Experience and Use of the Dwelling

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INTRODUCTION

Researchers and theoreticians from a wide variety of disciplines have studied the meaning of home. Some have focused on visible behaviors such as personalization and marking (Boudon, 1969; Hansen & Altman, 1976; Haumont & Raymond, 1975; Jacquier & Jeantet, 1976; Leroy, Bedos & Berthelot, 1971), whereas others have focused on historical aspects such as demographic and economics factors or successive conceptions of the ideal social order (Barbey, 1980; Gauldie, 1974; Guerrand, 1067; Murard & Zylberman, 1976). Still others have examined how dwelling reflects culture (Clerc, 1967; Heller, 1979; Korosec-Serfaty, 1979; Mauss, 1950; Verret, 1979). Underlying many of these perspectives is an interest in the subjective experience of dwelling, and those with such a focus generally share a vision of the dweller as an acting subject who confers meaning upon the world but also as an individual acted upon by the world of which she or he is a part. These approaches are influenced in various degrees by the theoretical explorations into meaning that are pursued at the interface between sociology, psychology, and linguistics (de Certeau, Giard & Mayol, 1980: Rochberg-Halton, 1984) and at the interface between psychoanalysis and philosophy, especially the philosophical movement of phenomenology. The focus of this chapter will be on phenomenological view of the dwelling, or how the relationship to home is experienced by the dweller.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO PHENOMENOLOGY

Our purpose here is certainly a limited one. We intend to introduce the reader to those few "watchwords" that are agreed upon by phenomenologists, without engaging in a detailed analysis of what separates Husserl (1959,1961, 1962, 1963) from Heidegger (1958, 1964), or Heidegger from Sartre (1943), even if, for the philosopher, these differences represent much more than mere academic quarrels.

We then intend to introduce some thoughts on dwelling from the phenomenological perspective. One finds partial justification for this project in the fact that phenomenology is, from the outset, concerned with the *question* of space, which is dealt with in various degrees, explicitly or implicitly, in the work of phenomenologists. But it should be kept in mind that it is above all a question. This excludes any idea of a finished doctrine, and, as will be shown, *space*, *place*, *dwelling*, and *being* elicit questions rather than certainties.

Phenomenology is "animated" by a few fundamental intentions that, it should be emphasized, are closely intertwined and represent the various expressions of a single endeavour. The key phrase is return *to the things themselves* (Husserl, 1962, p.8), which refers to the need to recover the attention directed at our primal experience. It has a corollary that is a given conception of personality and consciousness. Consciousness is viewed as oriented toward things, that is, it does not exist in a vacuum but only in relation with something else. Phenomenology, then, describes those concrete phenomena that constitute the experience of the *incarnate subject*, meaning that the person's apprehension of the world is rooted and articulated in his or her own spatiality. Lastly, because experience is by definition multifaceted, the phenomenological activity is under girded by the quest for unity of meaning in the subject. By this quest, phenomenology claims to be a science. Will we now examine four keys aspects: return-to-things, spatiality, intentionality, and affectivity, historicity, and sociality.

RETURN-TO-THINGS

The common foundation that has given impetus to the phenomenological movement is embodied in the Husserlian phrase *return to the things themselves* (Husserl, 1959, p.8). Indeed

> to return to things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always *speaks* and in relation to which any scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie, or a river is. (Merleau-Ponty, 1967, p.9)

Thus, phenomenology must think through our relationship to the "life world" of first experiences, prior to any representation.

SPATIALITY

At the same time, it is necessary to understand the fundamental primary spatiality of the thinking subject, that is to say, to understand the meaning and the importance of the existence of a body-as-self, a living body, a lived body in contrast with the body as an object for science, for instance. The spatiality of the life world is a correlate of one's corporeality, and it is the subject's spatiality that makes it possible to understand an *inhabited* space rather than its representation: the subject-as-*dweller* by her or his very need to exist, "spatializes", that is, finds shelter, arranges places for the sphere of her or his possessions, makes *room* for the different institutions of her or his life-in-society (i.e., communal life), and so forth (Villéla-Petit, 1981).

INTENTIONALITY

To the phrase *return to the things themselves*, to the notions of spationality of the life world and of the thinking subject, it is necessary to add the notion of *intentionality*, which describes the relationship of man-in-the-world as a relationship creating meaning. Things and events exist before and after the subject, may have experience of them. They acquire their meaning, value, and strength insofar as the subject, his or her action, and his or her impulses are oriented toward them. Furthermore, things and events also acquire meaning from the perceptual field to which they belong and that is perceived as open and changing ceaselessly. The things and events around us constitute "a whole that we process in this or that way, with which we act and that motivates us" (Graumann, 1979, p.4). This is why Sartre believes that situation and motivation are one and the same.

