

Photographic Essays of Place ~Introduction~

by Roy Beckemeyer

“A camera is a tool for learning how to see without a camera.”— Dorothea Lange

Konza Journal typically focuses on our prairie bioregion, our piece of the Planet Earth, where we live out our lives every day. True appreciation of our special place, our *bioregion*, can be enhanced by stepping back, expanding our field of view, seeing the prairie in terms of its setting in the larger world.

Hence we often set out to travel away from home, to see what is out there. In taking that step, we try, too, to gain a sense of the places we visit. We search, look, meet with people, write, sketch, take pictures. We try to etch the essence of the places to which we travel into our minds. They may never reside there with the intensity of our sense of our home place, but they fit around it, perhaps frame it, embellish it, polish it to a more brilliant sheen than it had before we left.

This series of essays features photos I have taken on my own journeys around the world knit

together with enough words, I hope, to make them into a coherent whole. I mean to convey to you a sense of what I saw, a feeling of what I felt, an idea of how I then saw my own place in the world. I hope you enjoy them.

Roy Beckemeyer of Wichita is a contributing editor of *Konza Journal*. He and his wife Pat, married for 56 years, have traveled extensively, and have visited all seven continents in their wanderings. He is author of the [2015 Kansas Notable Book Award](#) winner [Music I Once Could Dance To](#) (2014, Coal City Press). He blogs at <https://phanaerozoic.blog/>.