. Much of the body's behavior becomes unintelligible if one treats it as pure subject (i.e., separate from environment). The precise nature of physical and psychic forces within the person can never be precisely determined, but one can describe the way in which they share his existential relationship to the world. If the body is treated as a milieu unto itself, e.g., as roughly equivalent to the psyche, then one can only uncover the contents of consciousness rather than experience.<sup>31</sup>

If one considers the body as object, as in behaviorism, one fails to recognize the importance of the psyche. The crucial fallacy in each of these approaches is the attempt to make the body yield knowledge, but the body is designed primarily for action rather than knowledge.<sup>32</sup> The relationship between person and world cannot be fully described in terms of causal connections; therefore the body is not an object. Similarly, awareness of the body is not a thought; therefore its inherence is never wholly clear. We cannot know the body at all except through the life we live in it in the world.

Scientific procedures fail to provide adequate descriptions of experience because of their implicit separation of body and mind within the human person. Similarly, if one separates person and world, the wholeness of experience escapes. Person (body, mind, emotion, will) and world are jointly engaged in the processes and patterns observable in overt behavior. Is this stance translatable into a language and set of procedures amenable to geographical description? At least three general avenues of enquiry could be identified. First, space has been construed as a mosaic of special places, each

stamped by human intention, value, and memory. Second, studies of social space have investigated the experience of world which is filtered through social reference systems and interaction networks. Third, space has been studied in terms of ecological processes and functional organization, its objectively measurable character as context, rather than expression, of human experience. In these three major avenues geographers have grappled with tensions between subjective and objective ways of knowing, between individual and collective perspectives, and between the temporal and spatial facets of experience. Some conceptual issues involved in these orientations may help to clarify our problems and the questions we pose to the phenomenologist.

### *The Sense of Place*

The coincidence of social and spatial identification within a region was exemplified particularly in early twentieth century studies of French *pays*.<sup>33</sup> Although physiographic boundaries were emphasized, the pattern of living (*genre de vie*) shaped and was shaped by the sense of place. Technological and economic changes in *genres de vie* opened people's horizons toward wider interaction networks, but did not always undermine the sense of place; even technologically sophisticated and urban populations have territorial identification.<sup>34</sup> In recent years much research has focussed on territoriality and proxemic behavior, and much insight has been gleaned into the organic, cognitive, affective, and symbolic foundations of identification with place.

Phenomenologists have corroborated many of these results in their essays on lived space and existential space.<sup>35</sup> Each person is seen to

<sup>33</sup> P. Vidal de la Blache, *La Personnalité Géographique de la France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1941); and A. Buttimer, *Society and Milieu in the French Geographic Tradition*, Association of American Geographers, Monograph 6 (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971).

<sup>34</sup> S. M. Lyman and M. B. Scott, "Territoriality: A Neglected Sociological Dimension," *Social Problems*, Vol. 15 (1967), pp. 236-49; H. J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers* (New York: Free Press, 1962); E. T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (New York: Doubleday, 1966); and S. I. Keller, *The Urban Neighborhood* (New York: Random House, 1968).

<sup>35</sup> Otto Bollnow, "Lived Space," in Lawrence and O'Connor, op. cit., footnote 8, pp. 178-86; C. Norberg-Schulz, *Existence, Space, and Architecture* (New York: Praeger Press, 1971); and Seamon, op. cit., footnote 5.

<sup>30</sup> Merleau-Ponty (1962), op. cit., footnote 5, pp. 52-63.

<sup>31</sup> A. Rabil, *Merleau-Ponty: Existentialist of the Social World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 21.

<sup>32</sup> Merleau-Ponty illustrated the notion of "body subject" in his treatment of perception (op. cit., footnote 5, 1962), referring particularly to sensory motor behavior (pp. 103-47), sexuality (154-71), and language (174-99); Rabil, op. cit., footnote 31, p. 21.

have a "natural place" which is considered to be the "zero point of his personal reference system."<sup>36</sup> This natural place is set within a "membered spatial surrounding," a series of places which fuse to form meaningful regions, each with its appropriate structure and orientation to other regions.<sup>37</sup> Each person is surrounded by concentric "layers" of lived space, from room to home, neighborhood, city, region, and nation. In addition, there may be "privileged places," qualitatively different from all others, such as a "man's birthplace, or the scenes of his first love, or certain places in the first foreign city he visited in youth."<sup>38</sup>

