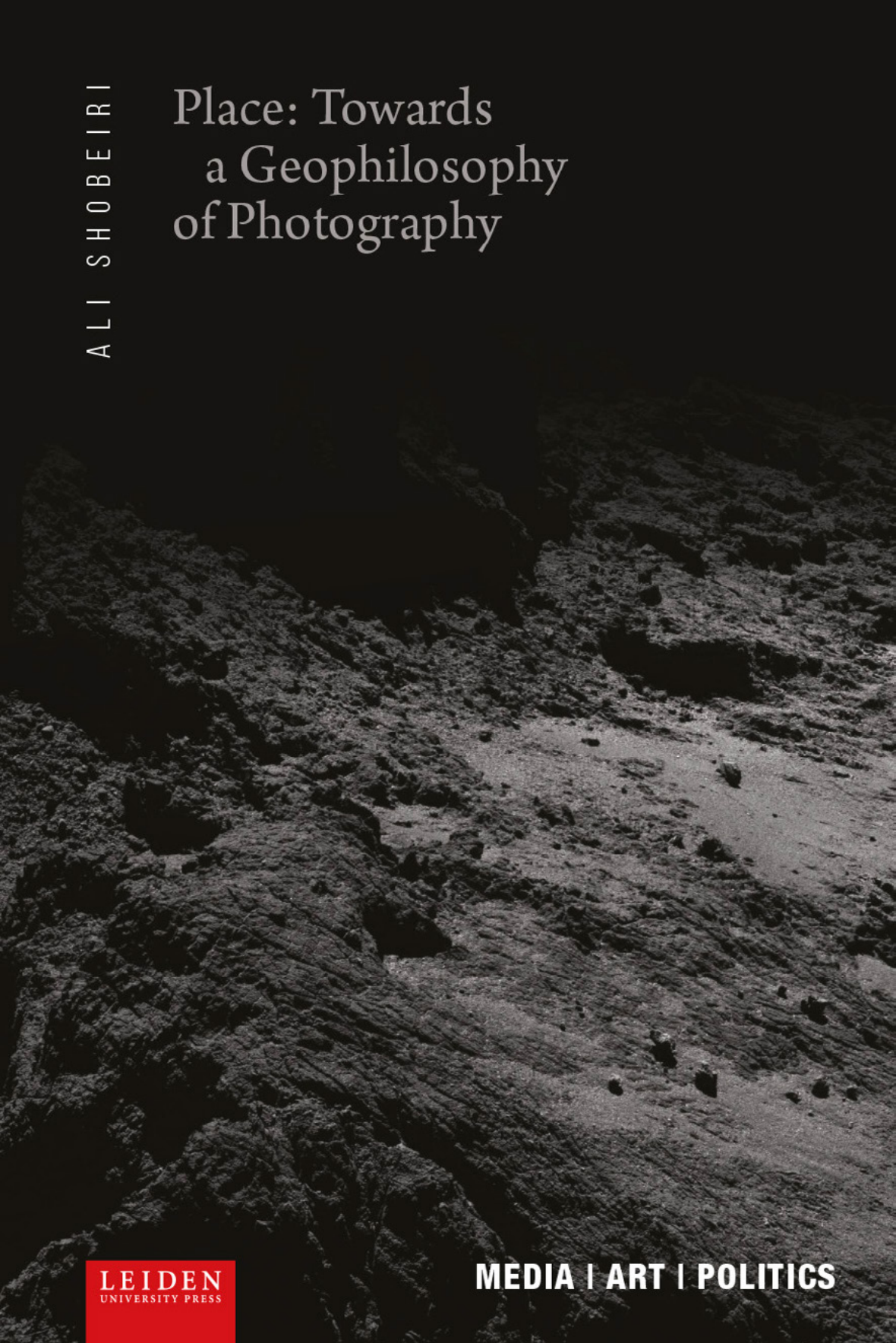
ALI SHOBEIRI

Place: Towards a Geophilosophy of Photography



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Introduction

The medium of photography has a long-lasting engagement with the nebulous concept of place, ranging from actual places captured in photographs to fictitious ones constructed by photographic software. This engagement can be traced back to the photograph taken by Nicéphore Niépce, *View from the Window at Le Gras* (1826/1827), which is believed to be the oldest surviving camera photograph in the history of the medium. Niépce's photograph stands as the earliest example of how photography can transmute physical places into photographed places. While in Niépce's time capturing photographs would require several hours of patience, in the present day almost anybody equipped with a photographic camera can, in less than a second, eternalise a physical place in the form of a photograph. Not only has the relationship between photography and places been preserved since the advent of the medium, but it has also been continually consolidated owing to the omnipresence of photographic images and cameras. For example, because of hectic working schedules or economic constraints, not everyone has the spare time to visit remote places. As a result, a great number of us have our first exposure to physical places through seeing them in photographs, before physically visiting those places in the world. Thanks to the medium of photography, we can observe a variety of geographical locations from vast distances away, glimpsing the orient from the occident and vice versa, thus circumnavigating the world photographically through images. Photography not only helps us to "pre-visit" physical places that we can later see during our lifetime, but it also allows us to arrive at places that we would not have otherwise. Owing to the recent technological advancement of photographic apparatus, for instance, we can observe images of far-flung places around the cosmos, places from which we are millions of light years removed. Imagine photographic images taken by cutting-edge cameras owned by The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) or the European Space Agency (ESA); these images make evident how photography can transmute a piece of space into a more familiar place: a photograph. Examples such as these serve to show the extent to which our very conception of place is constructed by photography, a medium that has been unremittingly utilised to discover and document new places around the world. In fact, my own pensive reflection upon the concept of place was also initiated by photography, while I was attempting to discern the topographical features of the physical world through my camera.

Several years ago, when I started studying photography with a view to becoming a photographer, I had an inexplicable proclivity for places as my subject matter. Both behind my camera's viewfinder and before my very own eyes, places became my way of being in the world. I henceforth set off on a journey to understand places in both the real and the representational worlds of photography. As a topographer with a fervid penchant for places, I was commissioned to make photographs of diverse geographical locations across the globe, a process through which my insatiable desire for learning about different places was amplified. Being fascinated, or rather haunted, by places I travelled to many countries across different continents to capture places with my camera, desiring to revisit them later through my photographs. However, being