



Larvikitt a feldspar extracted from an quarry near Larvik (N.).
[Gea Norvegica Geopark](#). Photos: Theodor Barth

The pictures *above* and *below* are both part of a multi-sited UNESCO-supported project called Gea Norvegica Geopark, in the municipalities of Larvik, Kragerø, Bamble, Porsgrunn, Skien, Siljan and Nome. The project is cited here on account of how geological knowledge defines an *estate*.

That is, a knowledge-estate of older-than-history accounts of periods that have shaped the structure of rocks and mineral strata, in an environment with a specific vegetation, and the resource-estate generically available for exploitation: public asset of private interest, private asset of public interest.

From the first vantage point the geological account largely *exceeds* human history and existence on planet Earth. From the second vantage point the polished slate surfaces are the pride of kitchens, bar-counters and terraces, that is public in the sense of featuring signs of natural beauty and status.



A rock section created by agents other than human at Stangnes near Kragerø, Cf. [Gea Norvegica Geopark](#).

A pivotal moment, in the accounts given by the Geopark project on tours and panels, is the insertion cities and their names in areas featuring processes that took place at a time where there were no cities (nor names). A sense of confusion invariably follows from the traffic of claims on the site.

The claims that originate from geological field-exploration. And the claims that originate from the exploitation of the same. For instance, as the complex processes that are unique to the areas photographed on the front page [*recto*] are linked to named sites—Larvik & Stangnes—and the fjord.

A confusion, however, rose when the geologists occasionally giving guided tours on the quarry near Larvik were asked about the position of the present site was located, in the geological era of [Permian](#), when the changes—of which we presently can see and speak—took place, on a continent *adrift*.

That is, where the drifting continental shield—called Baltica—was located at the time when the formative processes that created the present geological structures took place. The answer was 30° North: that is, approximately the same latitude as presently the Mediterranean Sea. *Before* names & places.

At the other end of the scale, are the *mining* processes: huge diamond studded saw blades are fastened in the rock to cut huge slates of rock. In the process of bringing these down to the size of industrial manufacture and transportation, about 90-98% of the minerals are inadequate, or waste.

The 2-10% that are kept are ill seen, since they are transformed beyond recognition to a domestic gem, of sorts. While when spoken for, the areas on site are conceived as though they were tied to places, to which they are presently assumed to belong. Thus, the quarry is both ill seen and ill said.

That is, if we choose to considering the site and its account in some of Samuel Beckett's recurrent themes: in the novella *ill seen ill said*. He is not concerned with how the matter is *settled*. But brings in a third element. Which is, the human settlement *itself*, as it were, in the form of a question.

“How come a cabin in such a place? How came? Careful. Before replying that in the far past at the time of its building there was clover growing to its very walls. Implying furthermore that it the culprit. And from it as from an evil core that the what is the wrong word the evil spread.” Doomed to endure.

From this perspective, the of what is ill seen and ill said is not negotiated at all, it is left gaping—as the geological scope does eminently—and instead it is the human settlement as such which is the puzzle we are brought to contemplate. Beckett forces the reader of the novella to [stay with the trouble](#).

The enduring human *settlement*. The glaring gap wherever it prevails. The necessity and impossibility of this existential plight. And then to realise that to perform under such conditions is something that must be reckoned with. Between what contains and what signifies, [matter comes to matter](#).