In many respects geography and phenomenology have arrived at similar conclusions about the experience of place. The routes of their investigations are different, however, and hence they offer valuable critical insight to one another. The phenomenologist notes that a social scientist using a priori disciplinary models to investigate experience may fail to tap direct experience. The social scientist may object to the tendency in phenomenology to universalize about human experience from individual accounts. A geographer would be justifiably skeptical about some of the generalizations which have been propounded about lived space. The ideal person described by phenomenologists appears to be rural (at least "local") at heart; nonplace-based social networks do not seriously influence his knowledge of space, or his attractions or repulsions from places. Surely a person could be psychologically present in distant spaces and milieux: places inhabited by loved ones, or milieux rendered vivid through literary or visual media.<sup>39</sup> Does "home" always coincide with residence? Could a person be "at home" in several places, or in no place?<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Bollnow, op. cit., footnote 35, p. 180; and G. Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), pp. 6-7.

<sup>37</sup> Bollnow, op. cit., footnote 35, p. 180.

<sup>38</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1957), p. 24.

<sup>39</sup> Rowles has discovered that elderly people sometimes vicariously participate in geographically displaced milieux inhabited by children and relatives whom they may never have visited.

<sup>40</sup> This question is based on evidence from a study in Glasgow some years ago. It was executed within the framework of positivist procedures, but I did try to explore sense of place, home, and satisfaction with life among selected housewives. The presence of a "home area" was most significantly related, of all the

Could the gestalt or coherent pattern of one's life space not emerge from mobility as a kind of topological surface punctuated by specific anchoring points?<sup>41</sup>

A more serious objection could be raised concerning the implicit assumption in some phenomenological writing that the human person is in charge, and that space and milieu are silent, or simply a kind of screen onto which a person may project his intentions. "Space becomes a horizon of existence itself. It is a horizon to be conquered, defended, explored, utilized and mastered in such a way as to be made concordant with human purposes." It responds to human initiative, mood, and memory.<sup>42</sup>

Some phenomenological study does emphasize the dialogical nature of people's relationship to place. Eliade's distinctions between sacred and profane space, Bachelard's illustrations of poetic modes of construing nature, place, and time, and Heidegger's notion of "dwelling" give an overall impression of ambiguity.<sup>43</sup> Phenomenologists affirm theoretically that environments ("world") play a dynamic role in human experience, but often in practice they implicitly subsume such dynamism within a dialogue in which human agents ascribe

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variables studied, to satisfaction with residence. Several respondents, of course, disclaimed having a home ground, some named areas which were removed from their present residences, and some appeared quite satisfied with life in the area while denying a sense of "at homeness." The relationship between interaction networks, images, and "home area" showed some evidence of residents' attempts to create a "membered spatial surrounding" through services, clubs, school, and church. Unlike the symmetrical stable patterns of home and center postulated by Bollnow and Schrag, I found a great variety of patterns. Most perceived home areas were symmetrically disposed vis-à-vis the residence, many were only partially bounded, and some were simply linear extensions along pathways used in movement patterns. Rather than settled stable patterns of home and neighborhood, my respondents revealed varying processes which only sometimes led toward a sense of belonging. What became overwhelmingly clear in open-ended responses to the question, "When returning home, at what point in the journey do you feel you are approaching your home?" was the salience of noncognitive, bodily, and emotionally based perceptions of space.

<sup>41</sup> M. W. Webber, "Culture, Territoriality and the Elastic Mile," *Regional Science Association: Papers*, Vol. 13 (1964), pp. 59-69.

<sup>42</sup> C. G. Schrag, *Experience and Being* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 63.

<sup>43</sup> Eliade, op. cit., footnote 38; Bachelard, op. cit., footnote 36; and Heidegger, op. cit., footnote 1.

meaning and significance. Geographers would be more inclined to ascribe a dynamism of their own to such external conditions as ecosystems, linkage patterns, and economies.

Overriding these differences in style and orientation emerges the sense of lifeworld as pre-consciously given facets of everyday place experience. One returns to the notion of *genre de vie*, and the routinely accepted patterns of behavior and interaction. From both geography and phenomenology the notion of rhythm emerges: everyday behavior demonstrates a quest for order, predictability, and routine, as well as the quest for adventure and change. The everyday lifeworld, viewed from the vantage point of place, could be seen as a tension (orchestration) of stabilizing and innovative forces, many of which may not be consciously grasped until stress or illness betrays some disharmony between person and world. This tension between stability and change within rhythms of different scales, expressed by the body's relationship to its world, may be seen as prototype of the relationship between places and space, home and range in the human experience of world.

