

EMERALD INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNEXIONS

MOVING SPACES AND PLACES

Interdisciplinary Essays on Transformative
Movements through Space, Place, and Time



EDITED BY

Beitske Boonstra
Teresa Cutler-Broyles
Stefano Rozzoni

Moving Spaces and Places

Emerald Interdisciplinary Connexions

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Moving Spaces and Places: Interdisciplinary Essays on Transformative Movements Through Space, Place, and Time

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	vii
About the Contributors	ix
Preface	xiii
Acknowledgements	xv

Introduction: Moving Spaces and Places	1
<i>Beitske Boonstra, Teresa Cutler-Broyles and Stefano Rozzoni</i>	

Part I Moving Homes

Chapter 1 Swallowing Castles and Houses With Stomachs: Dwelling as a Digestive Movement in Literature	9
<i>Elizabeth Batchelor</i>	

Chapter 2 Reshaping Spaces of Home: Reading Post-colonial Literary Adaptations as Affective Pedagogies	27
<i>Demelza Hall</i>	

Chapter 3 Barbarism in the Age of Progress: Emily Hobhouse's Report on the South African Concentration Camps and the Liberal Divide Over the Boer War	43
<i>Carla Larouco Gomes</i>	

Chapter 4 Urban Modernism in East Germany: From Socialist Model to Creative Appropriation	59
<i>Martin Blum</i>	

Chapter 5 Reauthoring Macassar: Storytelling as Community Engagement (CE) and a Spatial Practice in a South African Post-Apartheid Community	79
<i>Clint Abrahams</i>	

Part II Moving Bodies

Chapter 6 Framed by Textiles	99
<i>Lesley Millar</i>	

Chapter 7 Shorelines: Choreographies of Remembrance and Forgetting	113
<i>Laura Bissell</i>	

Chapter 8 ‘Excuse Me... Are You Lost?’ What Can Performative Walking Practices Contribute to Knowledge About Public Space?	129
<i>Deirdre Macleod</i>	

Chapter 9 This Place Is Not Safe for Walking	149
<i>Caroline Cardoso Machado, Hartmut Günther, Ingrid Luiza Neto and Lucas Heiki Matsunaga</i>	

Chapter 10 Dancing Your Way Through: An Explorative Study of City-Making Skills	167
<i>Beitske Boonstra</i>	

Conclusion: Moving Homes – Moving Bodies – Moving Minds	183
<i>Beitske Boonstra, Teresa Cutler-Broyles and Stefano Rozzoni</i>	

Index	187
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List of Figures

Chapter 5

Figure 1.	Studiolight's Reauthoring Process. A Community Action Process That Engages the Social, Spatial and Institutional Domains for Transformation.	81
Figure 2.	Youth Meetings Held in Macassar Living Rooms.	86
Figure 3.	Story Maps Made by Youth.	86
Figure 4.	Youth Making Display in Backyard Shack.	87
Figure 5.	Community Meetings Held in Shack at Bong's Place.	88
Figure 6.	Emergent Campus With CE Activities and the 2018 Who We Macassar Exhibition Sites Alongside Everyday Activities of Macassar Spaces.	88
Figure 7.	Shack at Bong's Place With Installation of Project Seminars and Workshops.	89
Figure 8.	Exhibition in Macassar Library.	90

Chapter 7

Figure 1.	<i>Pages of the Sea: The Tide Coming in Erasing the Figures in the Sand on Ayr Beach.</i>	118
Figure 2.	<i>Tide Times – Cramond Island Causeway Viewed from Island.</i>	124
Figure 3.	<i>Tide Times: Objects Left in Pilot Box.</i>	125

Chapter 8

Figure 1.	New Housing on Old Industrial Site, Portobello.	136
Figure 2.	Tenement Flats, Central Portobello.	136
Figure 3.	<i>Festoon Walk to Telferton Allotments.</i>	138

Figure 4.	<i>Festoon</i> Walk via High Street to the Beach.	138
Figure 5.	Red Ground Drawing, Portobello Prom.	139
Figure 6.	Yellow Ground Drawing, Portobello Prom.	140
Figure 7.	Blue Ground Drawing, Portobello Prom.	140
Figure 8.	Green Ground Drawing, Portobello Prom.	141
Figure 9.	Project Postcard Inviting People to Visit and Play in the Ground Drawings.	142

