THE BAUENSWELT:
TOWARD AN ONTOLOGY
OF THE 'BUILT ENVIRONMENT'
by
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Conventional notions of 'built environment,' 'architecture,' 'building' become useless in discussion of anything other than these notions themselves. The reflexivity of these concepts...

Since it is precisely these other discussions that are called for, alternative notions congruent with history, society, humanity have to be developed in order to begin to speak at all. The necessity of the task...

The Bauenswelt is one such notion, selfconsciously tied to a non-objectifying epistemology. With it we see the possibility of answering the question, 'What is the built environment' by turning away from it (the environment) toward ourselves, toward all selves and there seeking the answer by first rephrasing the question: 'What does it mean to us?' A modality of solution...

The Bauenswelt subsequently begins to emerge as a dynamic and relational meaning field which is totalized by transindividual subjectivity in its own ongoing totalization. Part I of this thesis explores these questions theoretically and Part II inaugurates what may one day be their resolution in practice.
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Toward an Ontology of the 'Built Environment'

Robert Manoff

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What began as an inquiry into the relation of architecture and social structure has become in part something else. But no matter: That question is implicated in any query about architecture; it is found, lurking, in any answer. And so it is here. We shall talk of many things, diverse things, yet always only to understand why it is, and how it is, that our building is of a piece with our doing; our dwelling but a moment of our being.

This is neither a philosophical, architectural or an historical task. It is all of them: It is political.

* For the purpose of this paper I shall assume the rough congruence of 'architecture,' 'built form,' 'built environment' and even 'city' when intended as something standing there, having been built. (I shall also suppress my inclination always to place these terms within inverted commas. The reader should understand that their presence there is simply assumed.) In doing so I am ignoring all the painfully drawn distinctions of recent years between what is pedigreed or folk, vernacular or fine art, engineered or designed, and so on. These distinctions are the product of the natural discourse which I want to supplant; and although they are to some degree useful in that context they are not so in the present one. Such distinctions are at best second-order differentiae that address themselves to the particular style of a Bauenswelt but not to the essential structures of meaning in which it participates. As such, we may return to them later, but I suspect they will mean other things then.

Further, inasmuch as these distinctions are not being honored at present, many of the terms are used interchangeably here, and always to signify the whole of the man-made physical environment, the process of its formation, and speech about either. The question of the 'natural' environment is for the moment, but only for the moment, suspended.
That, at least, is my conviction and hence the assumption that animates these pages. But no matter: Surely at this late date the reader need not be warned that all knowledge is interested. Indeed.

Indeed, that interest in architecture and social structure that now drives our querying beyond their relation, also drives it to a general critique of existing architectural discourse of any description. For whatever the antagonisms, talk about building has taken certain things for granted as being the case; it has particularized itself by finding different things to say about these same, consensual facts. It has, in a word, only disputed their evaluation.

But to accept these facts is to accept also the values that brought them forth. And if these be refused, thought must vie for legitimacy amidst an alien facticity, in a realm of things that neither appreciate or respond to its questioning. Thought then finds itself father to rootless values, empty imperatives severed from a world in which to realize themselves. Facts about men come with a value; and it is this or that value, and not some other.

If we would uphold that other, if that be ours, we must have the facts that go with it, that bed it deep in the social soil, that give it the room and the time to understand itself. Our different values must and do have different facts. For we ask different questions, get different answers, and therefore and finally have a different world. Here we root our imperatives; from here they take their force.
Our task, then, is to discover the world our values tell us must be there, to talk about, to achieve it. But these different facts will be talked of differently; and different speaking spins us in its turn another world. To understand it we must seize it in its fullness, in its movements, in its complexity and opacity. We must take it in its totality, and in the process of becoming this totality— in its totalization.

But to totalize is not only to take the totality of the object for our discourse, it is also to take the totality of discourse for our object. This leads us beyond the critique we have been discussing to an appropriation of global discourses not yet sufficiently turned on architecture: The new facts are the total facts of total discourses.

We have not, however, remained faithful to all of these discourses in the same measure; to some of them we have even done violence. We have looted them of what we found useful, or beautiful, and their exegesis has not at all been the intention. Nor have we stopped to dispute, even when the temptation was considerable.

What you have before you in the first part of this paper, therefore, is a personal synthesis deeply indebted in varying degrees to phenomenology, existential phenomenology, classical and Hegelian Marxism, certain sociologies of knowledge and genetic structuralisms. It is a heterogenous group of progenitors to acknowledge, and yet the final
synthesis which we believe is their future will testify to their fundamental compatibility, complementarity. Imperfect and wanting as it is in the present, there is a certain necessity about the synthetic.

For the moment much of this remains only adumbrated, a schematic and sometimes superficial treatment of new facts and new speaking. Sometimes, like astronomers, we can do little more than point, saying, Something is there, necessarily there, but give us more time to show you just what. At other times we have been led to assert what in a certain sense we don't agree with. The problem here has been to understand what we have thought, letting notions go their own way before being brought to heel by the intolerance of Understanding. This has been preeminently the case with certain aspects of the Bauenswelt itself, which threatens constantly to become an idealized and hypostatized concept. Let us simply plead that it is one whose necessity is sensed before its fullness is comprised, that it is known to exist before its Existence is known. We know that thought that fully understands itself is dialectical, and it is the measure of our failure that so much herein is not. But dialecticity cannot be willed. Only by embracing the statics of our thoughts, by carrying forward their limited truths to the very bounds of their power can we surpass them. At this moment, thought that has known its thinking as necessary but also as false will experience fully its real
inadequacy, comprehend its real truths, live its contradictions and pass anew to its greater totalization.

* * * *

The first portion of this paper is constituted by a series of compressed theses that are meant to suggest what kind of new facts we are in search of, why and how they may be adduced, and to what end. It is frankly programmatic. The second portion is a circumscribed attempt to demonstrate concretely one of the modes in which the abstract facts of the first part actually exist in the world. It is meant to be suggestive rather than exemplary.

I should like at this point to thank my advisor, Kevin Lynch, and my committee, Julian Beinart and Christopher Schaefer, all of whom forebore and encouraged. My friends know who they are, and that they have my thanks.

And Andrea. Who neither typed drafts or proofread or held the family together during. Nor was she always very understanding but precisely for that reason this paper is dedicated to her.
I. THEORY

A. The Limitations of Architectural Discourse and
What It Assumes about the World

1. A theory of architecture must be a theory of man. This conviction is both our point of departure and place of arrival; as the former it is but an assertion, as the latter I hope to demonstrate its necessity. Heretofore, thinking about architecture has largely been both ideological, asserting the particular as a universal norm, and partial, concerned with its object as a discreet sphere of instrumentality. Even when it has experienced these limitations it has for the most part been unable to escape them, perceiving itself therefore as in crisis. A way forward, if a crisis it be, is for architecture to become both critical and totalizing -- critical in reflexively seizing its experienced contradictions precisely in order to transcend them, totalizing in recognizing and living itself as an interdetermined moment of a social whole unendingly in transformation. Architecture must transcend its understanding of itself, totalize not only this theory but also its practice.

2. In the totalizing view, facts concerning man form themselves into significant wholes apart from which their real content cannot be appreciated. That this should be the case
follows from the understanding that any being or fact that does not comprise all being or all facts necessarily stands in some relation to what it is not, what it does not comprise. This system of relations, each particular delimiting both its own and others' natures, amounts to the domination of the whole over its parts, and the full participation of these parts in the structure of their own determination. The category of totality, therefore, signifies the comprehension of the world as unity and multiplicity inescapably and dynamically tied, the autonomy of the part and the reality of the whole being the reciprocal conditions for the existence of either.

Social reality is understood as total: Each of its factors, taken individually and in isolation, proves to be inessential. The real content of its appearance emerges only when it is understood as a relation within the total social process of which it is a part. But, importantly, this whole is in movement, and it is necessary to consider it dialectically as a concrete unity of interacting contradictions and partial totalities tending toward their concrete totalization in the historical whole. Social totality is therefore the totality of the social process, with reference to whose concrete, historical and unitary content both the isolated individual and any one human activity are abstract, unhistorical, partial.

Similarly, knowledge of the world is abstract and
superficial as long as it does not integrate the part into the whole, seize it in its internal relations with its world, understand their mutual dependence as existing within them as their momentary natures, and not as some connection extrinsic to them both. Their interdependence must be understood as aspects of their essence; each must be grasped as the completion of the other. Further, knowledge must know itself and totalize itself in order to grasp the totality of its object. It must know its own interests, its own movement, its own shifting relations with other knowing and whatever it would know.

3. Architecture, a social fact, is a moment of the social whole; its only truth therefore, is the totalized truth. The necessary task before us is to comprehend the mediations through which architecture is related to the whole and to the other partial totalizations whose dynamic interpenetration comprise it. We must make architecture yield us the concretely total meanings of which it is an instance; we must disengage its particularity, specify it, and understand it in the light of the unity of which it is a moment. The task, in short, is to recognize the totality and to totalize architecture within it. We must grasp the internal relation between the two, comprehend 1) the sense in which architecture participates in totality and in which totality informs and announces itself through architecture; 2) the manner in which this occurs, the concrete modes
in which participation and announcement are manifest.
We must experience the way this relation is: How it is there:
Its being there. Our task, then, is to develop a totalizing
ontology of architecture -- understanding from the outset
that to totalize architecture is to transcend it.

4. Most thought about architecture does not attempt
to totalize itself; it is content to confront the world as
a collection of positivities, and through its associated
practice to reproduce it as such. Our differences are
irreconcilable. There is some speech, however, that recog-
nizes the totalizing imperative and moves to heed it, albeit
in ways that are ultimately deficient. One such is an
architectural history that acknowledges the social embedded-
ness of its object and turns toward that fact as its
problematic. But in doing so it appropriates the intuitive
finitudes of formalism and approaches them as though
their totalized social meaning were simply spread over
their surface, an inappropriately objectivistic attitude.

Objectivism, ignoring consciousness -- which in any
case is in the habit of ignoring itself -- is also the pos-
ture of environmental psychology which, to its credit,
appreciates that man is effected by what is around him.
Its paradigm, however, is Behavioristic and in that measure
detotalized. To conceive of the environment as a stimulus
and human activity as a response is to conceive the latter
as essentially passive, without a structure of its own that
intercedes as an independent variable, without a life experience that makes it the product of individual choices. But man, on the contrary, contributes. Only his minor behaviors are simulus controlled and even these are complex exteriorizations of a field of possible meanings, the product of a range of possible processes. Behavior as a sign is transcended by the meanings it encloses, and these cannot be mediated by the Behavioral paradigm -- which has to impoverish experience in order to describe it, and reduce description itself to that which can be expressed.

This kind of objectivism, first of all, eliminates the subjectivity of its subject in the name of objectivity, failing to recognize that objectivity is discovered by an objectifying intentionality and that in taking objectivity as its object it at the same time has had itself as its object as well. Second, it eliminates the subjectivity of its object, detotalizing at the level of the desubjectivized individual wrenched from his concrete social existence and his complex being as a man. The Gestalt position, intended as rectification, is only a marginal improvement. While such an environmental psychology does speak of wholes and provide for the activity of consciousness in making the world its own, it does so only incompletely. The activity it allows its objects is only partial activity, but a slice of their true life experience; the wholes it posits are static wholes, completed and closed totalities rather than
the open and moving ones of historical totalization. What we have in the gestalt view is a system, a synthesis of externalities, a hypostatized totality which can neither account for history or the fullness of human life even at a moment.

Representational theories at their best embrace more of this life but not yet enough of it to totalize themselves. They are still false totalities, overlooking much of the wealth of their object in order to fix the rest of it in thought; they are reductionist. The representation is an attempt to bridge the gap that is assumed to exist between the knower and the known, to describe how the latter is apprehended and organized by the former, and what it means to him. Useful as it is, however, it distorts our experience, rendering suddenly thematic what has only heretofore been lived -- not represented but lived in its full ambiguity. Before representation, that is to say, in the flux of daily life there is simple presentation, the nonreflective living of sense that is only subsequently posited for its own sake through representation. What is more, the mapping technique usually employed here frequently indulges a naturalistic fallacy, assuming a certain isomorphism between the representations it elicits and the actual organization of the environment of which they are the meanings. There is also a certain ambiguity over whether the representation is an intellectual and collective
one or sensory and individual, and therefore presumably isomorphic with the actual mental processes lying behind it. Mapping also compounds the difficulty of seizing upon presented, lived and unthematized significances: It limits severely the meaning field in which it is interested and therefore limits severely the field of human activities of which it can give an account. The detotalization accomplished here yields an impoverished view of human consciousness, trivializes and desocializes human activity.

The above, taken as representative of the few totalizing discourses within architecture, are found wanting. Partial, closed or static totalities, they fail to do justice to the richness, complexity and movement of the dialectical social whole. Usually positivistic, they suppress the subject and therefore cannot understand our relation, as subjects, to the world. Reductionist, they hypostatize. Objectivist, they do not understand 'objective' as humanly objective and therefore in history as 'universally subjective.' Finally, in their refusal to totalize they hide the true, total nature of society: They are ideological.

5. We may generalize. Thinking about architecture, even thinking that would totalize itself, has been pursued within a single epistemological style, a particular concord of the knower and the known. In the act of theorizing, in thwarting and making thematic the transiency which
we live, we have distanced ourselves from the environment as our product in order to make it also the conceptual content our our consciousness. Appropriating it then through a common language used commonly, thinking about architecture has become a Discourse, a field of possibilities for talking established in advance of any specific statement.

As a lawful formation, Discourse is a regularity of relations between objects, types of statements, concepts and thematic choices, a set of rules that makes it possible for particular objects, statements, concepts and themes to emerge within its field at a particular times. Objects do not pre-exist Discourse about them, that is to say, but are enabled to appear by the transformations of Discourse itself. Architecture as a Discourse is not thought about privileged objects, as it may believe to be the case, but a group of rules governing the formation of such objects, rules that change over time along with those of other Discourses. Architecture as a Discourse, therefore, is a practice that systematically forms its own objects, speaking of them then with concepts born of the same process, subject to the same anonymous, historical rules of dispersion.

A discourse at a particular moment also has an epistemological style, a function of the position its speaking subjects are required to occupy within it. Discourse assumes a style in a double sense: 1) It takes
it upon itself, founds itself on a conception and mode of knowing; and 2) it embodies it, takes it up and carries it forward in its own accomplishments. Style is therefore both the ground of discourse and, in history, its achievement. Discourse needs it to approach the world and it then knows the world as this approach. It is both the cause and effect of knowing, and in that coincidence it annihilates the distinction. It is, then, both and neither, and at the same time. It broods over the drama: It is everywhere and it is nowhere.

The style of the epistemological approach to architecture has established in advance the field of possibilities for its accomplishments. Its accomplishments in turn have seemingly validated the style of this approach. Ground and achievements have spun in a widening gyre until the one is no longer discernible from the other and each is affirmed by its immersion in the whole which it itself has helped create.

6. The style of architectural Discourse is of a piece with that of our natural attitude in the world, the way in which we live believingly in it, carrying with us an unexamined assumption of the existence and validity of our experiences.\(^{64}\) This world, the scene and object of our actions, we find already pre-existing us\(^{65}\) seemingly independent of our will, a place which is found to be ordered and arranged\(^{66}\) and into which we insert
ourselves. This world, the world of everyday life, is simply there for us, and what we encounter in its course is felt to be 'there' as well. We find the world ongoingly present, a spatio-temporal unity to which we belong. It is for us, and for other men, and together we assert its communality and lucidity. Each of us, however, came into it as into something already in progress, finding its corporeal things already there, present within it whether or not we addressed them specifically. Its objects were already designated as such, and came replete with habits of their own which allowed us to organize the world and anticipate it in practical ways of importance. It became, in short, a fact world for us, something out there which we learned to take just as we were given it; and prejudicially.

This unquestioning belief in the existence of what we experience is the foundation both of daily life and of the systematic discourses embroidered on it as theory. The epistemological style of architecture, therefore, is nothing but the articulate elaboration of the naive realism of the natural attitude. Emphasizing the corporeity of its object, the fact of its being there, its objectivity and its subjective impermeability, architecture has perpetuated the style of everyday life and its positivistic and objectivizing theses. This Discourse has carried forward in its achievements the encompassing style of the intuitive environment, fixed its presumed typicality in its nouns, and then permitted these nouns to dominate over and detotalize the meanings of its sentences.
7. If our discourse occludes it and our vocational activities deny it, it is nevertheless true that the theoretical totalizing called for here is already lived by us as ongoing social life. What we must do is comprehend this fact and install it in the heart of our practice, eschew the naive mimesis of everyday life, and excavate the historically-specific discursive concepts appropriate only to other tasks. Instead of simply living our everyday world, that is to say, we should undertake to make it problematic in new ways, to enrich our experience of it — and thereby our knowledge of it — by making thematic what we have heretofore just assumed about it.

The route from our uncritical and consensual presumptions about the world to their full clarification lies through the *epoché*, their temporary suspension or bracketing in the name of radical clarity. In the *epoché* we suspend the use of all presuppositions and withdraw our belief in the legitimacy of the world that has been given us previously. We suspend absolutely the validating performances of everyday life; and we suspend their conceptual mediations. Doing so allows us to return to the world as it is immediately presented to us and as we present ourselves to it, not to deny its existence or that of what lies within it.
but rather to take what is there immediately as it appears.\textsuperscript{86} In the \textit{epoche} we place to one side the objectivistic theses of daily life and take what shows itself in the world exactly as it shows itself\textsuperscript{87} -- not the object \textit{per se} but the object as known, as we know it.\textsuperscript{88}

We must start afresh with the world, start with our experience of it purified through the \textit{epoche} of all presuppositions;\textsuperscript{89} and to understand ontologically what we experience therein ontically\textsuperscript{90} we have to approach this experience as consciousness of \textit{how}\textsuperscript{91} what we encounter appears to us, as consciousness of the precise manner in which we and it come together in the world and in which we know it without thinking it. Making thematic the modes of 'how' we then can turn toward the essentials of this presentment,\textsuperscript{92} toward an ontology of the given in its bipolar structures and in their meanings.