a topographical photographer not only gave me insights into morphological features of the world, but also made me realise that places were not necessarily limited to that which I was capturing in photos. They were not merely an assemblage of materialised things at which I could aim my camera; they were more elusive, inscrutable and unknown. At some point in my career, while taking topographical photographs of some vast terrain, I became aware of my own bodily presence as a place within the landscape I was attempting to seize with the camera. This realisation of my corporeal existence as something constituting another place in the landscape cast doubts on my conviction that I could capture and, in turn, fix places in photographs. Consequently, I decided to delve deeper into the concept of place through photography in order to examine how this medium could account for place as something that resists being rendered inert and static in time and space—as was the case with my own lived body in the aforementioned landscape. In other words, instead of simply regarding place as that which a photograph is of, as an image that is permanently fixed and circumscribed within the frame, I started to view place as philosopher Edward S. Casey does: as something "*at work*, part of something ongoing and dynamic, (being) ingredient *in something else*".[1]

In his seminal book on the concept of place, *The Fate of Place*: *A Philosophical History*, Casey argues that during the last two hundred years of philosophical and geographical inquiry place has been gradually reduced to a fixed location, suggesting that places have a permanent essence in time and space. One of the main reasons for the reduction of places to fixed locations is that they have been steadily subordinated to space and time, causing each place to cease to exist as a dynamic entity in the era of "temporocentrism": an epoch that signifies the belief in the hegemony of time.[2] Because of the spread of electronic technology and the resulting inclination towards an acceleration of time, Casey argues, place has been shrunk to a fixed location, whereas time and space have consistently remained processual. An obvious token of the dominance of space over place in contemporary academic discourse can be found in the prevalence of the adjective "spatial", derived from "space", whereas no English dictionary offers an adjective derived from "place".[3] However, through his unprecedented approach, Casey proposes and uses the adjective "placial" to address

the dynamic, processual and indeterminate account of place, contending that place is never a "fixed thing: [and] it has no steadfast essence".[4] By investigating the work of a multitude of thinkers, ranging from Foucault, Benjamin and Arendt to more contemporary ones, such as Soja, Irigaray and Nancy, Casey argues that each of them has "rediscovered" the importance of place as an unfixed and abstract entity in a different field of study.[5] In other words, he argues that, despite the fact that places have been gradually reduced to fixed locations, as if they are unaffected and unvarying, thanks to particular scholars, their indeterminate aspects have been preserved in different discourses. If Casey suggests that specific scholars have "rediscovered" the concept of place, it is because they have given meticulous and studious attention to place as something that remains equally indeterminate as time and space. It is also the intention of this book to revive the spatiotemporal dispositions of place, but this time by carefully examining the architecture of photography.