Chapter 9

Figure 1.	Image of the Varjão Police Station.	154
Figure 2.	Central Square of Vila Planalto.	154
Figure 3.	Image of the Green Area of SQS 409/410 Where There is Little Natural Surveillance.	157
Figure 4.	Underground Passageway at SQS 409/410.	157
Figure 5.	Image of the Place Where There is a Higher Incidence of Attempted Thefts, Assaults and Kidnappings.	159
Figure 6.	Image of the Square in Varjão Where Substance Users Are Present.	160

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Preface

When Progressive Connexions opened the floor for the theme of spaces and places, a gathering of scholars and professionals took place that reached across an overwhelming variety of disciplines and touched upon a wide array of topics related to spaces and places. The topic of movement stood out, among others. Movement in a literal sense of moving bodies through space and place, and movement in a more figurative way, of shifting perceptions and affects for spaces and places, affect in the meaning of a transitional product of an encounter through the senses. After a first conference on spaces and places, in Bruges, Belgium, in April 2019, the collaboration for this book was started. But then, the project got intercepted by the pandemic, causing serious delays. Luckily, both Emerald Publishers Ltd and Progressive Connexions allowed us to suspend and seek new contributions during a second event on spaces and places, which took place online in March 2021. We were thrilled to find, again, refreshing and cross-cutting perspectives on movement in relation to space and place. Again, however, the road through the pandemic remained bumpy, and new shuffles in the composition of contributions occurred over the course of 2021.

But here we are, and we are thrilled with the outcome. This edited volume, *Moving Spaces and Places: Interdisciplinary Essays on Transformative Movements through Space, Place, and Time*, presents a collection of 10 contributions which all approach the relationship between movement and spaces and places in surprising ways. We are aware that the relationship between movement and space and place is not a new topic, already addressed by many – predominantly spatial scholars – in multiple ways. But the diversity of these current contributions, as well as their multi- and cross-disciplinary approaches, reveals a depth to the theme that none of us had anticipated. Each of the contributions tells its own unique story of how movement is both an act of physical moving bodies and objects, as well as a way in which perceptions and affects can be unsettled and shifted. The contributions also illustrate how physical and psychological movements are often intertwined, creating new relationships between people and the spaces and places they inhabit, as well as new relationships with their own selves. The contributions illustrate how aesthetic experience, the study of culture and art, artistic and participatory practices play a crucial role in bringing the physical and psychological experience of movement into symbiosis. Moreover, the book reveals how physical duration and agency as a psychological act create a potential for healing and reconciling the often broken, interrupted or disturbed relationships between people and places and spaces.

The creation of this book has been an exhilarating journey. The suspense and forced reorientations due to pandemic challenges, granted us time to think and to reflect and revealed to us the intertwining of physical and psychological movement, and the transformative potential that emerges from this intertwinement. As such, this book does not only speak of transformative movements across real, physical spaces and places, but also is the result of a transformative experience itself.

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Secondly, our thanks goes to Progressive Connexions for the organisation of two inspiring events: the first conference on spaces and places in Bruges, April 2019, and the second (online) conference on spaces and places in March 2021. Their call for interdisciplinary perspectives on spaces and places has given ground to the truly enriching experience of putting this book together. Our special thanks go out to Teresa Cutler-Broyles, the soul and creator of these events, and our lightning beacon through pandemic disturbances. You always kept faith and never let us take our eyes off the content and the creation of the book. And you were always there to delve into the even deeper levels of meaning that connected the chapters in the book. Stefano Rozzoni, thank you for your ever lasting optimism, your critical observations, supportive thinking and inspiration, as well as your pioneering efforts in creating the other Progressive Connexions book on space and place: *Re-imagining Spaces and Places: Essays on Identity, Spaces, and Places* (2022). Beitske Boonstra, your always kind reminders and constant work to keep this volume on track has resulted in our meeting all the deadlines, and your communications with the authors has been exemplary in sometimes difficult circumstances. Your vision and dedication are inspiring: thank you for all that you have done.

Thirdly and lastly, we would like to thank all the contributors to the book. Many of you were there at our very start in Bruges; some of you joined the project at a later stage. For all of you, we are very thankful that you have stood with us through these challenging years and most of all, to remain adaptive to the transformations in the thematic focus of the book. Changes in the lineup of authors (mostly due to the pandemic) first forced us to shift focus, and at the very

xvi Acknowledgements

end of putting the book together, we as editors noticed an emerging consistency, a new connecting line throughout the book which we could not let go unnoticed. We thank you all sincerely for your latest efforts in making this connecting line even more explicit in your works. We deeply feel this book has been a collective journey that has transformed and enriched us all.

