

FREE-MARKET SOCIALISTS

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CAPITALIST CULTURE IN AMERICA
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What's Socialist about Capitalism?

In an oral history interview conducted in February of 1962, the Columbia University sociologists Paul Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell discussed how their youthful involvement in socialist movements and interest in Marxist theory affected the way that they practiced academic social research. Lazarsfeld, a Viennese émigré, recounted an episode that had occurred at an academic conference in Vermont in the summer of 1939, when he was serving as the director of the Rockefeller Foundation-sponsored Radio Research Project. A number of prominent sociologists, psychologists, and communications researchers, including Harold Lasswell and Lloyd Warner, were in attendance. When the topic of social stratification came up, Lazarsfeld grew frustrated with the course of the conversation. Prompted by Rockefeller Foundation officer John Marshall, who had started the Radio Research Project, Lazarsfeld took the floor to explain his frustration, beginning with the apology that he was “a Marxist on a leave of absence.” Without missing a beat, a colleague in the audience with a deeply resonant voice exclaimed, in a sardonic tone: “Who gave you leave?” What Lazarsfeld meant, and was compelled to defend, was that he—having grown up in the Austrian Social Democratic milieu during the transition from the Habsburg Empire to the First Republic—was “more socialist than any of the politically minded people.” “Just as I’m a Viennese, I’m a Socialist,” Lazarsfeld told Bell, “without questioning either.” Bell agreed:

It shows in your work. It’s a style, really for you. The content is less important than the style—it’s the way you connect things, and analyze them. That’s the Viennese Socialism of Paul Lazarsfeld, American sociologist. Maybe this is the way a style of thought is absorbed. The wisdom of the past

is converted into the ‘of course’ of the present. It’s not just a personal aspect, it’s the way a man is trained to look at the world.”¹

This book is about the way a style of thought with a political dimension—socialism or social democracy—settles in the minds and is evident in the habits, perspectives, and dispositions of outwardly-directed individuals. The result is an approach to cooperative work that is guided by a heightened sensitivity to social relations, class stratification, and the role of conscious planning in building a better society. My aim is not to analyze socialism as an ideologically stable, organized political system formalized in government institutions—though socialism in that sense is relevant to my analysis. Instead, I consider socialism here as a conscious practice of cooperative, progressive intellectual labor; it is a worldview and a set of values that are absorbed into habits of mind and expressed creatively in the products of professional work. For the purposes of this narrative, socialism and social democracy will be used somewhat interchangeably, though the connotative valence of the latter will tend toward the republican institutionalization and bureaucratization of socialistic ideas.

Whether expressed consciously or not, the socialist values held by the figures under consideration here emerged throughout their careers in the forms, patterns, and content of their work. As Central European émigrés, the sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, the architect Victor Gruen—also from Vienna—and the Hungarian artist-designer László Moholy-Nagy embodied a transatlantic transfer of socialistic values to the United States that manifested in surprising ways in the forward-looking industrial society and consumer culture of the mid-century. Each man was born under the Habsburg Monarchy of Austria-Hungary; each came of age during the republican revolutions that followed World War I; each was a socialist and a Jew (though the depth of that identification varied and was barely acknowledged in the case of Moholy-Nagy); and each fled Nazism in the 1930s and ultimately settled in the US. They worked in different professional fields, but they were all socialist intellectuals insofar as they theorized their own work in its social context. Importantly, each of them engaged the titans of American industry from a socialist perspective, with varying degrees of success: Lazarsfeld as a market researcher; Moholy-Nagy as an industrial designer; and Gruen as an architect of shopping centers and planner of cities. This book considers them as socialists, but for the purposes of this narrative the style of their work is much more interesting and relevant than the rhetorical content of their

1 Lazarsfeld and Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, Columbia Oral History, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, Paul F. Lazarsfeld Archiv, Institut für Soziologie, Universität Wien.

political views, which were not particularly novel or interesting relative to the theoreticians and polemicists who dominated their social circles. What is interesting is what appears on first glance to be a paradox: that the socialist work patterns, views, and dispositions of these émigrés were mostly embraced in the US, so celebrated for its individualism and capitalistic ideas, not only in the business sphere but also more broadly in the consumer sphere. Indeed, the products of their labor have become ingrained in the American commercial culture. This book is an intellectual history that considers ideas in practice.

Intellectual histories of political economy trace the genealogy of ideas and consider the context of their creation, articulation, dissemination, institutionalization, canonization, or effectual implementation as systems of laws, social relations, or cultural norms governing the behaviors of humans as individuals, members of classes, or as bureaucratic functionaries serving in the interest of institutional actors. Historians such as James Kloppenberg and Daniel Rodgers, for example, have considered the intellectual exchange between European social democrats and American progressives in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.² The intellectual infrastructure of the American Progressive movement was not developed in some isolated, exceptional national context, they argue, but rather as part of a transatlantic, cosmopolitan exchange of ideas among political philosophers. For Rodgers, that integrated Progressive movement culminated in the New Deal, which came into being just as the social-democratic republican project was collapsing in Europe. Other historians, however, view the New Deal as an exceptional phenomenon—made possible only by the crisis of the Depression and the peculiar political alignments of the time—that was “un-American” in that it broke ideologically from the spirit of the Progressive movement.

The relationship between democracy, capitalism, and socialism—particularly the question of the extent to which an economic system may compromise or support democratic institutions—has been a major concern of intellectual historians of political economy. Howard Brick, for example, has considered the efforts of a range of political theorists, sociologists, and economists to imagine alternatives to capitalism or alternative *forms* of capitalism in the twentieth century. Brick examines a range of critiques and imagined alternatives: the idea of “organized capitalism” proffered in 1915 by the Austro-Marxist Rudolf Hilferding, one of Lazarsfeld’s mentors; Adolf Berle and Gardiner Means’s 1932 call for business corporations, as collectivized institutions, to recognize their social responsibilities; sociologist Talcott Parsons’s importation of the social theory of

2 Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*.

Max Weber as a challenge to American behaviorist and positivistic tendencies in the social sciences, and the later popularization of the Weberian critique of bureaucracy by Lazarsfeld's colleague and chief antagonist, C. Wright Mills; the Hungarian political economist Karl Polanyi's analysis of the socially-grounded "countermovement" against capitalism; and the plea for a socially-committed, progressively-minded scholarship by sociologist Robert Lynd, another mentor of Lazarsfeld.³ Even a corporate management consultant of the period, the Austrian immigrant Peter Drucker, could recognize in the immediate post-World War II years that the American corporation was not merely an expedient economic organization but also a social institution which ought to recognize its workers as individuals who demanded status and dignity. The problem for American corporations, in Drucker's view, was that they were seen by shareholders and managers as merely means to other ends—i.e., profits—and not as social institutions that were ends in themselves.⁴ Historian Richard Hofstadter's classic understanding of Progressivism points to the centrality of anti-collectivist thinking in American culture. Far from being an eruption of social democracy, for Hofstadter the Progressive movement was a moralizing, in some ways conservative, effort to "restore" an idea of economic individualism that was believed to have existed in a previous era, but was destroyed by monopolies, great corporations, and corrupt political machines.⁵ The tendency in American political culture to atomize individuals, outside of any particular social context, has been so strong that historian Jefferson Cowie has considered the New Deal era in the middle of the twentieth century not as an enduring reformation of American capitalism but as the "great exception"—a social-democratic intermezzo or working-class interregnum—to the longer trend of liberal individualism and free-labor ideology that would later reemerge with the "Reagan restoration" (as opposed to "revolution") in the 1980s. Shifting political alliances after the civil rights and immigration reforms of the 1960s fundamentally altered the Democratic Party's coalition. When Southern conservatives and segregationists fled the Democratic Party to join the Republicans, the always fragile mid-century political alignments were destabilized. This eventuality ultimately contributed to the crumbling of the New Deal order, which had been defined by strong labor unions, high wages that allowed workers to achieve a middle-class lifestyle, and a robust regulatory and social-welfare state.⁶

3 Brick, *Transcending Capitalism*.

4 Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*.

5 Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*.

6 Cowie, *The Great Exception*.

The political-intellectual survey histories of Kloppenberg, Rodgers, Brick, Cowie, and others are essential to our understanding of broader trends in the history of ideas and their relation to public policies and social outcomes. Such intellectual histories are highly relevant to histories of capitalism, but their interest is primarily ideological; that is, they are concerned with ideas mainly with regard to their potential for realization as social or politico-economic programs, or as motivating principles for organized groups or classes of people. This book falls under the broad category of intellectual history, but the writings and rhetoric of economic theoreticians, political philosophers, and politicians are not the main concern here. Instead, this book examines the ways in which socialist ideas have been absorbed by the gritty, quotidian reality of American industrial capitalism, emerging transmogrified as sometimes-unrecognizable objects. The adapted or mutated ideas may manifest as business practices, marketing methods, patterns of management-labor relations, architectural forms, urban plans, industrial designs, or consumer products.

This approach to the history of capitalism may shed light on the life of socialist ideas as they transcend the sphere of political idealism and enter the vulgar world of economic relationships. The book is composed of interwoven biographies of three contemporaneous émigré socialists working in different fields: an artist-designer, an architect-planner, and a sociologist. By examining their lives and careers, we may better understand how socialist ideas may be expressed in the products of professional work, and how they may be translated, as it were, from one cultural-economic-historical context to another.

The socialist-controlled “Red Vienna,” at the center of the first Austrian republic, is the crucial setting for this narrative. It is the native city of two of the principal figures, Lazarsfeld and Gruen, and the temporary residence of the third, Moholy-Nagy, who came from Budapest, the other imperial capital of Austria-Hungary. The landscape of Vienna in its period of transition from the Habsburg Monarchy to the First Republic well illustrates the idea of the *translation* of socialist ideas into spaces that themselves regenerate socialist ideas. The greatest initiative of the Social Democratic city council of Vienna in the years following World War I was the construction of the *Gemeindebauten*, four hundred massive public housing blocks with 64,000 units that would house fully a tenth of the city’s population. The *Gemeindebauten* served a clear utilitarian function, to provide desperately-needed postwar housing for workers, but the design of the buildings also served an ideological function for their inhabitants. The *Gemeindebauten* were purposefully designed to transform the traditional Austrian *Volkskultur* into a proper *Arbeiterkultur*—that is, a working-class culture imbued with the values of social democracy. This mission of the *Gemeinde-*

bauten was incorporated in the elements of their design, which included laundries, bathhouses, kindergartens, clinics, libraries, theaters, and meeting rooms. These aspects of the physical environment were meant to facilitate inhabitants' socialization as socialists at every stage of life. The *Gemeindebauten* were built in the traditional Viennese *Hof-Haus* design: a perimeter block surrounding central courtyards, gardens, and playgrounds, which added to the communal atmosphere. They were “part dwellings, part public buildings,” built as part of the “slow revolution” toward socialism. As the architectural historian Eve Blau puts it, they were “the spatial correlatives of the Austro-Marxist concept of *hineinwachsen*, the process of slow growth from within.”⁷

An up-and-coming architect in Vienna at the time, Victor Gruen—who was also an ardent Social Democrat and leader of the socialist Political Cabaret—submitted *Gemeindebauten* designs for municipal competitions and also worked as a construction supervisor for a *Gemeindebau*. Indeed, the *Gemeindebauten* were the only major building projects in Vienna during the period of hyperinflation and economic depression after World War I. As a Jewish socialist, Gruen would be forced to flee his home country after Hitler’s 1938 *Anschluss* of Austria. He emigrated to the United States, where he would become famous for his designs of suburban shopping centers. Gruen’s shopping centers incorporated many of the same design principles of the *Gemeindebauten*: the perimeter-block design which created pedestrian-only zones (courtyards, arcades, and malls) in the interior spaces, which were originally in the open-air before being covered and air-conditioned; the communal meeting facilities and services that supplemented the shops and made the shopping center a community center; and the general sense of cooperation—even among shop owners, who did not so much compete against one another as contribute to an overall spirit of commerce beneficial to everyone. Shoppers coming for one or two items, for example, might linger in the pleasant environment and shop for other things while they were there. Every proprietor benefited from this collectivized buying experience. In the case of Gruen’s shopping centers, and in many other examples like it throughout this book, a fundamentally socialist idea found its way into spatial forms and business practices in a very different social context in the US. But just as the *Gemeindebau* was meant to facilitate socialization into a socialist society, the shopping center was meant to facilitate socialization into a consumer-capitalist society.

This is a story of exceptionally talented émigrés who navigated the peculiar obstacles presented by a foreign political culture. Scholars of immigration and intellectual history have taken various approaches to the study of Central Euro-

7 Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna*, 6, 14.

pean émigré intellectuals, scientists, and scholars—a relatively small but highly influential group of refugees from the Nazi terror. The classic, early studies were sometimes conducted by the émigrés themselves or with their cooperation as they neared the end of their productive careers in the mid- and late-twentieth century. These works often included first-hand accounts and attempted a comprehensive, in some cases encyclopedic, documentation of the émigrés' contributions to their respective fields, as well as their broader involvement in the culture and intellectual life of their adopted countries.⁸ Later edited collections and *Festschriften*—which often anticipated monographs by their contributors—took a closer look at German and other Central European trends and traditions in the social sciences and the extent to which they challenged or were incorporated into American methods of scientific inquiry.⁹ A persistent source of fascination for scholars has been the intellectual communities created by and for exiled scholars. The “University in Exile” at the New School and the Institute of Social Research—exiled at Columbia University and better known as the “Frankfurt School”—have attracted particular attention.¹⁰ Some of the more prominent émigré intellectuals, such as Hannah Arendt and Theodor W. Adorno, have been the subjects of individual biographies focusing on their American experience and their influence on American political thought and cultural criticism.¹¹ Intellectual historians have also used the study of German-speaking intellectual immigrant communities and political thinkers like Hans Speier to make broader arguments about émigrés' influence on democratic institutions and the course of American economic and foreign policymaking over the course of the twentieth century.¹²

This book falls under the broad category of scholarship on the émigré experience, but rather than looking at émigré scholars' influence within their respective fields, or at émigré intellectuals' critiques of American culture and political economy—the prevalent mode of secondary literature on the Frankfurt School and other communities of émigré intellectuals—my concern is émigrés' posi-

8 Major works in this vein include Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants*; Fleming and Bailyn, *The Intellectual Migration*; Boyers, *The Legacy of the German Refugee Intellectuals*; Hughes, *The Sea Change*; Heilbut, *Exiled in Paradise*; Jackman and Borden, *The Muses Flee Hitler*; Palmier, *Weimar in Exile*.

9 See, for example, Ash, and Söllner, *Forced Migration and Scientific Change*; Lautman and Lécuyer, *Paul Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)*; Kettler and Lauer, *Exile, Science, and Bildung*; Fleck, *A Transatlantic History of the Social Sciences*.

10 On the New School, see, for example, Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile*; Friedlander, *A Light in Dark Times*. The scholarship on the Frankfurt School is vast, but among the most important works are: Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*; Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School*; and Wheatland, *The Frankfurt School in Exile*.

11 King, *Arendt and America*; Jenemann, *Adorno in America*; see also Friedman, *The Lives of Erich Fromm*.

12 See, for example, Burgin, *The Great Persuasion*; Greenberg, *The Weimar Century*; and Bessner, *Democracy in Exile*.

tive engagement with the world of American business. In its biographical approach to the subject of the American consumer society, my methodology has some structural affinities with works by Daniel Horowitz,¹³ but, unlike Horowitz, my concern is not intellectual critiques of consumer culture, per se, but rather the émigré-intellectual-entrepreneurs' engagement in the business side of consumer culture. This book overlaps with business histories and industry studies by scholars including William Leach, Walter Friedman, and Susan Strasser,¹⁴ and it aspires to the transnational scope of works by scholars like Victoria de Grazia and Jan Logemann,¹⁵ but my interest goes beyond the decisions and dealings of businessmen and managers. My interest lies in the ways in which socialist ideas were realized in business forms. Jackson Lears's scholarly analysis of the American mythologies embedded in business practices and consumer behaviors, which elicits broader cultural conclusions from a close reading of the ephemeral vulgarities of the business world, is a model of astute cultural analysis,¹⁶ but this book does not conceive of American culture as a fully contained and coherent phenomenon. The mythic realm into which this narrative treads is the transatlantic idea of capitalism and "free enterprise," and the ways that socialist ideas have challenged or contradicted that idea but have, at the same time, become ingrained in American business practices.

This book is organized into four chronological sections containing three chapters each. Every chapter is devoted to one of the main figures in the book: Lazarsfeld, Gruen, or Moholy-Nagy. (If the reader is only interested in the biography of any one or two of the three, the book will make sense if the other chapters are skipped; however, these are interweaving narratives, and some of the contextual history would be lost.)

The first section, "New Republics and New Ideas," considers the period of transition from the collapse of the Habsburg Empire at the end of World War I through the early years of the First Austrian Republic, the fleeting Hungarian Soviet experiment, and the Weimar Republic in Germany. With the Social Democrats firmly in control of the city, Vienna functioned almost as a state within a state and became a European center for bold socialist experiments in municipal government. One of the protégés of the leaders of the Social Democratic Party was Paul Lazarsfeld, a bright young man with a commitment to socialism and a talent in mathematics. His abilities were quickly recognized by a man who was almost a second father to him, Friedrich Adler, the heroic social-

13 Horowitz, *Anxieties of Affluence*; Horowitz, *Consuming Pleasures*.

14 Leach, *Land of Desire*; Friedman, *Birth of a Salesman*; Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed*.

15 de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*; Logemann, *Engineered to Sell*.

16 Lears, *Fables of Abundance*.

ist who had assassinated Count Karl Stürgkh, the Austrian prime minister, in protest of the war. Lazarsfeld, the subject of the first chapter, completed a PhD in mathematics and taught statistics and survey research at Karl and Charlotte Bühler's Psychological Institute at the University of Vienna. Anti-Semitism at the University stymied Lazarsfeld's professional advancement, but he was able to direct an economic-psychological research center that used commercial contracts for market research to fund its studies, train students, develop research methods, and provide jobs for many comrades from Lazarsfeld's circle of underemployed socialist-intellectuals. The research center was a model of cooperative research that Lazarsfeld would replicate throughout his career. A focus on social stratification and the psychological motivations of ordinary working people was characteristic of its studies. The research center's most famous study of the unemployed in the village of Marienthal—which concluded that widespread unemployment led to resignation, not revolution—was the idea of Otto Bauer, leader of the Austrian Social Democrats. The study got the attention of Rockefeller Foundation officers in Paris, who, with the help of a recommendation from Charlotte Bühler, would award Lazarsfeld a travelling fellowship to the United States, which he began in the fall of 1933.

The “Red Vienna” of those years was defined not only by the ideology of its Social Democratic leaders but also by its physical spaces, most spectacularly in the *Gemeindebauten* described above. A young architect, Viktor Grünbaum—who would later change his name to Victor Gruen after emigrating to America—began his career working for the firm of his godfather, who had sponsored his technical training. He mainly worked on façade and apartment renovations, and occasionally on larger projects like department stores and the *Gemeindebauten*. He had bigger ambitions, though, and he was inspired by the unadorned designs of modernists like Adolf Loos and the city plans of Otto Wagner and Le Corbusier. He fueled his political energies as an actor, director, and master of ceremonies for the Political Cabaret, the antifascist, socialist agitprop theater where he occasionally crossed paths with Lazarsfeld. Chapter 2 considers Gruen's early architectural career and his experience in the cabaret, which established in his mind the power of physical spaces and spectacles to influence minds and shape societies.

The Hungarian artist-designer László Moholy-Nagy is the subject of Chapter 3. Moholy-Nagy, who usually went simply as Moholy, honed his skills as a sketch artist during the First World War, practicing his craft while recuperating in the hospital from a serious injury. He had been studying law in Budapest, but he abandoned that course completely in the later stages of the war, when he became involved in the Hungarian Activist movement. His Activist friends convinced him that art was not a decadent privilege but could be wielded as a force for rev-

olutionary socialist change. When the short-lived Soviet republic in Hungary collapsed in the summer of 1919, Moholy fled to Vienna and eventually made his way to Berlin, where he made a name for himself as an up-and-coming “Constructivist” artist. His abstract, unorthodox works caught the attention of Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus design school in Weimar (later Dessau), who invited Moholy to join the faculty as an instructor of the foundation course and metals workshop. Both the mission of the Bauhaus and its pedagogical method were social-democratic: teachers denied individual genius and emphasized the work of the collective, and the aim was to design useful objects for mass production that could be used and enjoyed by ordinary working people. When the course of the Bauhaus became increasingly vocational under a new director in 1928, Moholy left the school and returned to Berlin, where he became a stage designer for the theater. When the Nazis rose to power in 1933, Moholy, associated with the socialist leanings of the Bauhaus and the “degenerate” art of the Berlin avant-garde, was identified as a subversive and forced to flee.

The second section of this book, “Exile and Underground,” follows the careers of the three principals in the 1930s before Hitler’s *Anschluss* of Austria, when they were living as exiles from Nazism and Austro-fascism or, in the case of Gruen, evading political oppression by participating in the underground socialist theater movement. Lazarsfeld’s early American experience as a travelling Rockefeller fellow and budding market researcher is the subject of the fourth chapter. Though he did not begin the fellowship as an émigré, his decision to stay in America was compelled by political events in Austria, where Engelbert Dollfuss declared himself dictator and outlawed the Social Democratic Party after the civil war in February of 1934, forcing many of Lazarsfeld’s socialist comrades underground and resulting in the imprisonment of his wife and father. Lazarsfeld decided to continue his tour of America for another year. He worked on survey research projects for the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and apprenticed with several prominent American social researchers, most notably his sponsor Robert Lynd, the Columbia sociologist and author, with his wife Helen, of the famous *Middletown* study. Lazarsfeld also made a name for himself as an innovative market researcher who combined qualitative and quantitative methods to interpret the psychological motivations of consumers, a method that American businessmen found fascinating and potentially very useful. Lazarsfeld also replicated his Vienna research center at the University of Newark, assembling a corps of student researchers funded partly by his commercial contract studies and partly by the New Deal-era National Youth Administration. He continued his collaborations with Max Horkheimer’s Institute of Social Research, which by then was exiled at Columbia University.

Chapters 5 and 6 swing back to Europe, where Victor Gruen's Political Cabaret was forced underground as the *Kleinkunsthöhlen*, which evaded censorship by the fascist authorities by playing on small stages in wine cellars and coffeehouses. Gruen adapted to the new political climate by becoming increasingly focused on his professional career. He had left his godfather's architectural firm to establish his own practice in 1932, and he began designing shopfronts and store interiors in innovative ways, sometimes using tricks from the theater to enlarge the appearance of a small space. His work—such as a storefront that incorporated a mini-arcade that allowed passersby to window-shop out of the way of sidewalk traffic—attracted much attention in the architectural and retail trade press, which would serve him well later in his career. When Hitler invaded Austria in March of 1938, Gruen and his wife made frantic plans to emigrate and would finally reach New York by summer to begin anew. Moholy, meanwhile, had fled Nazi Germany for London, where he found work as a designer of advertising, department store displays, and special effects for films. Along with Gropius, who was also in London, Moholy kept the dream of the Bauhaus alive. Fortunately, in 1937, an association of Chicago industrialists, after consulting with Gropius, would invite Moholy to their city to reestablish the famous design school as the “New Bauhaus.”

The third section, “New Deal in a New Country,” looks at the émigrés' efforts to establish themselves professionally in the United States in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Chapter 7 tells the story of Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research (aka, Radio Research Project), an organization sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, which would provide employment for many of the Jewish and socialist refugees who had been displaced after the *Anschluss*. Ironically, the crisis in Europe would benefit Lazarsfeld insofar as it allowed him to staff his research center, which would move from Newark to Columbia in 1939, with an experienced corps of socialist researchers, including Lazarsfeld's second wife Herta Herzog and the Frankfurt School scholar Theodor W. Adorno. Indeed, jobs lined up at Lazarsfeld's center helped many of these researchers, including Adorno, to get visas to come to the US to begin with. Lazarsfeld's Radio Research Project became an early center for the study of mass communications, then a burgeoning field. When it moved to Columbia, the research bureau increasingly took commercial contracts for market research, and in 1944 it was rechristened the Bureau of Applied Social Research. Lazarsfeld had by then joined Columbia's sociology faculty, and his willingness to do commercial studies increasingly alienated his colleague, friend, and sponsor Robert Lynd, who believed in the purity of social research as a progressive pursuit. But Lazarsfeld was primarily interested in developing new research methods by whatever means possible. His system of col-

lectivized research, developed with his circle of socialist researchers in Vienna, turned out to be an excellent structure for the analysis of consumer behavior, and many of his friends and colleagues, such as Hans Zeisel and Ernest Dichter, would go on to become important and innovative practitioners of market research in their own right. Their interest in the tastes and behaviors of ordinary working people—cultivated in the social-democratic atmosphere of “Red Vienna”—had a ready application in the context of American consumer capitalism.