### *Social Space*

Contemporary man is mobile, and he may experience space most vividly in networks of social and commercial interaction which could not be circumscribed within a given region or place. Scholars have explored networks of special interest and cultural groups, nonplace-based "realms," and accessibility surfaces of social and economic opportunity.<sup>44</sup> Space has been viewed as container of populations with particular demographic characteristics, and as stage on which networks of social interaction take place.<sup>45</sup> The boundaries of spatial experience

are seen to coincide with a social world rather than with a particular area. The underlying conception is of mobile man, place-transcending, whose horizons are set by his social worlds. Assumptions are made about the relationships between individuals and groups, the internal homogeneity of particular social categories or networks of interaction, and the salience of reference group perspectives for the individual, but these assumptions are not usually validated through autobiographical or personal accounts.

The validity of such notions as surrogates for direct experience rests on the credibility of sociological models. Generalizations on this dynamic component of space experience have been based on models derived from, or inspired by, physics and communications theory. How appropriate are such generalizations for the description of social experience? Phenomenologists would view society as an assembly of subjects, and try to examine behavior and interaction in terms of intersubjectivity.<sup>46</sup> People are born into an intersubjective world, i.e., we learn language and styles of social behavior which enable us to engage in the everyday world.<sup>47</sup> Our natural interest in day-to-day activities is pragmatic, not theoretical. Most of its features—social, physical, and technical—are assumed as given, reasonably predictable, and manipulable; ways of relating to it have been transmitted through our sociocultural heritage, which provides guidelines and schemata for actions and interactions. This intersubjective heritage does not normally have to be questioned unless we move to a different cultural setting.<sup>48</sup>

Consider what happens when one first encounters a foreign culture. The knowledge acquired in one's own society is inadequate; one has to question the former "givens" of social life and search for common denominators for dia-

<sup>44</sup> Webber, op. cit., footnote 41; T. Lee, "Urban Neighborhood as a Socio-spatial Schema," *Human Relations*, Vol. 21 (1968), pp. 241-68; F. W. Boal, "Territoriality on the Shankill-Falls Divide, Belfast," *Irish Geography*, Vol. 6 (1969), pp. 30-50; A. Buttimer, "Social Space in Interdisciplinary Perspective," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 59 (1969), pp. 417-26; and A. Buttimer, "Social Space and the Planning of Residential Areas," *Environment and Behavior*, Vol. 4 (1972), pp. 279-318.

<sup>45</sup> G. Törnquist, *Contact Systems and Regional Development*, Lund Publications in Geography (Lund, Sweden: University of Lund Department of Geography, 1970); G. A. Hyland, "Social Interaction and Urban Opportunity: The Appalachian In-migrant in

the Cincinnati Central City," *Antipode*, Vol. 2 (1970), pp. 68-83; B. J. L. Berry, "The Logic and Limitations of Comparative Factorial Ecology," *Economic Geography*, Vol. 47 (1971), pp. 209-33; and J. O. Wheeler and F. P. Stutz, "Spatial Dimensions of Urban Social Travel," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 61 (1971), pp. 371-86.

<sup>46</sup> Schutz, op. cit., footnote 6; and H. R. Wagner, ed., *Alfred Schutz: On Phenomenology and Social Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

<sup>47</sup> A. Schutz, "The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 49 (1944), pp. 499-507.

<sup>48</sup> Wagner, op. cit., footnote 46, p. 73.

logue with the other.<sup>49</sup> To gain a foothold, or basis for dialogue, one needs to grasp the inner subjective meanings common to that other group, its sociocultural heritage, and its "stream of consciousness."<sup>50</sup> One needs not only to recognize, but to translate, the signs and symbols of the other group, and to grasp empathetically the motivational meanings of their actions.<sup>51</sup> To imagine oneself as a stranger may illustrate the fact that intersubjective communication between groups involves similar but much more complex procedures and considerations than interpersonal dialogue. It demands more than empathy (which, after all, diminishes the "subjectivity" of the other); it requires a recognition of the alter ego, conscious subject of its own lifeworld experience.

Intersubjectivity connotes the inherited situation which surrounds everyday life. It can also be understood as an ongoing process whereby individuals continue to create their social worlds.<sup>52</sup> The key message of phenomenology for the student of social space is that much of our social experience is prereflective: it is accepted as given, reinforced through language and routine, and rarely if ever has to be examined or changed. Until the social scientist has

<sup>49</sup> Schutz, op. cit., footnote 47.

<sup>50</sup> James described "streams of consciousness" and their "emotional halos" as lived features of the sociocultural world, noting that they could not be grasped by logically derived scientific means.