Although the processual and indeterminate accounts of place have been discussed in relation to particular discourses—such as those by Doreen Massey, who proposes a "progressive sense of place" that provides mobility in cities, and Yi-Fu Tuan, who observes place as a pause in a movement that transforms a location into place—it is Casey's reading that does not favour any particular discourse from which the indeterminacy of places can be fleshed out.[6] Instead, he looks at the pliancy and elusiveness of place in a variety of fields, ranging from architecture to phenomenology, arguing that the discussions of placial qualities cannot be confined to any particular domain, but can manifest themselves unconstrainedly in all possible arenas. In the words of human geographer Tim Cresswell, "geography is about place and places. But place is not the property of geography—it is a concept that travels quite freely between disciplines and the study of place benefits from an interdisciplinary approach".[7] That is precisely why Casey asserts, "since there is no single basis of the primacy of place, there is no monolithic foundation on which this primacy could be built", because "what is at stake is a polyvalent primacy" of place.[8] In other words, Casey is putting forward the idea that places can be identified as such through a variety of methods and discourses, and therefore there cannot be a single discipline that can claim to be able fully to explain, thus own, the notion of place. Moreover, he contends that place is not necessarily seen as a location, such as a room in a building, which can be captured and fixed in a photograph, but is to be regarded as that which continually resists permanent embodiment. That is to say, for Casey, a place is never identified by the location at which it is situated nor by the material construction that has constituted it, since it is not to be regarded as a localisable entity at all. He instead conceives of place as that which continually evades a finalised representation. Strictly speaking, for Casey, and likewise for this book, a place is never delimited to what it is, where it is, and to when and how it subsists in time and space.

In this book, by embracing Casey's understanding of place and giving precedence to this concept over that of space, my primary aim is to indicate how photography can

substantiate his dictum that "place is not the content of a definite representation".[9] I will discuss how the medium of photography can make clear that a place is never simply presented or fixed, but exists as something that is endowed with indeterminacy regarding its presence in space and time. To do this, this book will be triangulated by the fields of photography, philosophy and geography, as its title suggests. By adopting this approach, I hope this book will contribute not only to the burgeoning theoretical research on the concept of place in relation to photography,[10] but also to broader interdisciplinary research that probes into this notion, culminated in works such as: *Place and Experience* (1999); *Getting Back Into Place* (2009); and *The Memory of Place* (2012).[11] To achieve its goal the book breaks down the participatory elements of photography into six tropes: the photographer, the camera, the photograph, the image, the spectator and the genre. As a result, each one of its chapters will be devoted to discussing these themes. This division, however, is by no means intended to establish a "new theory" of photography or corroborate an ontological claim on behalf of photography, as numerous theorists have attempted to do over the past decades.[12] Instead, by reading photography through the above prisms, I want to make clear that discussions of place vis-à-vis photography do not need to be necessarily about, or end up in/around, the photographic image, as if place can only be the subject matter of photographs. But such debates need to acknowledge the processual, omnilocal, mutating and lived manifestations of place by bringing the other partakers of photography into the discussion. This hexa-part division, therefore, is my methodological strategy to avoid reducing place to a mere representation, i.e. the photograph. In other words, by breaking down the constitutive elements of photography into six tropes, this book intends to show how this medium is comprised of places, each instilled with latent temporal and spatial features. Rather than considering a place only to be the subject matter of photographs, it will study all the partakers of a photographic act as places, thereby trying to draw out their placial characteristics. To this end, it will explore how each participant of photography, viewed as a place, interacts with and interferes in different spaces and times, thus viewing spaces through places rather than the opposite. In doing so, this inescapably transdisciplinary book aspires to put forward what I call "a geophilosophy of photography", which incontrovertibly privileges places over spaces, through a medium whose history has been intertwined with place since its very conception.

The first chapter provides a phenomenological reading of the photographer's body, viewing it as both a lived body (*Leib*) and a physical body (Körper) in space. While as a lived body the photographer can actively project the schema of space by merely taking an upright position, as a physical structure the body is a thing among other things, which requires indirect localisation through kinaesthetic experiences that are felt within it. Cognizant of the double characteristics of the body, this chapter looks at the photographer through the lens of "lived place". This concept not only endows the body with porous boundaries and open orientations, viewing it

as something that can actively interact in its environs, but also acknowledges that, as a physical object, the body is co-localised amongst other objects in space. To make this point palpable, I foreground the banal act of walking as practised by landscape photographers, in which they constantly oscillate between keeping still as a physical body and keeping in operation as a lived body. For such a phenomenological body, I suggest, the landscape cannot be considered a predefined image, idea or way of seeing, but a confrontation with the materiality of the world. The chapter exemplifies this point through comparing a landscape photo taken by Ansel Adams, which embodies an anthropocentric landscape conjured up from the imagination, with a landscape photo taken by Gary Metz, which features the landscape as an unnameable encounter with the materiality of the world as a conglomerate of things. Finally, in my first step towards reading photography through the lens of place, I show that the photographer's body is never reduced to a fixed location or null point in space, but is always in a constant process of entanglement and disentanglement, belonging and disruption, and inactive intervention with the space of which it is a part.

