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1. Introduction

- 1 Today, speaking of Dewey's "unpublished" material seems almost impossible, thanks to the work carried out at the Center for Dewey Studies, where Dewey's papers, notes, and personal library – housed at the Special Collections Research Center of Morris Library at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale – have been systematically managed and made available to researchers. Working with his typescripts, notes, and books is particularly illuminating for anyone in the field of Dewey Studies, especially when it still sheds insight on aspects that Dewey "kept for himself."
- 2 The *Notes and Outlines (N&O)*, drafted for the 1922 *Carus Lectures* in memory of Paul Carus,¹ constitute a compelling case of understudied material. They offer a unique access to Dewey's philosophical work in the making, documenting Dewey's writing process in a particularly vivid way, capturing moments of conceptual experimentation, hesitation, and rearticulation on the path toward *Experience and Nature (EN)*. Moreover, they are both rich in conceptualizations, phrasings and references that would not be used again by Dewey, while also presenting a certain "family resemblance" with crucial themes and problems he developed in *EN* and elsewhere.
- 3 As far as I am aware, Paul Cherlin (2023: 55-7, 65-6) presents the only instance in the secondary literature which partly considers the *N&O*, with a specific focus on Dewey's metaphysics. Cherlin nicely shows that the *N&O* contain the conceptual architecture of "generic traits of experience" even without containing that term, prefiguring *EN*'s metaphysical theory. However, Cherlin seems to have dwelled more on the last part of the *N&O*, namely the more complete one, in which Dewey explicitly rejects both monism and atomistic or essentialist, i.e., "reversed" pluralism.
- 4 This paper, by contrast, offers an interpretive guide *particularly* to the *N&O*'s most discontinuous sections, namely the sections Cherlin does not fully take up and describes as consisting of "largely abstract and fragmented listings of terms and

concepts interspersed with prose that, while full of typos, incomplete sentences, and manic transitions, are somewhat coherent” (*ibid.*: 55).

- 5 Because these fragmentary passages constitute visual evidence of Dewey’s thought process, they are presented here mostly without alteration. For the reader’s convenience, the excerpts from the *N&O* will appear in quotation marks and italics, with page numbers assigned sequentially according to their order in the folder. All underlining,² dashes, typos, and truncations are Dewey’s own.
- 6 The paper proceeds in two intertwined ways. On the one hand, it reconstructs selected portions of the *N&O*, particularly their most fragmentary parts. This reconstruction necessarily involves a certain degree of mediation and selection, which is at times more substantial given the discontinuous nature of the materials. On the other hand, it proposes a reading according to which perception can be understood as a process of familiarization, and shows how this notion is articulated through a network of recurrent metaphors. Particular attention is hence devoted to those fragments that are more directly relevant to this process and to the appearance of the term *Heimweh*, which will be examined as a heuristic device within the *N&O*.

2. Establishing the Framework: Perception as Familiarization

- 7 This analysis takes as its starting point a thesis developed elsewhere (Iannilli 2023), according to which Dewey’s description of perception corresponds to a process of familiarization.
- 8 For present purposes, it suffices to recall how Dewey *emblematically* formulates this framework in “Qualitative Thought” (Dewey 1930/1984), in which qualitative thinking is described as fueled by the perception of a situation’s pervasive qualitateness, which serves both as the basis for inquiry and as the criterion for testing its results. Throughout this process, perceiving amounts to acquiring familiarity or, more precisely, to “familiarization.” This description of perceiving entails a notion of familiarity as something not given or immutable but rather as a “contingent stability” that requires readjustments and reconstructions and includes tensions functioning as productive factors.
- 9 In the 1930 essay, two notions in particular highlight this tensive character: “family resemblance” and “assimilation-resistance to mere assimilation.”
- 10 In family resemblance, one perceives an “air” of familiarity in a face or situation as a whole, without being able to locate precisely the elements on which that familiarity is based – it is not the same as straightforward identification (Dewey 1930/1984: 260). With “sheer” assimilation and resistance to it, a tensive dynamic operates between immediate recognition of something as a “single object of apprehension” (enabled by habits acquired through prior experiences) and differentiation of a dominant or pervasive quality that produces a passage from that “single object” to another through an explicit proposition (*ibid.*: 261).
- 11 This tensive dimension is particularly relevant here because it establishes familiarity not as unambiguously simple and unproblematic but as involving an “untamable,” resisting aspect; and not as exclusively stable, but as fueled by contingency and dynamic exploration. Ultimately, Dewey’s distinctive conception of familiarization is

embodied fundamentally in perception as an experiential practice – one that, unlike knowing, does not lead to the appropriation or assimilation of alterity.³

- 12 Now, the *N&O* materials considered here prove particularly valuable for extending this framework, as they offer a distinctive conceptualization of familiarity – and hence of perception⁴ – that operates within this same tensive structure while introducing elements that both complicate and enrich it. They preserve passages omitted from the published text, some of which concern the problem of familiarity articulated also in terms of its negative, that is, its (apparent) absence whether as *Heimweh*⁵ (homesickness) or as strangeness or foreignness. Questions concerning travelling and boundaries thus also enter the discourse crucially.
- 13 In what follows, particular attention is paid to the metaphors through which this thematic constellation is articulated in the *N&O*. Their recurrence has in turn enabled an *ex-post* metaphorological reading of *EN* itself, making visible a network of metaphors – related to the spheres of “household” (familiarity, and the house-home pair) and “travel” (exploration, adventure) applied to both experience and philosophy – that would otherwise remain scattered and less evident across *EN*’s ten chapters.⁶

