



OIKOLOGY: PHENOMENOLOGY OF PLACE  
DIALOGUE WITH HANS RAINER SEPP

OIKOLOGÍA: FENOMENOLOGÍA DEL LUGAR  
DIÁLOGO CON HANS RAINER SEPP

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Hans Rainer Sepp es uno de los filósofos más originales de los últimos tiempos, su apropiación de la fenomenología trascendental le ha conducido a trazar un proyecto propio: la 'oikología', cuyos rasgos, preguntas y relaciones [con otros campos de las ciencias de la vida] tratamos de explorar en este diálogo con el autor de *In Grundrisse der Oikologie* [2019]. La oikología es una de las derivaciones más amplias de la fenomenología trascendental, pues toca desde su inicio los temas centrales del análisis fenomenológico, la corporalidad, la imaginación, la praxis. Si el modo de estar y ser humano en el mundo consiste en "hacerse" un lugar en el mundo, la oikología se presta primeramente como una fenomenología del lugar y el territorio. Se trata, en todo caso, de una filosofía del lugar [o la situación corporal], del proyecto y de la vida como esta continua actividad de hacerse o buscarse una morada. La filosofía oikológica de Hans Rainer Sepp retorna al punto de partida de la filosofía [con la ganancia trascendental de la historia] al re-formular la pregunta por el sentido del mundo que se gesta en el lugar y se manifiesta en el territorio animal, en el sitio que se hace la vida como mundo, como casa.

Palabras clave: Fenomenología trascendental | Corporalidad | Territorialidad

Hans Rainer Sepp is one of the most original philosophers of our time, his appropriation of transcendental phenomenology has led him to build his own project on oikology, which features problems and content that we have tried to explore in this dialogue from his book *In Grundrisse der Oikologie* [2019]. The oikology is one of the broader drifts of transcendental phenomenology because it focus on the central subjects in phenomenology; the body, the imagination and praxis. If the way in which the human being is in the world, is creating its place in the world, then oikology is primarily a philosophy of place and territory. It is, in any case, a philosophy about place [or embodied situation], the project and life as this continuous activity to build and find a home. Oikological philosophy by Hans Rainer Sepp turns to the starting point of philosophy [with the transcendental historical profit] by returning to the question about the sense of the world that gestates in the dwelling and is expressed in the animal territory, and in the place that in life we constitute as world or home.

Key words: Transcendental phenomenology | Embodied experience | Territoriality

## INTRODUCTION

The academic definition of transcendental phenomenology is as a science focused on the analysis of the world sense genesis. The phenomenological philosophy pretends, as a philosophical goal, to rigorously analyze life itself, if life is here understood as a life of consciousness, continuous constituent activity [to serve us of another definitional formula]. We can realize this description in the first person perspective, attending to the development of a method, which its main purpose is to open a space of exploration, and to disclose it to a philosophical gaze. The problem is the world, the lived world. In the first place, the problem is the life if it's understood, as the life that has a world; the issue of transcendentalism is the correlation itself, that this link which in a sense is at play, is the most important in the philosophy of life as the one that phenomenology pursues and from which Hans Rainer Sepp takes a productive advantage.

Hans Rainer Sepp is part of transcendental tradition, from which he generates a new way, an original path to think that transcendentalism which leads phenomenology to a primal interest focus, the world experience; this vitality is manifested in the action to make itself a place in the world, the experience which means a dwelling thought from its radicality, its root in the 'measure' and its genesis in the corporeality. The body and territoriality originated in the appropriation of body are some of the issues of oikology. The oikological philosophy can be seen as Rainer Sepp expresses it in this dialogue, as a Philosophy of Culture, but at the same time that this overtakes the oppositional limits between nature and culture, therefore it prefigures rather as a philosophy of life.