Introduction: Moving Spaces and Places

Beitske Boonstra, Teresa Cutler-Broyles and Stefano Rozzoni

When discussing spaces and places from multidisciplinary perspectives, the concept of movement soon comes to the fore. According to Oxford English Dictionary, ‘movement’ relates to ‘the action or process of moving; change of position or posture; passage from place to place, or from one situation to another’ (OED Online, September 2021). Movement thus has a dual meaning: it is both a (physical) act of moving, as well as a change or development which can be physical but does not have to be so. This dual meaning of movement has been a leading thread through this book project from the start.

In her seminal work *For Space* (2005), the geographer Doreen Massey theorised this dual meaning of movement in relation to space and place. Massey argued that when a person moves through space, this is not only a physical act of movement, but also an act of alteration of space and place. Space is made of social relations, Massey argued, and the movement of people shapes these relationships. Reciprocally, space also constitutes people, and the movement of people across space is part of the ‘constant process of the making and breaking of links which is an element in the constitution of you yourself’ (Massey, 2005, p. 118). The example Massey deployed in her book to explain this dual meaning of movement is a commuter on a morning train, moving from one city to the other. The place the commuter left that morning will no longer be the same as when the commuter boarded the train, and the place of destination, will be inevitably altered by the future presence of the commuter, as will the commuter be changed as well.

With this metaphor, Massey used space in the context of movement, and place in the context of destination. With this understanding of space and place, Massey followed a comparable line of reasoning as renowned scholars on space and place Henri Lefebvre (1991) and Michel De Certeau (1984). According to their combined reasoning, the difference between space and place lies in confinement and multiplicity. Space is to be understood as the spatial dimension of the world where relationships are wide open, where multiplicity, simultaneity of stories and relationships, inter-subjectivity, and flow reign. Space is abstract, without substantial meaning. Place, on the other hand, can be understood as more or less static; defined and confined by settled relationships, a momentary suspension of flows into meaning. Space, then, is practised place (De Certeau, 1988). How the

divergent meaning of space and place touches upon the multi-layered meaning of movement is, again, illustrated by the train scene staged by Massey. The train travelling through the landscape is not only a physical movement through the open and abstract multiplicity of space, but a simultaneous transformative movement of the commuter, the confined and meaningful place the commuter left, and the new meanings and relationships the commuter heads towards in the place of destination.

This book addresses the dual meaning of movement and spaces and places in various ways. In a literal sense, moving and movement can be analytical tools for reading and understanding the meaning and values associated with space and place. In a more figurative sense, movement can thus also relate to unsettling perceptions and readings of spaces and places, which makes movement a psychological experience. Combining the physical and psychological experience of movement is nicely captured in the philosophical concept of duration. According to philosopher Gilles [Deleuze \(1966/1991\)](#), who builds upon the philosophical work of Henri Bergson, movement through space is a duration, which combines the physical experience of movement as a composite of space traversed by moving objects – in all their multiplicity – with the psychological experience of movement as a qualitative change, an alteration, a becoming-other, again, in all its multiplicities. Duration is a dual, continual and heterogeneous psychological and physical transformation of objects, spaces and places, and the relationships and meanings they constitute and are constituted by. Movement – conceptualised as physical moving and psychological duration – enables us to see and experience space and place as multiplicities of simultaneousness, of juxtaposition, of order – either static in place or fluid in space – and time as the heterogeneous determinant of the potential transformations of those fluidities and non-fluidities. The notion of duration, for example, the combined physical and psychological experience of movement through time and space, runs as an important theme through the 10 chapters that constitute this book.

Remarkably however, when assembling this collection of chapters, a consistency occurred that neither the organisers of the original events nor the editors of this volume had anticipated. This consistency concerned the acknowledgement of aesthetic experiences and artistic practices, as a way to bring to consciousness the duality of physical and psychological movement through and of space and place. Looking in hindsight at the process of bringing this book together, this should not have come as a surprise. Already centuries ago, poet and philosopher Friedrich [Von Schiller \(1795/2010\)](#) coined the aesthetic experience as a means to reveal identities and meanings that usually lie half hidden for conscious perceptions. This emerging consistency in these chapters thus opened up the opportunity to study these artistic practices in relation to movement, space, and place, in much more depth.