3. The Problem of Knowledge, Perception, and the Spatiotemporal Articulation of Experience

- 14 The *N&O* folder⁷ contains 42 pages. Some are typed, some handwritten, some both. Pages are numbered by Dewey either sequentially (toward the end), or marked as “*Carus lectures*,” “*Car L*,” “*Carus Lec*” with various sub-numerations and, in cases of uncertainty, “*Carus L. No.?*” Some pages are not numbered at all. Dewey often organizes topics schematically, ordering them with Roman or Arabic numerals (rarely exceeding 5-6 points). These schematic groupings, together with more discursive text portions, hint at *EN*’s contents and articulation while also offering a rather original document to readers familiar with Dewey’s work.
- 15 Dewey opens his *N&O* with a reconstruction of human understanding that begins with its most immediate form in common sense, then moves through the traditions of logic, spirituality, and science, and culminates in his own pragmatist proposal.
- 16 First, Dewey begins by stating that the “*common sense world- and its metaphysics*” (1) rest on direct experience of things and events in a spatiotemporal manner: what happens in the present, what is remembered or anticipated, observed and repeated, where it is located and how frequent it is: “*things independent, separate, space bounds, events, time limits, conjunction, aggregation and division, external change internal changes - self-moving, eternal, to its opposite- varieties of spatial provinces, of temporal endurance, always, mostly rarely, prodigiously, marvellously oncelly*” (1).
- 17 Second, building upon this lies “*the logic of discourse*,” “*framed to meet the material of common sense of course*” (1), where language and thought impose form on the raw material of common sense. Nouns, adjectives, subject-predicate structures stabilize meanings, transforming things into universals, essences, etc.: “*the noun, or thing of common sense - what happens to it when subjected to the laws of discourse as its meaning dominates, form Idea, a surprising addition to common sense norms of being- universal-essence, classes, kinds- and yet implicit in common sense discourse, conversation, social intercourse*” (1). Most importantly, intelligibility lies not in things themselves but in

their communicated meanings (*"intelligibility its meaning- substance and subjects- it is meanings that are communicated not things, forms without matter- we understand not things but their meanings,"* 1).

- 18 Third, Dewey refers to what he calls *"the spiritual tradition,"* in which *"imagination provoked desire and wonder."* *"Religion, art, poetry, and drama"* are here connected with forms of social control and social functions, and point to a dimension of experience that exceeds the limits of common sense. Dewey also alludes to the historical formation of this tradition through the absorption of Jewish, Christian, and Roman elements, culminating in what he calls a *"net world view."* This suggests a vision of reality as meaningful and structured, though not without tensions between its imaginative and regulatory aspects.
- 19 Fourth, Dewey identifies *"the irony of situation."* The *"mediev[a]l world"* was taken to be wholly intelligible, even though it rested on deep misunderstandings. The *"modern world,"* however, often appears unintelligible, even though science has achieved unprecedented growth and fruitfulness. Paradoxically, as knowledge expands, so too does awareness of its limits: ignorance once bred certainty, whereas inquiry now generates doubt even as it produces results (*"when men had no knowledge, they were sure of it and had no problem of knowledge, the more knowledge they got the more they wondered how they could have any"*). Dewey identifies *"the limitations of the common sense know--- novelties, not coped with- or forced under-- short curve of expectation, inexact, precarious,"* which brought to think of *"science as answer"* (2).
- 20 This brings us to Dewey's critique of science and the *"resulting epistemology."* In the second half of page 2 of the N&O, he warns against the error of equating world and knowledge, or assuming that reality must be identical with what science reports. Science is better understood as an instrument for prediction and control, rather than as a metaphysical account of reality.
the fundamental mistake carrying over the old conception that the world and knowledge equate one another- or that the world is what it is for knowledge- confused the standpoint of immediate enjoyment and use for knowledge--- esthetic and practical- teleology- taken as knowledge of reality--- hence inheritance- world must be what science reports it as--- in reality, function of control, prediction. (2)
- 21 Against this background, in the same page Dewey proposes a "general solution": to reconceive experience in terms of both the aesthetic and the practical.⁸ Things are not merely objects to be known: experience encompasses both appreciation and functionality, and reality must be understood in this wider and more complex framework. The contrast between things as presently enjoyed and as *"changing, moving, [and having] future consequences"* shows that the world isn't fixed for knowledge but experienced and tackled through action, meaning, and value.
- 22 Here Dewey avoids reducing reality either to the abstractions of metaphysics and idealism or to the assertions of science. His general solution emphasizes that experience is the medium in which knowing, doing, and appreciating all take place, and that it's through this interplay that the world becomes intelligible.
- 23 On page 2, Dewey also focuses on the relationship between sense-perceptual knowledge, common sense knowledge and science and, specifically, on the epistemological problem of perception and sensation in everyday life:
problms, sense-perceptual kn, common sense kn and science

*problem of perception and sensation as epistemological
everyday experience. (2)*

24 Interestingly, Dewey marks this passage with the stark opposition of “conception VS perception.”

25 All in all, Dewey’s general solution addresses the limits of philosophical approaches that privilege a rigidly cognitivist account of experience, especially in an ever-changing and unstable world. Here, he assigns to perception a central role not as a defective form of knowledge, but as something dynamic and productive: an ability to manage or control the world aesthetically (through direct appreciation of or aversion to things) and practically (through efficacious, concrete transformation).

General solution-- exp as esthetic and practical, that is enjoyment appreciation direct- and utility, things made for us to our hand-- contrast of things as present and as changing, moving, future consequences and future presences--- the place of knowledge--- the conservation of the ideal tradition - the continuity of culture, art, literature, social endeavor and aspiration, the cumulation of meanings. (2)

26 The discussion on the “problem of knowledge” continues on page 3 where Dewey introduces a caveat regarding attempts to measure and delimit value within established and fixed boundaries. Specifically, the problem of knowledge is directly linked to a reduction of value to measurement and exchange. Within science, understood “as a system of com[pa]risons [and] coordinates,” things and their values tend to be lost, as in any given “process of/function of measurement.” However, some direct perceptions “never lose themselves wholly in the measurement-system” and remain irreducible. When everything is treated as exchangeable, life becomes dominated by exchange for its own sake, turning consumption into a hollow repetition rather than a creative act. According to Dewey, science should not merely quantify but must also enrich immediate perception, practical use, and aesthetic enjoyment: “exchange a confusion and a corruption, lose ourselves in getting something else to exchange for something else, and the only increase is in the medium of exchange which only repeats the exchange-consumption--- creative-- so science- must enrich perception and immediate use and enjoyment---.”