<sup>51</sup> Schutz suggested a form of knowledge which is close to Weber's notion of *verstehen*; Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 3rd edition (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1947), pp. 1-30. "Subjective meaning" in Weber's view embraced both the meanings ascribed by an actor to his own conduct and the meanings ascribed to it by an external observer. *Verstehen* involved grasping the subjectively intended meaning of conduct by another. This "grasp" could be empathetic and/or rational. Weber emphasized the rational mode, which could be derived either from "actual understanding" based on direct observation of the actor or from "explanatory understanding" based on the underlying motivations of observed acts. The external observer could only infer on the basis of his knowledge of typical cases, i.e., probably motivations rather than certainty. "Rational" meanings, then, were idealized in terms of typical cases—meanings ascribed "pure" conditions. Weber did try to unmask the subjective components of action, but he did not proceed phenomenologically; he did not examine the tacit assumptions underlying his theoretical or methodological stance.

<sup>52</sup> Marcel stressed the intersubjective nature of human experience: "Man's existence is an existence-in-relation or it is nothing," Lawrence and O'Connor, op. cit., footnote 35, p. 327.

brought these social "givens" into consciousness, however, he is unable to appreciate the cultural bias in his own modes of thinking about experience, nor is he able to evaluate the appropriateness of a particular language for the elucidation of other social worlds. It is easy to see how phenomenology has inspired the development of comparative linguistics and ethno-science.<sup>53</sup> Its implications for geography have not yet been explored thoroughly: societies do not exist in a vacuum, they reside in territorial settings. To anchor social experience in the contexts of contemporary environments, phenomenologists leave many issues unexplored. Although they refer to "world" as an already constituted intentional structure, they have not yet explicitly recognized the dynamics of processes already operative which set the rhythms of time and space for everyday life situations. Geographers resorted to a similar kind of exaggeration when trying to counter charges of environmental determinism. Phenomenology suggests that we may justifiably claim a focus on man and environment without adopting a deterministic stance on their mutual relationships. The environment is not a *tabula rasa*, but a multilayered and dynamic complex. We have attempted to capture some of this dynamism both in our analyses of spatial systems and in our models of bioecological systems. Both endeavors could offer insight into the directedness or intentionality of the lifeworld surrounding each individual.

### *Time-Space Rhythms and Milieu*

One thrust of twentieth century geographic effort has been directed toward a more abstract topological conception of space, the context for and expression of systems and structures.<sup>54</sup> Geographers have examined the functional organization of space and have construed activities as the primary agents of spatial differentiation: maps and models "personify" space-using activities. Each spatial system—road network, service, opportunity surface—has its own built-in ethos, each lays claim to the space-time horizons of the individual, each is part of the inter-

<sup>53</sup> Sturtevant, op. cit., footnote 3.

<sup>54</sup> W. Bunge, *Theoretical Geography*, Studies in Geography, Series C (Lund: University of Lund, 1966); and H. Aay, "A Re-evaluation: Geography—The Science of Space," *Monadnock*, Vol. 46 (1972), pp. 20-31.

subjective heritage of a place. Problems arise in relating various types of spatial systems to one another, and also in examining the "packing" of activities and people within a particular area. Hägerstrand has recognized the conceptual weakness of an exclusive focus on space and the need to incorporate considerations of time, people, and finitude.<sup>55</sup>

The underlying conception is of aggregate man, exploiting the advantages of location and accessibility, and organizing functional complexes within space to optimize productivity and exchange. The first two approaches see experience of lifeworld primarily (often exclusively) as a function of personal, social, or cultural disposition, and the habits and motivations of human subjects, but the third approach sees space metaphorically as having a subjectivity of its own which is expressed in linkage systems, spatial structures, and functional networks.

The "time geography" model developed by Hägerstrand provides a promising perspective for investigating the dynamism of everyday environments. Each movement, event, and activity in a person's daily behavior can be represented in a four-dimensional grid: space is represented on a horizontal two-dimensional plane, and time on a vertical one. Each activity or flow of movement could be represented on an elongated cube or model of an area; each could be seen to generate its own particular schedules, sets of "stations," and "coupling" requirements, and weave its way through the maze of other flows. These time-space paths can give insight into the actual or potential harmony or conflict of circulation systems within a given area.<sup>56</sup>