Indeed, according to Jacques [Rancière \(2004\)](#), who follows a Deleuzian notion of aesthetics, aesthetics is not about works of art themselves but rather about the subjective feeling and transformation that occurs when one is put into relation with a work of art. When that work of art is then deployed for questioning the sensible – as in perceivable through the senses – , an aesthetic experience may

occur that causes a transformation of the percept and the affects belonging to the receiver or spectator (Ranci re, 2004) – affects in the meaning of new becomings (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2008), as transitional products of sensible encounters (Colman, 2010, pp. 11–12). Gilles Deleuze conceptualises art as an allegory, an act of representation, whereas the artistic *practice* is a way to turn chaos into a sensation, a sensation that then brings new affects and percepts to the consciousness (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994; Van Tuinen, Schuilenburg, & Romein, 2009). In relation to space and place, aesthetic experiences and artistic practices thus reveal notions and meanings of space and place that until then were unthought, unknown or subconscious. Moreover, these artistic practices – in Deleuzian terms – combine notions of the past with a creative process of renewal. These practices can be seen as events or happenings that create and generate ‘senses’, relive old ones and generate new, bringing to bear affect (new relations) and effect (new outcomes). When aesthetic experiences created by artistic practices are vibrant enough, they create movement in the exact dual meaning as in duration: both a physical and a psychological sensation of transformation.

Noteworthy, most of the aesthetic experiences and artistic practices discussed in the contributions of this collection have a bodily, corporeal, embodied dimension. This resonates with the bodily experience of movement and interweaves spaces and places together as addressed by Massey and underlined by the concepts of duration and aesthetic experience/artistic practice in a non-representational way by geographer Nigel Thrift (1996). Movement, in this sense, concerns the thought-in-the-act, the multidimensional relationship between body and environment, the embodied and situated nature of human practice, and the corporeality of psychological transformation. Again, movement is both a bodily experience and a transformative one, which creates new percepts and affects and thus relationships between people, places, and spaces – opening up places and providing ever-new meanings to space.

Moving Homes

The book is structured in two sections. The first section, ‘Moving Homes’, discusses movements as physical and psychological experiences through time related to the home environment, and the act of storytelling, literary practices and allegories that transform percepts and affects of that home environment.

In ‘Swallowing Castles and Houses with Stomachs: Dwelling as a Digestive Movement in Literature’, Elizabeth Batchelor takes us on an unnerving travel through castles and houses as allegories of digesting bodies; the people move through them as nutrients slowly transformed into an enlightened state of self-knowledge or a nightmarish state of self-annihilation. The allegory of the dwelling place as a digesting body reveals how places we regard as safe and sheltering can lead us through a subconscious transformation processes that enable us to better understand ourselves and the world.

‘Reshaping Spaces of Home: Reading Postcolonial Literary Adaptations as Affective Pedagogies’ by Demelza Hall also unsettles the notion of the home as a

safe space. Hall elaborates on her experiences teaching Australian literature, and the way Australian literature conceptualises settler colonialism in Australia, and the Indigenous appropriation of that literary tradition. Her teaching experiences give insight into how unnerving and affecting the unsettling of this literary tradition can be for students – and others – who never questioned their home narratives, but also how spaces for collective storytelling can mediate these psychological impacts.

Another account on unsettling home narratives comes from Carla Larouco Gomes, who in her chapter ‘Barbarism in the Age of Progress: Emily Hobhouse’s Report on the South African Concentration Camps and the Liberal Divide over the Boer War’ discusses a dark episode of British Imperialism. While many British at the turn of the twentieth century in the United Kingdom itself did not question the cultivating intentions of the British over the Boers in South Africa, this chapter tells how Emily Hobbs took on the brave enterprise of critiquing the displacement of Boer Women to concentration camps. By discussing the way in which these temporary living environments aimed at disaffecting women from their home environments, she was able to – slowly but steadily – unsettle the perception of the British in the United Kingdom of their Imperialist assimilating intentions.

Shifting perceptions of what a home can be is again a topic in ‘Urban Modernism in East Germany: From Socialist Model to Creative Appropriation’ by Martin Blum. In this chapter, the typical East German architecture of the Plattenbau is discussed, and the role time played in changing perceptions on this typical architecture. Blum illustrates how the functionalist and industrial approach of the Plattenbau initially depersonalised people according to pre-scripted and collectively narrated socialist ideals, but at the same time allowed for a creative and individual appropriation of place.