Chapter 8 looks at Gruen’s early career in the US. One of his first jobs was working as a designer on Norman Bel Geddes’s “Futurama” exhibit for General Motors at the 1939–40 World’s Fair in New York (which had impressed Moholy), where he helped to imagine a future city that segregated pedestrian and automobile traffic—a central feature of his later shopping center designs. Gruen also reconstituted his Vienna theater troupe in New York as the “Refugee Artists Group” for two bittersweet revues. The Viennese refugee community in New York was essential to Gruen’s ability to reestablish himself as an architect in America. Several of his first commissions—designs for shopfronts and store interiors—were commissioned by exiled Viennese who had become proprietors of small shops and retail businesses on Fifth Avenue and the Upper West Side. Gruen also established a partnership with Elsie Krummeck, an American designer of exceptional talent, who helped him get a commission designing stores for the Grayson chain of women’s ready-to-wear clothing on the West Coast. Gruen and Krummeck married and moved to Los Angeles, where they adjusted to the new climate and the American automotive culture. It was during this time, in 1943, that Gruen first conceptualized their design for the regional shopping center, which incorporated many of the fundamental design elements of the Viennese *Gemeindebauten* described above. At the same time, Gruen and Krummeck learned to adapt their style of architecture to the sprawling landscape of Los Angeles, much more typical of American urban space than the compact, pedestrian-packed streets of New York. Gruen’s shopping center would be a hybrid of the cooperative, community-centric concepts of the socialist *Gemeindebauten*, principles derived from his shopfront designs, and his acceptance of American forms of mass movement. Though he detested the automobile, he would design his centers on the presumption that most shoppers would arrive by car. At the shopping center, however, they would find a rare oasis of pedestrian-only malls and courts.

Chapter 9 moves to Chicago in January of 1939, when the New Bauhaus had lost the support of its industrialist founders and Moholy was suddenly on his own, despite having brought over several prominent ex-Bauhäusler to join his faculty. With the help of Walter Paepcke, an arts patron and president of the Container Corporation, Moholy was able to reestablish the School of Design in

1939. Like the Bauhaus, the School of Design sought to merge art and industry and provide broad training to designers in all areas, from print and graphic design to architecture. Moholy's pedagogy followed the socialistic Bauhaus method, which denied genius and encouraged workshops of collective design. Yet the School's industrial backers were skeptical of Moholy's methods and impatient with the results, and only a few of the students' designs were patented and went into mass production. Moholy adapted to the materials restrictions and steep drop in enrollment of the war years by establishing camouflage and arts-therapy programs for traumatized veterans, but the School struggled to survive, and in 1944 Paepcke reorganized it as the Institute of Design, with a board of directors and professional managers, in an effort to streamline its operations and remove it from the overbearing influence of Moholy, who began to show signs of the illness that would take his life.

The fourth and final section, "Making Postwar America," considers the ways in which the ideas of Lazarsfeld, Gruen, and Moholy became embedded in American culture and business practices. Chapter 10 looks at how the social research methods developed at Lazarsfeld's Bureau were applied more broadly—and very often more poorly—in the world of market research, sometimes by members of Lazarsfeld's own corps of émigré researchers, and sometimes by native-born American marketers eager to use whatever worked to motivate the masses of newly-affluent postwar consumers. Techniques like the "panel" method, which Lazarsfeld used in his study of the 1940 presidential election (published in 1944 as *The People's Choice*), used interviews with a stable group of people—the panel—at regular intervals over a period of time in order to determine the degree to which some stimulant from media propaganda or a social situation influenced or changed the views, habits, or voting decisions these individuals. Another technique developed at Lazarsfeld's Bureau, the "focused interview," analyzed the subjective effects of a specific media stimulus on an individual or group based on a set of objective properties of the stimulus. Both the panel method and the focused interview made their way into the standard practices of market researchers and pollsters, though often in a vulgarized form: the focused interview became the "focus group," which lacked adherence to the strict—but often expensive—methods practiced and perfected at the Bureau. As the Bureau's methods entered the mainstream of market research, some of Lazarsfeld's colleagues in the sociology department at Columbia, including Robert Lynd and C. Wright Mills, grew increasingly suspicious of his willingness to use commercial contracts to develop research methods. This criticism came to a head with Mills's publication of *The Sociological Imagination* in 1959, which eviscerated Lazarsfeld for his

“abstracted empiricism,” a method that produced studies beneficial to corporations but which were, he claimed, of no use to society.

Chapter 11 follows Gruen into the 1950s, when his plans for the regional shopping center were finally realized in the Northland Center, which opened in suburban Detroit in 1954; and Southdale, which opened in suburban Minneapolis in 1956. Northland would be the paradigm for thousands of suburban shopping centers that opened in the 1950s and 1960s, and Southdale—with its covered malls and courts and climate-controlled interiors—would become the template for the shopping centers that proliferated across the country in the latter half of the twentieth century. The key principles of the centers were the separation of pedestrian and automobile traffic; the co-location of a great variety of different shops at a single center; and the pleasant atmosphere created by pedestrian-only zones between the shops. Yet Gruen also promoted the centers as “crystallization points” or relocation shelters in the event of a nuclear attack. Although the centers to some extent realized Gruen’s dream of becoming true *community* centers—downtowns for the centerless suburbs—increasingly, the shopping centers of the later postwar years became exclusively commercial places that lacked the libraries, clinics, meeting rooms, and other community-building facilities that were essential to the socializing environments of the Viennese *Gemeindebauten*. Ultimately, Gruen was more of an urban planner than an architect, and he attempted to apply his concept for the shopping center to reimagine car-clogged American downtowns as pedestrian-only zones. But Gruen’s urban plans were only implemented in piecemeal ways—such as by blocking off a single main street as a pedestrian mall, thus failing to fully realize his vision. By the 1960s, Gruen, who also worked on housing projects like Charles River Park in Boston, became a target of critics of the excesses of “slum clearing” and urban renewal, which had destroyed many ethnic enclaves in American cities. By the end of the decade, Gruen began to agree with his critics, and he took up environmentalism and the revitalization of cities as his new cause. But he believed that the United States was a lost cause. He repatriated to Austria to warn Europeans not to follow the mistaken path that Americans had taken. After Gruen returned to Vienna, he would take to campaigning *against* the shopping center idea in the 1970s, which, he believed, had developed in an environmentally destructive way that was not to his liking. Gruen railed against the “unifunctional” designs of commercial shopping centers, and instead he promoted what he called “multi-functional” urban planning. He was, in a sense, atoning for his role in creating the monster of the shopping center, which had only encouraged the auto-centric society that he so despised. He also campaigned to remake the Innere Stadt, the central district of Vienna, as a pedestrian-only zone, an idea that was ultimately successful.

The twelfth and final chapter considers the Institute of Design after Moholy and Moholy's legacy in the 1940s and 1950s. Just upon completing the writing of his magnum opus, *Vision in Motion*, Moholy died of leukemia in November of 1946. Gropius would choose Serge Chermayeff to direct the Institute, which merged with the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1949, where the last Bauhaus director, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe—Moholy's nemesis who, in his and Gropius's opinion, had corrupted the spirit of the Bauhaus—headed the architecture department. The school, which still exists, became a typical professionalized design school, having lost the special pedagogical character of the Bauhaus and the personal impression made by Moholy. Moholy's American patron, Walter Paepcke, struck up a friendship with another Bauhaus alumnus and American émigré, the Austrian Herbert Bayer, who would essentially replace Moholy as the businessman's own modern artist. In 1945, as Moholy was ailing, Paepcke brought on Bayer to produce an exhibit of art in advertising, which premiered at the Art Institute of Chicago. The exhibit was a success, and Paepcke eventually convinced Bayer to move to Aspen, Colorado—a derelict old mining town that Paepcke had envisioned as a ski resort for artists, intellectuals, and businessmen. Paepcke bought up property in the town, and Bayer served as a consultant to Paepcke's Container Corporation as he worked on special projects such as the World Geo-Graphic Atlas, which Paepcke distributed for free to libraries, museums, and customers. Bayer also served as the “designer-in-residence” in the up-and-coming mountain town when Paepcke established the International Design Conference there in 1951. Aspen as a resort town was Paepcke's dream, and Bayer helped him to build this fantasy Tyrol.

Ultimately, the work of these socialist émigrés became embedded in American commercial culture in ways that could not have been anticipated. The socialist context they grew up in was essential to the development of their ideas, designs, and methods, and their forced emigration compelled their adaptation to the American context. In some cases—such as Gruen's cooperative shopping centers and Lazarsfeld's innovative methods of analyzing social stratification—their ideas found ready application in capitalist America. In the case of the holistic thinking and peculiar pedagogy of Moholy, in contrast, adaptation to the world of “free enterprise” was more difficult—yet his ideas would prove valuable to the system in the long run. It was, perhaps, the way a style of thought is absorbed, as Daniel Bell would observe. The wisdom of the past—or the way one was trained to look at the world—was converted into the “of course” of the present.



NEW REPUBLICS AND NEW IDEAS

1

**New Republics and New Ideas:
Paul Lazarsfeld in Vienna**

When the anti-war socialist Friedrich Adler assassinated Count Karl Stürgkh, the dictatorial Austrian prime minister, on October 21, 1916, he signaled the coming of a new, post-imperial era for the Austrian Social Democratic Workers' Party. The long-reigning Habsburg monarchy would soon cease to exist, and the chaotic violence of the First World War had vanquished whatever imperial allegiance remained in the party's younger members.

The Social Democratic Party had been established in 1889 by Adler's father, the medical doctor Victor Adler, after his association with Friedrich Engels and other prominent socialists in England and Germany. Victor Adler organized the various factions of the Austrian socialist movement that had grown out of the *Bildungsvereine*, the educational associations that emphasized cultural improvement to evade restrictions on political organizing under the Habsburgs. The latent conservatism that guided the party's "Social-Patriotic" wing and its official support for the imperial war effort—partly because Russia was viewed as an anti-Semitic, anti-trade-union country—was challenged by a younger generation of Social Democrats, a new left, who viewed the war as antithetical to the modern, progressive ideals of socialist internationalism.

The younger Adler's dramatic deed, which he staged in the dining room of a Vienna hotel, was designed to overcome Stürgkh's efforts to stifle the Social Democrats' antiwar protests by preventing the Parliament from meeting. In killing Stürgkh, Friedrich Adler immediately became the "hero of hundreds of thousands of Austrian workers, youths, and intellectuals," according to one contemporary socialist, by using the public platform provided by his murder trial in May of 1917 to articulate the antiwar position and transform the Social Democratic Party. Ultimately, Friedrich Adler's very real act of political assassi-

nation would carry the latent, historical symbolism of patricide: simultaneous with the end of the war that he despised was the death of his father on November 11, 1918; the final collapse of the centuries-old Habsburg Empire and the exuberant declaration of a new Austrian republic on November 12; and the installation of a new, internationalist leader of the Social Democrats, Otto Bauer.¹

Among the many young socialists inspired by Friedrich Adler's bold action was Paul Lazarsfeld, the future sociologist who had a particularly intimate connection to the assassin-hero, who was a father-figure and mentor to the boy. Lazarsfeld lived through the transition from the Habsburg Empire to the Austrian Republic, and his upbringing as a socialist was as essential to his future career in sociology and market research as was his academic training. As a sociologist he would apply psychology to the problem of human motivation and action, and as a mathematician he would combine quantitative and qualitative methods in innovative ways that would revolutionize market research and surveying techniques. The socialists of Vienna strongly supported empirical social research as an important facet of their project to construct *neue Menschen* (new people) for a new, socialist society. Class differences in consumer choices and behaviors were of keen interest to them because any proletarian limitations on the scope of possible actions could prevent that socialist society from coming into being. Market research as Lazarsfeld practiced it was a product of the socialists' deep interest in the quotidian lives of ordinary working-class people and their specific, often unconscious motivations. Along with his comrades from the socialist movement, Lazarsfeld would create a quasi-academic research center that took commercial contracts for market research to sustain itself—an administrative design that would serve as an important model for research centers he would build later in the United States. Lazarsfeld's exclusion from a typical university career in Austria because of his Jewishness was central to this unorthodox path, and the rise of Nazism and anti-Semitism in the 1930s would confirm his decision to remain in America as an émigré.

1 Rabinbach, *Crisis of Austrian Socialism*, 7–21; Sturmthal, *Democracy Under Fire*, 2–7; Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews*, 136–37. Lazarsfeld's friend Hans Zeisel would later compare Victor (sometimes spelled "Viktor") Adler to Moses in that he was never granted the privilege of seeing the country he had struggled his whole life for. Hans Zeisel, "Wissenschaft, Intellektuelle und Arbeiterbewegung [Science, Intellectuals, and the Labor Movement]," *Internationale Tagung der Historiker der Arbeiterbewegung: Arbeiterkultur in Österreich, 1918–1934* [International Conference of Historians of the Labor Movement: Working-class Culture in Austria], Wien, February 12–14, 1981 (Wien: Europaverlag, 1981), 69–79, box 118, folder "German articles—reprints, photocopies, and typescript drafts, circa 1931–1985," Hans Zeisel Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library [hereafter, "HZP"]; Paul Neurath to David Sills, February 27, 1979, Blaue Mappen: 20, Bio-4, Paul F. Lazarsfeld Archiv, Institut für Soziologie, Universität Wien [hereafter, "PFL Vienna"].

Lazarsfeld was born in Vienna on February 13, 1901, and his coming of age was coincident with the political revolution in Austria. His parents were enmeshed in the assimilated middle-class Jewish intelligentsia that was the driving force of the Social Democratic Party. They were close friends with several of its leaders and most important theoreticians, including Bauer, Friedrich Adler, Rudolf Hilferding, and Max Adler,² who would regularly attend the salons of Lazarsfeld's mother, Sofie. Sofie was a prominent sex reformer, psychologist, counselor, and advice columnist who would publish several books and become a member of Wilhelm Reich's Socialistic Society for Sexual Research. Despite his frequent pro bono legal defense of political activists, Lazarsfeld's father Robert was, in his son's recollection, "completely unpolitical" and "a very poor and unsuccessful lawyer" who was financially ruined after being drafted into the military. It was during his absence that Sofie became very closely acquainted with Friedrich Adler, and the impressionable young Paul became "a very violent pacifist" and a leader of socialist student organizations in the image of his new mentor.

Sofie's salons provided a "social center" for the socialist intellectuals who became almost like surrogate father-figures to Lazarsfeld, a bright boy with whom they would talk seriously about their ideas. The Marxist economist Hilferding, notably, looked after him at a military hospital during the summer of 1916 while his mother visited his father on the front. Hilferding provided a socialist education for Lazarsfeld, who was "terribly impressed" by this "great man." Hilferding, the "great neo-Marxist theorist," took the boy on "endless hikes" and supplied him with the right books for a proper socialist indoctrination. The first "serious" book that he read around this time was by the Marxist theoretician Karl Kautsky. Before that summer, young Paul had been a little patriot for the imperial war effort, directing soldiers who were transferring between trains in Vienna, but he returned home that fall as "a convinced Social Democrat." Lazarsfeld believed that Hilferding was jealous of Friedrich Adler's success in the competition for his mother's affections, although Lazarsfeld never tried to find out "how far" the relationship between Adler and his mother went. Nevertheless, his mother, who advocated sex outside of marriage, had a "very strong friendship" with Adler that would turn out to be formative in Lazarsfeld's upbringing.³

2 Max Adler was not related by blood to Friedrich and Victor.

3 Michael Pollak, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld: A Socio-Intellectual Biography," Program on Science, Technology and Society, Cornell University, n.d., Blau Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; McEwen, *Sexual Knowledge*, 96–111; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, Columbia Oral History [hereafter, "COH"], November 29, 1961 and February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Sills, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld, 1901–1976," 254.

Many of the principal figures in the twentieth-century Social Democratic Party—particularly its intellectual leaders, the group of so-called “Austro-Marxists” that included Hilferding, Bauer, Karl Renner, Friedrich Adler, and Max Adler—first associated in the 1890s through the *Freie Vereinigung Sozialistischer Studenten und Akademiker* (Free Association of Socialists Students and Academics) at the University of Vienna. Their intellectual mentor there was Carl Grünberg, the Marxist professor of political economy who would later serve as the first director of the *Institut für Sozialforschung* (Institute for Social Research) in Frankfurt, an important collaborator in Lazarsfeld’s later social research projects. For Grünberg, Marxism was not merely a static ideology or a leftist political badge; rather, he embraced its potential as an applied approach to social science with its own systematic, empirically-based methodology. The Austro-Marxists also founded a journal, *Der Kampf*, edited by Bauer, which became known for its support for modern science and the methods of social research.⁴ The socialist intellectuals met regularly at the *Café Central*, where they associated with Leon Trotsky during the seven years he lived in Vienna before the war.

The analysis of society based on empirical research was a central project of the Austro-Marxists, whose investigations also seriously considered the individual psychological motivations of the different classes and the social forces that shaped them. The approach was starkly different from the “Austrian School” of economics founded in the nineteenth century by non-socialist Carl Menger, whose concept of marginal utility relied upon a universalized construct of subjective actors presumed to behave rationally with regard to their buying and consumption patterns, as opposed to the messier, empirically-observed behaviors of consumers in the real world. The Austrian School’s detailed abstractions of the function of the price mechanism in consumer economies implicitly endorsed a *laissez-faire* approach to market regulation and a disinterest in empirical studies. In contrast, the practice of sociology in Austria was deeply identified with progressive socialist economics and the empirical research projects supported by the Austro-Marxists.⁵

The progressive socialism of the prewar Austro-Marxists was contained, however, by the reactionary conservatism and anti-Semitism that characterized much of late-Habsburg-era Vienna, the *schwarzes Wien* (Black Vienna) that preceded the postwar “Red Vienna” of the Social Democrats. Black was the color of

4 In its inaugural issue, *Der Kampf* called attention to the three branches of the socialist struggle: the political party, the trade union movement, and the cooperative consumer movement. “Editorial Introduction to the first issue of ‘Der Kampf,’” quoted in Bottomore and Goode, *Austro-Marxism*, 55–56.

5 Bottomore, “Introduction,” 1–44; Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 51–54; Burgin, *Great Persuasion*, 20.

the Christian Social Party, the banner carried by Karl Lueger, who prevailed in the 1895 city elections. His avowed anti-Semitism prevented Emperor Franz Joseph from confirming Lueger as mayor until 1897, but once installed in office, he served until his death in 1910. Lueger's anti-Semitism was often more political expedient than governing ideology, and indeed many Viennese Jews prospered during his reign.⁶ Nevertheless, a young Adolf Hitler, who arrived in Vienna in 1906, witnessed firsthand the value of politicized anti-Semitic demagoguery in motivating the masses.⁷ Hitler also learned to despise the Social Democrats, not because of their socialism but because of their embrace of internationalism, which was, to Hitler, proof of the non-German character of the party's many Jewish leaders. The promise of internationalism, of course, had great appeal for Jews excluded both formally and informally from the pan-German nation, and it was the most viable alternative to the Zionist nationalism advocated by the Viennese journalist Theodor Herzl. For many Social Democrats, assimilation was the ultimate solution to the "Jewish question."

The socialist movement provided a venue for solidarity with the working classes, and for many non-religious Jews, its progressive doctrine for social justice served as a surrogate form of humanistic Judaism. As Social Democrats, Jews could also join socially with non-Jews in municipal organizations and leisure activities, enjoying a cross-class solidarity that transcended ethno-nationalism. There was very little competition for industrial jobs between Jews and the Christian workers who made up the rank-and-file of the Party, who furthermore sympathized with Jews as another oppressed group. When the Liberal Party collapsed in the late-nineteenth century, the great majority of Jews migrated to the Social Democratic Party, which was free of anti-Semitism in its official program—though its members occasionally employed anti-Semitic stereotypes, as in caricatures of Jewish capitalists that appeared in leftist newspapers like the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Workers' Newspaper). Although the founder Victor Adler had converted to Protestantism, at least three-quarters of the intellectual leaders of the Social Democrats, including Otto Bauer, were Jewish.⁸

Judaism was not as much a defining characteristic in Lazarsfeld's childhood and adolescence as was socialism, but it still played an important role, and it would determine his fate in many ways later in his life. He called his parents "the

6 "Wer ein Jude ist bestimme ich" (I decide who is a Jew), he said when compromising his own ideology of anti-Semitism. Zeisel to Bernard Bailyn, December 9, 1968, box 2, folder B (2/3), HZP.

7 Anti-semitism was the "common denominator" by which the "polyglot populace" of Vienna could be united. See Beller, *Vienna and the Jews*, 193.

8 Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 6; Berkley, *Vienna and Its Jews*, 103–11, 118, 123–28; Morrison, *Search for a Method*, 26; Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 133–42; Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics in Vienna*, 85.

typical assimilated German Jews”: they did not convert to Christianity or deny their Jewishness, but religion played only a small role in their private lives. According to the historian Christian Fleck, they fit the type of Viennese “non-Jewish Jews”—functionally agnostic members of the middle class who did not strictly ritualize religion in the lives of their children. The family did, however, celebrate the Passover Seder in deference to Lazarsfeld’s paternal grandfather Friedrich, a paper merchant, and the boy did convince his parents to give him a Bar Mitzvah, partly to impress a rival schoolboy from his *Gymnasium* with whom he had secretly fallen “deeply in love.” At the *Gymnasium*, class divisions appeared more salient than religious differences to the young Paul, who inquired to his mother about the rich boys who ate bread with bologna for lunch and the middling and poor ones who only had butter.

Nevertheless, even as a boy Lazarsfeld was well aware of the “slight operetta tinge” of anti-Semitism in Austria at the time, and he certainly encountered the proto-Nazi Austrian-German students who hated Jews. Retrospectively, he analyzed the latent anti-Semitism that united the Christian Social Party at that time as being composed of a “real religious” anti-Semitism in the peasantry, a “manufactured anti-capitalist” anti-Semitism among small shopkeepers, and a “polite social discrimination” against Jews in bourgeois Vienna. Such discrimination became a mortal threat later when Lazarsfeld faced the draft. A military general who was one of his mother’s “admirers” advised her to have her son baptized so that he could, as a Catholic, have the privilege of serving in the relative safety of the artillery. But despite his family’s irreligious attitude, Lazarsfeld refused to change his identity in this way. (In the end, he was not drafted.)⁹

Around the time of Lazarsfeld’s Bar Mitzvah in 1914, his mother Sofie fell ill and spent time recuperating in a sanitarium in Vienna, where she became closely acquainted with Victor Adler and especially with his son Friedrich, who subsequently developed a deep attraction toward Sofie that would last for fifty years. Before his death, Victor Adler grew to hate Sofie, apparently because of a mistaken belief that she had influenced his son’s political views. In fact, Friedrich had first wooed her by lending her books, and Sofie was drawn to this passionate intellectual, an editor of *Der Kampf*, while her relatively apolitical, pacifist husband was distracted by his war work and by his efforts to evade the military draft. By the following year, Lazarsfeld’s father had been drafted, and Sofie’s weekend salons had become well established as a social center for prominent Viennese socialists. Other prominent intellectual figures attended the sa-

9 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Fleck, “Introduction to the Transaction Edition,” xx.

lons, such as the psychologist Alfred Adler, who was also young Paul's pediatrician. Sofie and her son would become disciples of Alfred Adler, known for his individual psychology, but it was *Friedrich Adler* who was the most intimate figure in the Lazarsfeld household. "By then it was just a matter of course," Lazarsfeld recalled, "that the family consisted of my mother, [Friedrich] Adler, my sister and myself." Although Sofie and Friedrich addressed each other by the formal German *Sie* in public, they used the informal *Du* in private correspondence, but the full extent of their relationship remained a mystery to Lazarsfeld. Some observers have drawn the reasonable conclusion that Friedrich Adler was indeed Sofie's "lover."¹⁰

So, when Friedrich Adler assassinated Count Stürgkh in October of 1916, the event was highly significant for Lazarsfeld not only in political-historical terms, symbolizing the break of the old Empire, but also as a highly personal, family matter. "I had this tremendous feeling that now, suddenly, great responsibilities lie on me," he recalled. His identity as a socialist "suddenly became a very serious matter," and suddenly "everything centered around protest." He began to attend clandestine socialist meetings, where he met likeminded boys and, for the first time, girls. He also once met a visiting Max Weber, the great sociologist and an idol of his, at one of these meetings. Friedrich Adler's self-defense at his trial, where he proclaimed his democratic and internationalist beliefs, became "the fanfare of the antiwar wing of the Socialist Party," according to Hans Zeisel, Lazarsfeld's longtime friend, colleague in social research, and comrade in socialist politics. Lazarsfeld faithfully attended the trial and its protests—which got him arrested—in support of Adler. Although Adler had initially been sentenced to death, the emperor did not dare to defy Adler's passionate supporters among the working classes by carrying it out, and his sentence was later commuted to eighteen years of hard labor.