27 In the second half of page 3, Dewey lists a numbered series of points, though with some uncertainty about their proper order:

*I Provinces and Boundaries. Continuous and discrete- Things + relations- things and meanings-
VI[;] II Wireless telephone, language, communication, intercourse
III[;] IV Expansion and intensification- individuality and association- extensity-intensity-
resistance, elasticity - homogeneous and heterogeneous env- ~~habit and attention- custom~~
IV[;] V Workshop-- teleology ad mechanism--
VI Value and its measurement--- appreciation and science---
III or II Security and adventure - structure + function, matter + energy, old age + youth, at
home and abroad- heimweh and yearning for the beyond- familiar and strange- the loved
and the contempted- the feared and the hoped for- possession, property, and the prodigal
son, prudence and heroism, savings and expenditure- peace and war- memory and
experiment--- evolution, custom + initiation, inertia + change, senses + (thought)
imagination.*

28 All these elements can be traced, more or less directly, to passages in EN. What is worth focusing on here are the first, third, and particularly the last point in order of appearance, as they seem most directly connected. Note that the last of these selected points could have been placed second or third in Dewey’s uncertain ordering, which makes their close connection all the more evident.

- 29 Taken together, the three points outline a set of tensive polarities. The first point addresses experience's spatial articulation between provinces and boundaries, continuity and discontinuity, and the idea that things can be experienced only relationally and in their meaningfulness. The third point complements this account, indicating how such spatial articulation of experience occurs: not as stationary, fixed, or solipsistic, but as exploratory, dynamic, and social. The last point proves most intriguing for the present discussion because, more than the others, it directly engages the question of familiarity and introduces the key term *Heimweh*.
- 30 Let us proceed in order, beginning with an analysis of the first and third points in relation to pages 5-7 and then to page 30 of the *N&O*.
- 31 Pages 5-7 address how human experience and knowledge are structured by space and time.
- 32 Spatiality is described in terms of "*boundaries, the relation of a system of energy to space, points lines, limits barriers*"; time in terms of "*living in a time world*" marked by (economic) risk and insecurity. Humans, for Dewey, try to regulate this instability through calculation, units, and standards of measure, culminating in modern science's "*spatial determination of time*," as in "*relativity*" (5).
- 33 The idea of provinces illustrates how change (with reference to Leibniz's idea that "*a change anywhere is a change everywhere*") isn't uniform: a disturbance (like a "*stone in the pool [which is] hardly the same to a frog and to Sirius*," or "*a tidal wave [which] distu[rb]s the border but hardly the remote inland*") has different effects depending on position and distance. Unlike mechanics, which assumes homogeneity ("*all the same everywhere, of[f] importance no where*"), actual experience shows limits that are qualitative – namely borders where tension, difference, or transformation occurs. Boundaries are carriers of significance, whether as "*border-surface*" or "*body-surface*," between nations ("*misunderstandings animosities [tariffs] and wars*"), or in cultural identity ("*yet also meaning of home, hea[l]th, native land, tradition, literature etc.*"). A province is described by Dewey as an area within which movement makes little difference: "*as long as we reach the point*," much like traveling on a train where the interior details remain constant ("*travelling on a train, may look out of window, or read or absorb in lunch basket we get there as the train does*"). But, at a boundary, things shift: crossing a boundary brings a qualitative change into a new province: "*cross the border, a change in quality, language, food manners, change our skies, seas*." It is precisely this qualitative difference that Dewey insists upon when he criticizes "*math*" that posits a "*universalized theory of boundaries*" and hence erases them, while treating all movement as equivalent, as if the world were a uniform continuum: "*free movement non movement at all- merely change of position which makes no difference since each position is equally a centre or circumference or anything else*" (6).
- 34 Metaphysically, the contrast emerges between a "*mechanical universe*" ("*without provinces or boundaries*," implying that uniformity is everywhere) and a "*fixed teleological universe*" (entailing rigidly "*unchangeable provinces*"). Dewey rejects both extremes, emphasizing instead the importance of boundaries and provinces as sites of transformation, adjustment, and sense-making (7).
- 35 This framework connects to Dewey's broader conception of experience as an energy field, and finds a parallel in Dewey (1925/1984). There, against the epistemological stance, Dewey develops a critical analysis of *situs* and formulates the concept of *specific*

location, namely where elements within a field work, or are worked out, most effectively, also through the re-making of habits (see in particular *ibid.*: 52-4).

