

Reconceptualizing Place

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Place is a geographical space with meaning attached to it, and philosophers think about the concept of place because of its role in understanding this meaning in relation to one's self and the world. Many socio-political implications arise from place, but there are few prescriptions on how to use the concept or why we should even use it. In this paper, I discuss the previously proposed concepts of place and highlight how place gives rise to distinct types of discrimination. In particular, I argue that place discrimination cannot be reduced to other forms of discrimination such as racial discrimination. I also discuss plicism as a way to understand place alongside various oppressive structures and realities.

It is unimaginable to think of human existence without thinking of one's 'place' or the aspects of one's place. Place contextualizes and situates one's status or position in the world. Place is necessary for us to understand ourselves within the world. We can only understand our experiences in relation to where we are or to the particular geographical spaces we are in. Furthermore, we only understand ourselves (alongside objects) against the backdrop of particular places.¹ Our life experiences are not independent of where we are as we are always on location, and we can only establish our identities when in place.² While we may not be aware of it, meaningful spaces illuminate our social, cultural, and political experiences and encapsulate our relationships in the world.

Place molds subjectivities and is one of the foundations and structures of human experience. In Martin Heidegger's concept of being-in-the-world, he implies that human existence is perpetually connected to its surroundings as the being-in-the-world is always placed-*in*-place or placed-in-the-world. Heidegger's idea of "thrown-ness" implies the arbitrariness of place and how human beings as dwellers can emerge meaningfully from where they are placed. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have thus argued for geophilosophy. With this, they try to change our philosophical framings to highlight space³ and territory as the foundation of thought (or earth-thinking).⁴ Thought is only possible between concepts and the earth, or in the movement across territories. Somewhat like Heidegger's dwellers "thrown" in place, human beings only "become" in space or territories.

1 Jeff Malpas: *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography* (London: Routledge, 2018) 180.

2 *Ibid.*, ix–x.

3 Gilles Deleuze; Félix Guattari: *What is Philosophy?* (London: Verso, 1994). If we look at Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of space, we can see that they are actually referring to place as the concept we use in this paper, i.e. physical space with meaning, see Thomas P. Keating; Nina Williams: *Geophilosophies: towards another sense of the earth*, in: *Subjectivity* 15 (2022) 93–108.

4 Thomas P. Keating and Nina Williams: *Geophilosophies: Towards Another Sense of the Earth*, *Subjectivity* 15, no. 3 (2022) 93–108, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41286-022-00138-3>.

Deleuze and Guattari also highlight geography as fundamental to grand histories. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Edward Casey, by contrast, underscore place as basic to our everyday, mundane, and ordinary lives.⁵ Despite this, modern philosophers have demoted the concept of place below the concepts of time and space. In the literature on semantics, causation, modality, and phenomenology, ancient and modern philosophical puzzles on time and space are vaster and more popular and controversial as they are supposedly more diverse and complex given their relationship to scientific and mathematical literature.⁶ Consequently, because place has disappeared from mainstream philosophical discourses, and we have forgotten and overlooked place in thought and concept creation, we have less understanding of ourselves and the world's workings. Casey has thus challenged us to restore the position of place in philosophical discourses and "bring it into daylight".⁷ We cannot ignore discussing place because it has the power to direct, stabilize, memorialize, and identify.⁸ Furthermore, place also provides varying topographies, material objects, and policies that shape and support thought, experiences, and agency.⁹ Talking about place in philosophy is essential, as it contributes to how we think and understand ourselves and the world as a place we live in.

In this paper, I will contribute to the discussion of place. I focus on the concept of place as a geographical space with meaning attached to it and explain how various place-aspects contribute to such meaning. I provide prescriptions on exactly how to use such a concept or detail why we should even use it. Furthermore, rather than just looking at the concept of place as fundamental to human subjectivities and that which stabilizes and memorializes identity and experience, we can see it as deeply problematic. With place's many socio-political implications, place also has the power to marginalize and destabilize human beings, their identities, and experiences. I discuss the previously proposed concepts of place on deeper and practical levels and elaborate on how these concepts impact the social order and give rise to a distinct type of discrimination. Place discrimination is unique and cannot be reduced to other forms of discrimination such as racial discrimination, or so I will argue. I also discuss the concept of placism as a means to understand various oppressive structures and realities.

