2013 | *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3 (2): 359–80

| Reprint |

The "becoming-past" of places
Spacetime and memory in nineteenth-century, pre-Civil War New York

The Edward Westermarck Lecture, 2003

Nancy D. MUNN, *University of Chicago*

Revised and updated by the author

I want to thank you for the honor of being asked to give this lecture in memory of Edward Westermarck. Westermarck had a long-term interest in articulating the generalizations of moral philosophy with the complications of ethnographic and historical particulars. The present paper, although very different in orientation and aim, takes up the analysis of some classic philosophical topics of interest in contemporary anthropology—namely spacetime, place, and memory—attempting to make self-evident how they are constituted as experiential forms only in and through the sociocultural complexities of a specific lived world.

Among the diverse anthropological and related approaches to place, space, and time, much attention has recently been given to places as tangible mnemonics for spatially presencing the past or for mediating history in the experience of the present. In this paper, however, I shift from these perspectives to an exploration of the becoming-past-of-places: Considering disappearances and appearances of new places in a people's lived place-world, I ask how these processes were configured in certain spatiotemporalizing practices in pre-Civil War, nineteenth-century New York. Interrelations being formed between the past, present, and future, place-mnemonics and forgetting will then reemerge within this processual viewpoint. By "spatiotemporalizing practices," I refer, on the one hand, to a particular nexus of common descriptions and related commentaries on observable changes in the city that we find in newspapers, magazines, speeches, and other everyday sources of the era. I think of these accounts as elements in what Bakhtin (1984: 6) calls a

Publisher's note: This is a reprint of Nancy D. Munn, 2004. "The 'Becoming-Past' of Places: Spacetime and Memory in Pre-Civil War, 19th Century New York." The Edward Westermarck Memorial Lecture, 2003. In *Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* (*Suomen Antropologi*) 29 (1): 2–19. We are very grateful to Nancy Munn and the editors at *Suomen Antropologi* for granting us the permission to reprint this lecture. We remind the reader that we retain the style of the original, except where the author has provided revisions and minor modifications.

 ISSN 2049-1115 (Online)

"polyphonous" discourse, "a plurality of independent . . . voices and consciousnesses," an open-ended, diffuse discourse rich in verbal clichés and habitual usages. On the other hand, I refer to modes of action or practices and states of the city place-world[1] which concretely engage and manifest these changes; and which are articulated in diverse (yet as we will see, thematic) ways in this discourse. In general, I look at some ways places are meaningfully constituted through the interplay between both discursive and concrete practices of the place-world.

For present purposes, I characterize "a place" in simplified terms as a meaningful, concrete locale with distinctive features and qualities, invested with different layers and kinds of identities (such as, at the most particular level, "Stevens' mansion," "Collect Pond," or "New York City")—a stretch of habitable space within which persons (and other entities) can "be," or to and from which they can come and go. Places in this sense should be understood as significant, meaningful forms in process rather than as static givens, since their existence is ongoingly subject to the varied ways they enter into human practices—into people's actions, expectations, pasts, and sense of their pasts—i.e., into particular social and cultural milieus.

The antebellum era of New York life was one of profound spatio-temporal transformation when the island was turning from a town set within a rural/suburban landscape into a metropolis with an increasingly capitalistic economy. People were not just constantly noticing change, but they often remarked on the rapidity with which their familiar place-world was disappearing; as Richard Terdiman (1993: 119) says of 1850s Paris, the changes going on had "not yet become routinized or transparent"; "memory of the time before [was] . . . still active." New Yorkers could still travel from southern Manhattan—the city's commercial center—into a hilly more open landscape as they went north—but one had to go further and further north to do so. In 1830 a writer could say of a walk not far north of Canal Street, "We passed over a part of the city which in my time [youth] had been hills, hollows, marshes and rivulets without having observed anything to awaken . . . a recollection of what the place was before the surface had been leveled and the houses erected" (Bryant, et al 1830: 338). Twenty five years later, this sort of experience, in which a locale's remembered features could no longer be recognized in its present face, could have been had as far north perhaps as fortieth street. But even before the rectangular street grid, which leveled the island's topography piece by piece, was laid down in a given region, the rural world was being penetrated by industrial and other developments such as "shanty towns" beyond the city proper. Simultaneously, expansive pressures of commerce, industry, finance (including land speculation), and radical population increases within the city, while pumping out these expansions up the island, were also defamiliarizing the face of the already built-up city: among other practices this entailed demolitions of older buildings and the construction of new ones—events which, the editor of *Harper's Monthly* wrote "were always going on before the eyes." (Curtis

1. Edward Casey (1993: xv, passim) introduced the term "place-world" to give concreteness to Heidegger's more abstract notion of "being in the world" by re-phrasing it as "being-in-the-place-world." Here I use the term to convey the notion of a place as involving a mundane world of practices, material forms, understandings, occurrences, situations, and so forth.

1862: 409).[2] In such markedly transformative contexts, problems involving relative duration emerge: places become old or are destroyed before their ordinary or appropriate times and such habitual expectancies themselves are changing or grasped as having to change. But a focus on the rapidity of change is merely one of the ways in which shifts in the ordinary duration, the temporal continuance or existence of places comes into consciousness.

A sense of rapid change, acceleration, transience, and loss are commonly noted characteristics of both nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western "modernities." Pierre Nora, for instance (1989: 7), referring to the twentieth century, has noted the "increasingly rapid slippage of the present into a historical past"; while Richard Terdiman, discussing modernity and memory in mid-nineteenth-century Paris, examines the "mnemonics of dispossession" of places in Baudelaire and other literary sources. Moreover, students of capitalism and urbanism, from Marx and Engels to more recent commentators, have variously remarked on the paradox of rapid destruction inherent in the productivity of capitalism. As Marshall Berman (1988: 99) has put it, referring to nineteenth-century urban material change: "everything that Bourgeois society builds is built to be torn down. . . . [Even] bourgeois monuments . . . are "blown away like frail reeds by the very forces of capitalist development they celebrate." So also, in *Consciousness and the urban experience,* Harvey (1985: 28) draws on comments about city change from writers like Baudelaire and Henry James in arguing that the accelerating turnover time of capital generates a "continuous [spatial] reshaping" of the city: "We look at the material solidity of a building [or landscape], [he says,] . . . and behind it we see . . . the insecurity . . . within a circulation process of capital, which always asks: how much more time in this . . . space?" But to the extent that Harvey addresses nineteenth-century "consciousness" on this matter, his account is what Bakhtin calls "monological": that is, it turns citations of contemporary perceptions of transience into emblems of Harvey's own unitary, general ideas about the relation between spacetime and the economy, rather than analyzing the complexity of peoples' heterogeneous ways of configuring the spacetime of places in their lived worlds.

