
EPILOGUE

The City: A Machine for Thinking In

"Do you suppose that some day a marble tablet will be placed on the house, inscribed with these words?

In This House, on July 24th 1895
The Secret of Dreams was Revealed
to Dr. Sigm. Freud

At the present time there seems little prospect of it."¹

THE PROBLEM OF CONTENT

In examining the secret life of buildings, I have inevitably been confronted with the problem of content. This issue is of the utmost importance for the development of modern architecture because it addresses the system of interrelations that cause meaning. The subject has a distinguished modernist pedigree, having been of fundamental concern to Freud, Saussure, Levi-Strauss, and Barthes, among others. An analysis of content in architecture must build on this tradition while avoiding overly literal translations from other disciplines. I shall attempt to do this by outlining three levels of content in architectural form: the literal, the representational, and the mythological.

Literal Content

In their analysis of the architecture of Utopian modernism in *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, Hitchcock and Johnson condensed and exaggerated certain significant and widespread tendencies of the time. Their three principles—architecture as volume, regularity, and avoidance of applied decoration—were strictly formal ones by which an outward expression of the one right zeitgeist supposedly could be ensured. Contemporary work of manifest value

in the Art Deco style or in the classical manner was either actively condemned or ignored outright. Since there could be only one correct expression of the "terms of the day,"² as they put it, there was no point in conducting an examination such as the one I have undertaken. This is not to say that the concept of secret life would have been alien to them or their contemporaries, but simply that in the ideology of the Utopian period its investigation would have yielded total consistency. Any other conclusion would have denied the force of a homogeneous zeitgeist dispersed throughout civilization. This ideology led to an obsessive critical and professional interest in what we may call literal content, to an amnesiac and contextless concern for the purely material aspect of buildings.

That we may now look back on the great buildings of the Utopian period, apply different methods of criticism from those of the Utopian critics, and see their secret lives as rich and inconsistent is no contradiction. It is simply the reflection of our own post-historicist preoccupations. Great buildings always transcend the ideology that brings them into being and lend themselves to reinterpretation. Each new generation can see itself within them, for the secret life of architecture is affected not only by the historicity of the building but also by the historicity of the interpreter.³ This is precisely why cities are living artifacts.

What should concern us, however, is the lesson we can learn from the impoverishment of the relationship between literal content and secret life during the Utopian period. The tendency in many works of Utopian

modernism was to mistake literal content for the secret life present in the greatest examples of the period. The resultant overemphasis on formal issues became extraordinarily destructive, especially toward the end of the Utopian period, producing an emptiness and banality unparalleled in the history of architecture. This tendency continues today and is responsible for sabotaging many current attempts to establish a wiser modernism. It is responsible for the spurious stylistic eclecticism that frequently bedevils contemporary work and has all too often led to a desiccated typological rationalism.

Stylistic eclecticism in itself simply provides a wider range of literal content. It eschews the idea of a *zeitgeist* that determines what may and what may not be acceptable manifestations of a period. This has great value as a tool; however, as dogma it simply compounds the problem inherent in Utopian modernism—mistaking literal content for secret life—by providing ever more alternative guises.

As I stated earlier, the concept of type is as fundamental a tool of the lyric modernist as style. It is far saner than function for those processes of classification by which the past can be made useful as a mentor because forms endure over time while functions change. Yet as a doctrine for the making of architecture, the rationalism founded on typology is as limiting as one erected on stylistic eclecticism. It is flawed because it does not address the diversity of secret life in buildings derived from the same type. It may, in fact, be said to have substituted a tyranny of form for a tyranny of function. Functionalism

deprived architects of liberty in cultural representation by imposing on them a "spirit of the age." Rationalism exerts the same restraint through an "autonomy" of form supposedly found in the type and resulting from the endurance of form through great changes in function.⁴ Rather than reducing form to the shape of an epochal essence, it instead demands the reduction of form to a typological essence. Such forms must be stripped of anything that would compromise the purity of the type and encumber it with the cultural experiences of the architect. Where previously the superhuman force was in the will of history, now it is in the world of objects. In short, functionalism, eclecticism, and rationalism are all useful as tools but destructive as dogmas since none in itself enables us to deal effectively with the secret life of buildings. Yet if we are to comprehend the transformation that modern architecture has undergone, we cannot afford to separate form from those meanings which comprise its secret life.