Becoming conscious of 'how' things appear to us is, since we are active in the world, simultaneously becoming aware of 'how' we make them appear -- of what we \textbf{mean} by making what shows itself show itself exactly as it does. Turning toward the world understood as a system of appearings, therefore, is to turn toward it also as a structure of meanings,\textsuperscript{93} meanings that we discover as our own products. To consider the world then means to consider our own acts,\textsuperscript{94} the operations \textsuperscript{95} by which we mean a world; and to consider these we must lay bare the structures of experience\textsuperscript{96} necessary to make the world the world we know it as. We have
to approach closer our being and our life through which
the world is for-us,\textsuperscript{96a} approach closer the essentials of
our meaning structures\textsuperscript{97} as intending structures, discover
the pure modes of being and encounter without mediation
their ground. Being in the world we live it every day without
taking particular notice. Being-in-the-world, that other
and former mode becomes suddenly a question:\textsuperscript{98} How is it
that we have a world to live at all?\textsuperscript{99}

8. Through the \textit{epoché} of the mundane it becomes possible
to approach this problem by consciously turning to how
we mean the world, to our concrete acts\textsuperscript{100} in their original,
antepredicative, unidealized presence.\textsuperscript{101} We can look to
their essential forms and to the world that appears as their
correlate,\textsuperscript{102} capturing the invariant properties of both
the experience of the world and of the world as the world
of this original experience. To do this is to confront the
universal causal style of the world,\textsuperscript{103} to enquire into the
\textit{a priori} essential structures of the life-world or
Lebenswelt,\textsuperscript{104} to constitute an ontology\textsuperscript{105} of the structures
of historical, temporal life.\textsuperscript{106} Here our only premise is
our own position as real individuals performing real activities,\textsuperscript{107}
and these are to be understood precategorically as the
operations of our basic life in its typical\textsuperscript{108} and thereby
also ultimately in its immutable forms.\textsuperscript{109}

It is from this primary 'living' that it becomes
possible for us to 'live' our world,\textsuperscript{110} but only within
the limits established by the former, primordial process.\textsuperscript{111} This \textit{Lebenswelt} is the terminus \textit{a quo} of history,\textsuperscript{112} the fundamental sphere of teleological activity\textsuperscript{113} and its origin in the structure of human needs.\textsuperscript{114} Our foundation \textit{in the Lebenswelt} is therefore our body and its requirements, our finding it already -- in some sense -- with others in a world from which it must get satisfaction \textsuperscript{115} through activity.\textsuperscript{116}

This metabolism\textsuperscript{117} occurs, within the \textit{epoché}, according to basic structural properties of the \textit{Lebenswelt} as a spatiotemporal horizon in which we prethematically experience change, motion, position, infinity.\textsuperscript{118} But although we use accustomed names for these experiences they are not the theoretical idealizations of everyday life outside the \textit{epoché}.\textsuperscript{119} Here we understand them as being immediately intuited,\textsuperscript{120} as forming implicit clues to what we naively experience daily, as forming parts of an essential structure which we ourselves bring to givenness and to ontic meaning through our own intentional life.\textsuperscript{122} In the \textit{Lebenswelt} we also have a surrounding world, but in similar fashion it is understood as that experienced prepredicatively\textsuperscript{123} as a structural constant, an intentional index\textsuperscript{124} that appears to us as a function of our orientation within it as a field of activity.

In the \textit{Lebenswelt}, therefore, we encounter the world as constituted by our own dynamic synthesis,\textsuperscript{125} as the fruit of our own performances, as a realm of phenomena which
have ultimate reference to our own subjectivity. 126 We return to this world through the *epoche* in order to confront the primordial mode of experiencing in which the world experiences and is experienced, 127 to restore as best we can the world of everyday life to its structural foundations, to experience it fully prior to the sedimentation of sense 128 under which it is customarily buried.

9. Through the discoccluding encounter with the *Lebenswelt* we therefore discover the intentional, subjectival 129 character of the structures underlying the objectivistic attitude of everyday life and its theories. We understand that experiences have their unique presentational characteristics, that the world is the world as we have it, 130 and that objects within it are always encountered in a specific way, a mode of 'how.' Objects such as we have them are then comprehended as the 'how' of things as they appear to consciousness, which is the very condition of their existing for us as 'that,' of their simple being there at all. 131 Finally, we understand that the 'how' of something is a function of our meaning it in a certain way and that a meaning is therefore a disclosure of a particular function. 132 That a being has a meaning, in short, means that we have intended it 133 as an index for consciousness in precisely that way. 134

Consciousness is access to what exists, 135 the revelation of objects external to it, 136 but only as they appear in the way we take them to be. 137 It is a vector accomplishing
an organizational synthesis in the world such that it imposes on the world the condition of being as being for it, and imposes on itself the necessity of being as being in a world. Consciousness has a world and is in the world. It is in the world through its actual body and the world it has, of which it is conscious, exists -- as the actual life process through which it accomplishes objects by intending their meaning.

Intending as meaning-giving is a moment of all acts insofar as they have as their ground or their product the organization and interpretation of experience. They all take root in an essential project of ours through which we seek to actualize a teleological goal in the world by acting on it materially, perceptually or thoughtfully. Any such transformative intention is praxical, and as such seeks to accomplish its own constitutive synthesis. Totalized intentionality is, accordingly, originary life in the tasks and operations through which it places itself purposefully and meaningfully in a world with other men.

Intentionality understood as act and act as intentionality has a structure, a necessary correlation of the intention with what is intended as such, a trinitarian unity of the subject with an object through the synthetical mediation of an appearance both have made necessary. In this dynamic relation we find ourselves as subjects, as the source of all intentionalities, directed toward something as toward a coherent unity of the appearances which are in fact all we
have of it. We don't have the object per se through our intentional acts, but its noema, the intentional correlate of the acts which they present themselves as their meaning. In opposition to our assumptions about our functioning prior to the epoché, therefore, when it is said of acts that they have referents, consciousness noematically considered has intentions which are internal to the act and thereby also has for its content its own meanings. In the noema the act has its sense, in short, in the same way that an action has its in the corresponding projected act, or that consumption has its in the commodity it posits as its ideal image.

Analysis of a thing as the analysis of how it appears is therefore at root the study of its noematic constitution by intending subjectivity. In the case of public things, and ultimately we must subsume all things under this rubric, the intending subjectivity is transpersonal and the object's constitution social. In either case, however, to study its being we must necessarily observe how it shows itself to us as we show ourselves to it, how we represent it to ourselves in our subjectivity and, most important, how we live it as an absolute experience in our lives. Through the access that the epoché has allowed us we are, then, finding a new object, the true object: Experience. Experience, however, understood not as presentation or as knowledge but as what appears, insofar as it appears; as
the appearing of what appears as such; as being\textsuperscript{162} -- in a word, experience understood as the ways in which we transcend ourselves at every moment toward what we mean and mean it.

10. Intentional life is therefore accomplishing life,\textsuperscript{163} transcendent life that refers to being outside itself and surpasses what it finds there ontically\textsuperscript{164} toward its meanings.\textsuperscript{165} Such intentional life thereby creates its world at the same time it creates itself, synthesizing an infinite facticity and asserting its place within it.\textsuperscript{166} To assert such a place is really to make it, to structure a world\textsuperscript{167} not given in a form adequate to human needs\textsuperscript{168} or even directly reciprocal to them.\textsuperscript{169} Man is open to the world in biologically unique fashions,\textsuperscript{170} that is to say, but to fulfill their needs and powers individual men must close their worlds in specific ways, creating out of undetermined freedom a world in which to be, and perhaps to be free, concretely. Man in his essential being is driven to appropriate the externality about him and to transfer himself into it,\textsuperscript{171} to fulfill himself in objects outside his own body,\textsuperscript{172} to form the world by exteriorizing what is internal to him and then to make it a world of his own by interiorizing in turn what is external.\textsuperscript{173} Purposive, intentional activity and the world interpenetrate as two moments of one process,\textsuperscript{174} and praxis is therefore an oscillating subject/object relation\textsuperscript{175} in which each is revealed as the correlate of
the other, in which the world is revealed as praxis' world, and in which the object for praxis is revealed precisely as praxis' object. 176

We array a world about ourselves which makes sense in the light of our ends, a world which we know as intelligible and which we help create as material. 177 Through the *epoché* we return to the aiming subjectivity that is responsible and to the ways in which it brings about the world by intending goals that lie within it. 178 The world is then revealed as a possession of ours 179 acquired through our experience of it, 180 as a blending of partial intentional perspectives into an overall meaning, 181 as being at all only insofar as it is meaningful for us. 182 And yet we must have it, and find ourselves already at work in a world 183 which is seemingly there for everyone 184 as something not itself known but as a condition of knowing at all. 185 The world in a sense seems to be there making worlds possible, as both an *a priori* structure and an *a posteriori* accomplishment, 186 as a dynamic totality of self-others-things 187 constituted in its specificity by our operations that bring into being our relationships and our sensible world 188 by meaning them. Our world, finally, is what has acquired reality for us through our intentional activity, 189 that is, it is what we have constituted as real through our operations on it. Our praxis has given us our experience of the world 190 and at the same time it has ongoingly reordered this world as
the foundation of this meaning. We find ourselves in a world, make it ours, and then live it as meant. Having originally received our place in the midst of things it is nevertheless true that through us and our intentions these things and the world to which they point take their place in their turn.

11. Our world, our reality, is thus a collaboration between us and it in which we unveil what it reveals and it reveals what we unveil. Consciousness and world are reciprocally dependent, therefore, and can only be established each in terms of the other; and if we would understand our world and what is in it we would do well to consider our choosing of it in the absolute immediacy of that act. The matrix of this choice is the situation, the place where being is chosen by our praxis and appropriated toward its ends, the moments at which the world's facticity and our own activity collaborate to render their encounter real in the light of intentions determined by our needs.

The choice is not a completely free one, of course, and the situation is ontologically conditioned by what is presented to us prior to any decision of ours and by the contours of what is given independent of us. Even the decision to choose a situation is itself a situated one, and we might say, for example, that in an environment we simply have no choice but to address ourselves to something in it.
Yet it is we who address it, who through our intentions create out of some primitive surroundings a meaningful opening to being\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 204} and a situation for ourselves. It is through our ends that we unveil the given\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 205} and through the resulting activity that we transcend it toward another facticity\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 206} of which we are this time the source. In our praxis we destroy what surrounds us as immediate in order to reconstitute it as mediate\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 207}, arranging things about ourselves as around our intentions\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 208} and meaning a situation out of what heretofore had only been encountered.\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 209} In the process we nihilate any distinction between us and it, for example between us and our environment, for the situation is neither subjective or objective but a relation of being\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 210} between the two in which both are comprehended fully as all that they can ever be at that moment.

Even a particular object exists only insofar as we reveal its self-unveiling in a situation, only insofar as it is meant in a total meaningful context of some specific magnitude.\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 211} In the situation the abstract relatedness of consciousness and the world is concretized as a determinate if-then relation.\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 212} In it we find that being is always meant under precise circumstances, and that meaning is not an arbitrary intending of consciousness but is meant in a situation as transcending its specifiable conditions. Even crass matter only counts for us situationally, only becomes such for us according to the kinds of transformative operations we can perform on it;\textsuperscript{\textperiodcentered 213} and the corporeity of things in a
similar fashion is but an exact function of particular kinaesthetic activities of ours at a moment. In the situation the object as meant is the object meant here and now; and in the situation what we mean is what we intend concretely. We need it and it is this need, this need; and insofar as this is true consciousness of the object and self-consciousness are synonymous in the situation, are two abstract moments of a single overwhelming phenomenon: Presence.

So from the outset situation nihilates surroundings and the object is swept up by unifying consciousness which means it and lets it be. What is there is there only for us in our concrete activity; the object, the milieu, the environment is but the intentional correlate of our praxis and is but the world from a point of view to which it gestures. The world, as we understand it through the Lebenswelt, is the totality of our operations, the final horizon of what we mean in our ongoing life through the activities by which we sustain it. And what is true of the world is true of the objects within it and of the ontic regions to which they belong. What is true of the world, that is to say, is true of the kinds of things within it, of architecture, for instance. And architecture, as part of a world bracketed in the epoché, as part of a world structurally excavated as the Lebenswelt, must similarly be suspended in its everyday objectivity and be
revealed as a region of poles for intending subjectivity, as meant through praxis and as being only insofar as it is being for consciousness. Architecture, in short, must be bracketed and integrated into the Lebenswelt, must be understood as one among the regional meanings of what we make appear as the appearance of what appears, as the Bauenswelt.

C. The Regional Living of the Lebenswelt:

The Bauenswelt

12. We are men insofar as we form a world about ourselves, insofar as we situate ourselves intentionally in our surroundings by meaning them, and insofar as we perform them as valid and subsequently recognize them as 'real.' This latter is something we ongoingly accomplish with other men, along with whom we constitute 'reality' as a unique social product seemingly without an author. And yet it is ours and we know it only in its relations with men, and it and we and our knowledge of it are ever in process, their very mutual entailment assuring us in the first instance of their mutual comprehensibility. As reality becomes so do we, and so does our knowledge of it; all three are jointly created, jointly maintained, jointly transformed.

We and our world therefore emerge together as a closing of the possibilities of the Lebenswelt, as a choice lived by its structures, as a situation fundamental both
to what we are and to what we encounter in being that way.\textsuperscript{229} In choosing our ends we choose a relation with what exists around us,\textsuperscript{230} we choose to make it appear in this and not some other way, we choose to mean one thing and not another. Our choice, however, is one that has got to be made, for we are in the world surrounded by its things and our praxis must intend some among them in specific ways while pursuing our ends. We are what we are, in short, as subjects of an environment,\textsuperscript{231} as the embodied choice of some among its possibilities, as the closing of its particular openness, as the \textit{a posteriori} elaboration of an \textit{a priori} structure of relatedness.

Even as we made the \textit{Lebenswelt} as a whole thematic we can make this one among its structures problematic as well.* For the \textit{Lebenswelt}, as the fundamental structure of human needs and activities in their metabolism with the world, possesses as an inalienable moment a necessary relation with the surroundings which men experience in meaning this world. An ontology of the \textit{Lebenswelt} as the structures of historical, temporal life or the universal causal style of the world must, accordingly, also be an ontology of the \textit{Bauenswelt} as the universal causal style of surroundings which are experienced within it. Such a study must of necessity depart from the intuited finitudes of the natural attitude\textsuperscript{232} as a guide but must thereafter suspend the everyday assumptions about them by placing their global

\*For the \textit{Lebenswelt} see above, p. 13ff.
category, architecture,* within an _epoche_.** Doing so we bracket our objectivistic theses about the built world and attend to what shows itself exactly as it shows itself, to how what appears appears to us, to the praxical constitution of what environ us in the _Lebenswelt_. We replace the study of architectonic objects, that is to say, with that of the processes by which they become such for us,\textsuperscript{233} the processes by which and through which we intend them in our praxis, mean them and assert them as both the product and foundation of reality.

In beginning with the architectonic finitudes of everyday life we are recognizing a fact which in a general way is sustained throughout the _epoche_: There is a class of appearances, of noematic references, which seem to share something in common and therefore to participate in a higher genus of meaning, or region.\textsuperscript{234} As such, as a class of intentional objects, this region is delineated by the kinds of possible experiences which may be had of it,\textsuperscript{235} by the modes of intentionality which may best be addressed to it, and ultimately by the typical manners of givenness\textsuperscript{236} through which we have it as precisely this region and not some other. It is in this sense that architecture is a regional index for us, and we recognize therefore that it has -- in some yet unspecified sense -- an a _priori_ way of being there\textsuperscript{237} for us in our performing life, a certain way of prescribing

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*See the note above on p.i for our broad use of this term.
**The _Epoc'hé_ is discussed on pp. 11-13.
possibly fruitful intentionalities for us to pursue in revealing its self-unveiling.

But through the *epoché* we seek to transcend this intuition even if we do preserve it in some form. If we therefore confront the fact that our intentional life is face-to-face with something and that our praxis is not completely self-legislating we do not absolutize or positivize it as we do everyday. Preserving facticity as a moment we simply recognize that the object is in some sense self-organized, that there is some structure present describing the totality of its noematic possibilities. It is we, however, who possibilize them, who bring appearances to givenness; and through the *epoché* we return to architecture seeking the modes of our own performances by which architecture becomes what it is for us. Through the *epoché* we seek to uncover the particular regionality of this region and the specific sense of the objectness of its objects as they are displayed throughout experience, appearance, presentification. We seek to study the ways we are with architecture and experience it, how we intend it, how we mean it, what it means and therefore how it exists. In studying architecture through the *epoché* as a region of the *Lebenswelt* we are seeking to uncover the meanings of our experience of it as the intending of its meanings and the contribution of this meaning structure to the constitution of reality. We are seeking to clarify, therefore, how we have a world that is ours in common, how it is that
architecture is in it and makes sense to us all, and how it is that architecture by its very being there points to its praxical constitution and is but our world from a perspective to which it gestures. We are interested, that is, in architecture as meant, as meant in common, as commonly meant as real, and as really meant. We are interested in architecture as a region of the Lebenswelt: We are not interested in architecture at all: We are interested in the Bauenswelt.

13. In our life we have the world, but it is ours only insofar as it is others' as well, insofar as it is meant by us all and performed by us all. Being in the world is being in it with others, being in their world, having them in ours, finding that we define our worlds reciprocally and synchronize consciousness around what we do and find within them. If social life is practical life, to act together we must reciprocate relevances and share relevant meanings. To share them is first to experience and then to communicate them, objectivating the private in order to confirm and validate the public. The Bauenswelt as a region of the performing world is also a region of the validating world; in it we synchronize our lives around our surroundings and how we mean them in our intentional life. But intentional life in the Bauenswelt is also praxical life, and it is therefore upon praxis that validating communication is ultimately founded and
finally through praxis that we have a welt and a Bauenswelt in common. As praxical, we are related to other men as praxical and through our practice; our relations with them in the Bauenswelt are therefore ultimately the relations of praxis with itself.²⁵⁶

Praxis, however, is in its turn the relation of the world with itself, an oscillating metabolism of subjective and objective which we initiate out of need²⁵⁷ and in which we participate as one of nature's own forces.²⁵⁸ As part of nature²⁵⁹ in praxis we nevertheless oppose nature,²⁶⁰ hewing from its necessity purposes of our own,²⁶¹ a world of our own, a common world and finally a social world. Making our situation in this fashion we simultaneously make ourselves,²⁶² but neither we nor it thereby escape from nature: If we are no longer strictly deducible from it we are even yet among its products.²⁶³ Our own products are hence second nature, and we live in and confirm the Bauenswelt to ourselves precisely as being such, as being both a force of ours and a force opposing ours, as being a product of us as nature's praxis and a nature whose product is this praxis. We are, in short, in nature in the Bauenswelt, and the praxis by which we intend it and the world is similarly a force of nature's own. We are nature,²⁶⁴ and our consciousness both is in and includes it,²⁶⁵ is our actual life-process,²⁶⁶ is praxis, is the world's worlding.²⁶⁷ We belong to ourselves and to the world at the same time, for it is within us and we are without ourselves at every
moment. We are self projects and world projects simultaneously, and the world we make as a social world is always immanent within us as the particularity of its universality. In sum, as a multiplicity of such immanences we are in synchrony; and we are in synchrony through praxical relations, relations which are the world's to itself. The making of the world, therefore, is the self-communication of the world, the mediation of the world with itself through praxis.