In this paper, my interest is not capitalism and "modernity" *per se*, but rather a microanalysis of some spatiotemporalizations of New York places in which we will see how a certain problematic was informing people's sense of place. This problematic resonates in some respects with the paradox of capitalism as expressed by Berman or Harvey, but cannot be abstractly summarized or subsumed by it, for it is made in its own forms out of experiences of the New York and American lived world of the time. Microanalysis can reveal at least some of its multidimensionality, showing how rapidity, motion, and memory take shape in different local apprehensions of events and practices involving the dissolution of places. Accordingly, I take a kind of exploratory "walk" through different facets of this spacetime in some ordinary commentaries on the city between about 1830 and 1860 (focusing on the 1850s). Obviously, this "walk" provides only a limited viewing of city viewpoints

2. The amount of building was actually uneven throughout the era. Construction slumped during economic downturns or financial panics such as that of 1837, while recoveries led to increased building. Fire as well as demolition destroyed many buildings, but the former is outside my concerns here.

and places. My commentators, who reflect a particular, but influential vision of the city, include journalists, editors, an educator, and a wealthy ex-mayor—they are professionals, intellectuals, or other elites—but the discourse conveyed and probably contributed to perspectives held more widely among the city's "middling" class. In fact, some of its features belonged to a diffuse American public discourse, as I explain later. Although these perspectives tended to be "Whiggish"—to resonate with the so-called "enlightened" conservatism of American Whigs who, as Daniel Walker Howe (1979: 74, 181) has pointed out, supported social and institutional continuities combined with "benevolent change"—they do not in themselves necessarily indicate affiliation with the Whig rather than the Democratic party.[3] Additionally, Whiggish viewpoints overlapped in part with romantic construals of spacetime, such as those of Edgar Allen Poe whom we are about to meet roaming around Manhattan in 1844.

Coming on certain "neglected—unimproved" localities on the island's east side, Poe ([1844] 1929: 25–26) wrote of them for his New York newsletters to a Pennsylvania paper:

> The old ["wood"] mansions upon [these "picturesque" localities] . . . remain unrepaired, and present a melancholy spectacle of decrepitude. In fact, these magnificent places are doomed. The spirit of Improvement has withered them with its acrid breath. Streets are already "mapped" through them, and they are no longer suburban residences, but "town-lots."

Poe's description shows these mansions in terms of different temporalities and values: their "decrepitude" displays a neglected old age—loss of support for the value still visible in their "magnificence"; they are "doomed" to imminent disappearance. Surveyed and mapped by 1811, the grid of streets subsequently appeared on later maps as well, even where the planned streets themselves had not yet appeared. Empowered by state law (and energizing the activities of developers and speculators), the map prefigured the city's spatial future within these mansions, which disclosed this aspect of the place-world as they were becoming subject to

3. The Whig party was not formed until the 1830s; however, according to Howe (1979: 3) Whiggery was not merely a party but a powerful "culture." Among the people I quote, Edgar Allen Poe aligned himself at different times with both Whigs and Democrats but by and large scorned party politics (Kennedy 2001: 44, 51). The poet-editor William Cullen Bryant started as a Federalist but after the collapse of the Federalist party turned to the Democrats, shifting to a third anti-slavery party in the late 1840s (Spann 1972: 168–69, passim). Daniel Webster, many of whose ideas reflected Whig sentiments, also became a Whig party member after the collapse of the Federalists. Most of the other known figures I discuss were Whigs or probably Whig in their political orientations. For example, the ex-mayor Philip Hone was a well-known, influential Whig. In the case of the moral philosopher and educator, Henry Tappan, one may speculate that his political sympathies were Whig; this appears to follow both from the views conveyed in his speech on city growth discussed below and his profession of moral philosophy. Howe (1979: 28) comments that "the majority of [American] academic moral philosophers [of the era] . . . seem to have been Whigs," although his biographer (Perry 1933: 65) points out that Tappan left no explicit evidence on this matter. However, questions of views on political issues and party affiliations are outside the scope of my argument.

dislocating powers. So Poe was not just speaking figuratively when he described the mansions and their surroundings through the prism of this destined future with "the streets . . . already mapped through them," as if they and their "picturesque" landscapes had already become "town lots." Indeed, newspapers sometimes listed such impending dislocations of well-known "country houses": for example, in 1843 *The Commercial Advertiser* said of the historic Kip Farm mansion: "when the [City] Corporation shall open and regulate Thirty Fifth Street, it will take off . . . one third of the old mansion" (cited in Stokes 1915: 1782).

Poe had a Gothic eye, and an uneasy relation with old mansions, but he also knew the city well. I infer that he saw the mansions as self-evidently this way for he lived in the world shaping them as part of a larger ensemble of its practices. He gave verbal expression to these places as a crystallization of what was happening to them—certain potentials and pasts which he saw emerging in them, at that moment. In this sense, the place can be thought of as disclosing itself to him as part of a specific place-world, a tangible concentration of certain spatio-temporalizations, even while he, of course, refashioned it in a distinctive verbal form which disclosed to others something of the way he took things to be. Here I draw on Heidegger's notion of "disclosure" to emphasize that, as elements of the everyday world, places show themselves forth to people in ways reflecting their nesting in wider place-practices, situations, and understandings as well as a person's specific perspectives of the moment; people then "bring out" and configure these disclosures through their own formulations which can in turn enter into others' understandings and formulations of places and the place-world.[4]

The spacetime Poe shows us emerging here embodies contradictory values conveyed in his use of the term "improvement." The standard label for all projects and products of urban construction was "city improvements." The notion of "improvement" derived from the much earlier English concept of cultivating land for monetary profit (see Wood 2002: 106), but had also long held its more general sense of a value-enhancing alteration of a present state, and, as noted above, could be used broadly to refer to any such change. Yet Poe's ironic "the Spirit of Improvement has withered them" points to a disturbing dialectic invading the eastside mansions: what passes as material "improvement" from one point of view, or with respect to one state of the lived world, may destroy from or with respect to

4. I use the term "disclose" without attempting to take account of Heidegger's multi-faceted argument, which invokes a family of analytic terms (such as "discover/uncover" or "show" as well as the basic term "disclose"). What I wish to convey especially is a dynamic interaction between persons and the place-world. As Heidegger (1982: 173) puts it in one context, meanings are not "imagined into" things but are "actually in" them—"The world, being-in-the-world, . . . leaps toward us from the things." Since "being-in-the-world" is intrinsic to the human way of being, the person-world relation itself—or the involvements it engages in a given case—actually confronts us in and comes to us from things. The passage from Heidegger I have quoted is particularly apt for the present paper, since it refers to an excerpt from Rilke's *The notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* which describes how an exposed wall, once the inner side of a demolished city home, manifests the traces of the absent house and of the everyday living, the daily involvements, it once housed.

another.[5] "The Spirit of Improvement" was materially shaping these places with a spacetime of contradictory values: old estates carrying family identities, and their open, landscape surroundings were being "withered" rather than "improved" by the soon-to-come legally empowered expansion of urban "improvements." Dwellings of this kind embodied certain prior values of localized perpetuity: namely, family continuity, male authority and stored, inherited wealth in land - - themselves ambivalently viewed in the wider socio-economic milieu of changing family relations (including decreasing paternal authority) and the increasing commodification of land. Such residences epitomized an older place-world in the process of becoming past. And so, nostalgically recalling the early 19th century "renown" of the Kip Farm's garden and others, one elderly physician (Francis 1858:21) remarked on "the havoc of progressive improvement" which had destroyed all "traces" of them. Wealthy residences (newer ones as well as old) were among the places often regarded as "landmarks" and will turn up again.