⁵ Edward S. Casey: *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993) xiv–xv.

⁶ Barry Dainton: *Time and Space* (London: Routledge, 2016) xiii.

⁷ Edward S. Casey: *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013) 11; E. S. Casey: *Getting Back Into Place*, op. cit., xv.

⁸ E. S. Casey: *The Fate of Place*, op. cit., 11; E. S. Casey: *Getting Back Into Place*, op. cit., xv.

⁹ Karen Lollar: *Strategic Invisibility: Resisting the Inhospitable Dwelling Place*, in: *Review of Communication* 15/4 (2015) 299–315.

The Concept of Place

When we think about place, we cannot help but think about physical spaces or geographic locations. These spaces may be as small as a parking spot near a supermarket or a room in one's house or as huge as a planet in the Milky Way. If we used the concept of place only for a geographic location, such as a town, country, or city, this would lead to us describing a particular place as that which is in a position on the earth (or the universe) that possesses specific natural or human-made features such as mountains or roads at a certain latitude or longitude.¹⁰ While this concept of place is straightforward and obvious, we should not limit the concept of place to a mere region with particular objects, as place has some deeper, existential, and social level to it. Defining place as a mere location falls short of its connection to human experience and society in general. Rather than thinking about place as separate from people who experience it, we can also conceive of place as an outcome of socio-political constructions.¹¹

Aristotle claims that "everything is somewhere and in place" or that "every sensible body is in place".¹² Edward Casey refers to the phenomenon of being placed or in place as being in a cultivational place-world or a constructed environment wherein "mini-worlds of imagination and memory" could multiply.¹³ A place-world is the world that we inhabit through our "habituated/ habituating" bodies.¹⁴ He explains that there can be "no place without a world" and "no world without places".¹⁵ Furthermore, Tim Cresswell defines place as a "meaningful location;" or "spaces which people have made meaningful".¹⁶ Spaces transition to places when people form relationships or affinities with them. Thus, for a place to be a meaningful location, it must have three fundamental dimensions, according to John Agnew: location, locale, and sense of place.¹⁷ Location can be thought of as the *co-ordinates* of a place on earth (which is our earlier simplistic concept of place) or the "where." The locale, local social worlds, or the actual material setting of a place are composed of distinct objects such as buildings,

¹⁰ Tim Cresswell; Maxwell Street: Writing and Thinking Place (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019) 191; Tim Cresswell: Place: A Short Introduction (Chichester: Wiley, 2004) 7.

¹¹ Dylan Trigg: The Memory of Place: A Phenomenology of the Uncanny (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012) 2.

¹² Aristotle: Physics. Volume I: Books 1–4, transl. by Philip H. Wicksteed; Francis M. Comford (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957) Book 4, 208b-209a., here quoted from Thomas Hünefeldt; Annika Schlitte: Introduction: Situatedness and Place, in: Situatedness and Place. Contributions of Phenomenology, Vol. 95, ed. by Thomas Hünefeldt; Annika Schlitte (Cham: Springer 2018) 8.

¹³ E. S. Casey: Getting Back Into Place, op. cit., 179.

¹⁴ E. S. Casey: The Fate of Place, op. cit., 233.

¹⁵ E. S. Casey: Getting Back Into Place, op. cit., 179; E. S. Casey: The Fate of Place, op. cit., 46.

¹⁶ T. Cresswell: Place: A Short Introduction, op. cit., 7.

¹⁷ John Agnew; James Duncan: The Power of Place: Bringing Together Geographical and Sociological Imaginations (London: Routledge, 2014) 2.

gardens, or rooms where people build their social relations and maintain their social identities. Finally, the sense of place is the “subjective and emotional attachment people have to place,” that feeling of being “there”.¹⁸ These three dimensions complement each other, as locales can only be understood through their location and territorial identities associated with sense of place.¹⁹ What makes people have that sense of place, or that connection to specific locations and locales, is its place-aspects.