AFFECTIVITY

Finally, phenomenology is situated between three poles – those of affectivity, historicity, and sociality. By *affectivity* I refer to the investments of the subject in the "positive" appropriation of space (e.g., through play) or the "negative" appropriation of space (e.g., through pillage) (Korosec-Serfaty, 1973, 1975). By *historicity,* I refer to the time component in the embodied subject's relationship with the world through personal perceptions, memories, anticipations, or, the use Husserlian terminology, the retentions and protensions that constitute intentionality. Finally, by sociality, I mean the analysis of work and language, that is, communication. My experience of space depends on what I can "make" of it, that is, on the nature of the actions I can perform on it. Similarly, places are marked by the words that designate their accessibility, the way they can be used, and their positive or negative qualities as a function of the cultural context I am in.

THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL "METHOD"

Phenomenology has been *practiced* chiefly in three of its aspects: the phenomenological description, the eidetic approach, and the hermeneutic approach. These three aspects do not completely capture the essence of the phenomenological method, but they are the most widely explored. This essay partakes of these three aspects, and it is intended as a contribution to the phenomenology of dwelling rather than with the intention of going through what some authors describe as "the steps of the phenomenological method" (Spielberg, 1960, p.659).

Phenomelogical *description* aims at retrieving through the original soil of experience, the life world that is assumed by our representations and by scientific knowledge. Take the experience of fire. Before I ever heard any explanation about the phenomenon of combustion, I had already experienced fire in different situations in my own life. I had experienced its heat, its brightness, and its destructive, or purifying, character. Phenomelogical *description* thus seeks to intuitively discern the various appearances of things for the subject. For example, the description of fire necessarily aims as grasping the various affective states of significant orientations that, in various situations, represent my encounters with fire.

It is through these various modalities of appearance that the essential (or "ideal") meaning of fire is constituted for me. This means that any description derives from the intention (called *eidetic approach*) to find out what is intrinsic to the phenomenon and therefore to eliminate what is contingent and incidental. Besides, in attempting to uncover the essential elements of a phenomenon, it also seeks to describe the relationships and their articulations.

Thus, the eidetic method, by asking what makes a phenomenon what it is, raises the question of its meaning or rather, of what makes sense in the phenomenon. It is precisely the uncovering of meaning that is the purpose of *hermeneutics*, which aims to reach the single or multiple meanings hidden beyond what is immediately given. Hermeneutics necessarily is based on the idea that phenomena and human experiences are not immediately accessible and therefore call for an interpretive reading. This is why language, for hermeneutics, is more that an elective field. This is especially true of the work of Heidegger (1958) who undertakes a kind of phenomenology of words. His undertaking, arduous as it may be, is particularly important for us because it deals primarily with dwelling.

LANDMARKS FOR THE HERMENEUTICS OF DWELLING

Heidegger's hermeneutics asserts that the being's primal spatiality is antecedent to the formation of any concept or knowledge of space as it is studied in science (e.g., in geometry), for space is neither a separate entity nor an external object.

The built thing is no longer viewed as an instrument, and, therefore, the question of activity related to the built thing, that is, the action of building, arises. This activity then appears as subordinated to the meaning expressed by the root of the Old German word *buan* that means both *to build* and *to inhabit*. "To build, we mean to say, is not only a means toward dwelling; building already is, by itself, dwelling" (Heidegger, 1958, p.172.) A still more decisive suggestion of language is seen by the comparison between *to inhabit* and *to be*:

> "I am, you are" mean: I inhabit, you inhabit. The way you are and the way I am, the way humans *are* on the earth, is the buan, the dwelling. Being human means: being on earth as a mortal, that is, to dwell. (Heidegger, 1958, p.173)

Thus, "the fact that in one language "I dwell" and "I am" may have been used indistinguishably is a sure indication of the extent to which dwelling is coexistensive with the essence of the human being" (Liiceanu, 1983, p.105).

