The following paper was delivered at a Conference on Consciousness in Self and Society during April 14-18, 1975 in Windsor Park, England, sponsored by the Human Institute of London. It was convened by John Staude, formerly a professor of history at the University of California at Riverside. He had an abiding interest in Jungian psychology.

CHAPTER 1

Problems of Self-Space: An Historian's View Inward and Outward

My scholarly aim of late has been to apply the insights of Alfred Schutz, Aron Gurwitsch, Jean Piaget, the Gestalt theorists, and their predecessors to the understanding of urban history seen in the context of the history of civilizations and polities. My starting point has not been with phenomenological analysis but rather with an attempted fusion of socio-anthropological, structural-functional, systems-analysis concepts with those of geopolitics. That is, polities have boundaries—boundaries that change. These boundaries, in some periods and in some sense, mark the spatial parameters of whole systems that can be analyzed in structural-functional terms. Groups of cities forming constellations over space help to create and articulate such whole systems, including their cultures. Cultures, in turn, are also aspects of temporally and spatially broader civilizations. Concepts of space are fundaments of all aspects of a system, including the ideology and culture that help to create, legitimize, or sustain the system's socio-economic-political structure. The morphological, ritualistic, and social-behavioral patterns of all "great" cities are icons or symbolic notations for civilizations, cultures, polities, and indeed whole systems. Two of the most important and still unanswered historical questions are how all of these elements interact and change, and what the relationship is of the individual self to them and to the process of change.

One important clue is the behavioral space of men whose activity in some crucial way spans space wider than that of local communities, men whom the sociologists call cosmopolitans, although I find that term too loaded for precise analysis and prefer a more neutral, if awkward, phrase: wide-space actors. The point is that under many historical circumstances, at particular times, wide-space actors have been sociologically and geopolitically marginal to a given community, society, or polity, while at the same time their wider range of activity has been an agent of geopolitical change. (Examples are the European medieval wandering merchants, men serving the great commercial trading companies of the 16th and 17th centuries, late 18th-century and early 19th-century American China traders, and 19th-century Chinese compradors.) The point also is that the geopolitical change correlated with their activities ends up embracing the formerly marginal wide-space actors (or their kind) in a more honorific and central way. In order to

effect this embracing, polity is created or changed. The dominant culture changes, and so does the system of cities.[1] Each of these changes is spatial. How shall we, then, describe and analyze the self-space of those wide-space actors who have so strongly affected the self-space context of others?

Before the historian can find answers to such questions, he needs a better understanding of what the questions entail, which is to say a better understanding not only of the self-space of others, but also of the interrelationships between self-space and perception in the historian himself.

As a descendant of wide-space actors and a continuer of the tradition, and also as an historian, I offer as an example aspects of my own long-range self-space development, insofar as the meaning of my own experience has become clear to me not through scientifically "objective" observation, but through a Husserlian process of living, introspection, and life-testing.[2]

I agree with Merleau-Ponty that we exist in the world through our bodies.[3] The roots of spatial-temporal behavior are undoubtedly partially physiological: in the mechanisms of the sensory organs; in the metabolic rate, endocrinological balance, heart-beat rate, and all the other rhythms that make up the body time about which the nurture-nature controversy over origins still rages; and in the signal centers of the brain.[4] We know far too little about the process by which an individual body gradually coordinates its diverse internal rhythms with one another while simultaneously learning to coordinate them with the external environment. Much of this process takes place at the preconscious level and is, therefore, not easily accessible to introspective analysis, but must be understood through controlled observation and experiment. Although I lack proof of it in all particulars, I am convinced that an individual adult's capacities in terms of scope of field of attention and length of temporal attention span (within limits permitted by physiology) are strongly affected by the spatial-temporal, rhythmic structure of his very early social and cultural context, to which his bodily rhythms had to adjust. Children raised with predictable eating, sleeping, and disciplinary patterns turn out differently from those whose experience in these matters was more random. Experience of reliable recurrence seems to breed a greater capacity for gratification-delay and for projection of long-range plans over wider space.[5]