- 36 On page 30, Dewey explicitly addresses “*the problem of position, location, where,*” linking it to field dynamics. The “*locus*” is neither absolute nor fixed and perceptual errors or illusions arise from a “*maladjustment in the field.*”
- 37 This leads Dewey to relate space directly to time. He describes error as a failure of timing in relation to space – a spatiotemporal “mismatch” – since what lies “*beyond in space means behind or before in time- it was or it will be.*” Misalignment thus occurs when perception fails to keep pace.
- 38 Here Dewey maintains that perception and its “*problem of adjustment*” as a “*perception-field*” operates through exploratory movements described as “*tentacles*” reaching out into the field. Error occurs when these movements become unhooked, when the organism lags behind its own exploratory tentacles, falling out of sync with the process of adjustment. “*The disruption of an area by something beyond its boundaries*” thus corresponds to a rhythm not properly held – a breaking down without a proper reconstruction.
- the disruption of an area by something beyond its boundaries- breaking down without accomplished building up- lag on one side--- preparatory or outreaching on other- unhooked up movement- the tentacles moving about to something seeking- organism lags behind tentacle- if they kept time no mistake. (30)*
- 39 Importantly, Dewey stresses that we are always situated within an area of concern, and this concern is never isolated but involves interaction with others: “*we are always within an area and concerned, interested in that, while it is interesting with others... the citizen, the patriot.*” Our “*where*” is thus intrinsically social, tied to fields of shared activity and meaning.
- 40 The text further reinforces that location is always practical and relational: “*a thing is where it is best handled*” (as in *specific location*). Like provinces and boundaries, “*where*” is not an absolute point in space but a functional boundary within which activities and adaptations take place.
- 41 Finally, Dewey describes “*life [and] mind*” as a “*process of making a core and periphery keep time.*” Experience is again framed as a dynamic field, unfolding between “*the central and the distant,*” marked by “*unstability and recovery*” over time (30).
- 42 While the pages just analyzed clarify the relevance of the first and third points – on the spatiotemporal articulation of experience and how it should be managed – it is now time to turn to the last point marked as crucial, which nonetheless remains in continuity with the other two.

3.1. *Heimweh*: “Missing Home” and Sense-Making

- 43 As noted above, the last of the three points selected from Dewey’s list (“*III or II*”) on page 3 is particularly significant because it gathers aspects clearly pertaining to the idea of perception as familiarization and of familiarity as emergent within mutually tensive polarities.
- 44 Here we find several polarities that can be usefully grouped into thematic clusters: tensions between *stability* and *risk* (security/adventure; prudence/heroism; savings/

expenditure; possession, property/prodigality; peace/war), *temporal* and *generational* dynamics (old age/youth; memory/experiment-evolution; custom/initiation), *cognitive* and *affective* aspects (the loved/the contempted; the feared/the hoped-for; senses/(thought) imagination), *articulation principles* (structure/function; matter/energy; inertia/change); and, finally, a cluster centered on *rootedness* and *displacement* (at home/abroad; *Heimweh*/yearning for the beyond; familiar/strange).

- 45 Within this list, one pair particularly stands out, significantly placed between “*at home and abroad*” and “*familiar and strange*”: “*heimweh and yearning for the beyond*.” Why is it especially important to dwell on this coupling? *Heimweh* differs from “at home” and “familiar” – terms generally considered positive and stationary – in that it emphasizes a lack, a longing; a facet we might define as negative and exploratory, yet productive.
- 46 Dewey’s use of the concept of *Heimweh* exhibits two other notable features. First, Dewey consistently employs the German term, suggesting a degree of technical or deliberate usage. Second, the term never reappears – not even in *EN* or in English. Taken together, these elements suggest that this term serves as a heuristic device within the *N&O*. Let us therefore begin by examining its occurrences in the latter.
- 47 The reference to “*heimweh- and the yearning for the beyond*” reappears on the following page (4) and is, once again, introduced through a “railway” example. In light of Dewey’s personal life – marked by extensive travels alongside strong family attachment – this imagery is far from incidental. The image of the “*attempt to abolish the locomotive by establishing an infinite n[umber] of stations*” (4) points to the neutralization of movement through the overproduction of stability. The locomotive stands for a condition of passage while a station marks pause and rest. A station is a stable point that punctuates the journey, or exploration; yet, if multiplied infinitely, every step of movement would already count as an arrival. Travel loses its transitional character and is flattened into a linear sequence of “stabilities.” In this sense, the locomotive – as movement itself – would be abolished: there would still be displacement, a mere change of position, but no proper transformation – no qualitative reorganization through the temporal duration and resistance required to restructure experience. As Cherlin observes, this would yield “only a series of discrete existences” (Cherlin 2023: 26) – a pluralism without continuity, or “identity without ‘dynamic internal cohesion’ and ‘resistance to external pressures,’ yielding only atomism or essentialism” (*ibid.*: 57, quoting from *N&O*’s pages 36-7). Experience emerges only from the tension between these two poles. Mere movement, with no pauses, dissolves into a flux without articulation; mere stability, even when multiplied infinitely, generates stagnation.
- 48 Placed alongside the polarity between *Heimweh* and the yearning for the beyond, the image becomes clearer. *Heimweh* reflects the pull of the station – the attachment to a stable point, familiarity, the return to what is currently missing. The yearning for the beyond expresses the push of the locomotive – the urge to move outward. To abolish the locomotive by infinitely multiplying stations would mean surrendering entirely to the negative, aching, side of *Heimweh*, without making it productive, leaving no room for outward movement and thus for new adjustments and reconstructions. Conversely, conceiving locomotion without stations would entail endless motion without pause, a restlessness that never settles into a sense of belonging.⁹
- 49 The following passage from the *N&O* further illustrates this point.
- the locale and exploration, expansion-extension, expansion and its reaction to diversify*

*intensity through restriction, the held in spring-
extension resisted gives intension- (4)*

50 Expansion only becomes articulated through resistance. Without it, extension would remain undifferentiated (just like the “unhooked” tentacles Dewey refers to); it’s through constraints that it acquires direction, variety, and intensity. The image of the spring under tension makes this clear: resistance isn’t the negation of movement but the very condition that transforms extension into intensified energy. Based on this, what appears as a limitation or lack becomes the very ground of sense-making. The tension between the locale and exploration, between resistance and expansion, is not a hindrance to experience but its generative and regulative principle.

51 Moreover, *Heimweh* isn’t treated as a mere private feeling, or mental state: interestingly, Dewey develops his argument also from a social stance.

