

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs License.

To view a copy of this license, visit
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/de/>

or send a letter to Creative Commons,
559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, California 94305, USA.

SPACES AND NON-SPACES

CLAUDIA WESTERMANN

ABSTRACT

“It may be desirable to keep hold of the dreams about the house which later we would like to inhabit, later, always later, so late that we do not have the time to realize it. A definitive house would be a house of death, symmetrical with the house of birth [...] and would no longer inspire dreams, but thoughts [...].”
(Gaston Bachelard, *La poétique de l'espace*, 1957)

In the year 2060, one could conceive, we, human beings, will be perfectly adapted to the capacities of technology. We will be linked to several apparatuses, which keep us alive and healthy, faster and more secure. We will be widely liberated from the hassles of daily life. We will, at all times, be aware of the geographical location of everyone we care about and think of it as a prerequisite to perfect timing. We will certainly not lose time anymore, nor will we ever have to wait again.

Yet, will we still have a place?

A “place”, says Marc Augé, is “relational, historical and concerned with identity”. It is the carrier of a “strong symbolism”.

Will we still move in space when the body is constantly controlled in favor of security and efficiency? When time has become nothing more than a variable?

Within “space, the place of coexistent beings”, says Gaston Bachelard referring to the philosophy of Leibniz, “[...] every thing is the centre of the whole space. For every thing, that which is far is as present as that which is close, the horizon has as much presence as the centre.”

Does space enfold the infinite, that within which all properties become one, as Giordano Bruno describes it -- “limit without limitation”?

*Space is the distinct perception of architecture
as a complex ideal, that which
shelters memories and nourishes dreams
in all their eternal possibilities
to enter in perfect harmony with the universe.*

This paper discusses variant concepts of space and their implications for its perception.