I agree, too, with those phenomenologists who state that spatial-temporal perception and behavior are integral with the structure of the self, including the aspects that we call character, personality, and psyche. A noted psychiatrist said to me not long ago that people seem to fall into two categories: those who believe they are solid and real but the rest of the world is a little unreal; and those to whom the world seems very real but whose feeling is that they themselves lack some vital core of reality. I fall into the former category, and I

used to think it was because my eyesight is myopic, but since then I have discovered myopic people with the latter traits. Instead, I have come to believe that my faith in my own reality and distrust in a reality outside my own sphere stems from the fact that I was left alone so much as a child (left for protracted periods by my parents to stay with my grandmother, who was not especially sociable, and also left on the family's large farms and ranches—in Alberta and eastern Washington—where other farms and ranches were miles away so that my most vivid experiences were of my own lengthy direct contact with the earth, grass, flowers, insects, rocks, little wild animals, water, trees, and sky, often with no one else around me as far as the eye could see in any direction except perhaps for a dog or my horse). I did have books and a vivid imagination. It was important for my later self-space development that most of my reading was done outdoors alone. At five, I read Greek myths lying in the straw of an unused barn with garlands of drying apples and ears of corn overhead and shafts of sunlight streaming from a window in the hayloft. At eight, I lay in the grass of an apple orchard to read history books. Because of this, books and the working of my own imagination, rather than society, became my referential framework. But these were always close to nature. I felt an affinity to the characters in *The Wind in the Willows.* Books and imagination also served as a magic carpet from which I could watch the world with amiably detached fascination. *The Little Prince* spoke to my childhood; more recently, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* has caught some of its spirit, too.

I am sure these experiences created a propensity for certain kinds of self-space. As an adult, I have always felt most comfortable either in extremely closeup relations with other individuals, or in the very large arena, but not with groups of intermediate size. In my scholarly work, I prefer to examine the sensitivities of an individual self or the patterns of large parts of the globe and whole centuries. I am intellectually uncomfortable in the middle range.

The closeup and the aerial photograph do not seem to me mutually exclusive. My magic carpet excursions would not be a source of delight if they were not grounded in a sense of roots that go deep into the soil and a feeling that meaningful unalienated life has at its core the garden feel of organic growth—of water, sunshine, bees, bloom, harvest, hibernation, and cyclical renascence. Although from a greater distance, those other people who are not part of the process of my organic growth are for me a detached and magic show, at closer range they are other plants with their own roots in the garden. It would not be a garden if they did not also grow.

Self-space is also created by parental images and a genealogically or ethnically rooted sense of identity. It is this conclusion I reach when I ask myself why I have spent the past seven years residentially based in California but

teaching history nine months of the year in Michigan, and traveling continually elsewhere. As a child, I yearned for my father, who was seldom at home and who traveled all of his life. His female agent was his mother, a former history teacher, who taught me about my own genealogy that went back in English history to 1066 and in American history to the *Mayflower* company, and that westered as America westered. So I grew up with a sense that I had inherited responsibility for all the territory traversed and to some extent transformed by the self-space of my scholar-lawyer-preacher-landed gentry ancestors, all those soberly restless, questing, conscientious, reliable but headstrong people. Which meant that I must look after the fences and the condition of rather far-flung pastures and treat with scholarly interest and farmer-like respect my neighbors on adjacent ranches—Africa, Persia, China. My unconscious emotion has been that if I made the rounds of the pastures with enough care and persistence and attention to duty, somewhere I would find my father, as indeed occasionally in childhood I had found my father, usually on horseback, out on the remote Alberta coulees or surveying the eastern boundary of our 685-acre Washington farm. A child whose father took in so much territory must certainly prepare herself to survey distant fields when she is older.

