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EXPERIENCE, NATURE, AND PLACE

One of the enduring interests in retaining some central place for experience in any account of how we are related to the rest of reality, is that experience seems to have the characteristic of being both something which belongs uniquely to the individual and is thus in some sense private and immediately accessible, and also something which reaches out and gives us access to objective reality. This dual characteristic has been noted by thinkers as different from each other as Locke, Hegel, and James. But the attempts to explain this characteristic, and to establish the degree of warranty one might have for any certainty claimed to arise from this characteristic of experience, traditionally met their fate on either the Scylla of dualism or the Charybdis of monism. A certain ambiguity, contradiction, or equivocation seemed to be demanded that appeared to doom the quest for an explanation that would clearly articulate the structure and power of experience.

I would like to address myself to this issue and to suggest that there is a certain sense in which experience involves a unique kind of place, and that by considering experience in this light we will be led to a more adequate account of it. I do not claim, of course, that this sense of place will explain everything problematic about experience; but I will maintain that if one looks at experience in terms of this unique sense of place, it will be possible to develop an acceptable, but yet essentially ambiguous notion of experience.

I

John Dewey expressed this ambiguity as well as anyone has when he wrote in *Experience and Nature* that at “every point and stage . . . a living organism and its life processes involve a world or nature temporally and spatially ‘external’ to itself but ‘internal’ to its functions.”¹ This formulation of the dual character of a living organism must, of course, be seen from within the problematic expressed at the very beginning of *Experience and Nature*: “experience is *of* as well as *in* nature.”² Dewey had thought for a long time that this called for the need to alter our conception of experience, a change which he had discussed in earlier essays such as “An Empirical Survey of Empiricisms.”³ Richard Bernstein, commenting on another essay of Dewey’s, “The Need for a Recovery in Philosophy,”⁴ sums up the dif-

ferences between a traditional notion of experience and what Dewey felt was necessary for a more adequate theory.

Dewey outlines five contrasts between the traditional notion of experience and one more congenial to contemporary times. Experience had been regarded as a knowledge-affair, but it encompasses all modes of interaction of the human organism with its environment; experience had been conceived of as primarily subjective and private, but subject-object is a functional distinction instituted within experience; traditional empiricisms, Dewey claims, had been concerned with the present and the past in experience, but experience 'is characterized by projection' into the future; experience had been understood as consisting of discrete disconnected particulars, but it contains within itself genuine connections; and finally, experience had been divorced from, and contrasted with, reason, but experience is 'full of inference' and can become funded with intelligence.⁵

This particular notion of the problematic of experience is not Dewey's alone. John Smith, for example in his *The Analogy of Experience*, makes the issue central to a consideration not only of the theological problem with which his work deals, but important for the solution of any set of problems involving the human condition. In a discussion of the general theory of experience and in an attempt to give "a more faithful account of the nature and status of the experience we actually have," Smith makes the following observations.

There are three points. . . . First, there is the contrast between experience as the domain of sense . . . and sharply distinguished from reason or thought, and experience understood as the funded and meaningful result of a multidimensional encounter between a concrete person and whatever there is to be encountered. Second, there is the contrast between experience as a body of data present to a theoretical observer who regards the *knowing* of those data as the primary concern, and experience in its variety embracing the moral, esthetic, scientific and religious dimensions which give point and purpose to the life of an individual person. Third, there is the contrast between experience seen as a private mental content which stands as a veil between ourselves and the so-called external world, and experience as objective disclosure of what is there to be encountered, whatever it may prove to be.⁶

In these observations taken from Smith, Bernstein, and Dewey there is one strain of the argument I would like to concentrate on for the purpose of this paper. Smith focuses on it in the following passage from the same work.

