

Space and Heritage

On the Generativity of Environing Worlds

In his manuscript fragments on perception, the philosopher Edmund Husserl would speak of a certain thickening of temporal experience as an acquisition, that is, as a kind of “heritage” (*Erbe*) that takes the form of embodied *habitus* that is inherent to the lived experience of space. This special issue of *Future Anterior* takes this phenomenological insight as a guiding clue, and inquires into the relation of this intimate sense of heritage as the embodied becoming of the subject, to some of its wider, more normative and critical senses in heritage studies. This issue is dedicated to the theme of heritage, viewed in terms of its implicit sense as a mode of lived experience that is embodied, and in this way, spatial. Approaching the question of heritage from this perspective can contribute to wider critical examinations of the concept of heritage, such as those explored in the recently published volume, *Heritage Futures*, that contains rich and multidisciplinary comparative research on cultural and natural heritage practices (Harrison et. al. 2020). In suggesting that heritage is a mode of lived experience, the issue emphasizes questions of subjectivity and intersubjectivity in exploring the meaning of heritage; and in proposing that such experience is spatial, it foregrounds questions of *embodiment* and lived-bodily experience. This turn to questions of embodied spatiality and intersubjectivity is also a “generative” turn, which functions to open certain possibilities for critique and renewal of the theme of heritage that this special issue wishes to explore.

One of the central problems that the issue introduces for consideration is that of heritage as a mode of experience that is both intersubjective and transgenerational, without, however, passing over the inherent spatiality of these relations. In fact, it is precisely the spatial question that the issue foregrounds, as one that is concerned with the “generativity” of space, of spatialized heritage values and sensibilities, and of ongoing processes of their spatializing. The concept of generativity (*Generativität*) is a phenomenological notion that thematizes problems concerning intersubjective and historical becoming, in the formation and transformation of intergenerational community (Steinbock 1995, Zahavi 2001). By locating the question of heritage at the site of inter- and transgenerational community, assumptions regarding the “objects” of heritage—not only artifacts and material contexts such as buildings and landscapes, but also intangible phenomena like the musicality of language—are brought into question. This is the case because the temporality of such a community has its locus in the living present. The example of song is a particularly striking one, in which through the very sonicity of speech meaning is constituted and transmitted in intergenerational community. The sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois would thus observe, of the “Sorrow Songs” transmitted across generations in the generative nexus of the Black community in the United States: “The child sang it to his children and they to their children’s children, and so two hundred years it has traveled down to us and we sing it to our children, knowing as little as our fathers what its words may mean, but knowing well the meaning of its music” (Du Bois 2008[1903], 170). This insight leads to another central problem that this special issue proposes for consideration, which is the question of the experience of heritage in the living present of what can be termed the *generativity of environmental*

experience. The author Simone Schwarz-Bart, for example, in speaking of a small town in the island of Guadeloupe, evokes the environmental sense of its generativity as follows: “The inhabitants say indulgently there never should have been such a place on God’s earth, that they made a great mistake in living there, they, their parents or their grandparents, for it is probably a bit of earth that escaped the hand of the Almighty. They have talked like that for a long time, but people are born and die, generations succeed one another and the town is still there, and so everyone has come to admit it will hold out as long as sun and moon are in the sky. La Ramée is really not only La Ramée itself, but the whole of the hinterland of which it is the heart [...] so that by settling here, with my back to the sea, I am still facing, even if only in the distance, my own great forest” (Schwarz-Bart 1974, 239).