The first part of this conversation, that is here published, occurred on June 18th 2018 in Professor Rainer's office, in the Humanities Faculty of Karlova Univerzita [Prague, Czech Republic]. This dialogue of almost three hours focused on a few items from a questionnaire that I had prepared. When the dinner time came, and we had to take a break from the conversation about oikology to take the subway toward Andel station near Prague's downtown. During dinner our discussion took another route, on the history of philosophy and the place of phenomenology in relationship with certain compre-

hension of this history as a continuous movement of a reform, a continuous return to an original or primal question, about the world. We touch the theme of epoché as a philosophical exercise, and, finally, we were able to talk about his own relationship with Heidegger's and Fink's philosophy. At the end of this very productive meeting, professor Rainer judged that the nature of the questionnaire deserved maybe a paused reflexion and better ordered answers than this informal conversation, which is why the answers were written directly by professor Rainer Sepp. I expressed my gratitude to professor Rainer for the time dedicated to this exercise, and the opportunity to further advance the reader's interest in this line of study which summarizes the main features of the original phenomenological appropriation that Rainer Sepp has carried out. Around the oikology one of the most vital and vigorous path of transcendental phenomenology is at play, a way which touches the most intimate core of life itself, the embodied condition in the the sense world genesis.

Finally, I appreciate the generous support of Professor E. Behnke in reviewing and correcting this document.

**Marcela Venebra.** While it's true that method no longer counts as an oikological category, as you pointed out, in a certain way oikology is revealed through phenomenological reduction [that is, a method]. What is the relationship between oikology and the method of reduction?

**Hans Rainer Sepp.** To describe the starting point and method of oikology, one can begin with a remark that Husserl formulated in a letter to Ernst Mach in 1903: the bodily and corporeal positionality of the subject, our concrete existential situation, forms the center of an "original circle" of experience. [I want to use the term "bodily-corporeal" not only to name abilities of the living human body [*Leib*], but also to include the physical corporeality of the body [*Körper*]<sup>1</sup> with which I offer resistance to the real; corporeality is not understood in an objectifying sense, but as a fact of real subjective existence.]

Husserl's remark gives a double hint: the subject is centered in itself [as "zero-point," as he says in several places], and at the same time it is in a situation, has an environment around it, lives in a social world. It is both absolute: an absolutely separated [cfr. Levinas's *séparation*] in-dividuality, and non-absolute: included, and being included means that it needs means for

<sup>1</sup> The difference is established in the phenomenological analysis about constitution between "*Körper*" as a physical or material thing and *Leib-Körper* as self-conscious corporeality. Cf. E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Zweites Buch: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, Husserliana IV, Walter Biemel [Ed.], Martinus Nijhoff [La Haya: 1952]. Ed. cast., trad. Antonio Ziri6n Quijano. *Ideas relativas a una fenomenol6gía pura y una filosofía fenomenol6gica*. Libro Segundo: *Investigaciones filosóficas sobre la constituci6n* [México: FCE, 2005].

its life and for experiencing with all its senses. With reference to a phenomenology of our bodily-corporeal status it can be said that subjectivity [a] in its separation functions as a "borderline body" [*Grenzleib*] and [b] in its relation to the means of life through the use of the senses realizes itself as an "orienting body" [*Richtungsleib*], whereby [c] it constitutes strata of meaning [*Sinnleib*]. The consequence of this, however, is that human existence is characterized not only by simply being in a world, as Heidegger says, but by the fact that there are two modes of being-in: first, the being-in of my bodily-corporeal subjectivity, existing in the original circle of my life [let us call it being-in 1], and second, the imaginative being-in, the being-in-the-world that is formed in the context of a social world [being-in 2].

The orienting, desiring body is related back to the boundary of the zero-point of a corporealized subjectivity and at the same time forms its worldly connections: this self-realization of the "movement of human existence" [Patočka] refers to the fundamental moment of method. To live life, to carry it out—this means to be orienting, to be "on the way," to realize the methodos. This does not imply that the method is an absolute, but on the contrary means recognizing that every kind of methodology is bound back to life in its progress, so that one can say that living life is synonymous with the fact of being methodical in an original sense.

But then the birth of theoria is merely an extreme mode of this movement of life, and the phenomenological version of theoria is its radicalized stage [Husserl says theoria is also practice, a practice with which life turns against the "natural" practical attitude, which is a derivative form of practice]. Practice and theoretical practice are thus tied back to the self-realization of life: to the fact that subjectivity carries out its moving in the sense that it breaks it, re-flects it. Accordingly, human existence is [a] centered as an absolute subjectivity in each case; [b] orienting itself in response to the stimulations of its environment; and [c] eccentric because of its ability to break the orienting [desiring] mode of its life anchored in its zero-point and return to itself, e.g., finally to establish a method in the usual theoretical sense.