Along with his mother, the teenaged Lazarsfeld sometimes visited Adler in prison and maintained a regular correspondence with him, and the socialist hero increasingly became a role model. The two even plotted, but never executed, Adler's escape from prison. Before his political career, Adler had been an assistant professor of physics and mathematics in Zürich, where he had worked alongside Albert Einstein. While in prison Adler wrote a monograph on relativity theory, and Lazarsfeld smuggled out manuscripts and typed them up for his mentor. In his letters to Lazarsfeld, Adler strongly encouraged the boy to pursue mathematics, a field which would, he insisted, be a "tremendous

¹⁰ E.g., Fleck, "Introduction to the Transaction Edition," xx.

advantage” no matter what the boy’s chosen career path turned out to be. “So being a Socialist and being a mathematician or something, and being interested in some version of psychology, were so completely inevitable,” Lazarsfeld remembered. “Thinking autobiographically, it’s kind of necessary, it’s inevitable.” When he was finally released from prison in October of 1918, having been given amnesty by the emperor shortly before the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, Adler immediately visited the Lazarsfeld household. There, he promptly rejected an invitation of a Communist, Paul Friedländer,¹¹ to join the Third International. Adler spurned communism and committed himself to the revolutionary success of social democracy.¹²

The end of Lazarsfeld’s childhood and his eventual career choice—the kind of adolescent decision that would be the topic of his first book, *Jugend und Beruf* (Youth and Career)—coincided with a tremendous social transformation in Austria. The new republic was declared in November of 1918, and the Socialists became its “caretakers” because of their “unique ability to deal with returning soldiers, unemployed workers, and radical crowds that voiced revolutionary demands and drew sustenance from the Russian revolution,” according to historian Anson Rabinbach.¹³ Social Democrats could respond to the demands of workers while avoiding the backlash from peasants and reactionaries that would have met a Communist dictatorship. The liberated Friedrich Adler, fervently supported by marching workers, had been completely vindicated in his antiwar stance by the outcome of the conflagration. He quickly became a key figure in the revolutionary transition to republican government as president of the Workers’ and Soldiers’ Council of Austria and as chairman of the Social Democratic group in Parliament. In the elections of February 1919, the Social Democrats became the largest party in the newly-formed Austria, though they were forced to form a coalition government because their support was mainly limited to Vienna and the industrial areas, while the Christian Socials and Pan-Germans took the rural regions and captured reactionary elements in the cities. But the Socialists dominated in the Vienna municipal elections in May, becoming the first socialist party to govern a city of more than a million inhabitants under Mayor Jakob Reumann.

11 Friedländer was the husband of Ruth Fischer, a founder of the Austrian Communist Party.

12 Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, February 9, 1962, COH, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961 and February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Sturmthal, *Democracy*, 14; Zeisel, “The Austromarxists in ‘Red’ Vienna,” 120; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 53; David E. Morrison, “Paul Lazarsfeld 1901–1976: A Tribute,” *Redaktionelles*, 7–9, Rote Mappen, “PFL ancillary,” PFL Vienna.

13 Rabinbach, *Crisis*, 20.

The Communists in Russia had hoped to win Friedrich Adler over to their side, going so far as to name the square in front of the Kremlin after him, flattering him with the post of honorary commander-in-chief of the Red Army, and bestowing upon him an honorary chairmanship in the Central Soviet. When a Soviet republic was declared in Hungary in the spring of 1919, and a leftist revolution broke out in Bavaria, the Communists in Austria attempted a putsch, but it was quickly squashed by the *Volkswehr*, the new army staffed by Social Democratic workers. Adler rejected the Communists' overtures, and he even personally chided Trotsky for misunderstanding him in an open letter published in *Der Kampf*. Support for the Communists would remain minimal in Austria. Distinct from other European countries outside the Soviet Union, the working-class movement in Austria was unified in the Social Democratic Party.¹⁴

Vienna would become the center of non-Communist socialist politics after the war. Friedrich Adler, the hero of workers, succeeded in neutralizing the Communist Party in Austria partly by inviting its members to join the workers' councils, which allowed them to participate but diminished their influence. The Communists' claims to Austria were further diminished by the fall of Béla Kun's Hungarian Soviet government in the summer of 1919, which was defeated by the invading French-supported armies of Czechoslovakia and Romania, resulting in the counter-revolutionary government of Miklós Horthy and a wave of "White Terror." Otto Bauer—the acknowledged intellectual leader of the Social Democrats "who shaped our Marxist convictions more than anyone else," according to Zeisel—had sought an *Anschluss* of Austria with Germany on the principle of cultural-linguistic unity and on the grounds that tiny Austria would be economically unviable. The postwar peace treaties precluded such a union, however, and Germany's later slide into fascism would ultimately nullify the idea from the socialist perspective.

The first coalition government of the new, small Republic of Austria was led by Social Democrats including Karl Seitz as president, Karl Renner as chancellor, and Bauer as foreign secretary. The government adopted a democratic constitution, enfranchised adult men and women unconditionally, and quickly instituted a number of social reforms, including insurance for unemployment and illness, limits on the use of child labor, and a mandatory eight-hour workday. The Austro-Marxists' view that social scientists could operate as technicians of the state was in accord with the push for immediate progressive reforms, and their philosophical belief in building cross-class alliances permitted the prag-

14 Sturmthal, *Democracy*, 14–16; Rabinbach, *Crisis*, 20–26; Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 57–58; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 53–56.

matic politics of governing coalitions in the new Republic. Vienna itself became both the capital of the Republic as a municipality and a separate province with powers of taxation, which it would use to finance an unprecedented program in municipal socialism. The city also became a continental center for radical-leftist and unorthodox economic thinking that challenged the Austrian School, with figures like the Italian Antonio Gramsci and Hungarian exiles such as György Lukács and Karl Polanyi frequenting the cafes and contributing to socialist journals like *Der Kampf*.¹⁵

In the midst of these social upheavals, Lazarsfeld completed *Gymnasium* in the spring of 1919. Going to the University of Vienna was simply a “matter of course” for someone in his social position, and he was particularly motivated to study mathematics because of Friedrich Adler’s influence. But politics was at the top of Lazarsfeld’s mind in these years, not academics, and he met two of his most important later collaborators in social research through his constant organizing and leadership activities in the socialist student movement: Hans Zeisel and Marie Jahoda, the latter of whom would become his first wife and the last director of his first research center. Zeisel remembered first encountering Lazarsfeld at an open-air meeting of socialist students at which Lazarsfeld lectured, a typical activity for the inveterate public speaker and natural leader. Jahoda first met her future husband while he was serving as a helper at a camp for undernourished Viennese children when she was twelve and he was eighteen years old. Jahoda recalled that, even then, Lazarsfeld was conducting surveys about which of the camp helpers the children liked best and why. Lazarsfeld had founded the Verein für sozialistische Mittelschüler (Association for Socialist Middle-school Students), and he also organized socialist summer and winter camps for children that combined fun and games with political seminars, music, and didactic theater.

The socialist movement in those years, being both “messianic and enormously practical,” was the “paramount” influence in their young lives, according to Zeisel. “For a brief moment in history,” Zeisel recalled, “the humanist ideals of democratic socialism attained reality in the city of Vienna and gave new dignity and pride to the working class and the intellectuals who had won it.” The socialist idea was, for Zeisel, not only an economic necessity, but also a moral and, in a sense, religious calling for a global movement in which they were the avant-garde. “We had little doubt that the theory of the class struggle was cor-

15 Zeisel, “Wissenschaft, Intellektuelle und Arbeiterbewegung,” 70; Gruber, *Red Vienna*, 20–22; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 51–57; Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 60–67; Bottomore, *Austro-Marxism*, 26–39; Zeisel, “Austrian Socialism: 1928 and 1978,” First Paul F. Lazarsfeld Lecture, Philadelphia, October 29, 1978, box 123, folder 11, HZP.

rect and that the social betterment of the poor had to be fought for and won by the socialist movement that represented them,” said Zeisel. “The Austrian political reality left us in no doubt about the truth of that part of Marxism. Nor did we doubt that capitalism was a transient phase in human development.”¹⁶ The terrible poverty in Vienna in the devastation of the immediate postwar years further stimulated the emotional dedication to socialism. The all-encompassing nature of social democracy in Red Vienna at that time was a feature noted by many of its adherents. “Almost daily meetings, excursions on weekends, camps and retreats during vacations filled our lives,” said Zeisel. “For many of us who were young at the time and participated in the development of social research, Austro-Marxism was not so much a theory as a view of life,” Jahoda recalled. “Austro-Marxism was not just a promise to be redeemed later but an activity that encompassed life as a whole in the here and now.”¹⁷ The euphoria of the social transformation was a spiritual analogue—the *Zeitgeist*—to real social reforms and lifelong commitments to the promise of socialism. “Having grown up in an exciting and constructive period of socialist optimism,” Lazarsfeld later recalled, “I have never quite lost my hope for radical social change.”¹⁸

Socialist Vienna and the Austrian Republic provided many new opportunities for personal reinvention in the context of a new society. Under the Empire, one had to be classified by religion, but in the new Republic, a citizen could classify as “*Konfessionslos*,” meaning “without religion” or secular. Being *Konfessionslos*, Lazarsfeld recalled, became “part of the uniform of a Socialist” in the Republic, especially since the main opposition party, the Christian Socials, were composed largely of conservative, Catholic reactionaries. “To be against organized religion was part of our attitude,” remembered Zeisel. “Not only was I born ‘confessionslos’, but the socialist culture of the day frowned on the mere distinction between jews and gentiles.” Fearful of being characterized as a “Jew-

16 They were so confident in the rightness of socialism, in fact, that they sometimes diminished the value of democracy: Lazarsfeld recounted a time when he served as an elections board chairman in a rural district, where he disenfranchised legitimate but obviously bourgeois Christian Social voters on the basis of spurious or insignificant flaws in their registrations, which made him a “great hero” to his socialist comrades. Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

17 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, “The Vienna Years,” 10–12; Jahoda, “Paul Felix Lazarsfeld in Vienna,” 135–38; Zeisel, “Wissenschaft, Intellektuelle und Arbeiterbewegung,” HZP; Jahoda, “Emergence,” 343; Zeisel, “The Austromarxists in ‘Red’ Vienna,” 122–23; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, “Austrian Socialism: 1928 and 1978.”

18 Lazarsfeld, “Sociology of Empirical Social Research,” 765. Historian Lewis Coser observes that “Lazarsfeld’s thinking was in the Austro-Marxist tradition of combining millenarian hopes with pragmatic concern for concrete social improvements that could be facilitated through disciplined empirical study.” See Coser, *Refugee Scholars*, 111.

ish defense force,” and sensitive to the pejorative name *Judensozi* that was in common currency, Social Democrats insisted on characterizing Judaism as a religion, not a race.

The official agnosticism of the party did not preclude bigotry, however, and some non-Jewish Social Democratic leaders such as Karl Seitz would occasionally make casually anti-Semitic remarks. Although most of the leading intellectuals in the party were Jews, they maintained a “well-managed inferiority complex” about it, noted Lazarsfeld in an allusion to Adlerian psychology. “Now, of course, the unions that formed the base of the party were of course anti-Semitic,” Lazarsfeld recalled, somewhat sardonically. “It was this friendly Austrian anti-Semitism.” Highly conscious of the social division between working-class Christians and middle-class Jewish intellectuals—and eager to avoid identifying the party with Jewry—the Social Democrats attempted to maintain a balance of Christians and Jews among the party leadership. Though he was a gifted leader, Lazarsfeld very often diplomatically took the title of *vice-president* of the various socialist student organizations he was involved in, reserving the title of president for someone “tall and blonde.” Nevertheless, the top spokesmen of the party were typically Jewish intellectuals, and the younger leaders such as Bauer never converted, as Victor Adler had done, or disavowed their Judaism. Indeed, the ranks of intellectual-professionals in the party—which included journalists, psychologists, lawyers, and performance artists—were largely composed of Jews.

The Jewish-intellectual class of Austrian Socialists had from the beginning been committed to the broad politico-cultural education, or *Bildung*, of workers, Jewish and Gentile, as a means of heightening their class-consciousness. Lazarsfeld and his comrades from the intellectual class of Social Democrats would volunteer their services as teachers and as occasional itinerant lecturers in the provinces. On their tours of agrarian districts, they would present strictly educational, not overtly polemical, lectures on historical topics, like revolutions, as well as mundane but useful topics, such as how to read a newspaper. Indeed, *Bildung* had long been fundamental to the ideology of the Austro-Marxists, and it was the official policy of the Social Democrats. Such education would, Bauer and other leading intellectuals argued, prepare the working class for its historical role under socialism. Max Adler’s *Neue Menschen*, a popular long essay, made the case for a cultural and educational revolution that would transform social consciousness and produce an enlightened new generation as the basis of a prosperous socialist society in the future. *Bildung* would be instituted not only through an explicit pedagogy but also by a thorough proletarian socialization in all kinds of Social Democratic clubs, associations, and consciously-designed environments like the

massive public housing projects—the *Gemeindebauten* where Lazarsfeld lived for a time—that would become the great communal centers of Red Vienna.¹⁹

Lazarsfeld, who was constantly involved in the more intellectual wing of socialist youth groups, believed that a modern, socialist pedagogy should not be directed at students as atomistic individuals but rather as members of a community. His first monograph, published in 1923, concerned approaches to developing “socialist personalities” through methods of socialist education and indoctrination. This approach was in accord with the broader view of many postwar socialists that, in order to understand and improve society, one had to deeply engage in the study of it rather than relying on old allegiances, calcified ideologies, and rote learning. Even theorists like Max Adler were dedicated to empirical sociology. Like psychology, socialist education would take into account the unique psychic lives of young people, and like sociology, it would consider the ways that a social group’s basic rules and historical development may shape the motives, beliefs, and behaviors of its members. Socialist education would also probe the character of the so-called *Gemeinschaftsleben*, or “community life,” of young people. Following the insights of Alfred Adler’s psychology, socialist teachers would best serve the cause of social democracy by considering the social environment that shaped the psychology of individuals vis-à-vis the community. In order to win their students’ trust, Lazarsfeld believed, socialist educators would benefit from studying young people and their communities to better develop socialism as a lived experience. Socialist educators had an imperative to understand the values, motivations, and social psychology of adolescents, characteristics which they could learn by gathering statistical facts that would inform the conscious building of self-educating social communities.²⁰

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- 19 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Natalie Rogoff, February 24, 1954, Rote Mappen, “Papers Vb,” PFL Vienna; Gruber, *Red Vienna*, 35–39; Lazarsfeld, “Development of a Test for Class-consciousness,” 41–43; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics in Vienna*; Jacobs, “Austrian Social Democracy and the Jewish Question in the First Republic,” 157–63; Zeisel, untitled transcript, n.d. [ca. 1978], box 39, folder “Marxism—articles, notes, clippings, circa 1948–1979” (3/3), HZP; Zeisel to Marvin [probably Wolfgang], June 10, 1985, box 7, folder W–X, 1959–1991 (2/2), HZP; Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 165. Not everyone was caught up in the spirit of social democracy. Peter Drucker, the management consultant who emigrated from Austria in 1927 after completing *Gymnasium*, told Zeisel in 1981 that he found Viennese socialists to be “sad” and the idea that socialism could produce a “new Man” to be a hubristic notion that would inevitably lead to totalitarianism. Drucker to Zeisel, April 27, 1981, box 2, folder D, 1960–1992 (1/2), HZP.
- 20 Lazarsfeld, “Die sozialistische Erziehung und das Gemeinschaftsleben der Jugend [Socialist Education and the Community Life of Youth],” *Die sozialistische Erziehung* [Socialist Education], August 1923, 191–94, Rote Mappen, “Early Vienna,” PFL Vienna; Jahoda, “Paul Felix Lazarsfeld in Vienna,” 136–37; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Bottomore, “Introduction,” 21.

Lazarsfeld's thinking on socialist pedagogy and experience as a teacher and socialist youth group and camp leader was an important factor in his eventual career choice. He dabbled in economics at the University, though he got bad grades in those courses and found the Austrian School's demand curves and theories of marginal utility to be "unbearably dull." When he was not distracted by his socialist organizing activities, he studied political science and especially mathematics, but he had yet to settle on a definite course. "I wanted to be a social scientist, and I wanted to be a mathematician," he remembered. He spent the 1922–23 academic year studying in Paris, where he joined the French Section of the Workers' International (Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière, SFIO) and became friendly with Léo Lagrange, who later visited Lazarsfeld in Vienna to learn more about the socialist student movement there. The unorthodox socialist theoretician Henri de Man, whom Lazarsfeld admired and defended as a "true socialist," also visited Vienna and took a liking to the young socialist leader.

Although these socialist-intellectual activities presented career possibilities, Lazarsfeld was not quite sure about politics as a career. Because his relatively apolitical father had been so devastated financially by the war and was therefore unable to support his son's studies indefinitely, he rather gently nudged his activist son to choose a profession around this time. As noted above, Lazarsfeld had been encouraged by his idol Friedrich Adler to study mathematics, a field he had always excelled in, and he already had plenty of experience tutoring young pupils in the subject, the main way that he earned a living at the time. When Adler moved to Zürich in 1924 to become Secretary of the Socialist International, Lazarsfeld desperately wanted to be offered an available job as Adler's assistant, but Adler declined because of the "unpleasant repercussions" that would have arisen if he were to appoint the son of Sofie (Adler's mistress, presumably).²¹

Disappointed but determined, Lazarsfeld resolved to complete a PhD in mathematics, knowing that, as a committed socialist, he would be guaranteed a job teaching mathematics in a *Gymnasium*. The Vienna public schools were administered by the Social Democrats who would, of course, be eager to place a prominent member of the party. The idea of having a guaranteed peer group of *Gymnasium* professors was also very appealing to him. Lazarsfeld went on to take his doctorate in December of 1925 with a dissertation on the movement of the planet Mercury, based on Einstein's theory of relativity. After four months of learning the relevant literature and making a critical discovery by solving an

21 The job of Adler's assistant instead went to Adolf Sturmthal, who drew on this experience to write a well-regarded history of the European labor movement, *The Tragedy of European Labor, 1918–1939*.

important equation, he wrote the dissertation in only three nights. Immediately after completing the degree, he began teaching in a *Gymnasium*, as expected.²²

The eventual course of Lazarsfeld's career, however, would evolve from the nexus of his interest in socialist politics, applied mathematics, and—perhaps most importantly—social psychology. Psychology was a family affair in the Lazarsfeld household: Lazarsfeld's mother Sofie was an important disciple of Alfred Adler, and young Paul became one of his “fair haired boys.” Adler was the first major dissident in the psychoanalytic movement, breaking from Freud in 1911 to establish his own system of “individual psychology,” which unlike Freud's system was not based on the universalized, ahistorical theory of the Oedipus complex. Instead, Adler believed in the contingency of family structures in the context of the societies to which they belonged, and his idea of the “inferiority complex” was based on a masculine-feminine conflict derived from early childhood encounters with sexuality, ultimately resulting in repressed feelings of inferiority. The incestuous element and depressing fatalism that were fundamental to Freud's theory were absent from Adler's, which was much more interested in the contingencies of the social context. It was, therefore, consistent with the Austro-Marxists' belief in social progress and support for empirical social research. Lazarsfeld fully endorsed Adler's “heresy” against Freud: while Freud believed that social phenomena reflected sexual factors, Adler believed that “sex is the language in which social relations can be expressed,” as Lazarsfeld put it, and that Freud had underappreciated the importance of the social context in determining both normal and neurotic personalities.

In fact, Adler's socialist politics strongly informed his relatively optimistic, future-oriented brand of individual psychology. “So those of us non-medical people who had an interest in analytical psychology were all Adlerians,” Lazarsfeld recalled. “Alfred Adler was *the* psychoanalyst of the Social Democratic Party” and a “great hero” of the movement, said Lazarsfeld, particularly for his influence on the school system. The Social Democrats established psychological clinics and child psychology centers inspired by Adler. Lazarsfeld remained a dedicated student into adulthood, attending Adler's lectures and seminars, which were given outside of the University, and he also visited him regularly at

22 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November, 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, Interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Yvon Bourdet, October 2, 1967, Blaue Mappen 19, “Bio-3,” PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Mrs. Leo Lagrange, May 6, 1969, Blaue Mappen 20, “Bio-4,” PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “An Episode,” 274; Lazarsfeld, “Das Ergebnis der De-Man-Debate [The Outcome of the De Man Debate],” *Arbeit und Wirtschaft* [Work and Economy], ca. 1927, pp. 683–90, Rote Mappen, “Early Vienna,” PFL Vienna.



FIGURE 1

Cover of the May 1927 issue of the journal, *Die Praxis die Sozialistische Erziehung* (The Practice of Socialist Education), which includes an article by Lazarsfeld, “Marxismus und Individualpsychologie” (Marxism and Individual Psychology).
SOURCE: Paul Felix Lazarsfeld papers, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

his coffeehouse table, where he was a very popular figure. Lazarsfeld even wrote instructional pamphlets for teachers that were based on Adler’s theories, and he advocated for the compatibility of Marxism and Adler’s individual psychology. He followed contemporary trends in Marxist thinking which held that the relationship between the economic base and the ideological superstructure was undeniably a psychological question, and that individual neuroses were the product of alienation in the modern, capitalist era.²³

But Lazarsfeld would eventually be pulled toward another school of psychology. In 1922, the husband-and-wife team of Karl and Charlotte Bühler

23 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, December 8, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Roudinesco, *Freud*, 116–17; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Gardner and Stevens, *Red Vienna and the Golden Age of Psychology*, 4, 177; Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 68; Lazarsfeld, “Marxismus und Individualpsychologie [Marxism and Individual Psychology],” *Die Praxis die sozialistische Erziehung* [The Practice of Socialist Education] 7, no. 5 (May 1927): 98–101, Rote Mappen, “Vienna Marktforschungsstelle [Market Research Office],” PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “Austrian Sociologists in the United States,” speech, Austrian Institute, New York, ca. 1972, Rote Mappen, No Dates III, PFL Vienna.

came to Vienna to establish the Psychological Institute at the University of Vienna, “a third force in addition to Freud and Adler in the battle of ideas in Vienna’s psychology,” according to Jahoda. The Böhlers’ Psychological Institute was supported by the University and by the municipality, because the governing Social Democrats sought to establish a center for empirical social research to support their child-centered approach to education.

