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**TITLE: Lush landscapes: Towards a material-phenomenological approach to the tropics**

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Recent developments in landscape studies and associated fields of research (e.g., cultural geography, placetheory and material culture studies) have been gesturing towards a ‘non-representational’ account of landscape. Whether influenced by Latour’s Actor Network Theory, landscape phenomenology, Bachelardean accounts of substances, or the anthropology and sociology of the senses, this line of thinking posits that landscapes are places where we ‘dwell’, engage in a variety of practical activities and which offer their own distinctive ‘affordances’ or agential affects. What might this theoretical development mean for sociocultural studies of the tropics? In this paper, I contend that a phenomenological-material account of tropical phenomena can profitably be focused on a quality we might term ‘lushness’\*. Lushness involves an excessive, if not decadent, amount of something; and tends to suggest voluptuousness, fecundity, density, vividness, an object or ambience that arouses the senses, as well as the sensation of feeling refreshed. I will suggest that whether we are talking about dark green forest canopies or white sandy beaches, the social and culinary life of tropical fruits or buildings that start to merge with their tropical surroundings (e.g., the wonderful ruin that is Paronella Park in North Queensland), the tropical lush raises conceptual issues relevant to tourism, environmental management, architectural and urban design, and regional economic development.