Representational Content

The Utopian obsession with literal content put architects in an enigmatic relation to imagery in buildings. Phenomena of the machine age inspired and excited them. Cubism, technology, or industrial processes seemed to embody the very meaning of the new world.⁵ However, such phenomena were presented as offspring of a *zeitgeist* that would also give birth to an architecture deemed truly expressive of modern times. These phenomena were perceived more as so many aspects of a force destined to conquer the modern city than as what they

were in practice—sources of imagery with which modern architects labored to block out the past.

This negative conception of imagery was perfectly supported by the Utopian modernist's view of memory, expression, and morality. Both empathy and association, from which imagery is derived, depend on memory. Since the past, however recent, was for the Utopianist always inferior to the present, both were also clearly subordinate to the faculty of intuition, that sextant for historicist minds adrift in the "eternal present."⁶ Any conscious use of imagery was therefore seen as at best, if resulting from recent history, an illusion of the genuinely modern forms possible only through the union of intuition and the spirit of the age, and as at worst, if resulting from traditions of greater antiquity, an assault on the unfolding of history itself.⁷ The use of imagery, in other words, was condemned as a counterfeit system of reality, to be opposed by the full range of moral arguments.

As the historicist underpinnings of the Utopian period have collapsed, so the web of justifications for begrudgingly tolerating a narrow range of imagery in buildings has been torn apart. The imagistic level of content—what we may call representational content—is for us the means of visibly articulating the fact of cultural diversity. All the works we have considered employ both natural and architectural forms of representational content, whether in the waves, clouds, and fins of the Gehry house, the mountains of the Portland building, and the faces of Gordon Wu Hall or in the Piranesian deformations of

House El Even Odd, the romantic classicism of Four Leaf Towers, or the Shingle Style and American colonial roots of the Bozzi house and Manchester Superior Court.

Despite the increased scope of both natural and architectural imagery, one image stands out as having successfully displaced the machine from its preeminent position. This is the image of the human figure. The influence of the figure in its natural form is extensive, from its overt anthropomorphic aspects, as we have seen them in the Portland Public Service Building, to its more abstract aspects, such as the symmetry of the Four Leaf Towers. The influence of the figure in its architectural form is equally far-reaching, through its embodiment in the classical vocabulary—from classical revivalism on the one hand to the deliberate inversion of classical precedent on the other.

The pervasive influence of the human figure in the representational content of modern architecture has, however, a significance deeper than its value as a flexible currency of aesthetic expression. For while the figure itself is by no means a universal image in modern architecture now, any more than the machine was previously, it is symbolic of the general shift from an identification of architecture with anonymous historical forces to its identification with the mystery and variety of individual personality. Thus, it is individual memory of the past as mentor that permits representational content, displacing unalloyed intuition from its hallowed but hollow role as a weathervane of the zeitgeist. Empathy and association inventively applied now inform an ar-

chitecture expressing a breadth of cultural meaning that can arouse Scott's "true ethical analogy" and echo in our moral sense.

While Scott himself claims that the purely physical experience of architectural form is primary and association is destructive, he stresses that what he calls "literary ideas" are nevertheless "its *ultimate* value." He states:

Since man is a self-conscious being, capable of memory and association, all experiences of whatever kind will be merged, after they have been experienced, in the world of recollection—will become part of the shifting web of ideas which is the material of literary emotion. And this will be true of architectural experience. . . . There is, therefore, so to say, a literary background to the purely sensuous impression made upon us by plastic form, and this will be the more permanent element in our experience. . . . In the last resort, as in the first, we appreciate a work of art not by the single instrument of a specialized taste, but with our whole personality.⁸

It is this experience that the deepest level of content in the buildings I have examined provides.

Mythological Content

Neither the exaggerated importance of literal content nor the deliberately weakened role of representational content would have been possible in Utopian modernism but for the ideology of historicism. The belief in the unraveling of history according to social laws analogous to those of the physical sciences produced among architectural theorists the unfortunate belief that each age must produce work unique to itself *in all ways*. The embodiment in architectural form of

what we now perceive as deeply entrenched cultural beliefs that are experienced "with our whole personality" I shall term mythological content.