Husserl refers to the horizontal interaction of subject and environment, but at the same time emphasizes that theoretical reflection can break out of this horizontal relationship by establishing a verticality in exposing the transcendental. This unveiling, the incision in the horizontal world-reference, is, in oikological terms, the separation of the forms of being-in 1 and 2 normally welded together in the context of our social life [being-in 2]. We have to think that this incision, as a theoretical act that is basically practice, realizes itself in a world-context, i.e., that the vertical is formed within the horizontal itself by transforming its structure through the release of the transcendental. This is the starting point of oikology and of an oikological method, i.e., oikology goes back to the origins of the "methodological" movement of human existence by analyzing two basic modes of motion.

1. On the one hand, oikology addresses the original socialization of in-

dividual subjectivity and thus of the two ways of being-in and their mutual reference. This takes place within the framework of a vertical genealogical analysis that breaks down the formed world-approaches and reconstructs the transcendental development of subjectivity as it has developed in different cultures in times and spaces. Here it must be shown how the house [dwelling, settlement] is the decisive factor that makes the existential movement from being-in 1 to being-in 2 as original socialization plausible. Reconstructing retrogressively, genealogically, the factual "methodological" movements of existence means to understand from the beginning the results that these movements have led to, the results in which and through which we live. To refer to the past is therefore first of all an attempt to uncover the boundaries drawn by existential presuppositions. By becoming recognizable possibilities of world-formation that have not yet been realized, a reference to the future is also implied in this direction to the past, because this procedure liberates the present from the compulsion to petrify itself in the standstill of already formed shapes.

2. Furthermore, oikology has to investigate the ways in which possibilities have already been opened up, in intercultural contexts, of turning the horizontal style of existing in a world into a vertical one—for example, in transcendental phenomenology and in [Zen] Buddhism.

If the method of oikological philosophy is an intensified reflection of the "methodological" movement of existence, and if the movements of philosophy are only a special realization of the reflexive force of life itself, oikology can also be described as a "philosophy of philosophy," a philosophy that—among other processes of existential movements—reveals the respective existential prerequisites of philosophical manifestations. With regard to phenomenology, the question is not how epochē and reduction in a theoretical sense provide the methodological basis for a [transcendental] phenomenology, but what the practical realization of the epochē means for the transformation of life.

In this respect, oikology realizes the idea of a philosophia perennis in a new way by mediating between the basic experiences implied in each philosophy. The starting point, therefore, is not the ideal of a philosophy guided by the premise that philosophizing takes place through arguments, but the real fact of a multiplicity of philosophies, each based on previous experiences, so that the task is to uncover their genesis and coherence. In this way, the unity of philosophy does not stand at the beginning, but would emerge in an open-ended process. And in a certain sense this is also a reformulation of a Husserlian idea.

**MV.** If the natural attitude is necessarily economic, and if it is in this attitude that the measure is established, how do you describe the relationship between oikology and economy?

**HRS.** The starting point of an oikological theory of the economic is also the relation of being-in 1 and being-in 2. Here this relation is to be

described as the result of a deception. The German words *Tausch* [barter] and *Täuschung* [deception] point to a mutual relationship: *Tausch* as *Vertauschung* [permutation]. The occlusion of being-in 1 by the process of social constitution resulting in being-in 2 can be described as an original exchange, as an *Ur-Tausch*. Here we can formulate two theses: 1. the occurrence of this original exchange is the condition for any economic exchange, whereby a social world is constituted in such a way that its members fight over an object; and 2. thinking about economic conditions means that this original exchange must be interrupted in order to take into account the skipped and forgotten bodily subjectivity [being-in 1]. In this respect, the common mistake both of capitalism and of communism / socialism—and also of all theories that proceed from an already socially endowed world—is that the place of the in-dividual, the ab-solute subject, is skipped. In contrast, it is necessary to include this subject in order to understand the function of natural egocentrism in the formation of the social world on the basis of the fight over the object.