14. The Bauenswelt is our surroundings as we intend them with our praxis, as we act in them and act through them, producing them and being produced in turn. As self-projects and world-projects we are also the world's regional projects, making our Bauenswelt at the same time that we make ourselves, creating the scene for our praxis out of praxis as seen. Praxis figures here in its essential dualism, as both performance and confirmation, as both the activity that wrenches a world from nature and then as the movement of mind that knows it that way and affirms it as such. Bauenswelt as scene is accordingly reality seen, a field for praxis as mind and body which is done, and known, and known as done. To edify, for example, is to build. But to edify is also to teach, and finally to learn.

Doing together and knowing together we make our world, and make it as real. Making it real we first make it public, make ourselves and what we subtend available for others, and avail ourselves constantly of them and what they subtend
in our turn. To found a reality all of us and what we sub tend
must come to exist for each other in some approximation
of how we exist for ourselves, and this is possible only
as an accomplishment based on praxis. Through it we come
to exist for one another, and through it we take up
each other's world. Thus, learning about the other is
learning about him in his existing, learning about him in
his practicing, intentional life. Learning about him, in
short, is not only finding out through his symptoms how
he is doing but what he is doing as well. Having this we
also then know that which is being done -- the action in
its manifold determinations -- the where and the when of
its doing, and finally that which is being done to -- the
resistent facticity of social acts and social things. We
thus create a common world through our coexistence and
then coexist through this common world as our jointly
intended praxical scene, as the anvil on which our acts
are forged. It only becomes clear through others, in short,
what the Bauenswelt is; but we know these others at all
only through the Bauenswelt which we clarify in common.

In fact it is through the Bauenswelt that each of us
knows himself, for each knows himself as in immediate
contact with the world which he must form in order to
survive. Forming it we each intend it and then work on it,
and as we objectivate ourselves in our praxis we each
apprehend ourselves in the act and thus become available
to ourselves in our fundamental being. Through our praxis
in the Bauenswelt each of us also changes himself and praxis as the mediation of the world with itself is also therefore the mediation of each of us with himself through his intending life in his surroundings. Each of us knows himself as he changes himself in his praxis in the Bauenswelt. Each of us makes his Bauenswelt and finds himself in the act. It is through this same Bauenswelt praxis that others come to know us too, and we are there for them through the same objectivations by which we make ourselves present to ourselves. We are each only different perspectives on the same praxis and the Bauenswelt it subtends, and our views conterminate in consensual noemata* the reality of which for us is an implicit appeal to the validating assent of others. We know others and they know us in this fashion, as living experiences of the same Bauenswelt, as closed openings** on the same scene, the scene in which and through which we totalize our relations by totalizing the surroundings.

If the Bauenswelt thus mediates knowledge of self and others it is also the case that self and others mediate knowledge of the Bauenswelt. Where it is true, for example, that each of us knows himself through the Bauenswelt, it is also true and not at all necessarily trivial that each of us knows the Bauenswelt through himself. Our acting asserts it, our body recounts it, our very being announces it. The Bauenswelt is the Bauenswelt that we have and

*See p. 16f for the noema.
**Man's world-openness: p. 18.
as we have it, such and only such as each of us experiences it and means it in his praxical life, as he chooses it as a region of poles for intending subjectivity. But the Bauenswelt is not the solitary accomplishment of any of us, and although we know the Bauenswelt through ourselves it is also the case that we know ourselves and the Bauenswelt only through others. We know ourselves as immediately with others, for example, and we know them immediately as relating to the same surroundings to which we find ourselves addressing our intentions. It is in this reciprocal intending and apprehending that we found and experience these surroundings as real. What environs the others is for us at one moment largely what they make of them through their praxis, how they mean them in their performing life, how they determine this Bauenswelt to be through the synthesizing agency of their acts' intentional core. But at any moment whatsoever the Bauenswelt is in some measure what we know it as through others, and to this extent the Bauenswelt is always mediated for us through the praxis of others in the social life we share as concrete men. The converse is also true of course, and it is through the reciprocal transcendence of each other's Bauenswelten that we come to have a single one more or less in common to which we all lend our consent as the meant correlate of our intentional lives.
15. In short, we know ourselves and others and they know us through the Bauenswelt: We prove ourselves in the Bauenswelt. We know the Bauenswelt through ourselves and others and they know it through us: We prove the Bauenswelt to ourselves. To prove is to know something for what it is; but to prove is also to experience and finally even to establish it as being that way. Proof is thus the achievement of praxis that does, and knows, and knows that it does and what it has done. And since praxis is in turn the world's relation with itself, our proving of ourselves in the Bauenswelt and our proving of it then to ourselves is therefore also its doing and knowing of itself, the self-accomplishment of the very world whose praxis we are. Thus not only do we prove ourselves and the Bauenswelt reciprocally in our praxis but the Bauenswelt through this same intentional life proves itself through us.

In this mutuality is the final eclipse of the objectivism of everyday life and with it of the subject/object dualism upon which it founds itself. In this mutuality, too, is the totalization of architecture as the Bauenswelt through the transcendence of its partial categories by those homologous with the totality of our performing, synchronizing, socializing life as concrete praxical men. And in this mutuality, therefore, is the adumbration of the truth of architecture as the totalized truth* of its being.

*See p. 3.
The Bauenswelt is and knows itself in and through us; we are and know ourselves in and through the Bauenswelt.

A. The Bauenswelt is itself in us, and only in us, inasmuch as it is for consciousness and in consciousness, inasmuch as we have it that way as the experience of meaning our surroundings in our intentional life.

B. The Bauenswelt is itself through us as what we have made appear as the appearance of what appears, as the performed meanings of which we are the praxical source.

C. The Bauenswelt knows itself in us inasmuch as we are of it and in it and it is in us: Our knowing it is its knowing of itself; and in our knowing of ourselves is the Bauenswelt's.

D. The Bauenswelt knows itself through us, therefore, inasmuch as it only knows itself as it shows itself, it is only we who know its showing of itself and know it only as its showing itself to us, and inasmuch as it only shows itself to us as we show ourselves to it.

E. We, for our part, are ourselves in the Bauenswelt and are at all only insofar as we are within it. As men we are necessarily related to our surroundings.

F. 1. As men becoming, we are ourselves through the Bauenswelt, being necessarily related to our
surroundings in process, making ourselves through meaning them, accomplishing a self at the same time that we choose a world.

2. We are ourselves in the Bauenswelt, that is to say, but we are in it specifically by being in it; and to be in it is to be also through it, wrenching from its possibilities our own.

G. We also come to know ourselves in the Bauenswelt, and this in a dual sense. 1. We know ourselves, first, 'as in' it, knowing as we do (E) that as men we are as necessarily being that way.

2. Second, we know ourselves 'from in' it, our intentional life in the Bauenswelt being always a partial determination of our epistemological situation.

H. And finally, we also know ourselves -- as we have seen above -- through the Bauenswelt, through our praxial life and its objectivations that make us simultaneously available to ourselves and to others.

And perhaps we can also begin here to realize the task of making our knowledge of the Bauenswelt critical knowledge,* addressing ourselves directly to its nature and limitations. For if we only know ourselves 'from in' the Bauenswelt (G.2) it is also the case that we cannot know at all other than through it. Our epistemological rootedness is 'in it;' but again (F.2) the specific way we know while in it is through it.

*See pp. 1 and 3.
Being in it (E) and knowing in it (G) we are also becoming in it. But becoming in it is also becoming through it (F), and knowing while becoming through it is also knowing through it: The concretely mediated character of our knowledge.

16. The mutuality of man and Bauenswelt is a concrete mutuality, of course, and as such is a determined mutuality, an ontologically conditioned negation of the abstractly open possibilities of the relatedness of man and surroundings. Even in the epoché, for example, we have intuited finitudes, and moreover we apprehend them immediately as possessing a past and particular cultural attributes of which they are but the material expression. Our acts' intentional correlates, that is to say, are saturated with the labor which created them, are the objectivations of their creating subjects, and by being there for us in the way we intend them return to us the very praxis sedimented in them as their intentional constitution. What surrounds us in the world is therefore in some sense already meaningful and is there for us pointing back to the intentional activity of which it is the meaning as the form impressed by consciousness upon the world. Meaning is thus already a property of our surroundings, and in intending the latter ourselves we are at the same time intending their objectivated meanings, the existence for us through our environs of other men who are their source.
In some measure the Bauenswelt is thus already meant before we mean it, is diachronically social and in this measure is objective in possessing meanings not entirely of our own creation. These are not the creation of contemporaneous others either, for we and they both find ourselves similarly situated in an existing universe of meanings in which and through which we must synchronize our lives in order to act and to have a world. In the Bauenswelt we find that surroundings and meanings are primordially integrated and that what we find around ourselves is there as a praxical accomplishment, an intentional accomplishment and finally as a meant accomplishment of others. Our mutuality with the Bauenswelt is thus a founded mutuality, one determined in one of its moments by the already meaningful character of our surroundings as intentional correlates.

We may say that in a general way our surroundings are already meant as meant for use and are already meant for use in a particular way, that they make demands on us and prescribe in a fashion specific to them alone the intentionalities of ours to which they will be most receptive. They clue us, that is to say, and in then giving ourselves to our surroundings in conformity with these clues we find that our surroundings give themselves to us as the appearing of what we have made appear as such, as the meaning we have meant and which in some occult way meant us to mean it.
The objectivated meanings that we find already sedimented in the Bauenswelt thus also mean us even as we mean them and we find ourselves within the Bauenswelt as ongoingly solicited by what we in our turn intend. We prove ourselves and the Bauenswelt reciprocally, to be sure, but the Bauenswelt is already the proof of other men whose praxis reaches us through it; and in our intentional life we therefore also prove them and what they have meant to ourselves. They and their meanings haunt our world, and through it their commands reach our ears. Their behaviors have settled into the world, and what they have done delimits in a certain fashion what we can do. Acts are consistent with the scene, and insofar as it is their praxis that has set our scene, the acts we perform within it will have been in that measure determined by them already in their own performing lives.

17. But it is precisely through our acts that we mean, through our intentional activity that we make our world, through our praxis that we intend it as real, perform it as valid, have it as meant. The delimitation of our activity by the sedimented praxis of our surroundings is therefore the delimitation also of how we mean and of what we mean in the way that we do. It is the delimitation of the presentational mutuality of the Bauenswelt, of the performances through which it becomes what it is for us, and therefore of what it in fact does become for us through these very
performances. The delimitation of our praxis by that already embodied in the surroundings is, in short, the negation before the fact of our freedom to mean our Bauenswelt, the negation before the fact of our freedom to mean a world, and ultimately the negation before the fact of the very freedom of our consciousness itself.

For consciousness is a world synthesis, the organization of multiplicity as a particular unity, the primal making of sense by man making himself. Consciousness makes sense of the world by having it its way, and it has it its way by meaning it so. But meaning for its part is the accomplishment of intentional activity; and the delimitation of our activity by the objectivatated surroundings as also the delimitation of our meanings is therefore and finally the delimitation of our consciousness as well. Thus, the mutuality of man and Bauenswelt, which is a concrete and a founded mutuality, has as an essential moment the delimitation of possibilities by praxis diachronically objectivatated and sedimented in our surroundings. The possibilities so limited are total: We are open to the Bauenswelt, but it is never entirely open to us. It solicits and beckons us, but only in ways of its own choosing; we mean it, but it is somehow already meaningful before we do so; and we have it in consciousness only as we take it, but we can take it only upon its giving itself to us just in the way that it does.
Surroundings teach us\textsuperscript{313} and also remember for us\textsuperscript{314} both what we know and what we have yet to learn about the Bauenswelt. They induct us into the company of our fellows; We take on surroundings, we therefore take on praxis, take on meanings, and take on a world. As men in a line of men we become in part therefore the product of our product;\textsuperscript{315} we are, that is to say, socialized by our surroundings. We may say as a consequence that our acts are implicit in the scene\textsuperscript{316} to the extent that they were meant to be that way by diachronic others, to the extent that implicit in the scene is a praxically-objectivated telos which we for our part mean through our own intentional activity, to the extent that fruitful intentionalities and therefore appropriate meanings are regularized and therefore institutionalized in and through our surroundings as a moment of the Bauenswelt.

Our surroundings as the meant objectivations of social praxis not only teach us what to do but thereby also how and finally what to mean. Sedimented in surroundings are the institutionalizations of praxis both by which they were first created and for which they subsequently call in the form of use. They solicit us in our intentional life, calling us to actualize the former by means of the latter, to reaffirm in our own praxis and then to internalize the objectivated meanings of which they are the expression. For the world is only maintained as we mean it, and what is real must be asserted as such at every turn. The reality we
negotiate between ourselves in the Bauenswelt is already mediated by what is meant as real by the Bauenswelt itself; reality and Bauenswelt are equally and reciprocally founded. In the Bauenswelt we are not free to mean anything, or do so only at our peril. Through it we understand on the contrary what our real possibilities are, what we can mean as real and really mean in our concrete life. The Bauenswelt is diachronically social, we are saying, and insofar as praxis, meaning and consciousness proceed together as life-process the Bauenswelt is in some measure institutional, possessing as an essential moment our surroundings as intentional correlates which we discover as coming with a past, a praxis, and therefore and somehow already with a meaning.  

18. We mean, we only know what we have meant, we are meant to mean, we mean in part the meanings we were meant to, we mean otherwise only what we ourselves mean to mean. We mean in doing, do in acting, act in intending. Our meanings are the intentional accomplishments of our praxical life; our Bauenswelt is our surroundings as we have meant them in it. We know them as we have meant them and as we do so at every turn, as we experience them, as we reveal their self-unveiling by showing ourselves to them as they show themselves to us. Our Bauenswelt is therefore the sense that we have made of our world, the way we have arrayed the region of its surroundings around our ends, our intentions, our praxis.
But the Bauenswelt is also that through which we have sense at all, through which it is possible to array surroundings around ourselves as around our intentions, through which we are able to mean surroundings, able to have them, and able to have them as meant. The Bauenswelt in this sense is an a priori essential structure through which in turn particular Bauenswelten are possible. It is the universe of possible 'hows' through which we and our surroundings can appear to each other, through which we can come together in the world to disclose and prove ourselves in our concrete mutuality. As a structure of such appearings the Bauenswelt is also a structure of meanings, for what we have is always what we have meant, how we have transcended ourselves toward our meanings, and what we have made appear, insofar as it appears, by meaning it. The Bauenswelt, therefore, is the essential structure of our experience of surroundings, that immediate relatedness through which they are there for us as we are there for them in our ongoing social life.

As such a structure the Bauenswelt is anterior to all experience yet present in it and necessary for it. It is the a priori of which we possess an a posteriori, the universal of which we have a particular, the possibility which we live actually in our intentional life. But intentional life has its structures as well, and though the accomplishments of concrete intentionality be particular and a pos-

*See above, p. 12.
teriori, intentional life in its a priori mode participates as a structured totality in the structured totalization of the Bauenswelt. Surroundings, in a similar fashion, also participate in their universality as one among the moments of the Bauenswelt, but only as the structural intentional correlates of structural intentional life.

We may say that the Bauenswelt as structure is:

A) A relational field, through which intentionality is with its surroundings by presenting itself to them in a mode of 'how,' and through which surroundings appear in turn precisely in the mode in which they were intended;

B) A meaning field, inasmuch as it is through meaning them that intentionality has its surroundings and inasmuch as it can only have them as it has meant them;

C) A dynamic field, inasmuch as intentionality that means its surroundings is praxis and praxis is in its turn an oscillating and transformative subject/object relation;

D) A unitary and total field, inasmuch as the relation of intentionality with surroundings is that of praxis with itself, and it is through this relation that each is totalized as a moment of the other.*

18.1 We don't have our surroundings per se** in the Bauenswelt as such a field, but only the appearings of that of which each is an appearing, the noematic correlates of our praxis as its intended total meanings. It is the structure of these meanings in their codetermination

*See p. 28ff.
**See p. 12ff.
by us and that toward which we aim that really grounds the Bauenswelt, for thinghood is not a fundamental ontological category within the *epoche* and through it this and other such categories are revealed to us as accomplishments and prejudices of our own. Architecture *per se* is therefore not in the Bauenswelt either, which is to say that it too is a category of only secondary ontological status. We never have anything in architectonic monadicity: Having it is to have it in its relatedness and through this relatedness, to have it only as mediated and through relations which are both experienced and real.

The objectively architectonic is never experienceable in itself, and what is is an achievement of ours through which we have brought it to existence by bringing it to meaning as relation meant. The architecture we customarily discourse upon and take for granted in the way that we do everyday, therefore, is not in fact the 'architecture' that we live, that we experience immediately and without reflection in our ongoing praxical life. It is through the *epoche* that we return to architecture in this immediate presentation, and through it that we find that architecture as it shows itself to us is not primordially either material or formal or spatial. We find rather that it is an intentional correlate, that it is a regional index for performing subjectivity which means it in ways the region itself prescribes as fruitful. We find that it is only...
as and insofar as it is for us, that it is for us only as we intend it, and that we intend it insofar as we practice in it and through it. We find, that is to say, that architecture is not something materially there but that it is on the contrary meaningfully here, brought here through the totality of relations established by intentional, praxical life. We find, in a word, that architecture dissolves, resolves into the Bauenswelt; that the Bauenswelt is the truth of architecture as its totalized truth: It is a field in which praxical life and surroundings are internally related as interdetermined moments of the social whole.