The misguided attempt of the Utopian period to develop a theory of homogeneous mythological content disguised as scientific "truth" is the single most destructive legacy of the period. Its central myth—a technofunctional determinism based on historicist ideology strong enough to bring about the myth of the end of myth—was aggressively anti-urban in its demand for homogeneity of literal content in the face of evident urban diversity. Rejection of this myth does not mean that lyric modernism is necessarily antitechnological (rather, it has enlarged the narrow scope of Utopian representation) nor that it is antivisionary (rather, the less mired in historicism, the more winged mythological speculation may become). Lyric modernism is fundamentally urbanistic, based as it is on the belief that an architectural mythology cannot but originate in diverse inhabitation of the urban realm.⁹

As my analysis has shown, the collapse of a modernist ideology founded on historicism has permitted a diversity of cultural expression in modern architecture. The representational content of form acts as a key to this deep level of significance. Thus, the marine imagery of Gehry's house enables us to understand a particular condition of centrality, just as the Jacobethan gate of Wu Hall leads us to an understanding of a particular condition of ordinariness. Ultimately, these conditions address the varied effects of developed industrial culture on man in the late twentieth century.

They articulate a diversity of mythological content no longer falsely controlled by a supposedly superhuman force, but rightly the result of individual human consciousness.

To understand the passage from the Utopian to the lyric period of modernism, and to effectively investigate work of this period, we must consider architecture as the expression of the many effects of industrial culture on man rather than as built historicist ideology; we must be concerned with the representational content of buildings rather than with the abstraction of essence from form; and we must free ourselves from the obsession with literal content for its own sake. In this way the comprehension of our present situation also opens the door to a comprehension of the full output of the modernist years.

An obsession with the historicist view of history meant that very few historians of modern architecture writing during the Utopian period considered the total architectural production of the years on which they focused.¹⁰ Their examinations do not compare Lutyens with Le Corbusier, for example, or Asplund with Mies, or Cass Gilbert with Walter Gropius, despite the fact that these architects produced work of exceptional quality at precisely the same time. It therefore falls to us to consider the mythological content of this work and to construct a sane historical framework for modern architecture capable of providing a sound basis for its further development. In other words, we must acknowledge a unity of an altogether different order: not the false order of an imposed homogeneity, *but*

the living unity in diversity that is the fact of modern life.

That it should be American buildings and not European ones that best demonstrate the transformation of the Utopian period is no coincidence, because the period we have entered is profoundly affected by the tension and resolution in the fundamentally American condition of diversity within unity. History is no longer a burden to be cast aside by the triumphant man-machine; rather, immigrant architectural histories now find themselves in the melting pot of a developed industrial culture. We seek our great gestures now in the reconciliation of opposites, in the difficult art of joining, rather than in the undisputed fact of separation. This is why I speak of an American mythology for modern architecture.

The subject of these myths is the figure in the shadows who has been present throughout this book. My analyses have illuminated many different aspects of this figure, from the shattered, alienated individual of House El Even Odd to the beleaguered but resolute occupant of Manchester Superior Court. If we are to grasp the mythological unity of these buildings and to justify my contention that they are indicative of a new period of modern architecture, we must understand this figure. To do so I shall consider not the architecture of the city but the soul of a city—the secret city of lyric modernism, formed from the mythological content of my analyses. This city is no longer a utopian house for mechanized living but a machine for thinking in, the house of the figure in the shadows.

THE FIGURE IN THE SHADOWS

"Mr. Bloom stood far back, his hat in his hand, counting the bared heads. Twelve. I'm thirteen. No. The chap in the macintosh is thirteen. Death's number. . . . In Lower Mount Street a pedestrian in a brown macintosh, eating dry bread, passed swiftly and unscathed across the viceroys path. . . . Golly, whatten tunket's yon guy in the macintosh? Dusty Rhodes. Peep at his wearables. . . . Don't you believe a word he says. That man is Leopold M'Intosh, the notorious fire-raiser. His real name is Higgins. . . . What selfinvolved enigma did Bloom (as he undressed and gathered his garments) voluntarily apprehending, not comprehend? Who was M'Intosh?" The Man in the Brown Macintosh who passes through the dream of the book is no other than the author himself. Bloom glimpses his maker.

Vladimir Nabokov on *Ulysses*¹¹

The method of criticism I have employed in this book is based on a reordering of the principal themes of modern architecture: memory, expression, and morality. I have used this method to penetrate the deepest level of content in the buildings under consideration. It is now necessary to consider the meaning of that mythological content. To do so I shall examine three characteristic conceptual concerns of lyric modernism: centrality, monumentality, and perfectibility.