The awareness of a problem emerging in the ongoing process of city improvements took varied forms. During one spate of city building, a *New York Times* article put it: "old landmarks are swept away, and even good buildings are pulled down to make room for better. The iconoclastic hand of improvement is everywhere busy and everywhere visible" (*New York Times*, October 12, 1860: 8). Here, the new buildings are produced in an inherently "iconoclastic" process which "sweeps away" (an often-used cliché connoting the rapidity of spatial obliteration) whatever is there, indifferent to already extant positive values, yet producing value increment in the new buildings. The writer of this article was not expressing a blanket opposition to such "improvements." Elite New Yorkers, whether or not they perceived a negative side to "improvements," or to some "improvements," generally found them "splendid" and progressive. The label "city improvements" held in tension within it both poles of this dialectic; however, the negative evaluation was, in effect, hidden within the overtly positive sense of the notion, only released and made overt as improvements were problematized and their negative aspects experienced.

A moralistic version of this problematic is developed in a speech by the educator, Henry Tappan, a New Yorker who had taught philosophy at New York University (but was then the first President of the University of Michigan). Speaking to the New York Geographical Society on "The Growth of Cities" in 1855, he asked what New York requires to become a memorable, "immortal" city comparable to other famous cities. Tappan was among those New York elites who

5. One can find a negative awareness penetrating the sense of "city improvements" as early as post-revolutionary, eighteenth-century New York at a time when there was widespread "confidence in the beneficent nature of change and innovation" (Hartog 1989: 92). Opposing this "spirit of improvement," the conservative chancellor, Robert Livingston, warned the city's mayor about building port facilities along the Hudson River: "Put a stop," he said, "to your improvements (*as they are falsely called*) upon the north river" (cited in Hartog, ibid.: 33, emphasis added). Similarly, referring to the stripping of ornament from a room at Independence Hall in Philadelphia three years before his visit there in 1819, one commentator noted sadly: "The spirit of innovation . . . violated its venerable walls by *modern improvement as it is called*" (cited in Kammen 1991: 53, emphasis added).

held the Whiggish view that New York's (and the nation's) "improvement" required intellectual and aesthetic "works" or "culture" to counterbalance "commerce" (Bender 1987: 56, 111). (Given the breadth of Tappan's commentary, I will keep returning to different parts of it as we go along.) Regarding New York's ongoing material "improvements," which he linked to aims of commercial and monetary gain, and viewed as essential to the city's growth, Tappan (1855: 31, 32) argued nonetheless that they could not give the city enduring identity.

> The works of one generation [Tappan says] are swept away by the works of the next. The improvements of one generation do indeed introduce the higher improvements of the next; but the old and abrogated are ever prone to be forgotten in the new. . . . If [New York] . . . goes on increasing . . . [in the future,] must not all the works of the present and prosperous generation . . . leave not a trace behind in the more magnificent prosperity of generations that follow? Shall we not be forgotten as we have forgotten our fathers?

In this view, the "iconoclasm" of "improvements" derives from the fact that the value increment they create over the value they displace engenders their own future displacement: Each generation, obliterating the works of the previous one in its own superior "improvements," prefigures the future, soon-to-be obsolescence of its own "works." The problematic inherent in "improvements" reproduces itself, taking with it moreover, memories of past "improvements" and their makers. This seems to be less a "mnemonics of dispossession" (in Terdiman's 1993: 110 passim phrase) than a reiterated, ongoing "dispossession of memory." We can see that the subversive power in "improvements" not only destroys "works" (i.e., here, city places), but in this process disrupts relations between persons and places (i.e., peoples' "works") and relations between persons; for each generation the production of its own "being forgotten" begins in the next descending generation as a moral retribution for its own forgetting of the previous generation. Each generation's works become saturated with its own forgetfulness of the past, prefiguring its own fated (predetermined) future of being forgotten: "Shall we not be forgotten," Tappan asks, "as we have forgotten our fathers?"

In short, generativity as a reproduction of social persons who sustain a consciousness of others before and after them—i.e., a crucial aspect of the fundamental socio-temporal logic of generation—is negated. Tappan's model does not just depict what the literary historian R. W. B. Lewis (1955: 16) characterized in a related context as "the disjunction between generations": more tellingly, it conveys a cyclic process in which the basic "self-other" relations defining generation as a social form are ongoingly negated—namely, the kinship-modeled form centered in an ego who, in effect, is always looking both "before," towards his or her immediate antecedents and "after," towards descendants.

Tappan's generational model is part of an historically rooted, polyphonic discourse—a "language of generations [that] was corporate, national, civic" (Wallach: 1997: 7)—concerned in this era of marked sociocultural and economic change with dilemmas of American national identity and historicity. American historians have long occupied themselves with these dilemmas and widely documented this polemical, public language variously penetrating the arguments of national politics, property inheritance, and the generational conflicts posed by

"Young America" Movements active in New York City (and elsewhere) in the pre-civil war era.[6]

The historian J. V. Mathews (1978: 195) points to the obsession of Whig politicians with the sorts of mnemonic-generational disconnections remarked by Tocqueville (2000, v.2: 483) in his famous passage on the constantly dissolving and reforming families in a democratic society: "the fabric of time is torn at every moment and the trace of generations is effaced. You easily forget those who have preceded you, and you have no idea of those who will follow you." And one of Tocqueville's American informants said to him: "[In America] almost all families disappear after the second or third generation" (Tocqueville 1959: 20). According to Mathews (ibid.: 195), Whigs regarded such disconnections as "[isolating] . . . the individual . . . in his own . . . willfulness, unaware of the claims of ancestors or future progeny." This was, in fact, a preoccupation of the famous Federalist (later Whig) orator, Daniel Webster in his Plymouth Rock oration of 1820 where he argued for "looking before and after to hold communion at once with our ancestors and our posterity" (Webster 1891: 26).

But Tappan's argument was shaped not just by this ubiquitous discourse of the wider sociocultural milieu, but also by his experiences and knowledge of New York's place-world and its building practices. Moreover, he was hardly the first for whom a dispossession of generational memory was disclosed in the improvements seen as coursing rapidly through the city. "Continual alteration [of the city] is so rapid," the poet-editor William Cullen Bryant and his coauthors (1830: 338), the latter, two native New Yorkers, had written some twenty years before, "that a few years sweep away . . . the memory and the external vestiges of the generation that precedes us."[7]

---

6. Wallach's history of the "language of generations" examines its ongoing elaboration, and the shifting forms and contexts of its American usages from the seventeen century (Wallach 1997). The concern with developing transgenerational continuities in the face of the sense of their dissolution in the place-world of the city as illustrated in Tappan's argument is, of course, matrixed in the larger complex of conflicted attitudes toward these continuities themselves in the antebellum era. Moreover, Tappan's polemic against forgetting the previous generation can be viewed as speaking to what R. W. B. Lewis (1955: 16, 18) describes as the "deepening sense of the disjunction between generations." More recently, in his study of New York's Democratic youth groups, Edward Widmer (1999: 23) has argued that "generational tension" should be viewed as one of the basic problems facing antebellum America. As Widmer points out, however, New York's "Young Democrats" of the 1830s and 1840s, while stressing that the present "rising generation" should radically separate themselves from the politics of their seniors, did not necessarily disdain transgenerational bonds with the past (cf. also Wallach 1997). Rather, "Looking backward and forward at the same time, young Democrats peered through history to Jefferson and Paine [prototypes of revolutionary change], and also projected themselves [as "role models"] into the future." In this respect, they created a kind of mediation of generational ruptures and connectivities by rejecting the adjacent parental generation for its "conformity" and "materialism," while identifying with the alternate, grandparental generation as models for their opposition (Widmer ibid.: 6, 23).