18.2 The delineation of the boundaries of this field is among the tasks of a full Bauenswelt ontology, which must specify the regionality of this region in its presentational uniqueness, delineate its essential, universal structures by making thematic the modes of 'how' necessary to make the Bauenswelt the Bauenswelt as it can be known. If it be true, for example, that we are in nature in the Bauenswelt, it is not necessarily also the case that the Bauenswelt itself is in nature. Here again we can differentiate it from architecture, which in its materiality remains always the stuff of nature and subject to its laws, always but a special case of nature in its having been mediated by men in pursuit of their ends. Architecture, that is to say, is but transient form impressed on nature by man, an interregnum between dust
and dust which is even so at nature's mercy. In the Bauenswelt, however, the positions of man's and nature's work are reversed: Here it is nature that is the special case, here it is but one among others of man's intentional accomplishments, but one class of appearings among all others meant through his praxical operations. Here we understand that the nature we have is the nature we have taken as we have taken it, that nature has a history and that it is the history of our nature, that therefore the praxical history of man as his natural history is at the same time the human history of nature.

And yet: Mediated though nature be by our praxis and the categories of which it is the source, it remains unmistakably clear that the revealing of the self-unveiling of nature is a presentation with a causal style uniquely its own. Nature, first, does not possess objectivated meanings of which it is the expression as the sedimentation of institutionalized praxis: Whatever pathos we mean together with our objectivated surroundings, for example, the fallacy of expecting such mutuality with nature is clearcut. Second, the modes of 'how' by which we make ourselves present to nature are of a different order from those by which we show ourselves to our objectivated surroundings. We mean nature in different ways, that is, and nature as a result means something different.

And yet: This boundary is at best an intuitive one.
A Bauenswelt ontology may employ it as a clue but must suspend everyday assumptions concerning its validity. Even without a formal *epoché* we know that the line between the social world and natural world migrates from culture to culture.\(^ {336} \)

And yet: A Bauenswelt ontology must address itself to the *regionality* of the region, describing the limits of the field and if necessary discriminating among such subregions as it may possess on the basis of their divergent presentational characteristics. This is among its fundamental tasks. Whether or not natural and objectivated surroundings are in fact addressed in distinct intentional modes is accordingly an *a posteriori* ontological determination and not something to be specified before the fact and before the *epoché* by quotidian reason. The resolution of boundary questions such as this, together with the specification of the regional and subregional mutualities upon which they are based, constitutes in fact the elaboration of precisely those essential features that accumulate as an ontology of the *a priori* structures of the Bauenswelt.

18.3 To this horizontal boundary question of what, among what can be meant, can be meant as the Bauenswelt, there corresponds one that is essentially vertical: Whether what can be meant as the Bauenswelt, but is not, is in it even so. To this the solipsistic ego necessarily answers no, the Bauenswelt being for it its Bauenswelt as it has it and as it has it alone. The solipsistic ego, however, is
a fiction, and its response serves simply to point to the
range of legitimate responses to the question. For ego is
as being, and being is necessarily being with others and
through others and in and through the world and the Bauens-
welt it and they have in common. Ego, proving others and
surroundings reciprocally and being in turn proved to them, is
therefore not alone in its Bauenswelt and this Bauenswelt
is thus not its alone. What ego can but does not mean
directly as its Bauenswelt is, it is true, not realized
directly within it. But ego is also ongoingly meaning other
egos in founding a world and in doing so is meaning them
as the lived experience of their Bauenswelten, meaning
them as the meanings of what they have meant with their
own particular surroundings. Each ego, that is to say, is
transcended by and transcends other egos; similarly, the
Bauenswelt of each ego transcends and is transcended by
that of other egos, totalizing and being totalized in turn
in the dialectical totalization of the social life-process.

What ego does not intend directly may thus nevertheless
become part of its Bauenswelt insofar as this latter is a
moment of the totalization of particular Bauenswelten as
the intersubjective social meaning of surroundings. But the
question reappears here, raised to a higher power: Is what
can be meant as the Bauenswelt, but is not by a community of
egos, in the Bauenswelt even so? Here the question becomes
one of sheer potentiality; and here as a result the Bauens-
welt is adumbrated in its full a priority. For the Bauens-
welt, as the universe of possible 'hows' by which surroundings can be meant, is necessarily transcendent to any particular modes of 'how' which may be performed by a concrete group of egos, or by any higher order collectivity in which this group in turn participates. The Bauenswelt, that is, is a structured relational field of pure possibility and as such is neither lived nor known in this form by ego or any corporation of egos. It is not itself experienced but it is itself experience; it is the being of surroundings which ego never has as such and which it is ongoingly bringing to appearance as but the appearing of that which it has made appear as such. The structural Bauenswelt is not and cannot be proved by ego, by us, by them, by him or her. Its mutuality, on the contrary, is with 'one,' the transcendental subject of which it is, in a sense to be fully established by an ontology, the transcendental experience.

19. If it be thus the task of an ontology of the Bauenswelt to describe its a priori as a structural field, it falls to historical understanding to comprehend the particularization of this universal in the ongoing social life of concrete men. For the Bauenswelt, to make explicit a tension inherent in much above, is both before and after the fact, both necessary for experience and the experience which is necessary, both the universal in which particulars participate and the particulars whose participation is in fact this universal. The Bauenswelt is transcendental
and historical, and it can be either only by being the other as well. It is the furthest reaches of what can be between man and surroundings as purest possibility, it is finally what we as historical men mean with our environs as determined actuality. The Bauenswelt is therefore in a sense ambiguous in terms of established antinomies: It is both and neither: Ideal/material, necessary/free, objective/subjective. It is and it becomes; and while each of its moments has an antinomial character of its own, the Bauenswelt in its totalization has not. An ontology of the Bauenswelt, that is to say, can only approach its structures as it has them in history: As the task itself is historical and as its object itself appears in time. Historical understanding for its part is implicitly ontological: History is the history of something and it must know of what and know the what to understand its transformations. Ontology is historical and history ontological. The structure of the Bauenswelt accordingly is in history and history is in some measure the history of this structure. This is all the more the case for the fact that history itself is in the structure. It is in it as intentionality is in it; inasmuch as the structure is a dynamic field shaped by praxis, and inasmuch as praxis, being essentially dynamic, is also essentially temporal. Quite apart from the necessarily historical character of any ontology, therefore, the Bauenswelt possesses historicity.
as among its necessary moments.

19.1 The praxis that is essentially dynamic and temporal is also essentially social, solipsistic praxis being as much of a fiction as the solipsistic ego by which it would have to be inserted in the world. Praxis at its most basic, in fact, is the activity necessary to perpetuate human life.\(^{338}\) It is socially necessary labor.\(^{339}\) The praxis of the individual, though real, is inessential.\(^{340}\) Its fundamental content lies in its dialectical relations with common praxis,\(^{341}\) which is that through which it defines and lives the hierarchy of its social memberships.\(^{342}\) These memberships, what is more, may in a certain sense be defined as intentional memberships, that is, as memberships in intentional collectivities which, although they may be more or less universal,\(^{343}\) are all constituted and motivated by interests\(^{344}\) which they in turn objectivate\(^{345}\) in the social field as their collective praxis through the individual praxis of their members.

Praxis is sociogenic\(^{346}\) and historical\(^{347}\) and historical understanding that would comprehend the Bauenswelten of concrete men must therefore do so in seizing the dialecticity of their praxical constitution through intentionalities which are at root historically specific. Such understanding must reveal the links that bind individual praxis to the collective\(^{348}\) and which in turn render the praxis of groups intelligible only insofar as that of their
members can be accounted for, and in a fashion that does not mechanically construct the former as either an arithmetic or static multiple of the latter. For in the dialecticity of social constitution lies another of architecture's totalized truths: The Bauenswelt is the totalization of collectivities in their own ongoing totalization. Social groups are and know themselves in and through the Bauenswelt; and in the fullest sense it is in and through such groups that the Bauenswelt is and knows itself. The intentional correlates of historical Bauenswelten are therefore historical, praxical collectivities which through their interested social action mean certain things and not others with their surroundings, and which then through these meanings are further totalized, further differentiated from or integrated into the transcendent historical communities of which they are the moments. The dialectic among subjects in which they make or break their world is, as we know, also a dialectic between Bauenswelten. In a similar fashion, the dialectic among collective subjects is likewise one between the Bauenswelten they sub tend in their turn.

19.2 It is only at the level of collective subjectivity that the historical particularizations of Bauenswelt a prioris become fully intelligible. For these are eminently social phenomena, and it is to the social, or collective subject that they must be referred if they are to be comprehended
and totalized in their manifold relations with ongoing social life. Such subjects, to repeat, are not additive, are not exterior unities of a multitude of egos in their social performing. 'We,' that is, as some multiple of 'me,' 'you' and 'him' do not properly speaking constitute a collective subject, which on the contrary is a plural intrasubjectivity in which each individual as such is but a partial element of the transindividual subject and in a certain sense does not even experience himself as independent of the biological others with whom he is grouped within it. This social subject is of course a plural subject and in the first instance it is its characteristic operations that serve to constitute it and then permit historical understanding to define it after that fact: We are our praxis and the transindividual subject is its. It is through praxis, moreover, that the world is experienced and life is expressed. In one way or another it is praxis and the social relations which are its vehicle that effect the development of cognitive skills, conceptions of logical relations, perception, and knowledge itself. Praxis, that is, is a mode of consciousness and the transindividual subject as a praxical subject is by virtue of that fact also a conscious, cognizing, conceiving, perceiving and knowing subject as well. What is more, this subject embodies a certain social character, which may be described as a modal
psychic structure developed out of its particular praxis, experience of the world, and conditions of existence. The transindividual subject is therefore also an affective subject and an intentional subject driven by a particularized and historical aim structure to realize an optimal coherence in its behavior, objectivations, and in the organization of the world of which it is the lived experience. Behind this collectivity, finally, stand concrete meanings and meaning structures related to its modal praxis, meaning structures which in the last analysis constitute the very essence of the collectivity itself and which find homologous expression in the diverse regions of its intentional life.

19.3 Among these latter, of course, is the Bauenswelt, and here too the transindividual subject pursues a certain coherence which it intends ongoingly, even though it never fully achieves it. The Bauenswelt, that is to say, is given as it is taken, and the collective subject, being unitary, tends toward a specific world unity as an end toward which its individual members move as they experience and organize their praxical lives. The Bauenswelt meant under these conditions -- and these are the only conditions under which it can really be meant -- is meant by a collective consciousness, a tendency of affect, ideation, intent common to and embodied in a plurality of individual consciousnesses but which transcends them toward
a transindividual coherence greater than that of any of its members taken separately. We may say then that historical Bauenswelten at the level of their greatest social significance are transindividually coherent, for behind the individual's experiencing of his Bauenswelt stands a certain suprapersonal sameness which characterizes his relationship to the experiencing of a collectivity of other men; and it is this transindividual subject which is ultimately the subject of historical and social action.

The seeming subjectivity of what is meant with surroundings is in fact therefore an historical microstructure. What he, she and they mean, they mean as individuals transcended by their transindividuality, as members of intentional collectivities defined by situation, praxis, meaning and consciousness. What they mean, for instance, they mean as members of a class, and in fact the collective subject as a praxical subject is perhaps above all a class subject, which through its particular praxis aims from its social situation at an ideal and a global coherence as its concrete response. Through its praxis, in addition, it also has its consciousness and through it it structures the regional meanings of its world as well. The Bauenswelt thus is a transindividual totalization, an ongoing structuration homologous with and related to the structures of the total life-process of praxical collectivities and of the concrete men that comprise them. The Bauenswelt,
in its objectivated moment, what is more, is equally the product of transindividual intentionality, for collective consciousness lies behind the collective actions\textsuperscript{381} that embed it in the world and it is through this praxis that transindividual experience is impressed on matter as form. Surroundings, which have already been described as sedimented institutionalizations of activities, may in the present context also be described as the sedimentation of certain transindividual coherences which lead an independent yet influential existence as some among the world's own facts.\textsuperscript{382} Surroundings manifest the relations of social praxis of which they are the product,\textsuperscript{383} that is to say, and this manifestation conditions the praxical relations of their subsequent subjects\textsuperscript{384} even to the point of imposing identities on them\textsuperscript{385} or serving as dispersion indices for successive collectivities.\textsuperscript{386} It goes without saying that the Bauenswelt is transformed along with its subjects, but over time the Bauenswelt as meant must also develop along with the surroundings themselves of which it is the meaning if it is to remain adequate to them,\textsuperscript{387} albeit in transindividual diversity.

19.4 Let it suffice here simply to adumbrate the task facing historical understanding if it is to comprehend and totalize the Bauenswelt in its transindividual particularizations. We may say in the most general sense that it must, first, reconstruct the global intentionalites
of groups in which it interests itself; second, reconstruct the situation by which they are conditioned; third, reconstruct the modal praxis by which these conditions are both transcended and preserved in this transcendence; fourth, reconstruct the specifically Bauenswelt-constituting praxical structures which are a moment of the englobing ones; and fifth, reconstruct the specific genesis and sense of the resulting relational field. Let it be said at once that this schema is not intended as a sequence. Knowledge, and particularly knowledge about man, develops dialectically and modal praxis is as little intelligible without Bauenswelt praxis as global intentionalities are without the praxis that gives them their place in the world. A Bauenswelt hermeneutic must therefore tolerate the very circularities in itself that endow the world it would know with the complexities that make knowing it worthwhile. But, after all, in this undertaking it is mind that would know mind;\(^{388}\) and if it and its works are not completely familiar, the task of knowing them better being therefore necessary, neither are they unutterably strange, the task of grasping them being therefore possible.\(^{389}\)

Such a hermeneutic must comprehend from within, but not necessarily relive, the transindividual meaning of the Bauenswelt, and it must do so with any technique at its disposal. What is ontologically determined about it will of course dictate in part the kind of knowing by which the
Bauenswelt might best be known in its historical structurations; but even so, for example, those techniques fruitful for the understanding of its objectivated moments will likely prove less so in relation to its others. In fact, whatever can contribute to seizing transindividual coherence will be of use, for what has to be comprehended is the experience of the world from which and through which a collective subject means its surroundings; and for the experience to be collective means that it tends toward a certain coherence, from which in turn a hermeneutic must reconstruct the supporting experience in its total significance. A Bauenswelt hermeneutic is thus but a region of a total hermeneutic which seeks the global coherence of which the Bauenswelt is a partial manifestation. Its object is the historical totalization of surroundings in the totalization of the historical subject. As such, it is a totalization of a totalization of a totalization, for historical understanding itself is the faculty of an historical subject, and its knowing of historical Bauenswelten becomes in turn a moment in the meaning of its own.

20. The historical inquiry is therefore an interested inquiry, and it is through awakening to this interest that we can become selfconscious in pursuing it. For as hermeneutical subjects we are moments of the same objective structure as our historical objects, and hence our understanding of them is in part our understanding of ourselves.
Such knowledge as we may have of historical Bauenswelten, that is to say, constitutes not science but consciousness, and through it we may better appreciate the meaning of our own Bauenswelt situation and the totality of its relations with our own ongoing social life. For we too are the subjects of history, and in our transindividual embeddedness we are among its significant subjects. That we do not live our lives as though this were the case is our fault and not history's, and becoming conscious is among other things becoming conscious of this fact. The everyday objectification of the Bauenswelt as architecture for example, is from another perspective its systematic desubjectification. This occlusion of the subject, however, is also the occlusion of society and history which therefore continue to function for us in everyday life as impersonal forces beyond our comprehension or control. But everyday life is on the contrary historical, even if it does not know itself as such, for it is the locus of the production and reproduction of the social life-process as it becomes over time. In and through everyday life actions and objects are kept in their proper order and through it also a hegemonic concept of social reality is spread among a collectivity by being embodied in its routines and in the organized appearances which they necessarily engender.

It is in this routinization of everyday life that its
power lies, for what helps sustain it on the social scale is precisely the collective inattention to it that routine naturally encourages. Far from living it wide awake we live it in a kind of stupor, and it is in this same stupor that we live our Bauenswelt as well, distractedly sensing our surroundings and absentmindedly heeding their commands in our ongoing praxical life. But routinization is not only the patterning of the kind of praxis we undertake but also the withdrawal of meaning itself from what we do in fact accomplish. For what we attend to routinely is that to which we are routinely inattentive, that from which meaning has fled and that which has become if not quite meaningless then simply not meaningful for us any longer. Meaning, however, is in turn the ground of action, or in this context, of changes in action, and therefore the routinization of praxis as the occlusion of its meaning is finally the appropriation of the ground for the transformation of this praxis. Here the significance of objectivated surroundings becomes clearer: As the delimitation of praxis, meaning, and consciousness they are finally the negation before the fact of the very action that might transform them. In the Bauenswelt, therefore, everyday life is reproduced, and with it the social system which is its support and which everyday life reproduces in its own reproduction.

Architecture is the reification of the Bauenswelt, and

*See p. 30ff.
in occluding subjectivity it occludes everyday life as well. But everyday life will not disappear of its own accord: It must willfully be transformed by praxis that means, and does and does what it means. It must be transformed by first bringing it to givenness in its apparent anonymity and then by acting on it in its social specificity. It must be transformed, that is, by recognizing that architecture hides the problem of which it is itself a part and that through recovering the Bauenswelt we can recover our own potency as historical subjects if we so choose. Without knowing the Bauenswelt, however, there is no choice, for there is no knowledge that there is a choice to be made. Without choice, moreover, there is no moral life, and in hiding our choices from us architecture hides from us our possibilities as total men. But this we can no longer tolerate: A theory of architecture has to be a theory of man.
II. PRACTICE

Certain Fragments of a Mid-Twentieth Century Bauenswelt:
A Psycho-Archaeology

Introduction. What follows is a circumscribed attempt to recover the Bauenswelt as it has been lived in an individual life. It is, in the usual sense of the word, true; but since there are no names none have had to be changed to protect those who are in any case innocent. For guilt, like architecture, is in the eye of the beholder, and what emerges on the following pages, albeit incompletely, is in our eyes but moments of the praxical constitution of a family and its surroundings in determined mututality. The account is necessarily provisional and incomplete and in certain respects even a failure. It does not succeed, for example, in effecting an époche of all preconceptions about experience, and in fact there are places below where the level of abstraction from what would appear to have been immediately given is high indeed. Yet this is a failure that paradoxically points to those ways in which the archaeology is successful. For in some measure is does succeed in deobjectifying surroundings and in seizing their meaning as they are lived and as they have actually been lived by one particular subject in his ongoing praxical life. As a concrete subject he necessarily came to this task.
with knowledge and experience and therefore with certain explanatory schemas which he employed in undertaking it. Some of these have filtered into the text, eluding the *epoché*; and once they were there, there they were allowed to remain. For our present task is more to establish a possibility than to practice a theory, and there appeared to be a curious sense in which the purity compromised by the presence of the schemas was more than compensated for by the authentic force they lent to the narrative and thus to the legitimacy of the possibility in question.