Liiceanu (1983) points to something similar in Greek, which is illustrated in the following passage:

> The Greek verbs designating dwelling: *oikein, naiein, demein*, etc. communicate through the idea of *duration/ stability*, the fact of existing, and it is interesting to see that in Greek they are the only verbs entirely interchangeable with the verb "to be", with which they are genuinely synonymous. (p.106)

Thus, in both languages, *dwelling* is to be understood not only on the basis of the activities it shelters or generates but also on the basis of its instrumentality. In Heidegger's terms, it gathers the "Fourfold", by which he means that the dwelling must provide space for the experience of the sacred. Similarly, the role played by the earth in Heidegger's thought should not evoke a romantic or pastoral reverie (Grange, 1977, quoted by Seamon, 1982). Heidegger's point is rather a validation of the earth as a fundamental shelter of humanity, that is, as soil for life's roots and the shelter for the final act of dwelling, that is, the funeral rites. The Fourfold evokes nothing else but the multidimensionality of the human dwelling and hence the multidimensionality of being, that is, the *openness* of both to the world.

When dwelling is conceived of as the fundamental characteristic of the human condition, what other messages does language convey? Through the study of the initial forms that designate *building* and *dwelling*, etymology again provides the grounds for showing that dwelling, lived from the outset as

"habitual" (Heidegger, 1958, p.174), is associated with peace, residence, care, and integration in the Fourfold. Generated order is also preservation and consideration; that is to say something *positive*.

This experience of dwelling is also apparent in Liiceanu's examination of the meaning of Greek words. For the Greek, we read that the *oikos* (house) did not refer to the dwelling as building but was a guarantee of stability.

> It was the order in which took place and unfolded the fundamental actions of life. Oikos meant birth, childhood, kinship, all possessions, their management, the conception of descendants, and the framework for their birth. (Liiceanu, 1983, p.106)

Thus, any wandering, any exile was a rupture with oneself, and any "going-home-again" amounted to a returning to oneself. Furthermore, the word *ethos* used to mean "habitual residence", or "dwelling", including the notion of habitual activities. The home, therefore, is this sum of immobility, of stability, and of continuity that every being needs in order to weave the links between identity and essence constantly. After wandering, it is the place where one experiences the return to the unity with oneself.

Levinas's work, and more particularly his essay on exteriority, *Totality and Infinity* (1961), widens the range of the mediation on dwelling initiated by Heidegger's hermeneutics. It is in this chapter devoted to the dwelling that we find the idea of self-communion (*recueillement*), that is, a necessary condition for nature to be represented and processed and that is actualized as dwelling. It is after having "dwelt" in himself or herself that a person dwells in a building. Self-communion also amounts to creating a distance from the outside world, arising from an intimacy that is dwelling itself: "Concretely, the dwelling is not situated in the objective world, but the objective world situates itself in relation to my dwelling" (Levinas, 1961, p.126). However, any intimacy is *intimacy with someone*; that is to say, any solitude as well as any interiority is situated in a world that is already human. Self-communion always refers to a welcoming, an openness toward the Other. The hospitable welcome circumscribes the field of intimacy. Thus, Levinas brings in the theme of withdrawal, which is seen as a process of identity elaboration, as well as the theme of *secrecy*, which is a requirement for this process. This is why the separated being meanders between visibility and invisibility, between work – seen as an involvement in the world, as action that organizes it, and therefore relates us to others – and the movement toward the self through which the being secures interiority.

Finally, the dwelling enables the being to pause; it suspends the immediate exposure of the being to the being to the exterior world, just as it is, by nature, "a perpetual postponement of the time when life is liable to come to an end" (Levinas, 1961, p.139). The consciousness of death as the primary postponement that opens up the dimension of time is thus found in both Levinas's and Heidegger's work, thereby disclosing another field to our thoughts about dwelling. Does not the French language call the grave *the last abode*?

PHENOMENOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF DWELLING

On the basis of the preceding lines of thought, I propose to define the fundamental characteristics of dwelling as the following:

1. Setting up an inside/ outside. Hence, the question of interiority will raise that of visibility.
2. Visibility is the gaze the inhabitant is exposed to: the gaze directed at oneself, the gaze of others upon oneself. Visible and concealed at the same time, the subject gives herself or himself to be seen through her or his practices, her or his mode of insertion in space. Thus, the third characteristic appears.
3. This is *appropriation*, by which is meant that home usage has consequences on one's experience of dwelling. One's inner self is thus transformed and grows because of one's actions in space (or, in this case, in one's home).

THE INSIDE / OUTSIDE

The question of the shift from "space" to "place" is the question of boundaries that is, the differentiation and qualification of space. The dwelling is a place in that it is an "inside" as opposed to an "outside", a place in that it always means "generating order". Finally, it is a place because it makes room for being, for dwelling, through the events that constitute the gestures and the human relationships that develop in it. This is why one can say that the question of the shift from "space" to "home-as-place" is the question of "making place" and "taking place".