7. Cf. also the remarks of Philip Hone (the ex-mayor of New York whom I consider below). Prompted by the discovery of buried Revolutionary War cannon during excavations for the construction of a new house, Hone (1889, v.2: 246) wrote in an 1845 diary

If city changes in general were disclosing this problematic spacetime, so also, as we saw in the case of "Poe's mansions," it was shown in particular events engulfing places. In 1856 the elegant Stevens home (which Stevens had left to move back to New Jersey) was being torn down: "The Irish laborers [recklessly] insert their crowbars into the frescoe painting and choice joiner work," said one account of its dismemberment (*Home Journal* 1856: 2). Another journalist wrote:

> We saw the busy hands of the ruthless destroyer pulling out its vitals and scattering its costly walls. . . . Little do those who are pulling down old landmarks to build up a new one think of the day when another generation will also be engaged in the great work of pulling down. (*Daily Tribune* 1856, cited in Lockwood 1976: 104–5)

The future disclosed to this observer in the spatial rupturing of the Stevens house, in effect, jumps over the more immediate future—the next building's construction—to the latter's subsequent pulling down. Unlike those behind the current demolition, with their more short-sighted focus on the new building (to consist of stores), he foregrounds a transgenerational repetition of the present destructive activity—a long-term view based, I infer, on his awareness of recurrent city practices.

The continuous dissolution and increasingly "higher improvements" invading the city place-world were being asserted in other ways. Rebuilding and urban expansion were disrupting the experience of the city as a whole as a continuous, enduring identity in people's lives. Loss of recognition of the city known even in the recent past or over one's lifespan was variously emphasized. For instance, Washington Irving wrote to his sister in 1847: "I often think what a strange world you would find yourself in, if you could revisit your native place. . . . [The New York you knew] . . . was a mere corner of the present . . . city, and that corner is [itself] all changed" (1982: 148). And an 1850s magazine editorial observed more generally: "It is never the same city for a dozen years together. A man born in New York forty years ago finds absolutely nothing of the New York he knew" (Curtis 1856: 272). In noting that the new ongoingly abolishes the old, Tappan (ibid.: 31) situates this altering of city identity in terms of a repetitive process ongoing into the future. "The New York of to-day is not the New York of fifty years ago; and fifty years hence where will the New York of to-day be?" he asks. Tappan's phrasing is one variant of a conventional indexical frame conveying the sense of ongoing rapid change in the city. Centered in the present, this frame draws the audience's awareness backward and forward from the present, as do generational relations, towards past and future.[8] But this spacetime turns on a parallelism of year-measured retrospect and prospect: the retrospect marks the time difference between now and then, defining a *prospect* like itself for the same number of years into the future. Again we see the configuring of an ongoing negation, in this instance an unstoppable transformation of the city's identity into the future, but framed here in terms of units of annual time rather than generations.

---

entry: "[in New York] one generation of men seems studious to overthrow all relics of those which [*sic*] preceded them."

8. I refer here to this frame in its temporally most comprehensive form rather than in its partial form, which is merely retrospective (for example, "Only twenty years ago . . . ").

Like "generations" this frame reconstitutes particulars within a larger, self-reproductive process in which the future coursing through the city appears not simply as a progress of increasing value, but also as a construction of loss—in this case of the city's identity. While expectations of open-ended change informed this view, it did not "detach . . . [expectations] from past experience" but actually "introduced the past into the future" *contra* Koselleck's (1985: 279, 8) characterization (on a different level of analysis) of historical time in European modernity.

Tappan typifies this transformation of identity by a sequence of place-changes within the city. His aim is not just to point to successive dislocations of places, but also to the concomitant dislodging of certain significant person-place identifications, notably between wealthy homes and their owners: "The palaces [wealthy homes] of the last generation [Tappan says] were forsaken and turned into boarding-houses, then pulled down and replaced by warehouses." Furthermore, a present builder's work contains the same cycle *in potentia*: "He who erects his magnificent palace on Fifth Avenue to-day, has only fitted out a future boarding house, and probably occupied the site of a future warehouse" (ibid.: 31).

We can view each alteration of place-identity (from palatial residence to boarding house to warehouse) within this repetitive cycle as if it were a phase in the life history of a wealthy family home destined to decline and disappear. Although this sequence may seem merely stereotypic, it actually reflects commonly reported place changes going on in the spatial transformations within which New Yorkers were living: as business establishments spread out and expanded north in the increasingly crowded, noisy city, well-off New Yorkers left their downtown residences to move north to more desirable edges of the city. For instance, 1853 accounts state that along Greenwich Street "[once] the residence of the old aristocratic families . . . elegant old mansions are [now] occupied by immigrant foreigners . . . almost every house being a beer shop or boarding house"; and on Dey street, off of lower Broadway, as businesses engulf this area, "private dwellings and boarding houses . . . [have] been entirely torn down and rebuilt for . . . drygoods dealers [i.e., for warehouses, also called "stores"] (*New York Daily Times* 1853: 3; [Cook] 1853: 358). Although Tappan ignores it in his comment, large new retail stores (which might also have wholesale floors) could be described as the "splendid" "palaces" of their owners, suggesting the wealth and expansive energy they condensed; and the admiration for the business development that was displacing the earlier downtown place-world of elite residences (as the grid and urban "improvements" were displacing uptown residences like those of Poe's country mansions).

Tappan's conversion cycle implies a world in which the house is infused with motion as it is caught up in both the departure of owning residents and the circulation of money which subvert and transform it. The house is first identified with an elite, wealthy family which then moves away, taking the house's socio-personal and functional identity with it and leaving behind an empty shell to take on the new lower class identity of an outsider—often a widow of lower status who leases the house from the prior-owner and rents out rooms (Blackmar 1980: 140; cf. [Cook] 1854: 246). This creates a multi-tenant house riddled with commercial units whose typically single, often working class men are relatively transient

residents.[9] The house itself loses both familial and elite identity as it becomes invested with monetary circulation and transient renters. Finally, the old house is demolished and replaced with a commercial building, a temporary location for transient commodities on their way to future purchasers. These last "inhabitants" are literally "for sale." We might say that the house is shown in a "commodity phase" of its biography (in Appadurai's 1986: 13*ff.* and Kopytoff's 1986: 65*ff.* sense), but instead of itself physically moving away (like a mobile exchange object), it reflects in itself the transience of its inhabitants, enabled by monetary transactions: Monetary circulation (like human transience) is, to loosely paraphrase Marx (1906: 123), increasingly depicting itself in the body of the house as it is converted into extinction.