Reality is open to experience, and man is open to reality; experience, though it is always realized by someone, somewhere and somewhen, is not a private set of mental representatives or copies of what is encountered. Experience is, instead, an intersubjective way of meeting reality which issues in the funded result of

many encounters whereby it is disclosed. That funded result in the form of qualities, relations, events, objects, purposes, meanings is a genuine disclosure of the real world. As such, this result is far richer and more complex than the impressions, representations and sensory data envisaged by classical empiricism.⁷

Smith is insisting, on the one hand, on the objectivity of experience and on its authentic openness to what is there “in reality.” On the other hand, he is not simply denying that there is anything internal, subjective, or private about experience. As we have seen, it is somehow both internal and external, both subjective and objective, both private and shareable. What I want to suggest is that this means that in dealing with the nature of the “someone, somewhere and somewhen” we are dealing with a situation or phenomenon of *being in place* which cannot be captured by any of the traditional senses of self, space, or time. Rather, we shall have to accept two different senses of ‘place’ if we are to do justice to experience. The first sense—and the usual sense—I shall call “secondary” or “objective” place. A second sense, which I shall call “primordial” place, when added to the first, gives us the unique sense of place we need in order to have an adequate conception of experience.

II

First, there is a definitional matter. When I speak of ‘place’, I do not mean space, but rather space-time; for both space and time taken by themselves are abstractions. Every concrete, lived space is a space temporally located; and every concrete, lived time is a time spatially located. When I say that some people are together some place, or that I am some place, or another person is some place, I do not refer simply to a set of abstract spatial coordinates, but to those coordinates now, at this time or then, at some time in the present, the past, or the future. The room or whatever place is being referred to, if referred to as a real place, is a different place not only with respect to other spaces, but also to time. Likewise, “now” must always be now in some space or other. So the notion of ‘place’ rules out considering either space or time as self-existent or concrete by itself.

I would like to introduce an example. I am sitting in my study, looking out onto a garden and the year is 1984. In terms of the dual nature of experience we are puzzling about here, the study, garden, and all the surroundings are both internal to my “private” experience and yet also external in the sense of being objective or transcendent to me as a person experiencing them. The “world or nature [is] temporally and spatially ‘external’ to [myself] but ‘internal’ to [my] functions,” to use Dewey’s phrase.⁸ Or, to

quote Smith, "there is the contrast between experience seen as a private mental content which stands as a veil between ourselves and the so-called external world, and experience as objective disclosure of what is there to be encountered, whatever it may prove to be."⁹

Now this place could, in relatively ordinary terms, be identified in any number of ways: as a geographical place, a physical place, a biological place, an historical place, a sociological place, to name but a few. Whatever it be taken as, there would be certain spatio-temporal and other parameters in terms of which this place could be uniquely identified. I myself (taking myself as an object of an appropriate kind, e.g., sociological, physical) would be identifiable as one of the objects situated in terms of that place and in relation to other (possible and actual) objects in that place. As other persons entered the study, they too could be properly placed. Likewise, the desk, books, etc. would each be properly placed. Using this common notion of different types of places, we have a way of situating or indexing all relevant objects and events, as well as objects and events which occur in other places taken relatively to this place which is my study.

There are six characteristics of this general notion of place that I would like to note. (1) Each kind of place is relatively independent categorially. Geographical place has its own parameters; i.e., even though there may be some relation to parameters for, e.g., geological or historical place, in the end the geographical determination of place would be autonomous. That is to say, once fixed, the parameters work autonomously as a closed system. If there are geological or sociological factors involved, they are involved as factors in the systemic geographical location of place.

(2) The objects to be found in these objective places belong to those places, are defined partially in terms of the kind of place that it is. So, in historical places, historical objects are found; in physical places, physical objects; etc.¹⁰ Historically, I am an historical object, a philosopher found writing in State College, Pennsylvania in 1984, part of a line of American philosophers who have thought about this topic of experience, having been trained in the American university system, etc. Geologically, of course, I am none of these things; for categorizations such as philosopher, writer, American, university system, and perhaps even the ethnocentric identification of a period of time as the year 1984 A.D., are irrelevant to geological places.