The second chapter moves away from the photographer to investigate how the camera as a place complicates space and time, by considering it as a non-living agent in a photographic act. By surveying several thinkers who have mulled over the photographic camera, such as Derrida, Flusser, Kracauer and Barthes, this chapter proposes that the camera does not literally cut off or slice out a section of space and time, which would make it an active tool that can interfere in the physical world, nor is it entirely a passive agent in a photographic act. Instead, it suggests that the camera functions as a place that forever eternalises the spatiotemporal dimensions to which it is exposed through a passive intervention, a mechanism that allows it to be passively active as an apparatus. To illustrate this point this chapter examines a photograph taken by contemporary artist Susan Collins, showing that, despite the camera's passivity in recording the exposed reality, the photographed subject never remains passive, waiting to be hunted by the camera. Here I also expound on several enduring concepts in the photographic discourse, such as the "punctum" of time and detail and the crucial distinction between the photographic "referent" and "reference"; notions that have been indefatigably discussed, applied and quite often misinterpreted over the past decades. Finally, in my second effort to read photography through places, not only do I show how the camera as a place grants a temporal dimension to the spatial configuration witnessed by its lens, but also how it imbues the photograph with a spatial dimension caused by the suspension of the photographed subject into an irrevocable past.

In the third chapter I will shift my focus from the camera to the photograph itself, considering it as a thing that travels through different spaces, to show how it can be seen as a place that is identified neither by its constituents nor by the location at which it makes an appearance, but by its movability. To clarify this, I focus on the pliability of the photograph as a thing that has been continually altering and transforming

through different modes of reproduction and channels of distribution. Underlining reproducibility as a capacity instilled in each photograph, this chapter shows that photographs are simultaneously marked by the conflicting forces of domiciliation and dispersion, whereby they resist being permanently localised in any time and place. To exemplify this, this chapter looks at a photograph constructed by conceptual artist Joan Fontcuberta through spatial concepts proposed by Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze: a photo that lays bare the temporary localisation of photographs in space and time. Having been converted into reproducible immaterial information subjected to mass proliferation in cyberspace, here I propose that photographs are no longer distributed via a fixed itinerary, which can be traced and localised, but rather they unboundedly drift into unspecified directions and locations in the internet space. Consequently, in my third step towards reading photography geographically I discuss how the photograph as a material or immaterial thing cannot be restricted to the space in which it temporarily rests, but instead it becomes a vagabond flyer whose spatial movements and provenances remain radically open.

In my fourth attempt to examine photography through places I shift my attention from the body of the photograph to its surface, in order to look at the spatial features of what I call "photographic place": a perceptible place that is embedded in the photograph as an image. To do this I consider the photographic frame as an edge to examine the spatial features that lie inside, outside and at the photograph's frame. One of these spatial facets is the so-called "blind field": a spatial dimension that could be included but has been left out of the photograph. This chapter dives deep into the significance of this usually overlooked spatial element of the photographic place. To foreground the gravity of the blind field I first examine a photograph taken by the European Space Agency (ESA), showing how a maximised blind field can not only strip off the spatial nexus between the in-frame and off-frame, but also destabilise the spatial scales within the frame, thereby manifesting a defamiliarised photographic place that seems to have come into existence ex nihilo. Then, by looking at another photograph constructed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), I show how the radical minimisation of the blind field can help us to visualise the spatial fabric of the universe, thus creating a familiarised photographic place wherein our perceptual distance towards what remains physically far removed is reduced. Having looked at the spatial features that lie inside and outside the frame through ESA's and NASA's photographs, this chapter probes into the spatial qualities that lie at the photographic frame itself, where the implied existence of the blind field is buried. To do this, it discusses how the enshrouded existence of the blind field allows mental projection and spatial protension beyond the frame, thereby making liminal what is kept in the frame. Therefore, in my fourth approach to reading spaces through places I show not only how the liminal existence of the blind field can affect our spatial reading of a photographic place, but also how this tertiary element can project itself as an extra-spatial dimension onto its edge.

