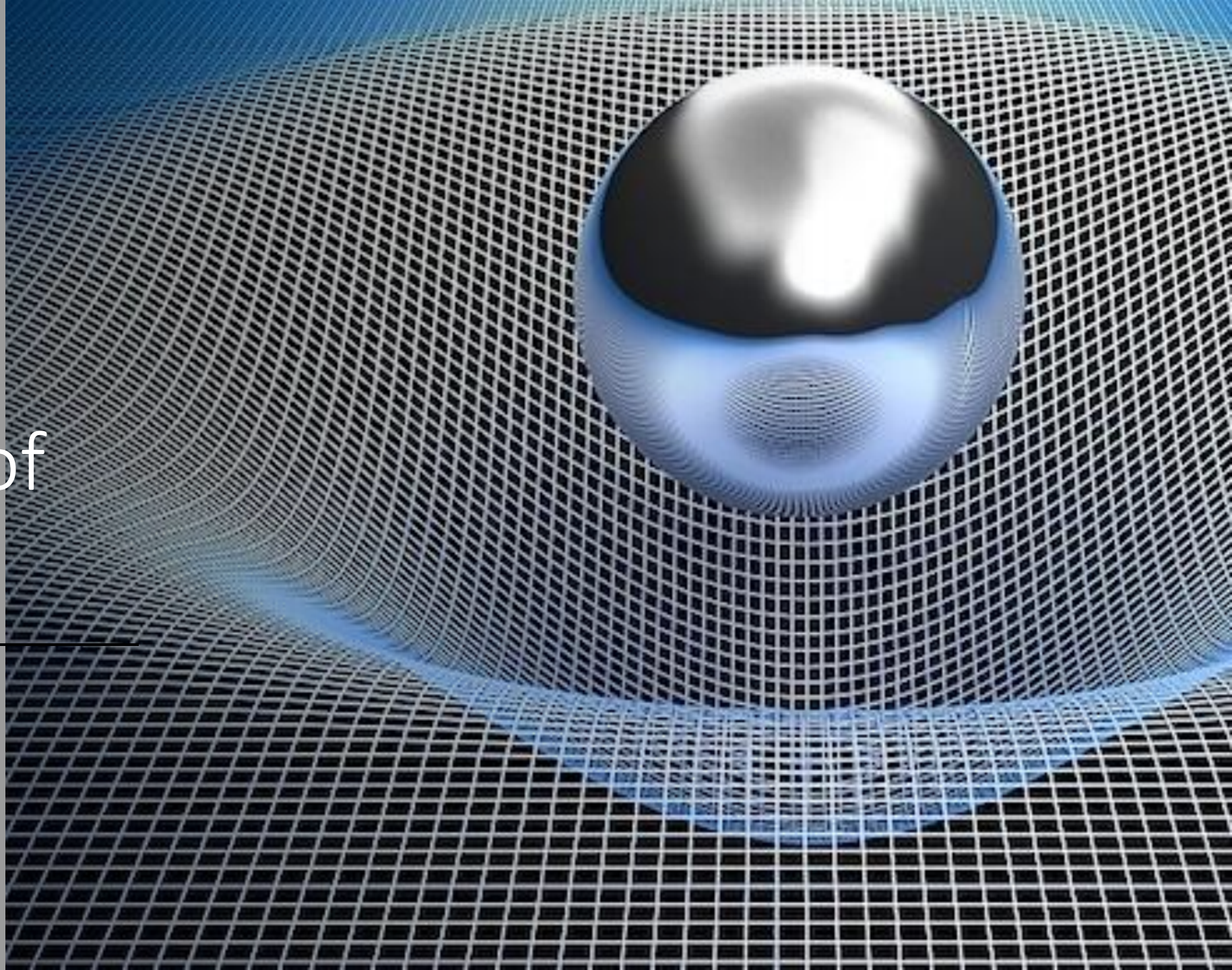




# The Power of Place