(3) Within any objective place there is a system of places, all related to each other in terms of the parameters appropriate to such places. As a geographical place, the place in which I now find myself, is, spatially defined, State College, Pennsylvania. But we could also determine it more exactly as a particular part of State College, or more specifically as my house,

my study, or the chair in front of the desk in my study. Or the spatial dimension can be more generalized as well. The temporal side of the place in which I am can also be fixed in different degrees of specificity or generality: 1984, the last quarter of the 20th century, etc.; or, in the other direction, November, November 14th, the morning of November 14th, etc. All of the relative degrees, in all the possible appropriate permutations of space/time coordinates, are systemically determined and connected with each other.

(4) Closely related is the fact that any of the places specified are related to other places specifiable within the same parameters. Thus, the year 1984 is related to other years, and State College is related to other cities or like locations in the space to which State College “belongs”; the place 1984-in-State College is related to the place 1984-in-Paris or to the place 1983-in-State College. Various geographical changes can be noted in terms of these differences, comparisons can be made, and variations in the objects in these places can be fixed in geographical terms. Each of the designations of a place is relative to each of the other designations. It is because a certain calendar or other temporal measure is being used consistently in these measurements of place—i.e., because there is a consistent system of objectively indexing place—that the spatial dimensions can have meaning. If the time 1984 were not in the system of times that exist within the calendar, the fixing of place would have no meaning. Likewise, if the system of spaces were not consistently indexed from within a certain map system, then the temporal dimensions would lose contact with each other. In short, if the whole system of relations were not fixed within a general, extended place, then the coordinates would not have meaning.

(5) I, as well as all other objects, can be said to be in a place only relative to other objects which are in that place and in the places related to it. Each of the objects in my geographical place is defined in position relative to other objects and relative to myself. I am to the north of the garden, the garden is to the south of me as I sit in the study. November 13th is “behind” me and November 15th is “in front of” me.

(6) This means that in terms of geographical place—and *mutatis mutandis* for other kinds of place—there is no privileged position. If something is on the periphery or in the center, it is determined as being such only in relation to the other things. What is the center in one instance is not the center in another. Everything depends on the scope and the degree of specificity involved, and on the specific way in which the parameters have been set. And the same is true, respectively, for “before” and “after” temporally.

Thus far I suspect that there is nothing I have written which has not occurred or is not clear to anyone who has thought about geographical place

or place in some other objective sense; and everything I have said addresses the fact that I am in place in such a way that what is experienced is there, e.g., geographically, and is that to which my experience is open precisely because I am situated in the place in which what is experienced is somehow also placed.¹¹ And this is the way in which one usually thinks of place. But if we restrict ourselves to such an idea of place or of various objective places, we will miss the complexity of experience—a complexity to which the tradition has appealed, but most often has rejected because of the ambiguity involved in allowing simultaneously for another, radically different sense of place. For there is a dimension attributable to place, as it pertains to experience, which does not derive from the system of coordinates belonging to any given objective place. If I were to designate the place in which I am now working as “here and now,” and compare it to yesterday (“here and then”), or to my office at the University right now (“there and now”) or yesterday (“there and then”), the indexicals “here,” “there,” “now,” and “then” and their combinations would *not* derive *solely* from the geographical system (or from any other objective determination of place). The reason is this: we have already seen above that there is no privileged place within any system of objective coordinates; but, on the other hand, in order to specify something as here, there, now, or then, it is necessary to have some fixed position, some privileged place from which to determine what is temporally now or then and what is spatially here or there. No set of purely objective indexicals includes as part of its structure the capacity to fix such a determinate set of indexicals or their appropriate permutations. While it is true that the “here and now” does belong to the place State College-in-1984, the belonging is not due to the geographical nature of the place. Geographically, i.e., objectively, 1984-in-State College will always be what it is now, and will be geographically related in a relative way to 1983-in-State College and to 1984-in-Paris. But it is uniquely “now” that it is here, and uniquely “here” that it is now. In 1985 or 1983 it will be or was then, and in respect to Paris it is there. If we look more closely into this phenomenon of privileged place—I am calling it “primordial place” for reasons which will become apparent in a moment—other characteristics emerge which will begin to contribute to an explanation of the way in which, in Dewey’s terms, the world and nature are external to my experience and yet internal to my experience and the way I interact in the world.

