

Outlining a General Theory of Atmosphere: Implications from Everyday Life

Mikkel Bille

There is nothing new about atmospheres, even if the term has only come into vogue relatively recently. Atmospheres are fundamental conditions of human life – being located in space, past and present. Through the 20th century, however, there has been an increasing focus in philosophy on trying to understand what implications this fundamental condition then has for our understanding of human perception and life-worlds. This lecture draws on the writings of Heidegger, Bollnow and Böhme to outline some of the central features of current understandings of atmospheres. It then takes these philosophical writings into the world that people actually inhabit. This move will involve highlighting how the social sciences since the late 1990s have used the theories of the above-mentioned philosophers to develop better understandings of life-worlds, as well as to ground and question aspects of these theories.

**Thursday, September 10
at 13h00**

**Please write to cissc@concordia.ca
(with "ATMOSPHERES" in the subject
line) to register and you will be sent a
Zoom link.**



Atmospheric urban design, Northwest Park, Copenhagen
(photo: Ida Lerche Klaaborg)

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Mikkel Bille is Associate Professor at Roskilde University. His PhD in Social Anthropology from University College London (2009) explored Bedouin material culture and heritage, including domestic atmospheres and lighting. He currently leads a project on urban lighting in Scandinavia, *Living with Nordic Lighting*, and a Covid-19 project on *The Pandemic City*. He is the author of *Living with Light* (2019), *Being Bedouin around Petra* (2019), co-editor of a special issue of *Emotion, Space and Society* on "Staging Atmospheres", as well as the co-edited books, *Verden ifølge Humaniora* (2019), *Elements of Architecture* (2016), *Politics of Worship in Contemporary Middle East* (2013), and *An Anthropology of Absence* (2010).