The various influences on childhood self-space become interiorized in the psyche. If different influences are contradictory, the adult person may need a certain kind of geographic space in order to achieve satisfactory psychic integration. My dreams as a young adult were about trying to get to work or to go home and being both chased there and detoured in some vague way by a golden-haired girl with a delicate gold chain and cross around her neck; or about trying to cross the channel between an island and the mainland; or about not being able to enter locked rooms—dreams about the two halves of myself that both longed for and feared integration. I eventually concluded that the two halves were images of my proudly pretty, fiery, Puritan, bluestocking grandmother, daughter of abolitionists, and of my sturdily independent but compassionate baby-and-flower-loving mother. I also discovered that the two halves of my work—one concerned with geopolitics, law, and power structures and the other with the arts—corresponded to the two halves of my psyche. For a time, my psyche's bifurcation dictated that each half of my work be conducted at a different academic institution, divided literally by a body of water, the San Francisco Bay. For several years, I crossed the bay each day, linking the two separate halves of my work and psyche. A stubborn undercurrent in me, pushing toward psychic wholeness, eventually required that I leave that scene of bifurcation and go to a central place in the ancestral pastures where I could integrate my self-space and yet be sure, in a typically Puritan way, that I was not thereby neglecting a larger duty.

I chose to go to Michigan, seemingly by accident, certainly by instinct. I did not know it at the time, but my paternal great-grandparents had come from there. That Detroit was across a strait from Canada, my birthplace, that it was the seat of multinational corporations representing major international power, that it was a locale of black people forging their own freedom, that it was a working town, that it allowed anonymity (i.e., freedom to be alone), that it was both violent and kind, opinionated and tolerant, that it was a mosaic of immigrant groups and yet archetypically American—all of these traits served my psychic purposes (note that I did not say needs, for by this time my relation to the task of restructuring my self-space was purposive). There is much more to the story of how I did restructure that self-space and what it meant to my psychic integration, but I have already imposed enough autobiography upon you. Perhaps though, I should call your attention to the fact that I have chosen to articulate all of this in such a public way at a conference in England not far from Cambridge out of which my Puritan grandfather, seven "greats" back, came to America in the first place. It is as if a circle has closed.

The factors that are at work in spatial behavior seem also to be at work in spatial perception. My recent efforts to integrate self through a structuring of spatial orientations have been paralleled by efforts in my work as an historian to develop a mode of research and interpretation that will synthesize and transcend the modes of the various academic disciplines and see all aspects of life as a unity in which the parts do not lose their identity but enhance one another by making up a single and dynamic whole. The point here is that the psychological forces at work in creating self-space also create perceptual space, and when the person in question is a writer, preacher, journalist, public official, or teacher, the resulting perceptual space becomes part of the conceptual spatial framework for other members of the society for whom he plays this special role.

Since my examples have all been drawn from one case, it might be well to add two other brief case histories to illustrate some of the same points.

One of my dearest friends, now dead from leukemia, was born in Vilna, in that part of the world that bred Zionism and an especially rich ferment of Jewish cultural movements. His parents sorrowfully sent him to the United States just ahead of Hitler's armies, and in the U.S. he Anglicized his name, married an American Gentile, became a specialist in American political science, and eschewed everything foreign and Jewish. Then, in his 40s, he underwent a marked personality change, divorced his wife, ceased teaching American politics in California, went back to Harvard to engage in East European studies, traveled through Eastern Europe, and launched a new career on the American East Coast teaching Eastern European politics and government and courses on Zionism and socialism. When I last saw him, he was establishing an institute in

New York City for Polish Jewish studies, with an especial focus on Vilna. This working out of his identity, which had drawn him back over half the globe, was still in process when he died in his early 50s, and the self-space changes that were part of the process helped structure the self-space of others through the influence of his work as a scholar, writer, and teacher.

Still another good example is my 25-year old Ukrainian friend whose Galician father was a guerrilla fighter for Ukrainian nationalism from age 13 onward. My friend was born in New York City after his parents came to the U.S. as refugees of the Second World War, and he was raised in Detroit, but spoke only Ukrainian until he was six, went to Ukrainian schools, and was instilled with a fierce commitment to the Ukrainian cause. To watch him is like watching a person possessed by history. After an abortive try at law school and "American normalcy," he has accepted his destiny and is deep into East European studies. Years of keeping an anxious eye on world events (because of what they might do to the Ukrainian cause) have given him a remarkably detailed world perspective. He is like a living war game room where all of the maps for all of the world are kept up-to-date daily. One of our common bonds has been an interest in history, and with him I have learned about Kievan princes, Russian merchants, and Cossacks; and I can see that the culture of the ninth century Dnieper Valley is as alive in him today as the culture of my Norman English ancestors is still alive in me. His future is ahead of him, and he will be fascinating to watch because he was typecast to play for real on the world stage.