*nationalism otherwise run like molasses--
society and solitude, entering into the closet to pray- consuming your own smoke - -
Hudson on the unity of mind, homogen[e]ity in a village--
the neighbor and the stranger---
habit and its breach-- function of war, commerce, travel, reading--- (4)*

52 It is possible to detect Dewey’s underlying warnings about what happens in the absence of this dialectic: nationalism without tension would run “like molasses,” thick and unarticulated; solitude without sociability would suffocate; homogeneity in a village¹⁰ would imply that cohesion without difference easily turns into inert sameness, while the encounter with the stranger, or the disruption of habit (be it war, commerce, travel, reading), produces new functions. These tensile poles thus prevent social life from both homogenization and dispersion into heterogeneous, scattered units – both of which would ultimately generate exclusion and isolation.

53 We referred above to two more reasons why it’s worth focusing on *Heimweh*.

54 As for the first one, namely the usage of the term in German and its technicalization, we can recall Dewey’s relationship with Romanticism or at least with some of its aspects.¹¹ *Heimweh* is equated with philosophy by Novalis (1798-99/2007): “Philosophie ist eigentlich Heimweh – Trieb überall zu Hause zu sein (*Philosophy is really homesickness – The desire to be everywhere at home*).” Although not explicitly referenced,¹² a possible link to the German poet was James Marsh, president of the University of Vermont while Dewey was a student there, who played a crucial role in introducing German idealism and Romantic thought to American audiences.¹³ We can *speculate* that Dewey encountered the concept and was drawn to it as a means of articulating a more nuanced and dialectical account of familiarization processes.

55 Novalis’ equation of *Heimweh* and philosophy is interesting because it is grounded on the idea that homesickness might be overcome through explanation, domesticating the alien or through self-alienation, thus allowing something not immediately graspable, understandable or communicable to emerge. With his aspiration toward comprehensive knowledge culminating in universal science, he emphasized a circularity where homesickness generates yearning for total knowledge that promises to resolve homesickness by approximating the Absolute.

56 This concept was subsequently taken up, most notably by Heidegger (1929-30/1995), through an explicit retrieval of Novalis’ fragment, and later as a hermeneutical tool for a metaphorological analysis of Husserl’s philosophical path (Friedrich 2014).

- 57 Heidegger cites Novalis' fragment, arguing that homesickness must be preserved as a defining feature of our finitude: the restlessness of "being in the between" is the core of our very Being, such that mitigating it would amount to mitigating Being itself.¹⁴ Friedrich (2014) employs *Heimweh* as an interpretive lens for spatial metaphors structuring Husserl's work, reconstructing a progression from nautical departure (Husserl 1907/1973) through coastal landing (Husserl 1913/1976) to the colonization of the Promised Land (Husserl 1930/1971), a trajectory that expresses the teleological structure of phenomenology itself. Friedrich argues that this progression reveals homesickness for a homeland never possessed and constitutively unreachable: after the *epoché*, return to natural immediacy appears impossible, while absolute foundation or transcendental *telos* lies in the infinite. All these positions thus share an orientation toward something beyond immediate presence – whether as knowledge to be attained, finitude to be preserved, or foundation perpetually deferred.
- 58 This brief *excursus* on philosophical treatments of *Heimweh* helps clarify the second point recalled above: Dewey will never use the term (either in German or English) again, suggesting a heuristic use of it in the N&O. He likely discarded the term because its philosophical roots conflicted with his naturalism on several fronts. Novalis' conception of *Heimweh* as the desire to be "everywhere at home" and to "understand everything" runs counter to Dewey's emphasis on situated, localized experience and his rehabilitation of perception over traditional epistemological models. Moreover, Novalis' alternatives – either domesticating alterity through explanation or practicing self-alienation – risked the total assimilation and Romantic solipsism that Dewey explicitly condemns (Dewey 1925-29/1981: 187). Heidegger's insistence on preserving *Heimweh* as constitutive of Being itself represents an ontological focus Dewey would have rejected given his concern with how organism-environment relations *emerge* as significant and efficacious. Friedrich's reading of Husserl's phenomenology as structured by a vertical teleology toward an unreachable transcendental foundation lying in the infinite likewise clashes with Dewey's horizontal-reconstructive approach emphasizing plural, situated, immanent ends-in-view realized at each stage of present activity (cf. *ibid.*: 280, where ends-in-view are interestingly explained through the example of building a house).
- 59 The disappearance of the term *Heimweh* may thus represent a deliberate philosophical choice. Although in the N&O the term offers Dewey a way to articulate the tensive and complex character of familiarity, bringing into view its negative yet productive dimension, it is eventually rejected as it ultimately proved inadequate for his project of naturalizing philosophy and experience. It likely risked introducing an "eschatological" dimension – a tension toward an absolute elsewhere – which Dewey specifically seeks to avoid. For Dewey, there is no permanent homesickness because there is neither a lost nor a promised home, but only the natural processes of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction. The tension between the familiar and the unfamiliar, between inhabiting and exploring, is thus not a painful longing, but the constitutive rhythm of experience itself. At the same time, that tension *Heimweh* serves to articulate is not simply abandoned, but finds a different expression in *EN*, where it is reworked through a broader network of metaphors – those pertaining in particular to the spheres of "household" and "travel," already recalled above.

3.2. The Humanly and the Complex Familiar

60 The centrality attributed in the N&O to familiarization in managing the material of experience, both theoretically and practically, emerges also beyond this analysis of *Heimweh*.

61 On page 12 (*“Car I I”*), Dewey identifies “two modes of approach, starting points and direction” in which he contrasts two different modes of inquiry, or exploration. One begins with the “humanly familiar” – whatever pertains to our everyday lived experience and proceeds by “getting clues,” starting with what is closest. This mode is likened to beginning with the “fruits [at] the top and working down” (to the roots). Yet a danger arises when this approach turns into what Dewey calls the “complex familiar.” Concepts such as George Bernard Shaw’s “life force,” “will to live,” “vital force” as well as Schopenhauer’s treatment of “intelligence, reason” illustrate this. Lacking analysis, such notions treat functions that are in fact the outcome of developing processes – which Dewey describes as “complex and eventual” – as acts of will, that are hypostatized and “then shoved back” into descriptions that fail to account critically for how these functions have actually emerged.