The home may be represented by the door and the window. Through the door, one gains access at will either to one's intimacy or to the indefinite outside (Simmel, 1976, p.96). Furthermore, established as a *limit within* ourselves, the door makes us feel the impulse toward freedom. Its beneficial, formative function defines the door as a postulated limit on the level of freedom, or as the accepted limit.

In a different mode, the window continuously ensures the relationship between the inside and the outside. But its finality and its limitations originate in the fact that it is chiefly designed to allow the gaze from the inside toward the outside.

Thus, any "fixed residence" where one has "settled down" is, on the philosophical level, tantamount to an accepted existential situation (Eliade, 1983). In addition, any dwelling possesses or is likely to possess an "opening" making it possible the passage into "another world" – that is, the ontological rupture. For Eliade, the symbolic value of the house openings observed in various kinds of habitations

proves the "universality and the perenniality of the communication with the other world, the world above" (Eliage, 1983, p.74), or the world of a personal transcendental experience. Therefore, it is the image value of the openings in the dwelling that is significant for our purposes.

By *house*, Eliade does not mean only *house-as-temple* and the *house-as-cosmos* but also the *house-as-body*. This homology between the house and human body is indeed to be found in secular (Boughali, 1974; Choay, 1974) and sacred speech (Eliade, 1983) as well as in popular art (Lassus, 1974). It also derives from the polysemy in the French word *intérieur* that is in its adjectival form, means inside and in its substantival form means either *home* or *the inside* (of something). Finally, this homology is also proposed on the basis of the common etymology between interior (i.e. inside) and *intestine*, both of which derive from the Latin adverb *intus* (i.e. "within"). This idea that, on the experiential level, bodily interiority and the inside of the dwelling are identical is reinforced by the complex idea, drawn from Freudian theory, that the self is the body (Freud, 1970), and by the Anzieu's concept of the skin-self (*Moi-peau*) (Anzieu, 1974).

THE HIDDEN AND THE VISIBLE

Because any dwelling is closed and open, it conceals me and shows me; it designates me as a unique individual and as a member of community. It obviously conceals me more or less, depending on my character and personal history, depending on my degree of acceptance of a cultural pattern (Bernard & Jambu, 1978). Nevertheless, the dwelling is essentially what ensures secrecy and visibility: secrecy in closing doors and windows, secrecy in chests and shut closets, secrecy in putting the outside world at a distance; visibility in hospitality and shared meals and in conflicts and contradictory claims. The question of the hidden and the visible in the dwelling, therefore, is the question of the relationship between secrecy and the relationships with others. Goffman's distinction (1973) between stage and backstage in the home partially sums up these relationships because it designates the home as being simultaneously a visage and a mask.

In a study devoted to hidden spaces in the dwelling (Korosec-Serfaty, 1984), I have shown that secret knowledge is not a trivial knowledge among a person's other kinds of knowledge and have underscored the etymological kinship between the two words *secret* and *excrement* (Levy, 1976). This kinship is empirically translated in all the gestures that create and reinforce order and tidiness in the home. By these gestures one seeks to substitute a domesticated nature to a certain organic savagery, leading Médam (1977) to characterize the dwelling as "a set of interlocking secrets" (p.72).

Research by historians (Evans, 1982) as well as by ethnologists (Zonabend, 1980) shows that changes in the physical shape of the dwelling and in material and social conditions affect the meaning of the dwelling and hence modify the dweller's relationship to his or her home. However, even if the historical and social dimensions of home use are taken into account, it is necessary to assume that, in any dwelling, there exists a particular way of establishing the relationship between the "hidden" and

the "shown", *whatever the nature of this hidden may be*, for example, women (Bayazit, Yonder, & Öszoy, 1978; Boughali, 1974; Duncan, 1982), servants and their hall (Martin-Fugier, 1982), or the body (Flandrin, 1976). Until recently, in several rural French regions, the main room (*salle*) constituted the focus of the family life, the place were daily work was planned. Its uses were governed by rigid customs that maintained the distance between the "showable" and the "hidden". In Bourgogne, for instance, the uses of the main room followed several rules concerning the crossing of thresholds, access to other rooms, precedence, generational relationships, and especially right of speech. These rules also made it imperative to suppress any signs of women's private lives and to diminish the frequency of the opening if the *salle* toward the outside (Zonabend, 1980).

In this perspective, the housewife in the Western cultural context is "the careful warden of denial" that operates against the organic and the sexual (Médam, 1977, p.73). It should, however, be added that the analysis of secrecy cannot be reduced to this one theme. The stakes involved in secrecy are the preservation of *identity* (Smirnoff, 1976). To demand "full confession", that is, in the case of the home, total availability, openness, and transparency, amounts to demanding a complete surrender from the dweller. Hidden things and places help to situate the boundaries of the self and help to gain confidence in one's own capacity to control one's "inner self" (Margolis, 1976; Korosec-Serfaty, 1984).