Managerial interests dominate the time-space rhythms of work milieus and urban environments.<sup>57</sup> The schedules and programs of urban institutions profoundly affect the choice open to their clientele.<sup>58</sup> No attempt has been made to assess the experiential meaning of such scheduling in time and space: the model is designed to elucidate spatial constraints and opportunities surrounding everyday life choices. This func-

tional and topological perspective, however, also assumes an undifferentiated space—the "featureless plain" of our spatial tradition. Removing this assumption, and examining the dynamism of the biophysical substratum, one could uncover facets of "world" which play a crucial role in everyday experience. This multi-layered dynamic complex could also be represented in terms of time-space rhythms: patterns of sound and smell, light and dark, heat and cold, movement and stillness. Though each of these conditions may follow rhythms of different rates and scale, they could be synchronized within a time-space framework, and thus collocated with the rhythms of the functional milieu. The geographer's contribution to a more realistic exploration of the lifeworld might consist primarily in demonstrating the variegations of the potential time-space surface and the structure of the horizons within which individuals may choose. An awareness of these "givens" should help each person make more enlightened choices in relating to environment.

#### AVENUES FOR DIALOGUE

Phenomenologists may continue to seek more dynamic versions of human subjectivity, and geographers may further explicate the dynamics of "world," but there still remains the challenge of grasping their interrelationships. To render a version which would more truly resonate with human experience, one needs to ask how present one can be to the world as living event: how nature, space, and time speak in everyday living.<sup>59</sup>

Lifeworld, in geographic perspective, could be considered as the latent substratum of experience. Behavior in space and time could be regarded as the surface movements of icebergs, whose depths we can sense only vaguely. Whether one speaks of individual or collective experience, overt patterns of movement and conscious activity can be elucidated by exploring the dynamism and tensions of its taken-for-granted underpinnings. Problems apparent in the everyday experience of world are mirrored in the conflict between what individuals and groups have taken for granted about place, space, and society on the one hand, and what the managerial and functional requirements of spatial and bioecological systems have taken for

<sup>55</sup> Hägerstrand, *op. cit.*, footnote 7 (1970).

<sup>56</sup> Hägerstrand, *op. cit.*, footnote 7 (1970 and 1974).

<sup>57</sup> D. Harvey, "Revolutionary and Counter Revolutionary Theory in Geography and the Problem of Ghetto Formation," *Antipode*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (July, 1972), pp. 1-13; and W. Bunge, *Field Notes*, Discussion Paper No. 1 (Detroit, Michigan: Detroit Geographical Expedition, 1969).

<sup>58</sup> Hägerstrand, *op. cit.*, footnote 7 (1974).

<sup>59</sup> W. J. Ong, "World as View and World as Event," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 71 (1969), pp. 634-37.

granted in the organization of environments on the other. Phenomenology challenges each individual to examine his own experience, to become subject rather than object of research inquiry, and then reach for common denominators in the experiences of others. We need a language and set of categories which will enable us to probe lifeworld experience and to communicate about it.

Problems such as neurophysiological stress and anomie/alienation illustrate the fact that man and world are inseparably conjoined. Many share these experiences, and science and rationality alone cannot elucidate or heal them. In lifeworld language they could be regarded as behavioral indicators of a clash between the rhythms of time and space to which individuals (groups) have become attuned—physiologically, emotionally, and psychically—and those which their environments demand in the organization of space and time.<sup>60</sup> On a physiological level, each of us varies in our dispositions and capacities to be present to nature, space, and time; we vary in our needs for activity and repose, silence and sound, stimulation and rest, yet the environments in which we live and work allow little variation or choice in how we actually behave.<sup>61</sup> In most cities, for example, the spaces and times of the twenty-four hour day are already stamped by the rhythms of activity and circulation; one may choose to adapt to those rhythms on a conscious level and suppress body needs for silence, fragrance, privacy, or reflection. One may avoid conflict by blunting sensory awareness or mobility. People vary in their awareness of their surroundings and their capacities to transcend or master them.<sup>62</sup> Consider disadvantaged persons whose homes are on busy

thoroughfares; the “world” in which they may wish to dwell (in Heidegger’s sense of the term) allows little room for the kind of attunement with nature, space, and time which former experience may have predisposed them to expect. An Appalachian migrant housewife described her situation graphically:<sup>63</sup>