In the fifth chapter I elevate my view from the ground to, as it were, hover above the photographic act by including the spectator in my geophilosophical reading of photography. This chapter contends that a place is neither necessarily embodied through its location, locale or sense of place; nor can its significance become palpable by combining these three aspects into a unity whereby it becomes a place. Instead, it proposes that places can also be viewed as moments of encounter that yield transitory appearances in time. To tie this evanescent conception of place to photography I deploy Azoulay's formulation of "the event of photography", as that which occurs not only as an actual confrontation in relation to the camera or the photograph, but also as a potential encounter in relation to their hypothetical existence. Like the concept of "the event" espoused by Alain Badiou as an effect that exceeds its establishing causes, here I argue that "the event of photography" can surpass its founding structures and come about without heralding its arrival time; in that it is an additional possibility immanent within the structure of photography, awaiting the time of its maximal appearance, thereby providing a retroactive sign of recognition of its emergence. As a result, in my fifth step towards reading photography through places, I show that the very perdurable encounter between the spectator and the photograph can be viewed as a place, instilled with the possibility of eternal resumption thanks to the vacant space of the spectator.

Having already looked at each partaker of photography through the lens of place, in the last and longest chapter I look at the genre of aftermath photography to see how this representational scheme translates physical places into photographed places to communicate a content. In this genre the photographer visits an empty physical place which has invariably witnessed a tragic event and, irrespective of its physical features, considers it a place instilled with meaning. In doing so, the aftermath photographer aims to direct the spectator to the concomitant histories of physical places in the world by putting an undeniable emphasis on their specificities in the world of photography. First, by looking at physical places in the world, this chapter considers landscapes to be localities that are inherently interlaced with, and comprised of, places, foregrounding the inextricable affinity between landscape and place. Then, I put forward that physical places in the world, such as landscapes, can acquire agency by intra-acting with people through their intermediary non-human elements. Later, by shifting from the physical world to the world of photography, here I argue that aftermath photography utilises the landscape genre to create a temporal suspension in the act of looking. I exemplify this point through examining an aftermath photograph taken by contemporary artist Gert Jan Kocken, showing how aftermath photography uses landscape images to prolong the act of looking, thereby creating a ghostly effect in the viewer. Here, however, I propose that the ghostly effect or spectral presence of aftermath photography originates not only from the image but also from its accompanying text: the caption. To clarify this point I delve into the multi-layered means of interaction between text and image by inspecting how a caption operates

vis-à-vis a photograph. Accordingly, this chapter suggests that in aftermath genre the meaning resides neither in the image nor in the text but in their point of convergence or site of struggle: the spatial juncture in between the two. Finally, by drawing on the philosophy of Giorgio Agamben, this chapter proposes that, if aftermath photography entangles the viewer in between the text and the image, it is to conjures up the exigency of the photographed place: an urgent demand to remember what remains unexpressed yet haunting within the photograph. Therefore, in my final approach towards reading photography through the concept of place, I show not only how the space in between the photographer and a physical locality coagulates the agency of place, but also how the lacunary space in between the text and the image begets the exigency of place.

Taking together all six approaches that were shortly introduced above, in this book I am going to embark on a journey to rediscover the spatiality and temporality of places through photography. As Casey has contended, what is irrefutable about the concept of place is its "polyvalent primacy": the fact that places can exhibit their indeterminate features in a multitude of discourses and practices. To unearth the effervescent existence of place, I single out the medium of photography in order to unravel how this medium can bring the indeterminate qualities of places to the forefront. Consequently, by closely examining each constitutive element of photography in the coming chapters, I am going to flesh out the inactive, contingent, unlocalisable, liminal, evental, agential and exigent features of places, with the aim of proposing a geophilosophy of photography that regards the aforesaid dispositions as the prerogative of places. I hope that my theoretical trajectory comes to fruition for an avid reader who bears with me throughout the book, where my geophilosophical lexicon finds its place.

Chapter One

The Photographer: A Corporeal Place in the Phenomenal World

> Phenomenology is … a philosophy for which the world is always "already there" before reflection begins—as an inalienable presence; and all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world.
>
> —Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*

To begin my analysis of the notion of place in relation to photography I will look at the usually unheeded partaker of a photographic act: the photographer's body. By employing a phenomenological scheme that pays significant attention to human lived experiences and perceptions in the world, this chapter regards photographers as both affecting and affected beings in space. As philosopher Vilém Flusser suggests, a photographer is "a person who attempts to place, within the image, information that is not predicted within the program of the camera".[1] By actively engaging in the world through their bodies, photographers are constantly in search of the information that is not provided by their cameras. Otherwise, they are reduced to some "functionaries" whose existences are restricted to their apparatuses.[2] Through discussing the bodily engagements of photographers, this chapter aims to foreground the significance of the photographer's body as a place instilled with lived experiences. As geographer John Wyile suggests, paying attention to the lived experiences of humans can allow us "to move away from a description of subjectivity in terms of rational, distant observation, towards an alternate understanding of human beings", which is based on "expressive engagement and involvement in the world".[3] To foreground how our lived experiences affect our engagement in, and perception of, the world, this chapter will hence treat the photographer's body as a place: a corporeal place that is continually perfused with and entangled in the phenomenal world.