B Shaw, on learning bicycle and evolution- so silly in his assumption that it creates a new tissue- phil significant in that a new level accomplishment, rearranges and thereby releases energy for new ends. [...] characteristic danger-- that of starting with the complex familiar illustrated in B Shaws life force, will to live, vital force-- a function which is complex and eventual hypostatized and then shoved back- lack of analysis- Schp [i.e., Schopenhauer] - same with intelligence, reason-- then becomes abstract th[r]ough a concretion. (12)

62 Shaw’s appearance here is noteworthy, since Dewey references him in his works only briefly and rarely, and certainly not in *EN*. Dewey’s reference – as a Darwinist – to “learning bicycle and evolution” and to the “silly” idea that riding a bike creates “a new tissue” can be traced back to Shaw’s *Back to Methuselah*, first published in 1921 (Shaw 1921/1929: xxi-ii), where Shaw, as a neo-Lamarckian, advances precisely this claim. Referring to Shaw (and Schopenhauer) doesn’t seem completely incidental if one considers how the cult of the “Life Force” has been linked to Bergson’s “Élan Vital,” whose theory of perception Dewey criticizes – at least as early as in Dewey (1912/1979) – for not being sufficiently organic.

63 By contrast, a second approach begins with the “most definitely established [forms of] kn[owledge]” – mathematical, physical, or otherwise too “technical and remote” from common life – and works upward. Dewey refers here to Descartes’ method in the *Rules*, where colors are reduced to geometrical forms: “may be union of two and if they do not come together, we get dualism.” This approach presents a different danger, namely an excessive narrowing, by making overly specific abstractions carry more weight than they can, thereby leaving other aspects of experience overlooked or dismissed: “lack of synthesis, making too specific and narrow a conception carry a burden too large – and as some other specific natural process comes to focus of science, is ignored and past over” (12).

64 Notwithstanding their shortcomings and dangers, Dewey emphasizes that both approaches are legitimate and necessary (“no basic preferability--- both legitimate and necessary - - each has its characteristic danger - -”). The task, then, is to balance them so that philosophy neither stiffens experience in an “abstract [...] concretion” drawn from the “complex familiar,” nor relies entirely on a sterile technicalism divorced from lived experience. Dewey further notes that, given his “stand in these lectures with the eventual

end,” one should also be wary of the weaknesses of “*historic empiricism*,” which often took “*alleged analytic result[s]*” from science as starting points instead of engaging directly and primarily with experience. Without this grounding, philosophy risks embracing “*conventionalism instead of genuine fresh experience*” (12).

- 65 On page 13 (“*Carus L 2*”), in continuity with the warnings against the two approaches discussed above, Dewey also cautions against reducing experience to something “*exclusively psychical or individual*.” He does so by returning to the argument of boundaries, which shows that experience is always relational: “*continuity- no interregnum, or no man’s land*.” A boundary is never defined by one side alone: “*you can’t define a boundary in terms of one, you must have two regions of energy, two areas of activity that reciprocally limit each other*.” What marks the line is precisely this interplay, the push and counter-push that makes belonging inevitable: “*The end of one is the beginning of the other- and which we take as the one or the other depends upon the one we identify ourselves with [...]. The selection is in a way arbitrary, but the identification which requires the selection isn’t arbitrary but unavoidable-*.” To be somewhere is to be within a system of energies: “*every man belongs somewhere, no man without a country*” (13).
- 66 Boundaries are not abstract divisions, but sites of readjustment: crossing them alters the field of action, requiring the reorganization of ways of acting. They are thresholds where habits falter, new rules and jurisdictions apply, and different patterns of energy must be dealt with. Boundaries thus structure not only perception *per se* but also its bearing on political and social life, shaping how communities interact and where conflicts arise. Not surprisingly, Dewey opens this page by situating boundaries in the context of wartime experience: “*begin with familiar fact of boundaries which play such a mighty and perplexing part in contemporary life--- the outcome of the war--- look at the map--- our political and economic life determined or affected by boundaries--- pol determined, econ affected*” (13).¹⁵
- 67 The image of centers, capitals, and outlying regions further confirms that belonging is never uniform – power and intensity are unevenly distributed, so that boundaries do not just lie at the edges but ripple through the entire field: “*The system of energy is centred and energy is distributed irregularly, spotted-- there is a capital, a seat, and minor seats scattered about--- there are caves of Adullam and cities of refuge, outlaws in a wilderness, outlying regions where the centred organization is weak in operation-- [...]. The mutual push isn’t located mainly at the cen[ter of the] boundary. It reacts with the whole*” (13).

3.3. A House is not a Home

- 68 It is now worth focusing on three pages: 18-20, the first two of which are respectively titled “*Carus - No?*” and “*Carus L no.?*,” again indicating Dewey’s uncertainty in organizing his lectures. The treatment of some of the elements addressed here isn’t reiterated in *EN* and once more concerns household and travelling metaphors.
- 69 On page 18, Dewey turns to the topic of the “market place.” He presents it as a meeting place “*not for discussion but for exchange*.” Interaction thus takes the form of trading, rather than other modes of shared activity. Dewey’s references to anthropological accounts suggest that such encounters function to overcome strangeness under the pressure of need, through practices of “*swapping*” and “*barter*.” This “*direct*” form of interaction is transformed as exchange becomes “*indirect*,” mediated by money and structured by processes of accounting, calculation, and the reduction of value to “*units*”

[and] quantities.” This transformation reflects a broader shift toward quantification, in which value is articulated through measurement rather than as qualitatively experienced. For Dewey, this matters because it exemplifies how spaces lose their function as sites of meaning when reduced to mere economic transaction. He links this development to materialism (“*the growth of materialism- importance of material not used save for exchange lording it over materials of use---*”) and to the logic of specialization, where “*tools, machines, organs*” become detached from the ends they originally served and begin to dominate as independent structures. Quantification and discretization take over in a “*world [which] is qualitative from start*” (18).

