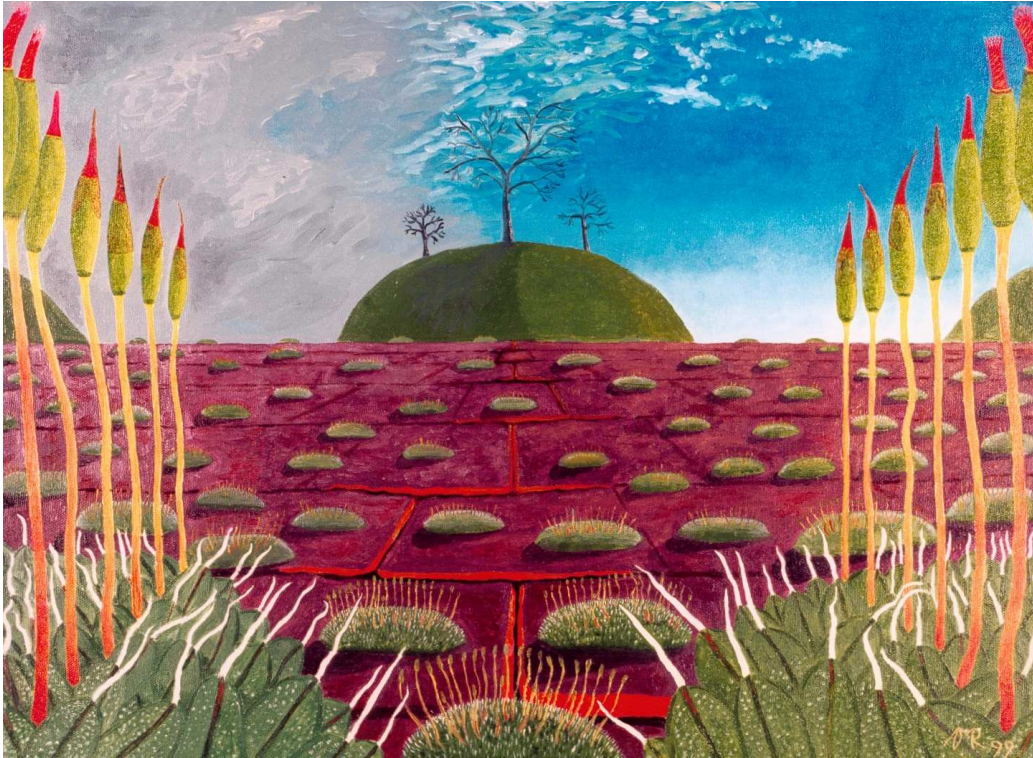


Built -In Discomfort
Feeling The Difference Between Abstract & Natural

By Alan Rayner



“Tortuous Advance” (Oil painting on canvas by Alan Rayner, 1999) *The moss, Tortula muralis, with twist-topped spore-producing capsules and cushions of bristle-pointed leaves, advances across an exposed, cracking boundary of constraining brickwork built both to shelter and to confine human beings, towards a distant green hill. The hill contains the self-same shape as the moss and is topped by a trinity of trees, two straight-trunked, the other forked, symbolizing the natural communion of shadow and conscious selves.*

Feeling The Difference

Have you ever felt the difference
Viscerally
Between ruling a line
Or constructing a square
Using a straight edge
And creating a circle
Using still point
And moving point
In receptive-responsive relationship?

Let's be clear.

'Artificial' isn't the opposite of 'Natural', and neither is 'Human'.

That supposition is itself anti-natural!

When 'Nature' is recognised to be 'all actual occurrence, both tangible and intangible', both human beings and our artefacts are understood to be local expressions of Nature (<https://admrayner.medium.com/discerning-the-difference-between-natural-and-fictional-occurrence-5be91feaa928>). We do not and cannot exist anywhere outside of or displaced from Nature.

The real contrast is between 'natural' and 'abstract', where the latter is a product of an idealistic separative or coercive human mentality.

This mentality ultimately rests on the supposition that material form and immaterial space are either mutually exclusive or one and the same. It either divides Nature up into many separate wholes, or unifies Nature into one big whole.

It is inconsistent with our actual human experience and gives rise to paradox (self-contradiction)

It can simply be resolved by being aware that material form and immaterial space are distinct but mutually inclusive, with the former being a dynamic local embodiment of the latter.

And feeling this awareness in the depth of our receptive-in-responsive human hearts.

Whereupon many, if not all, widely accepted abstract scientific, mathematical and philosophical concepts concerning life, environment, people and biological and cosmological evolution require radical reappraisal and revision.

And this reappraisal and revision is URGENT, if we are to stand a chance of recovering from our current psychological, social and environmental crisis.

I say this because the above abstract premise has become incorporated into a whole way of thinking and a whole way of life that works against the grain of natural evolutionary processes, resulting in needless misunderstanding, turbulence, conflict, damage and distress.