III

The place in which I find myself is “here and now” for me as well as for others who are located, say geographically, in the “same place”; but for

persons outside of State College at this moment State College is “there and now,” while for persons who were here yesterday this present moment was designated “here and then.” In short, there are other privileged places from which to range over the whole of the objective system of places, and in terms of a privilege which cannot derive from or systemically belong to objective place. Furthermore, other objects in this place—including other persons who may be found there—are locatable in terms of positions attributed to them relative to the primordial, privileged here and now. The garden, the street, the University, the students and professors in the library at the University, are all here, there, now, or then relative to the here and now which I occupy, as well as relative to the here and now of each individual person. The directions of the compass and the segments of the clock and divisions of the calendar are supplemented and overridden by the non-objective determinations of position in place which belongs to every person who experiences the world. The here and now *which I am* (as contrasted to the here and now *in which* I might find myself placed) is *literally* primordial because there is a primary ordering which derives from it and which also belongs to it.

The contrast between objective place and its closed systemic nature on the one hand, and the complexity and relativity of primordial place on the other hand, is the heart of the issue concerning the ambiguity of experience noted at the beginning of this present essay. On the one hand, each person is a privileged center of indexicality; but for that reason there are many such centers, each of which retains its absoluteness in the presence of the relativity in respect to other persons. That is to say, my designating the study as here and now does not contradict or even conflict with it being designated by my wife as there and now, or with it being designated by me tomorrow when I am at the University as there and then. Or, put in another way, if I turn north and designate something as “there,” and then turn to the south and designate something as “there,” the compass is overridden by my indexing. The same would be true of the temporal aspects of place. The absoluteness of the privilege seems, then, to be opposed by the relativity of the presence of a multiplicity of privileged places. I will have more to say about this below. In contrast, however, there was a non-privileged, relative character to locations in objective place (e.g., in geographical place), each place being merely relative to other places in the system. But this relative character remained within a closed and thus absolute system of coordinates. That is to say, the precise determination of “in-my-study” was relative to other coordinates of place in the system of geographical places, but would remain in precisely that relative position in place irrespective of other factors: it remains absolutely what it is. To designate it in any other way would be either to abandon the system of objective place first taken up or to con-

tradict oneself by giving a set of coordinates incompatible with the first set. It is true that one could expand or contract the designation, but that would leave the original designation intact relative to all other possible designations. So, while there is a relativity to all objective place designations, they remain, systemically, absolutely the same throughout. On the other hand, while there is an absolute privilege to primordial place, it becomes relative in the sense that there are other places of indexing which differ as to the relevant coordinates.

To sum up for the moment, there are two sorts of indexing which we can see at work here, and the both together will constitute the place which is unique to experience and which has given it its importance (as well as its character of being the center of many disputes) in the tradition. The first is the system of indexing which belongs to and specifies in a fixed way the places relevant to a specific universe of discourse: geographical, biological, historical, etc. This system relative to a universe of discourse is a totality, a constant, and is autonomous. It specifies the relative places in which objects appropriate to that universe of discourse are to be found. Objects within this system of indexing are all indexed relative to the terms of the index and thus are relative to each other, i.e., have only relative space/time position. The second sort is the system of indexing which belongs to certain of the objects (i.e., experiencing individuals) which can be located in various universes of discourse but which, at the same time, is a system in some way independent of the indices belonging to the various universes of discourse. The objects at the origin of this primordial system of indexing are themselves absolute, constant, and autonomous and, in turn, specify the relative places in which other objects in any given universe of discourse can be found. Each experiencing individual is the origin of this second system of indexing and is in this sense non-relative. Each origin uniquely fixes the indices and locations for all objects. The whole is relative to this kind of part which is the origin of primordial indexing. At the same time, there are many such origins, none actually conflicting with the others, yet each indexing differently from the others.

If we now explore more fully this latter system of indexing we will see that it is not only a system of indexing which contributes to the fixing of place, but is the central feature of experience and the feature which gives to experience the ambiguity which has been so problematic for the tradition.