What I am saying is that, as we spend our whole lives working out our self-space, putting the pieces together, finding the spot where they all coincide, we are all possessed in some way or other by history. It dictates to us—as a gut urge—where we shall go, what we shall do, who our closest friends are, but not in a simple causal or deterministic way, acting like a magnet or prod as we move over a pre-existent neutral space-plane. It is in us, but we reshape it. We get our life from it, but it gets its life from us, and the life we give it is a new life. As architects of our own self-space, we become architects of history and historical space. The relationship of the individual to his historical past is active, not passive. This is saying much more than "history is relative" or "every man his own historian." To repeat: we are never outside history. It is always in us, and its spatial structure is what we and others like us create or recreate over our lifetimes of personal spatial development.[6]

The ontology of the world we live in is one of multiple realities, and therefore the space of history living in the present is pluralistic, not monistic, a compound of myriad pluralisms.[7] I am bemused and sometimes dismayed by the practical operation of this fact among professors of history in my own University department. When we disagree over mundane details, often the disagreement is really between the Byzantine Empire, the British Commonwealth,

the antebellum American South, pre-seventeenth century Scotland, and so forth, because each of these regions or regimes is alive and active in the self-space of one or another of us. Because the odyssey of each of us has a different dynamic pattern involving a different spatial process, the administrator attempting to coordinate us has a very difficult task indeed. Difficult also is the task of arriving at intellectual consensus. But then, beyond a certain point, can there or should there be coordination and consensus?

If what I am describing is true of those of us who live in the present, then it must have also been true of people in the past. This suggests that the best way to study those wide-space actors who seem to have played so important a role in shaping the space of past history is to study the dynamics of their self-space development as it was integral with their role not only as agents of change but also as re-creators of the past.

What about the question of objectivity or of intersubjectivity, you might ask? Are there not professional canons of evidence tempering the historian's subjectivity as he exercises his craft?

Aron Gurwitsch has written:

> In Hume's concept of consciousness which was to become that of classical British empiricism, the total field of consciousness appears as a sum or aggregate of elements which are all independent of, and intrinsically unrelated to one another, regardless of temporal relations between them.[8]

The historiography I advocate is not Humean, but is based on the concept that consciousness is a field structured by intentionality and by the functional necessities of dynamic integration of all the mandates of physiological rhythms, the rhythms of nature, the coordinating processes of nurture, internalized imagery, external social demands, and internalized history that work upon and within the individual. This applies equally well to the consciousness of the historian and to the consciousnesses of the historical people he studies. If the historian wishes to be "objective," he must first know himself, accept responsibility in an existential way for the continual process of creating his self-space, and commit himself to the tasks of scholarship out of the wisdom gained from his commitment to the process of himself.

This is not to say that the craft of history is a solipsistic exercise. The historian does not exist in isolation. Nor did the people he chooses to study.

As Adrian Van Kaam has put it, writing about the work of psychologists rather than historians, but in words that are relevant to historians:

> Every so-called fact is . . . always and necessarily embedded in some world . . . [O]ur existence is fundamentally co-existence, vertically in history, horizontally in contemporary culture. Vertical co-existence means that we assimilate

> what others have unveiled before us, while horizontal co-existence implies that we are influenced by the insights and experiences of those who presently live with us . . . Irrelevant empirical research is produced by the totally detached, abstract, and isolated investigation carried on by the neutral spectator of behavior who is indifferent to the relationship between his abstract game and the life situation of man. Relevant research is that which explores, describes, and empirically tests human behavior while preserving a 'lived' relationship with it in the reality of life. Of course, all empirical research . . . necessarily presupposes a temporary detachment from actually lived behavior. Otherwise no research would be possible. But relevant research *starts out* from an involvement in reality as it is lived, and it recovers this relationship after obtaining its scientific results.[9]