Jeff Malpas defines place-aspects as the particular features of places that construct people’s relationships to spaces or geographic locations. Specific aspects such as places being their birthplace, place of origin, place of migration, culture and background, community, language, place of ancestors/descendants, places of travel, food, and so on form people’s relationships and affinities to these locations.²⁰ For instance, a person born in a certain place would have a different relationship with that place than someone who had just traveled there for a few days. Similarly, someone who does not know where their birthplace is or someone who was assigned a birthplace by the state through adoption may have no specific relation to that place. Barbara Yngvesson explains this phenomenon as a loss of bearing and rootedness to place.²¹

Place-aspects are the basis of self-identities, characters, nuances, and personal histories, and through these affinities, people understand themselves, objects, and the societies they live in. Casey’s place-world concept describes the familiarity of places to humans because of their awareness of place. Place-worlds reveal primary and secondary qualities and awareness of ourselves and others. Similarly, Kelly Baker explains that, while we are in physical places, our rootedness to their place-aspects creates our attachments, narrative self-productions, and “multifarious identities”.²² Some would characterize this sense as “existential insideness” or “belonging” to a place because of its historicity, distinctiveness, heritage, and the intimacy it enjoys with us.²³ While it seems that this belonging is limited to one’s birthplace or the place where one has chosen to live, this also applies to place in general. For instance, the place to which one has briefly traveled for one’s wedding or honeymoon characterizes a sense of place, or a historicity and distinctiveness as well. Even places that we have not been to, such as the place of our ancestors, “root” us and give us a sense of affinity and belonging. Casey likewise gives the examples of the Piazza San Marco in Venice or the

18 T. Cresswell: *Place: A Short Introduction*, op. cit., 7–8.

19 J. Agnew; J. Duncan: *The Power of Place*, op. cit., 2.

20 Hazel T. Biana: *Traversing Paths/Pasts: Places of Filipino Philosophy*, in: *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 14/1 (2022) 3.

21 Barbara Yngvesson: *Going ‘Home’: Adoption, Loss of Bearings, and the Mythology of Roots*, in: *Social Text* 21/1 (2003) 7–27.

22 Kelly Baker: *Identity, Memory and Place*, in: *The Word Hoard* 1 (2012) 26, 23–33.

23 *ibid.*, 27; T. Cresswell: *Place: A Short Introduction*, op. cit., 1, 20, 34, 60; J. Malpas: *Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography*, op. cit., 9.

Jimmy Jarvis Garden in Harlem. Some people would have a particular attachment to these places as places of reflection even if they were not born there.²⁴ The “historical memory” and “embodied knowledge” of place result in that sense of place.²⁵ The memory and knowledge of place also contribute to collective memory and belonging.²⁶ Through place, we get to view the world not only from our point of view but also from the world’s point of view.²⁷

Accordingly, if we are conscious of the constructed natures of places, we see the essence of socio-cultural particularities in our everyday lives. Furthermore, we see how others are *placed* around us, and we get to affirm that we are connected to other places all over the world.²⁸ Nishida Kitaro discusses the act of such consciousness in *Place and Dialectic* and claims that we no longer think of physical space as mere space. Kitaro builds his theory of place within the context of searching for the underpinnings of knowledge. He claims that place is where knowledge becomes possible. Poetically speaking, he states that “from within consciousness [of place is] where we find ourselves,” and in this case, we find others as well.²⁹

From a practical standpoint, we can think of place as influenced by a person’s place-aspects, enriched by the locale and the sense of place. The individual and collective memories and sense of belonging, thus, arise not only from personal experiences but also from social relationships and “geographically bounded political contexts”.³⁰ If we see the constructions of place socially, culturally, and even ecologically, we recognize how we are tied to or affected by various places around the world.³¹ More than just a cartographic location, place determines “how” we are to ourselves, together with others, and “who we shall become together”.³² This illustrates the power of place and how it shapes our struggles over resources and collective identities.³³ With the onset of capitalism, commodification, and resistance, the role of place has become a critical foundation of traditions and identities of individuals and, at the same time, national and “supra-national” institutions.³⁴

24 E. S. Casey: *Getting Back Into Place*, op. cit., 180.

25 K. Baker: *Identity, Memory and Place*, op.cit., 26.

26 Ibid.

27 Huang Wen-Hong: *The Shift in Nishida’s Logic of Place*, in: *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy 4: Facing the 21st Century*, ed. by Lam Wing-keung; Cheung Ching-yuen (Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion & Culture, 2009) 135–151.