IV

If we look to the actual experience of being a person or a self, we find a characteristic in all the behaviors—a characteristic observable by others if

they listen to reports given by the individual, and thus not something unobservable or esoteric—which gives direct evidence of primordial indexicality. Let us look again at the example. I am writing this essay at this moment, and in the space of this study. The place is objectively locatable in various ways, and whatever the objective location, it will remain forever within those coordinates. Earlier this morning I was doing something else, at another time and in another space. That place can also be fixed and will never change so long as one stays within the parameters used to locate the behavior. Yesterday, at a definable place, I was also writing on this essay. Furthermore, there are other selves, other persons who were also active in those and in other places. All can be objectively fixed; every single thing each of us does can be properly indexed in this way. *There is, objectively, nothing left over, and we all have positions relative to each other and consistent with the parameters in force.*

But one of the things which might be noticed about me, or that I might report, is that I experience the fact that I am writing this essay here and now, while my activity earlier this morning is now identified by me as taking place there and then, and my writing in this study yesterday is identified now as occurring here and then. On the other hand, had I been queried yesterday or earlier this morning, the indexing would have been different. If asked yesterday while writing I would have identified *that* place as here and now. I would have identified what I am doing at this moment (which then would have been “tomorrow”) as something that I would probably be doing here and then, and I would have identified my eating breakfast this morning in another room as there and then. And the same would be true for any other person. They would identify their own respective actions in a like manner, while identifying mine in a way different from the way in which I would identify it. However, if they were indexing the faculty studies in the library at the University as here and now and we were both writing in the studies at the library, they would identify the place as I would: here and now. Thus, we not only override objective designations, but we might also override, as well as coincide with other persons’ respective indexical systems. This encompassing of experience and experiences introduces the further complexity of the questions of intersubjective experience, other minds, etc.

There are several important things to notice here before going on. First, as I have already pointed out above, the designation of place, the index, even within the same (e.g., geographical) objective index, varies directly with the individual. The “here,” “there,” “now,” and “then” are determined uniquely by each individual, and may or may not be in agreement with the indexing by any other person. The location of the self as experiential indexing is both determined and determining: it determines itself reflex-

ively as well as determining other objects in respect to place. Second, a given behavior will be *variously* indexed in a primordial sense even though it is indexed in a fixed and unchangeable way objectively. If we take this activity of writing as evolving in this place—in this set of space/time coordinates in some objective index—then it is primordially indexed by me while in that place as “here and now,” but when I am in another place it will be indexed in other ways. And the same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, as others index this act of writing. The reason for this is that there is a complete invariance of place in the case of each experiencing person. In other words, whatever I am doing, in whatever space (wherever) and at whatever time (whenever), it is always “here and now.” Whatever the change may be in objective place, however differently I may index what is here and now or there and then, I am always and invariably here and now.

In this sense the experiencing self is place, and what is “in” my experience is experienced as belonging uniquely to me and as having continuity. I am place in the sense that I am always and everywhere “here and now,” always the same place, everywhere the same place. Without a doubt there is also change and much complexity concerning my self or who I am, but in spite of that there is always this character of simplicity and absence of change. Here/now is always and everywhere the place in which I am, and it is this derivatively from the pure here/now which I am.

It is important that one not think of this characteristic of constancy as simply reference to the fact that there is an identical item in the world being referred to, whatever place it might occupy. That is to say, it is important not to reduce this phenomenon to simply the case of any object capable of moving or of being moved, or even of simply developing or subsisting over time. For this would not capture the absoluteness of this place and the consequent absoluteness of the experiencing self. If this phenomenon of constancy indeed involved only reference to an item which remains constant through change, then the place of that item—the experiencing self—would remain completely relative in every sense. There would be no privilege in terms of objective place. This being true, there would be no sense to the observed characteristic of this phenomenon, namely that in whatever place the experiencing self might be, that place is designated by it as “here and now,” without at the same time denying the constancy of the relative objective position. Only if one recognizes this characteristic of an experiencing self can one explain the complete phenomenon. The experiencing self is *itself* a privileged place which has the authority to designate objectively designatable places as here or there, now or then. And it can do this regardless of the system of objective reference only because it in some sense “stands outside” the relativity within the objective system, and stands there as constantly “the same” place.