70 On pages 19-20 Dewey introduces the “workshop” as an alternative model of experience. Here, humans are “*engaged in transforming, reshaping materials with the help of tools, and using certain processes.*” Yet, within this framework a role is also played by “*prior products [that] set the models, patterns, standards- plan- in the abstract, the formal arrangement*” as well as by a “*blue-print or diagram.*” Dewey then sketches a two-fold understanding of design¹⁶ that isn’t unambiguously positive. Design may either rely on pre-established models, dangerously fostering conventionalism and the generalization of the particular – as suggested by examples such as “*the shoe as the end or purpose of the shoemaker, the house of the architect and builder*” – or be conceived as “*purpose, aim, intention- or end [...] related only to human desire--- or [...] only in the mind because in the world--- design as mental- image or idea- merely a transfer of the real into the mind*” and hence it’s “*made to order, [providing] a shoe for a definite man, a house for a definite order*” (19). In the latter case, what is negatively emphasized is an excess of individualization and customization in design, which fails to take into account the more social, relational and tensive dimensions that should inform design processes.

71 Against these one-sided tendencies, on the same page Dewey identifies a set of guiding concepts that appear to serve as kernels for more dialectical design processes:

- “*form*” isn’t something fixed but “*limiting term at each end*”;
- “*transformation*” highlights the processual nature of making, where materials are never static but continually reshaped as they “*are initial- but [...] fit, apt*”;
- “*end*” isn’t fixed in advance either, but understood as “*completion, perfection,*” as “*being without qualification*” and emerging through the process itself;
- “*movement*” underscores that making is never closed or self-sufficient, but always a “*change, coming from without the particular material worked upon,*” a dynamic relationship;
- “*techni[que]*” is the “*order of procedure,*” the “*rule of steps or operations,*” which must remain “*apt, fit, proper,*” yet flexible, preventing both arbitrary customization and the rigidity of convention.

72 Dewey then turns his discussion to the “*Modern factory or makery*” in which “*the divorce of end-product from making and of both from end*” results in a situation where the end is no longer intrinsic to the making process but external: “*the end is wages or profit- somebody else’s end --- unknown, uncertain, precarious*” (19). This produces a split between an “*objective,*” external dimension, understood as mechanical and standardized, and a “*subjective,*” internal dimension in which ends are relegated to mental states and desires (“*objective becomes a mechanical, lifeless, soulless-- ends and goods become, teleological become-- subjective, mental, psychical---*”). Qualities are reduced to mere “*extrinsic effects, called impressions sensations*” while “*form become[s] spatial*” and motion is reduced to “*quantity and velocity*” (20).

- 73 Dewey concludes the analysis developed across these three pages by returning to locomotion. Although initially deemed “*least important*” – since movement understood as mere change of position does not yet entail any qualitative reorganization of experience – it becomes “*all important when we get the locomotive engine*,” as modern mechanisms elevate speed, efficiency, and circulation to dominant values. Locomotion thus exemplifies how, under the hegemony of mechanism and quantification, what was once a secondary aspect of experience becomes dominant. The locomotive engine turns locomotion into a symbol of modernity, but at the cost of depersonalization, standardization, and de-individualization: “*the machine instead of craftsmanship*” (20). In doing so, it reduces movement in its strong processual sense – once integral to experience as exploration and qualitative transformation – to a merely quantitative and positional function, defined by velocity and change of location.
- 74 Dewey reframes the problem in social terms (“*the social problem*”): the task is to reintegrate the instrumental and the final (“*instrumental and final brought together again*”) in a world now marked by fluidity, “*variation, uncertainty, risk, novelty*.” “*Expansion*” remains “*a constant factor*” (20) in experience, and as such it must be dealt with in this novel context so that expanding doesn’t merely amount to quantitative growth, but to a qualitative enrichment.
- 75 This leads to a distinction that Dewey doesn’t explicitly draw but that follows from his analysis: the *house* as a material *object* – the actual building or its blueprint – and the *home* as that which isn’t given, i.e., what cannot be reduced to its material components alone, but instead indicates the lived dimension of *experience*. Home emerges within the ongoing process by which we orient, dwell, and reorganize ourselves within an environment. It concerns the way a place becomes our *own* not because we have simply purchased or inherited it,¹⁷ but because, through our perceptual-explorative and practical endeavors, as we dialectically move through familiarity-unfamiliarity, stability-change, likeness-lack dynamics, we transform something fixed and finished into something that *makes sense* – a place where we (at least contingently) belong. Through this process, familiarity and transformation co-exist and co-operate, and a *house becomes a home*.
- 76 This means that “home” isn’t merely “familiar” but it’s inseparable from processes of familiarization. Familiarization here doesn’t mean the mere translation of strangeness into the already known. Instead, it implies the *dialectical movement* through which what is initially unyielding or disorienting becomes inhabitable – not by erasing its difference, but by adjusting to it, reworking it, and finding new ways of sense-making.
- 77 Page 10, one of the few fully handwritten ones in the N&O, offers an extraordinary fragment that captures this logic in condensed form:
- Nature – our home.
If we remake it.
our walls – when we make it.
- 78 Here Dewey makes clear that “home” cannot be something simply given, nor the result of a nature already completed or merely tamed. If nature is taken as finished, or passively accepted, it ceases to be a field of familiarization. Instead, it hardens into a ready-made environment that risks turning into a prison, with “walls” already fixed and unchangeable.