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**MV.** How do you describe the relationship between oikology and ecology? I am thinking about a possible transcendental ecology, an ecology that describes the constitution of nature as property, as well as an environment, and at the same time, as something different from the ego itself in the human being's case. This means that the human being doesn't recognize himself or herself as a part of nature, but as alien to nature. Does nature play some kind of role in oikology?

**HRS.** The relationship between oikology and ecology is fundamental in the sense that it also refers to the basis of oikological thinking, to the relationship between being-in 1 and being-in 2. Here too oikology attempts to unveil the original meaning of ecological thinking.

From the oikological point of view, the ecological is a critique of the subject, not of reason and not of the human. At first this has nothing to do with the question whether ecology is anthropocentric or not, since the first thing to do is to clarify in which sense of human existence can it be said that it is centered and that it proceeds in a centering way. In order to understand this more precisely, oikology reconstructs the genealogy of ecological thought by looking at its development since the second half of the 19th century. The core of this development concerns the transfer of subjectivity to the center of life in the course of the 19th century: the theoretically determined subject was shifted from its absolute, autonomous status to a subject that found itself in the center of an already preconstituted world—the oikological starting point for both phenomenology and philosophical anthropology. Insofar as subjectivity, theoretically determined as autonomous and absolute, can be distinguished from the concrete fact of the separated ab-solute subject [being-in 1], the abolition of the traditional position of transcendental subjectivity does not mean a farewell to the subject as such, which has led to great misunderstandings in the 20th century; rather, it offers the possibility

of determining subjectivity anew and in close reference to its real factuality.

2. This was the starting point to discover subjectivity as being in the world. Expressing this, e.g., Husserl, like Scheler, used the notion of a “coordination in principle” of I / We and my / our environment; then it was described by Heidegger literally as being-in-the-world, as being in a practical-social world, but it was also emphasized by von Uexküll in the natural relationship between the inner world of an animal and its environment. However, oikology does not only deal with the individual creature in its environment, including the observer [von Uexküll]. An oikological analysis of ecology as eco-logy also reflects the potential of reflection itself, qua theoria—science—by showing how theory is the expression of the movement of life. Insofar as the reflective gaze is no longer bound to a particular theoretical system, it loses its anthropocentric character and becomes free to confront itself with the meontic structure of a “world” that in its cosmic dimensions is just as independent of me as is the real Other. Reflecting the reflective self-expression of life, however, is at the same time also an encounter with the endless depth of my own self as this reflective life itself. Thus I live in the center of my sojourn in a social world, doubly anchored in being-in 1 and being-in 2, but touching boundaries by being constantly confronted with myself, the Other, and the cosmic world.

The task of oikology in this context is to explain [a] how and to what extent being-in 1 necessarily generates a natural egocentrism; and [b] how this egocentrism is radicalized in the development of being-in 1 into being-in 2, so that, e.g., nature is understood only as being at my disposal, as a field subjected to my theoretical abilities and practical projects. Thus it can be said that the relation of being-in 1 to being-in 2 is the origin of an imbalance of human existence, given that a single existence normally makes the position of its being-in 1 implicitly absolute as soon as it “awakens” in the being-in 2 of its social environment. This imbalance cannot be eliminated, so that the “ecological” task is to learn to control the tension between being-in 1 and being-in 2, not with the aim of achieving a final equilibrium, for any equilibrium is threatened by instability, but as an attempt to realize a “stable imbalance,” as the biologist Josef H. Reicholf puts it.

Therefore the main point of view of an oikological ecology is guided not by the question whether an ecological theory is anthropocentric or not, but by the fact that we must first unveil the origin of any centrism in the constitution of our bodily-corporeal existence and then learn to deal with the centric tendency of our existence—in theory as in practice. To achieve this, we do not need a specific ethic, but, more radically, a theory of the centric nature of our existence, and on this basis, a vision of ways in which we can change our life so that it can adapt itself to its facticity, and so that we dwell in it in such a way that we do as little damage as possible to the environments in which we are ensconced, to nature, and to Others.