Consider this monetary "depiction" from the perspective of one home-owner's dilemma. In 1836 Philip Hone, wealthy, conservative auctioneer and ex-Mayor of New York, was torn between his attachment to his home near City Hall and his desire to escape the neighborhood's increasing noisy commercialization; but, as he records in his diary, it was the considerable money offered for his home which finally enticed him to move north: "The splendid rooms . . . my snug library, well-arranged books . . . what will become of them? [he asks]. I have turned myself out of doors; but $60,000 is a great deal of money" (Hone 1889: 203). The problematic spacetime of the city is reflected in Hone's personal conflict: which will gain empowerment—the tempting monetary value of his house and the expanding commerce encouraging him to move to a new home, or the value to him of his current house as loved home (rather than commodity)? His departure acts reciprocally on his own biography and that of his house which he leaves behind to be metamorphosed into a hotel annex and stores. Three years after his move, he writes of the "Brickbats, rafters and slates . . . showering down . . . in every direction" during the mass "pulling down" of houses and stores in the area of his old home, and he laments: "my poor, dear house . . . is coming down . . . [soon] the home of my happy days will be incontinently swept from the earth" (ibid.: 359). The circulation potential of money in the monetary offer for the house prefigures Hone's departure and the house's future; his previous home is in effect set loose by his decision and his own mobility, and only three years later is spatially ruptured and extinguished.

For Tappan, the inevitable disappearance of personally or family owned palatial houses, implying their dissolution into monetary value, also points to the forgetting of the personal and familial identities of the owner-builders. So he chides his audience: "How soon you yourselves will be forgotten if you leave nothing but your money behind you" (Tappan ibid.: 37). (Tappan has an alternative to this rather dismal future I will return to later.) In short, the shaping of spacetime through "improvements" was disrupting expectations about the tangible durability of places and by the same token these altered expectancies were affecting the remembrance of persons who might otherwise remain objectified in home-places saturated with their identities. In these respects, the spacetime was "out of joint."

9. Boarding houses were of different kinds and levels, but they commonly accommodated single working class men, and in the poorer ones the basic commercial "unit" could often be a single bed in a multi-bed room (See for example, Blackmar 1989: 134, 314n, 44, passim).

Nevertheless, more recent wealthy homes were being built without attention to these altered expectancies. One architectural critic saw this in the contradiction between the futures materially built into new wealthy residences and the actual futures they could sustain. According to his detailed survey of New York's 1850s buildings, the solid "self-glorifying" and "costly" houses being built by "merchants and land speculators" as if to be inhabited in perpetuity by their descendants had little chance to survive the builders: the rapid "accumulation and dispersal" of family fortunes and the lack of an inheritance "law of primogeniture" worked against their retention within the family after the builder's death ([Cook] 1854: 245–47).

Yet these mansions, the essay notes, would even meet John Ruskin's requirement that houses "be built as durably as the pyramids" (ibid.: 246–47). This romantic image reflects Ruskin's vision that houses like these should be memorials to the original builders whose life experiences and rights inhering in them after death were to "be respected by . . . [their] children" and descendant generations ([1880] 1989: 182, 197). As the historian Gillian Brown (1990: 74) has put this: "Such houses would be monuments to their builders, museums to their lasting ownership." But, of course, these are just the mnemonic powers the New York mansions are unable to muster. Instead, they disclose a contradictory spacetime: invested with the identity of an affluent family, they are built as if forever, but are unable to transmit that identity down the generations; they have only a lifetime (at most) in them.

The inheritance of land through male primogeniture and the "entailment" of this type of inheritance within the specified line of descent down the generations had largely disappeared in America by the end of the eighteenth century. In New York state, these constraints on land circulation had been legally abolished in 1782.[10] Yet they led an active afterlife in American political and legal discourse as a stereotypic symbol of European feudal hierarchy (taken as the antithesis of the American republic), epitomizing the power of elites to concentrate wealth over time and perpetuate the nonpartible, transgenerational inheritance of land within a single family, as against releasing it to the circulating, monetary powers of the market.[11] If primogeniture was viewed (in Henry Maine's words) as "a source of . . . durabilty" ([1861] 1963: 229), in the present context its lack was made to

10. See Blackmar (1989: 220) and Shammas, Salmon, and Dalhin (1987: 63, 67). The dates that these regulations were abolished varied from state to state.

11. Cf. Alexander (1997: 56, 81). Alexander points out that in early post-revolutionary legal thinking, primogeniture and entail "symbolized the connection between what was thought of as 'feudal property' and social hierarchy." According to Alexander, these principles of inheritance actually had little "practical significance in [American] legal practice" after the mid-eighteenth century; if American post-revolutionary lawyers gave so much attention to abolishing them, they were driven primarily by this charged symbolism. Indeed, he points out, the thematic emphasis upon destroying primogeniture and entail persisted "even after . . . [they] had been virtually eliminated everywhere," precisely because they "continued to act as powerful symbols" of what was antithetical to certain asserted ideals of American polity. Primogeniture and entail also drew these and related associations into the nineteenth century, living on, as my example suggests, in the wider cultural/political milieu.

convey the transgenerational power that wasn't there: the capacity, that is, to constrain the commodification of property separating families and their residential places.[12] Consequently, (in this view) these places, although new, even improved manifestations of a solidary condensed wealth, can only be demolished in the monetization practices of further improvement as if they were old. Neither wealth nor remembrance of past generations can be stored in them and transmitted down the generations. Such social dimensions of descent and inheritance, as well as their embedding in the material forms of enduring houses are familiar themes in anthropology and history, but here it is their nonexistence, their negative, that is at issue.

* * *

Now let us pay closer attention to places viewed as "external vestiges" of the past. In this context, certain fundamental conditions of human being-in-the-world involving the basic situatedness or emplacement of persons come into focus. New Yorkers, we have seen, were sometimes troubled with the realization that not only were tangible forms and identities of familiar places (themselves traces of the city's earlier place world) being rapidly swept away but that disappearing in them were the "traces" of persons and events or of generations who had themselves disappeared. Older citizens might remember the particulars of a vanished place and some of the more distant people and events identified with it, but such places also sometimes held for them historical identifications with persons beyond their personal memories, keeping these persons within the "living present" of that earlier time by maintaining them in place. What was being problematized of course was the capacity to presence the past on an ongoing basis within one's mundane place-world. If we consider memory with respect to this felt capacity of places, the line between the past outside and that inside lived memory blurs, as Halbwachs ([1950] 1980: 57) has suggested. I want to look briefly at some ways the mnemonic power of places to presence the historical past emerges as part of this problematized place-world.

For Tappan, reversing the cycle of each generation's forgetfulness of the previous one and assuring the city's memorability and renown as a distinctive place, required constructing landmark places with staying power beyond the mortal life

12. It is striking in this respect that some fifty years later, Henry James's famous address to the affluent Fifth Avenue mansions he saw on his return to New York, figures this same sort of lack: Noting that the qualities of these mansions would seem "to imply that they are 'entailed'," James says to them that in fact, although new, they have no future any more than they have a past: "[For] you sit here only in the lurid light of 'business,' and you know . . . what majestic continuity . . . that represents. Where are . . . your eldest son and *his* oldest son, those prime indispensables for any real projection of your estate? . . . No, . . . you are reduced to . . . the present . . . squaring itself between an absent future and an absent past" ([1907] 1967: 160–61). In James' cynical encounter, the buildings disclose to him their inherent powerlessness to command any time for themselves, even though they are massively materialized showcases of wealth, for they lack the protection of laws of primogeniture and entail.

span, not subject to the disruptive powers of "improvement." Instead of buildings incrementing private property and personal wealth, New Yorkers should construct places of civic value, institutions that contribute to the public good. (This vision was in accord with Whig ideals of moral interventions balancing the city's self-aggrandizing commercialism.) The identities of both the city and those who supported the construction of such landmarks will then be "remembered."