Although the examples of Du Bois (the parent that sings to the child) and of Schwarz-Bart (the town surrounded by sea and forest, sky, sun and moon) point to vastly different scales of intimacy and distance, they both can be said to foreground types of environing worlds. The spatiality of sound is constitutive of such a type of environing world (*Umwelt*), which not only *surrounds* one perceptually, but, as Du Bois points out, in the experience of the sonicity of the song, we experience as intricately intertwined the meaning as its very musicality. Here we can draw on Sylvia Wynter and Édouard Glissant in seeing these “Sorrow Songs” as an inseparable part of the remembering and transmission, through iterative constitution in the living present, of a world in its “lived existential history” (Wynter 1989, 643). What this example indicates is that environments are constituted as worlds in the intimacy and embodied spatiality of personal encounter, and that it is precisely the dialogical nature of intersubjective and intergenerational relations that give the concept of “world” its sense as *generative*, and in this way historical. In this issue of *Future Anterior*, we seek contributions that speak to questions of heritage that are attentive to the particularly spatial and embodied nature of the intimacy of intergenerational relations. In the example from Schwarz-Bart above, we are presented with the image of environment in an expanded sense, extending from the space of domesticity to the town and its hinterland, the sea and forest, reaching even to the sky and the cosmic space of the sun and moon. We draw on this example—taken from a Caribbean author whose narrative concerns the interlaced lives of five generations of Antillean women—as a way of opening the sense of heritage, provoking a question of its meaning in relation to not a mere “natural environment,” but to geo-historical landscapes that are as saturated with traumas—of colonialism, imperialism, and neo-colonial extractivism—as they are with life and love, as Stuart Hall put it, “inside the post-colonial, in the wake, in the devastating aftermath, of an untranscended colonialism” (Hall 2017, 24). In an analogous vein, the Romanian author Mihail Sebastian would evoke the obscure temporality of heritage, which “reaches far back and hangs like a haze over the horizon of our future” (Sebastian 2016, 215).

The role of narrative in its multiple figurations and modalities—as the orality of storytelling, song, literature, film, or the performativity of ritual, theater, carnival... —in the constitution of spatio-environmental imaginaries as heritage is a theme that is of particular interest for this special issue. Schwarz-Bart would point to the environmental quality of the experience of the love for another “as a bird loves space, as the living love the earth” (244); and Derek Walcott would indicate the historicity of the environment with a simple poetic, and in this way ontological assertion: “The Sea Is History” (Walcott 2007, 123), or what postcolonial scholar Natalie Melas identifies as “the ontological dimensions of

anticolonial writing” (Melas 2007, 173). With these examples, we suggest that in as much as lived experiences of the historicity and sedimentations of colonial, imperial, and neocolonial violence produce profound experiences of environmental alienation on the whole, there exist also everyday experiences of environmental empathy and interspecific care, as a function of ongoing formations of inter- and transgenerational community. In this way, care for the environment would seem to be less a function of abstract forms of quantification and objectification; rather, such environmental care may be seen to manifest through expressions of one’s feelings for, and habitually practical relations with others in life-processes of having grown and growing together with others in intergenerational community. This would thus bring us back to the types of intimacy suggested by Du Bois, and the embodied experiences of the spaces of such intimacy, which now can be seen to extend to the historicity of the environmental horizon in a much wider sense. This issue of *Future Anterior* aims to foreground this movement of relations that extend, through speech and song, from the intimacy of lived-bodily spatial experience and acquired sensibilities, to the expansiveness of intersubjective, intergenerational, and interspecific relations in their geo-historical sedimentations and depth. In conceptualizing these relations, we propose to term this the “environmentality” (*Umweltlichkeit*) of heritage, drawing on the phenomenological sense of this term (DuFour 2022).

This special issue on “Space and Heritage” thus provokes us to ask questions such as:

- How is heritage constituted in the intimacy of embodied and intergenerationally shared experiences of space?
- What ties spaces of intimacy to wider environmental horizons and landscapes experienced intersubjectively and intergenerationally as heritage?
- How is the historicity inherent to manifestations of (post)colonialism, (post)socialism, and imperialism itself spatially constituted and problematized as heritage in lived experience?
- How can a focus on the generative space of heritage contribute to reparative and empathic possibilities for critique and renewal of enviroing worlds?
- What is the role of narrative in the constitution of space and spatial/environmental imaginaries as heritage?
- How can attention to lived-bodily experience play a role in addressing questions of environmental alienation and intergenerational justice, as issues that deeply implicate heritage values and sensibilities in ongoing processes of spatialization?