The social meaning of secrecy is strength. It is not an incidental that, in European societies for instance, the elite's rules of etiquette imposed a far-reaching mastery of the body, the voice, the eyes, and facial expressions. As long as one retained one's composure, one retained, in a way, control of the situation. Similarly, the house interiors had to be kept fully under control. Domestic practices had to be ritualized, particularly with the help of numerous servants who ensured the status (i.e., the mastery of money) and the accessibility of the different territories in the home (i.e., the mastery of the "inside").

However, by its order, its arrangement, its maintenance, the dwelling is also a facade that expresses hospitality and openness. These caretaking gestures that we said had ontological value will now be examined.

APPROPRIATION

The concept of *appropriation*, which originates in Marxian thought (Marx, 1894/1934, pp.82-104), was used frequently in French urban sociology research in the 1960s and 1970s (Lefebvre, 1968a, b). Indeed, it was a concept that was used in general psychology before the notion of space appropriation was defined (Korosec-Serfaty, 1973, 1975; Graumann, 1978).

Marx viewed work as the primary impulse. The individual reproduces himself or herself through the production of things, which thus constitute

> the actualization of powers or of potentialities which would otherwise remain implicit... Work is reified through products and the producer finds himself faced with objects which are foreign to him unless he appropriates them by means of operations and activities... These operations or activities always coincide with the appropriation of knowledge or know-how, whose real subject is not the individual but society. (Graumann, 1978, p.121)

However, in all phases of humanity,

> each man not only appropriates the heritage which has reached him, but experiences, through his own activities, a personal venture of appropriation, i.e., he produces and generates himself. (Leontiev, cited in Graumann, 1978)

Because it partakes of acting and making, appropriation necessarily takes place in a world of modification, alteration, and transformation. It implies that nothing is definitively "given"; on the contrary, the "given" always constitutes the basis for a necessary appropriation.

The Marxian origin of the appropriation concept has frequently led to incorporating in all circumstances, appropriation, ownership, and work. That it is indispensable to resist such generalization (Sansot, 1978) is manifest as soon as proper emphasis is placed on the fact that ownership can occur only where actions leading to appropriation have already taken place. On the other hand, it is true that "work attempts to endow things with a still more significant and more finished form," whereas "appropriation occurs through a progressive transformation of the being" (Sansot, 1978, p.65). That is, it occurs *in its own way*, in places where reality has already been worked upon others. Ornamentation, maintenance, and housework (in a home that has seldom been built by the dweller) evidence this drive to appropriate it. Appropriation, however, does not function only by modifying things. It is also at work in all the identification processes that I consent to. Numerous kinds of work do not give rise to appropriation because they are not willingly accepted. This acceptance amounts to investment and, more particularly, bodily involvement. For instance, the city that I cannot transform may be strolled in and appropriated through the fatigue of having walked through it or through the familiarity of routinely walking the same streets (Sansot, 1978, p.69). Thus, appropriation never is a "by-product" of something else (Raymond, 1978, p.75) but is always a process that has ontological value in that it coincides with a development and an actualization of the self. However, like artist or craftsman, one must attain an "active unobtrusiveness" with regards to the things thus appropriated and remain aware that these things are not owned (Sansot, 1973, p.69).

In this context, what is appropriated is not space or the home but their meaning and the modes of the relationships one establishes with them (Graumann, 1978). The dwelling is arranged, maintained, and modified only when the person has appropriated the significance of the shelter. Similarly, in order to be able to deal with the appropriation of the dwelling, it is necessary to comprehend the whole dwelling experience while keeping in mind, that, in a way, things reveal themselves only partially, with

much imprecision, trial and error. The appropriation of the dwelling does not merely amount to what can be directly observed (personalization, maintenance, affective and financial investments), even though all these aspects may be part of it. Thus, personalization, which derives from the need to differentiate (Kron, 1983) and which varies as a function of the individual's financial, cultural, and/or intellectual capital (Bourdieu, 1979), shows that the alternation of the being has been accepted and that the openness of the home has been recognized.

All the gestures through which the home is transformed from *"space"* into *"place"* simultaneously introduce the risk that appropriation may break down. Indeed, home appropriation does not occur only through the gestures that modify the dwelling but also in the effects these actions have on the dwelling experience. Consequently, any praxis contains its risk of alienation when it is carried away by its own movement and loses touch with its finality or when the subject no longer wants to invest it with meaning. The tone used in contemporary analyses of domestic or "housewifely" chores is representative in this respect. For instance, after having been said to be satisfying for nearly two centuries, housework is now viewed as alienating (Aron, 1980; Friedan, 1964).