To follow Tappan's argument we need to depart the city for a moment. His exemplary place—intended as a moral for his New York audience—is the research observatory he himself created at the University of Michigan; just finished, it stood at the time of his speech, on a hilltop then overlooking "a beautiful [natural] locality."[13] Assuming that as the home of a scientific institution this new building will endure into future generations, Tappan (ibid.: 30) imagines a future astronomer descending from the observatory and recalling those "who erected [it] for him" as he reads their names on the plaque at its foot. Tappan thus draws his present audience to look both forward to the future rememberer remembering them (the audience) and backward from the rememberer's spatiotemporal locus in the future to their own present, the future rememberer's past. That is, he constructs a repaired transgenerational (social) spacetime—a reciprocity of spatiotemporal perspectives being worked out between the generations within the medium of this "long-lived" place. Tappan also sees the observatory's surrounding land as a region for future building. Returning to a contemporary vantage point, he imagines himself situated in the observatory's "beautiful locality . . . looking around" at the landscape. In this image, space is formed indexically: Tappan becomes its center from which it stretches out as his own view, his spatial field; by the same token, Tappan is centered in and oriented by this place. And just when this mutual centering of the place "in" the person (that is, as his spatial field) and the person in the place (that is, as the surroundings in which he is immersed) takes over, he hears the voice of "the genius of the place," inviting him to "improve" the area by "adorning" nature with institutions of art and learning (ibid.: 30).

The ancient notion of the "genius of the place" was part of a larger view of nature's primacy in guiding human practices of landscape art or aesthetic "improvements" to land. Deriving from English landscape architecture, such views were also prominent among the American pioneers of these practices, including the soon-to-be designers of what would become at the end of the decade New York's Central Park, then a stretch of rocky, hilly land, sparsely populated by the poor, which the city—intending to save a portion of "nature" and "open space" from inevitable urban advance—was purchasing for parkland up town. Tappan's place "genius" was the persona of "nature's" creativity animated as its prior authority; Tappan shows himself heeding "nature's" authorization to make future "improvements" (here, institutions of art and learning) that will, in his view, adorn rather than obliterate the landscape. In this romantic vision, the disturbing contradiction in "improvement" drops from view: the improvements prefigured in the land are to maintain a spatiotemporal continuum, rather than to demolish what

13. In fact, the observatory, recently saved from demolition, is now a historical museum, a *lieu de mémoire* in Pierre Nora's (1989) sense—not what Tappan imagined, but still there. See Steneck (1991). For a detailed history of Tappan's observatory see Whitesell (1998).

is already present in what is to come. Similarly, a mediating sense of "improvements" was later materially embodied in Central Park by its designers who aimed to preserve what they could of the topography while altering or "improving" it. This kind of aesthetic improvement was explicitly worked out in their construction practices.[14]

Tappan sympathized with the idea of creating a large park uptown. In the lower city, he remarks, most of "the [natural] beauty" has been lost. For instance, instead of being improved ("preserved and embellished")—made into a healthful, attractive place (like a city park)—New York's "Collect Pond" was filled-in with the soil of the surrounding hills and the whole area leveled; now the city prison (known as "The Tombs") stands on the site in a degraded, slum neighborhood. "The [city] fathers," he says, "absorbed in . . . [money-making]" heard not the voice of the Genius of the place; "they formed no strong local attachment" (ibid.: 34).

American lack of "local attachment" was associated with the transience of both people and places, some of which were noted earlier. As one commentator remarked: "We accomplish our object in one place and remove to another, leaving behind us nothing . . . permanent" (*Home Journal* 1855: 2). And George Curtis (1856: 272), the editor of *Harpers Monthly* asked why people born in New York some forty years before should "love" the city, since so many places that had defined the city for them were gone. The symbolism of "attachment" involved some mix of "being" or "staying there" and paying attention to, caring about a place—for instance, by preserving rather than destroying it. Tappan demonstrates "local attachment" when he situates himself on the observatory hill and attends to what the landscape tells or shows him; and the future astronomer demonstrates it when he reads the plaque bringing to his mind the place's past creators.

Efforts to bring the past to life in felt experience through concrete imagery and tangible memorials are well-known features of this era of American history.[15] Whig orators, says Mathews (1978: 195), worried about the loss of social constraints when the individual consciousness was slipped out of the "network of generations," aimed in this way to stimulate in people's minds "a vivid, emotional and filial attachment to the past." Undergirding this concern with experiencing the past is an emphasis upon subject-centered space or deixis, on "being here" (or "being there") in a particular place. Consider Daniel Webster's Plymouth Rock speech of 1820 in which, drawing on "familiar tropes" (Seelye 1998: 63), he addresses the people as if they were assembled on the Rock where the original English settlers were

14. For example, the lake to be constructed between the Fifth and Sixth Avenue entrances at 59th street was "suggested by the [rather swampy] present . . . ground," and was expected to "heighten" the "picturesque" qualities of the bordering "bluffs." Consequently, the "rocky" character of this location (exemplified in the bluffs) was to be preserved and enhanced by the lake; although the watery potential of the undesirable swamp would be developed into the "ornamental lake" (and in this sense preserved), the swamp itself would disappear in this aesthetic transformation. (See Olmsted 1983: 127). Contrast what happened to New York's "Collect Pond," as noted below.

15. See among others, Browne (1993); Byer (1993); Harris (1982: 188–98, 205–7); Levin (1959 :7–9); Seelye (1998); Mathews (1978).

supposed to have first arrived (although the commemoration was actually being held elsewhere).

> There is a local feeling connected with this occasion . . . a sort of genius of the place. . . .We are here, at the season . . . [when the landing] took place. . . . We cast our eyes abroad on the ocean and we see where the little bark . . . progress[ed] to the shore. We look around us and behold the hills and promontories where . . . our fathers first saw the[se] places. . . . We feel the cold which benumbed, and listen to the winds which pierced them. Beneath us is the Rock on which New England received . . . [their] feet. We seem even to behold them . . . gain[ing] the shore. (Webster [1820] 1891: 27)

Plymouth Rock was what Pierre Nora (1989: 7) calls a national *lieu de mémoire* where memory was being made to "crystallize and secrete itself." One audience member who visited "Forefather's rock" (as he referred to it) beforehand to prepare himself for this talk recorded how deeply its historic associations moved him, and how subsequently he was overwhelmed by Webster's commemoration (cited in Seelye 1998: 65–66). Webster aims to infuse the gathering with a sense that they are standing on the Rock, scanning the sea from the land which the original settlers once saw from the reverse orientation as they sailed towards the rock. In effect, the place is to be experienced as joining within it the two temporally discrete, centered spatial fields of actors, making their bodily orientations reciprocal—one field stretching seaward from the present rememberers, the other landward from the incoming ancestral arrivals looking to land. The place's unifying embrace almost evokes the copresence of the two groups: the present generation looking backward, as it were, to the original settlers who are looking forward to their own immediate arrival. As in Tappan's talk, the present generation is being spatiotemporally reconstituted, not simply through evocation of an enduring place, but more precisely through what I have described as the centering of persons in places and places in the action-fields of persons.