Charlotte Bühler (née Malachowski), born in 1893 to a Jewish family that had converted to Protestantism, studied under Carl Stumpf in Berlin before the war. She was trained in the methods and theories of Gestalt psychology, a school that was critical of the behaviorist approaches to psychology then ascendant in America, which made a fetish of empiricism by diminishing subjectivity and reducing human actions to observable stimulus-and-response. In contrast, Gestalt theorists sought to describe the total “essence” of psychological and subjective phenomena. Charlotte went to Munich to study with Karl Bühler—whom she would marry—a member of the Würzburg school of German psychologists that had originated the empirical study of *action* as it related to complex thought processes. Charlotte also became familiar with American research methods while on a Rockefeller Foundation-sponsored travelling fellowship for the 1924–25 academic year. She studied child psychology and social development with Arnold Gesell at Yale, where she developed an interest in techniques of statistical analysis based on behavioral observations. The Böhlers became quite well known in America, and their Psychological Institute in Vienna became a major draw for American students of psychology, including many prominent figures such as Gordon Allport. “During the summer there isn’t a famous American who didn’t want to spend a few months with the Böhlers,” Lazarsfeld later recalled.²⁴

When he was still a student, Lazarsfeld had heard about the Böhlers’ arrival at the University from Siegfried Bernfeld, a somewhat older friend from the socialist youth movement whom Lazarsfeld greatly admired for his direction of a home for war orphans. Bernfeld was a budding psychologist and a student of Freud, but he encouraged Lazarsfeld to attend the Böhlers’ lectures, which had begun to draw socialist students who were interested in using education to fashion the “new people” of socialism. Lazarsfeld was particularly interested in Charlotte’s studies of child and adolescent psychology, and he would continue to attend the Böhlers’ lectures and to sit in on their seminars even after he had

24 Jahoda, “The Emergence of Social Psychology in Vienna,” 346; “BUHLER, Charlotte (Mme),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, Rockefeller Foundation Records, Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York [hereafter, “RAC”]; Ash, “Emigré Psychologists after 1933,” 117–38; Lazarsfeld, “Historical Notes on the Empirical Study of Action,” 57–60; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, “Biography Tapes,” PFL Vienna.

finished his PhD. He was particularly intrigued by their empirical study of human *action*, which was the basis for a system of categories by which inner motives could be described: it was, in essence, the origin of motivation research. German human scientists of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, particularly the Würzburg group to which Karl belonged, had used the word *Handlung*—a more evocative analogue to the English *action*—to describe the complex psychological relationship between outside influences, inner experiences, and goal-oriented external behaviors, the consequences of which could be observed in relation to the intent of the actor. Basically, the Böhlers wanted to find out “what happens when people do something.” Charlotte studied goal-directed action in childhood and adolescence, comparing the differences between a child’s performance earlier and later in development. Her interest, articulated in her 1927 book *Kindheit und Jugend: Genese des Bewußtseins* (Childhood and Adolescence: Genesis of Consciousness), was in how mature human action, more precisely *Handlung*—which is directed toward things, people, or higher cultural norms and institutions—develops from the relatively primitive actions of an infant, which are directed toward immediate gratifications. She later developed the concept of “self-determination” as a means of goal-striving in her 1933 book *Der menschliche Lebenslauf als psychologisches Problem* (The Human Life Course as a Psychological Problem), to which Lazarsfeld contributed studies on youth and adolescence. “As usual in a European institute,” Lazarsfeld recalled, “we all divided the work necessary to help her.” Together, the Böhlers’ work led to the articulation of “categories by which goals of human action could be systematically described,” according to Lazarsfeld.²⁵

Lazarsfeld’s interest in the statistical applications of survey research crystallized around 1925, when he attended a speech by a socialist youth leader, Otto Felix Kanitz, who described the plight of the working classes on the basis of anecdotal quotations derived from a questionnaire he had distributed to some 2,000 workers. Kanitz had picked quotations for purely rhetorical purposes as illustrations of the drudgery of work and the injustices perpetrated against the working class. Lazarsfeld had never seen or even heard of a questionnaire, but he immediately thought that these instruments would be much more meaningful and scientifically useful if they were counted and statistically analyzed rather than being used merely as a source of anecdotes. Kanitz obliged Lazarsfeld’s request to give him the questionnaires, which Lazarsfeld then tabulated with the

25 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “Working with Merton,” 35–66; Ash, “Emigré Psychologists after 1933,” 133; Lazarsfeld, “Historical Notes on the Empirical Study of Action,” 57–98; Lazarsfeld to Jane Hauser, n.d., Blaue Mappen 38, Correspondence 1966–1976 (mixed Dates), PFL Vienna; Wiggershaus, *Frankfurt School*, 166.

help of his fellow young socialists from the student organizations, one of whom was Jahoda. When Lazarsfeld and his comrades had completed their “secondary” statistical analysis of the questionnaires, he presented his results in Charlotte Bühler’s seminar on youth psychology. His method of survey analysis was enthusiastically received at the Institute, and his presentation so impressed the Böhlers that they invited him to give a course on statistics and survey research, a proposition he eagerly accepted. Lazarsfeld’s penchant for survey research was almost natural: he experienced “visceral fun” in devising questionnaires and found “endless pleasure” in analyzing the results. When he first read an explanation of a correlation coefficient in a textbook, for example, the experience was so revelatory that he compared it to a budding musician’s feeling of sublime elation upon hearing his first chord of Beethoven.²⁶

Lazarsfeld’s initial analysis of the Kanitz questionnaires would be the basis for an article and a project coordinated by Charlotte called *Berufseinstellung des jugendlichen Arbeiters*, which concerned the occupational inclinations of young workers. Lazarsfeld also worked as a statistical analyst for the Social Democrats’ municipal government—a job he got because he belonged to a “Socialist family”—devising and evaluating surveys of the career choices of graduates of Vienna’s public schools. Social stratification stood out to Lazarsfeld as the most important factor influencing occupational choices, a finding that supported his own socialist indoctrination. The proletarian youths, who went to work at the age of fourteen, were denied the “energizing experience of middle-class adolescence” and never developed an effective “scope,” which confined them to an inferior position. “It is not difficult to see that this first group of studies was closely related to the socialist background from which I and my collaborators came,” Lazarsfeld recalled. His work for the Psychological Institute and the city of Vienna would later evolve into his first book, *Jugend und Beruf*, published in 1931.

Lazarsfeld’s teaching at the University and work at the Institute eventually became a full-time occupation, and around 1928–29 he took leave from the *Gymnasium* to become an assistant instructor at the University. He taught the statistics course and lectured on adolescent psychology and social psychology at the behest of Charlotte, who was a “very objective Prussian” and “very much the boss of the situation,” almost in an authoritarian manner, according to Lazarsfeld. Charlotte was especially interested in Lazarsfeld’s statistical methods because she wanted to establish precise age phases for her theories of childhood development. Lazarsfeld’s lectures on statistics were later published in 1929 as

²⁶ Lazarsfeld was also an accomplished violist who regularly visited the Jahoda household to play chamber music. Zeisel, “The Vienna Years,” 10.

Statistisches Praktikum für Psychologen und Lehrer, which was the first German-language book on statistics written for psychologists and teachers. He became a fixture at the Psychological Institute, which was a truly international center visited by many American psychology professors and students, many of whom would later reconnect with Lazarsfeld and help him to establish himself in his American career.²⁷

At the Böhlers' Institute, Lazarsfeld began to fuse his talent as a socialist youth leader with his interests in mathematics and statistical analysis, Marxist sociology, the psychological study of motivation, and the empirical study of action. He had found a place where he could properly institutionalize his devotion to socialism as cooperative social research. The collective form of organized, directed survey research that he had discovered with the group tabulation of the Kanitz questionnaires would become, he later recognized, a way of sublimating his "frustrated political interests" and channeling his abilities as a socialist youth-camp leader. He was a committed socialist, but as a politician he recognized that he was impatient and undisciplined; he could never work for "common success" *within* the party because he had a low tolerance for intraparty politics. The collective form of social research became an intellectualized form of the socialist movement that retained the purity of spirit and clarity of purpose that had characterized Lazarsfeld's socialist youth camps. At the same time, social research indulged Lazarsfeld's tendency toward interdisciplinarity: he could be, simultaneously, a mathematician, historian, empiricist, and philosopher through the collective work of his organization. It would embody the range of his intellectual interests. The activity of empirical social research was also, for Lazarsfeld, a fulfillment of the practical possibilities of applied Marxism: it was a way of analyzing relationships between objective socio-economic structures and subjective experiences, and using the findings of such research as the basis for intelligent policy proposals for municipal officials and business leaders. Typical of Austro-Marxism, Lazarsfeld's organized research pursuits did not remain restricted to theoretical abstractions, but rather dove into the practical politics of social organization: it was the union of theory and practice. He was able to transform the indulgent tendencies of some of his socialist associates, which could tend toward theorizing and dilettantism, into a useful research corporation, and at the same

27 Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Neurath, "The Life and Work of Paul Lazarsfeld," 510; Fleck, "The Choice Between Market Research and Sociography," 89; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Sociology of Empirical Social Research," 757–58; Lazarsfeld, "Austrian Sociologists in the United States," PFL Vienna.

time he gave new meaning to surveys and statistical analysis. Instead of mere social accounting, which could only *describe*, social science as executed in Lazarsfeld's organizations would also employ systematic thinking to *explain*.²⁸

Although Lazarsfeld was able to employ—or, to put it less charitably, exploit—the free labor of his socialist friends to tabulate the Kanitz questionnaires as part of the cause for better working conditions, such an ad hoc group did not present a sustainable model for a social research enterprise. Lazarsfeld needed a way to pay for a corps of research assistants to work on empirical studies that could be used to train researchers and develop new methods. Around 1927, Lazarsfeld happened to hear about a new idea from one of his students: market research. The student had been hired by an American soap manufacturer to conduct a survey on whether—but not *why*—a sample of consumers used its branded product. “Market research was then completely unknown in Austria,” Lazarsfeld recalled, “and she told me about this commission as a kind of curiosity.” For Lazarsfeld, the idea of market research presented the “perfect conjunction”: he could fund his research projects through commercial contracts, and at the same time he could find out “why people do something,” which was essentially an extension of his interest in youth occupational choices. The problem in applying statistical analysis to occupational choices, for Lazarsfeld, was that they occurred over such a long period. Lazarsfeld had also wanted to do a study of voting—a great interest of the Austro-Marxists, who were institutional democrats unlike the revolutionary Communists—but could not get support for it from the conservative University. A study of consumer choices would present more manageable material for Lazarsfeld's methodological interests, which were his chief concern. Lazarsfeld himself would later put it succinctly: “Such is the origin of my Vienna market research studies: the result of the methodological equivalence of socialist voting and the buying of soap.” When it came to developing research methods, Lazarsfeld “did not give a hoot about the subject matter,” according to Paul Neurath, son of the *Wiener Kreis* theorist Otto Neurath and a student of Lazarsfeld.

Lazarsfeld convinced the Bühlers to let him set up a private research center that was officially separate from the University yet vaguely adjacent to it, which

28 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29 and December 8, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Paul Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Jahoda, “Aus den Anfängen der sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung in Österreich [On the Beginnings of Social Science Research in Austria],” in *Das geistige Leben Wiens in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Ring-Vorlesung, Internationales Kulturzentrum [The Intellectual Life of Vienna in the Interwar Period, Lecture Series, International Cultural Center], Vienna, May 19–June 20, 1980 (Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1981), Blaue Mappen 4 (about PFL-2), PFL Vienna.

became the Österreichische Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle (Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center), established in 1928. The mission of the Forschungsstelle was essentially the application of psychology to society and the economy, and particularly the study of motivation as it related to consumer choices. Its location outside the University arose from both expedient and necessity: the University did not have the means to support empirical research on a large scale, and it would not properly incorporate an institution that worked on commercial contracts. Yet the Forschungsstelle was able to siphon the prestige of the University by virtue of its academic leadership. With Lazarsfeld as the director, Karl Bühler served as president and brought together a board of directors composed of “all the big shots in town” they could get: important businessmen and industrialists, university professors, trade union leaders, politicians and government officials from both major parties, economists including Oskar Morgenstern, and even the president of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce. As Jahoda has pointed out, the formal independence of the research center from the University also allowed Lazarsfeld to achieve, as director, a level of status that he would have been unlikely to achieve at the University, where a latent and sometimes explicit anti-Semitism usually precluded Jews from full professorships.

The Forschungsstelle allowed Lazarsfeld to remain tangentially in the academic sphere, where he merged it with his political activities by bringing in his underemployed friends from the socialist youth organizations needed as research assistants. They “liked to be in organizations,” Lazarsfeld recalled, and they had been inspired by both the socialist movement in Austria and the “prevailing spirit of collective action” they had heard about in reports from Russia about the Bolshevik Revolution, where schools had been merged with factories. They translated this almost romantic inclination for common action into an enthusiasm for “academic teamwork.” The result was a veritable factory of researchers, the great majority of whom were women. “It was this combination of personal friendship and common Weltanschauung that kept them together in spite of the fact that the money was scarce and pay was low,” remembered Neurath. Among these socialist colleagues were Lazarsfeld’s most important students, friends, and collaborators: his wife Jahoda, his close friend Zeisel, and Herta Herzog, who would later be his second wife. Another one of Lazarsfeld’s students, Ernest Dichter, would go on to a prominent career as a popular psychologist and motivation researcher in the US. The Forschungsstelle became Lazarsfeld’s paradigm for an organized, commercial-academic social research institute that trained graduate students in the practical research methods discovered in its studies. He would reproduce it several times over after his emigra-

tion to America. He was, Zeisel recalled, the “great catalyst” in uniting the intellectual and the practical in social research organizations.²⁹

The Forschungsstelle was in its basic structure modeled on the Institut für Konjunkturforschung (Institute for Business Cycle Research), which was also formally outside the University and initially under the directorship of the Austrian School economist Ludwig von Mises, one of the luminaries who also sat on the board of the Forschungsstelle. But Lazarsfeld’s Forschungsstelle was unique in its combination of influences that merged to produce innovative research methods and unorthodox working styles. A motivating intellectual force and framing principle for Lazarsfeld and his colleagues were the theories of Austro-Marxism and Adlerian psychology, notable for their attention to the importance of the class situation in shaping individual psychology. These theoretical approaches were combined with American-style empirical research methods and a pragmatic, progressive effort to use each study to develop new techniques that could be applied for the next study. It was, in Jahoda’s recollection, a triumph of the famous Viennese *Schlamperei*—a sort of accidentally eloquent sloppiness—that relied on the researchers being creative and adaptable yet still driven by their ideological commitment to the socialist youth movement.

New contracts would just barely, or not quite, cover the deficits incurred by the previous work, so that each contract would require another one immediately—it was a kind of pyramid scheme of organized research. The Forschungsstelle’s market research contracts often concerned the most mundane topics, but the researchers’ socialist Weltanschauung structured their interpretive capacities in a way that helped them to describe the minutiae of the lives of ordinary workers and consumers. “Their own Socialist beliefs,” the scholar Ronald Fullerton has observed, “far from leading them into ritualistic denunciations of consumer society, seem to have helped them empathise unusually well with the mass of consumers trying to get through each day.” Historian Christian Fleck has noted that Lazarsfeld’s social psychologists were among the first to appreciate the entrance of working-class people into market society, even when their

29 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Jahoda, “Paul Felix Lazarsfeld in Vienna,” 138–39; Neurath, “The life and work of Paul Lazarsfeld,” 511; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Paul Neurath to David Sills, May 3, 1983, Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “Austrian Sociologists in the United States,” PFL Vienna; Paul Neurath to David Sills, February 27, 1979, Blaue Mappen 20 (Bio-4), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Bernard Bailyn, February 7, 1968, Rote Mappen: PFL ancillary, PFL Vienna; “Multi D Seminary: Attribution Theory and Reason Analysis,” transcript, December 6, 1973, Rote Mappen, T/U XII, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, “Wissenschaft, Intellektuelle und Arbeiterbewegung,” 72; Barton, “Paul Lazarsfeld and the Invention of the University Institute for Applied Social Research,” 22–23; Zeisel, “The Vienna Years,” 13.

purchasing power was not great. “To take ordinary people seriously was a core effort by Vienna’s Social Democrats,” Fleck argues, “and to stretch this endeavor to ordinary consumers sounds much more egalitarian than high-brow reasoning about the masses and their vices.” For his part, Lazarsfeld was driven both by his socialist moral commitments and by his intellectual desire to make methodological discoveries in his quest to apply quantitative methods to survey research. Fortunately, in the cultural context of Red Vienna, these were entirely compatible pursuits.³⁰

The idea of such a market research center was new in Vienna. The *Forschungstelle* promoted itself as an organization that could develop innovative research methods to help business firms to understand the economic motives that underlie consumer choices. Its researchers would conduct surveys and interviews with respondents from each of the various classes of consumers in order to determine the basis for their buying decisions. It was part of a new, modern science of “social engineering” that business firms could support not only through contracting individual studies but also by receiving the *Forschungstelle*’s publications as dues-paying members of its association. The *Forschungstelle* also offered subscriptions to a “Sales and Consumer Barometer,” a quarterly survey of the brand preferences of thousands of Austrian consumers, segmented by social class, which was modeled on a similar survey done in America. Businessmen could learn, the *Forschungstelle* claimed, what qualities of a particular consumer product were attractive to consumers, and what kinds of advertising techniques would get consumers to take notice and follow through with purchases. The research center could pursue other questions that might interest people in industry, such as how consumers liked to spend their leisure time and how tourism to Austria might be made more attractive. Businessmen could be confident that methods of social research which passed muster at the University would be applied to their problems, and that trained researchers with a deep commitment to methodology, whatever their political inclinations, were crafting the studies. Its studies would be also be published, opening them up to the scrutiny of scholarly peer review.³¹

30 Fleck, “Introduction to the Transaction Edition,” xxi–xxiv; Zeisel, “Die Wiener Schule der Motivforschung [The Vienna School of Motivational Research],” *Die Zukunft* [The Future], Mid-May, 1968, box 118, folder “German articles...circa 1931–1985,” HZP; Jahoda, “Aus den Anfängen der sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung in Österreich,” 219–20; Fullerton, “Historic Analysis,” 502; Zeisel, “Die Wiener Schule der Motivforschung, [The Vienna School of Motivational Research]” lecture, World Association for Public Opinion Research, European Society for Opinion and Market Research, Vienna, August 21, 1967, Rote Mappen, “Vienna Marktforschungsstelle,” PFL Vienna.

31 “Verein Österreichische Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle [Association of the Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center],” n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; Zeisel, “Market

One of the first big contracts won by the Forschungsstelle was for a study on chocolate consumption. The client, a major food concern, needed to determine the proper means of distribution and relative quantities of production for its sweet and bitter chocolates. Lazarsfeld's survey showed that low-income people preferred sweet chocolate, whereas higher-income people preferred bitter chocolate. Working-class consumers, who had access to a narrower range of goods and were ill-informed about them, generally preferred strong sensory experiences, whereas upper-class consumers, accustomed to the minute differences of a multitude of similar products, generally preferred blander things. The chocolate study also found that the well-to-do and middle classes viewed the same shop differently as being, alternatively, a "general store" or a "confectioners," whereas the lower classes would avoid it completely as a "forbidden luxury." This finding and others compelled Lazarsfeld to develop a broader theory about the taste preferences of the "proletarian consumer." Indeed, a class-based analysis of consumption patterns would be a common feature of Forschungsstelle studies. "Even when we did straight commercial market studies we tried to show the theoretical applications of our findings," Lazarsfeld recalled.³²

Lazarsfeld oversaw about forty studies as director of the Forschungsstelle between 1927 and 1933, and from about 1929 it became his main activity, to the point that he took a leave of absence from teaching at the University. Most of its studies were conducted for Austrian firms, but the center also took contracts from firms in Germany and Switzerland, covering a wide range of consumer products, including many different kinds of foods, clothing, medicines, electrical appliances, and children's toys. The Forschungsstelle also did studies on leisure time, tourism, and radio-listening, including a major study in 1932 for RAVAG, the public company that broadcasted *Radio Wien*. This survey of some 36,000 listeners, which was the first major study of radio audiences, revealed class stratification in listening habits. Some studies concerned not consumer products but rather customer relations and the most effective ways in which shopkeepers could sell to different kinds of customers. Other studies compared the relative effectiveness of various methods of product marketing, such as advertising, window displays, and word-of-mouth.

The studies were mostly but not exclusively commercial; occasionally the research center would conduct other kinds of studies on social services for the

Research in Austria," *Human Factor* 8, no. 1 (January 1934): 1–4, Rote Mappen, Vienna Marktforschungsstelle/Early Vienna/Papers I, PFL Vienna; "Verkaufs- und Konsumbarometer [Sales and Consumption Barometer]," advertisement, n.d. Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna.

32 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, "Market Research in Austria," 4; Lazarsfeld, "Austrian Sociologists in the United States," PFL Vienna.

municipal government, such as a study on the development of community relations in the new public housing projects, the *Gemeindebauten*. Lazarsfeld's research center also did work for political and scholarly organizations like Max Horkheimer's Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt. The Forschungsstelle was contracted to do empirical studies in collaboration with Erich Fromm, whom Lazarsfeld described as a "neo-Adlerian," that would later be published as part of the Institut's *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (Studies on Authority and the Family). The study concluded that the German working class had been vulnerable to Nazism and Hitler's demagoguery because the patriarchal German family structure fostered submission to authority. Although Lazarsfeld did not personally meet anyone from the Horkheimer group while he was in Europe, he would become well acquainted with them later when they were exiled together in New York.

The Forschungsstelle's research techniques evolved and were adapted for individual studies, but a set of standard procedures was established by Lazarsfeld and his colleagues. For each study, the researchers at the Forschungsstelle followed detailed instructions in conducting interviews with respondents, recording responses diagrammatically. They interviewed several hundred or as many as 1,500 respondents, who were coded according to sex, age, and three or four basic socio-economic classes: working class ("A"), lower middle-class ("B"), upper middle-class ("C"), and, sometimes, upper-class or "very rich" ("D"). In their reports, researchers' descriptions of consumers' preferences were typically grouped by economic class, and differences in buying habits between classes were keenly observed. Interviewers were instructed to distinguish respondents not only by economic class but also by cultural differences and background. The family situation of respondents was particularly important: researchers inquired about the social class of respondents' parents, whether they had been unemployed and for what period, what kind of neighborhood and apartment they lived in, and what their political affiliations were. The issue of class and social stratification, of particular concern to Lazarsfeld's cohort of Viennese socialists, was essential to the practice of market research because of the key role it played in consumer behavior. Lazarsfeld's conception of social division was sophisticated enough to differentiate both economic and cultural categories, which were particularly important distinctions for consumer preferences: a high school teacher would have more in common with a university professor than with a grocer, for example, even though the teacher and the grocer might have more comparable incomes. It was a more pragmatic approach to the socialist program, a hallmark of the Austro-Marxists' tendency to preference empiricism over dogmatism.

If there was an element of Freud in the method of the Forschungsstelle, it was an acute awareness of the limits of rational action and an appreciation for the unknown, unconscious depths of human motives that guide behavior. For Lazarsfeld, the very question “Why?” was not in fact a real question but rather a problem that needed to be solved through a systematic analysis of environmental and situational factors, histories of action, and respondents’ reports of reasons and purposes. Lazarsfeld would later call this “the art of asking ‘Why?’” Interviewers developed techniques to avoid eliciting the misleading rationalizations or recitations of advertising slogans that respondents would often provide in response to direct questioning. Instead of directly asking what respondents’ self-understood reasons were for choosing a particular brand, for example, a questioner might ask respondents how they first came across a brand, or what its advantages were over other brands. Narrative reports were supplemented by statistical analyses. By coding and tabulating the responses to systematically-arranged questions in a way that would later be codified as “reason analysis” by Zeisel in his book, *Say It with Figures*, the researchers could infer the psychological motivations, or true “reasons,” of respondents. Through such processing, responses that initially appeared as superfluous details could emerge as important elements of reasoning. Statistics were, Lazarsfeld said, the translation of living processes into numbers and of real phenomena into tables. Ultimately, the researchers sought to use statistical analyses to connect the “purchase biography” of respondents to the corresponding external stimuli, so that they could recommend to clients what environmental factors or marketing techniques would be likely to produce a favorable response from prospective purchasers. In the process, Lazarsfeld and his researchers continually refined their methods of analyzing motivation, choice, and action, which could be applied to any situation of human decision-making.³³

33 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Fullerton, “Historic Analysis,” 498–503; Illa Weiss, “Verkäufer und Kunde. Wie der Kunde die Sache sieht [Seller and Consumer: How the Customer Sees the Matter],” Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; “Verkaufen als Reklame: Ergebnis psychologischer Erhebungen [Selling as Advertising: The Result of Psychological Surveys],” n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; “Die Stadtrandsiedlung Leopoldau [The Suburban Development of Leopoldau],” Ein Vorschlag der Wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle [A Proposal of the Economic-Psychological Research Center], n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; “Wer verwendet Suppenwürze? [Who Uses Soup Spice?],” Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; “Zigarettenhülsen [Cigarette Tubes],” n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; Zeisel, *Say It With Figures*; “Die psychologische Situation auf dem Wiener Schuhmarkt [The Psychological Situation in the Viennese Shoe Market],” Gutachten der Österreichischen Wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle [Report of the Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center],” n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; “Instruktion [Instruction],” n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; “Anweisung für eine Auslagenuntersuchung [Instructions for an Expense Investigation],” n.d., Blaue Mappen

After a few years of refining research methods at the Forschungsstelle, Lazarsfeld was able to confidently judge the superior value of his economic-psychological method of survey research relative to the rote questionnaires that most market researchers in Europe and America still relied on. Those primitive questionnaires could indeed be useful for acquiring basic facts about product usage, but they often failed when it came to the question of *motivation*. The mistake of such questionnaires, Lazarsfeld claimed, was that they presumed that people generally knew and could articulate their wants and needs, when in fact their actual behaviors often belied their conscious understanding of their own motives. Lazarsfeld's surveys were designed to avoid direct questions about opinions or desires; instead, they sought to elicit the basic facts underlying the buying situation, beginning with the origin of the need and carried through to the act of purchase. To the extent that interviewers did ask about opinions and desires, it was only to compare their responses with discrepancies in their actual behaviors in order to draw conclusions from the difference. It was the job of researchers to deduce the motives of consumers through the analysis of facts about their buying history, which they derived from a specific series of questions, the results of which were systematically categorized and tabulated. Certain lines of questioning could produce more accurate responses. For example, negative questions concerning the disadvantages of certain products were more reliable than positive questions about perceived advantages. Similarly, questioners could better infer respondents' motives in choosing a business if they asked why they had abandoned another one. In order to learn about the behavior of a consumer in a buying situation, interviewers would ask not about the re-

131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; "Gutachten der Österreichischen Wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle über die Untersuchung zweier Spezialprobleme bei Unger [Report of the Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center on the Investigation of Two Special Problems at Unger]," n.d., Blaue Mappen 132 (WiFo-2), PFL Vienna; "Vortrag bei Prof. Bühler. Gehalten von Frau Dr. Wagner [Lecture by Prof. Bühler. Held by Dr. Wagner]," n.d., Rote Mappen, "Vienna Marktforschungsstelle [Market Research Center]," PFL Vienna; Zeisel, "Market Research in Austria"; Michael Pollak, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld: A Socio-Intellectual Biography," Program on Science, Technology and Society, Cornell University, Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Paul Neurath to David Sills, May 3, 1983, Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Statistics for Fieldworkers in Psychology," 1931, trans. John G. Jenkins, 1935, Rote Mappen, T/UI (3 bis 7), PFL Vienna; "Wir haben untersucht [We have investigated]," pamphlet, n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 274-75; Zeisel, "The Vienna Years," 11; "Multi D Seminary: Attribution Theory and Reason Analysis," transcript, December 6, 1973, Rote Mappen, T/U XII, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Austrian Sociologists in the United States," PFL Vienna; Paul Neurath, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the institutionalization of empirical social research," paper, Columbia University Seminars on Content and Method of the Social Sciences, November 11, 1981, box 185, folder 7, Robert K. Merton Papers, Rare Book and Manuscripts Library, Columbia University [hereafter, "Merton Papers"]; Zeisel, "Paul Lazarsfeld und das Wien der Zwanziger Jahre [Paul Lazarsfeld and the Vienna of the Twenties]," n.d., box 123, folder 2, HZP.

spondent's own behavior but rather about that of the shopkeeper. By considering the patterns of purchasing behavior and the environmental factors that influenced the actions of respondents, Lazarsfeld's researchers could make scientific recommendations about ways that businesses could make changes to their products or marketing practices in order to induce favorable responses from consumers. Lazarsfeld believed that his kind of market research provided a means for the psychological rationalization of the sales organization and consumer relations—the “last phase of the business cycle”—to complement the modern technical rationalization of production.³⁴

Lazarsfeld's application of psychology and statistical analysis to market research produced results that were not only of practical use to businessmen but also of interest to academic sociologists, politicians, and psychoanalysts. Some results were predictable, and some were surprising. Most users of cologne were guided more by brand names than by a capacity to judge the quality of the product, for example. The working class was least likely to drink tea and most likely to drink coffee for breakfast, and, as one might expect, workers—relative to the middle and upper classes—were much more concerned with coffee's price than with its strength or quality. The banalities of daily consumer life could reveal broader social anxieties, as when Forschungsstelle researchers applied Alfred Adler's idea of the inferiority complex to the experience of shoe-buying, a situation where customers felt “totally exposed” in the presence of shop attendants as they sat waiting, shoeless, worried about holes in their socks, sometimes making a purchase only out of pity for the salesperson, finally resolving never to return to the same shop again out of sheer embarrassment.³⁵

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- 34 Lazarsfeld, “Neue Wege der Marktforschung [New Ways of Market Research],” *Mitteilungen der Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Berlin* [Communications from the Berlin Chamber of Commerce and Industry], October 25, 1932, Rote Mappen, “Vienna Marktforschungsstelle,” PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “New Ways of Investigating Markets” [translation of *Neue Wege der Marktforschung*], October 1932, box 175, folder 9, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York; Zeisel, “Market Research in Austria”; Lazarsfeld, “Marktuntersuchungen auf psychologischer Grundlage [Market Research on a Psychological Basis],” *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Organisation Ev.* [Notices from the Society for Organization Ev.], October 31, 1932, 127–28, Rote Mappen, “Early Vienna,” PFL Vienna.
- 35 Fullerton, “Art of Marketing Research,” 319–27; Lotte Radermacher, “Zur Psychologie der Schuhmode [On the Psychology of Shoe Fashion,” Tagung des Modeausschusses der deutschen Schuhhändler [Meeting of the Fashion Committee of German Shoe Retailers], Berlin, November 10, 1932, Blaue Mappen 132 (WiFo-2), PFL Vienna; “Der Tee und die Wiener [Tea and the Viennese],” Gutachten der österreichischen Wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle [Report of the Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center],” ca. 1932/3, Rote Mappen, “Vienna Marktforschungsstelle,” PFL Vienna; “Untersuchung über die Absatzchancen eines fertigen Kaffees auf dem Wiener Markt [Investigation of the Sales Prospects of Readymade Coffee in the Viennese Market],” Gutachten der Österreichischen Wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle,” ca. 1933, Rote Mappen, “Vienna Marktforschungsstelle,” PFL Vienna.