BEING BURGLARIZED

If some credibility is granted to the preceding discussion, there should be consequences when one's dwelling is violated by burglary. In this section, I shall use the phenomenological perspective to elucidate some of the psychological significance of burglary. That is, from the experiential view, how does a person react to this blatant negation of the experience of dwelling? We shall attempt to define, through its dramatization, what is vitality damaged when one is burglarized.

The following analysis is based on data collected during non-directed interviews centred on burglary. Twenty-six adults living with their families and belonging to the upper middleclass were interviewed. All of them had been burglarized at least once, about a year prior to the interview. These respondents were randomly selected from official list of burglarized homes, and interviews were then arranged by a subdivision of the city police in Strasbourg, France.

These interviews reveal more than anger, feelings of vulnerability, and grief for the lost things or an increased suspicion after being burglarized. They reveal, in addition, these points, on which we shall focus exclusively:

1. that being burglarized is experienced as being defiled; and
2. that being burglarized causes a specific psychological and affective impact on the person's relationships with others.

The words used by the respondents and designating burglary as a *rape*, a *violation of privacy*, a *violation of one's universe* underscore the brutality of the rupture of the boundary between the inside and the outside. The door is ultimately protected by its status of boundary, by collective respect for its symbolic value. The metal casing and the safety locks installed after a burglary aim at restating that the dwelling is not accessible to everyone. The dwellers are outspokenly reluctant about these locks, saying that they are ugly, expensive, and too-visible signs of the degradation in social trust ("One has to be careful...that's bad," said one 35-year-old woman). Yet they also symbolize a code indicating the private character of certain territories (Brown & Altman, 1983; Korosec-Serfaty, 1978; Rapoport, 1982), a code that the burglar appropriates by bypassing it, thus causing the dweller to retreat to two facts: the vulnerability of his or her house interior, and the fragility, or absence of a protecting community, or at least a community that sides with the resident.

THE CONFUSION BETWEEN THE VISIBLE AND THE HIDDEN

The word *rape* moreover emphasizes the articulation of the home experience and the body-as-self. This articulation appears, on the one hand, at the level of *sight* and, on the other hand, at the level of *touch*. Says a 40-year-old man:

> They've violated our privacy, these people who broke in here. We tell ourselves, well they saw things which belongs to us, which are, well they're our own little *secrets*, they're not anybody's business; we don't tell them to anyone. That's it, it's this aspect of the thing, rather than what they stole. (emphasis mine)

This foreign gaze, imposed, loaded with deceit ("we've certainly been watched"), ransacks what "is nobody's business" and which is generally closed: the boxes, chests, drawers, closets, and "the dressing table, where you always keep a few things" (60-year-old woman); "letters, the papers, the photographs, the addresses, the nooks and corners, really the private places" (35-year-old woman). This reification through the gaze (Sartre, 1943) is the more difficult to bear because it goes together with disclosed secrets: "What they can tell to others about us after they've gone (laughter), "secrets that they no longer have any hold on but that may be reused at any time to reinforce the reification: "I mean, they're people that you can pass in the street, they can recognize us, but we can't (recognize them)" (35-year-ol woman).

The fear of defilement, violation of self and reification, is revealed by the way the respondents described the burglaries in which there was, either breakage, spoilage, or, sometimes, any disorder. In such cases, burglary is called *work* and is said to have been "cleanly done" (28-year-old man). The burglars then "did something which was almost logical...well planned, well done... it was tidy" (36-year-old man). This "work" is said to be "clean" because the range of the gaze and of contact has been mastered and limited to the "necessary": the dweller's secrecy and identity have not been reached (Korosec-Serfaty, 1984).

APPROPRIATION OF ONE'S DWELLING BY OTHERS

The loss of mastery over the visible/hidden distinction goes together with a feeling of disgust due to a gross, arrogant, imposed contact, as pointed out by the respondents' expressions that describe burglars as "these people" who "sniff in corners," "poke their nose into every place," or "put their paws everywhere." The burglar's body is repulsive because it imposes a shared appropriation of what, by nature, it might be said, is appropriated individually or by a restricted group: "Especially that, they rifle through your clothes, through everything private. I think it hurts a great, great deal" (70-year-old woman). "Disgusting, like for my daughter, they had touch her clothes" (60-year-old woman). This emphasizes one's complete vulnerability: "You tell yourself, they went into the bedroom, they've been

on the beds" (30-year-old woman). The burglar eats your food that, when shared, symbolizes hospitality and friendship: "They took ice cream from the freezer and ate it on the sofa" (60-year-old man). And they use your home as an open, nearly public space: "They used the bathroom" (60-year-old woman). Thus, the burglar "touches" the dweller, by engaging in all the small gestures by which any person appropriates his or her home and his or her body: "The bathroom has been ransacked, that really *hurt* me; there was my makeup: it was open, it had been tried on, it really made me mad" (35-year-old woman).