**MV.** Speaking about this phenomenological ecology as relative to a phi-

osophy of life, in the sense of the Imanishi Project [*The world of living things*] or von Uexküll [the *Umwelt*], do you think that this conception affects the phenomenological concept of the body, and if so, in what way?

**HRS.** I think there are two moments that connect von Uexküll and Imanishi with phenomenology and oikology: on the one hand, the emphasis on the correlativity of living beings and their environment; on the other hand, the inner perspective of the single experiencing being [Imanishi says that one has to “start from the existence of the individual”]. The latter is already a pre-interpretation of being-in 1 in the sense mentioned here. What Imanishi particularly emphasizes is the problem of *equilibrium*: following Nishida Kitaro, he summarizes the correlation of I [the living being] and my environment even more radically by saying that the living being is completely determined by itself, but at the same time is determined through and through by its natural and social environment. Consequently, Imanishi speaks of an “*equilibrium*” that is constantly built up from two fields of force [“a mutual *equilibrium* of interacting forces”]. This leads us not only to make that strict distinction between being-in 1 and being-in 2, but also to emphasize that both ways of being-in are constitutive for our existence.

One sees that here we are no longer talking about a balance that is objectively perceived from the outside, but about the genesis of this balance, whereby the point of view lies in the perspective of the experiencing life itself—namely, in the tension of this self-moving life and its experiences of resistance.

**MV.** How do you describe the relationship between the measure that divides and creates property, on the one hand, and the experience of territory on the other?

**HRS.** The relationship between measure and territory concerns the problem of imagination versus reality in the context of settlement: to claim, to delimit a land is both an imaginative act and an action that involves handling the real—the real in the strict sense that I can touch it and it resists me. Thus to found a site, a city, means on the one hand to cut out a piece of the real land and to de-fine it as mine, to demarcate it, and on the other hand to give meaning to my action and its results by defining the de-fined land as my place—territory as a [common] possession. Although we know too little about the organization of social groups before becoming sedentary, it can be said that dwelling in human developments was a momentous turning point.

The house, at first perhaps a sacred site, a sanctuary [e.g., Stonehenge, Göbekli Tepe], connected the older magical structure of human experience with the newer mythical one, radicalizing the relationship between inside and outside. This was the starting point for life in the house, which in turn led to the distinction between a secret and an open space, and later between a private and a public space. This was done by forcing the development from being-in 1 to being-in 2 in the sense that a differentiating process of socialization was increasingly superimposed on “silent” individual exis-



tence; in a certain culture, in Europe, after a long time the possibility arose that on the ground of a specific sociality, existence discovered itself as an individual [individuality in the realm of being-in 2], primarily by not being able to penetrate into its in-dividual life.

The egocentric perspective of my experiencing life has always been shaped by the style of a small group [family, clan, etc.] into which this life was born. However, at the level of settlement, it changes into an egocentricity that is determined as a common one by the de-defined / defined place we have occupied. De-definition and definition—as results of a struggle for property [for real land and the cultural interpretation associated with it]—to some extent stabilize the cohesion of a society that emerges from that struggle. This new society installs measures: norms, rules, laws in order to secure this cohesion in the future and to protect it against attacks from outside as well as against dissolutions within.

It is important to see that social cohesion is only relative and can be weakened at any time, both internally and externally. At the same time, it must be noted that the “identity” of such a society is more the invention of some of its leading members—who thus express their desire for security in a common social home—than a real fact. It is real only as an imaginative product. In contrast to the identity of the merely factual in-dividual existence, any identification based on imagination is relative. It is precisely this relativity that societies try to stabilize by measuring for “eternity.” Accordingly, actual “possession,” that is, what one really “has” by living it, is only one’s own bodily-corporeal existence and the open dimensions toward self and world, which, however, can never be fully appropriated. This is what I have with my life and for the time I live, including the ability to actualize the possibilities of expanding my experiences in relation both to myself and to the others I meet, along with my possibilities in relation to the endless space of the cosmic world. The rest is presumption.

**MV.** Do you consider it’s possible to see territorialization experience as the basis of the theory of appropriation by dis-appropriation? What is the place of this theory of identity within oikology?