The last chapter discussing movement in relation to the home environment is ‘Reauthoring Macassar: Storytelling as Community Engagement (EG) and a Spatial Practice in South Africa’s Neglected Post-Apartheid Communities’ by Clint Abrahams. Taking another dark chapter of South Africa’s discriminatory history, Abrahams elaborates on the re-appropriation of a township after the Apartheid era. He describes a design-led process of engaging and involving the local community through collective spatial storytelling, expressively appropriating places and revealing the affects and changing the percepts of the community members for these places.

Moving Bodies

The second section of the book, ‘Moving Bodies’, discusses the way in which moving bodies create physical and psychological transformations in relation to space and place through embodied practices and aesthetic allegories that relate the body directly to its environment, for example, the spaces and places it inhabits.

The section starts with a contribution by Lesley Millar, 'Framed by Textiles'. In her elaborations on various works of art that involve textiles, and predominantly lace, Millar shows us the permeability of space, place and bodies, and how textiles represent hidden, subconscious meanings and experiences of space and place as both intellectual and sensual.

'Shorelines: Choreographies of Remembrance and Forgetting' by Laura Bissell is also situated in permeable space, namely in the constantly eroding and shifting coastlines of Britain. Through the description of various participatory artistic, choreographic practices, the author interweaves space, place, time, movement and performing agents, questioning processes of presence and disappearance, remembering and commemoration.

How an artistic practice contributes to an increased understanding of space and place is also illustrated in "'Excuse me...are you lost?'" What Can Performative Walking Practices Contribute to Knowledge About Public Space?" by Deirdre Macleod. The author discusses – in the same style of Millar and Bissell – various projects of performative walking in urban neighbourhoods, designed to create an affective friction and enhance participants' sensitivity to space and place. Performative walking is a valuable form of research. As such, both Bissell and Macleod, together with Abrahams in the section 'Moving Homes', no longer just give us an analogy between spaces and places and the arts, but actively address a participatory artistic experience as a means to understand spaces and places in a different way.

This practical, participatory dimension of transformative movement as a means of researching space and place is a challenge further taken up by Caroline Cardoso Machado, Hartmut Günther, Ingrid Luiza Neto and Lucas Heiki Matsunaga in 'This Place is Not Safe for Walking'. This chapter elaborates on a research method that involved participatory walks with go-along interviews, which not only reveals hidden perceptions on spatial safety and affects (or dis-affects) for places in unsafe neighbourhoods, but also creates new percepts and affects along the way.

The last chapter of this section combines an allegory of artistic practice with a practical approach for changing cities. In 'Dancing Your Way Through: An Explorative Study of City-making Skills', Beitske Boonstra describes how the allegory of improvisation dance can help in understanding how the skills of community leaders contribute to collective processes of city-making and urban transformation processes, and how this allegory creates a new repertoire for governance of spaces and places.

Moving Spaces and Places: Interdisciplinary Essays on Transformative Movements through Space, Place and Time illustrates how movement generates both physical as well as psychological transformations in affect for and percept of space and place in three interlinked ways. First, the book takes art, and specifically art consisting of fluids, permeability and movement, as an allegory through which spaces and places can acquire new meanings or reveal the meanings that had so far laid in the unconsciousness. Secondly, the book introduces and discusses artistic-based practices, deliberately executed (often in participatory ways) to alter percepts and affects for space and place. And thirdly, this volume reveals

forgotten or unknown aesthetic values that had lain hidden in certain spaces and places, and by taking up or discussing agency for these values. In the majority of the contributions to this book, the ways in which movement contributes to new understandings of space and place are interwoven. In multi-layered investigations of movement, taking temporal, physical and psychological transformation as its conceptual core, the book discusses the transformations in affect and percept of spaces and places – solidifying space into meaningful places, as well as opening confined places into places of heterogeneity.

All the chapters in *Moving Spaces and Places: Interdisciplinary Essays on Transformative Movements through Space, Place and Time* offer rich and multi-layered experiences of transformational movement. Putting them into a sequence has therefore been a difficult and fraught decision, as each sequence again revealed new connectivity and new readings. We therefore encourage the readers to not *only* follow the interpretation of the relationships between the various contributions as suggested by us, the editors, but to think themselves about all the interwovenness, multiplicity and interconnectivity of the various chapters. The book might then not only be *about* movement as a transformative experience but may offer a transformative experience in itself.

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Part I
Moving Homes

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