In this context, the loss of things that in our society are viewed as extensions of personality (Simmel, 1976) and as symbols of self (Graumann, 1974; Korosec-Serfaty, 1984; Rochberg-Halton, 1984), is made more painful because it is associated with the disorder created by the burglar and which amounts to an appropriation of the home through destruction (Graumann & Kruse, 1978; Korosec-Serfaty, 1973, 1975). The disorder created by the dweller remains within the dweller's order because the things and their "order" from a configuration familiar to him or her, made by him or her. Things, thus, are perfect mirrors, reflecting the desired image rather than the real image (Baudrillard, 1968) of the *dweller's own coherence*. The disruption brought about by burglary actualizes the fear of inner fragmentation, this fear that is usually mastered by setting up an order or outer coherence around oneself, that is, in one's dwelling.

RESTORING BOUNDARIES

The interviews reveal extensive concerns about the burglar's personality, identity, and motivations, about the reason why he or she chose the victim personally, an anxiety that appeared the stronger because it sent the dweller back to questioning his or her own identity and his or her relationships with others. The French euphemism *visit* for burglary is one of the forms of denial and dedramatization that seems to enable the dweller to continue to live in the home. Someone who "visits" the home is not (or cannot be) hostile. Among the respondents, the one person who failed to undertake this work of self-reappropriation following a burglary, moved into another apartment on the very next day. This move can be seen as a confession of powerlessness when confronted with identity loss and burglar's appropriation of the home through invasion. In order to go on living in the home, the dweller must go beyond the questions asked by the three bears in *Goldilocks*, that is, beyond "who sat in my chair?" and reappropriate the home and his or her own identity (Bettelheim, 1976).

In addition to denial, one of the means to this end is laughter, whose purposes and targets are numerous. The analysis of laughter during the interviews shows some of its well-known functions (Victoroff, 1952), among them the cathartic and tension-reducing ones. Thus, we are told about the "visit" made by burglars who did not soil anything but "only" stole the money and jewerly: "They might at least have left some flowers for me [*laughter*] "(35-year-old woman). The respondents, thus, reintroduce, on the verbal level, an interaction ritual that civilizes the relationship and reinstates the burglarized dweller's dignity. Burglary was also described as a *relationship*: "It creates bonds

(l*aughter*), direct ones even, but you stay out" (35-year-old woman). Because these bonds exist, it is necessary to reintroduce distance, the separation between the shown and concealed, to tame the gaze of others so that the relationship may be lived with: "When my son refuses to clean his room, I tell him he ought to do it, if only for the burglars [*laughter*]."

Therefore, to the numerous questions that the dwellers asked themselves – "Who did it? Why pick on me? Why did they steal *and* destroy? What were they looking for?" and so forth – a single answer emerges. Just as rape is not a crime of lust but of violence and power (Brownmiller, 1975), burglary can be seen as not mere stealing but also power acquisition through defilement and identity theft.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this essay, we have laid out a brief description of key aspects of the phenomenological perspective, defined some directions for the phenomenology of dwelling, and shown how this perspective can be used to elucidate the psychological experience of burglary. Response to burglary represents only one phenomenon that can be examined from a phenomenological orientation, and we shall turn to Bachelard's seminal work (1981) to guide us toward other potential areas. *The Poetics of Space* illustrates at the same time the importance of phenomenology's contribution to the study of dwelling, the problems it raises, and the direction of research that it opens.

Bachelard successfully tackled the themes of the home as a fortifying, enclosing, and secret shelter, as a place for centred intimacy and solitude. His specifically original contribution resides in his project to show that "the house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, the memories, and dreams of mankind. The binding principle in this integration is the daydream" (Bachelard, 1981, p.26). Reverie is the way to access to dwelling. It means experience a certain and immediate happiness, and it is triggered by images such as "the nest" that, according to Bachelard, like any image of rest and quiet, is associated with the image of the "simple house" and of the hut as the primal engraving (p.46).