28 Robert Feagan: *The Place of Food: Mapping out the ‘Local’ in Local Food Systems*, in: *Progress in Human Geography* 31/1 (2007) 23–42.

29 Kitarō Nishida: *Place and Dialectic: Two Essays* by Nishida Kitarō (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

30 K. Baker: *Identity, Memory and Place*, op. cit., 26.

31 R. Feagan: *The Place of Food*, op. cit., 23.

32 E. S. Casey: *Getting Back Into Place*, op. cit., 23.

33 K. Baker: *Identity, Memory and Place*, op. cit., 26.

34 J. Agnew; J. Duncan: *The Power of Place*, op. cit., 7.

Uses of the Concept of Place

Place is a force or barrier that can restrain, restrict, or prevent motion and mobility. It is an “exclusionary force in the world where groups of people define themselves against threatening others who are not included in the particular vision of place being enacted”.³⁵ Various (placial)/social frameworks and systems are sites of power and domination. Place figures in understanding socio-political identities, discrimination or privilege, and advantages and disadvantages. These meanings, notions, and connotations we put on place tend to oppress people and their sense of place. We *can* reconceptualize place and use it to explain multiple identities of beings-in-place with multiple place aspects to identify configurations of oppression and how place discriminates people.

Place is a specific factor that figures in the social order. Using the buzzword *intersectionality*,³⁶ place plays a role in and contributes to our complex identities and how we perceive these identities. Interestingly, intersectionality theorists have emphasized more common intersectional factors such as gender, race, and class,³⁷ but failed to acknowledge place as something which also reinforces certain oppressions and injustices. Place’s role in the establishment of the social order, however, cannot be discounted. Place-aspects such as place of birth, origin, and others, for instance, affect a person’s experience of power and equity.

Furthermore, a person’s place may be integrated into the so-called diversity wheel which dictates whether people “belong” to certain groups or community relationships. Marilyn Loden and Judy Rosener developed the diversity wheel as a framework for thinking and understanding the varying aspects of individuals’ and institutions’ diversities. Each person’s differences and uniqueness are functions of various dimensions such as sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, age, ethnicity, education, etc. The framework was seen to initiate dialogues regarding individual and group similarities and differences across societies and cultures. The diversity wheel also illustrates that intersectionality goes beyond sex and race. If we incorporate place in the diversity wheel, in particular for displaced refugees or traveling minorities, for instance, we can see that they are oppressed, maybe even ostracized, or delegitimized not merely in virtue of their race alone, but rather because of their place as well.

Explaining further, we can say that place is a factor in existing intersectional oppressions aside from the common factors of sex, race, and class because place determines the unequal mobilities of people, identity borders, citizenship, na-

35 T. Cresswell: *Place: A Short Introduction*, op.cit., 56.

36 Hazel T. Biana: bell hooks and Online Feminism, in: *Journal of International Women’s Studies* 25/2 (2023) Artikel 10, 6.

37 Hazel T. Biana: The Place of ‘Place’ in Intersectionality: Developing a Critical Place Theory, in: *Migrations and Diasporas*, ed. by William Arrocha; Elena Xenii (Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2023) 128.

tional and international power relations, claims, and entitlements to geographic spaces, rights to “dwell” in a place, rural and urban inclusivity, and place-based stigma, placism, or placist thinking. Reducing the root of intersectional oppressions to sexist-racist discriminations, for instance, ignores the role of place in individual and group diversities. If we acknowledge the role of place, we will not only see place as an abstract affinity or emotional connection to a physical, geographical place but rather something that has practical implications on our everyday life experiences and socio-political power struggles. A practical implication of place is its possible hindrance to global travel and mobilities. On the other hand, place also affects forced movements or displacement. While “diasporas and migration” are usually the common terms mentioned in policy discourses, oppressions experienced by migrating people are usually equated with their race or ethnicity but not place.

Place and Migration

Place is a physical space with meaning attached to it. Sometimes, the concept of place is used as a “strategic concept,” especially when there is a “particular political purpose” to oppose it with space.³⁸ For instance, we can infer that certain groups are such and such because they are from certain places (that may have meaning to them). A simple example is when inhabitants of more developed countries think that inhabitants of less developed countries are simpleminded or less educated, in the same way as those from urban places stereotype inhabitants of rural places as simpleminded or naive.