I have to think back though; I love to think back to the days we lived up in the hollow and neither Jack nor I cared what hour it was. We knew what we had to do, and we went and did it. There was the sun, of course; the sun’s time was enough for us. Up here, we never see the sun. I will wonder to myself sometimes: what has happened to the sun and to the moon? I can go for weeks and never see any sign of the moon, and the stars are always behind some cloud. And the sun doesn’t shine into our windows; we’re at the wrong angle, it seems. My little girl hears me complain, but she doesn’t really know what I’m talking about. She was two when we left home, and she doesn’t remember those evenings with stars so low you could hold out a cup and sweep it full of them, my mother would say, and the moon perched over a tree smiling at you. And in the morning suddenly you’d hear the birds begin, and you knew they were shouting their hello to the sun, and it was trying to get to your territory—from China is it? That’s what our teacher told us, that at night the sun was in China. Sometimes the sun would be slow in coming to us, so the birds seemed to get louder and louder, because they get impatient after a while, waiting and waiting. But then she’d come, and the whole cabin would be a different place. If I had to say one thing I miss most, it’s the sunrise. And the second thing, that would be the sunset. I see why everyone here has to have a watch or clock nearby. They’d never know otherwise whether it’s light or dark in the street.

How could a geographer use this account to elucidate her situation and that of other migrant families? A “relevant” geography of their world would sketch rhythms of sound and silence, light and dark, smell, movement, and land use of the hours and days of their milieux. Individuals could record their actual behavior through time and space, and note incongruent rhythms. Social scientists have done this kind of inventory of space use and time budgets, but unless one considers space and time together, as a synergistic whole, one cannot grasp cumulative effects and long-range implications. Conventional research on migration has focused on forces which push and pull, on images, anticipations, and realizations, on costs and benefits; ultimately, a theory is sought to “explain” assim-

<sup>60</sup> I do not imply that a focus on time-space rhythms could provide an exhaustive or all-embracing formula for the study of stress. Recent psychiatric research, however, has recognized the importance of “environmental factors” in the genesis and diagnosis of stress, but it still lacks adequate measures of “environment;” L. Srole et al., *The Midtown Manhattan Study* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962); and E. S. Lee, “Socio-economic and Migration Differentials in Mental Disease, New York State, 1949–1951,” *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. 41 (1963), pp. 249–68. A method which focuses on time-space rhythms within the environment might yield a more dynamic measure of environmental factors in producing and maintaining stress.

<sup>61</sup> Minkowski, op. cit., footnote 28.

<sup>62</sup> S. Milgram, “The Experience of Living in Cities,” *Science*, Vol. 167 (1970), pp. 1461–68.

<sup>63</sup> Robert Coles, “The South Moves North,” *Children in Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1971), Vol. 3, pp. 321–22.

lation to the new environment.<sup>64</sup> Ask any migrant "object" of such study whether these accounts adequately describe his experience, or help him understand or cope with his new situation in any sense beyond the prerequisites of economic or social survival.

Personal experience has shown me how the residue of former rhythms and routines in my relationship to nature, space, time, and people have influenced my evaluation of a new environment. I have realized how much this preconscious residue has shaped by capacity to engage wholeheartedly, to be humanly present, to a foreign world. One could also examine positive experiences from this point of view. The sense of well-being, health, and creativity are ways of being in the world which are not entirely explainable in rational terms. These positive experiences are related to the quality and pace of time-space rhythms of different physical and social milieux. As long as I sought explanation in the differences between milieux, or in the differences in my own dispositions, many dimensions of such experiences remain opaque; person and world interpenetrate, and bodies, emotions, desires, and fears channel the data which become meaningful in our behavior before they can be ordered in our minds.

My own reflections have highlighted the negative aspects of my capacity to be present to my work milieu: the "natural" attitude of preconscious body experience has been adaptive rather than creative. Adaptation to "world" was a strong motif in my education and socialization, a motif quite appropriate for a relatively stable cultural milieu, just as active mastery over milieu was a central motif in American education. In neither context, however, was (to my knowledge) the motif of existential freedom—engagement in, yet transcendence of, one's milieu—the primary educational goal, yet this would be a more appropriate preparation for the mobile, transient, and relatively unpredictable experiences of the latter twentieth century. In

partial piecemeal steps we could begin to set a direction which promises more intellectual insight, and more room for empathy, than our present procedures.

Perhaps the critical contribution of phenomenological reflection may lie in unmasking preconscious, preplanned, involuntary dimensions of experience. One faces the metaphysical issues of free will, determinism, motivation, liberation, and it is hard to see how the phenomenological method per se could yield much insight into the problems which people face in their everyday lives. It helps elucidate how their moorings in past experience can influence and shape the present, but it has little to say about future direction; it generally refuses to judge on problem resolution, on political life, stress, health, hope, and desire. What it does provide, however, is extremely important as preamble not only to scientific procedure, but also as a door to existential awareness. It could elicit a clearer grasp of value issues surrounding one's normal way of life, and an appreciation of the kinds of education and socialization which might be appropriate for persons whose lives may weave through several milieux.