**HRS.** Two types of appropriation and possession must be distinguished: 1. the appropriation of a real space [site, territory] with all the goods provided by a force that legitimates itself by imaginative means; and 2. the self as a possession, which I already have on the one hand—my bodily-corporeal fact—and which I do not [yet] have on the other hand—as a possession on the basis of a reflective relation to myself. However, I have the opportunity to acquire the latter during my life, although, as mentioned, without the prospect of attaining it completely and forever. This happens when I change the desire for possessing objects in favor of an appropriation of myself. These two different ways of appropriation—the technique of an external style, so to speak, and as Scheler said, the “technique of the soul”—can be understood as reactions to the uncertainty of life and the will to secure my life.

If the greatest enemy of the human being is his or her own egocentric desire, then the first way—the attempt to secure objects—is destined to fail if the tendency to gain objects strengthens egocentrism and thus the risk of conflict with others. In order to obtain some relatively stable security, it is therefore necessary to take the second path of appropriation, *i.e.*, to respond to the predominance of the first type of appropriation with a specific expropriation. This was apparently the fundamental [oikological] motivation for Plato's concern for the soul, for the Christian effort toward a "true" territory different from all the territories of the world, and for the Buddhist reaction to "discrimination" on the part of the practical worldview, which loses itself in the field of distinct desired objects—and such an expropriation is also hidden in the practical reason of the epochē of Pyrrho and Husserl.

As for the specifically oikological point of view, the expropriation consists in breaking the magical egocentric desire through the epochē, going back to the possibilities and limits of the original life-mode of being-in 1 and revealing the constitutive process leading from being-in 1 to being-in 2.

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**MV.** We understand with relative clarity the notion of one's "own body" as my body, the one I recognize as mine [on the basis of an embodied consciousness], wouldn't this property be a first and originary measure, a first place or originary territory, even in light of the basic tensions that you suggest about the paradox of measure and its beyond?

**HRS.** The first measurement is apparently based on physical proportions: "arm," "hand," "foot." In the formation of such measures—which were already realized in early cultures [e.g., the hand imprints in prehistoric caves in Europe and Asia, or in Argentina in the Cueva de las manos]—one can discover an early transition from being-in 1 to being-in 2: on the one side there is the bodily-corporeal expression, *i.e.*, the hand; on the other side, the immediate testimony of bodily identity fixed to the wall of the cave is solidified when by means of the intimate bodily manifestation a kind of early objectification is carried out with which sociality is constituted—namely, by arranging the hands of different people on the cave wall or by using the hand as an objective measure. In this way, the surrender of the bodily-own [the original possession] takes place in favor of the formation of a community and the forms of its stabilization. The intimate bodily-corporeal manifestation as the origin of measuring in social contexts can be described as an original measure [*Ur-Maß*], as a condition of the possibility of all measuring. Such an original measure is what it is only in the execution of a pure doing [according to being-in 1]; as soon as it becomes explicit, it functions within a social reality [being-in 2].

**MV.** In your paper about the trace of Teotihuacan,<sup>2</sup> I noticed some sort of

<sup>2</sup> "Teotihuacan: fragilidad del nosotros. Un capítulo para una antropología filosófica interdisciplinar" en Jesús Díaz Álvarez y José Lasaga Medina, *La razón y la vida. Escritos*

analogy between the urban trace and the constitution of one's own body. Can you describe in more detail how do you consider this mutual entailment between the body and the city, between spatialization and urbanization?

**HRS.** The fundamental thesis of oikology is that in all cases of founding a site or city, the bodily-corporeal factuality is the decisive factor—in the interaction of imaginative and real moments. A fundamental mode of founding a site is centering, i.e., defining the land around me as this concrete bodily-corporeal fact: I, the founder, draw a circle around me [Göbekli Tepe, Stonehenge—or Rome, in the use of a plough by Romulus]. In some cases, the imaginative moment may predominate, and a figure such as the human figure may more or less explicitly function as a pictorial master plan of the settlement.

What I said about Teotihuacan [and this is a speculative interpretation]—namely, that the structure of the city recalls a human figure [head, heart, belly, arms, and spine]—does not mean that the founders of the city first had such a plan in mind and then realized it. It is rather a kind of implicit subjective expression of a living context, an “organism.” We know that the imaginative potential is founded in preconscious areas and becomes operational through “passive syntheses.”