We can see how person and place are being formed as aspects of each other, coordinates of what Merleau-Ponty (1962: 102) calls "a practical system" integral to the constitution of the embodied subject, but also, I have argued, to the constitution of the place. The presence of the past is not grounded in either the subject or the place *per se*, but in the subject as always oriented, located, moving through or in "some place" and equally, in the place as a concrete location and center orienting and surrounding the subject. The importance of places to memory is founded in this complex of relations as the philosophers Edward Casey (1987, 1993) and Jeff Malpas (1999) have also argued in other ways than I have here.

In New York, this power of presencing the past was problematized in the spatiotemporal disorders of vanishing places. "The other day," wrote George Curtis, "they were tearing down the Irving House [Hotel]. It is too old [he says ironically]; it has been built at least ten years" (1856: 272–73). In effect, aging is being speeded up in the hotel, making it ready for its demise, when it is actually young. In London, however: "Ah! With what emotion a man awakes . . . and walks out to see the famous places! . . . Great men not only lived in London, but in this London. . . . Here are . . . [Thomas] Gray's Inn . . . Charles Lamb's Islington [and so forth]." Not so in New York: "[Who] . . . can pause before any building . . . and say, 'There sat Washington' . . . [yet he] has been

dead . . . little more than half a century" (ibid.: 272–73). In London where landmark places have longer lives, one can, in effect, center within one's own bodily field of action and be centered by and within places that give concrete spatial presence to the past bodily orientations of known historic figures.

Curtis, like Tappan, moralized New York's spatiotemporal disorders. He described decent citizens' "local love" for the city being torn down in this "eternal demolition" of the city's landmarks. Leaving its governance to corrupt "trading politicians" (in fact, the then city Councilmen, were known as "the forty thieves"), these decent citizens themselves "merely pull down their warehouses and build greater [ones] and move from one fine dwelling to another" (ibid.: 273). In sum, Curtis points to the dislodging of local bonds and place identities, and the abstraction of self from places manifested in the restless relocation of homes and businesses as people pursue their own monetary self-interests rather than the civic good. It is thus a disturbance of the sociomoral self (a lack of local caring) which Curtis (like Tappan) in the moralizing fashion of the time, finds ramifying in (and being furthered by) the disappearances of places from people and the mobility of people departing from places. It is as if both places and people depart from each other, each disappearing from the other's view.

We have in fact already noted some ways in which the problematized duration of places is directly connected with the final departures of people identified with them as aspects of their (the places') spatial being. When owners moved away from their residences, this refracted back on the places: For instance, in the supercession of one place by another, places lost critical aspects of their identities and some of their previous visible qualities; similarly, they came to manifest the volatility of monetary circulation rather than familistic bonds of continuity. Demolishment is the finalizing "rite of passage" into oblivion in which (as made graphic in the cases of the Hone and Stevens houses) the whole spatial form is ruptured, the walls are opened up and the houses disappear into rubble. Indeed, these places do look back at people "with intimate eyes" (to draw on Baudelaire's expressive phrase), but with the spatiotemporally disturbed "looks" that come from being left behind. In this respect, the "practical system" of persons and places discussed above is shown in its characteristic operation as an arena for transposing the action of persons to objectifying forms, which then "look back" at people in these given shapes as aspects of themselves.

Memory and forgetting also apparently had some direct associations with departures. One commentator lamented the mobility of Americans who leaving their rural "paternal homes" for elsewhere were likely to find by the time they returned that these homes had been "ruined by improvements"; consequently, "nothing is left . . . in one's memory, save the blank surface where he [*sic*] vainly endeavors to picture to his mind the absent landmarks" (Flagg 1861: 306, 308). Just as places take on negating forms put into motion by their inhabitants' departures, in this case, the departing inhabitant's memory takes on the mental blank left by the absent places.

* * *

To conclude. In his study of place, the philosopher Jeff Malpas (1999: 40–41) uses an apt analogy from geographical surveying to describe his analytic method: It is

only by operating within the complicated topography of the region to gain a relational account of the surface—"through . . . journeying, sighting and resighting [he says—] that place can be understood." In this paper, I have journeyed, sighted, and resighted some features of New York's mid-nineteenth-century place-world to analyze certain problematized spatiotemporal relations being formed there in a particular interplay of discursive and concrete practices. Accordingly, my account emerges here not in generalized glosses such as "rapidity of change," "flux," or "the annihilation of space by time" (and its variants)—often used to characterize spatiotemporal features of Western "modernity"—but in an analysis of spatiotemporal relations internal to specific sociocultural practices. As I have argued, aspects of the sociocultural milieu such as, for example, mnemonic-generational discontinuities, contradictions between fluid monetary wealth and inherited property, and between mobility and local attachments were integral to these relations. Thus my aim has been to show how the spacetime and identities synthesized in places were unraveling and being transformed in and as part of a particular lived world. The sense of a problematized duration was not given just in some quantifiable phase of time of a place's existence, but more fundamentally in the ways varied pasts and expected futures were being configured in its present spatial being at any given "moment." For instance, we saw that the forthcoming arrival of a "city improvement"—a street opening—could presage impending spatial segmentation in the bodily being of an old place. In this case, the place was experienced as being caught up in the potential expansive motion of the street grid. Disintegration of a place might also be initiated or prefigured in the severance of its sociopersonal identity, which could be drawn away from its spatial "body" in the departure of those inhabitants who gave it their identity. In the moment of demolition, a place's entire existence—the concrete space, temporal pasts and futures, and current identity held together in it were consumed as it was torn apart. And ongoing disappearances and transformations could prefigure a transgenerational spacetime of repeated vanishing and mnemonic loss in the current, changing face of the city. Further, the ongoing loss of many places brought into play a sense of disturbed mnemonic relations between persons and places—i.e., disturbances of the basic "practical system" of locative connections. If this seems like a litany of negative spatio-temporalizations, recall that this spacetime operated as part of a world of positively viewed "improvements."

Contexts of radical material transformation in people's lived worlds are especially revealing for studies of spacetime and place. For when there are "breaks" in the tangible environments of mundane experience "circumspection comes up against [some things gone missing]" (Heidegger 1962: 105)—or in the current case, against places going missing earlier than one might ordinarily expect or desire—and attention is then drawn "afresh" to them; the spacetime of the place-world becomes problematized and must be worked out, as it were, "anew," taking into account just this problematic form. It is this "working out" (or some aspects of it) in one local world which has occupied me here.

References

Alexander, Gregory. 1997. *Commodity and propriety: Competing visions of property in American legal thought 1776–1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1986. "Introduction: Commodities and the politics of value." In *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai, 3–63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1984. *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics*. Edited and Translated by Caryl Emerson. (Theory and History of Literature, Vol. 8). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bender, Thomas. 1987. *New York intellect: A history of intellectual life in New York City, from 1750 to the beginnings of our own time*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Berman, Marshall. 1988. *All that is solid melts into air*. New York: Penguin Books.