However, it is true that the spectators of a photograph cannot access the lived experiences of the photographer at the moment the photograph was taken. Instead, they can only observe the outcome of a photographic encounter, that is,

the photograph. That is why for philosopher Hubert Damisch a phenomenological reading of photography is fundamentally problematic. The hesitancy we have when a series of phenomena results in what we consider to be photographs, Damisch notes, "is a revealing indication of the difficulty of reflecting phenomenologically… on a *cultural* object".[4] Cognizant of this difficulty, this chapter does not aim to elicit the interpersonal experiences of photographers, nor to speculate on their first lived-contacts with the world. Instead, it aims to highlight that the act of photography begins when the phenomenological body of a photographer involves in the world, when the body as a place engages with its surrounding space, aspiring to reflect the given experiences in the representational form of a photograph. By focusing on the photographer's body as a place, I intend to underline that photography is a medium of dynamic and indeterminate places, the first of which is the lived body of the photographer, a place that usually goes unnoticed. As art historian Hans Belting has put forward, in the triad of picture, medium and body it is usually the body that is overlooked.[5] As he notes:

> Photography, although it remained confined to a framed visual field, fed on its opposition to the concept of painting. It was not a medium of the gaze, for it replaced the gaze with the camera, but rather a medium of the body, which itself produced its own shadow. This shadow was arrested, held still at the moment of exposure, and so soon as it took shape in the print, *the body was lost*.[6]

By looking at the way in and through which a lived body experiences the world, in my first approach towards reading photography vis-à-vis the concept of place I enquire how the photographer's body can be seen as a place and how such a place interferes with its surrounding space. To do this this chapter will first discuss how the human body can be considered a place with bilateral features, being both a physical and a lived body at the same time. Then, by discussing the work of two American landscape photographers, Ansel Adams and Gary Metz, it will exemplify how such a place can inhabit spaces in the physical world. While both of these visual artists were working as landscape photographers, due to their divergent approaches to their subject matter their works reflect different methods of engaging with their surrounding space. Finally, having foregrounded the characteristics of the photographer's body as a bilateral place, through discussing philosopher Jacques Rancière's conception of aesthetics, this chapter suggests how such a place deals with space while retaining its duplicitous characteristics. To begin my study, in the following section I will explain how the photographer's body can be seen as a place that continually deals with its surrounding space, exemplified by the act of walking as practised by landscape photographers.

Going for a Walk with a Lived Body

> One knew of places in ancient Greece where they led down into the underworld. Our walking existence likewise is a land which, at certain hidden points, leads down into the underworld.
>
> —Walter Benjamin, *The Arcade Project*

For Tim Cresswell, spaces transform into places when they are invested with "human meaning", that is, when humans impart meanings to a portion of space it becomes what they consider to be a place.[7] However, not only do humans create places out of infinite space, humans themselves can be considered places in which meanings and images transpire. The provenance of images, Belting argues, is to be found not in the natural world but in the bodies of individuals.[8] As he puts it, "the body is a place in the world, a locus in which images are generated and identified".[9] For Belting, it is through human bodies and the corporeal activities thereof that their perceptual system makes sense of the world and, in turn, constitutes images. Consequently, he defines visual perception as "an operation by which we—our bodies—take in visual data and stimuli and analyse them. But the final outcome is not an analysis but a synthesis".[10] In the process of taking in visual data from the world, the human body is not merely a passive recipient, but one that actively constructs and reconstructs the sensory data received from its surroundings. That is why Casey notes that "we must realize that the perceiver's body is not a mere mechanism for registering sensations but an active participant in the scene of perception".[11] However, by having a direct contact with the world, the human body is not only an active participant in the process of perception, but also directly in charge of its unification.