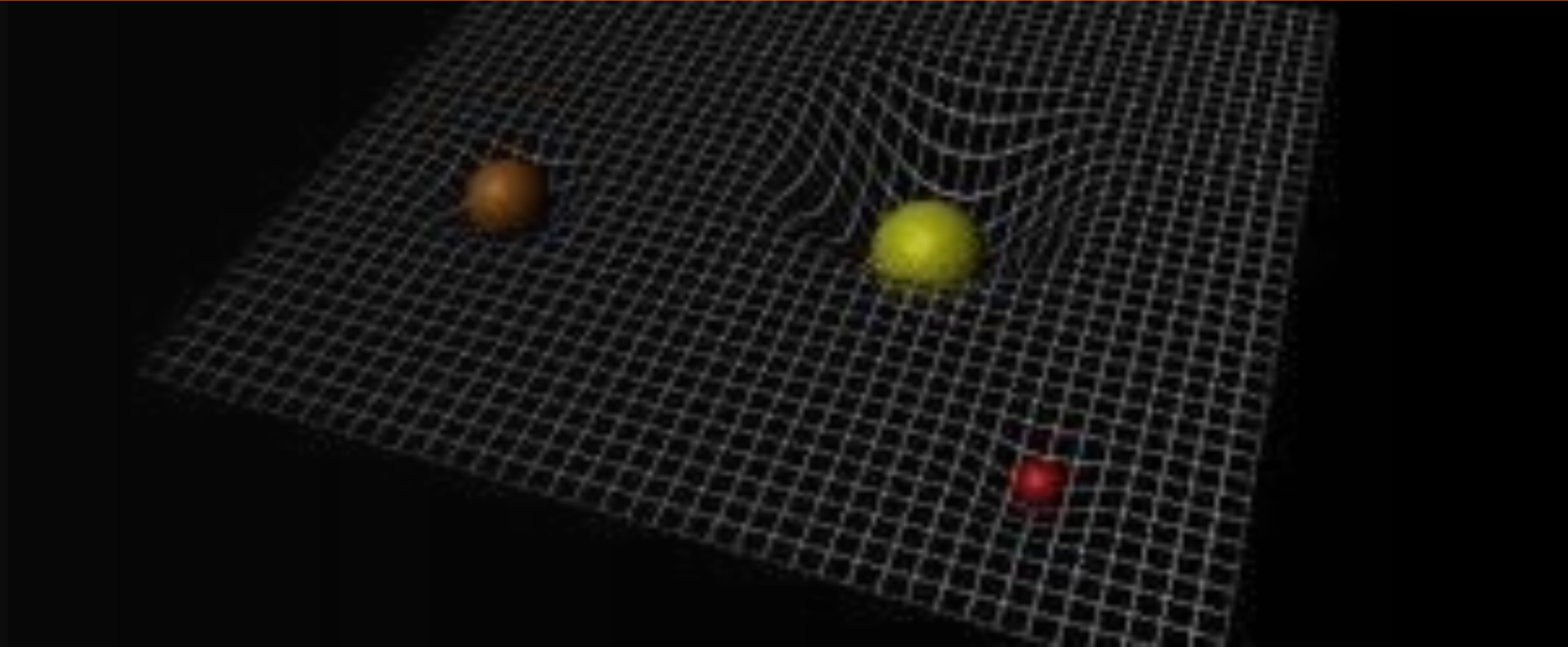
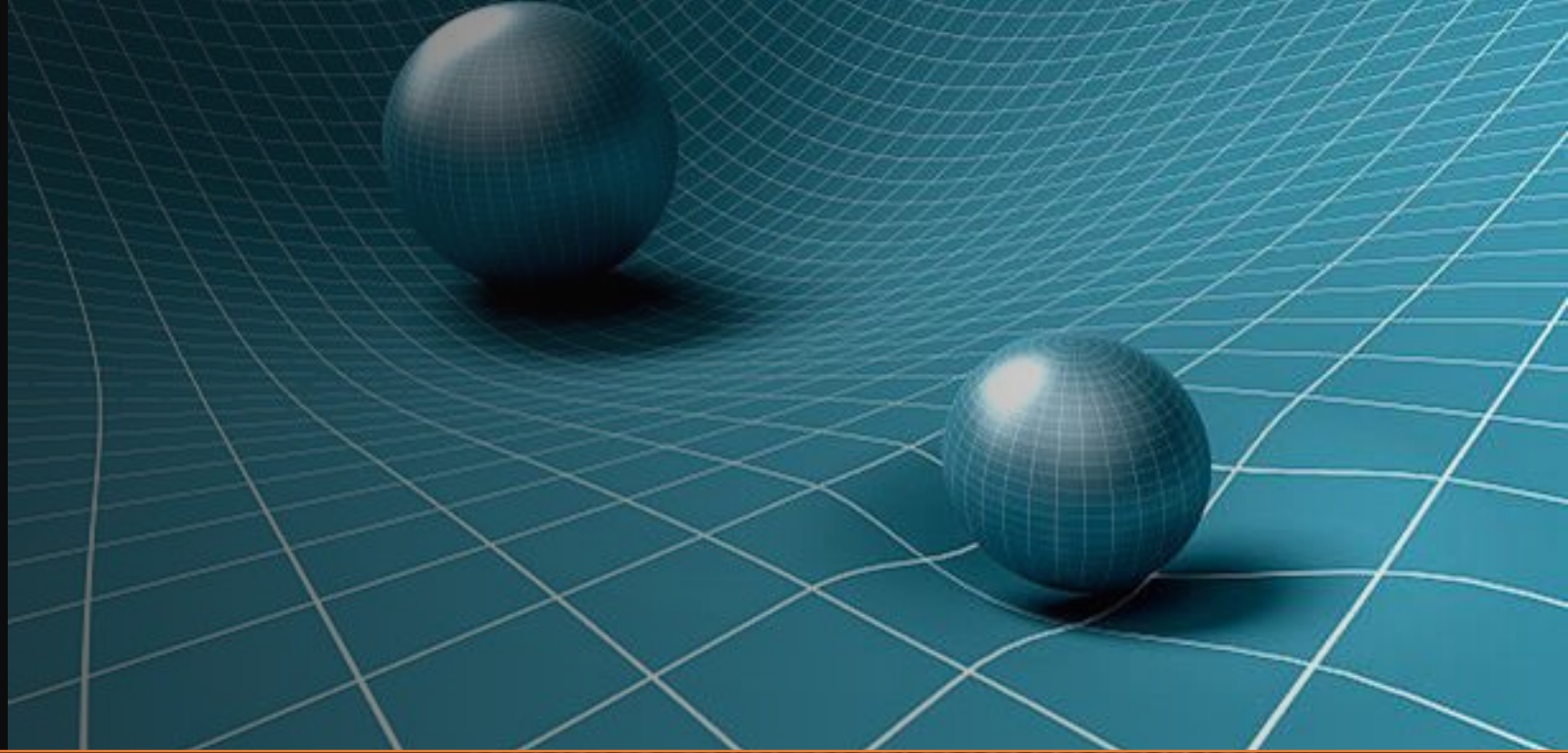
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Sacred Geography