Such findings might appear trivial, or only of interest to the business concerned, but as Herta Herzog and other researchers in the socialist movement stressed, market research was an excellent way to find out what ordinary people were thinking and what their needs, desires, and opinions were. Herzog—who would later become known for her studies on listeners of American radio serials—completed her dissertation under Lazarsfeld in 1933 on the topic of radio voice and personality, a typical *Forschungsstelle* topic insofar as it made a client's practical problem into a research interest. The unique combination of qualitative and quantitative methods that Herzog and other *Forschungsstelle* researchers used allowed them to gain insight into the subjective experiences of ordinary workers and consumers. Lazarsfeld and his corps of socialist researchers used these studies to develop empirical research methods, while the content of the work helped them to understand the daily life of common people. Lazarsfeld recalled that the study of working-class problems was “always in the forefront” of their interests. Lazarsfeld's corps of researchers were motivated in their worldview by Austro-Marxism but disciplined by their clients' demand for usable results and the academic community's demand for rigorous research. These studies allowed Lazarsfeld and his researchers to hone their methods for larger works with a more explicit socialist commitment.³⁶

At the same time, however, Lazarsfeld and his colleagues in social research began to drift somewhat from their earlier influences as they refined their own methods. When Lazarsfeld began to work more seriously at the Böhlers' Psychological Institute, integrating quantitative and statistical analysis in his practice of social psychology, he was cut out of Alfred Adler's circle. Adler thought that quantitative approaches to social psychology were a horrible waste of time, and he would not tolerate Lazarsfeld's presentations on such methods in his seminar. “He just threw me overboard,” Lazarsfeld remembered. “He reproduced his own experience with Freud continuously, on a small scale; every six months someone was excommunicated from Adler's school. I was one of the early ones.”

While Adler spurned Lazarsfeld for his adoption of new-fangled research techniques, Charlotte Bühler rejected the strident socialist ideology that still infected his work. When it came to publishing his first major monograph, *Jugend und Beruf*, Lazarsfeld used the opportunity “to make a big plea for the working class” and his view of the plight of proletarian adolescents through an

36 Herzog, untitled speech, ca. 1933, *Blaue Mappen* 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; Zeisel, “Market Research in Vienna”; Lazarsfeld, “Forty Years Later,” xxxvii; “Untersuchungen der Österreichischen Wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle [Investigations of the Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center],” n.d., *Blaue Mappen* 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna.

analysis of the Kanitz questionnaires that had inaugurated his interest in survey research. “The essence of this monograph is the tremendous difference between the middle-class adolescent and working-class adolescents,” Lazarsfeld recalled. “Of course, making statements on stratification was a political move at the time. The differences between a Socialist and a non-Socialist was that the Socialists would always stress stratification.” Charlotte Bühler, who was rather apolitical, approved of Lazarsfeld’s analysis but strongly objected to his unbearably polemical style of left-wing advocacy and working-class chauvinism. “When I began to write about working-class youth, it was ‘Isn’t it horrible.’ It was no longer in terms of concepts, the whole style was one of accusation,” Lazarsfeld remembered. “The whole idea that the way capitalism keeps the workers in line is not by shooting them, but by depriving them of their aspirations.” Bühler forced Lazarsfeld to strip away the polemical language and the “soapbox element” in his manuscript, while the basic concepts and ideas remained. “Looking backwards, this is the moment of sell-out,” recalled Lazarsfeld with a touch of irony. “The moment I have always lived on since is the moment of the compromiser.” He would later refer to himself as a “Marxist on leave.” Lazarsfeld may have compromised on language, but the form of his critical, socialist analysis remained: “This whole theme is very outspoken in the book, but it is written in an absolutely detached way.”³⁷

In addition to Austro-Marxism and psychoanalysis, there were other intellectual currents circulating in postwar Vienna that, somewhat more tangentially, influenced Lazarsfeld’s thinking and affected the research methods employed at the Forschungsstelle. Among the innovative thinkers in Vienna at the time were the members of the so-called “Vienna Circle” (*Wiener Kreis*) of philosophers: the interdisciplinary, scientifically-oriented group of logical empiricists led by Moritz Schlick, who were known for their rejection of metaphysical thinking. The Circle’s regular members included Otto Neurath, Edgar Zilsel, and Rudolf Carnap; many others, including Karl Bühler, skirted the periphery of the circle. Zilsel, a philosopher of science, led a seminar attended by young socialists including Hans Zeisel and the exiled Hungarian economic historian Karl Polanyi. Zeisel and Polanyi shared an unorthodox approach to Marxist theories of value and became lifelong friends. Zeisel noted that, “purely intellectually, the Circle played an “enormous role” in their lives.

37 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, December 8, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; “Multi-D Seminar: Attribution Theory and Reason Analysis,” transcript, December 6, 1973, Rote Mappen, T/U XII, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, untitled transcript, n.d. [ca. 1978], box 39, folder “Marxism...circa 1948–1979” (3/3), HZP.

Lazarsfeld's circle of socialist empiricists certainly overlapped with the *Kreis*, and Lazarsfeld knew many of its members and thought that his thinking nicely paralleled logical empiricism. Lazarsfeld and Zeisel even formed a debating club with Carnap and Oskar Morgenstern as co-presidents, and they were particularly drawn to the interdisciplinary idea of the "unity of science" promoted by Neurath. Although the Forschungsstelle was loosely associated with the Psychological Institute, its members primarily used the methods of sociology, which was not yet established at the University. In the spirit of the idea of a unity of science, Forschungsstelle researchers would employ whatever methods necessary, regardless of disciplinary boundaries, to analyze data and "solve problems." Carnap, Neurath, and the other Vienna Circle philosophers were likeminded in their pragmatism and resourcefulness: they were not interested in the good and the beautiful typical of much humanist philosophy; instead, they dedicated themselves to the scientific analysis of language and the practical meaning of statements and utterances. Neurath took whatever ideas suited his purposes and put them to use, and his application of cost-benefit analyses beyond the marketplace in the *social* sphere was an important influence on Zeisel's work at the Forschungsstelle. Despite being a socialist, Zeisel was no Marxist dogmatist, and his dissertation was a critique of the labor theory of value, which "proved to be self-contradictory." When it came to economic theory, he had catholic interests. Zeisel would later express his debt of gratitude to Friedrich Hayek for the "important role" his teachings had played in his life since taking one of his seminars in Vienna.³⁸

More generally, the social-democratic culture of Vienna at the time had a significant influence on the work of Lazarsfeld and the Forschungsstelle. "The essence of this Vienna was that it combined a powerful and active reform," Zeisel recalled, "at least for improving the day to day conditions of the poor and the working class with a wide vision that went both laterally into the international scene and into the future." Following Max Adler's idea that the cultural work of the Social Democrats should be geared toward shaping *neue Menschen* for a fully-realized future socialist society, and Alfred Adler's idea that the inferiority complex caused by capitalist alienation could be ameliorated by

38 Stadler, "The Vienna Circle," 13–40; Zeisel, "The Vienna Years," 12–13; Zeisel, "Erinnerungen von Rudolf Carnap [Memories of Rudolf Carnap]," Internationales Symposium "Wien-Berlin-Prag, der Aufstieg der wissenschaftlichen Philosophie [Vienna-Berlin-Prague, The Rise of Scientific Philosophy]," Vienna, October 1–4, 1991, Box 125, Folder "Speeches (2/5), undated," HZP; Zeisel, "Die Wiener Schule der Motivforschung," *Die Zukunft*, Mid-May 1968, 17; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, "Wissenschaft, Intellektuelle und Arbeiterbewegung," 74; Zeisel to Friedrich Hayek, March 13, 1980, box 3, folder "H, 1950–1992," HZP; Zeisel, untitled transcript, n.d. [ca. 1978], box 39, folder "Marxism... circa 1948–1979" (3/3), HZP; Zeisel, "Austrian Socialism: 1928 and 1978."

social intervention, the party established a network of about forty cultural organizations that would claim about 400,000 members by the early 1930s. Among these organizations were the *Rote Falken* (Red Falcons), the socialist scout groups adapted from the *Wandervogel* scouting tradition that Lazarsfeld had participated in as a leader, which strove to inculcate socialist cooperation and a healthy proletarian ethic in adolescents, in contrast to bourgeois vice and decadence. Similarly, the aim of the party's cultural directors was to elevate the general cultural level above the lowbrow *Schund* and *Kitsch* that, in their view, defined much of working-class culture. The movement for school reform to break the "access monopoly" of the upper classes—and the establishment of public libraries, education centers, nature clubs, public art institutions, and people's theaters and cabarets—made a range of cultural activities newly available to working-class families. Through a regime of progressive taxation that included very steep luxury taxes, the municipality—which was also a state in the Austrian federation—was able to finance a wide range of public programs. For the first time, the working poor had real opportunities to spend their free time engaging in dignified, culturally-enriching activities. Zeisel, Lazarsfeld, and the Forschungsstelle researchers participated in and took note of these profound cultural changes, and through their work they sought to analyze, document, and understand the lives of ordinary workers in a new socialist culture that included leisure activities.³⁹

Having finally won the eight-hour workday in the new Republic, Lazarsfeld decided that he wanted to do a major survey on how workers were occupying their newfound leisure time. In 1928, Lazarsfeld had attended a major international psychological conference in Hamburg, where he had learned about a demographic survey of Chicago that was represented by a collection of detailed maps. Chicago was at the time the center of American sociology, and the Forschungsstelle researchers were very interested in American methods of quantification as applied to surveys. The *Middletown* study, by American sociologists Robert and Helen Lynd, had also very recently appeared, which provided a profound example of how an empirical study could use "skillful description" and "vivid graphic pictures" to convey an "overall image" of typical life in a medium-sized American town. That study was of great interest to marketers, who saw that its qualitative descriptions provided great insight into the subjective

39 Gruber, *Red Vienna*, 81–166; Zeisel, "Die Wiener Schule der Motivforschung," lecture, congress of the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) and the European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR), Vienna, August 21, 1967, Rote Mappen, "Vienna Marktforschungsstelle," PFL Vienna; Zeisel, "Austrian Socialism: 1928 and 1978"; Zeisel, untitled transcript, n.d. [ca. 1978], box 39, folder "Marxism...circa 1948–1979" (3/3), HZP.

lives of consumers. Forschungsstelle researchers also saw its potential, but they wanted to combine its qualitative descriptions with quantitative analysis, while at the same time more prominently addressing the “social question” that was not typically present in American sociography as clearly as it was in European works. With this in mind, Lazarsfeld approached Otto Bauer, whom he still saw regularly on Sunday hikes in the Wienerwald despite his having drifted from Social Democratic Party activities. Lazarsfeld suggested the idea of the study of leisure time to Bauer, who replied aghast: “Isn’t that pretty stupid when half the country is unemployed?” Thereupon Lazarsfeld resolved to do a study about the unemployed, which would eventually become *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal*.⁴⁰

Marienthal was a depressed Austrian village of 1,486 inhabitants, mostly Catholic, about a thirty-five-minute train ride plus a half-hour walk from Vienna. It had suffered chronic unemployment after the closure of a cotton-and-flax mill and its associated plants in the summer of 1929 amidst the worldwide economic crisis. All factories in the village were shut down by 1930. Marienthal was chosen as the site for the study partly for the pervasiveness of unemployment and economic devastation there, and partly because it had been a stronghold of the Social Democratic labor movement: there had been workers’ libraries, widely-distributed socialist newspapers, and strong participation in party clubs. Lazarsfeld got financial support for the study from the trade unions, the Vienna Chamber of Labor under the leadership of the Social Democrats, and, crucially, from grant monies available from the Rockefeller Foundation, which had for years supported Charlotte Bühler’s Child Research Center. Still, the study, which took six months of data collection and a year and a half to write, was conducted on a shoestring budget of only about a thousand dollars for a resident supervisor in Marienthal and periodic visits from student researchers. In order to secure the cooperation and goodwill of locals, the researchers paid them in the form of second-hand clothes that had been collected in Vienna.

Jahoda was the lead author of the published study, and Zeisel, who had a law degree and had just completed a PhD in political science, was the other principal collaborator. Lazarsfeld directed the study, though he did no interviews or data collection, and he did not write the final report. According to Jahoda, Lazarsfeld’s “forceful personality” precluded him from being an interviewer, and

40 Gruber, *Red Vienna*, 21; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Zeisel, “Afterword: Toward a History of Sociography,” 121–25; Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 75–76; *Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal: ein soziographischer Versuch über die Wirkungen langdauernder Arbeitslosigkeit* [The Unemployed of Marienthal: A Sociographic Experiment on the Long-term Effects of Unemployment] (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1933); Zeisel to Bernard Bailyn, December 15, 1981, box 2, folder B, 1945–1992 (2/3), HZP.

his main role was to lead weekly meetings with field researchers where he pushed them to quantify their qualitative findings. The aim was to combine statistical analysis with subjective impressions. Researchers were instructed to inquire about where respondents received their income, how they spent their time, what radio programs they listened to and what books they read, what they were doing to find work and who had found it, how both adults and children made plans, and what the differences in outlook were between the employed and the unemployed. In addition to conducting interviews, researchers collected students' essays and housewives' diaries, and they examined organizational records and library reports. Ultimately, Lazarsfeld sought to describe the overall social structure and general social characteristics of the place, including relations between parents and children, men and women, conflicts between groups, and, more generally, whether the prevailing mood of the inhabitants could be characterized as hopeful, satisfied, desperate, or resigned.⁴¹

Beginning in the fall of 1931, researchers integrated themselves into the community, attempting to "fit naturally" and avoid being mere reporters or outside observers. In an effort to objectively depict daily life, their research produced files for 478 families as well as life histories for 62 people, time sheets on the daily activities of 80 individuals, and meal records for 40 families. What they found was a depressed community completely transformed by the pervasive condition of unemployment. The regular rhythms of factory life had given way to the complete absence of a schedule, except for the fortnightly payments of unemployment relief that were taken by three-quarters of the families in Marienthal. Women, whose household labor did not diminish, and children, who attended school, remained disciplined by time, but the forced idleness of unemployment had a deleterious effect on adult men. While employed, the men had made good use of their precious leisure time, but under the condition of unemployment, they squandered it: they read less, and their level of participation in political activity dropped precipitously. Subscriptions to the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, the main organ of the Austrian Social Democratic party, declined by 60 percent between 1927 and 1930. Social Democratic Party membership had also declined by 33 percent in the same period, but a local branch of the Nazi Party had recently been founded. Political activity and, indeed, all activity had been dampened in Marienthal.

41 Fleck, "Introduction," vii–xviii; Gardner and Stevens, *Red Vienna*, 153; Jahoda, "Paul Felix Lazarsfeld in Vienna," 139; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; "Anweisung für Marienthal [Instructions for Marienthal]," n.d., Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; Barton, "Paul Lazarsfeld and the Invention of the University Institute for Applied Social Research," 22–23; Freund, "Sociography," 55; Lazarsfeld, "Austrian Sociologists in the United States," PFL Vienna.

The dispositional typologies established by Lazarsfeld and his researchers were not merely subjective interpretations; they were, more precisely, statistical categories that had a real basis in objective measures and indices such as daily units of consumption. The researchers found that a small portion of the community, about seven percent, was “broken” or “apathetic,” characterized by complete passivity, neglect of home and children, and alcoholism. But the most common basic attitude found in Marienthal, defining about 70 percent of families, was “drifting along,” according to the researchers. It was an attitude of *resignation*, devoid of hopes, dreams, and plans for the future, which affected even children in terms of their diminished aspirations for future careers and even Christmas gifts. To the dismay of its socialist backers, the study revealed that the situation of persistent, widespread unemployment had produced not a revolutionary fervor but rather a general feeling of resignation, apathy, and hopelessness.⁴²

Charlotte Bühler immediately saw the value of the study and sent Lazarsfeld to the 1932 International Congress of Psychology in Copenhagen, where he reported the results of the yet unfinished work. His presentation became a “great event,” drawing the praise of visiting American psychologists including Gordon Allport and Goodwin Watson, who would later serve as important contacts for Lazarsfeld in the United States. Although he would later be embarrassed by the study’s “naïve” sampling procedures to the extent that he refused an English translation for many years, the Marienthal study was what Lazarsfeld would become known for more than anything else when he arrived in America. According to Jahoda, the interest aroused by the Marienthal study was due to its demonstration of how social problems could be illuminated by social science. “The public debate produced arguments for two incompatible outcomes of large-scale unemployment: it would create a revolutionary atmosphere or it would create public apathy,” wrote Jahoda. “*Marienthal* produced an answer: apathy.” One of the study’s most important conclusions, according to Lazarsfeld, was that “the dole is wrong,” and that a work-relief program like the Works Progress Administration in the US would be much more preferable because the persistent state of unemployment led to the feeling of resignation that would become fertile ground for the exploitation and demagoguery of the Nazis. “There is no doubt that if the unemployed had been on work relief, Hitler would not have had such an easy time organizing the *Sturmabteilungen*,” Lazarsfeld reflected. “I think one of the most tragic mistakes of the German unions was that they didn’t want the unemployed to work with other people.” But any potential for a

42 Jahoda, et al., *Marienthal*; Clavey, “Resiliency or Resignation,” 146–170.

sociological intervention on this point would be rendered moot. The published version of the report, which included a historiographic appendix by Zeisel that cited the authors' theoretical and methodological debts to Max Weber and Friedrich Engels, first appeared in the spring of 1933, just a few months after Hitler had seized power in Germany. At the request of the publisher, Leipzig-based Hirzel, the authors consented to leaving their Jewish names off the title page. But the book was nevertheless soon banned by the Nazis, who subsequently burned most copies in Germany.⁴³

Although anti-Semitism would become official state policy in Nazi Germany, it had been institutionalized in subtler ways in Austria. By 1930, Lazarsfeld and a colleague of his at the Psychological Institute, Egon Brunswik, who was another assistant, were both eligible for a more legitimate lecturer position at the University. There was no problem in appointing Brunswik, a Gentile, but because of the increasing anti-Semitic mood at the conservative, largely Catholic University and the diminished role of the Social Democrats in the Austrian government, the Bühlbers judged that it would be impossible to ever appoint Lazarsfeld, a Jew, for the permanent position of *Dozent*; even Lazarsfeld's hoped-for title of *Privatdozent*, securing a right to teach, seemed out of reach. "Never for a second could he think of a university position," said Zeisel. However, the Bühlbers were "very decent," according to Lazarsfeld, and, feeling "embarrassed about the injustice," instead put Lazarsfeld forward as an applicant for a one-year Rockefeller Foundation travelling fellowship in the United States. Lazarsfeld's application was essentially pre-approved on the basis of Charlotte Bühler's recommendation, which had been forwarded to the Paris Rockefeller office by an amenable regional evaluator. Though Lazarsfeld had become known internationally for his empirical market research studies, and especially for his exciting presentation on the Marienthal study, it was his mentor Charlotte Bühler, well-known to Rockefeller Foundation officers, who secured the opportunity for him. Lazarsfeld visited the Paris office of the Rockefeller Foundation in the spring of 1932, where he was personally invited to apply for the travelling fellowship. Incredibly, Lazarsfeld did not submit an application because, as a typical Austrian pessimist, he thought that his chances were so poor that he did not want to suffer the terrible disappointment of being rejected. But the fellowship spot for Lazarsfeld was so preordained that the Rockefeller officer cabled him in

43 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Fleck, "Introduction to the Transaction Edition," xix; Freund, "Sociography," 55–57; Sills, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld," 257; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, April 19, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Jahoda, "PFL: Hedgehog or Fox?" 5; Lazarsfeld, "Forty Years Later," xxxi–xxxv.

December to notify him that his application had been “misfiled,” and that he should immediately resubmit it. He did then finally apply.⁴⁴

Lazarsfeld’s application was approved on April 4, 1933, whereupon he was granted travelling expenses, laboratory and tuition fees, and a monthly stipend for his fellowship. The Paris office asked Lazarsfeld to provide a “detailed account” of his plans for the twelve-month fellowship in the United States. In a rather sketchy outline, Lazarsfeld indicated that he was interested in studying American organizations which applied psychology to economic and social problems. He wanted to go to New York to learn American methods of market analysis and their application in the techniques of advertising. He was also interested in organizations that employed social research to understand business, such as the Bureau of Business Research of New York University and the U.S. Department of Labor. He specifically mentioned Columbia University, which he believed to be a center for “market analysis.” It was also the home institution of Professor Robert Lynd, who was in correspondence with Lazarsfeld and was “interested” in his work. But Lazarsfeld also wanted to investigate social class divisions, racial relations, and the “special problems of community life.” He also expressed an interest in the work in social psychology being done at the University of Chicago by Ernest Burgess and W. I. Thomas, which had inspired much of his own work at the Forschungsstelle.⁴⁵

The following September, Lazarsfeld would depart for America to begin his travelling fellowship.⁴⁶

Conclusion

The end of the Habsburg Empire signaled a new beginning for Austria as a republic and for the Social Democrats as a political party with power in Vienna. Paul Lazarsfeld came of age during this transition, growing up in a secular-Jewish, socialist-intellectual household and learning about socialist politics di-

44 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Neurath, “Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the Institutionalization of Empirical Social Research,” Merton Papers; Zeisel to John Haag, January 29, 1979, box 3, folder H, 1950–1992 (1/3) HZP; Fleck and Stehr, “Introduction: From Vienna to New York,” 2–4; Fleck, *Transatlantic*, 52.

45 John V. Van Sickle to Lazarsfeld, April 4, 1933, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, “Biographie 1933–1946 (Briefe und Memos, 1932–1946),” PFL Vienna; Paul Lazarsfeld to Stacy May, ca. 1933, Rote Mappen, Biography I, PFL Vienna; George Bakeman, notarized statement, April 5, 1933, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946 (Briefe und Memos, 1932–1946), PFL Vienna.