This means, thirdly, that there is a kind of eternity and omnipresence to the self as place. It is an eternity and omnipresence because it itself does not change: here/now is always here/now, and the experiencing self *qua* experiencing is *never* there/then. It is an eternal present, if you wish, a present in both the spatial and the temporal senses of that term.¹² But it is an odd sort of eternity and omnipresence if we take for a paradigm the traditional sense of being an infinite instant with no change; for while the here/now is always here/now, it is *also* true that the content changes in the sense of constantly involving new behaviors or activities which have not occurred before. The “change of place” involved objectively is also involved in this eternity. But that does not alter the fact that the place which the experiencing self *is* does not change. This ancient puzzle—that the self is permanent in the sense of preserving identity over time and space *and* that the self is ephemeral in the sense of changing identity over time and space—is rooted in this double sense of place which constitutes experience. It is in reality not a puzzle, but simply a fact, an important characteristic, an identifying ambiguity or contradiction which must be accepted as the truth about the self. In fact, the true nature of the self and its experiences would be lost if we did not preserve with equal weight both of these senses of place and the characteristics which go with them. The primordial here/now *is* eternal and omnipresent only in contrast with and in coexistence with the changing of experiences and of the experiencing self over space and time; what is indexed *by* any person *qua* primordial here/now is constantly of a differing character and in constantly changing objective places. The primordial here/now exists only in tension with the secondary here’s, there’s, now’s, and then’s which are “indexed” from a point of reference which is nothing other than the primordial here/now.

Thus, experience involves not simply eternal and omnipresent place, but an odd sort of one if we take the usual notion into account. For with the usual notion there is no change in time and space at all, but, rather, everything is captured simultaneously, in an instant as it were. The experiencing self, on the other hand, is not only place as primordial, but place as primordial and as indexing its own place and the place of other objects as these are given in experience. As experiencing I do not achieve my identity as a self simply because of my constancy; for as pure constancy I would be empty and thus could not be distinguished—even objectively—from other individuals with different experiences. I or any other experiencing self literally lacks specificity without the other seemingly contradictory aspect of experience, namely its changeability, its ephemerality, its constant over-reaching of itself as a constant self. That this place which I uniquely and always and everywhere am has just this “content” in its collective experience rather than another content is what makes me unique and in those

terms the same self. On the other hand, if there were not the simple identity of primordial place, there would not be a self at all, no experience at all, but only some object which could be identified if carefully plotted in its movements through some specific set of objective places. It could be argued that this desk on which I write has also undergone changes and yet remains the same desk, but this does not get to the heart of the issue; for so far as I know, the desk does not primordially index the world. Leibniz tried to make it so with his theory of monads, and if he was right, then I am wrong; but I simply find no evidence to support Leibniz's contention.

Finally, one of the characteristics deriving from the uniqueness and active character of the self as primordial indexing is that it reveals what has been traditionally discussed as "the privacy of the self." Put in other terms, only I have a certain kind of access to myself; my self is private, my experience is my own, no one else can *be* or stand for my experience. There is much *about* my experience and about me as a physical-psychical-mental-social being which is directly accessible for other selves through observation. Even the *fact that* there is a dimension of privacy to the self is observable. But my place as primordial place is unique, absolute, closed off to all others.

Several other consequences also follow from this uniqueness and activity. One is that, because the indexed is as much a necessary part of myself as the place which does the indexing—without the former there is no content and uniqueness to a self—the self also involves a sharing of this content with others, and a sharing in two senses. First, the place which I am is a working-in-this-study, but there is always the possibility and often the actuality that others could also have as their unique place a working-in-this-study. Second, they can know that part of what makes me "me" is that I have worked and am working in this study. They simply observe this or I tell them. And I can know something like this about them. We can discuss the study, its merits and its defects. What I index is public because I refer to it as a given.