Centrality

In considering the difference between Gehry's house and House El Even Odd, we confront the difference between a powerful centering effect produced by the act of perception in a world of the senses and a profoundly cerebral sense of the loss of center in a world of objects. These houses represent opposing tendencies toward, on

the one hand, the centrality of an inner world of which the individual may or may not be master, and, on the other, a concern for the existence or absence of some larger order that can provide an external form of centering. Neither of these tendencies exist alone in any of the buildings I have analyzed, and indeed the coexistence of these inner and outer forces is what defines the nature of centrality in our present modernism.

In Gehry's house, as I have shown, man is an individual adrift in an ocean of being. The centrality of this inner world is conveyed both by literal content—the cross in plan with its unique focus—as well as by representational content—the marine imagery that perpetuates the immediacy of constant shock, keeping those memories that might invoke a traditional centering system at bay. Despite itself, however, the house also retains traces of the once-powerful external centralizing forces of earlier periods. We can see this residue in the kitchen's prismatic glass crystal, once the purifying symbol, as for Scheerbart and Taut, of a paradise of man's creation; or we may see it in the corner window of the house, now, through Malevich, doubly distant from the icons of the Russian church.

In House El Even Odd, by contrast, man is deserted in a hostile world of his own creations from which it would at first appear that there is no escape. This obsession with the loss of an external centering system is conveyed by literal content—the form of the el cube—and by representational content—the bitten apple of an Eden lost forever. The loss of center is defined, in fact, by a persistence of

traditional centering systems through the technique of inversion, through the denial of the centrality of the cube as it has been used by Palladio, Ledoux, Le Corbusier, or Johnson. And yet, as in Gehry's house, but in reverse, there is a weak force in tandem with this strong force. It is the upward, escaping motion of the three axonometric models, the heartbeat of the house, which indicates a plan of battle and gives a glimmer of the inner centrality that is the strong force in the Gehry house.

Manchester Superior Court carries forward the classical centering system of the humanist tradition without the slightest trace of House El Even Odd's inversions. And yet the attenuated lobby of the courthouse, with its opposing forces that squeeze and dilate the barrel-vaulted sky itself, bears witness to the presence of that internal force I have described. The classical at Manchester is not, as Geoffrey Scott described the Renaissance tradition, "too alive to admit of analysis, too popular to require defense."¹² This analysis and defense, this forthright assertion of the enduring nobility of human nature, is carried out beneath a troubled sky whose contrast to the quattrocento dome shows the irrevocable impact on the classical of the isolation of this inner force from all external order. In the Bozzi house, on the other hand, it is the nineteenth-century humanism of the Shingle style, with its great volumes of sheltering space and its thematic principles of nature and of structure, that is in retreat. The individualized centering of each space and the discrete associative emblems of the exterior create of the remains of these

centering forces a stage on which the players act out this very inner force. So too at Houston the external centering force of Mies's technological universe, of Sullivan's empathetic one, or of Ledoux's mountainous embodiment of the Enlightenment is drained of its capacity, leaving us on a stage of silent witnesses to this loss.

But it is at Princeton and at Portland that we confront the centrality of lyric modernism at its point of balance, though this is no indication of greater merit, as imbalance has the intrinsic advantage of an implied force. In both buildings man as individual contemplates his distance from past centers, whether in the vestigial and poignant crossing beneath the window in which the sun descends or in the rooftop temple whose spirit is the vulnerable and threatened creator of the new sublime. Despite these differences of mythological content, however, despite the drama of the one and the irony of the other, the principle of a centering force derived in part from the isolation of an inner world and measured in part against and thus beholden to the certainties of outer forces remains the same.

In all the examples, in fact, we find a distancing from previous systems, whether from the humanism of the Renaissance as we can perceive it in the central plan churches of Bramante or in the fugal compositions of Palladio, from the Reason of the Enlightenment as it proclaims itself in Boullée's cenotaph to Newton, or from the machine world of the Utopians as we see it newborn in Sant Elia or at its denouement in Paul Rudolph. This distancing has pro-

duced a lingering sense of threat, more evident in some examples than in others, but nonetheless present in all.

Monumentality

Monumentality, like centrality, is composed of two opposing forces. And, as before, two buildings in particular most clearly show these separate forces.