The question of this possibility is of course the question of the *Bauenswelt*, and it is one which this psycho-archaeology is meant to pose directly by excavating a particular lived experience of the world to unearth the presence within it of a particular lived experience of the *Bauenswelt*. In doing so we are actually undertaking the dual tasks of a *Bauenswelt* analysis simultaneously, contributing both to an ontology and to the *Bauenswelt's* transindividual and historical specification. We are on the one hand, that is, attempting to disocclude its fundamental structures; and on the other we are trying to particularize them and comprehend their concretely total meaning in the life of this praxical subject. The latter is the easier of the two tasks, certainly, and as little as either is really accomplished here it is nevertheless this one which is undertaken most successfully. The achievement of a truly transindividual specificity, however, is
beyond the purview of what follows -- except for the fact that the individual Bauenswelt is misunderstood if it is not seen as in some way typical, as a participant in overlapping transindividual meaning structures of increasing coherence and significance.

The psycho-archaeology as a technique is not a privileged one within the Bauenswelt hermeneutic, it is simply one that provides ready access to the Bauenswelt of another subject through a procedure that is basically Analytic. It is, in a certain sense, a symptomatic reading of the 'text' we and he collaboratively produce in our encounter. It is itself a species of praxis, of transformative activity, through which we attempt to penetrate to the other's problematic, to what it is about his living in the Bauenswelt that is essential, and then to rewrite the script of this lived experience by projecting and to a degree anticipating it. The result is therefore as much a product of ours as of our subject's: It is his life in the Bauenswelt that is our object, but it is only in its dialectical relation with ours in this task that his takes on its full meaning for him an thus for us. Our role, let it be clear, is not to impose an order or to create a sense. On the contrary. It is to bring to emergence meanings and structures of meanings that have already given his Bauenswelt its coherence from within.

What follows, finally, must for the present stand on its own. To mediate it -- that is, to explain or
annotate or analyze it -- would only be to lose what we have just now begun to recover. What follows, that is, is to be experienced and not at first thought about. It is to be lived and felt and rolled around the tongue. If it is thought at all at first, let it be our bodies that do the thinking. Later, when we better understand the curruption of our concepts and the occlusion of the world's true sense, we can return, in thought, to this life. But there are possibilities there that we must first begin to live before we can begin to think them anew.
I'm about four or five years old and I find myself in a huge barrel-vaulted space -- ornate, gilt, cavernous -- and I know I am looking for a bathroom there. As I walk along I see what must be the location of the toilets, but outside the door to this area sits a man wearing a uniform who tells me that I can't go in without my father. But, I reply, 'Papa non est a qui.' Then I wake up.

As the dream was ending I remember very clearly that I couldn't decide on the proper pronunciation for 'a qui,' whether to say it in Italian -- in which case the sentence would have meant 'Papa is not here' -- or in French -- in which case the sentence wouldn't have meant anything at all. Even so, the pronunciation bothered me. It wasn't until several days later, when my mind was on something else entirely, that I realized that the French pronunciation was also the English pronunciation -- although for a different word: key. So the sentence also meant, I discovered that 'Papa is not a key.' At that point I sat down and tried to reconstruct the detail of the dream and to work it out.

I wrote that the structure in which I found myself was 'ornate,' and recognized the term as one used by a friend of mine a couple of days earlier to refer to my parents' apartment, where I was staying at the time I was having this dream. I realized that 'gilt,' which on the one hand was a description of the decorative style of the barrel-vaulted structure, was on the other a description of a state of mind when spelt 'guilt.'
I wrote that the structure reminded me of a Roman Bath, perhaps the Baths of Caracalla, and remembered that the first night my girlfriend and I had stayed in that apartment a week earlier we had taken a bath in my parents' bathroom. In fact, what made the dream particularly interesting in general was that I had had it while sleeping in my parents' bed, where my girlfriend and I had stayed for a week and in which I was then sleeping alone while staying on in the City.

The decision to use the bed at all is one that has a history, and it began when I first started sleeping with girls and decided, the first time that the opportunity arose, that I would sleep in their bed when they weren't using it themselves. That state of affairs lasted a couple of years, during which time I presumably was not concerned with the pretty openly incestuous implications of what I was doing, or chose to ignore them. At that point, however, I remember becoming more concerned over this issue and deciding very explicitly that until I gave myself further notice we would use some other bed when staying in the apartment alone. That decision remained effective for another several years, at which time I recall feeling that I had mastered the conflicts, that in a sense I had matured beyond them, and once again could sleep in that double bed with psychological impunity. This pretty much has been the state of affairs during recent years, so that this time when my girlfriend and I were going to be in New York and my parents were not, I made a decision with very little thought or concern that the two of us would use the master bed and that the friends we were expecting could distribute themselves on the two single beds which are also in the apartment at the moment. After my girlfriend
left I continued to stay there, expecting to move out of the room when my father returned in about a week to spend several days in the City. It was during this time, when I was both sleeping alone in this bed and expecting his arrival in a couple of days, that I had the dream.

My declaration that 'Papa non est a key' means a couple of things to me. First of all, I think it is a declaration of independence of sorts: Whatever else I need my father for, I don't need him to go to the bathroom. This is not as insignificant as it may seem. In my family, there is a famous bit of 8mm film, shot by my father of my brother when he was three, which shows him being led by the hand by my uncle into a building over the door to which is written 'Men.' I remember very clearly that every time this film has been shown in the past, and it is a family favorite, it has occasioned great levity from those viewing it, as though they had never quite got over the incongruity of their son being a man. In this context it might not be outlandish to suggest that although there is no particular door in my life that reads 'Men' any longer, there is certainly a sense in which over the Bath-like apartment in which I was dreaming stands a sign on which is written 'Emperor.'

As a matter of fact, a couple of days after I had the dream, but also a couple of days before I realized consciously some of its significance, I was having dinner with my father, who had by then returned from my parents' house in the Alps, when we got into a minor dispute over whether or not the Emperor Claudius had succeeded Nero or had preceded him by
some years. I maintained the former, and my father the latter, the whole conversation having been occasioned by his telling me of a book he was reading at the moment about a plot to assassinate Nero. Of course both of us quickly realized that for each of us the primary source of our information was Robert Graves' *I, Claudius*, the threat of my Claudius to his Nero thus being the real issue between us, and the very confusion over the Roman succession simply mirroring a certain confusion that obtains in our family over the same thing. Any doubt I had about all this was annihilated when, as I was writing down my thoughts about the dream several days later, I committed a really classic slip of the pen that first embarrassed and then delighted me. I was writing, '...as I thought I was mastering the situation ...in which their bed was a signifier,' referring to the history of my decision to sleep or not to sleep in it. But instead of writing 'bed' I found myself writing b-e-a-, misspelling what I was setting out to spell and rhyming it instead with 'dead,' and writing the one along with the other.

Although I may seem to be placing a lot of importance on the Queen-size extra-firm Sealy Posture-pedic that takes up much of their bedroom, it seems to me that this bed has perhaps no more importance in my life than it has in the lives of the others of my friends with whom I was discussing my decision to sleep there while we were all in New York. Both my girlfriend and two friends of ours who were staying with us said that they had never slept in their parents' beds and would feel very strangely doing so, indicating
to me that although they have made one decision and I another, the power of the object and the grip of its symbolism is not lost on any of us. Whatever incestuous implications it might have had or might continue to have, in short, one thing that seems clear is that at least this part of the meaning of the Oedipal myth still applies: sleeping in that bed implies the murder of my parents or at least my father, and that is an idea that is both attractive and terrifying.

And so it is that I declare my independence in that ornate bath, and yet am aware at the same time that the scene of my act is 'guilt;' guilt that, by the way, is related not only directly to the murderous impulses I am betraying there, but that also has deeper roots in my past. I recently discovered them in going through some old letters I had written to my parents from camp. In one of these, for example, I wrote, 'Dear Ma and Pa, I may be in a baseball game against the thirteen year olds. I'm having a good time. I am on the top of the bad.' What I had meant to say, I think, was that I had gotten the top of a bunk bed, but once again my pencil told me something else. In another one of them, written a couple of years earlier, when I was eight, I answered a card of my mother's that had ended, 'We're fine here, everything has been very quiet, weather's been pleasant and not too hot, so that we haven't even wanted to go away for weekends.' I wrote back, 'Dear Mother and Father, I made two double plays here at camp. Please keep sending me the places of the sixteen teams. I hope you are still having a good
time snoozing in bed.' Whether or not I knew exactly what my parents did when they snoozed is perhaps moot, but I tend to think that I had some idea of what went on there, at least in general terms; and that alone would have made for the transformation of an anonymous piece of furniture into a symbol of great power in my life.

I was more or less prepared to understand all this as, shall we say, hangups of my own and a set of attitudes and fantasies which were the product of my own particular psychic constitution. I was prepared to understand it this way, that is, until I was discussing it with a friend of mine and realized in the course of doing so that, in fact, there was really no place for me and my girlfriend to sleep in that apartment other than in the double bed, my parents' bed, the one we chose to use. That there is no other double bed in an apartment of an American middle-class nuclear family may not be particularly extraordinary, since it is usually the perquisite of its mother and father; but that there is really no other bed at all worthy of the name is perhaps somewhat more notable.

This leads me to the second sense of my statement that 'Papa non est a qui.' It's perhaps less compelling even for me, but it points to facts certainly no less important than those I've been talking about so far. When I began to think over the dream I realized that the 'non est' part of the statement, which appears to be in Latin, a language I've never studied, can also be read as 'no nest.'
And I knew what that meant the minute I saw it this way.
When I was a Junior in college I worked for days without
letup on an art history paper in which I was attempting
to unravel the iconography of a fourth-century ivory
reliquary, on one side of which a Crucifixion was portrayed
for one of the very first times in Western art. But not
only Christ was pendant there, for next to him was Judas,
hanged by his neck from a tree. And in this tree I discovered
something totally ignored in the voluminous literature on
the box: a nesting bird and its two chicks. This little
domestic scene became my fixation.

Although I no longer remember the details of my analysis,
I recall that I saw Judas' juxtaposition with that nest
an an allusion to his refusal of Christ's call to 'Cast
aside thy father and thy mother and follow me.' The actual
association of nest, bed, home and family was made in Matthew,' and I cited it as the clincher:

Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have
nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay
his head. Another of the Disciples said to him,
'Lord, let me first go and bury my father.'
But Jesus said to him, 'Follow me and leave the
dead to bury their own dead.

I rather fancied this bit of work, even though it was
really a little far-fetched; it compelled me. But what
interests me here is not so much the accuracy of this analy-
sis as the compulsion under which I remember working on
it and the instantaneous recollection I had of this experience
when I re-read 'non est' as 'no nest.'
For me there are hints here of a whole range of feelings that I've been aware of for years about the nature of our home and our family and about something I've often aluded to consciously as the lack of 'roots.' This refers, first of all, to the fact that my family history trails off two generations back into the darkness of the Holocaust and the shtetls of late nineteenth-century eastern Europe. Secondly, it refers to a more personal, ontological unrootedness which is more directly a function of the specific details of my life and that of my immediate family. The dream points to this in the play between 'Papa non est a qui,' which is a literal statement in the literal context of my dream that my father is not in Europe, Rome, and that he is also not in New York, where I am dreaming -- and between 'no nest,' understood figuratively as evoking my general experience of lacking a place, lacking roots, lacking a home. In short, my father isn't around, but then there's no nest anyway. To paraphrase Gertrude Stein, there's no here, here; or in the language of my dream, 'non est a qui, a qui.'

To begin with, other than my parents' bed, there really is no place for two people to stay together in that apartment, or really for one person to sleep alone comfortably. This situation is the fruit of the last two redecorations of the apartment, the first undertaken after my brother and I went off to college nine or ten years ago; and the second some six years after that, when the whole
place was once again refurbished, recovered, repainted, repapered. So few are the signs of my and my brother's tenancy in that apartment that friends of mine who come there for the first time invariably ask me where my room is and then have to be told that, well, you see, where the sitting room is now was once my room and over there, where the library is, was once my brother's.

I think even a trained investigator would be hard put to find traces of us beyond the few pieces of clothing stored there temporarily and some of the books from our high school days which still line the shelves along with some piles of old homework. So thorough has this housecleaning been that, as I said, even our beds no longer remain and have been replaced by sofas of one sort or another, each of course in keeping with the prevailing decorative style of its room. They are meant, it is said, to double as beds when necessary, but they prove to be relatively uncomfortable because of their somewhat irregular and slightly smaller size. Even for one person the bed in my room, or what was once my room, is relatively inadequate for a family that otherwise does not skimp on the essentials or even by-and-large on the luxuries of life.

So it was that I chose and then found myself in my parents' bed, a decision that was undoubtedly overdetermined but which is not yet completely transparent to me. What emerges from this, however, is that although my role in putting myself there is obvious, the family itself would seem to have played a part in making that choice a logical
one and perhaps in many ways even an appropriate one. To put it plainly and perhaps crudely, the apartment was redecorated into a place where, given the not unlikely eventuality that I and a girlfriend would be there in my parents' absence, we would have little choice but to occupy that master bed and in it to experience the conflicts which accompany that action.

What this means is something that I have a great deal of difficulty unraveling. If I felt guilt being in that bed, which I did, then it seems there was a kind of familial collusion in placing me in the situation where I would feel it. If there were conflicts over oedipal murder, and there seem to have been, then the family seems to have conspired together to provide them with a locus. And if there is confusion about succession, and there seems to be, then too the family as a whole seems to feed it. And if, finally, I have experienced for much of my life, and have experienced consciously for much of my adult life the sensation of rootlessness, of homelessness -- then I have to enquire further into the ways in which my family conspired with itself through its activity to produce these very feelings.

In fact, so little did I feel at home in that apartment on the day of my father's arrival that when his secretary called me early in the morning to ask if I would drop his extra pair of glasses downstairs with the doorman to be picked up, I rushed downstairs so quickly that I left
behind me the key to the apartment and had to round up
a ladder and climb back in through the second-story window.
It was as though I had recapitulated in its true setting
the experience of my dream, in which I had been forbidden
to enter the Bath -- that ornate, gilt and Imperial structure --
without the accompaniment of my father.
The irony of the idea that the family conspired with itself through its activities to produce my feelings of rootlessness is that in retrospect it's very clear to me that the idea of house and the idea of home had enormous power and significance for them as they saw their lives lying before them, as my mother put it, like some 'Road to Happiness.' Precisely how their feelings compare with those of their contemporaries in intensity I can't really judge, but of the strength of their feelings I have no doubt. Since their marriage my parents have lived in four different apartments in New York, occupied a different summer house every summer until I was fifteen, and then in rapid succession have acquired a beach house on Long Island and a ski house in the Alps. Four apartments in thirty years is actually not even up to the American median of one move every five years, and I can only speculate about what the effect is on families which are average in this respect. All I know is my own experience, if I know that.

I recently came across a card which my mother made and then gave to my father on their fifth anniversary. I found it extraordinary and I think it tells much of the story in a very direct way. The cover of the card announces its theme, 'Five Years of Marriage: The stick figures of Road to Happiness,' by showing my mother, father, brother and me on that road -- which is bordered by several trees and a house with smoke curling from its chimney. Each

...
successive year of the marriage is accorded a page in the card, and as the family grows the card shows it superimposed on floor plans of the apartments we occupied. For example, in 1943 my parents are shown in the plan of an apartment on West 20th Street, an arrow to my mother's womb indicating my impending arrival; 1944 finds us housed anew in a Washington Heights floor plan and my brother on the way to join us.

In the card my mother's association of family fortune with the increasing size and comfort of the family abode is conscious. For 1946 she writes that the 'great wide world has heard of this marvelous couple and rewarded them with worldly goods.' Finally, in '1947 and after' on the last page of the card we find the family back on that same road, striving toward the horizon, 'much happiness' and 'at least 25,000 plus Yale for the boys.'

So whatever housing may have meant to my parents, it was never unimportant; and particularly never unimportant to my mother, whose card this was and whose sentiments it was expressing. But it was actually my father who seems to have done most of the leg work looking for each new familial site. Even the apartment on West 20th Street, soon to be surpassed, was rented in the midst of a war-induced housing shortage; and I know from family legend that he found it only after walking up and down every street in most of lower Manhattan knocking on doors to discover vacancies. I know that the apartment into which we moved in 1949, when I was five, was one we got only after my father, again
according to accounts that have become part of family tradition, went daily to the office of the renting agent to bring flowers to his secretary.

In fact, as important as the house is for my mother, and as much energy as she has spent redecorating and keeping them spotless, it was my father who seems to have been charged with performing a series of housing miracles. These consisted of finding the apartments and, when the family prospered and began to take vacations, of securing for us ideal hotel accommodations in resorts at high season when the experts said it couldn't be done under any circumstances or at any price. My father, who impressed me very early with his magic, either seems to have accomplished the impossible many times or with my mother to have clothed the plausible in the garb of the incredible, thereby creating a myth which still has power over me. A few years ago it was still so potent that before a vacation with my girlfriend in Spain I fretted for days about how to land the required kind of quaint hotel rooms. It was only after I had succeeded that I realized where that impulse had come from and under what kind of anxiety I had been laboring.

What my father miraculously procured my mother turned into a showpiece of one kind or another. I don't remember that first apartment on 187th Street very well, but I remember quite well the Peter Cooper Village apartment into which we all moved when I was five. For a family living
on what must have been a modest income it seems to me that my parents spent a lot of money on furnishing that apartment, even constructing quite elaborate built-in units in the living room and in both bedrooms and dropping the ceiling elsewhere to define a dining area.