Blackmar, Elizabeth. 1989. *Manhattan for rent, 1785–1850*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Brown, Gillian. 1990. *Domestic individualism: Imagining self in nineteenth-century America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Browne, Stephen. 1993. "Reading public memory in Daniel Webster's Plymouth Rock oration." *Western Journal of Communication* 57: 464–77.

Bryant, William Cullen, Robert Sands, and Giulian Verplanck. 1830. "Reminiscences of New York (II)." *The Talisman*. New York: E. Bliss.

Burrows, Edwin, and Mike Wallace. 1999. *Gotham: A history of New York City to 1898*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Byer, Robert. 1993. "Words, monuments, beholders: The visual arts in Hawthorne's Marble Faun." In *American iconology: New approaches to nineteenth-century American art and literature*, edited by David C. Miller, 163–85. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Casey, Edward. 1987. *Remembering: A phenomenological study*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———. 1993. *Getting back into place: Toward a renewed understanding of the place-world*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Curtis, George. 1856. "Editor's easy chair." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 13 (July): 272–73.

———. 1862. "Editor's easy chair." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 24 (February): 409.

[Cook, Clarence?]. 1853. "New-York daguerreotyped." *Putnam's Monthly* 1 (4): 353–68.

———. 1854. "New-York daguerreotyped." *Putnam's Monthly* 3 (15): 233–48.

Flagg, Wilson. 1861. *Mount Auburn: Its scenes, its beauties and its lessons*. Boston: J. Munro.

Francis, John. 1858. *Old New York: Reminiscences of the past sixty years*. New York: Charles Roe.

Halbwachs, Maurice. (1950) 1980. *The collective memory*. Translated by Francis Ditter and Vida Ditter. New York: Harper and Row.

Harris, Neil. 1982. *The artist in American society: The formative years 1790–1860*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hartog, Hendrik. 1989. *Public property and private power: The corporation of the city of New York in American law, 1730–1870*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Harvey, David. 1985. *Consciousness and the urban experience*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Heidegger, Martin. 1962. *Being and time*. Translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. New York: Harper and Row.

———. 1982. *The basic problems of phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

The Home Journal. 1855. "American restlessness." 481 (May 19, 1855): 2.

———. 1856. "City improvements." 534 (May 3, 1856): 2.

Hone, Philip. 1889. *The diary of Philip Hone*. Vol. 2. Edited by Bayard Tukerman. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company.

Howe, Daniel Walker. 1979. *The political culture of the American Whigs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Irving, Washington. 1982. *Letters (Vol. 4), 1846–1859*. Edited by Ralph Alderman, H. Kleinfield, and J. Banks. Boston: Twayne.

James, Henry. (1907) 1967. *The American scene*. New York: Horizon Press.

Kammen, Michael. 1991. *Mystic chords of memory: The transformation of tradition in American Culture*. New York: Alfred Knopf.

Kennedy, J. Gerald. 2001. "Edgar Allen Poe 1809–1849: A brief biography." In *A historical guide to Edgar Allen Poe*, edited by J. Gerald Kennedy, 19–62. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kopytoff, Igor. 1986. "The cultural biography of things: Commoditization as a process." In *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai, 64–94. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 1985. *Futures past: On the semantics of historical time*. Translated by Keith Tribe. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Levin, David. 1959. *History as romantic art*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World.

Lewis, R. W. B. 1955. The American Adam: Innocence, tragedy and tradition in the nineteenth century. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lockwood, Charles. 1976. *Manhattan moves uptown*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Maine, Henry. (1861) 1963. *Ancient law*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Malpas, Jeff. 1999. *Place and experience: A philosophical topography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marx, Karl. 1906. *Capital: A critique of political economy*. Translated by Samuel Moore and A. Aveling. New York: Modern Library.

Mathews, Jean V. 1978. "Whig history: The New England Whigs and a usable past." *The New England Quarterly* 51 (2): 193–208.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. 1962. *Phenomenology of perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge Keagan Paul.

New-York Daily Times. "Changes in New-York: Reminiscences of down-town street." July, 4 1853: 3.

New York Times. "A city of change: Transformations on Broadway." October 12, 1860: 8.

Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire." *Representations* 26: 7–25.

Olmsted, Frederick Law. 1983. "The Greensward Plan: 1858." In *The papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, Vol. 3.*, edited by Charles Beveridge and D. Schuyler, 140–49. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Perry, Charles. 1933. *Henry Philip Tappan: Philosopher and University President*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Poe, Edgar Allen. (1844) 1929. "Letter I." *Doings of Gotham*, edited by Jacob Spannuth and T. Mabbot, 25–26. Pottsville: J. Seiders.

Ruskin, John. (1880) 1989. *The seven lamps of architecture*. New York: Dover.

Seelye, John. 1998. *Memory's nation: The place of Plymouth Rock*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Shammas, Carole, Marylynn Salmon, and Michel Dahlin. 1987. *Inheritance in America*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Spann, Edward. 1972. *Ideals and politics: New York intellectuals and liberal democracy, 1820–1880*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Steneck, Margaret. 1991. "Restoring Tappan's observatory." *LSA Magazine* (Fall): 17–23.

Stokes, I. N. Phelps. 1915–28. *The iconography of Manhattan Island, Vol. 5*. New York: Robert Dodd.

Tappan, Henry. 1855. *The growth of cities: A discourse delivered before the New York Geographical Society . . . March 15, 1855*. New York: R. Craighead.

Terdiman, Richard. 1993. *Present past: Modernity and the memory crisis*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Tocqueville, Alexis de. 2000. *Democracy in America*. Translated and edited by Harvey Mansfield and D. Winthrop. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

——. 1959. *Journey to America*. Translated by G. Lawrence, edited by J. P. Mayer. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wallach, Glenn. 1997. *Obedient sons: The discourse of youth and generations in American Culture, 1630–1860*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Webster, Daniel. 1891. "A discourse delivered at Plymouth, December 22, 1820." *The great speeches and orations of Daniel Webster*. Edited by Edwin P. Whipple. Boston: Little Brown.

Whitesell, Patricia. 1998. *A creation of his own: Tappan's Detroit observatory*. Ann Arbor: Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

Widmer, Edward. 1999. *Young America: The flowering of democracy in New York City*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. 2002. *The origin of capitalism: A longer view*. London: Verso.

Nancy MUNN is Professor Emerita of Anthropology and of Social Sciences in the College at the University of Chicago. She has conducted fieldwork in both Papua New Guinea and Australia, and more recently has been working on aspects of place-change and related issues in early-nineteenth-century New York City. Munn's research has been concerned with such topics as value, exchange, space-time, memory, and aesthetics. Her works include "The decline and fall of Richmond Hill: Commodification and place-change in late 18th–early 19th century New York" (*Anthropological Theory*, 2013), "An essay on the symbolic construction of memory in the Kahluli Gisalo" (In *Cosmos and society in Oceania*, edited by Daniel de Coppet and André Iteanu, Berg, 1995), "The cultural anthropology of time: A critical essay" (*Annual Reviews in Anthropology*, 1992), *The fame of Gawa: A symbolic study of value transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) society* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), and *Walbiri iconography: Graphic representation and cultural symbolism in a Central Australian society* (Cornell University Press, 1973).

Department of Anthropology
University of Chicago
1126 E. 59th St.
Chicago, IL 60637
USA
ndmunn@uchicago.edu