To record behavior in an isometric grid representing space and time is only an opening onto the horizons of lived space and time. Neither geodesic space nor clock/calendar time is appropriate for the measurement of experience. The notion of rhythm may offer a beginning step toward such a measure. Lifeworld experience could be described as the orchestration of various time-space rhythms: those of physiological and cultural dimensions of life, those of different work styles, and those of our physical and functional environments. On a macrolevel one is dealing with the synchronization of movements of various scales, taking a sounding, as it were, at the particular point where our own experience has prodded us to explore.

Classical accounts of simpler genres de vie, or the social milieux of urban neighborhoods, have implicitly captured this perspective on experience.<sup>65</sup> We know little of contemporary life

<sup>64</sup> M. Brody, *Behavior in New Environments* (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1970); J. Wolpert, "Behavioral Aspects of the Decision to Migrate," *Papers of the Regional Science Association*, Vol. 15 (1965), pp. 159–69; A. L. Mabogunje, "Systems Approach to a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration," *Geographical Analysis*, Vol. 2 (1970), pp. 1–18; and D. Hannenberg et al., eds., *Migration in Sweden: A Symposium*, Lund Series in Geography, Ser. B, Vol. 13 (Lund, Sweden: University of Lund, 1967).

<sup>65</sup> Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Tupé-Cawahib," in J. Steward, ed., *Handbook of South American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1948), Vol. 3, pp. 299–305; Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 52 (1947), pp. 293–308; and Renée Rochefort, *Le travail en Sicile* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961).

styles from this point of view, but the record of human and ecological alienation suggests that we should try. Focus on a particular genre de vie may yield some insight into the conflict of time-space rhythms which an individual may experience, but to assess the implications of their juxtaposition in place is more difficult. Each genre de vie, analytically speaking, could be considered as a world unto itself, but existentially they interweave and jointly shape the common time-space horizons.

#### CONCLUSION

The still unanswered questions about the relationship between phenomenology and geography are many and complex. Whether it can lead us toward a more experientially grounded humanistic orientation within the discipline depends on much more empirical investigation. Recent commentaries on phenomenology have perhaps exaggerated the case against "objective" science. It is time we discovered that humanistic and scientific enquiry are not inevitably opposed; we need to find their appropriate roles in the exploration of human experience.

Anchoring the venture within our contemporary world, however, it is difficult to see how one can fail to move beyond the letter of the phenomenological law; one becomes fatigued with the "act of consciousness itself," and is prompted to engage in the existential issues of survival, anxiety, alienation, and hope. In such engagement, the geographer may discover that his unique contribution to the study of life world may involve.

The "wisdom" of social science, and its static equilibrium oriented models, speaks to mobile, transient society in a language of adaptation to milieu; it implicitly argues for making a viable home within a given place and its surrounding spaces. Existentialism may suggest a different kind of "wisdom," though it may exaggerate a person's potential capacity to transcend milieu.<sup>66</sup> Instead of bemoaning the advent of mobile society and condemning it as pathological and necessarily exploitative of nature, one might envision it as a challenge to develop a new respect for space, time, and nature. Instead of forcing all places to provide all the prerequisites for authentic living, one could conceive of a new areal differentiation of the earth,

each area containing a certain potential range of human experiences, and within each one a careful housekeeping of space and time to facilitate such shared experiences. The overriding importance of cost-efficiency criteria and competitive individualism in determining contemporary patterns of areal specialization has resulted often in awkward juxtapositions of incompatible activities, packed into a given space and time. If human liveability, human growth, be the principal criterion, one could envision a different kind of complementarity between places, a different ordering of spatial interactions and opportunities.

If people were to grow more attuned to the dynamics and poetics of space and time, and the meaning of milieu in life experience, one could literally speak of the vocation and personality of place which would emerge from shared human experiences and the time-space rhythms deliberately chosen to facilitate such experiences. In contradistinction with the "picture" versions of *homo economicus*, or *homo faber*, carving out cost-minimizing, profit-maximizing areas on the earth, one could envision a dynamic version of *homo sapiens*, more attuned to his own survival and growth needs, in dialogue with nature, space, and time.

Hindsight reveals how much of man's relation to nature is a function of the way scholarly minds have construed life, value, health, and rationality. To heal the wasteland and to erode the anachronisms and injustices in our current modes of regionalizing space demands more than campaigns against poverty, hunger, or international war; a radical reorientation of thought and vision within geography is also required.

