

Drawing Conversations- What and where is home?

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Abstract Title: *Sketch for a Theory of drawing as an 'unbinding' of definitions of space, place or 'home'*

As the title suggests this essay is keen to explore the thought that 'home' in, shall we say, the now 'industrialised' regions of the planet, has been pre-disposed to be considered as a spacing, placing or homing in terms of defined 'products' of human social organisation 'standing against' the natural world.

'Configurations' of mapping, plans and art representations have supported this 'othering' between the earth and natural world, and potentially 'othering' of those peoples of indigenous populations who have in more sustained ways, related to space and place as ongoing interactions and mutual relations with the natural environment, where home and 'dwelling' have different connotations of continuum with the natural world.

Whilst the essay does not go into this latter, it does go towards setting out how an argument for re-reflecting upon 'dwelling' as rather than being 'represented' as a built environ, is instead presented as a 'becoming' and 'gathering towards' a sense of 'homing'. It does so by means of the consideration of drawing as a form of 'becoming' and presented and 'gathering' of lines, 'other' and 'different from' representation as such. This latter stemming especially from, writing on 'lines' in various contexts by Tim Ingold, with here especially referring to "Drawing Together: materials, gestures, lines" (Ingold 2010).

The essay starts however with a reflection upon a piece of writing by artist Tamarin Norwood (2021) who has brought together descriptions of some of her unusual 'uses' of drawing and the drawn line. In a piece entitled 'The Blunt Pencil' Tamarin takes the reader through, the 'final performance' of a particular pencil, in her experience of returning to a house (a family home, "our old house") she and her family had vacated, in order to perform "a kind of portrait of our old house: a single line drawn all the way round the internal perimeter of every room, mostly hidden in the joint between the wall and the floor". (Norwood 2021 p.20). The intention and 'imagined' experience perhaps, was that the pencil would somehow 'gather up' the 'living in the rooms' in the drawn lines and the actual process of drawing would allow for these to become a contemplative 'visual memory'. As it turned out, the process was of course meticulous and laborious but by a kind of 'stuck' compulsion not easily controllable. What remained was less an imagined 'memory plan' of the house, but the blunt pencil.

This for me, as I interpret it, is a little 'cameo' of what Ingold (following Heidegger here) might construe as a 'representational'/'abstracted' articulation of 'home' and 'drawing' even as it had sought to be very 'present', and definitely 'taking a line for a walk'.

This leads me to want to look carefully into this other thinking of dwelling and drawing more as 'homing' and 'becoming/gathering' and what we might learn from this or indeed 'gather'... Another way of thinking this is to give more 'breathing space' to the primary importance of 'dwelling' as more of a 'hovering' within the environs, which gradually points towards or shapes a movement towards building within a continuum of 'beingness' rather than 'driven by' production. (Heidegger, M 1951). So, part of the argument goes back to the critiques in Heidegger's thinking of 'dwelling' as being thought of as a necessary human propensity for 'building' and 'thinking', which appears to

focus upon 'production; and 'usage' of nature as a 'standing reserve' of resource for human social development and endeavour.

Following this is how Tim Ingold makes references to both 'line' and 'drawing' in the context of this 'othering' with regard to space and place and peoples. In a chapter in "Experiments in Holism: Theory and Practice in Contemporary Anthropology" (Bubandt N and Otto, T 2010), Tim Ingold (Ingold 2010) makes the case, in this context of 'dwelling', for living being to be thought of as *presenting* as a line of its own movement; a growth and gathering of *lines*.

This presenting to itself of human dwelling, is not lines as boundary markers but as in *drawing*, as linked and gathered traces like sketches; hence his title referring to 'being and dwelling' as Drawing Together: materials, gestures, lines. Here Ingold also refers to how different peoples with differing relations to habitat, nature and 'dwelling in and 'living' within and gathering with it, may 'present' such dwelling via a differing 'code of presentation' and 'drawing'. Ultimately, we might say 'drawing' and 'dwelling' share characteristics. Ingold argues that humans do not simply inhabit space; they actively engage with and shape their environment through continuous interaction.

Dwelling, according to Ingold, is a mode of attunement to the world, a way of being that involves constant adaptation and responsiveness to the surroundings. Drawing, like dwelling, is a process-oriented activity that involves a deep connection with the environment. The act of drawing requires those drawing to be attuned to the nuances of their surroundings, actively observing and interpreting in the particularity of a moment. In this sense, drawing becomes a mode of dwelling; not the re-production of what is seen but active participation in the act of dwelling.

This essay additionally expands on this idea, as indeed Ingold suggests, that, whilst anthropology has been preoccupied with written signs as 'language' and 'writing' in examining culture and social being in the world, *the sketch and the drawing*, hovering and at a point of *being 'there' yet still to be revealing, yet already almost coming into being*, is a closer account of and an intricate "fuller in its complexity" record of a 'culture' and its sense of 'home' .

References: Bubandt, H & Otto (2010) T *Experiments in Holism Theory and Practice in Contemporary Anthropology* UK Wiley Blackwell

Heidegger, M (1971 publication) "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated by Albert Hofstadter, New York, Harper Colophon Books, New York, 1971.

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Norwood, T (2021) *The Mourning Lines. The Constellations Book XIX* London MA Bibliotheque