The first limitation observed in Bachelard's (1981) book derives from the direct transfer of ontological analyses in the realm of value judgements. Heidegger's term *preservation* (p.175), the experience of dwelling viewed by Bachelard as "being well" (p.26), Levinas's concept of "self-communion" (p.125) originating in a "greater kindness to oneself", Liiceanu's analysis of the Greek words that designate dwelling as stability, all of this, understood in the ordinary sense of the words and outside an ontological context, would give an exceedingly trivial and narrow image of the dwelling, imagined as a single-family house, limited to security, material comfort, and, above all, stability (Cooper, 1976; Marc, 1972). Phenomenology is not betrayed when due emphasis is placed on the cultural patterns, they in no way alter the exercise of being in dwelling or being through dwelling (Korosec-Serfaty, 1984).

Another opportunity is illustrated by Bachelard refusal to account for those aspects of dwelling that give rise to conflicts. Bachelard (1981) undertakes a topo analysis based on what he called "to phopilia" and that, consequently, is applied to "eulogized" spaces (1981, p.17). Such an attitude has the potential to stifle any project designed to analyze negative experiences or conflicts in dwelling. However, these negative experiences deserve great attention precisely because dwelling in neither produced nor experienced in a static way. The preceding analysis of reactions to burglary showed that after the events, subjects had to come to terms with this disruption of experiences mastery over their homes. As we said in this examination of appropriation, burglarized individuals had to be able to project their capacity to dwell elsewhere, so as to avoid being appropriated by the place the burglar inhabited. That is, because any appropriation incurs the risk of its alienation, it is necessary to

approach, at the level of the subject dynamics, the conflict-provoking aspects inherent in the home experience.

Moreover, any dwelling is a social space and, here as well, phenomenology is not betrayed when the study of dwelling takes into account the fact that the dwelling also features social conflict and, therefore, negative memories. Acknowledging the fact that the conflicts occurred permits us to examine the consequences of such conflicts. For example, it is likely that the dwelling is sometimes given up with relief when it is associated with anguish, unhappiness, and so forth.

Bachelard and numerous other authors following him seek to grasp the dwelling experience without bringing in the practices underlying it. Furthermore, several studies devoted to home practices evoked only briefly the effect uses upon experience and never even raised the question of ontological relationships between *being* and *doing*, that is, between *dwelling in* and *appropriating* the home.

However, a study that examined attics and cellars in home (Korosec-Serfaty, 1984) indicated that the appropriation practices related to hidden, dark, and dirty places could result in changes in the designation and characterization of these places. After appropriation, these places were then perceived as capable of being mastered and better integrated into the home. Simarly, Barbey's research (Barbey, 1984; Barbey & Korosec-Serfaty, 1982-84) about writers' rooms shows the articulation of the writer's solitary work to the dwelling experience in these rooms. This points to a fundamental direction for research, which demands an understanding of the interaction between *being* and *doing* as well as of their integration of individual dynamics on the one hand and, on the other hand, to the collective history of a given society.

For things indeed contribute to creating a setting or theatrical universe only because they are produced toward this end by a given economic system. Because things "speak" as symbols, it is "through alienated things that alienation is expressed" (Adorno, 1983, p.53), an alienation that is revealed by the refusal to admit that the "things" from one's "home interior" are themselves historical and social products of the outside world.

Thus another necessity for future studies on dwelling is illustrated, that is, that of a dialectical approach. This ought to emphasize the dynamic tensions on the one hand between the inside (of a home) and the outside (of a home and the outside world) and, on the other hand, between the subterritories (rooms, kitchen, cellars, garages) that the house is made of, for the dwelling experience is indeed a global one. The experience of the home is an experience of "inside" as well as an experience of the world in which it has its place.

Lastly, Bachelard's (1981) description of full and well-ordered cupboards, chests, and closets should not be understood as a celebration of conventional order in home but as an image that conveys his approach of "felicitous space" (p.17) and that has complex links with his own culture. Conventional

order is defined by social rules. It constitutes a basis and a reference for social communication as well as for expression of the self. But what is perceived as a "disorderly" house by a visitor is not necessarily perceived such by the inhabitant. As we said earlier, *order* refers ultimately to our relations to the things surrounding us. Thus, this familiar configuration of objects and places deserves to be studied in relation to conventional or socially defined order (Sauer, 1982).

The preceding description of future directions of research for the phenomenology of dwelling encompasses the diverse intentions of the phenomenological endeavour. Therefore, it should help to achieve knowledge of the multiple facets of the home experience as introduced earlier and through this knowledge, to sustain the quest for the unity of meaning that animates the phenomenological activity as a whole.

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