It is evident not so much in *what we make*, whether this be some kind of material, mechanical or theoretical artifice, as in the *design principles* affecting *how and why* we make it. There is no good reason why these design principles should *not* correspond with natural evolutionary processes. The question we have to ask is, do they – and what are the consequences of not doing so?

A useful illustration of this issue can be found in building design or architecture, because this depends very fundamentally both on how we perceive space and boundaries, and on our design purpose. To put it starkly, if our design principles are abstract, then what we construct may not be fit for its purpose of comfortably and sustainably sheltering and accommodating living human beings, and may even be harmful to our bodily and psychological well-being.

Abstract architectural principles are based on abstract Euclidian geometry, along with its derivative Riemannian, Lobachevskian and fractal geometries. Here, material boundaries are regarded as definitive and hence space-excluding. This is paradoxical both because no material substance can

exist without thickness and because it implies that motion can only be brought about by mechanical force situated ultimately somewhere ineffable outside Nature (as per Newtonian mechanics).

Natural geometry, by contrast, arises from the mutually inclusive relationship between space as an intangible continuum, receptive to movement, and energetic motion, which underlies tangible material formation. You can get a feel for it simply by using a geometer's compass to draw a circle dynamically around a receptive central zero-point of space. The resulting circle arises from the local dynamic inclusion of internal space within continuous space. This can't be achieved instantaneously – it requires the passage of time! In other words, natural material boundaries are intrinsically fluid and space-including – from sub-atomic scale outwards – not definitive and static. They originate from dynamical curvature around receptive points and axes of immaterial space, not from material points, straight lines, flat planes or polygonal solids. Natural geometry is the geometry of flow-form – form made from energetic flow around receptive (i.e. gravitational) centres of space – not instantaneously fixed form.

Now, you might imagine that building design based on permanent, fixed, primarily rectilinear structure would be ideal for the purpose of housing people economically, effectively and over long durations. And indeed such boxed-in, building block design is commonplace in both urban and rural settings, where it contrasts stridently with natural geomorphology and living form. It is convenient to build and reproduce as, quite literally, sets of 'blocks on the landscape', regardless of local context. But when we come to ask whether it is truly 'fit for purpose', we find that it is profoundly inefficient and even discomforting to live and work in. It is obstructive to natural fluid flow, full of stagnant corners, over-exposed to weathering and both physically and psychologically oppressive. We don't have to dwell in it for long before we either start to experience a claustrophobic craving for open vistas and 'a breath of fresh air' or an agoraphobic dependence on the security it seems to offer. It is a breeding ground for feelings of discontent, deprivation, aggression, anxiety and depression.

How would building design based on the natural flow-geometry of impermanent and dynamic structure attuned with natural spatial and energetic context differ? Actually this may not be so difficult to imagine as you might imagine! You only have to examine examples of human settlements based primarily on curved structure shaped to fit in with landscape features to get a feel for it. And while such structure might often not be made from long-lasting materials, this can be compensated for by their ready local availability and ease of replacement when worn out or decomposed. Moreover, designs that minimise surface area to volume ratios and/or maximise flexibility are by their very nature more resilient and sustainable than rigid, rectilinear ones. And there is no reason either, why, for example, living plants should not be incorporated into the structure where appropriate.

So, next time you come across some kind of human artifice, don't imagine either that it is not natural or that it has to be designed the way it is. Nature can be and often is a source of inspiration for our inventions, not something we should ignore as somehow beneath us. After all, nature invented us – and no form of unconscious, binary 'artificial' (i.e. 'abstract') intelligence will ever get close to that.

For further exploration of natural inclusional principles, see
<http://www.spanglefish.com/exploringnaturalinclusion> ; <https://occurity.com>

1. ABSTRACT BOX GEOMETRY [RIGIDLY SPACE-EXCLUDING / FRAMING]

DEFINITELY CONNECTING DOTS IN 'LEG-O-LAND'

FINITE 'WHOLE' NUMBERS AND 'FRACTIONS'
'LINEARITY'

GROUND
ZERO



CONNECTION

SQUARE
ONE



CUBICAL
ONE



ADDITION



MULTIPLICATION



TRIANGULAR
ONE



TETRA-
HEDRAL
ONE



2. NATURAL FLOW GEOMETRY (DYNAMICALLY SPACE-INCLUDING)

FLUIDLY CIRCULATING
IN FLOW-WORLD

CRYSTALLIZING / CLOSE-PACKING

INDEFINITE INFINITESIMAL π ϕ

RECEPTIVE SPATIAL STILLNESS
& RESPONSIVE ENERGETIC FLUX
CURVATURE



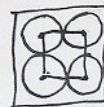
GROUND
ZERO



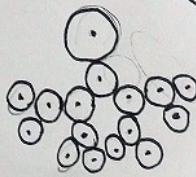
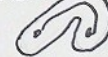
ROUND
ONE



SPHERICAL
ONE



ELONGATION



PROLIFERATION