We are interested in papers that take on these questions/problems from different methodological perspectives, and invite contributions from a wide spectrum of disciplines to engage with the themes of this special issue on “Space and Heritage;” these include areas such as architecture and architectural history, preservation and planning, landscape architecture, comparative literature, cultural studies, anthropology, philosophy, art and art history, environmental humanities, and other fields. We encourage academic and narrative papers that investigate the generative space of heritage from a breadth of perspectives and approaches, including: architectural and landscape histories that address questions of the spatiality of heritage from a generative perspective, spatial ethnographies, intimate stories of intergenerational inheritances—tangible or immaterial heritage—that have a particularly spatial quality, analyses of literary or filmic descriptions of space thematized as a form of heritage, and other approaches

to the theme of the issue. We especially welcome creative project submissions, such as photo-essays and film projects formatted for print publication.

Future Anterior is a peer-reviewed journal that approaches the field of historic preservation from a position of critical inquiry. A comparatively recent field of professional study, preservation often escapes direct academic challenges of its motives, goals, forms of practice, and results. *Future Anterior* seeks contributions that ask these difficult questions from philosophical, theoretical, and critical perspectives.

Formatting requirements for the manuscript:

Complete papers should be submitted by January 31, 2023.

Articles should be no more than 4,000 words (excluding footnotes) with up to seven illustrations. References to the identity of the author must be removed from the manuscript before submission. It is the responsibility of the author to secure permissions for image use and pay any reproduction fees. A brief abstract (200 words) and author biography (around 100 words) must accompany the submission, but in a separate file to preserve the double-blind peer review process. Acceptance or rejection of submissions is at the discretion of the Editorial Staff. Please do not send original materials, as submissions will not be returned.

Formatting Text:

All text files should be saved as Microsoft Word or RTF format. Text and citations must be formatted in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style, 15th Edition. All articles must be submitted in English, and spelling should follow American convention.

Formatting Illustrations:

Images should be sent as TIFF files with a resolution of at least 300 dpi at 8” by 9” print size. Figures should be numbered clearly in the text, after the paragraph in which they are referenced. Image captions and credits must be included with submissions.

Examples of manuscript and illustration formatting can be found in past issues of *Future Anterior* or via EBSCO.

Checklist of documents required for submission:

- Abstract (200 words)
- Manuscript (4000 words, excluding footnotes)
- Illustrations (maximum of 7)
- Captions for Illustrations

- __ Illustration Copyright information
- __ Author biography (100 words)

All submissions and questions about the submission process must be submitted electronically, via email to Future.Anterior.Journal@gmail.com

Questions about the Call for Papers can be sent to the above email address or emailed to the guest editor:
Prof. Tao DuFour
Guest Editor, Future Anterior
Cornell University
tns29@cornell.edu

References

- Du Bois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- DuFour, Tao. *Husserl and Spatiality: A Phenomenological Ethnography of Space*. London: Routledge, 2022.
- Hall, Stuart. *Familiar Stranger: A Life between Two Islands*. Edited by Bill Schwarz. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017.
- Harrison, Rodney, et. al. *Heritage Futures: Comparative Approaches to Natural and Cultural Heritage Practices*. London: UCL Press, 2020.
- Melas, Natalie. *All the Difference in the World: Postcoloniality and the Ends of Comparison*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Schwarz-Bart, Simone. *The Bridge of Beyond*. Translated by Barbara Bray. New York: New York Review Books, 2013.
- Sebastian, Mihail. *For Two Thousand Years*. Translated by Philip Ó Ceallaigh. UK: Penguin Books, 2016
- Steinbock, Anthony J. *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995.
- Walcott, Derek. *Selected Poems*. Edited by Edward Baugh. London: Faber and Faber, 2007.
- Wynter, Sylvia. "Beyond the Word of Man: Glissant and the New Discourse of the Antilles." *World Literature Today* 63, no. 4 (Autumn 1989): 637–648.
- Zahavi, Dan. *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity: A Response to the Linguistic-Pragmatic Critique*. Translated by Elizabeth A. Behnke. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001.