If we hear its fundamental message, phenomenology will move us toward a keener sense of self-knowledge and identity; it will create a thirst for wholeness in experience and a transcendence of a priori categories in research. While reassuring us of the value of much contemporary effort on the dynamics and intentional structures governing the common time-space horizons of mankind, it could also sensitize us to the uniqueness of persons and places. Most of all it will make us aware of our characteristic mode of knowing man and his world. Do our major concepts and models in geography bear the stamp of the era in which they were first introduced? Whence came the tena-

<sup>66</sup> Bachelard, *op. cit.*, footnote 36, pp. 44-45.



cious preference for Cartesian grid systems, and whence the fascination with region? How relevant are such notions for an elucidation of today's lived world? Does the idea of region, for example, reflect our close ties with Western political structures, particularly in periods of colonization?<sup>67</sup> Were our maps, charts, and proposed regionalization schemata the best we could deliver in the service of imperialistic interests since the time of Alexander the Great? Does the fact of boundedness, or areal containment, and territoriality have some basis in lived experience? If so, how isomorphic would spontaneously defined "territories" be with the administrative-regionalization systems now operative within the world?

Do the major ideas presented in this essay resonate better with contemporary life world experiences? The notion of body-subject does appear to offer an attractive counterpoint to the virtual obsession over cognition and the cognitive dimensions of environmental behavior of recent years. Does it not also resonate with a growing concern to harmonize body energies and mind, e.g., in yoga, bioenergetics, psychomotor therapies, and "natural" ways of living? At least this notion should open the way for integrating the organic and the psychic aspects of behavior, and a sense of familiarity with the preconscious foundations of perception and behavior. The notion of intersubjectivity, taken either in the sense of cultural heritage or social interaction, should help bridge personal and collective dimensions of human experience. It could also shed light on the tensions between social past and present, and the implications of the life styles characteristic of any status quo. Focus on time-space rhythms could add an important focus for investigating the concrete circumstances of everyday life, much of which lies beyond the potential discretion of human persons. Time-space studies may presently be primarily directed toward an amelioration of environments from an externalist, managerial point of view, but the method could be fruitfully channelled toward phenomenological reflection on everyday behavior, and the modes of presence to world which are normally possible for human persons.

Together these routes into the exploration of life world should elicit a sense of finiteness, of human scale and feasibility, as opposed to the implicit faith in infinity, optimization, and reckless extrapolation of trends of our "rational" models of behavior. It should evoke a sensitivity to nature, sound, smell, and touch, so blunted by our technologically paved-over physical milieu. Mostly, it should generate a sense of shared lifeworld and invite evaluation of the ethos underlying the interpersonal relationships of the status quo by showing, for instance, how role polarization, competitiveness, and profit maximization are firmly linked with a particular ideological and political system.

Phenomenology muddies the waters for those who believe in separating "subjective" and "objective" modes of knowing; it questions the assumptions and ideological foundation of conventional scientific models; it offers ambiguity rather than clarity on several fundamental issues. It is not in reference to knowledge, however, but in the realm of experience that its central message rings most clearly. Here it questions the meaning of our activities as scientists: does gaining an intellectual grasp of problems make us more sensitive to our world, or does it remove us from it? Can our research models and routine interaction within the profession promote a keener sensitivity to our own lived worlds or to those of other peoples?

What one may gain in the end is a perspective which should be the preamble to, rather than the operational formula for, research methods. The choice still must be made by each scholar; phenomenology is neutral on issues of value judgment, as is existentialism. Together they challenge the social scientist to question radically his normal ways of knowing, his normal way of being in the world, and to dare to accept the responsibility of freedom. One who has peeled off successive layers of his lifeworld can either decide to acquiesce in adaptation to or alienation from the "determinisms" of the status quo, or engage in them humanly, yet in a transcendent way. Panacea for the problems facing positive science? A route in that direction perhaps. Liberation plea of lived experience? Potentially so, but "liberation" depends on the mode of one's engagement in it. Heralding a more humanistic perspective on geography? Herein lies

<sup>67</sup>J. M. Blaut, "Geographic Models of Imperialism," *Antipode*, Vol. 2 (1970), pp. 65-83.

perhaps its most important contribution. Not only could it help broaden our horizons to new areas of intellectual enquiry, but it could also help us transcend the artificial barriers which

our Western intellectual heritage has placed between mind and being, between the intellectual and moral, the true and the good in our life worlds.