As philosopher Alfred North Whitehead notes, "we have to admit that the body is the organism whose states regulate our cognizance of the world. The unity of the perceptual field therefore must be a unity of bodily experience".[12] For Whitehead, humans' corporeal activities are not only the primary source of perception, but also the means of their unification. "You are in a certain place perceiving things. Your perception takes place where you are, and is entirely dependent on how your body is functioning", states Whitehead.[13] One of the constructive instances whereby bodily functionality can become palpable is the way in which a human body orients itself in the world, thereby determining objects' locations by means of its direction with respect to them. Although we usually think of orientation as a purely mental activity, hence disregarding our bodily intervention in this process, it is the human body that mainly determines our very sense of direction. That is why Casey contends that "things are not oriented in and by themselves; they require our intervention to *become* oriented. Nor are they oriented by a purely mental operation: the *a priori* of

orientation belongs to the body, not to the mind".[14] For instance, a photographer can project orientation onto their surroundings by his/her mere bodily presence, because the human body is a living organism that can hold an upright position. As human geographer Yi-Fu Tuan underlines, one of the unique features of the lived body of humans is that it can stand up, allowing space to be constructed in its surroundings.[15] In an upright position, he writes:

> man is ready to act. Space opens out before him and is immediately differentiable into front-back and right-left axes in conformity with the structure of his body… In deep sleep man continues to be influenced by his environments but loses his world; he is a body occupying space. Awake and upright he regains his world, and space is articulated in accordance with his corporeal schema.[16]

According to Tuan, the lived body that can hold an upright position immediately "imposes a schema on space", which determines orientation according to the position of the body, and the person notices this spatial coordination only when he/she is lost.[17] This means by simply moving into an upright position the photographer's body instantaneously projects the coordinating schema of space onto its surroundings, thereby engaging in the perceptual world with, and through, a corporeal activity.

Nevertheless, as Casey reminds us, a person's body is not only a lived body (*Leib*) that can move and determine orientations, but also a physical body (Körper) that appears to be still and inert.[18] Seen as a physical construct, the human body has its own interior mechanisms by which it senses itself, which are premised on the body's kinaesthetic experiences. While we can habitually see the spatial movements of a lived body, we cannot observe kinaesthetic experiences and the way in which receptors in smaller body parts (e.g. muscles, tendons and joints) constitute our perceptions. As Casey explains, kinaesthesia is "the inner experience of the moving or resting body as it feels itself moving or pausing at a given moment".[19] To be clear, kinaesthetic experiences are the internal corporeal movements of the human body whereby it constitutes itself, which are not visible in the way that spatial movements are, but are nevertheless felt through movements and stoppings of internal body parts. Although we can observe the exterior spatial movements of our body parts when they move, such as a moving leg or an arm, according to philosopher Edmund Husserl, the "holding sway" of our physical bodies is felt only indirectly in bodily movements.[20] The imperceptible holding sway of the body is a clear instance of kinaesthetic experience. As Husserl explains this point:

> All such holding-sway occurs in modes of "movement," but the "I move" in holding-sway is not in itself the spatial movement of a physical body, which as such could be perceived by everyone. My body—in particular,

> say the bodily part "hand"—moves in space; the activity of holding sway, "kinesthesis," which is embodied together with the body's movement, is not itself in space as a spatial movement but is only indirectly co-localized in that movement.[21]

Despite being a place that can actively project the coordinating structure of space by its mere presence, Husserl suggests that the human body has its own internally co-localised movements as well, i.e. the indiscernible activities through which a moving or resting body holds sway. Accordingly, when a lived body (*Leib*) moves in space it imposes the schema thereof through orientation and, being also a physical body (Körper), it actively and internally co-localises itself in that movement. For this reason Casey puts forwards that the human body, being both a lived body that externally moves and a physical body that internally holds sway, "resists direct localization"; that is, the human body cannot ever be viewed as a location fixed in space.[22] Geographically speaking, the term location "refers to an absolute point in space with a specific set of coordinates and measurable distances from other locations. Location refers to 'where' of place," states Cresswell.[23] The human body, which moves spatially as a lived body and kinaesthetically as a physical body, cannot be reduced to an absolute point in space. In other words, calling the human body a location is to announce its death, turning it into a null point in space, therefore disregarding both its spatial and kinaesthetic activities. Given that the body of a photographer is at the same time a lived and a physical body, it cannot ever be reduced to a location in space. Instead, a photographer's body embodies what Casey calls a "lived place".[24] As he sets out, lived places are

> regarded not as the mere subdivision of an absolute space or as a function of relationships between coexistents but as loci of intimacy and particularity, endowed with *porous boundaries* and *open orientations*. They are experienced and known through customary bodily actions.[25]

The human body, seen as a "lived place", is not delimited to the spatial movements that can be perceived by the naked eye (such as a moving hand), nor to the interior kinaesthetic experiences of our body parts. Casey's notion of lived place, instead, refers to the conflation of the lived body, which spatially moves in and through space, *and* the physical body, which is constantly co-localising itself amongst other objects in that space. As Husserl suggests, the coalescence of the physical and the lived body in one place—or, as Casey calls it, a lived place—can be best exemplified by the banal act of walking. In walking, Husserl points out, "my organism constitutes itself: by means of its relation to itself … the kinesthetic activities (of the physical body) and the spatial movement (of the lived body) stay in union by means of association".[26] In walking, the physical body, which is in charge of inter-bodily experiences, and the lived body, which is in charge of bodily spatial movements, forge one coherent

organism. That is why for Husserl walking becomes an oscillation between "keeping still" as the physical body and "keeping-in-operation" as the lived body.[27] By simply walking in the landscape, therefore, the photographer's body is not in it just as a fixed location, but is actively constituting itself as a physical body and reconstituting itself as a lived body, thereby inhabiting its environment as a lived place.