46 “LAZARSFELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, Rockefeller Foundation Records, RAC.

rectly from the leaders of the Social Democratic Party. The Social Democrats' support for empirical social research as a means of realizing a socialist society was impressed upon Lazarsfeld at an early age, particularly through the father-like figure of Friedrich Adler. Vienna became the center of social-democratic politics in postwar Europe, and Lazarsfeld was in the middle of it as an organizer, teacher, writer, and leader of socialist youth organizations. Comrades like Hans Zeisel and Marie Jahoda became collaborators, and Lazarsfeld translated the interests, motivations, methods, and spirit of socialist organizing and activism into a regime of cooperative social research at the University of Vienna. Through the influence of Alfred Adler and the Böhlers, he fused his interest in quantifying the data gathered from survey research with his insights into the psychology of human motivation and decision-making. His exclusion from a typical career path at the University—which in most cases barred Jews from permanent positions—combined with his need to support a large corps of researchers to do quantitative analysis. The result was the establishment of the Forschungsstelle, a private organization which took commercial contracts for market research to support its work, which in turn trained students and provided the opportunity to experiment with new research methods. Market research was an important source of employment for these young socialist intellectuals, and it allowed them to take seriously the lives of ordinary workers and consumers in a way that had not been done before. The socialist researchers were particularly attentive to the class differences that affected the purchasing decisions of different segments of consumers, and their psychological training allowed them to avoid the mistake of many professional market researchers of confusing rationalizations with genuine reasons for action. The culmination of the Forschungsstelle's work was the study of the unemployed in the village of Marienthal, which produced an important conclusion—that unemployment led to widespread resignation and not revolution—and established a new kind of research combining qualitative and quantitative methods. It established Lazarsfeld in the world of social research, and it would serve as the main qualification for a travelling fellowship in the United States from the Rockefeller Foundation, which he began in the fall of 1933.

Lazarsfeld's experience in Vienna at the dawn of the new republic presented an extraordinary opportunity to witness the radical transformation of society in a socialist direction, but at the same time the consumer marketplace and the competitive incentives of profit-seeking industries would provide exciting opportunities for the practice and refinement of the methods of social research. It was a mutually beneficial relationship that allowed businesses to use the insights of socialism to better understand consumer markets, while at the same

time providing Lazarsfeld and his researchers with projects and income. The pragmatic nature of this relationship, combined with the range of ideas circulating in Vienna at the time—from psychoanalysis to marginal utility to logical empiricism—lent Lazarsfeld an open-mindedness and an aversion to dogmatism that would define his approach to research and his style of socialism.

2

**Building Socialism's Future:
Victor Gruen in Vienna**

As a Jewish socialist, the architect Victor Gruen was forced to flee his beloved native city of Vienna following Hitler's *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938. Yet the compact, pedestrian-friendly Vienna would remain etched in Gruen's mind as a paradigm for all urban design, including the building type that the émigré would become best known for: the American shopping center.

In Gruen's view, Vienna had arrived in its modern form on the basis of a "nearly perfect plan." The genius of the plan was partly the product of intentional design and partly the fortunate result of a historical coincidence, or "facts and flukes," as Gruen put it. The Innere Stadt of Vienna, the central district where Gruen lived from his birth until his emigration, is a compact jumble of narrow streets winding through a great variety of ornate facades attached to buildings that are occasionally pleasantly interrupted by squares. It is the old city that was once protected from invaders by gigantic fortification walls and a sloping field called the "Glacis" beyond them. As the city shed its medieval vestiges, the walls were razed in the latter half of the nineteenth century to be replaced by the great Ringstrasse, the wide boulevard lined with stately buildings, parks, and tree-lined promenades that proclaimed Vienna's greatness as a modern, imperial capital. The former outer perimeter of the Glacis was replaced by a service road, colloquially referred to as the Lastenstrasse, and beyond that a third concentric ring road, the Gürtel (Belt), marked the division between the inner and outer districts and facilitated the development of modern rapid transit. On the edges of the outer districts, the former aristocratic hunting grounds were preserved as the Wienerwald, an easily accessible and "much-sung-about" wooded destination for the weekend hiking excursions that became such an essential aspect of Viennese culture. His indelible memory of the "ring form" of

Vienna would become a basic aspect of Gruen's ideal city and environmental planning more generally. "There is no doubt that my European urban heritage," Gruen reflected, "has influenced my work in the United States."

According to historian Carl E. Schorske, the rival concepts of urban space in Vienna were best characterized by the city's two great architect-planners of the fin-de-siècle era: Camillo Sitte, the "romantic archaist" who defended the pedestrian ideal of the city square as an island of humanity and community amidst the cacophonous traffic and imperial pomposity of the Ring; and Otto Wagner, the "rational functionalist" who triumphed in modernizing the city with ring roads intersected by radial arteries, which paved the way for a municipal railway system that made Vienna hum with swift streetcars carrying orderly masses of commuters through bustling commercial corridors. For Gruen, the contrast between the narrow, intimate streets and squares of the Innere Stadt, and the grand monumentality of the Ring and the modern communication of the Gürtel, was not a contradiction; rather, the complementariness of the designs offered a perfect urban paradigm. Gruen's later interest in planning efficient, functional cities and buildings that lacked ornamentation would echo Wagner's modern vision and the unadorned facades of Adolf Loos, but his reverence for the city square as a site of human interaction—which Gruen would translate into the shopping center's pedestrian mall—was inherited from the traditionalist philosophy of Sitte, whose architect son spurred Gruen's interest in city planning. It was thanks to *planning*, Gruen said, that Wagner's aim of functional transportation and Sitte's ideal of environmental humanism—both necessary "elements of the urban organism"—were integrated and finally "converted into lasting assets of the city."¹

Sitte's cherished city squares, intimate "rooms" in the open air, conjured the charms of a pre-industrial past of strolling pedestrians and horse-drawn carriages, while Wagner's rapid-transit thoroughfares contributed to the modernization of a Vienna that was still under the imperial reign of the Habsburgs. After the postwar dissolution of the Empire, however, it was the newly empowered Social Democrats of the First Republic who refashioned the city as a truly

1 Gruen, *Heart of Our Cities*, 36–38; Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 25–100; Gruen, "Highways and the American City," speech, Hartford, Connecticut, September 9–11, 1957, Speeches, Volume V (1957), Box 1, Victor Gruen Papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming (Laramie) [hereafter, "Gruen AHC"]; Esther McCoy, "Victor Gruen," *Arts & Architecture*, October 1964, reprint, Scrapbooks, "The Heart of Our Cities: The Urban Crisis, Diagnosis and Cure, July 1964–Nov. 1967," Victor Gruen Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.) [hereafter, "Gruen LOC"]; Victor Gruen, "Biographische Notizen [Biographical Notes]," April 2, 1975, p. 50, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, "Light and Shadow of the European Metropolis," speech, June 11, 1963, Volume XII (Speeches, 1963), Box 2, Gruen AHC.

livable place for the masses of working people. Essential to the Social Democrats' project of forging *neue Menschen* for the new, socialist society of the future was the deliberate molding of the *ordentliche Arbeiterfamilie*, the term used to refer to a decent, dignified, secure, and culturally fulfilled working-class family. Such a family would need, first and foremost, adequate housing and a social environment that would encourage cooperation, solidarity, and the development of a genuine proletarian culture. This grand architectural design became the *Gemeindebauten*: the governing Social Democrats' blocks of municipal public housing, sometimes also referred to with reference to the courtyards that provided their communal center and a synecdoche for the whole project, the *Höfe*. Four hundred *Gemeindebauten* were constructed in Vienna between the end of the war and the effective end of the Republic in 1934, which would provide 64,000 units that would house 200,000 people, a tenth of the city's entire population.

The building program, which would become the most expensive architectural project in Europe, was initiated in 1919 after the Social Democrats' triumph in the municipal elections in May, but building ramped up dramatically in the fall of 1923 with the stabilization of the currency and the passage of a sharply progressive tax structure to finance construction. Rents were strictly controlled, averaging only about three-and-a-half percent of a worker's annual income, which was just enough to cover the housing blocks' regular maintenance costs. The *Gemeindebauten* could have been built more cheaply using prefabrication, but they were intentionally designed to be built with expensive, labor-intensive methods as a means of generating mass employment. The *Gemeindebauten* were between four and six stories high, and they typically occupied an entire city block, sometimes several. They were built in the *Hof-Haus* style typical in Vienna: a perimeter block surrounding a large central courtyard that served as a common space that would, ideally, unify the families occupying the individual units. More than 190 architects, mostly contracted from private practice, contributed designs for the *Gemeindebauten*. Many of the architects had been students of Otto Wagner at the Academy of Fine Arts, including some of international renown, such as Adolf Loos, Josef Hoffmann, and Peter Behrens. Wagner's legacy was evident in the monumentality of the *Gemeindebauten* and their deliberate location throughout the city along accessible streetcar lines, while Camillo Sitte's traditionalist conception of urban space became an important aspect of the blocks, particularly as manifested in the large, peaceful central courtyards that offered a refuge from the hustle and bustle of the street.

The *Gemeindebauten* fulfilled the immediate, desperate need for postwar housing for workers, but they also served an intentional progressive purpose to

transform the traditional *Volkskultur* into a new *Arbeiterkultur*. The design of the blocks' communal facilities was essential to this ideological function. Although the individual domiciles generally had running water, toilets, gas, and electricity, they were otherwise very modest, lacking any "luxuries" such as bathtubs, showers, or built-in closets. Instead, the fully-equipped, modern communal facilities were the defining feature of the great new housing blocks, which offered mechanized laundries and public bathhouses. These very generous communal facilities became a point of great pride, and the *Gemeindebauten* were sometimes referred to as "people's palaces." All of the essential elements of a healthful and culturally rich workers' community were included: kindergartens, parks and playgrounds, gardens, swimming pools and gymnasiums, sports and health facilities, lecture halls and workshops, libraries, medical and dental clinics, theaters, cinemas, child welfare clinics, community centers, meeting rooms, shops, and many other public facilities. According to historian Anson Rabinbach, the *Gemeindebauten* were built with the clear intention of "embodying communitarian values and providing a socialist environment which signified the future-oriented character of Social Democracy." The progressive *Bildung* of the workers would take place not only in institutions of formal education but also in the day-to-day routines of their lives. The communal spaces of the *Gemeindebauten* would be part of a "slow revolution" towards socialism, changing workers' social outlook through the conscious shaping of the quotidian environment as a cooperative, communal space.²

Victor Gruen was too young and inexperienced to be involved as a leading architect in the designs of the *Gemeindebauten*, but this bold project of municipal socialism would offer a paradigm for his own development as an architect and as a socialist. It was the only major construction project happening during the First Republic, and as the centerpiece of the Social Democrats' reform efforts, it was the preeminent architectural expression of socialism in Vienna and, indeed, in all of Europe. Gruen's first achievement as an architect was winning a prize in a competition to design a *Gemeindebau*, and he worked as a supervisor on several public housing projects in the 1920s. He studied under Behrens, and he was deeply influenced by Loos and Hoffmann, each of whom was a major architect of *Gemeindebau* projects. The general design and spirit of the *Gemeindebauten*—with their perimeter blocks around central courtyards, and their many communal facilities meant to create an environment of socialist cooperation—would reappear in Gruen's later designs for the shopping center. Gruen's shopping centers were also essentially perimeter blocks, although the central court-

2 Gruber, *Red Vienna*, 46–73; Blau, *Architecture of Red Vienna*, 2–15; Rabinbach, *Crisis of Austrian Socialism*, 28.

yard was transformed into the pedestrian mall, which became a synecdoche for the entire building form. The shopping center also recalled Sitte's cherished city square as an exclusively pedestrian, community space for the then centerless, automobile-dominated American suburb. Gruen's early work on the *Gemeindebauten*, combined with his later work as a designer of Viennese shopfronts and store interiors—and his commitment as a socialist and belief in the power of environments to create social consciousness in the minds of individuals—were the essential ideas he drew upon in his designs for the American shopping mall.

Viktor Grünbaum was born in Vienna on July 18, 1903 to Adolf Grünbaum and Elizabeth (Elly) Lea Levi.³ His mother came from a well-to-do Hamburg family, and his father's family was from Moravia, a province in the present-day Czech Republic that was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Grünbaums were a liberal, modern, thoroughly bourgeois Jewish family for whom Judaism was not a central aspect of everyday life. Although Gruen's paternal grandparents were religious, his father was not, and the family went to temple only for weddings. Adolf did, however, revive the Passover Seder as a family ritual during the tense war years. But the Grünbaums' assimilation was complete to the extent that they quite regularly celebrated the Catholic feast days and eagerly anticipated Christmas and Easter. "We had a passion for eating matzo," Gruen remembered, "but we put ham on it." The secularized family's large apartment at Riemergasse 9 was equipped with all of the early-twentieth-century conveniences, including electric lighting and a gas water heater. The Grünbaums employed a live-in cook and a maid who took the little Viktor and his younger sister, Luise, on daily trips across the Ringstrasse to the nearby Stadtpark. Gruen, the future architect, recalled staring out the window of his family's apartment as a boy, watching the street scene and keenly observing the progress on the construction of a new building in the neighborhood.

Gruen's father Adolf was a prominent lawyer and, like a good Viennese, a lover of Sunday excursions in the Wienerwald. Young Viktor would accompany his father on foot or by horse-drawn carriage as he traveled around the winding streets of the Innere Stadt on business. Adolf was also a "musical man" who loved art, theater, and satire, and he took care to instill his passions in his son. Many of Adolf's clients were composers, actors, and other people involved in the theater, and he would regularly visit his clients in their performance

3 Throughout his childhood, adolescence, and early career in Vienna, Gruen used the typical German spelling for his first name, "Viktor"; however, it is spelled "Victor," with a "c," on his birth certificate. "Geburtszeugnis," August 5, 1903, box 22, folder 4, Gruen LOC. Although he did not officially change his name from "Viktor Grünbaum" to "Victor Gruen" until 1943, when he became an American citizen, I will refer to him interchangeably throughout as "Gruen," "Viktor," and "Viktor Grünbaum."

spaces, which included the Carltheater, the famous Viennese operetta house. While his father was consulting with his clients backstage, Viktor would watch rehearsals of popular musical comedies and operettas like *Der Rastelbinder*. “Undoubtedly, this is when my interest in the theater awoke,” he later recalled. Unconsciously, the theatrical life of Vienna began to “soak into” his bones. Little Viktor also regularly visited the Burgtheater and the Volkstheater, and he occasionally performed in plays as an adolescent.⁴

At school, Viktor Grünbaum was a fair but not excellent student, attending *Volksschule* (elementary school) through 1914, when he began *Realgymnasium*. At this secondary school, he encountered an art teacher who first stimulated his interest in drawing, the skill that would eventually lead to his career as an architect. Gruen’s comfortable middle-class life was interrupted, however, with the outbreak of the war in 1914, which introduced new deprivations and ended his cherished holiday trips to visit his mother’s family in northern Germany. His father was very liberal, but he was also an “ardent Austria-Hungary patriot” who put all of his money into war bonds. At the same time, however, Adolf responded positively to the socialist Friedrich Adler’s assassination of the prime minister, Karl von Stürgkh, because he thought it might bring an end to the war. Just before the war’s end, however, Adolf succumbed, at the age of fifty-nine, to the Spanish flu that plagued the continent that summer of 1918.

The death of his father was the most profound event in young Viktor’s life, for reasons both emotional and practical. The war bonds in which Adolf had invested all of the family’s money became worthless, and suddenly the fifteen-year-old boy was faced with the prospect of finding a livelihood to support the family, which had no stable source of income outside of some meager revenue that trickled in from his father’s law firm. The family abruptly fell into poverty; they were forced to eat in public kitchens and gather scraps of waste from the streets to burn for heat during the first postwar winter. The servants were let go, and Gruen’s mother “went from being a spoiled society lady to a careworn housewife,” he recalled. Although Viktor had hoped to enter a *Gymnasium*, or high school, he was instead forced to enter the program in building construction at the *Höhere Staatsgewerbliche Lehranstalt*, the state trade school. The

4 Gruen, *Shopping Town: Designing the City in Suburban America*, ed. and trans. Anette Baldauf (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 25–30. (This is the English translation of Gruen’s memoir, which was left unpublished in his lifetime but was deposited among his papers at the Library of Congress. It was first published posthumously as Victor Gruen, *Shopping Town: Memoiren eines Stadtplaners (1903–1980)*, ed. Anette Baldauf (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2014); citations for *Shopping Town* hereafter will refer to the English translation.) Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 1–17, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC. (The “Biographische Notizen” were Gruen’s notes for his autobiography, which include many important details that were ultimately left out of his memoir.) Guzzardi, “Architect of Environments.”

plan for Viktor's future was laid out by an intimate friend of his father, Edmund Melcher, a wealthy architect who had been entrusted with the guardianship of the fatherless boy and his sister: Melcher would support the children's trade-school education on the condition that Viktor would come to work for Melcher's architectural and construction firm upon completing his degree. (His sister, meanwhile, would become a seamstress.) Fifteen-year-old Viktor Grünbaum really had no choice in the matter, and he entered the vocational school in the 1918–19 academic year. "Thus, objectively speaking," recalled Gruen, "I would say that it was decided by fate that I should become an architect."⁵

Gruen passionately hated the building trade school, which, relative to the polite, bourgeois "intellectual atmosphere" of the *Realgymnasium*, he found to be an "inferior environment" in every way. His classmates were mostly the sons of petit-bourgeois families who were rabidly anti-Semitic supporters of the nationalist Pan-German Party, the ideological home for those who would later become Nazis. Viktor's vulgar classmates bragged about drinking, cursed at socialists, denigrated democracy, and railed against the Republic. Although it was common in the Vienna of that time for Jewish children to be beaten simply for being Jewish, never before had Viktor suffered such an onslaught of anti-Semitic taunts from his classmates and even, occasionally, from his teachers. "I felt like a despised outsider," Gruen recalled. He was relentlessly teased for his diminutive stature and small hands, and one particularly vile teacher tried to flunk him for his inability to properly handle and cut a brick. Only one professor, Freiherr von Stutterheim, encouraged him on the basis of his writing talents. His only friends at the trade school were Rudi Baumfeld—the only other Jewish student, who would become a lifelong friend and colleague—and the "one-hundred-percent Aryan" Karl Langer, the smartest, biggest, and strongest boy in the school, who took on a role as protector of the two Jewish boys from the bullying of the proto-Nazis. Paradoxically, young Viktor earned some respect from the anti-Semitic ruffians when he was nearly expelled from the trade school for his cosmopolitan brazenness in publishing a poem that the school authorities deemed "anti-German" because it suggested, through metaphor, that the German-nationalist perspective was not the only correct one.⁶

5 "School Papers, July 1910–May 1925, n.d." box 23, folder 8, Gruen LOC; "Verschiedene Daten bezüglich Biographie [Various dates regarding biography]," July 7, 1977, box 77, folder 11, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 29–35; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," pp. 21–25, 49, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, "Notes for a New Book," January 4, 1972, box 77, folder 14, Gruen LOC.

6 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 35–37; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," pp. 26–30, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Beller, *Vienna and the Jews*, 196; Susanna Baird, "Fatherland: Victor Gruen, A Return Home, 1968–69," May 20, 1996, box 10, folder "Biographical Information," Gruen AHC.

Although he hated the vocational school and suffered from blatant anti-Semitism, Gruen remembered that the “basic sadness” of this time after his father’s death was “lit up” through his involvement in the socialist youth movement. Gruen’s politicization had begun before the end of the war, when he joined a “progressive and revolutionary” *Pfadfindergruppe*, a scout group led by Edi Jahoda, who was the brother of Marie, lead author of the study of the unemployed in Marienthal and the last director of her husband Paul Lazarsfeld’s economic-psychological research center (discussed in Chapter 1). Edi Jahoda’s scout group shared Friedrich Adler’s deep antiwar sentiment, once refusing to participate in a parade in front of the emperor. They sang socialist songs and were thrilled by news of the Russian Revolution. They eventually joined with the explicitly socialist Wanderbund, which itself would merge with Lazarsfeld’s Freie Vereinigung Sozialistischer Mittelschüler in 1923. They spent their winters skiing and their summers in camps or “colonies” of between fifty and seventy young socialists, wholesomely communing with nature while spurning “bourgeois” vices like drinking and smoking.

The increasingly leftist Gruen ingratiated himself in the so-called “Jahoda-Kreis,” the circle of socialist artist-intellectuals who attended salons at the home of the bohemian Jahodas, who performed chamber music for their guests. Lazarsfeld also frequented these events, where attendees discussed politics, philosophy, and art. Gruen often gave lectures on topics such as “The Building as a Molder of Men” and “City of the Future,” and he was inspired by the salons to write socially-conscious poetry that critiqued technological society and celebrated the omnipotence of nature. Growing up, Gruen was an avid reader of utopian literature and science fiction, and in 1922 he wrote a short dystopian story called “America in Vienna,” a nightmare scenario about his native city horribly overrun with automobiles. (Gruen was a lifelong enemy of the automobile, a means of transit that his later shopping centers simultaneously depended on and excluded.) Young Viktor also became a fierce adherent of the nineteenth-century proto-socialist Austrian philosopher Josef Popper-Lynkeus. Popper-Lynkeus’s idea of a just, peaceful society, free from poverty and achieved through research and planning, would remain deeply influential on Gruen throughout his career.⁷

As the city of Vienna instituted its program of municipal socialism after the war, there appeared the opportunity for Gruen to apply his socialist politics to

7 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 42–43, 291; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” p. 177, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” pp. 30–32, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “General Book Plan,” n.d. [ca. 1978], box 77, folder 2, Gruen LOC.

his future profession as an architect. He lamented the strictly technical training he received at the vocational building school, but Gruen became something of an autodidact on the subject of architecture. He attended lectures and exhibitions; read books and journals about important new trends like the German Bauhaus, the Wiener Werkstätte, and the Secessionists; and studied the great architects of the time such as Wagner, Loos, and Le Corbusier. He completed the final *Matura* exam in the summer of 1923, and that fall he went to work for Melcher's firm, Melcher & Steiner, where he would work for the next nine years as a construction technician, architect, and site manager. He had greater ambitions, though, and along with his friends from the vocational school, Baumfeld and Langer, he entered a competition in 1924 sponsored by the municipality of Vienna to design one of the new *Gemeindebauten*, which were then commonly referred to as the *Volkswohnhäuser*, or "people's houses." Their entry for a project on Lassallestrasse was bestowed an "honorable mention" and received a positive critical reception from the press. Contemporary newspaper reviews of the many submissions complimented the architects for their creativity in designing public facilities, accommodations, and common spaces that would create a "cultural community," particularly after years of inactivity in building and the conceptual limitations of the architects' upbringing under capitalism. Gruen entered another design competition for a *Volkswohnhaus* on the Gaudenzdorfer Gürtel the following year, and increasingly his interest lay in combining "sociological themes" with architecture.⁸

On the basis of a portfolio of drawings and project proposals, Gruen applied for admission to the master class of Peter Behrens—the German Werkbund architect who had mentored the Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius—at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. He passed the entrance exam and was admitted for the 1924–25 academic year, during which he split his time between Melcher's firm and the Academy. Gruen adored the atmosphere of "happy bohemianism" at the Academy, a sharp contrast to the vulgar anti-Semitism he had endured at the vocational school. However, it turned out that Behrens, who was still based in Germany, only occasionally visited his own class, which was usually run by an uninspiring assistant. Gruen learned some architectural basics, including

8 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 37–41; "Curriculum Vitae," June 17, 1937, box 22, folder 5, Gruen LOC; "Die Volkswohnhäuser in der Lassallestrasse," *Neue Freie Presse* [New Free Press], January 3, 1924; "Ein notwendiges Nachwort. Zum ersten Volkswohnhaus-Wettbewerb [A necessary afterword to the first Volkswohnhaus competition]," *Der Tag* [The Day], January 6, 1924; A.M., "Wiener Volkswohnhäuser," [unknown publication] n.d. [ca. January 1924], box 54, folder 6, Gruen LOC; "Verzeichnis der in den Jahren, 1924–1937, durchgeführten Arbeiten [List of works carried out in the years 1924–1937]," May 15, 1937, box 75, folder 10, Gruen LOC.

perspective-drawing techniques, model-making, and the essential jargon of the profession, but ultimately he was disappointed. After only two semesters, Gruen was forced to withdraw from his studies because Melcher insisted that he had to work for his firm full time or not at all. Given the fact that he still had to support his mother and sister and desperately needed that income, he decided with a “heavy heart” to abandon his architectural studies and return to work full-time at Melcher’s firm.⁹

Because Melcher & Steiner was a very small firm, Gruen was able to learn many aspects of building and construction, including jobs like facade renovations and shopfront repairs that would prepare him for his later career as a commercial architect. Melcher was also a certified building inspector, and Gruen would accompany him on his visits to the dilapidated prewar tenement houses in Vienna. These visits exposed Gruen to the conditions of poor workers in his home town that he had only been aware of abstractly before then. The experience aroused a sense of social injustice in the young man who had grown up in the relatively posh environs of the Innere Stadt.