My father took a great deal of pride in the results, and in fact I might say it was a somewhat inappropriate pride. In 1950, when he and my mother were taking painting lessons, he sat down and did a watercolor of the newly furnished living room showing the built-in breakfront with its cabinets and open bookshelves, some custom shutters, and a pair of couches and lamps separated by a hexagonal, dark wood, glass-topped coffee table. I can actually remember him setting up the easel in one corner of the room to do the watercolor and I still have a visceral recollection of his pleasure when it was done.

That very fall the painting was printed up as a card and sent out each December for three or four years with the greeting, 'From our Home to Yours.' Until recently I had never been struck by how essentially peculiar that greeting card really was: Although it's not necessarily surprising that a beginning watercolorist turned to his apartment for a still life study, it does strike me as eccentric that he then displayed that scene -- devoid of any inhabitants -- across the inside of a Christmas card. But such was his pride.
And yet, with all the attention lavished on our houses, there is a sense in which I was never really secure in them. Before we moved to Peter Cooper we were living in Washington Heights on the top floor of a five-storey brick apartment building dating from the 1920's or early 30's. As do most such buildings, this one had a primitive elevator which moved painfully slowly and which started and stopped with a jolt, giving rise to grave doubts about its stability and permanence. By the time we moved into our eleventh-floor apartment in Peter Cooper, where the elevators were modern, I had developed a fullblown fear of all elevators.

This made it quite difficult for me to lead an independent life, which at five years meant going off to the playground when I wanted to; and it meant that I had to be accompanied up and down the elevator whenever I came or went. Within weeks or months of our move my father seems to have resorted to a direct assault on my problem. He took me bodily and more or less threw me into a down elevator, sending me the eleven floors to the ground without company. In spite of that treatment I remained terrified and believed it had a will and a consciousness of its own which had to be appeased by me. I would make entreaty each time I had to use it, begging please Mr. Elevator don't stop, don't get stuck; and that continued for a long time.

And if I wasn't secure there, in the precincts of my building, I wasn't comfortable in some of the world around it either. A year or two later my father decided that it
was time my brother and I learned how to get to school ourselves by public transportation. Until then we had been members of a car pool, but it had folded and my father was taking us to school himself, leaving home some thirty minutes before he otherwise would have gone to work. Recently I came across a couple of pages he had typed out at the time about what happened, and it's clear from them that those lost minutes alone with my mother were valuable ones to him. For this and other reasons, according to his own account, one night he casually mentioned the possibility of a 10¢ increase in our allowances if we could manage to make the trip by ourselves every morning. After many days of building up our courage, debating our tactics and staging dry runs with my father in passive attendance, the morning for the solo arrived. Even my body still remembers it clearly.

We were late, dashed downstairs in the company of my father and rushed onto the bus waiting at the stop. Only as this bus began to veer off its customary route did I begin to get afraid. I took hold of my brother's hand and held it tighter and tighter as the bus departed ever further from the course I knew. At each intersection I held my breath, hoping that now it would head toward my school. But it didn't; instead of going downtown it went crosstown on busy 23rd Street. With each avenue that we crossed I became more convinced that we were on the wrong bus; and with each I became more afraid to leave it.

Finally, almost at the line's end, we got off and
hand-in-hand walked back over the route, across avenues choked with trucks, down sidewalks awash with people, under the El -- across Manhattan, up that elevator and up to our apartment door. There we rang and rang, and got no answer. We were there, home, but couldn't get inside. Grim, we walked several blocks to a friend's house, where his mother got mine on the phone: She had been in the shower and hadn't heard the doorbell.

We were reunited and we carried on as before; but if I blamed my father for having put us on the wrong bus, I was deeply upset by my mother's 'deafness.' I still carry with me a picture of us at that door, ringing. Steely, cold, impregnable, that door was announcing the disappearance of our haven, home.

In fact our home, in a certain sense, seems to have been chronically ephemeral. This is not to say that in the day to day conduct of our lives it wasn't there for us to sleep, eat and play in. Rather, it is to suggest that at certain critical moments the house -- as it had that morning -- seemed inaccessible or indeed almost appeared to vanish beneath our feet. Some eleven years later and two years after I went to college, for example, my parents redecorated for the third or fourth time the apartment in the Village into which we had moved when I was eleven. It was during this redecoration that any real trace of my presence was obliterated, my bed included, the house in a manner of speaking vanishing and reappearing in a vastly different form six or seven months later.
Changes of a similar magnitude have been wrought on the beach house my parents bought during my years in college, and on the house in the Alps, where once again they have succeeded in confounding the builder's original intentions by knocking down walls and recreating rooms and spaces. Although I have never had much to do with either house, or left any traces within them, I'm beginning to appreciate through their fate how this process might well have looked to a young member of the family. There is within my parents, for a variety of reasons, a rage to transform; and in sweeping the apartments before itself this force, I now realize, constituted a grave threat to my rootedness.

For much of my life, however, I remained proud of these changes and of many other less total transformations that periodically overtook our apartments and houses. Moreover, I remained particularly proud of the fact that my mother's taste always seemed striking and appropriate in conceiving and executing them. I can remember how she first did the Washington Square apartment in whites and neutral shades, producing with her reasonably modest budget an impression of a smart modernism neither Danish nor faddish. This at any rate is how things appeared to me then, and how they continued to appear over the years, particularly since I took pride in my own taste and felt that for the most part I had learned it at my mother's knee.

She once told me she had got a taste for the better things in life at her mother's, where the fact that they
were all going to have them was never much indoubt. Her Uncle Nathan, to use one of her own examples, lived with them for a couple of years while he was working as a waiter at the Waldorf; and as a result he brought home as his contributions to Sunday breakfasts not the usual fare on which recently immigrated families were used to dining, but food even the knowledge of which was largely privileged. As my mother put it: 'I knew what blue cheese was before I knew what cream cheese was.' And I think that this probably accurately expresses both how she sees herself and a certain reality about that family. My grandmother, for instance, refused to teach either my mother or her two sisters how to sew and cook, believing that if they knew how to perform these womanly tasks they would be fated to perform them. As it turned out, all three sisters went to college and became professional women. It was, therefore, in accordance with the tastes and ambitions born of this experience that my mother went about ephemeralizing, transforming our homes.
My grandmother, by the way, is presently suffering from some of the aftereffects of the family situation from which my mother's taste sprung. For several years now she has been having limited but persistent 'hallucinations' and has been on the verge of a low order 'paranoia;' and I think some of it can be understood by looking to this home and family life as both a source of injury and of symbolic material with which to express it. At first, when she was living alone in The Bronx apartment that she had shared with her husband before his death years ago, she began reporting that she heard a 'knocking' sound in the wall which her bedroom shares with another apartment. Over a year or so these interruptions apparently became more frequent, louder, more intrusive and increasingly better-timed to annoy her and disrupt her life. She insisted, during the two years that she remained there, that a certain woman who lived in the abutting apartment was responsible for her torment and that she was willfully ruining my grandmother's life with her 'knocking.' Finally, remaining convinced of her tormentor's identity and intent, my grandmother left that place, simply unable to live in it any longer. Her children found her an apartment in an expensive residence hotel on 72nd Street near the Park and began paying the substantially increased rent for her.

It wasn't long after she moved in, however, that she began reporting that some of the hotel staff had been entering the apartment in her absence, wearing her clothes,
stealing her food, taking baths in her tub without cleaning it afterward, and eventually even wearing out her furniture and clothing. In the three years she has been there, and despite several elaborate lock installations, so these violations have become/increasingly personal and frequent that she no longer keeps her clothes there or stocks any food. She is in constant motion between the apartments of her children where she changes her clothes and eats. In all other respects she is completely lucid and insightful, and in fact has had some fairly devastating things to say to me about various members of the family. But she remains firmly convinced that she is the victim of this hotel staff, which disrupts her life, damages and uses up her possessions.

Searching for origins, we should go back to the root; or perhaps to where that root was torn up or abused. During the time that Uncle Nathan was living there and bringing home the blue cheese another brother of his and my grandfather's was sharing a room with him and also working in another hotel as a waiter. A year or two after they moved in, the sister of these three brothers arrived from Europe two months pregnant and also moved in, to be joined after their child was born by her husband, for whom Nathan got a job as a hotel bookkeeper. My grandmother and grandfather were apparently so solicitous of this sister and her young family that they moved out of their bedroom and slept on
the living room couch so that she might have the comfort and privacy of a room of her own.

Some months after these arrangements were made the sister's family moved out, only to move back into its own apartment a floor or two below my grandmother in that same, small building. Nathan and his brother moved downstairs to their sister's apartment shortly thereafter, and from then on, according to my grandmother, she never really saw her sister-in-law and only rarely her husband's brothers for whom she had kept house for years. In fact her own husband, my grandfather, spent much of his free time downstairs with his natural family playing cards, talking and even taking them all out for rides in his Model T on their days off while his wife minded the kids.

My grandmother remembers all of this with what I took to be bitterness but which she denied was anything of the sort. It's not hard to imagine, though, that whatever she gained in the way of privacy and peace she more than lost in the way of jealousy and peace of mind. It's not hard to imagine, further, her ears constantly pricked up for any sound from below, evidence of all that activity from which she was excluded and of that woman's tormenting presence.

three years ago

Moving to the hotel/got rid of that 'knocking,' but at a price. Here she became prey to that same force which had first disrupted and misused her home by staying in it, and had then haunted her life by leaving it. That is to say, both places had a hotel staff. Nathan, as a matter
of fact, occasionally arrived from the Waldorf with crumbs from the tables of the rich for the Sunday breakfasts; and even though these were putatively 'leftovers' brought home with the cook's permission, there is room here for prevarication. His brother, my grandmother readily informed me, was not above out-and-out pilfering on his hotel job; and about the sister's husband I can only speculate. But here, again, it's not hard to imagine that my grandmother's long-suppressed resentment at their very presence in her home, at the inevitable domestic irritations it caused, has become symbolically transformed into the anonymous deprivations of a real hotel staff. Imagine a household that explodes from a mother and a father and two children, to a mother, father, two children, four more additional adults and a young infant/—imagine this and you may understand how my grandmother, against her will perhaps, perceived it as a house invaded, a house soiled, a house stolen, a house violated.

The measure of this pain is that her reports of victimization at the hotel are invariably followed by loving reminiscences of the home in eastern Germany in which she and her family lived until she was fourteen, when her father died and she emigrated to escape her mother's new husband. According to her it was a fine, large house built at a crossroad, with four bedrooms, barns and outbuildings. Its location made it ideal for an inn, and it was often filled with the sounds of people who had come
to see her father, and the cheer of soldiers on manoeuvres stopped for the night. She tells proudly of the local Count who used to arrive regularly to pick out a choice cow for his herd from her father's stock; and there was much additional coming and going related to the family's other commercial activities. As she recalls the home of her youth, therefore, it was a busy, warm place. It was a farm, it was a school, it was an inn, it was a place where her father would have become 'another Rockefeller' had he lived.

But now, of course, she has no place and spends her life resting for the night at her hotel and moving by day from one of her children's apartments to the other. Meanwhile, the apartment she left in The Bronx because of the 'knocking' has been declared part of an Urban Renewal Area, has had every building around it for acres leveled into a sea of rubble, and has become the property of a Puerto Rican community development corporation charged with its renovation and management.

Whatever sense of home she had in Germany she has lost progressively as hers was first overrun by a hotel staff and then as the delayed and transformed anger at that violation forces her even now from the only rooms she can call her own. And so she stays on at that hotel, in an apartment she says is attractive but is hellish nonetheless, her life having been a transit from one inn, run by her family, to another, occupied by its malevolent spirits.
Several of the apartments in which my father lived as a child have also become parts of Urban Renewal Areas in Brooklyn, but even before this fate overtook them it was apparent that the neighborhoods were no longer what they had been when he grew up in them. I saw this for myself one Sunday when I was about ten when my father took my brother and me on a tour of where he had lived. He drove us with great energy from one end of Brooklyn to the other, stopping three or four times to point out the third-storey window of a tenement, a delicatessen or a candy store where he had worked after school, or another spot of personal importance.

Once, when I remarked that a neighborhood didn't look as poor as I had expected it to from his description of his childhood, he stopped to make sure that I fully understood and appreciated his account. Actually, he and his older sister have habitually disagreed about just how poor their family was, she insisting that in fact they were somewhat better off than he remembers; and he insisting that in fact they were so poor that at least once they had been evicted for not paying the rent. Whichever account really fits the facts, he took great pleasure in showing us how much better we were living than he had; and he unquestionably numbered this as one of his great accomplishments as the head of his own family.

I didn't understand what this history fully meant until several years ago when I went to work for New York's Urban Renewal agency. For my first task I had to survey a
small part of the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn in preparation for the relocation of tenants, the demolition of buildings and the construction of a new housing project there. The area then hosted a strange although typical mixture of dirt-poor and wretchedly housed Spanish-speaking residents and the rundown remnants of what had once been a major Jewish shopping district.

Several weeks later I was telling my father of my new job and first task when he asked me what part of Williamsburg I was talking about, and then what particular streets I had been surveying, and then which buildings were to be torn down. And then he told me: It was right there, there where I was walking, that my father's father had first opened a small provision company from which he sold frankfurters and other kosher meats. I had heard about this little business many times from my father, and right then I was overcome by my fate.

I, who felt rootless, had been brought full circle to the point of origin of my family; and I, who valued my roots, was there to destroy them.

At the same time, fate had decreed that this family circle be completed only as part of a larger social pattern over which we were individually powerless. My grandfather, an immigrant, opened a shop in an immigrant section of an immigrant city. His grandson, now college-educated, assimilated, and from a different class, returned to play his role in his time just as surely by tearing down what his grandfather's had built. It is the kind of fearful symmetry that gives the lie to any notion of free will.
We had merely recapitulated and carried forward in our own lives the history of our time.
There are other, less dramatic ways to collide with history than to Renew a family site out of existence. I suppose that we recognize these ways daily when we speak both of our lives and history 'taking place;' for inevitably, on occasion, they must take the same place. We ask each other, for example, where were you when Kennedy was shot, or when the war ended, or the bombs fell -- seemingly fascinated by the unexpected collision of historical significance with everyday existence. Doing this, we map history onto our lives, transferring to the latter some of the drama and meaning of the former. But we also execute the inverse operation, mapping our lives onto history, endowing the impersonal events around us with special and even idiosyncratic importance. Mapping in the first way, we historicize our person; doing it in the second, we personalize the history.

I have done much of the second, and have done it in a consistent fashion. I carry around in my head a group of tableaux, static images of me and my home at historic moments or during historic times. They are almost emblem-like in their power to weld place, agent and event into an evocative sign for me. The years at Peter Cooper are particularly rich in these set-pieces, and they point to personal meanings consistent with those I've already talked about before. I see myself standing in front of the break-front in the living room. I am alone and listening to the radio. The news is on: An announcement: Stalin, ruler of Russia, is dead. I am still listening to the radio. There is a discussion between experts: Is this a good time to
attack Russia? It is leaderless, confused. The experts are undecided, but the idea is not rejected.

I see myself on the threshold of my parents' bedroom. It is the afternoon and I am just home from school. My mother is watching television, as she has been every afternoon for weeks. She is completely absorbed in it. I know the show is very important to her. If I'm quiet I can watch too. It is the Army-McCarthy Hearings.

I am asleep in my bed. It is late. My parents, who have been out, open the door and tiptoe in. The hall light falls across the floor. As they tuck me in I turn over and ask, 'Who won?' 'Eisenhower,' they reply. 'Oh-h no-o' I complain bitterly as I turn around under my covers.

My brother has, let me add, a similar tableau of his own from those years: He is in bed. It is dark. It is night. It is the Korean War! He is waiting for the bombs to fall.

I'm not going to squeeze the power out of these things by talking them dry; they are eloquent on their own behalf. All I really want to add is that the fantastic anxieties and disappointments that are experienced here are, I believe, mappings onto history of our life-experiences. In that apartment, transformable and ephemeral, we personalized that history and then reappropriated it as fact -- frozen as a moment, as a place, as a meaning.
When Kennedy was shot I was a good ten years older and in College, but I associate it nonetheless with another domestic tableau: I am seated in front of a television with my father. We are in a fancy hotel suite. I say to him, 'Wouldn't it be incredible if Osawld were killed.' A few minutes later we are watching as Ruby shoots him.

This particular weekend I had returned to New York to see my parents and had joined them at the hotel in which they were staying while their apartment on Washington Square was being redecorated once again. This time it was a really monumental transformation, and it was such a job and took so much longer than expected, that they had actually been forced to move out and take up residence in the hotel. They took a three or four room suite in a fancy place on Park Avenue in the mid-50's and it was there that I stayed that weekend, the weekend that Kennedy was assassinated. That was November 22, six full months after the start of the redecoration.

In June of that year all of us had moved out for the summer to a house in Connecticut, expecting to return and reoccupy the apartment again in September when the work was completed. That was not to happen and, in fact, it was to be several more months after that November day until my parents were able to move into what was even then an only partially completed home. This whole incident, from start to finish, is one of the more amazing in my family's history and illustrates better than any other the almost pathological dimensions of my parents' rage to transform, improve and metamorphose the places in which we lived.
It's important to get some perspective on this affair: In the eight or nine years between the time we had moved to Washington Square and this major upheaval, the apartment had been repainted or carefully reorganized on two or three occasions; but evidently not to my parents' satisfaction. My own room, I remember, had mutated several times, starting out with green walls and ending up with white, another shade or two having adorned them in the interim. My bed had migrated from one part of the room to another; my desk had changed shape several times, growing larger and larger until it occupied all of one wall and extended perpendicularly into the center of the room. The rug had disappeared at least once; and bookshelves had come and gone along different walls, becoming ever more numerous in order to handle my stock. And this was the norm, for much the same things had been happening at the same times to the rest of the apartment. I remember, for example, that at one point my brother had a desk which placed him at one end of his room with his back to the window, and that at another he had a desk which placed him along the opposite wall facing in the opposite direction. And so it went.

But upon our departure for college my parents were overcome by an urge of a different magnitude and they set out to transform the place totally. They hired a decorator to assist my mother in drawing up the plans and choosing the appropriate furnishings, not an unusual thing for them to do, even though my mother had a very strong sense of what she wanted -- or at least that's how I remember her as being and how she still impresses me as having been. In collaborating
with this decorator whatever plans she may have started with became either formalized or altered into a complete restructuring of the entire apartment and a virtually complete replacement of its furniture and amenities.