Sergio Gómez Chávez found out that in the cave under the Temple of the Feathered Serpent in Teotihuacan, the path ends in a three-armed chamber; at the intersection of these three rooms a vertical stele was erected, and the walls of the cave were made to sparkle like a starry sky by using a mineral powder. Gómez interprets this as a mythical place of world-creation that is to be preserved here. One could say that with this representation of the cosmos, the inhabitants of the city wanted to create a balance between their city and the universe. The orientation of the stele in the context of its surroundings, the cave, is the direct expression of a bodily-corporeal movement: the stele is the magical, “intentional” extension of a bodily-corporeal existence. Then there is not only the horizontal plan of the city, but also a vertical orientation that is not only deeply rooted in the earth, but points up to the highest heavenly spheres—all in all, a perfectly complete model as an expression of the effort to give stability to social life.

**MV.** In which way or through which path does oikology capture the sense of culturality while going beyond the philosophy of culture?

**HRS.** Oikology is indeed a philosophy of culture, provided that “culture” encompasses the entire range of the relationship of the bodily-corporeal self to its environments [sociality and nature / cosmos]. However, oikology is not a philosophy of culture in the sense of the cultural sciences, insofar as these, as a complementary counterpart to the natural sciences, proceed by objectifying and presupposing the status of bodily-corporeal subjectivity, yet without being able to clarify the relation of subjectivity both to its me-

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*en homenaje a Javier San Martín*, [Madrid: Trotta, 2018].

ontic abysses of meaning and to meaningless real resistances. Oikology, on the other hand, sees in this relation the decisive moment that determines the capacity of the ego for all its actions, including science, since science itself is the result of a constitutive process of being-in 2 on the basis of being-in 1.

**MV.** Beyond the opposition nature/culture, what is outdoor space? I'm thinking about some sort of negative sedentarization, as in the Latcho Drom people, but also in the people displaced by war, alone and without direction in a violent sea. Is it possible to explain or describe this kind of experience of nomadism through oikology, or is this a limit of oikology theory? Does oikology offer a possible description of outdoor space?

**HRS.** All outdoor experiences—as out-doors—refer in principle to the house, even if it is transportable or lost, and are therefore topics of oikology. Refugees and displaced persons do not stand in opposition to the house; instead, by having lost their home through violence, they remain in a relation to the house. Moreover, the contrast to settlement is not simply nomadism, provided that the nomadic home can be described as a transportable house. But to avoid misunderstandings: to be related to the house does not mean that modes of nomadism are merely derived cases of living. Rather, it means that the nomadic implies a special relationship to places and is in a special correlation to bodily-corporeal existence in space and time, and their specific relation to sites means to be moved, shifted in real space. And of course there are more [possible and real] alternative ways of living, away from the striving for possession and the will to power, and possibilities in between settlement and nomadism. Australian Aborigines, for example, realize a variable relation to certain places; they say, literally, "The land is the home," and they do not de-fine a site to claim as territory, but establish a strictly regulated relationship to certain places to which they continuously return. And it must also not be forgotten that the human as such is already a home-related being, an *in*, insofar as bodily existence as the first *in* strives to secure its own life. This is the reason why oikology does not begin with dwelling, but with its condition, bodily-corporeal existence.

**MV.** Thank you very much, professor Hans Rainer, for your answers and your time.

The author provides a detailed introduction to oikology in his book *In. Grundrisse der Oikologie*, which will be published in German in 2019 by Karl Alber [Freiburg/München]. For publications in Spanish, see "Planos para una filosofía oikológica," en *Revista de filosofía moderna y contemporánea*, trans. Andrés Osswald, [Argentina: Ideas, 2016], pp., 10–33; see also "Teotihuacan: fragilidad del nosotros. Un capítulo para una antropología filosófica interdisciplinar," in: José Lasaga Medina and Jesús M. Díaz Álvarez, eds., *La razón y la vida, Escritos en homenaje a Javier San Martín*, [Madrid: Trotta, 2018], pp. 436–459.

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