We form our strategic concepts of place and perceptions of groups (with unique place-aspects) based on our subjective and emotional attachments to it. For instance, Indigenous Peoples (who are original inhabitants) were historically displaced by migrants from more developed places such as more developed or “civilized” countries, in the case of the Spanish colonization of the Philippines back in 1521. In this example, we see how those with perceived superior place-aspects oppress and discriminate against those with different place-aspects. On a more serious and controversial note, we may have varying judgments and opinions of the Israeli and Palestinian populations in connection to the Gaza-Israel conflict. We may be pro or anti-war (or neutral and apathetic), depending on our specific political leanings and where in the world we are. Our derivation and constructs of people in these places are formed by our sense of place, which is also “a positional good” or “a form of ‘symbolic capital,’” made evident by specific knowledge, interests, and (cultural or aesthetic) tastes.³⁹

³⁸ J. Malpas: *Place and Experience*, op. cit., 8.

³⁹ Jana Raadik-Cottrell: *Cultural Memory and Place Identity: Creating Place Experience* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Publishing, 2010) 22.

Like other factors contributing to our diversity, place dictates our privilege or lack thereof. Place is also a factor in people's social standing or class. We have certain privileges, opportunities, entitlements, and benefits or burdens and oppressions because of place. Agnew and James Duncan claim that place has the power to constrain and enable lives on various socio-political levels.⁴⁰ Nation and citizenship, which are functions of place's territorial implications and illustrations of place-aspects such as place of birth or migration, act as social borders that are tools for enacting power relations and creating certain injustices. William Arrocha and Elena Xení refer to these injustices as physical and legal barriers and as exclusion and rejection due to place.⁴¹ Arrocha and Xení also claim that people from other places, in this case, migrants, are constantly discriminated against even though they merely wish to improve the status of their lives. We see that their being excluded and marginalized is a jarring function of having the different place-aspects such as places of birth.

Refugees and legal or illegal migrants because of being born in, or traveling from, certain places, suffer injustices through human rights violations and discrimination. An excellent example of a physical barrier would be the "Trump wall," which aims to prevent people in Mexico from crossing into the United States territory. Such "physical" walls are put into place not to prevent the migration of Mexicans per se but any form of unauthorized or illegal migration of people south of the border or generally, outside of the US territory. Such walls are not solely physical but symbolic as well of the racial or placial discrimination that migrants are subjected to in many countries. Border control authorities often assume that every non-citizen entering a particular territory is a potential threat who might overstay and abuse their visa privileges. While the scrutiny of border crossers appears to be solely a function of race, we cannot discount that place plays a huge factor as well.

Place, too, helps explain the inequalities and unjust power relations in the mobilities of individuals and groups. For instance, those in so-called power positions dictate who can occupy specific places and who can obtain certain rights associated with those places. In the case of settlement countries such as Canada, which is a top destination for immigrants and refugees, some "original" inhabitants tend to prevent migrants from having specific human rights. Canada's immigration detention system, for instance, locks up migrants alongside regular detainees. A report by Human Rights Watch reveals that some migrants are subjected to harsher and more onerous living conditions as opposed to these other

⁴⁰ J. Agnew; J. Duncan: *The Power of Place*, op. cit., 7.

⁴¹ William Arrocha; Elena Xení: Introduction: Embracing Interdisciplinary Approaches to Better Understand the Challenges Facing Migrations and Diasporas, in: *Migrations and Diasporas*, ed. by William Arrocha; Elena Xení (Leeds: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2023) 1–8.

detainees.⁴² While we may say that the alleged injustices are a function of the migrants' race, it is clear that the discrimination is targeted toward people who moved to the settlement country from another place.

Aside from being victims of injustices, migrants or refugees have certain place-aspects denied to them. This fact affects their individual and collective identities, and their place in the social order. These place-aspects include language, community, food, place of migration, place of birth, among others. While the denial of language, community, food, and place of migration are obvious forms of denying place-aspects, an individual's place of birth may be denied when states deprive citizens of their nationality through their policies. Some examples of these policies are when children are denied their nationalities (thus, the right to inhabit a place) when their parents are stateless or unknown. According to The UN Refugee Agency, millions of people are left stateless in their country of birth.