The psychologist's task, he says, is to make explicit, describe, and interpret originally given behavior, rather than to impose upon reality an *a priori* framework. Conceptual clarification comes by making explicit the constitutive structures, including the spatial-temporal structures, of the behavior being studied.[10]

To come back to the historical problem of those wide-space actors who have most affected past geopolitics and to look, for example, at the Boston and Salem China traders of the late 18th century and early 19th century, the question is how their self-space developed over time, how history was structured within their self-space, and how as a result they changed American geopolitical space. What is especially interesting is the stage in the lives of some of them when they cashed in their gains from the China trade and invested in American railroads, ending up by planning, building, and sometimes even managing whole railroad systems. At first, they moved into railroad building cautiously, step by step, until they reached the Mississippi; then their associates proceeded with greater spatial dare.[11]

The explanation of the radical shift from extra-continental to continental orientation is surely more than economic. The China trade was one way of rivaling England, from which they had so recently won political independence. But by focusing their attention outward, they were continuing patterns characteristic of the geopolitical framework that preceded independence. When their spatial imagination, daring, skill, and expertise turned toward construction of transportation links between Boston and their own country's heartland,[12] they were bringing self-space more into juxtaposition with national space, although their attitude toward the hinterland was almost as imperialistic as England's had been. The result at first was not really to enhance American independence, but rather to further American economic colonialism, by extracting more raw

material from the hinterland for trade abroad and by opening up the hinterland to English manufactured goods. Even the rails of the railroads often came from England. The longer-range result was national integration and a contribution toward the maturation of the American industrial revolution. Cosmopolitan colonialism was thereby transformed into nationalism. Self-space overlapped into or was projected onto national space.

To turn to another example, in an earlier paper of my own, I said:

> I like Joseph Levenson's very subtle analysis of the interplay between urbanism, universalism, nationalism, and provincialism in China. Anti-Manchu nationalism in the late 19th century took the form of provincialism. Confucianism had been in fact non-local, but since Chinese Nationalists were an anti-provincial elite who also opposed the empire, for strategic reasons they equated Confucianism with provincialism. After the revolution, Chinese nationalists sponsored provincialism in a spirit of cosmopolitanism. "The only way to keep from being patronized for one's 'ancient wisdom' or 'local color' —the only way to avoid feeding the cosmopolitan appetites of others—was to patronize one's own, on one's own, in a spirit as modern and non-provincial as that of the West which would make China provincial."[13]

Stages of wandering, of cosmopolitanism, of localism, of nationalism, of isolationism, of imperialism, and concomitant changes in urban systems either toward emphasis on seaports or conversely toward heartland emphasis, changes in the symbolically-loaded spatial structure of individual cities, and also changes in socio-economic-political institutions—all are expressions of self-space worked out over the plains and plateaus of history, the process never complete within a single person's lifetime but taken up anew—with suitable revisions—by each new generation. The creation and dismantling of political boundaries, the integration and disintegration of whole large-scale systems, the articulation of cultures and civilizations are all to be understood—at least in part—in terms of this complex process. The self-space process of the individual is the cell both of historical change and of historical continuity. As I said before, history is in him; he is history.

It is this profoundly *personal* aspect that is missing from many historical textbooks. Historians write about "great men," who are sometimes perceived to have "psychological dimensions," but what is missing is a depiction of the dynamic spatial drama within the individual as integral with his externalized spatial behavior. What is missing is a sense of the great pluralism of life-spaces. History occurs not on a spatial plane or in a spatial box, but inside and between the myriad mobile cells of the great honeycomb of these pluralisms. Since there are as many spatial dramas as there are persons and groups, what is missing is

an historiography designed to describe perceptively and accurately the complex structure and dynamics of it all. Those historians who are not biographers write as if the drama were all or mostly external and as if there were some common external field of space within which the actors moved and interacted. They write as if the most important events of history were in this externalized field rather than deep in the psyches of individual persons. Social sciences, too, are guilty of analogous reductionism, for similar reasons.