Melcher’s firm was also contracted by the municipal government to supervise the construction of a new *Volkswohnhaus* on Fendigasse near the Margareten Gürtel, the so-called “ring road of the proletariat,” and Gruen was assigned to the project. The fact that Melcher’s firm was involved in the *Gemeindebauten* was not surprising, since these were the only major construction projects happening in Vienna during this period of economic depression in Austria. Gruen began his work at the building site as a payroll officer and assistant to the site manager, but by the completion of the project he had risen in the ranks to take on a supervisory role, partly because the portly site manager could not climb to the upper floors. Eventually, Gruen became the lead negotiator with the architect. After three years at Melcher’s firm, Gruen was certified as a journeyman, and in 1929 he passed the exam to become a *Baumeister* (master builder), a title he assumed along with “architect”—somewhat presumptuously since he never did complete his proper architectural training at the Academy.¹⁰

Gruen had since 1924 been steadily gathering private clients on the side, doing mostly modest interior renovations, decorations, furnishings, and apartment remodeling projects for his friends from the socialist movement. One of Gruen’s early clients was Paul Lazarsfeld, who had his apartment redecorated

9 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 39–41; “Curriculum Vitae,” June 17, 1937, box 22, folder 5, Gruen LOC; “Notizen für Biographie,” July 11, 1977, box 77, folder 11, Gruen LOC; “Verschiedene Daten bezüglich Biographie,” July 7, 1977, box 77, folder 11, Gruen LOC.

10 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 40–41, 291; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” p. 67–68, Folder 7, Box 76, Gruen LOC; “Curriculum Vitae,” June 17, 1937, Folder 5, Box 22, Gruen LOC.

in 1928. Although his early work was on a small scale and not nearly sufficient to support him and his mother and sister, it led to bigger and more important jobs for wealthier clients, mostly well-off Jewish intellectuals and important political officials. One of Gruen's socialist friends, Friedrich Scheu, a journalist for the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, hired Gruen to remodel and decorate the rooms he and his wife occupied in his parents' house on Larohegasse in the thirteenth district, which had been designed by Gruen's hero, the enemy of ornament Adolf Loos.¹¹ Scheu's father Gustav was an important municipal official in the Social Democratic Party, and the job gave Gruen the opportunity to closely examine Loos's work, and at the same time he was able to ingratiate himself in the social and political circles around the Scheu family. Gruen would even rebuild and furnish a small apartment for the Austro-Marxist theoretician and party leader Otto Bauer. His success in winning private clients and satisfying their requests was proof, Gruen believed, that he had the capacity to run his own business. When Gruen was informed late in 1932 that, because of a steep decline in business, his boss Melcher would have to lay off one of his employees, Gruen took the opportunity to leave his job at the end of December and establish his own independent design firm. Until he was forced to leave Vienna after the *Anschluss* in 1938, Gruen would make a living designing and renovating apartments, decorating and furnishing interiors, and, increasingly, refashioning shopfronts and store interiors.¹²

Gruen also began to think more broadly about architecture not just as the design of buildings but as an essential part of the planning of cities and urban environments. Clearly influenced by Le Corbusier's "Contemporary City" and the *Plan Voisin*, which he had seen on a visit to Paris in 1925, he published an essay in which he imagined an idealized "big city of tomorrow" that was compact, clean, pleasant, orderly, and easily navigable for pedestrians, commuters, and motorists. Leafy residential districts in this imagined city would be organized around large squares lined with "community houses" with spaces for club rooms, dining rooms, reading rooms, children's rooms, and administrative of-

11 Gruen would write an obituary for Loos in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* in which he praised the modernist master as a "true revolutionary" for "freeing modern man" from "useless things" and creating a "living space" (*Lebensraum*) suitable for the times. Gruen pointed out that Loos struggled against the "spiritlessness" (*Geistlosigkeit*) of wasteful, tacky ornamental architecture that ignored spatial and environmental context and thus failed to serve a purpose for inhabitants. Victor Gruen, "Adolf Loos gestorben [Adolf Loos dead]," *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, ca. 1933, box 76, folder 6, Gruen LOC.

12 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 41, 52, 290–93; "Verzeichnis der in den Jahren, 1924–1937, durchgeführten Arbeiten," May 15, 1937, box 75, folder 10, Gruen LOC; "List of Work Done in the Years 1924–1937," May 15, 1937, box 75, folder 10, Gruen LOC; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," pp. 70–71, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; "Curriculum Vitae," June 17, 1937, box 22, folder 5, Gruen LOC.

fices. Also on the district square would be a school, a department store, a central garage, bath houses, and a sports facility with fields behind it. The city would be served by two main highways for automotive traffic, each sixty meters wide, running north-south and east-west, which would intersect with no other streets. The highways would meet at a skyscraper-dominated central district that would be machine-like in its dedication to facilitating efficient working conditions, with all truck deliveries directed to underground loading zones. The central business district would be separated from the residential areas by a broad strip of forests and meadows—not unlike the Glacis that separated the old walled city of Vienna from its surrounding suburbs. Unlike the skyscrapers of New York, however, the buildings in this central district would be separated by parks, and there would be separate sectors for manufacturing, administration, and the arts. At the intersection of the huge north-south and east-west highways there would be a large plateau with an airport over a massive, mostly underground, multilevel transit station serving intercity trains, suburban commuter trains, and city subway trains.¹³

But there was, at the same time, another important aspect of Gruen's life that grew out of his involvement in the socialist movement and the Jahoda-Kreis. Beginning around 1923, Gruen began to perform in an amateur socialist theater group which staged open-air, antiwar-themed plays and revues of historical political events such as the revolutions of 1848. Among the writers and organizers for the theater group were Marie Jahoda, Hans Zeisel, and Paul Lazarsfeld, who would later become better known as the three principal authors of the Marienthal study of the unemployed discussed in Chapter 1. In late 1926, Lazarsfeld and another socialist youth leader, Ludwig Wagner, invited Gruen to serve as a consultant for a new political cabaret they were organizing. On December 18, 1926, the Political Cabaret staged its first performance, "Wien, wie es weint und lacht" ("Vienna, how it cries and laughs"), on a very small stage at the Czartoryskischlüssel in the Währing district. Acting as stage manager, Gruen translated the impossibly baroque revolutionary scenes imagined by Lazarsfeld and Wagner into more practical scenarios that conveyed political points through satire, irony, and wit rather than elaborate staging. The authors acceded to Gruen's changes, but Lazarsfeld's performance skills that evening did not quite match his sociological gifts, and at one point Gruen had to artfully remove the "great intellectual" from the stage when he was boring the audience with his

13 Viktor Grünbaum, "Die Großstadt von morgen: Ein Spaziergang durch die Stadt der Zukunft [The big city of tomorrow: a walk through the city of the future]," ca. 1933, box 78, folder 10, Gruen LOC; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 24.

poor singing and lackluster acting. Later in the evening, Gruen returned to the stage to diffuse a performance flub, winning over the audience with an amusing improvisation, and thenceforth taking over as master of ceremonies, the role he would regularly play in the Political Cabaret for the next seven-plus years. The young leftists' first performance took satirical aim at some members of the Social Democratic Party leadership who were in attendance, including Otto Bauer and the mayor of Vienna, Karl Seitz, for their "reformist" tendencies, but the esteemed socialist leaders were, for the most part, thoroughly amused and unoffended, perhaps even flattered.¹⁴

While the party leaders took their roasting in stride, they suggested that the interests of the socialist movement would be better served if the targets of the Political Cabaret's satire were fascists and capitalists rather than members of the Social Democratic Party leadership. Although their initial goal was to move the Social Democratic leaders further to the left, the players happily obliged with the new strategy. The young leftist performers formed the Socialist Event Group (Sozialistische Veranstaltungsgruppe), the socialist core of the Political Cabaret, which ran a Propaganda Center in Vienna that published a magazine covering the "political stage," *Die Politische Bühne*. The Propaganda Center printed between two and three thousand copies of the magazine for distribution in Vienna and the Austrian provinces. Groups of "Red Players" (Roten Spieler) were organized to stage political cabarets in the provinces for peasants and proletarians on the basis of the scripts, sheet music, and stage directions published in *Die Politische Bühne*. Some of the Socialist Event Group's programs were even translated into Czech, Polish, Hungarian, English, Yiddish, and Dutch, and performed abroad. The Political Cabaret was the focus of Gruen's "creative life" from that opening night in December of 1926 through February of 1934, when it would be forcibly and tragically shut down by the Austro-fascists.

In those halcyon years, though, Gruen would spend countless hours on Sundays, evenings, and holidays in the famous Viennese coffeehouses writing satirical, antifascist plays with his collaborators, Robert Ehrenzweig, Charles Sable, and Jura Soyfer. Soyfer was one of Gruen's closest friends and, by his account, one of the best writers of the time. Gruen would also draft witty, anti-capitalist lyrics for songs at the piano in his apartment with the musicians Fritz Jahoda and Hermann Zimbelius, and he would design and sew costumes with

14 Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," pp. 32–43, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 43–45, 291; "Neon: Vierhundertmal Politisches Kabarett [Neon: Four hundred acts of the Political Cabaret]," *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 2, February 1933, p. 27, box 71, folder 14, Gruen LOC.

his sister Luise, the seamstress. In the theater next door to his apartment on Riemergasse, the Pan-Künstlerspiele, a venue with a capacity of about three hundred, the socialist theater troupe would stage the first several performances of a new program.

Over the course of about seven years, the Political Cabaret—a fairly consistent group of between twenty-five and thirty members—would produce fourteen programs and stage more than four hundred performances. In addition to the early shows in the Pan-Künstlerspiele, the Political Cabaret performed in larger theaters, some with a capacity of more than a thousand, as well as in hotels, inns, and even workers' homes. New programs were premiered before “intellectual” audiences and reviewed in the socialist newspapers and magazines, such as the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, *Kleines Blatt* (Little Paper), *Der Abend* (The Evening), and *Der Kuckuck* (The Cuckoo). According to a flattering review in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, the Political Cabaret combined political agitation with wit and humor to “unmask” the hypocrisies of the bourgeoisie. The Cabaret fulfilled its ideological mission by performing its fully-worked-through programs before audiences of workers in nearby industrial cities such as St. Pölten, Wiener Neustadt, and Neunkirchen. Over the course of its career, Gruen estimates that the group performed its quite explicit plays of socialist propaganda before two hundred thousand people, not including the provincial productions of the Red Players. The Political Cabaret's deep cultural influence was evident in the fact that some of its songs were taken up as anthems at workers' demonstrations. “Enthusiasm was the only motive for our commitment,” Gruen recalled. “There was no pay, no quest for individual glory, no career aspirations—the group was a true collective.”¹⁵

The Political Cabaret produced two or three new programs and put on about fifty performances each year. The titles of the early shows indicate their deeply satirical, antifascist and pro-socialist nature: “In the Christian Social Sky,” which premiered on March 31, 1927; “The Jerk to the Right,” which premiered on May 10, 1927; “Black White Revue,” which premiered on December 3, 1927; “The Little Political Weather House,” which premiered on April 28, 1928; “Ten Years of the Bourgeois Republic,” which premiered on November 8,

15 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 45–48, 291; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” pp. 33–44, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Das Politische Kabarett,” program, 1929, box 71, folder 20, Gruen LOC; “Neon: Vierhundertmal Politisches Kabarett,” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 2, February 1933, p. 27, box 71, folder 14, Gruen LOC. Friedrich Scheu published his first-hand account of the Political Cabaret in *Humor als Waffe: Politisches Kabarett in der Ersten Republik* [Humor as a Weapon: Political Cabaret in the First Republic] (Vienna: Europa, 1977), and Jürgen Doll produced a proper history of the period in *Theater im Roten Wien: Vom sozialdemokratischen Agitprop zum dialektischen Theater Jura Soyfers* [Theater in Red Vienna: From Social-democratic Agitprop to the Dialectical Theater of Jura Soyfer] (Vienna: Böhlau, 1997).

1928; “Hello, Class Harmony Here!” which premiered on February 24, 1929; “Austria, Where Are You Going?” which premiered on February 9, 1930; “Thinking Forbidden!” which premiered on March 8, 1931; and “Why? That’s Why!” which premiered on December 13, 1931. Although the programs were scripted, the group announced its prerogative to make improvisatory changes on the basis of recent political events. The troupe was, as Gruen asserted, a cooperative group of young socialist workers, salaried employees, and students who performed purely for their love of theater and for their belief in the socialist movement. All credits were attributed not to individuals but to the collective. Though they each had their special talents as actors, composers, musicians, and set and costume designers, everyone also worked as stagehands, ticket sellers, ushers, and scene-painters. Gruen’s main role was as emcee, but he was also a director, organizer, writer, singer, and actor. The Political Cabaret was such an all-consuming aspect of Gruen’s life that when he married Lizzie Kardos, a comrade from the socialist movement, on March 22, 1930, they celebrated that evening with a costume party at the Pan-Künstlerspiele theater with all of their friends from the Cabaret.¹⁶

The Political Cabaret was a joy for Gruen and his comrades to produce and perform, but they also took their satirical revues very seriously as a critical form of socialist propaganda in the fight against rising fascism, anti-republicanism, capitalism, and bourgeois complicity and decadence. None other than Max Adler, one of the leading Austro-Marxist theoreticians, saw the Political Cabaret as a vital weapon in the political struggle that enlightened audiences of workers and exposed the “spiritual decay,” cynicism, and hypocrisy of the bourgeois world. *Die Politische Bühne* was a vehicle for the distribution of the Socialist Event Group’s theatrical programs, which were meant to be performed as an ideological “weapon against fascism and reaction” and to bring “enlightenment and enthusiasm” to the working masses more effectively than speeches and leaflets. *Die Politische Bühne* contained complete scripts, sheet music and lyrics for songs, and detailed stage directions. The regional Austrian performers, the Red Players and Blue Blouses (*Blaue Blusen*), used it as a guide for their provincial productions. Some of the Vienna-based Red Player groups toured the provinces, and there were also as many as a hundred local groups of Red Players outside Vienna. The Socialist Event Group charged no fee to perform its plays; it only asked that the Red Players submit regular reports of their performances.

16 “Neon: Vierhundertmal Politisches Kabarett,” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 2, February 1933, p. 27, box 71, folder 14, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 47–48; Lizzie Kardos to Gruen, August 7, 1977, box 77, folder 3, Gruen LOC; *Warum? Darum! Ein Politischer Bilderbogen* [Why? That’s Why! A Political Picture Book], Sozialistische Veranstaltungsgruppe, Politisches Kabarett, 1931/2, box 71, folder 26, Gruen LOC.

Looking for potential recruits to the socialist movement, the Red Players were encouraged to invite as many as twenty adolescent boys and girls to participate in the productions as members of the chorus. Each performance was led by a master of ceremonies—the role Gruen most regularly performed for the Political Cabaret—whose job it was to establish a rapport with the audience, introduce and explain the scenes during the breaks, and interject when necessary with a timely and politically incisive joke. The emcee therefore had to be sharp, witty, and up on current events. The performances were intended not only as didactic entertainments in themselves but also as a means to attract working-class audiences to whom printed socialist propaganda would be distributed in the form of flyers, leaflets, or newspapers.¹⁷

The short plays published in *Die Politische Bühne* by the Socialist Event Group were unabashedly didactic. These skits were deeply satirical yet hardly subtle, and they were sometimes very literal. “We want a new earth where everyone will be happy!” implored the emcee at the conclusion of one performance. The skits generally featured a few archetypes. The enemies and objects of ridicule were typically the reactionary Christian Social, the rapacious capitalist, the vulgar Nazi (often Hitler specifically), and sometimes the dumb *Heimwehrmann*, a sort of nationalist militiaman and proto-fascist often aligned with the Christian Socials. The Nazis were typically portrayed as agents of the capitalists who used scapegoats such as Jews and Communists to try to fool workers into fighting each other rather than joining to challenge capitalist exploitation. The hero of the play was typically the worker, who was positively portrayed, often by a good-looking, clean-shaven young man or a healthy young woman. Revues often closed with the singing of the socialist anthem, “Die Internationale.”¹⁸

The career of the Political Cabaret and the Red Players coincided with a mounting fascist threat in the First Republic. Although the Social Democrats had won a significant electoral victory in the elections of April 27, 1927—holding the mayor’s office and two-thirds of the municipal council of Vienna, and capturing 42 percent of the Austrian parliament—the party’s hegemony did not extend to the rural regions, where the Christian Socials were in control. The conflict between Viennese Social Democrats and reactionary, fascist elements gaining support in the provinces came to a head on July 15, 1927, when thousands of workers gathered on the Ringstrasse to protest a jury verdict acquitting a fascist accused of killing a socialist in the town of Schattendorf in the Burgen-

17 *Die Politische Bühne*, July 1932, box 71, folder 12, Gruen LOC; Max Adler to the Politische Kabarett, February 14, 1933, *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 2, February 1933, p. 27, box 71, folder 14, Gruen LOC.

18 *Die Politische Bühne*, July 1932, box 71, folder 12, Gruen LOC; *Die Politische Bühne*, ca. September 1932, box 71, folder 13, Gruen LOC.

land region of eastern Austria. Mounted police were called in to control the crowd; shots were fired and a riot erupted that culminated in protesters storming the Palace of Justice (*Justizpalast*), which they set on fire. In the end, ninety demonstrators were killed in the melee. After the riot and fire of July 15th, the reactionary resistance began to take shape, particularly with the assistance of the *Heimwehr*, a paramilitary organization supported by the Christian Socials and the Catholic Church, which began a campaign against the Social Democrats to establish a fascist dictatorship in Austria.¹⁹

Although the Social Democrats won a plurality of seats in the elections of November 1930, a right-wing coalition led by the Christian Socials, known as the “Bürgerblock,” kept control of the national government. The Nazis had done poorly that year, failing to win a single seat in Parliament. Yet their strength was growing in Austria, and the party managed to garner more than two hundred thousand votes, or sixteen percent, in Vienna in the provincial elections of 1932 (Vienna itself was a separate province). The Nazis also won 18 percent in Lower Austria and 22 percent of the vote in Salzburg. Emboldened, Nazi street thugs ramped up their harassment of Jews, whom they believed to have assumed undue cultural influence in Austria through their disproportionate presence in the press, cinema, and the theater. Gruen recalled being attacked and beaten by a pair of Nazis when they caught him tearing down a poster that read “Jews out!” The police intervened and threw both victim and perpetrators in jail, where Gruen spent the night. He was released only due to the intervention of Julius Deutsch, the secretary of the Social Democratic Party and a chief supporter of the Political Cabaret, who believed that satire was a “powerful weapon” in the fight against the many adversaries of the working class. When Gruen recounted the story of his incarceration onstage the following evening, he was served a subpoena for insulting an official of the state, though he later got off with a warning. After this episode, skirting the censors became part of Gruen’s act.²⁰

The “raw material” for the Cabaret’s revues came from world history and current events, but as the fascist threat rose in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the “grotesque reality” would make even their most “frivolous inventions” appear “too serious,” as a writer for *Die Politische Bühne* confessed in February of 1933, just after Hitler had become chancellor of Germany. As the Political Cabaret was celebrating its four hundredth performance, suddenly no mere theatrical caricature could do justice to the horror and absurdity of the Führer. The young

19 Rabinbach, *Crisis*, 32; Sturmthal, *Tragedy of European Labor*, 189–200.

20 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 196–98; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 48–49; Julius Deutsch to Politisches Kabarett, February 17, 1933, *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 2, February 1933, p. 27, box 71, folder 14, Gruen LOC; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 208–9.

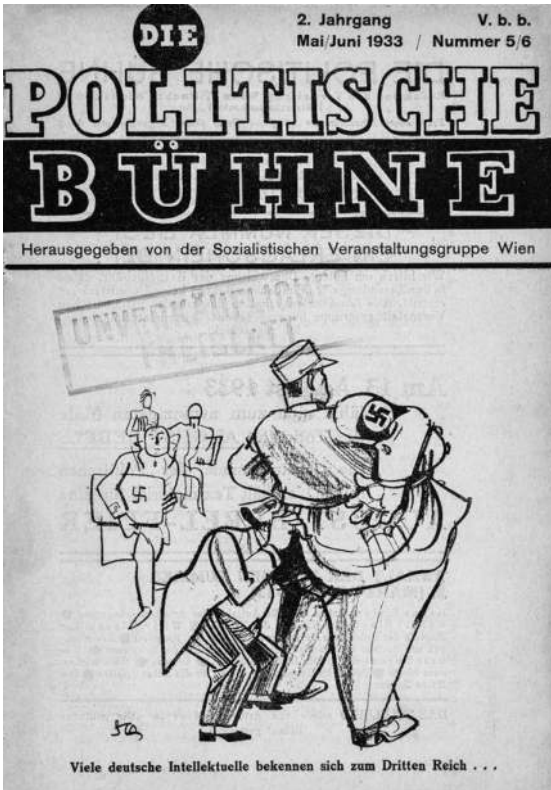


FIGURE 2

Cover of the May/June 1933 issue of *Die Politische Bühne* (The Political Stage), the journal published by the Socialist Event Group, mocking the cowardice and complicity of many German intellectuals in the Third Reich. SOURCE: Victor Gruen papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

socialist performers worried that their satirical methods of propaganda were no match for the Nazis' scapegoating and fearmongering. Yet Hitler's triumph in Germany only hardened the Cabaret performers' commitment to using socialist propaganda and education in the struggle against fascist propaganda, which, they believed, had succeeded in reaching broad layers of the German population *emotionally*, not through enlightened reason or through the compelling force of rational argument. They desperately wanted to defend democracy in the First Austrian Republic, but the young country was, unfortunately, not immune from the fascist creep.

On March 4, 1933, Engelbert Dollfuss, the Christian Social chancellor, dissolved the Austrian Parliament after the body's president and two vice-presidents had resigned in protest following a procedural dispute over a vote on the government's response to a railway strike. Dollfuss asserted that since only a president could convene the Parliament, and because that position had become vacant, the body could no longer meet. From that point forward, Dollfuss ruled by emergency decree as a dictator, refusing to call a new election and thus effec-

tively ending parliamentary democracy in the Austrian Republic. The reactionary, strictly Catholic Dollfuss had, by that time, come under the thumb of Italy's own fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini. In January, the Social Democratic newspaper in Austria, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, had revealed an illicit arms shipment from Italy that was making its way through Austria *en route* to Hungary, exposing Mussolini's illegal plan to rearm his ally in defiance of the postwar peace treaty. When Dollfuss—who dreamed of an Austrian papal state—visited Rome in April, Mussolini offered his support for an independent Austria, partly as a buffer against a newly aggressive Germany, on the condition that Dollfuss take action to suppress the meddling Social Democrats. Dollfuss, as an enemy of the trade unions and as an autocrat intolerant of his political opponents, eagerly took the opportunity presented by the parliamentary maneuvering to follow his own inclinations, as well as Mussolini's demands, to abolish democracy in his country.²¹

Dollfuss then went about establishing a regime of censorship and suppression, and his targets included the publications of the “godless” Social Democratic Party, as well as the *Schutzbund*, the paramilitary organization of the left. Dollfuss suddenly deprived the deeply Social Democratic city of Vienna of a significant source of its government revenues. He also opposed the Nazis, whom he would outlaw on June 19 due to their terrorist tactics, but they were able to continue their propaganda, harassment, and terrorism with aid from Hitler's Germany. Nazi thugs regularly threw bombs into cafes frequented by Jews. The Political Cabaret was no longer permitted to portray foreign politicians onstage, which presented quite a problem for a theater of political satire. The troupe attempted to evade the restriction by strategically employing an actor sporting a *real* Hitleresque mustache—but even that clever evasion resulted in the actor's arrest. Dollfuss was engaging in a “war of attrition” against Social Democrats, trade unions, and democratic institutions, according to one socialist contemporary. By the fall of 1933, the Social Democrats recognized that a final showdown with the dictator was probably inevitable. On the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of the Republic, its very future appeared doomed. A writer in *Die Politische Bühne*, looking nervously at what was happening in Germany and Austria, lamented that the “rabid fanaticism” of fascism was destroying all cultural and artistic values, and the progressive projects of Social Democrats appeared to be mortally threatened. The Cabaret's skits increasingly depicted Nazis as agents

21 “Neon: Vierhundertmal Politisches Kabarett,” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 2, February 1933, p. 27, box 71, folder 14, Gruen LOC; Robert Ehrenzweig, “Neue Aufgaben,” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 5/6, May/June 1933, box 71, folder 15, Gruen LOC; Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 201; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 209–12; Pauley, *Prejudice*, 260–61; Sturmthal, *Democracy Under Fire*, 100–101.

of capitalists, and capitalists as enablers of thuggish Nazis; Capital and Fascism were even personified in one skit as sinister collaborators, eager to exploit the despair and confusion of the unemployed, who themselves had been failed by capitalism but were unable to locate the cause of their misfortune, leaving them vulnerable to fascist scapegoating.²²

Eventually, the very existence of the Political Cabaret, and indeed every institution of Social Democracy in the First Austrian Republic, was directly threatened. In the November 1933 issue of *Die Politische Bühne*, the editors noted with alarm that government authorities had confiscated copies of the previous issue, pleading with readers to help them in their “difficult fight.” In January of 1934, the reactionary, fascistic *Heimwehr* militiamen began marching to call for the final dissolution of the Social Democratic Party. On February 12, police raided the Social Democratic headquarters in the city of Linz, and the workers there took up arms in defense. Later that day, electrical workers in Vienna walked out, triggering a general strike that became the inciting event for an all-out civil war. Dollfuss’s troops and the *Heimwehr* stormed the *Gemeindebauten*, which had become the last bastions of resistance for the workers. But after only a few days, it was clear that they would be defeated. Dollfuss’s decrees banning the Nazis were now applied to the Social Democrats, who were forced out of the country or underground. Eleven resisters were hanged. Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch, the leaders of the socialist resistance, fled Austria for Czechoslovakia. Gruen continued on as an independent architect, but his life in the theater was drastically altered. The Political Cabaret was shut down, but Gruen would participate intensively in the new underground theaters that sprouted “like mushrooms after a rain.”²³

Conclusion

For Victor Gruen, Vienna, the native city he loved but was forced to flee in 1938, was the paradigm for all urban design. Simultaneously imperial and intimate, medieval and modern, lazy and efficient—Vienna was a paradox of urbanity that ultimately made sense. In the period of the First Republic of Austria after

22 Wasserman, *Black Vienna*, 201; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 210–13; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 49; Sturmthal, *Democracy*, 103; Erwin Hartl, “In Dieser Zeit...” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 9, September 1933, box 71, folder 16, Gruen LOC; “Noch sind nicht Alle November Vorbei... [All November is not yet over]” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 10, October 1933, box 71, folder 17, Gruen LOC; Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews*, 212.