Ties to more traditional senses of place, such as birthplace or hometown, help people gain "easy identities".⁴³ This is why those who know their birthplaces may know *where they are*, and get a sense of belonging to a related community. Similarly, displaced refugees who have been prevented from preserving their ethnic and cultural backgrounds are denied their legitimate presence in their place of migration. This is because the "true belonging" to a place is said to be constantly surveilled by those who believe that certain spaces mark their identities.⁴⁴ Therefore, anyone who seems to be an outsider cannot "belong" to such a place and is prevented from building their individual or group identities, from engaging in socialization, or from achieving their potential and living an authentic life.

Aside from refugees or illegal aliens, some people with dementia have forgotten *where* they belong. Here, the disorientation with place results in the loss of dignity from aimless wandering.⁴⁵ This can also be thought of as "nowhere-ness" or no-place-ness, where there is a lack of identity and legitimacy in one's sense of place as well.⁴⁶ Those who do not belong or are "nowhere" at a certain geographical location are not really *in place* despite being in or moving to a place. When one's belongingness to place is pulled from under the rug or altered, or where people are prevented from connecting to their place-aspects, they are displaced. This is known as displacement or the "movement from place or

42 Brian Stauffer: Canada: Abuse, Discrimination in Immigration Detention, in: Human Rights Watch (June 17, 2021). <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/06/17/canada-abuse-discrimination-immigration-detention>.

43 K. Baker: Place, op. cit., 25.

44 T. Cresswell, Maxwell Street, op.cit., 61–62.

45 Rose Gilroy: Places That Support Human Flourishing: Lessons from Later Life, in: Planning Theory & Practice 9/2 (2008) 157.

46 Bruce B. Janz: Philosophy in an African Place (Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009) 3.

position.”⁴⁷ Some also use the term “dislocation”, likening it to the medical term “(joint) dislocation”, wherein one is moved or disconnected painfully from their *normal* spot or position. Dislocation breeds alienation;⁴⁸ and this can be traced back to the displaced’s loss of political power (political displacement) or sense of belonging and ownership (cultural displacement).⁴⁹ Without belongingness or rootedness of place, some have to surmount various power structures to be placed. This is a continuous struggle, the finding, claiming, and asserting entitlements to place.⁵⁰

Questions have been posed about the possibility of the existence of place outside a nation-state system.⁵¹ In the Arendtian sense, without a place that is part of a nation-state, humans may not have the right to a place in the world where speech and action can be meaningful. Or if at all, they will not have “the right to have rights”.⁵² Asylum seekers and refugees who do not belong or are deprived of place identities, for instance, are segregated from their host societies due to place constructions.⁵³ In this context, Mimi Sheller points out injustices and inequalities brought about by certain place-aspects when it comes to rights to mobility and dwelling in a place.⁵⁴ Ron Scapp and Brian Weitz reconfigure and rethink race, ethnicity, migration, and habituation and include place in the conversation. They highlight the question of place: *where* is one, *where* has one been, and *where* is one going?⁵⁵ These questions figure in human experiences, dislocation, and alienation. If we conceptualize human experience through the “where,” we can see how one’s place or placelessness can oppress us. At the crux of these oppressions and deprivation of rights is the state of being placeless, or placelessness.

47 Hazel T. Biana; Ruel M. Nalam: Terms of Endearment: The Displacement of Inday, in: *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* 20/3 (2020) 124.

48 Ron Scapp; Brian Seitz: Introduction. *Being in Transit*, in: *Philosophy, Travel, and Place: Being in Transit*, ed. by Ron Scapp; Brian Seitz (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan/Springer, 2018) 2.

49 Steven Tuttle: Place Attachment and Alienation from Place: Cultural Displacement in Gentrifying Ethnic Enclaves, in: *Critical Sociology* 48/3 (2022) 2.

50 B. B. Janz: *Philosophy in an African Place*, op. cit., 1–2.

51 Marie Claire Caloz-Tschopp: Scientific Diasporas, Migration and Development. A Perspective from Philosophy and Political Theory, in: *Scientific Diasporas as Development Partners. Skilled Migrants from Colombia, India and South Africa in Switzerland: Empirical Evidence and Policy Responses*, ed. by Gabriela Tejada; Jean-Claud Bolay (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010) 21–136.