- 79 This insight resonates with Dewey's broader reflections on boundaries as thresholds of readjustments, where what we take as "ours" can be corroborated and/or reshaped by what resists it. Just as no boundary can be defined from one side alone – since each results from at least two regions of energy pressing against each other – so too the process of familiarization is relational, tensive, complex, and rhythmically unfolding.
- 80 This brings us back to a central aspect of Dewey's work in the *N&O*, and to the broader framing of perception as a familiarization process. Just as, in the opening of the *N&O*, Dewey counters the idea that the world can be equated with knowledge while insisting on the dynamic character of perception, so in the concluding passages he makes explicit what perception entails, writing:
- experience has been associated exclusively with perception, having contact as its base and vision as its climax, and with perception viewed as a form of cognition not as a form of energy or behavior.*
- Now perception as vital experience is something more than a contact with ready-made things or beholding of them with the consequences of revealing their properties. Perception as experience includes interest, purpose and consequences and also the conditions which effect it. Any clew to metaphysics which confines itself to things and properties revealed and which ignores purpose, conditions and consequences is bound to give wrong results because it sets out from a mutilated fragment of experience. (42)*
- 81 This formulation both brings the *N&O* to a close and clarifies the role they play in illuminating Dewey's broader conception of perception as a vital, processual, and familiarizing mode of experience.
- 82 To say that perception is not "*a form of cognition*" but "*a form of energy or behavior*" means precisely what the *N&O*'s account of perception as an inherently exploratory field has shown: perceiving is moving, adjusting, keeping rhythm between organism and environment. To say that it "*includes interest, purpose and consequences and also the conditions which effect it*" means that perception never occurs in a vacuum but is always already situated, and structured by provinces, boundaries, and thresholds of transformation. And to say that any metaphysics ignoring these elements "*sets out from a mutilated fragment of experience*" means that a conception of perception reduced to "*contact with ready-made things*" – without tension, resistance, or exploratory movement – captures only one of its moments, and perhaps also its most impoverished one: the one that domesticates alterity rather than engaging it.
- 83 This is what the *N&O*, read in their most discontinuous and experimental passages, ultimately make visible: that perception as familiarization is not a secondary theme in Dewey's work, but one of the structural principles of his naturalism – one that the *N&O* allow us to see in a particularly generative form, before it is taken up and developed across Dewey's broader philosophical project.

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NOTES

1. This paper represents the final, expanded version of a lecture delivered during my 2022 research stay at Special Collections Research Center as a recipient of the Alwin C. Carus Grant. I am grateful to the SCRC's staff and, in particular, to Nicholas Guardiano, for their invaluable assistance.
2. In the editorial practice of Dewey's time, underlining in a manuscript corresponded to italics in print.
3. To say that perception does not lead to the appropriation or assimilation of alterity does not mean that it is opposed to inquiry or knowledge, but that it operates at a different level within experience. In Dewey's framework, knowing involves the determination and relative stabilization of meanings within inquiry, whereas perception remains tied to a single ongoing process of adjustment between organism and environment. Familiarization maintains a tension with what resists assimilation, without being resolved into stabilized meanings. Perception is thus not separate from knowledge, but designates a mode of experience in which alterity is engaged – as Dewey puts it, perceiving and par-taking are "allied" (1925-29/1981: 259) – within this ongoing process, without being reducible to knowledge, though it may result in knowledge.
4. On Dewey and perception see Iannilli 2024.
5. This will be addressed in more detail later. Please note that Dewey does not capitalize the word, as German would require.
6. We will recall only a few passages for purely explicative purposes, as this reconstruction will appear in Iannilli (forthcoming).
7. *John Dewey Papers* (Box 26, Folder 32).
8. Also on page 27 "Esthetic recourse; control" are mentioned; notably, on page 31 "Use and enjoyment" are referred to as "prior to anything save the most elementary and urgent prudence just as prudence precedes the constructive arts, and arts the science." Through this, Dewey offers a "predicament [that] explains the problem of knowledge" (which is also central to the very first pages analyzed here): "in short, reflection does not occur till enjoyment is threatened."
9. This recalls a similar tension at stake between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. For a more detailed analysis I refer the reader to Iannilli & Matteucci 2021.
10. The Hudson referenced here is most likely Argentinian-British writer, naturalist and ornithologist W. H. Hudson, who died in the same year Dewey gave the *Carus Lectures*.
11. For a more detailed analysis see Goodman (1990, chap. 4).

12. Novalis' quote "Philosophy can bake no bread; but she can procure for us God, Freedom, and Immortality" was on the cover of the January 1883 issue of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* where Dewey published his first Hegelian article (see Hahn 1969: xxvi).
 13. See Dewey 1941.
 14. For a detailed comparative analysis of the usages of *Heimweh* in Novalis and Heidegger see Moore 2019.
 15. Dewey develops this issue in some of the better written parts of the *N&O's*, i.e., pages 34-5 (or 6-7, if we consider Dewey's numbering).
 16. On design see also Dewey (1934/1989, chap. 6); Iannilli 2020; Dixon 2020.
 17. See Dewey (1925-29/1981: 179) for an equation of "house" and "experience" within the question of "ownership."
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ABSTRACTS

This article offers a reading of the 1922 *Notes and Outlines* Dewey drafted for the *Carus Lectures*, making an otherwise fragmented set of materials more intelligible while also drawing attention to what Dewey chose not to publish in *Experience and Nature*, of which these lectures serve as the original basis. It argues that processes of familiarization – meant as a tensive, dynamic, and complex field of experience – are central to these pages and, more broadly, to Dewey's account of perception.

INDEX

Keywords: Notes and Outlines for the Carus Lectures, Experience and Nature, Heimweh, Familiarity, Perception

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