As philosopher Merleau-Ponty puts it, "our body is not primarily *in* space: it is of it", referring to the fact that our body, or rather the body as a lived place, is not a fixed location in space.[28] As he further writes, "we must therefore avoid saying that our body is *in* space, or *in* time. It inhabits space and time… I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them".[29] For Merleau-Ponty inhabiting a space is not merely being present in it as a location, but being a part of that space as a lived place, through corporeal porosity and perviousness. For photographers, the act of walking becomes, to a certain extent, a way of phenomenologically inhabiting the world through internal kinaesthetic and external spatial dynamism, not as locations, but as lived places. As anthropologist Tim Ingold notes, "it is through being inhabited, rather than through its assimilation to a formal design specification, that the world becomes a meaningful environment for people".[30] However, as Merleau-Ponty has underlined, inhabitation is not merely being *in* space and time, but including and combining them with our bodies, just as humans inhabit their houses. Yet, even to be in a house is not to be fixed in it as a location, but, as Casey succinctly states, it is

> to feel oneself to be in the centre of things without, however, necessarily being literally at the centre. The difference is that between a strictly geometric centeredness (being a location) and an inhabitational being-centred-in (a lived place) that is as thick as it is porous.[31]

Through the practice of walking, photographers not only resist being reduced to a simple location which has specific geometrical boundaries, but are also being inhabited as lived places in the world. Because, as I have discussed with regard to walking, the photographer's body viewed as a lived place is continually in the active process of integration (as a lived body) and reintegration (as a physical body) into its surrounding space, thereby inhabiting the space with and through a somatic place. In other words, being capable of spatially moving through and kinaesthetically co-localising itself in the world, the photographer's body is not in but *of* the space.

Although it is true that having access to the inhabitational experiences of the body of a photographer is inconceivable, the way photographers choose to embody their lived experiences in photographs can be suggestive. Therefore, having argued that the photographer's body can be seen as a lived place, which oscillates between keeping still as a physical body *and* keeping in operation as a lived body, I will next look at the work of two landscape photographers to examine the extent to which their work reflects the conflicting aspects of this lived place.

Inhabiting the World as a "lived place"

> Landscape, in short, is not a totality that you or anyone else can look *at,* it is rather the world *in which* we stand.
>
> —Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment*

Taken in 1942, *The Tetons and the Snake River* (fig.1) is one of the most widely acknowledged photographs of American landscape photographer Ansel Adams (1902-1984). Adams' fascination with the American landscape prompted him to walk to the remotest areas of the US to visualise the splendour of American nature. Describing Adams' landscape work, photography theorist John Szarkowski once wrote, "for Adams the natural landscape is not a fixed and solid sculpture but an insubstantial image, as transient as the light that continually redefines it".[32]

Figure 1: Ansel Adams (1942). *The Tetons and the Snake River, Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming*, 1942. Collection Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. © The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

Figure 2, however, shows a photograph from a lesser known landscape photographer, Gary Metz (1941-2010). This photograph is included in a landscape series entitled *Quaking Aspen: A Lyric Complaint,* which was published posthumously.[33] While Adams' photograph presents a spectacular view of the landscape where all the visual elements are in a paradisiacal arrangement, Metz's photograph foregrounds a more commonplace facet of the landscape.[34] Irrespective of their approaches to the landscape, both images aim to convey the lived experiences of the photographers in their surrounding space. Referring to his work, Gary Metz notes that the concept of landscape is habitually conceived as a "pictorial one", and that is why most of the American landscapes are "visited but not lived in".[35] It is true that photographs cannot make tangible the lived experiences of landscape photographers, but to some extent they can put the spectator in relation to those experiences. As sociologist Rob Shields rightly states, "photographic 'shooting' kills not the body but the life of things, leaving only representational carcasses".[36] Evidently, photographs do not contain the phenomenological experiences of a lived body, and are merely "representational carcasses". However, through looking at them, we can comprehend how photographers *chose* to convey their bodily and inhabitational experiences of being in the world.

Figure 2: Gary Metz (circa 1970). Untitled, from *Quaking Aspen Series*. © Gary Metz Estate.