52 Serena Parekh: A Meaningful Place in the World: Hannah Arendt on the Nature of Human Rights, in: *Journal of Human Rights* 3/1 (March 2004) 41.

53 Steve Kirkwood; Andy McKinlay; Chris McVittie: The Mutually Constitutive Relationship between Place and Identity: The Role of Place-Identity in Discourse on Asylum Seekers and Refugees, in: *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 23/6 (November 2013) 454.

54 Mimi Sheller: Mobility Justice: Sustainable Mobility Futures, in: *Routledge Handbook of Social Futures*, ed. by Carlos López Galviz; Emily Spiers (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022) 289–304.

55 R. Scapp; B. Seitz: *Philosophy, Travel, and Place*, op. cit., 2.

Place and Oppression

Some practical place indicators contributing to oppression can be traced to the place of one's birth certificate, passport, and language (accent, jargon, word choice). A birth certificate (or lack thereof) may dictate one's nationality, citizenship, privileges, or even placelessness. Which passport one has determines one's limitations in travel and mobility, naturalization, and the emotional tax and invisible labor that comes with it.⁵⁶ Language, at the same time, can lead to one's displacement, isolation, and discrimination.⁵⁷ All these place indicators (while not independent of race) play out significantly in various injustices and marginalization.

One specific place indicator that can be a source of discrimination is a person's birth certificate. Most birth certificates (or a semblance of such documents) contain information about one's birth, particularly the place of birth. These include the place indicators of their parents as well as other placial information. Other such documents include passports and other identification cards. To illustrate the importance of the birth certificate, newborn babies need them to establish their national identity or nationality, citizenship, and their legitimacy to travel or reside in particular places. Furthermore, these "place documents" are the basis of specific political or governmental services, resources, and benefits available to individuals on various levels. As mentioned earlier, without such nationality (which is dependent on particular place-aspects of course), one may fall into the trap of statelessness. UNICEF Philippines states that, without nationality or birth certificates, children do not have a right to a name or nationality- and they may be separated from their families, and less protected from trafficking, conflict, and child labor. The UN Convention on the Rights of a Child mentions that "stateless refugee" children have a higher risk of being subjected to abuse and exploitation and living in extreme poverty.⁵⁸

The same goes for adults who are undocumented, as they likewise have difficulty accessing certain resources and privileges. In the examples mentioned in the previous section, migrants and refugees who go through legal motions already suffer injustices through various human rights violations and discrimination – what more if they do not possess valid documents that prove place-aspects such as the birth certificate. Perhaps, this is also one of the reasons why

56 Matthew Aijuka: Visa Applications: Emotional Tax and Privileged Passports, in: Impact of Social Sciences (blog), July 19, 2019, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2019/07/19/visa-applications-emotional-tax-and-privileged-passports/>; Rachel Fraser; Tushar Menon: Navigating (Living) Philosophy: On Passport Privilege | Blog of the APA, June 19, 2023, <https://blog.apaonline.org/2023/06/19/navigating-living-philosophy-on-passport-privilege/>.

57 H. T. Biana; R. M. Nalam: Terms of Endearment: The Displacement of Inday, op. cit.

58 The UN Refugee Agency: Ending Childhood Statelessness in Europe, January 2019, <https://www.unicef.org/eca/media/8086/file>.

some go through extreme measures to “fake” place indicators, to prevent various discriminations, and to be privy to some privileges. A typical example of this is how, according to Human Rights Watch, North Korean nationals who travel to China obtain fraudulent Chinese documents to prevent them from being forcibly returned to North Korea where they suffer violence and abuse.⁵⁹ These place documents are ways to prevent suffering and abuse. In this case, a person’s place of birth becomes a source of oppression.

Aside from race, the place of birth is a place-aspect that should be reinvestigated. The place of birth may decide a person’s citizenship and nationality, and it is essential in the politics of belonging. Particular social groups with various places of birth may be excluded or included due to immigration and citizenship policies. We can see that these exclusions are not entirely based on racialized or ethnic diversities but on placial ones. Immigrants experience exclusions not entirely because of their race or color but also because of their place of origin, birth, or migration as well.