Durkheim can be  
considered an  
articulation of the  
influence of the  
power of place

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# **The Ontological Turn – challenging Durkheim's social theory**

## The Ontological Turn – challenging Durkheim’s social theory

‘Proponents of the ontological turn argue that ‘culture’ carries with it significant metaphysical baggage. In particular, they point out that it implies that although human beings may differ in their ideas about or viewpoints on the world and other material or natural objects, such objects themselves do not vary with these ideas. ‘Cultures’ may differ, but nature does not’.

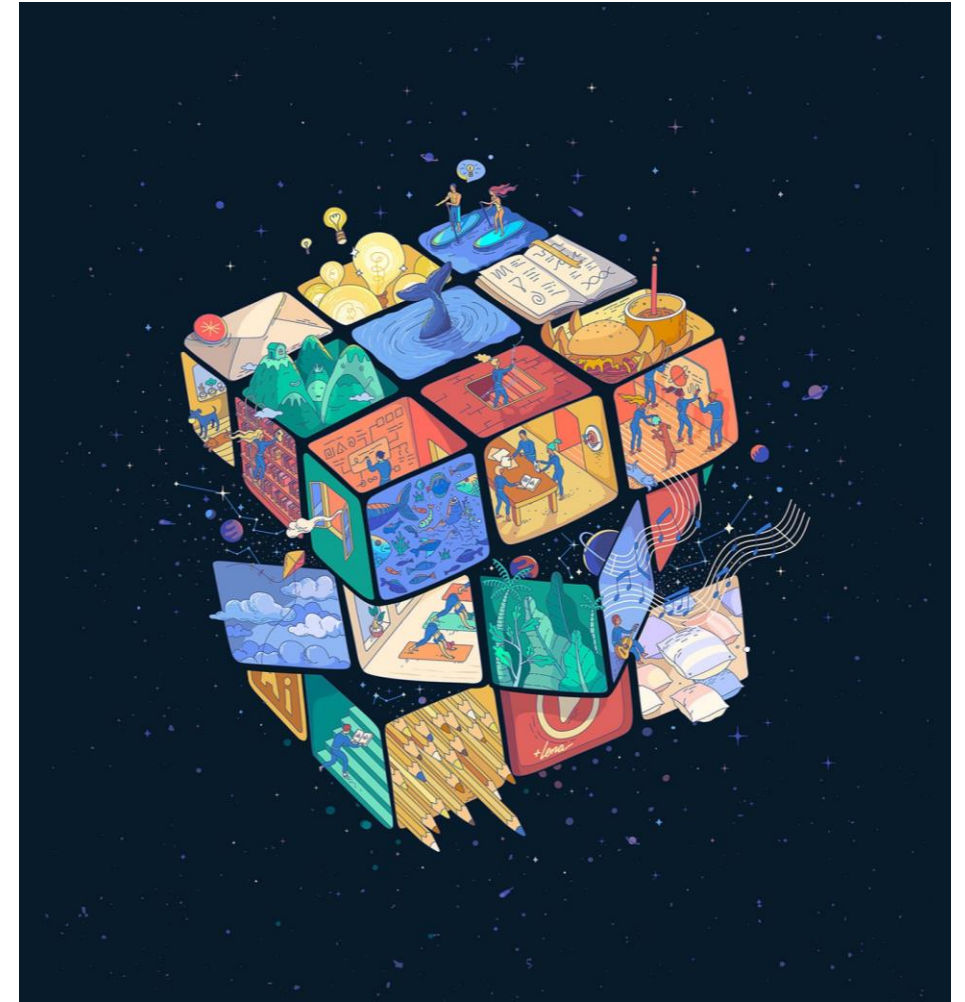


Heywood, Paolo. (2017) 2023. “Ontological turn, the”. In *The Open Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, edited by Felix Stein. Facsimile of the first edition in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*.

Online: <http://doi.org/10.29164/17ontology>

## The Ontological Turn – challenging Durkheim’s social theory

‘It relativises perspectives on the world, and thus by implication universalises the nature of the world itself. It claims that epistemologies (forms of knowing or understanding) vary, but that there is only one ontology (form of being or existing). Many worldviews, only one world. The ontological turn, instead, proposes that worlds, as well as worldviews, may vary.’



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'your interlocutor may 'believe' the tree to be a spirit, and you may 'respect' this belief as much as you wish, but your own belief is probably not what you would consider to be a belief at all; it is what you would think of as 'knowledge'. You do not think of yourself as 'believing' it to be a tree, you *know* it to be so. 'Respect', in such a situation, becomes a synonym for mere toleration, and as philosopher Isabelle Stengers has pointed out, often people want to be more than merely an object of tolerance (2010).'



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Online: <http://doi.org/10.29164/17ontology>

# Thinking through Place

Amiria J. M. Henare, Martin Holbraad, and Sari Wastell considered an object, not as a part of a culture, but 'as they present themselves'.

Amiria J. M. Henare, Martin Holbraad, and Sari Wastell, *Thinking through Things : Theorising Artefacts Ethnographically* (London: Routledge, 2007), p.2.

To become aware of the power place is central to sacred geography and a method of being open to this view of place is to engage in **thinking through place**, borrowing this idea from Henare, Holbraad and Wastell

In this regard to let 'place' present itself and attempt to see the view of a place by that place. Thus to ask questions about how place regards itself, is to think through place, or see through place's lens, to adopt a 'placefulness' perception.