That summer the four of us lived in Connecticut while the apartment was being worked on; and even though I commuted to a job in the City, I didn't see what was happening to it. Only months later when I ran into an old friend of mine and I heard what the rest of the world had seen of that apartment's upheavals did I appreciate their drama. The structural changes worked out by my mother and her decorator were so extensive that a demolition chute had been installed from our second floor window, and the rubble from one room after the other hurled down it, amidst clouds of dust, to dumptrucks parked on the street below. He and other people whom he met, he told me, had been just wondering if we had all/simply moved away.

Indeed, we had moved away: The decorator and my mother had together engineered the displacement of my family. First for two months, and finally for over half a year, we had to live elsewhere; and during this time it became apparent that the dis-location was more than merely physical. My father, I believe, had never been happy about having to move out, and as the exile lengthened his relations with my mother deteriorated. Living in a hotel, even a small and plush hotel, was simply no substitute for having a home, they discovered. Once the novelty wore off, even
the convenience of being able to work to work was not sufficient compensation for having to live on the Upper East Side when my father preferred his home in the Village. Of my mother's ultimate preference in the way of neighborhoods I'm not so sure but, in any case, it was my father's unhappiness which was critical in the whole affair.

What was done to the apartment during this time is really difficult to describe, but to give you an inkling of what happened I'll simply say that it's not only the absence of my bed that leads my friends to ask me where my room is. To begin with, the closets in my and my brother's room were sealed off and another access to this new space was created to form a walk-in bar and sound center for the stereo, tape deck and radio. A door was cut from what had been my brother's room to the living room, further destroying its utility as a separate bedroom. The kitchen was enlarged by sealing off the door to what had been a small maid's room used as a study by my father, and capturing part of it for a new cooking area. A new door was cut to turn the remainder of this space into a new study, slightly smaller but much better equipped. What had been two closets in the entrance gallery were joined into a single, large one with internal cabinetry; and roughly the same thing was done with the two closets in a dressing area of my parents' bedroom.

An enormous amount of carpentry was also required by the new design. In what had been my room two whole walls...
were reconstructed, one into floor-to-ceiling bookshelves and the other into a sort of inverted 'U' storage space under which my problematic 'bed' was now placed. My brother's room was turned into a library with wall-to-wall bookshelves along two walls; along a third, which faced the Park, a pair of falsely-arched French windows; and in the fourth a sunken recess for the television, concealed by a framed drawing hinged at the top which could be opened to expose the set and closed to hide it. The living room was panelled with rough packing crate wood and a window which had been placed eccentrically in one corner was mortared up. In my parents' bedroom a set of shutters was installed on the four arched windows; but because there was no wall surface on which to fold them back when open, an elaborate superstructure was built a foot into the room to conceal them in a position perpendicular to the window surface. Along the whole length of the facing wall an armoire was built for my father, further narrowing the room by another two feet. In the adjoining dressing room, where the two closets had been merged, another whole wall was appropriated for the construction of additional closet space.

I'm not even going to describe the dropped ceilings in the bar and the study, the desk and shelf arrangement in the latter, cabinetry in the kitchen and dining room, or simply the incidental carpentry on the period doors and moldings. The point is that there was not a single room in the house which in that six months was not either altered in dimension, through the movement of walls or doors, or totally in appearance, through the installation of major
built-in cabinetry, shelving or other work.

In addition to this, most of the furniture was replaced with either real or simulated Louis XV pieces and commensurate changes were also made in wallpaper and accessories. Let's just say that it was quite a job; and particularly so since the apartment was not and is not now a co-op. The money they spent on structural changes and major carpentry, therefore, they will not get back. Even simply in economic terms all this change has never made a lot of sense to me; and in terms of what it did and perhaps still continues to do the the family, it has made even less.

The decorator was, clearly, a homosexual: At the height of the turmoil over what was happening and how much it was costing and how inconvenient it was becoming, my father angrily insisted to my mother that it was all a homosexual plot of his against the men of the family. He reminded her that this guy had been going around New York taking on jobs like this one and very often escalating them into operations of similar magnitude and duration, prolonging the agony of the families, the men of which then presumably suffered as my father did. Whether or not his assertion is literally valid, or was even meant to be, it is certain that a kind of collusion had developed between my mother and her decorator in their attempt to put through their plans for the apartment and then execute them satisfactorily. And whether or not my father was correct in insisting that the decorator's intention had been to destroy all the families which hired him, it is without doubt the case that he succeeded in creating a great deal of stress in ours.
I only know of one other family which used this guy -- and it was destroyed. They were friends of my parents and had undertaken their transformation a couple of years before we had ours; my mother even may have chosen the decorator based on what she had seen of his work there. This would be revealing, because even though they hadn't been forced from their home by the work on it, they found it so expensive that they could only afford to do one room at a time. For five or six years, therefore, they lived in an apartment somewhere on the Upper East Side which was largely uninhabitable. Finally, the year it was more or less finished, I happened to pick up the New York Times one morning and read, on the front page I think, that the husband had been indicted for embezzling funds from trusts which his law firm handled. He was subsequently tried, convicted and sentenced to a year, which he served. Whether or not this was in fact a decorator's revenge I can't say, but I don't doubt for a minute that in addition to all the other financial pressures to which he was subject and which he met by stealing, his wife's pressure to redecorate was substantial and very possibly conclusive.

Fortunately, my father's business was profitable enough to spare him the fate of his friend. But the strains of the eight-month exile were long in the resolving. In their rage to transform their home they had displaced themselves, and in displacing themselves they had negated what they sought to transform in the first place. This is particularly
true since I've long felt that the displacement was, in a certain sense, permanent, that the apartment emerging from the redecoration was never as comfortable or as warm as it had been before it.

What is more, the sequence of events has a dramatic quality about it, the quality of a play or of a display staged for the benefit of unnamed others. This is not to suggest that it didn't have intra-familial meaning, but simply that this by itself is not sufficient to explain what went on in its full richness and complexity. Quite apart from the decorative results, which were obviously meant for others' eyes as well as our own, just consider the process by which they were achieved. The old friend I had encountered after the redecoration was but one of a number who had noticed all the activity and had speculated about it, and this was inevitable. Our apartment faces on Washington Square, the hub of the neighborhood, and is completely open to the eyes of our friends and neighbors. People repair to the Park sooner or later and in doing so that just had to see what was happening to our place.

This was no quiet redecoration, remember. We had workmen by the dozen, dump trucks, a chute, dust, noise and God knows what else. If this was mystifying to others, so much the better --we've cultivated mystery, too. Consider also the dramatic move out of the apartment and into a suite of rooms at the hotel; the changes of phone number
and address required in scores of little black books all over the City. And consider, too, those neighbors of our own, whose windows overlooked our own at and angle, who had been for yeas in the habit of very openly keeping track of how we were living our lives.

There was about our activity, in short, the aura of life lived at least in part for others. My mother's fifth anniversary card for my father, for example, had said at one point that 'the great wide world heard of this marvelous couple and rewarded them with worldly goods' -- the rare conscious articulation of a fantasy that more often remained latent, but was none the less powerful for that fact. It was a need far more compelling than simply to keep up with the Jonses and to let them know it. This kind of simple status exhibitionism counted for something, of course. But I am suggesting that their rage to transform was in part the product of their urge to be public, and further that this transcends mere show and goes right to their core as people, defining in an important way how they are in the world.
We were not simply an all-American family living out the generalized success fantasies which were current, although it might have been easier on all of us if that had been the case. We had always been meant to be successful, of course, 'Yale and 25,000' is ample proof of that fact. But however conventional those goals appear to be, they were never the only ones proposed to me, and even when they were held up it was not without ambivalence. Living in the Village, to begin with, is a sufficiently unusual choice to raise questions about how my parents saw themselves and the family. To be sure, there were good reasons for living there. My school was there, and my friends, and perhaps it was just something they could afford then, unlike the Upper East Side. But they could have afforded the suburbs, or Queens, or the Upper West Side, and certainly most people who could made one of those choices instead. But my parents, I am sure, never really considered living anywhere but Manhattan, and during our first years in the Village my father used to incant his reasons for preferring it to the rest of the Borough: He could 'wear Bermuda shorts while walking the dog' is the way he was used to putting it. This informality -- not bohemian certainly but exercised in the midst of bohemians -- was not to be found elsewhere, he believed, or only at the cost of ridicule. And, remember, this was 1955, and he was probably right.

The Village became an identity for me and for my brother and we quickly learned that living there made us special in the eyes of other people. The Village, of course,
was also special in its own right, and we reaped the rewards of having a park outside our window, a real neighborhood all around, and the heart of the City only minutes uptown. But quite as much as all this, I came to appreciate the status value of living there. I found that growing up there, both in fact and in others' fancy, I picked up a kind of cosmopolitan sheen that I exploit even now. Today, when people ask me where I come from and I say 'New York,' I know that they will press me further and ask me where in New York; and I know that when I say 'Manhattan' and they press me still further and I reply 'The Village, along Washington Square' -- I know that I will be regarded henceforth with a kind of awe by many of the people who have pursued my roots that far.

This is something that I appreciated even when I was growing up there, when sightseeing buses used to come down Fifth Avenue and turn West along the Park and pass within feet of our apartment. I learned to treat the buses and their passengers with a kind of scornful disdain, born of the knowledge that I was what they were coming to see. This was unquestionably contemptuous of me, but it gave me a sense of worth, confidence and superiority.

This attitude, which I'm now connecting with residence in the Village, is one which we were taught in more general ways by my parents. It was my father especially who overtly encouraged this thinking, often replying to our protests that a friend was permitted something by saying: That's his family, we're different and we have our own rules. This meant in practice that a kind of psychic Gardol Shield
was created between us and the rest of the world behind which we were meant to live our life secure in our im-perviousness to contamination and sure of our superiority by virtue of that fact.

Thus, if it is true that the family had an urge to be public and so was a family-for-others, this was not simply the product of a desire to impress these others. The pure desire to impress implies effacement before the authority and superiority of those who are to be impressed, this and/my parents and our family had no intention of doing in many important respects. But there is an ambivalence here; or perhaps we can speculate that the family didn't have complete confidence in the Shield it had erected.

Look at it this way: Instead of moving to a co-op on the Upper East Side in 1963, when they could well have afforded it, my parents act as though they had by making an enormous investment in their Village apartment, which is neither recoverable or very statusful. But, and here is another twist, this basically inappropriate action is accomplished in such a way that it produces both a public spectacle and an apartment of incongruous elegance, partially making good the loss. This whole incredible drama, in short, is a testament to the family's insistence on defining itself out of situations in order to avoid their full implications. It was, let it be said, an imaginative attempt to resolve two contradictory family imperatives: To live for ourselves -- one born of strength -- and to live for others -- one born I think of weakness.
Somewhere along the way I became particularly attuned to this one issue among all the problematic issues in our family practice and began to pay special attention to my surroundings, began to lavish a particular kind of care on my room, and to participate regularly in making decisions about its fate during the regular transformation of the house. I became something of what I would have to call a 'designer,' to distinguish the sort of artistic talent I displayed from that of my contemporaries who were 'artists.' Unlike them, my drawings were never particularly noteworthy, even if they were praised; and in fact I have a self-portrait I scribbled on the bottom of a letter when I was eight which is unquestionably lousy.

What I did develop was a sense of visual balance, proportion, appropriateness and cleverness that quickly led to my perennial appointment as executor of the class bulletin boards and similar projects. I also became the son from whom his parents and others always seemed to expect something visually exciting to accompany his school work or the presents given on family occasions. Indeed, I obliged by producing a series of very elaborate reports in elementary school, replete with pictures and graphics and bound in large books, that established me once and for all as the premier rapporteur in the class.

But throughout I was particularly concerned with how my room was arranged, how large and comfortable my desk was, and whether my bookshelves were convenient to it so
that I might reach behind me as I worked and seize the necessary reference work. By the age of eleven I was writing to my father from Santa Fe that, 'You know the adobe houses that you saw in Mexico with the wooden roof beams sticking out? Well, all Santa Fe is adobe. There is a building code, that's the thing Aspen didn't have, that says all buildings have to be built in a certain fashion. It's beautiful, just beautiful.' Precocious or not, what that postcard unquestionably reveals is that even by that time I had an interest in my surroundings beyond the merely casual, and this is something I understand as an expression of my family's intense preoccupation with the same issue. As children do unfailingly, I had become sensitive to precisely that which was problematic.

At about the same time I visited Santa Fe the family moved to the Washington Square apartment, where one of my first concerns was to get for myself the larger of the two rooms set aside for me and my brother. It was the larger by only two or perhaps three feet in one dimension, but at the time that seemed an extraordinarily significant difference, particularly in the light of my ongoing rivalry with him. I remember how I captured that room for myself by putting forward to the family the thesis that I needed more space than he in order to set up my electric trains on the floor. I don't think this really convinced anybody, and I suspect that there was simply an agreement to let me have that room if it really meant so much to me.
This preoccupation had an historical dimension, too, as when I chose to do a science report on King Tut and his tomb, constructing in the process a three-by-five foot model of the famous site. Over a period of weeks I cast it out of countless bags of plaster, leaving the tomb as a void in the solid ground. By the morning I was to present my report in class the model was so heavy that I couldn't move it and my father and two other men had to lug it the several blocks to my school. Unfazed by this difficulty, and very much encouraged by the praise I had garnered, my master building continued apace, and two years later, in the tenth grade, I authored a large model of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. It was built painstakingly piece by piece out of balsa wood in two months of after school labor, and once again it was a sensation -- a picture of it even making the local newspaper. Once again I might add, I required the help of my father and this time also of my mother and my brother to finish it the night before it was due.

But it wasn't until I was a Senior in college that the full significance of all this dawned on me through my mind's back door. During an exam I was writing on Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture, I began to answer a question about the formative influences on his style with a phrase I still remember well: 'Frank Lloyd Wright's mother was a yenta.' I had been intending to mock the conventional art historical wisdom which traces his style to the Froebellian blocks his very anxious and aggressive mother
had seen at the St. Louis World's Fair, ordered by mail, and had him play with as a child. In fact, I had unconsciously glossed the story of my own evolution as a 'designer,' pointing the way to the source of my own sensitivities. I, too, had my blocks; but I am not speaking of these. What I am talking about is the family conduct we've been discussing so far, my mother's role in shaping it and, most immediately, the direct exchange that developed between the two of us around this issue. It was not blocks that influenced my 'style,' therefore, but the everyday life of my family.

Over the years I became increasingly proud of and confidant in my own taste; and when I thought about it, which I did occasionally, I knew intuitively that it was a product of my mother's nurturing. I don't really remember how early she actually began encouraging me to collaborate on the changes made in the apartment, but by the time we moved to Washington Square I was an active participant in some of the design decisions made about the apartment and certainly in all the decisions made about my room. In fact, there I was the final arbiter. During the years that followed my mother would often ask me to comment on swatches she had brought home, and approach me to help decide between two pieces of furniture or among accessories; or of a Saturday afternoon she and I might go to a museum or window shopping in some of the interesting furniture stores comparing notes and opinions on the designs. In short, interest in the house and in art, design and
housing in general became an important point of contact for us, something we knew we shared and could honor in common.

It was often I who looked on when she met with the decorator through the years, and I who was present later in the day when my father was informed of the decisions made at the meeting that afternoon. And it was I, to cite just one more example, home during vacations, who was charged with making sure that the house painters were mixing their colors to match the swatches my mother had given them. In time, I came to think of myself as, if not a co-equal collaborator, then as certainly a full cooperator with my mother in the transformations of our house.

But this activity was something more than simply our point of contact, something solely between us, because in pursuing it we two really constituted an alliance in the family, and an alliance by definition not only unites its members but excludes those who are not. Nominally, this alliance charged itself with maintaining the tasteful standards and decorative persona of the family. My father, it seemed to me at the time, was simply too busy with other things to spend time on this business -- though I also suspected that this was not really a fully satisfactory explanation for his abstention. My brother's interests seemed to lie elsewhere, and even his partici-
pation in the doing of his own room was not as interested as was mine.

The roots of this distribution of family responsibility lie deep, but are not all that difficult to dig up. I've long known of a conflict between my parents, that I imagine has raged from the day they met, over what I can loosely call 'culture.' My mother, with her blue cheese taste, seems to have both appealed to and threatened my father with it. And he, alternately attracted and fearful, reacted by rejecting and discarding many things that she valued solely because it was she who was valuing them. He, let me add, had gotten a CCNY degree in English, had taught it on the high school level and had written music reviews for one newspaper while later editing another. To this day he knows more Shakespeare than do I; and I count as one of our true heirlooms my grandfather's set of the Complete Works which my father notated as a student. So the threat my mother's culture constituted for him didn't have its roots, it would seem, in any purely objective difference in their learning or experience. Yet nervous I well remember my father's disdain for much of the art she and I went to look at in the museums on Saturdays, and it was my mother who proposed that we subscribe on Sundays to a Philharmonic concert series. She was the bigger reader and the faster reader and it was she who played the piano, or at least sat down at it occasionally; and it was probably she who insisted that my brother and I have music lessons.
But if my mother pursued this kind of culture more aggressively than did my father, what he decided to like he valued every bit as much as anything my mother favored. It's just that his taste ran to 'Death of a Salesman' instead of 'Waiting for Godot;' to Filippo Lippi. -- when he finally let himself take a look -- instead of Kandinsky. But this difference of opinion was not allowed to remain solely that, if indeed that was all it ever had been; and over a period of years it developed into a major point of contention and something of great symbolic value for both of them.

It is in the context of this struggle that we should see the transformations they wrought together in our apartments, for it makes them additionally intelligible. Having been too young to appreciate who did what in the early redecorations, I nevertheless imagine that whatever major decisions they made in common it was left to my mother to execute and to provide for their further detailing. Ultimately, this means that it was left to her to really pull off whatever they had decided to accomplish together; and in practice, therefore, it was her taste that was decisive and her taste that prevailed.