Ethnicity should also be examined in relation to place. The discrimination suffered by Tribal and Indigenous Peoples, for instance, cannot be reduced to racism or racist discrimination. In the case of Philippine Indigenous Peoples (IPs), their identities and experiences cannot be assumed to be homogenous – as some inhabit the highlands, others the lowlands, and they have varying affinities to various geographies in the country. The Filipino Mangyans, for instance, while lumped into one Indigenous group, speak different languages and are composed of several different Indigenous groups. We can assume that both IPs and non-IPs in the Philippines are of the same race, but we see that IPs are less privileged than non-IPs. With regards to the African diaspora in Europe, on the other hand, we cannot assume the homogeneity of African migrants as they come from various countries in Africa. The fact that only the African continent is considered as a place-aspect illustrates how the complexity of discrimination is not sufficiently analyzed. Grouping diaspora communities according to geographical origin is an oversimplistic indicator of experiences of oppression. When Africans migrate, for instance, they are referred to as African-American, African-Asian, etc., or even “Black Race” or “Black People.” This grouping is solely dependent on the “African Race” but silent about how migrants have varying ethnicities since they are from different countries and regions in Africa.

59 “North Koreans in China in Need of International Protection,” Brookings, accessed March 22, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/north-koreans-in-china-in-need-of-international-protection/>; “A North Korean Defector Is Spurned, for Decades, by South Korea – The New York Times,” accessed March 22, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/09/world/asia/north-korean-defector-south-korea-kim-seok-cheol.html>; “China Forcibly Returns More than 500 to North Korea | Human Rights Watch,” October 12, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/10/12/china-forcibly-returns-more-500-north-korea>.

The example of the “groupings” above is a type of generalization or stereotyping of groups of people. Just because they come from a certain place, we assume that they are such and such. These generalizations are basically placist, or a practice of placial discrimination. Jeremiah Joven Joaquin refers to such thinking as placist stereotyping or generalizations about a supposed trait or quality that people from a certain place have.⁶⁰ In this regard, new, hybrid, and more specific terminologies for such discriminations may be reimaged in connection to place, such as placial profiling, placial prejudice, and overt bias. While we may refer to such as racist, they actually fall under placist thinking. The basis of such a supremacist type of thinking is not race, after all, but place. Place discrimination cannot be reduced to other types of discrimination.

Conclusion

Since social frameworks and systems are sites of placial power and domination,⁶¹ we can also reconceptualize place in the current social milieu by looking at how others put people in their places or discriminate according to place. Placism, a relatively new concept in the slew of “isms”, can be a novel means to understand oppressive structures and realities further. While all other “isms” are tackled in social and political philosophies, there seems to be a focus on discourses on racism, classism, or sexism. Perhaps we can think of placist oppression as well, which may adequately illustrate and explain oppression’s structural, personal, and symbolic sources and assumptions.⁶² Placist stereotyping is also one form of oppression or of placial discrimination, wherein generalizations are made about a supposed trait or quality that people from a particular place possess.⁶³ We can reconceptualize these phenomena in connection to how other (racial) discriminations are defined – some of which include placial profiling and placial prejudice. In philosophy, we can also think of ways to combat some of these placist oppressions by using such place concepts as a critical method and a tool for analysis.⁶⁴

To reconceptualize place and make it more relevant in philosophical discourses, we must include it more significantly in discussions of intersectional oppressions, marginalization, and discrimination. Place has a vital role in the diversity wheel as it helps establish one’s position in the social order. We must

⁶⁰ Jeremiah Joven B Joaquin: On the Logic of Arguments from Placist Stereotypes (Progressive Connexions, 3rd Global Conference on Diasporas: An Inclusive Interdisciplinary Conference, Hotel Angelo, Prague, Czech Republic, December 2019).

⁶¹ H. T. Biana: The Place of ‘Place’ in Intersectionality, *op. cit.*, 127.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 127.

⁶³ J. Joaquin: On the Logic of Arguments from Placist Stereotypes, *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ H. Biana: The Place of ‘Place’ in Intersectionality, *op. cit.*

expand the diversity wheel to include particular place-aspects, as place-aspects have roles in individual and group oppression and reproductions of oppressive social constructs caused by various place indicators.

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