Four Leaf Towers are carved, rooted, and empathetically affecting forms. They do not derive their meaning from the movement of the city's inhabitants but from the structure of the city those inhabitants have built, from its primary artifacts and from its space. The towers are monumental for this very reason: in their mythological content they bear witness to the fact of human existence over vast periods of time.

The Bozzi house, on the other hand, is significant precisely because it looks to the side of the Shingle style that is scenographic in nature and that is based on the associational theories of the picturesque least concerned with timeless and intrinsic qualities of matter. In its secret life it is not a witness to life but a mirror of life, and the drama its elements enact is of the day-to-day events that together make possible the monumental.

As before, however, these impulses can never quite exist alone. In Four Leaf Towers the perceptual ambiguity of the skin acts as an antiscenographic foil to the monumentality of the towers' form, since it describes an accommodating condition that is then robbed of scenographic potency by the sensibility of silence. In the Bozzi house, conversely, the chimney, the

porch, and especially the tower strive toward an empathetic and monumental stand but are thwarted by their emblematic treatment, which continuously returns them to a stage they cannot transcend.

A similar opposition can be observed between Manchester Superior Court and the Gehry house, although both buildings move somewhat toward balance. At Manchester, the classical is used to connect the building's mythological content with a vast time scale, stretching back through Lutyens, McKim, Jefferson, Palladio, and Alberti all the way to ancient Rome. And yet the building is not just a witness, but an accomplice; its didactic inscriptions are a script for the partially scenographic qualities of the courthouse facade. In the Santa Monica house, by contrast, we are kept always in the present and to such an extent that the building cannot be said to mirror day-to-day life as much as it strives to capture the actual experience of living from moment to moment. In this closeness to the fact of life, in its superheated scenography, its secret life escapes like steam through a retort to condense, paradoxically, as droplets of that primeval sea to which the experience of the monumental returns us.

The issue of monumentality in lyric modernism, in short, requires the resolution of two forces; it is a question of the extent to which the ancient heartbeat of the human race is threatened by the circumstances which its day-to-day demands have forged. This has a special meaning for the modern architect not possible earlier in the century, a meaning made explicit where the monumental and

the scenographic interlock in Portland's Public Service Building.

In Graves's building the *tabula rasa* of the International style curtain wall is emblazoned with the monumental actors of a scenographic architecture, figures who specifically recall the distant inhabitants of the primitive hut and yet are also modern urban beings. This monumental anthropomorphism, increasingly plastic in Graves's post-Portland work, has created an architecture of a new sublime, in which trepidation replaces delight and the tragic splendor of atomic man replaces the majesty of nature. Graves's resolution of the forces of the monumental, however, is by no means the only one; and in Gordon Wu Hall and House El Even Odd, other, subtler, balances have been struck.

The anthropomorphism that permeates Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown's building avoids empathetic insistency; its scenographic figures are drawn, literally and figuratively, and the ripeness of the sublime is drained by a penetrating irony. And yet the figures escape their stage, as those of the Bozzi house cannot. The entrance gate, that most scenographic of elements, is alternately and equally an actor wryly soliloquizing on the loss of center and a simple pedestrian gazing at the camera's lens. Ultimately the building is a wistful acknowledgment of the ordinariness of human beings, of Vitruvian man come down from his cosmic arc and lost among the confusion and turmoil of the world.

Eisenman's balance could hardly be more dissimilar. The cerebral aspect of the new sublime and the renunciation of the physical reach an extreme detachment from the Vitruvian theme

in House El Even Odd. Trepidation is piled on trepidation until a feverish anxiety results at the collision of man and object, of helpless actor and Piranesian stage. This is a collision captured in the el cube, which at once connects us with the ancient myth of loss and confronts us with our present nuclear uncertainties.

We must thus conclude that monumentality is inseparable from its sister centrality, for it concerns the very nature of man as individual, without which we cannot fathom his capacity to establish order as the certainties of older orders slip. In the resolution of these forces, we bring the fact of life into alignment with the sense of threat.

Perfectibility

The problem of perfectibility is the problem of the classical. Once again, the issue is defined by two opposing forces, embodied, in this case, by Manchester Superior Court and Gordon Wu Hall.