So their culture conflict notwithstanding, some kind of an agreement was reached between them to distribute the decorative responsibility in this fashion; and it is precisely this inconsistency that is revealing. The fox, in a manner of speaking, was put in charge of the chicken coop. However threatening my father found my mother's
taste, that is to say, he appeared to yield before her decorative abilities. It's almost as though he retained his strong opinions about those artifacts of culture he experienced privately, but yielded to hers when it came to those which were to be consumed in public.

This suggests that yielding, the pride he took in the finished apartments notwithstanding, was painful for him, and I think this pain was visible in a reified form in his repetitive contests with my mother over the cost of what she was doing. Over the years the combat took on a kind of ritualistic flavor, which is not to imply that it was taken any the less seriously by the participants or by me, the son, watching. Its advent was predictable and its form never surprising, so much so that I clearly remember mentally anticipating the rejoinder of each to the other's assertions and secretly dreading the inevitable and prolonged anger that was to follow. The clash was really not resolvable except through the defeat or voluntary surrender of one of the parties. This didn't happen and, if I am right, couldn't happen because the entire issue was a symbolic transform of some of the very basic material of their marriage. The dispute, in fact, seems to have worsened with time so that the scale and consequences of the infamous 1963 redecoration were the most momentous ever. Ironically, their very absurdity seems to have stunned my mother into a six-year decorative hibernation, which really ended only when she was able to resume operations in a fashion every bit as intense but this time displaced to other houses.
In short, my father yielded and/or presented power over his home to my mother, who in its exercise encountered his resentment at his own decision. It was a routinized conflict—parts of which achieved the force and durability of incantation—that vested my mother with one kind of authority and my father with another, countervailing sort. It was an agreement to disagree and then to conceal from themselves their own duplicitous assent. It was an arrangement, finally, that recognized my mother's better preparation to enjoy their forthcoming success with grace and to consume and display it with taste; but it was an arrangement that for these very reasons stuck deep and hard and long in my father's craw.

The delegation of the home to the wife as her sphere of responsibility is of course the norm, and here my parents were simply affirming in their own lives what had been preestablished by the culture. But doing so had a particular significance for them, and they did it in their own way and with their own understanding of what it meant. If the wife is simply supposed to demonstrate her competence by keeping house, my mother had long ago rejected that role. My grandmother's refusal to teach her to cook and to sew had paid dividends and my mother, from the time she got her Master's, had always worked—first as a social worker, then in business for herself, then as director of a music school and finally for the government of Israel and the Hebrew University. These jobs were extremely
important to her in giving her independence and an alternative to domesticity as an identity and a source of gratification. Perhaps the best way to convey this is through the following told me by a respectful witness:

My mother had flown to Israel for a series of government meetings, and on one occasion, she and several men were meeting with the Minister of Labor, with whom my mother was on a first-name basis. In its midst, he suddenly realized that his jacket was missing two buttons and turned casually to my mother to ask her if she'd mind putting it right. According to the account, his words died on his lips as he faced the look of horror already frozen on her face. He got up, got some thread, and participated in the rest of the meeting while sewing on his own buttons.

However else she might concern herself with the house, then, she had neither the time nor the inclination to simply 'keep it,' and from the time I was born the family had a full-time maid. Therefore, if my mother and father agreed, in conformity with the norm, that it was through the house that she was to demonstrate competence, she did so through managing it and through transforming it and not through the execution of tedious domestic chores which she made the responsibility of the maid. She arranged the house and its changes so that she became an executive with a staff consisting of decorators, maids and service people -- an extension first of all of the kind of authority she exercised on her jobs and moreover an analogue of my father's position in the world and as such an opposing force to H15.
position and the power he derived from it within the family.
If this was domesticity, it was certainly domesticity
raised to its highest power.

So it was through a combination of custom, the particular
dynamics of my parents' marriage and the assertion and
the recognition of her particular brand of good taste that
her relationship to the home was determined. My father's
relationship to it was coordinated with hers but not
complementary with it; the two, so to speak, didn't always
add up. As an independent woman, my mother wanted to be
free of a domestic identity; but as the woman who penned
the anniversary card and valued her taste, she saw it as
the fulfillment of her ambitions for the family. My father--
as the man conforming to the norm, feeling jealous of her
jobs and yielding before her taste -- thrust the house
upon her as her task; but as the man who then feared her
control of it and was threatened by this taste, he resented
her completing it.

If it is overdramatic even so to say that the house
became a battleground for them, I think it was clearly a
critical symbol and locus in their direct conflict.
Significantly for me, it was also an important medium
through which the encounter was indirectly pursued with
for example, and through their children. My mother, 'recruited' me to
her side through design and by encouraging my interests
in my room and the house and the environment in general.
This was the basis of our alliance, and it was something
that certainly served my purposes as well as hers, since I, too, must have needed support in withstanding the overbearing presence of my father. In playing one parent against the other I was, of course, not unusual; but what is revealing in this whole affair is once again how this pattern was particularized in my family, the manner in which the abstract was concretized -- in this case, how the alignments were drawn, and how they shifted and over what.

None of this was ever static over time or ever simple even at one moment. For example, it was my father whom I think I must have emulated in the beginning when I first began to draw and design and style my handwriting. Moreover, I was encouraged in this by him, helped on many occasions with my projects, and rewarded handsomely with paternal praise when I was successful. In fact it was my father who, during my Sophomore year in college, wrote me a long letter in which he reminded me of my design and visual talents and encouraged me to pursue them and to become an architect.

But here again appearance may be deceiving, and this alignment not what it seems. In urging architecture upon me he might appear to have been 'acting against his own interests,' so to speak, unconsciously cementing my alliance with my mother when presumably he should have been working on ours. But although this is a correct reading of his intention -- to cement my alliance with her -- it is a misunderstanding of his motive to believe that he did it
'against his own interests.' This is something I only appreciated years later when I read what he had told a trade journal when asked about all the recession-generated firings in his field. His statement, printed in a box with his picture, read in full: 'Anybody who has a delicate stomach and a highly perishable gut should get out of this business. Be a lawyer, doctor or architect if you want security. You don't belong in this field.' In the light of this, I think it is fair to reconstruct his earlier letter to me along these lines: 'With all of your interests (which are your mother's), and with your delicate stomach and perishable gut (which are also your mother's), you would be better off where you really belong -- practicing architecture (in alliance with your mother).'

By then it had been many years since I had in fact come to experience our house through her eyes. Having been a party to many decisions about it, I could see their fruits here and there; and in a more important and general way, I could understand and moreover appreciate the kind of intentions that had gone to make the house what is was. For my father our home was the successful meeting of his requirements for a house that was sturdy and worthy of our family and also a certain improvement over those in which he had grown up. For me, I felt, it was the result of a process directed by my mother in accordance with her taste and on occasion after talking with me. I thought,
in a word, that I appreciated it more than he did, or at least appreciated its complexities and subleties from their inside rather than simply enjoying the effect and comfort from without.

This distinction, important as it is to the intra-family dynamic, is really irrelevant in another context, however. For it was a central fact of family life that although each of us saw the house differently, each derived great satisfaction from the certain knowledge that it was somehow notable. This was our shared reality, even though we all lived it in our own ways. My mother created the house and basked in its glow; my father took pride in its sturdiness and comfort and what that meant for him; I fancied myself a contributor and enjoyed the compliments of friends; and my brother for many years felt something similar, I am sure.

I was reminded of some of this recently in reading the third book of Carlos Castaneda's Don Juan trilogy, in which he reports the Indian Shaman's account of the manner in which we all together 'spin rooms into being' with our interlocked 'rings of power' -- an alternatively-dictioned explanation of the things I've been talking about. To Castaneda's protests that the room they are in exists by itself and is not dependent on their presence, Don Juan replies only that 'every one of us knows the doing of rooms because in one way or another we have spent much of our lives in rooms.'
Our family, in these terms, had its own way of 'doing,' one it shared with a certain number of similar families and which in a sense constituted the joint 'practice' on which we each embroidered variations. Knowing the same things, having the same experiences and sharing the same expectations, we continually reaffirmed for each other the appropriateness, taste, comfort and power of this manner -- this 'doing.' For me, particularly, allied as I was with my mother and so close to this activity of hers, the 'doing' of our apartment had a singularly strong grip on my perception of it.

Several years ago, for example, my mother completed her most recent transformation with the help of a decorator who was being touted on the *Times* society page and who was then practicing an aesthetic depending largely on the juxtaposition of bold patterns throughout an apartment. Shortly after the house was done I came home, not having heard in any detail of what my mother had accomplished there. I remember clearly that on entering the place I was shocked and dismayed: The clash of what I would have ordinarily considered outlandish wallpaper was just overpowering. My mother herself, I seem to remember, seemed a little apologetic -- but perhaps that's only my wishful thinking. In any case, by the second hour of my presence there I had adjusted completely to its new transformation; and by my second *day* in that house I had come to regard its decor as completely normal and tasteful. By the time
my girlfriend and I and several friends stayed there recently, I had completely forgotten that at any time at all I had nursed even the slightest doubts about its appearance and comfort.

So it was with something like anger that I heard them all expressing absolute incredulity at the way my parents lived. During our first days in the apartment I was defensive, I was hurt and I was impatient at their boorishness. Obviously, I thought to myself, their parents simply don't live this way and they should show the same tolerance for the life of my family that I would show for that of theirs. But then I began listening to what they were saying and although some of their incredulity still seemed naive, most of it, on reflection, was well placed.

I began at long last to practice what Don Juan had preached, I began to 'undo' that apartment. I stepped back from my collaboration in its decoration; stepped back from the simple assumption of its tastefulness; stepped back from associating my taste with my mother's, my pride with my father's; and stepped back, finally, from identifying my family with theirs. It's a painful thing to do, but it was either that or throw my friends out into the street.

I realized, too, that I could step back and 'undo' virtually everything in that apartment, whether or not it astonished my friends, and find that it would astonish me. This was so not because such things then seemed unusual or strange, but precisely because they then emerged as
so very usual -- because, that is to say, of their lethal ordinariness. Every object and utensil sprang at me with its history, and when it didn't have a history that fact was itself historical. And in this history each thing, each place, each spot in the air meant something, was a sedimentation of a multitude of moments, was significant.

I stood before our quite ordinary G.E. self-defrosting refrigerator and 'undid' it: Year upon year of family life spun around it as spokes around a hub; act upon act flashed by as in some extraordinary movie, the machine remaining at stage center, mute yet shocking eloquent. There it stood, suddenly a totem to the family's preoccupation single with food and its compulsive snacking; In a moment its door opened ten thousand times in a dozen years as each of us raided its insides in diachronic synchrony. But suddenly it was 'undone' further. Still a totem, it was one now raised to my father: There he was, a thousand times in these same dozen years, rummaging around within, but eating nothing, willing restraint, being absolutely what he is. And there stood the machine, bearing silent witness to its own history; speaking finely of ours and my father's special place within it.

I 'undid' the hundreds of books lining the shelves in what had been my room; They mocked the fetishism of which their presence was the product. Each had a history, each an association with a moment in my life, each a compelling voice warning, 'Lose me and you lose that moment.' Each held me in thrall, a prisoner of my past, of my books, of myself.
I 'undid' the water glasses, the wine glasses, the juice glasses, the soda glasses -- all the glasses standing row upon row in the kitchen cabinets. My friends had asked me, Why? And suddenly I knew Why and the answer took only one word and yet said it all. Crystal.

I 'undid' the dishwasher, saw it arrive in 1963 when I was already in college, saw my years of manual dishwashing rendered superfluous, and saw the years of family squabbles about it rendered superfluous, too. This time I asked Why: Why, when we never hesitated to consume, when it would have added to our comfort, when it would have spared us so much strife -- why didn't we have this machine until the point was moot? Why, in the midst of superfluity, this strange poverty?

I 'undid' the absence of things: Where was the orange juice squeezer--that electronic converge for my parents' co-frustrations--which my father demanded that my mother use daily and which she reliably failed to do. Where is that squeezer now, years later, now that my father has been diagnosed as allergic, allergic to orange juice.

I 'undid' the absence of old things in the house, the truth that whatever there is of them is Louis XV and not Ours, 1950. I faced the fact that there is nothing owned by the family over the years that is still used or displayed, that whatever the family has that is old, it has bought. I faced what it meant that things which are truly products and momentos of our life have all been discarded and abandoned and no longer have any place in our home.
I 'undid' every wall in our apartment and instantly detected the absence of the walls/there two years before, and those from two years before that, and before that. I saw the layers of paint and paper coating each room, and each had furniture, events, dates and lives to go with it. And each had been forgotten, erased, denied -- and with it the life of which it was a part.

Only one room remained the same as I 'undid' it, as I stripped its wallpaper layer by layer and its life year by year. Here, it was always the same. Here, the same pattern, the same colors, the same effect. Here, my parents' bedroom, things have changed with time, but have altered little. From the very first its wallpaper has been a floral pattern printed in pinks and light reds and matched to the spread and headboard of their king-size double bed. The large area-rug now partly covering the dark wood floor is a shade of red, echoing the paper; the bookshelves, shutters and other built-in work is in pink, as is the crystal in the chandelier. Even the Louis XV chest and desk is in a cherry-toned wood that complements the rest of the decor. This room, once/has always been decorated in this fashion -- and in saying this I am not referring to its Period but to its pink.

Even many years ago, when I proceeded no further with the observation, it struck me that the room was overwhelmingly feminine. I suppose that this seemed so completely at odds with my perception of my father as the power in the family that I paid it no mind and let it pass without trying to understand it. Now that I am more appreciative
of my family's complexity, the doing of the room has become both more problematic and more consistent with my other perceptions. On my mother's part, feminizing their bedroom unremittingly seems to be something of a clear declaration of intent, and perhaps the clearest example of the way in which the decoration of the apartment has been an important mode of expression in their life with each other. Having said this much, however, I still cannot really fathom how my father acquiesced in this treatment of his bedroom, how he endured in that room and its predecessors without making sure that in its next transformation it emerged a different color and another ambience. Clearly, here was one place where my mother's taste seems to have gone awry from the first; but he said nothing and I can only assume that here, in the most intimate and personal of places, he acknowledged even if unconsciously a certain justice in the way it was arranged.

But quite apart from anything else, I find the room uncomfortable. Its reading chair and hassock goes unused completely because it is ill-placed and -lit; my parents do their reading in bed and it is really the only place in the house where the light is sufficient to do it. In fact their room as a whole is dark, and darker than need be, because of the window treatment that effectively recesses the glass a foot-and-a-half from the wall surface, cutting down the light that enters the room and creating the strange 'cavernous' feeling of my dream.
The room that was once my brother's has windows that are treated similarly, and the one that was once mine has submitted to a slightly different but equivalent scheme. Overall, facing as it does on the Park, the apartment should receive a good deal of light but feels quite dark and somber; it is shut off from the world around it in subtle ways. The windows that now cut the light also limit the view to be had of the outside, and similarly that to be had from the outside, in. Whatever the other sources of this intention, it is as though an act of decorative transformation was called upon to counteract the realities of the changing neighborhood and the very real threat that it is beginning to pose to my parents' well-being and safety.

But the outside world can't be blamed for the apartment's uncomfortableness: Somehow, after all these transformations, it has ended up as a place where I find it impossible to read or even to sit down and relax. Even my parents rarely use the living room when they are alone in the house; and the dining room, which was once a pleasant place where the family gathered in the evenings, has now become an ultra-formal wooded room from which only a string quartet is lacking. Only the kitchen with its round slate table set in a niche near the window and their own bedroom can even remotely be considered comfortable rooms. The others seem to have been provided as settings for public functions or at the very least as scenes in which the family was meant to enact images -- and therefore travesties -- of true familial activities.
My friends said they felt relieved when they left the apartment, that its formality, its ornateness, its clashing wallpaper and upholstery patterns were simply too oppressive. I have begun to appreciate what they meant. It is really no place to stay for long, and that means that in my parents' rage to transform their houses they have finally ended up by destroying this one as a home. It simply doesn't serve any more.

They have, in fact, virtually driven themselves out of it and live there less and less each year, spending two or three months in their house on Long Island and another three or four in their recently acquired place in the Alps. These houses, by the way, were furnished by my mother in a completely different style, one so unlike that she chose for the New York house that if I didn't know it for a fact I would find it impossible to believe that the same woman was responsible for all three. If Washington Square is Louis XV, then Long Island is Breuer-Beach and the Alps is Colombo-Ski. It is in the latter two, let me add, that she and my father have provided the bedrooms and beds that were decorated out of existence in New York. Should my brother and I choose at any time to arrive at either of these places we should always find a room to call our own: What disappeared in New York has magically materialized in abundance around in the world.

As I am talking to you my brother, who has spent much of the last several years travelling in Africa, this country and the Caribbean is now in Jamaica, working on a film of
his own and living more or less natively in the Silver City Guest House. Having been something of a chronic wanderer, he has for the moment settled on that island which in family legend was the site of one of our best and most glorious vacations. It was there, at the Tower Isle Hotel, when I was fifteen, that we all felt with absolute certitude our sense of ourselves as a family. It was there that the three men waterskied in the morning, played tennis in the afternoon, and where the parents at dinner every night proved the stars of the dance floor. We were a young, vigorous family and knew that we were known and admired as such. Five years later at another hotel in Jamaica when our former waiter recognized us, it was only confirmation of what we already knew: That at the Tower Isle that winter we had made it big. I will always want to know, however, if we were as successful a family-for-ourselves as we were a family-for-others.

And so my brother sits in an Inn in Jamaica longing for 'the cozy family happiness of Tower Isle vacations' but suspecting the truth about them nevertheless; my parents are at the moment resident in the Alps, living with their maid who has become more like a daughter in a house that has many too many bedrooms; and here am I, having moved four times in the last five years -- each time for a 'good reason' but it was moving nevertheless -- longing for and feeling like travelling myself.

And in New York on Washington Square sits an empty apartment, transformed perhaps one too many times in a frantic attempt to turn a house into a home. From Jamaica my brother writes,
speaking perhaps for myself and our parents and their parents, that 'I suffer from a protracted homesickness for a home that was never there.'
Notes

N.B. 1) Few of these citations actually refer either to architecture or to what we are calling the Bauenswelt. They are references to statements made about the world or others of its regions and which have served, let us say, as precedent. 2) About form: op. cita. have been suppressed. Only the author's name and the page reference are included when a work is cited more than once. If more than one work of an author's is represented here, they are distinguished in these iterations by the publication dates of the editions consulted.


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