This means that we can share experiences, that we can share places, that there is the possibility and actuality of an *intersection* of primordial places. It means that there are common places, both as actual and as possible. There is no mystery, given the dual nature of the self as place—its private and its public nature. The objective place as I index it is not mine alone but rather the location of a possible intersection of primordial places, of self. The indexing is mine alone, private, closed off from anyone else. The self is thus not only that central core of indexicality, but as well what is indexed, the objects and events which can be "reported" in a biography.

V

This view of the self preserves what is true from both of the extremes which have emerged from the tradition and which Dewey and others have tried to bring together. On the one hand, the enclosed, unique, atomistic self is still here, but only as a place of a special kind, not as the self *per se*. The relation between primordial indexing and what is indexed, however, shatters as well as preserves that atomicity; for what is indexed is as crucial to the preservation—indeed to the very existence—of a self as is that pure, unique activity to which I refer as my innermost self. Thus, it is also true that the self is a relating and a set of relations, a social and physical self which shares with others what is public. The specificity of the self comes from this aspect which is the concrete action of the private aspect. Neither public nor private, neither outer nor inner, neither social nor atomistic self is the whole story.

There is much else to be explored concerning this conception of experience as founded in these two senses of place. Among others, there are questions about the relation between the indexicality of experience—in both the objective and the primordial senses—and the categoriality which brings intelligibility to the content of experience.¹³ In the present essay I have only tried to examine some of the characteristics of place as it applies to our concrete experience and as this sense of place might contribute to an understanding of the ambiguity which is inserted in any careful reflection on experience.

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NOTES

1. John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (New York: Dover, 1958), p. 278.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
3. "An Empirical Survey of Empiricisms," in *Studies in the History of Ideas*, edited by the Department of Philosophy of Columbia University (New York: Columbia University, 1935), III, 3–32. Reprinted in Richard Bernstein, ed., *Experience, Nature, and Freedom* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press), 70–87. This "new version of experience" continues also in Bernstein's own works. See especially his *Praxis and Action* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971) and *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).

4. "The Need for a Recovery in Philosophy," in *Creative Intelligence: Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1917), pp. 3–69. Reprinted in Bernstein, *Experience, Nature, and Freedom*, p. 19.

6. John E. Smith, *The Analogy of Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 33–34. See also his account of the historical differences between conceptions of experience, *Ibid.* pp. 32–43.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 40. What I am going to touch on in my own text now reflects also a proposal for the sort of "metaphysical" analysis which would undergird the conception of place in John McDermott's *The Culture of Experience* (New York: New York University Press, 1976). In addition, and to range a bit farther afield, what I shall now argue concerns something also at the basis of, e.g., Hilary Putnam's reflections in *Reason, Truth, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). I hope that I can address what Putnam there calls the "preconditions for thinking about representing, referring to, etc." (16), and can lay a foundation which will neither lead to nor involve any "magical theory of reference" but, rather establish the kind of *place* where the "causal connections" can be established. (16–17).

8. Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, p. 278.

9. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

10. This is not to say that there are not physical objects to be found in geographical places. The point is only that their meaning or importance, *qua* physical, is subsumed under their geographical significance.

11. Objects and places thought of (in memory) or anticipated (in imagination) also fall within the descriptions of place just given. The places remembered or imagined are geographical, physical, or of some other sort. But there is an oddity about such modes of experience which needs also a consideration of the second sort of place I wish to discuss, primordial place.

12. This "presence" does not automatically make this discussion one concerning a "metaphysics of presence" as criticized by Heidegger, Derrida and others. To show this would involve more than could be accomplished in this brief essay, but I hope to show it subsequently.

13. For a preliminary discussion of these and other matters having to do with this conception of experience, see my programmatic essay "Categories of Comportment," in *Categories: A Colloquium*, ed. Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park, Pa.: The Department of Philosophy, The Pennsylvania State University, 1978), 121–41, and the final chapter of my *Hegel's Quest for Certainty* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984).