The courthouse continues the classical tradition by means of imitation, that is, by the inventive but scrupulous adaptation of classical precedents for the expression of mythological content. In so doing, the building carries forward the standard of ideal beauty based on the perfection of nature which is vested in the Orders. The architecture of the classical tradition is the fruit of this belief in perfectibility. The buildings and cities of this tradition are the habitat of a race deemed noble, indelibly stamped with the mark of the divine. In Greenberg's courthouse this system is brought to bear on day-to-day life at its point of greatest imperfection, and there is a

poignancy not only in the power of classicism to confront transgressions of the everyday in this particular case, but in general to open our eyes to what may even now be admirable and magnanimous in human nature.

Wu Hall establishes an altogether different continuity with the classical tradition, for its adaptations of classical precedent are as much innovative as inventive, more adulterous than scrupulous. The building is not based upon the Orders and carries forward no standard of ideal beauty. On the contrary, as we have seen, it strives at every opportunity to draw its strength from what is ordinary rather than from what is perfect; not, clearly, from the ignoble, but from the imperfect, the vulnerable, the human. A continuity exists not because the origin of the classical in man's presumed perfectibility is still considered relevant but because the perceived deformation of this original basis by modern culture is held to be of even greater value. Wu Hall represents the assimilation of change by a distortion of classical language; Greenberg's courthouse represents acceptance of a given standard with which to measure change by further refinements to that language. Wu Hall is not a sabotaging but a reformulation and an enlargement of the classical, made possible by the belief that at its root should now lie the ordinariness of man and not his perfectibility.

We may therefore say that this final issue is defined by two forces: the first tends toward an absolute view of classicism based on perfectibility, through which a critique of modern culture can be made by scrupulous adaptation of classical precedent and

the Orders. The second tends toward a view of man as ever less capable of perfectibility, expressed through ever greater distortions of the absolute nature of classicism, ever greater distortions of the Orders, of the memory of the Orders, and finally of memory itself.

In the Bozzi house the classical is used, but it is emblematically used. The Tuscan Order is correctly detailed by means of imitation, but it is then made a fragment in a picturesque composition. Neither the spatial unity nor the all-embracing roof of the nineteenth-century Shingle style is used to compensate for the lost hierarchical wholeness of part to part inherent in the classical; and that measure of the absolute which is embodied in the Orders begins to dissipate. Still, however, the actors on the Bozzi's stage fill up its space, confident not of their perfectibility perhaps but certainly of their significance.

At Portland this dissipation is intensified by the sublime, for the strident presence of the Romantic tradition makes the denial of any absolute standard unambiguous. The pilasters of the main facades are now distorted in scale and no longer recognizable as a specific Order. The condition of the sublime thus represented separates man from any hoped-for perfectibility either through machines or nature, but at the same time, in the rooftop Arcadia, the possibility of its recovery is insinuated.

In Four Leaf Towers the Orders themselves are no longer evident, and it is a distortion of the memory of the Orders that is present. The marriage of Loos's Tribune column with Mies's

Friedrichstrasse project presents a distortion in scale and meaning of the massive, carved forms of Romantic classicism, and the perfectible is replaced not now with ordinariness but with silence, with the witnessing of the ordinary rather than its expression.

In the Gehry house memory itself is distorted, drained of power, and finally replaced by individual perception. Even the classical prerequisite of gravity is lost and one is disengaged from the ground plane, tilted up and over a world for whose inhabitants the words perfectible or ordinary can have no meaning.

Finally, in House El Even Odd the classical, capable of no further distortion, is precisely inverted, literally and metaphorically. The collapse of the axonometric models by gravity is inverted to create the double axonometric model of the main facade which proclaims the loss of center. Man, at his journey's end, stands paralyzed at the void's brink.

The issue of perfectibility cannot therefore be divorced from the difficulty of action. This is the true significance of classicism for modern architecture. Whether inverted, distorted, or extended, it remains the only language through which architecture can address the issue of human magnanimity and can approach the question of whether it is possible to avert the catastrophe of man's ordinariness turned to pettiness and destruction.

The figure in the shadows of the secret city now has nowhere left to hide. The architecture of lyric modernism tells innumerable stories to explain man's relation to the world. It

is constructing a new mythology of poetic richness and urbanistic potency. In the end, however, these stories all have the same subject. Its features are described in full when it is caught simultaneously in the sharp light of the sense of threat, the fact of life, and the possibility of action. And we see that it is ourselves.