23 “Die ‘Politische Bühne’–Konfiziert [Confiscated]!” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 11, November 1933, box 71, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Jura, “König 1933 ist Tot–es lebe König 1934 [King 1933 is dead—long live King 1934]!” *Die Politische Bühne* 2, no. 12, December 1933, box 71, folder 19, Gruen LOC; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 214–16; Blau, *Architecture*, 2; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 49.

the First World War, the Social Democrats' massive public housing projects, the *Gemeindebauten*, refashioned the city as a paradise for ordinary, working-class families. The *Gemeindebauten* not only provided desperately-needed housing for masses of poor workers, they also served an ideological purpose as consciously-built environments that encouraged an ethic of cooperative, communal living. Though Gruen was too young to have meaningfully participated as a major designer of the *Gemeindebauten*, their construction was the major building activity in Vienna in his formative years of architectural training, and he was evidently inspired by the grand urban project. Like Vienna itself, they would become central to his idea of environmental planning and socially-conscious building, and they would remain in his architectural vision as a paradigm for his American shopping center.

Gruen's comfortable childhood as a member of a bourgeois, secular-Jewish family was transformed when his father died at the end of the war, and the fifteen-year-old Viktor Grünbaum suddenly became the head of the family. When his wealthy godfather took over his guardianship, Gruen was compelled to attend a trade school for building construction rather than the high school he would have preferred, and he was exposed to anti-Semitic bullying for the first time. His Jewish identity took on new meaning. Gruen's tenure at the trade school coincided with the birth of the First Republic, and his politicization as a socialist was not merely a political affiliation but the very center of his social life, in some ways filling a vacuum left by the absence of his father. His interests in socialism and architecture merged in his early designs and preliminary work on the *Gemeindebauten*. Although he was forced to abandon his formal architectural training after only two semesters, he continued his studies as an autodidact. Increasingly, he took design jobs on the side, mainly for his friends from the socialist movement, which would help him to establish his own independent design firm when Melcher was forced to let him go in 1932.

But while he established himself as an architect, the center of Gruen's social life was his involvement as an emcee, actor, and director in the Political Cabaret, the Socialist Event Group's theater of satire and propaganda. Over about seven years of existence, the Political Cabaret and the regional groups of "Red Players" attempted to use satirical theater to combat fascism, capitalism, and reactionary conservatism. The emergence of Engelbert Dollfuss, the Austrian chancellor of the Christian Socials who declared himself dictator in 1933 and outlawed the Social Democratic Party in 1934, spelled the end for the Political Cabaret, and it would mark a new stage in Gruen's career as an architect who would become increasingly known for his designs of retail shops, an initial foray into the world of consumer culture and design.

3

**Bauhaus for the Masses:
Moholy-Nagy, from Budapest to Berlin**

László Moholy-Nagy, the Hungarian artist and designer who introduced the German Bauhaus pedagogy of Weimar-era Germany to America during the Great Depression, summed up his life's work teaching applied industrial arts in the interest of social progress in *Vision in Motion*, his final book, published shortly after his death from leukemia in 1946.¹ The book is a clear statement of the ways in which social-democratic ideas were an essential part of modern industrial progress. With conscious effort, Moholy-Nagy believed that the ideals of community and cooperation could be incorporated into the organization of Western, capitalistic business enterprises as a way of promoting holistic thinking and avoiding the limits of overly narrow specialization. The ultimate goal was the mass production of high-quality, well-designed goods that were widely available to ordinary consumers.

Moholy-Nagy, who usually went by “Moholy,” believed that a pragmatic, up-to-date education could help humans to overcome their natural tendency to resist the life-altering social changes brought on by new tools and technologies. He called for a broad “education of the senses” to overcome this basic “emotional prejudice” against technological change. Fundamental to this education was art, not as some remote luxury or bourgeois indulgence but as an essential aspect of daily living and the way to achieve “social coherence.” Moholy's educational ideal spurned mere skills training as part of a regime of labor exploitation and profit-making; instead, a truly democratic education would entail a “social organization in which everyone is utilized to his highest capacity.” The capitalistic idolization of rare genius was antithetical to the idea that

1 L. Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1947).

everyone has the creative capacity to contribute something to the collective. In Moholy's scheme, specialists would selflessly integrate their skills into the "social whole." Industry, Moholy believed, required planning and social investment; it could not simply be left to the "blind dynamics of competition and profit." The long struggle of workers for solidarity was evidence that "there is nothing more satisfactory to an individual than to belong to a group which has a social goal and through it a firm coherence." A common aim was the best agent for "activating the efforts of the individual," and a proper social education would provide the basis for group cooperation. Though capitalism used industrial technology for the realization of profit, that aim ought to be subordinated to "human requirements," in Moholy's view, so that technology would become a "benefit instead of a curse."

Over the course of Moholy's decade in America, which lasted from 1937 until his death, industrial design had come to be associated with "artificial obsolescence," the superficial styling and manufactured outdatedness that succeeded in fueling relentless consumption in a "quick succession of 'novelties'" but failed to make good design an essential part of life. "Streamlining," that principal of aerodynamic shaping that had migrated from the design of airplanes to all manner of consumer products through the work of designers like Raymond Loewy and others, had, in the twentieth century, taken the place of nineteenth-century ornamentation, which modernist architects like Adolf Loos, Victor Gruen's hero, had aggressively rebelled against. Artificial obsolescence was contrary to the Bauhaus ideal that Moholy had helped to create.

Design in the *Bauhaus*—founder Walter Gropius's coinage combining the German words for "building" and "house" meant to encompass all branches of design—was not merely a matter of facade or external appearance; rather, it was the "essence of products and institutions" that required "thinking in relationships" and an appreciation of "organic functions and planning." A true designer had to have a keen social consciousness and accept social obligations, working cooperatively with other designers to accommodate the old ethos of craftsmanship for the age of industrial mass production. Designers would form a "working union," guided by a "spirit of cooperation for social aims," with the understanding that individual prosperity depended on the general welfare. In order to liberate their creative sensibilities, designers in the Bauhaus's foundation course were invited to play and experiment with form, almost as in a kindergarten for adults. The ultimate problem to be solved through design was meeting human needs in the machine age. Design was a kind of *planning*, and *vision in motion* signified a "projective dynamics of our visionary faculties"—seeing into the future, that is.

Moholy-Nagy's theory of design enabled an ethos of socialism to enter the age of modern mass production. The Bauhaus idea was antithetical to the atomistic extremes of capitalistic enterprise but at peace with modern industry and the twentieth-century consumer culture, which, according to Bauhaus principles, was simply a means of meeting the needs of ordinary people. Moholy and the other Bauhäusler argued that it was foolish to deny the facts of modern production, and that workers would be best served by embracing the machine. Moholy's life was shaped by the great ruptures in Central Europe in the twentieth century: the technological horrors and carnage of the First World War; the precipitous collapse of the Habsburg Empire; and the brief success and tragic failure of republican governments in Hungary, Austria, and Germany. Moholy forged his identity in the bohemian world of art and leftist intellectualism, and through the Bauhaus he became a conduit between artists and industrialists, defending the humanistic values of social democracy in contrast to the technocratic, exploitative, and wasteful tendencies of unfettered capitalism.

Moholy's youth was defined by abandonment, academic privilege, and war. He was born László Weisz in the village of Bácsborsód on the Great Plain of southern Hungary, then part of the Habsburg Empire, on July 20, 1895. His derelict father, Lipót Weisz, abandoned the family when László was still a small boy, emigrating to the United States, apparently to escape a gambling debt. His mother, Karolin Stern, raised László and his two brothers, Jenő and Ákos, with the help of her well-off bachelor brother, Gusztáv Nagy, a lawyer who lived in Mohol, a village of about seven or eight thousand Hungarians and Serbs in present-day Serbia. At some point, the patriotic Gusztáv had changed his name from "Stern" to "Nagy" in the interest of *Magyarization*, or assimilation into the Hungarian national community. Despite this nationalistic gesture, however, Gusztáv was fundamentally a worldly and well-traveled cosmopolitan who spoke Serbian as well as Hungarian and was trusted by both linguistic communities. László and his brothers referred to their friendly uncle in the familiar as "Gusztai bácsi," and László himself also went by the diminutive "Laci" within his family. Uncle Gusztáv's large, multilingual library was well-stocked with art books that greatly interested the precocious boy, whose own literary proclivities included a youthful reverence for Dostoevsky.

According to his biographer,² László attended a Jewish public school in the nearby small town of Ada from 1901 until 1903, when the family returned to

2 Lloyd C. Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy: Mentor to Modernism, Volumes 1 & 2, Electronic Version* (Cincinnati: Flying Trapeze Press, 2009). Engelbrecht's massive biography is a rough and sprawling book covering all aspects of Moholy's life and work, and it includes a wide range of primary sources gathered over decades of research.

Mohol to live with Gusztáv. In 1905, the family moved once again to Szeged, where the young László attended a very good secondary school, studying German among other subjects. Following their uncle, László and his brothers changed their family name around 1909 or 1910 from “Weisz” to the typically Hungarian “Nagy.” With the support of a trust fund bestowed by their grandfather, László and his two brothers later moved to Budapest, where László enrolled in the Royal Hungarian University as a law student in 1913. The following year he applied to enter an evening course at the national arts and crafts school, though whether he ever attended is unknown. László studied law to please his family, but he also found an outlet for his bohemian proclivities and desire for intellectual stimulation by attending literary seminars, where he befriended the budding arts critic Iván Hevesy, who would become an important influence.

László’s law-school education was interrupted in its second year when he was called to serve in the Austro-Hungarian army after the outbreak of the First World War. He was inducted in the spring of 1915 and underwent his training in barracks in and around Budapest. Beginning in February 1916 he began service as an artillery scout in Galicia, where he would participate in trench warfare on the Russian front. In June, László’s brother Ákos was captured by the Russian army, never to return to Hungary. László himself was badly wounded.³ His left thumb was so shattered by shrapnel that it would become permanently bent and swollen, a disfigurement which would cause him to make a lifelong habit of hiding his left hand in photographs. László’s injury was severe enough that he was forced to leave the front to recover, and his widow-biographer, Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, would later claim that the trauma of war was the cause of the streak of white hair that would become a signature of his appearance. While convalescing in military hospitals in 1917, including an extended period in Odessa, László would pass the time making pencil and crayon sketches, a hobby he had been cultivating since childhood. Using his fellow soldiers as subjects, he made drawings on innumerable postcards, which he would send to Hevesy and other friends who were enchanted by the results and encouraged his hobby. He also experimented with watercolor portraits.

In the fall, László moved into an apartment in Budapest with his brother Jenő and reenrolled in the university. In November he published a short story in the first issue of Hevesy’s new literary and cultural journal *Jelenkor* (Present age), for which László served on the editorial board. When he had recovered in

3 According to Engelbrecht, this happened in a battle near Berezhany, in present-day Ukraine, but according to Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, Moholy was wounded in late 1916 on the Italian front in Venezia Giulia. Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 746; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 8.

the spring of 1918, he became an army reservist, the duties of which required him to travel to military hospitals. He continued with his sketches and poetry on his tours, and on his intermittent returns to Budapest he increasingly spent time socializing in the café scene. He ingratiated himself with literary intellectuals in the circle of the *Nyugat* journal like the poet Mihály Babits, whom he had known from Szeged. He also became a fixture at the gallery exhibitions organized by the journal *Ma* (Today), a central organ in the revolutionary movement in the arts known as Hungarian Activism, where he first encountered its leaders, including the socialist artist Lajos Kassák. The socially relevant ideas of the *Ma* exhibitions were deeply influential for László and would become the “standard” for his work, as he later recalled.⁴

Toward the end of the war, László Nagy began the process of reinventing himself as a uniquely Hungarian artist. He began to draw more regularly and attended a free art school in the evenings. Around March he added “Moholy” to the rather common Hungarian name “Nagy,” becoming “Moholy Nagy,” which he first used to sign a review he had written for *Jelenkor* in April of 1918. Although he never officially registered it, the new name paid tribute to his childhood home of Mohol and vaguely suggested gentry. Informally, he would typically shorten his name to “Moholy,” and he would often sign his postcards “M=N.” In another act of Magyarization, Moholy converted to Calvinism, or the Hungarian Reformed Church, on May 2, 1918. Hevesy was his baptismal godfather. Moholy’s somewhat indeterminate Jewish background had never been an important aspect of his self-conception in ethnic or religious terms. Indeed, he never remarked upon it in his published writings, and his own daughter was unaware of it. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy does not discuss it in her biography.

Moholy was demobilized in September 1918, and he resumed his legal studies in Budapest. Moholy’s earlier literary ambitions had by this time been overtaken by this new determination to get serious about his hobby and become a painter. He spent what little money he had on art books and occupied his time practicing drawing and producing pictures with proletarian and industrial themes. Moholy also became active politically through the social-science-oriented Galileo Circle, which was presided over by the economist Karl Polanyi. Kassák’s Hungarian Activist movement and the *Ma* magazine and gallery would be the main inspiration for Moholy’s political awakening. The Hungarian Activ-

4 Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 10–14; “Reminiscences of Jenő Nagy, brother of László Moholy-Nagy,” Interview, October 25, 1975, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 384, 433 (endnote); Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, xv; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 5–10; Moholy-Nagy to Antal Németh, July 18, 1924, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 395–96; Botar, *Technical Detours*, 18–30, 178–79; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus de Chicago*, 22–23; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 3–55, 747; Hattula Moholy-Nagy, “Chicago Memories,” March 2, 1995, in Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 725.

ists regarded art as essential to social and political revolution, and Kassák stressed the idea of “synthetic” art as a way of life that served society by bringing subjective liberation into harmony with social justice. The idea of merging art with social revolution resolved Moholy’s internal debate over whether devoting himself to art was merely a decadent privilege that had nothing to do with the “happiness of the masses.” The Hungarian Activist idea made art into an urgent, socially relevant practice, not merely a hobby for aesthetes. The Activist idea permitted Moholy to use his painting to project his “vitality” and “building power” to “give life” through color, light, and form.⁵

Moholy’s own artistic and political reorientation was a product of the turmoil that radicalized so many at the end of the war. The Nagy brothers’ trust fund had evaporated with the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its defunct war bonds. Cut off from this source of inherited wealth, Moholy intensified his artistic study and production through informal art courses under Róbert Berény. The Chrysanthemum Revolution, led by the leftist Count Mihály Károlyi in early November 1918, resulted in the establishment of a new people’s republic on November 16.⁶ Many of Moholy’s comrades in the Activist circle, such as Kassák, began to demand a communist republic in the place of what they viewed as an ineffectual liberal democratic republic led by Károlyi. According to his brother, Moholy’s politics at this time were “progressively oriented” and he would have been welcomed into the communist movement.

The Hungarian communists would be thrust from the margins into political prominence when a Hungarian Soviet was declared on March 21, 1919, led by Béla Kun, who himself had been radicalized by the Bolshevik movement as a prisoner of war in Russia. Along with many in the *Jelenkor* and *Ma* circles of avant-garde artist-intellectuals, including Kassák and Hevesy, Moholy very soon after signed onto a manifesto supporting the new direction for Hungary that called for an end to “bourgeois arts” and the establishment of “communist culture.” The Activists wanted artists to serve the interests of workers rather than the whims of the decadent bourgeoisie.⁷ Although he initially supported

5 Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 10–15; “Reminiscences of Jenő Nagy, Brother of László Moholy-Nagy,” in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 384–85; “Excerpt from Moholy-Nagy’s Diary,” May 15, 1919, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 386–87; Moholy-Nagy to Antal Németh, July 18, 1924, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 395–96; Botar, *Technical*, 21–43, 179; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 54–56, 747.

6 Moholy as a young man was not involved in the formation of the republic at the time, but many years later, when he was living in the US, Moholy would lend his support to a movement at the end of the Second World War to establish another new republic in Hungary led by Károlyi, who was at the time exiled in London. Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 62–63.

7 Botar, *Technical*, 43–55; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 62–64; “Reminiscences of Jenő Nagy, brother of László Moholy-Nagy,” Interview, October 25, 1975, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 386.

Kun's communist revolution and the Soviet Republic, Moholy would be, according to some accounts, ultimately spurned by the communists.⁸ Despite the attempts by the Activists to appeal to György Lukács, the Marxist theorist and minister of culture, Kun would attack Kassák's arts and literature journal *Ma* as a decadent bourgeois publication. Although the Kun regime had purchased four of his drawings, Moholy would later disavow the communists for their dismissal of culture and indifference to the "inner revolution of life." He came to think that the leaders of the revolution were excessively nationalistic, intellectually pretentious, and still a product of the bourgeois world. Their version of communism was, for him, a "heap of contradictions" that was ultimately not that different from the oppressive relations of capitalism.⁹

Despite his misgivings, the revolutionary fervor that accompanied Kun's short-lived regime may have spurred Moholy's artistic innovation. He made a radical break from the traditional folk art that had been the principal reference for his childhood drawings, embracing instead nonrepresentational art and the sharp geometry of the industrial landscape. This expressed his "profound inner transformation during the postwar chaos," according to Sibyl Moholy-Nagy. For the first time, artists of the period were appreciating the aesthetic qualities of engineering as "pure carriers" of functional requirements, which encouraged simplification, de-ornamentation, and a new perspective on the social and political relevance of art and design. Moholy deepened his fascination with the radical formalism of Cubist paintings and the introspective work of Expressionist artists such as Edvard Munch, Lajos Tihanyi, Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, and Franz Marc. But for his own work he looked to the industrial objects of the built environment, like ironworks, for inspiration, and he developed a new fascination in the design of common consumer objects such as saltshakers. The trauma of war and the confusion of its aftermath compelled him to seek a complete break from the prewar past, and in his collages, drawings, paintings, and woodcuts, he stripped his work down to the basics of color and form, simplifying everything to simple, geometrical shapes and colors. He attempted to remove himself by eliminating the perspective he had previously applied, and he embraced color not as a mere decorative element but as an emotional form that could express space.¹⁰

8 Botar (*Technical*, 56–57) suggests that, despite the evaporation of his inheritance, Moholy's well-to-do background may have made him something of an outsider in his communist circle. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy wrote that the landholding status of his family and his rank as an officer in the army would have raised suspicion. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 13.

9 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 63–68; Botar, *Technical*, 62; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 14–15.

10 Engelbrecht, "Association of Arts and Industries," 239–47; Dyja, *Third Coast*, 44; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 5–15; Kramer, "In Chicago"; "L. Moholy-Nagy," n.d. [ca. 1946], box 1, folder 17, Myron Kozman Papers, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections and University Archives, The University of Illinois at

The situation in Hungary deteriorated with the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and the invasion of the country by the Romanian army in August 1919, followed by rising anti-Semitism during the reactionary wave of “White Terror” and the rise to power of Miklós Horthy. Moholy and many of the left-wing activists and communists in his circle were gravely threatened by Horthy’s counterrevolutionary movement and were forced to flee Budapest. Moholy first returned to his childhood home of Szeged. The city had been Horthy’s base before his departure for Lake Balaton, and at the time Moholy arrived it was occupied by the French. Moholy would stay there through the fall, and he even managed to stage a gallery exhibition along with several artists from the *Ma* group.

By the middle of November, however, Moholy had fled the troubled and dangerous country for the relative security of Vienna. He joined a group of leftist Hungarian refugees that included his former roommate Tihanyi, whom he referred to as his “dear good man” and with whom he would spend much time and come to love “deeply.” Vienna became the new base from which Kassák’s *Ma*, banned in Hungary, would reappear in the spring of 1920 as an international art journal circulated among avant-garde exiles. Moholy would grow quite close to Kassák and his circle. Nevertheless, Moholy became increasingly annoyed by the internecine squabbles and ego conflicts that beset this group of exiled artists and intellectuals. He came to feel that he was “rotting” in the suffocating atmosphere dominated by embittered Hungarian expatriates, which made it impossible for him to pursue a truly progressive politics. He also found the “baroque pompousness” of the old imperial capital to be an oppressive atmosphere to reside in. By late winter he had resolved to leave the idled group of “depressed conformists” in Vienna. He felt himself pulled toward the modern art scene and advanced industrial technology that characterized Berlin in the early years of the Weimar Republic. He set out for this progressive mecca sometime in early March.¹¹

Moholy traveled from town to town in the German countryside, earning money for the next leg of his journey as a letterer and sign painter before arriving in the capital in the middle of March 1920. By the time he reached Berlin he had become quite ill with the Spanish flu. He collapsed in a hospital, where he was rescued by a medical student who nursed him back to health. He was also aided by a sympathetic Quaker couple, who rented a room for him in a boarding house. Shortly thereafter, a friend introduced Moholy to the woman whom he

Chicago [hereafter, “UIC”]; Moholy-Nagy, *New Vision*, 68–71; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 17; Moholy-Nagy, “Design Potentialities,” in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 81–90.

11 Wessely, “Exile’s Career,” 76–81; Botar, *Technical*, 62–86; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 83–97; Moholy-Nagy, *New Vision*, 72; Moholy-Nagy to Iván Hevesy, April 5, 1920, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 388.

would marry within a year, Lucia Schulz, a leftist photographer and member of the bohemian, communistic youth group *Freideutsche Jugend* (Free German Youth). The anarchic tendencies of Lucia's youth were beginning to give way to a more pragmatic streak, something which attracted her to the level-headed Moholy. They were both committed to socialism and pacifism, but Moholy had seen the downsides of absolute, doctrinaire communism in Hungary. He had become accustomed to performing a delicate dance with his leftwing comrades, endorsing their ideals but never fully joining their movement.

Lucia was from the beginning not only Moholy's romantic partner but also his close collaborator, editing his writings and carrying out photographic experiments with him. Photography as a medium would become fundamental to Moholy's evolving ideas on the potential of reproducible industrial design and art for the masses. He understood photography as an art form based in light which had the potential for further elaboration through movement in the medium of film. Lucia was an inspiration for Moholy, and her own later photographs of the Bauhaus designers in their workshops in Dessau would become iconographic documents of the period.

Crucially, Lucia's job at a publishing house was the main source of income for the couple, particularly before Moholy was able to establish himself as an artist in the avant-garde art scene in Berlin. Moholy had arrived in the unfamiliar city with a letter of recommendation from Kassák addressed to Herwarth Walden, who ran the important Galerie der Sturm. At first, Walden ignored this unknown Hungarian artist. Offended, Moholy dismissed Walden as a dilettante who affected the airs of a prince to exploit the toiling of poor artists merely to enrich himself. The found-object collage exhibition by the Dadaist Kurt Schwitters held at Walden's gallery at the time did not impress Moholy. At first, he did not see the point, though before long he would come to deeply appreciate the work of Schwitters. Despite being rebuffed by Walden, though, Moholy was ever the optimist, and he relied on his contacts in the Hungarian exile community to facilitate his integration into the Berlin art scene. József Nemes-Lampérth, for example, soon reintroduced Moholy to Walden, and Moholy would present works alongside those of Nemes-Lampérth at his first gallery exhibit in Berlin in October of 1920.¹²

Among the artworks Moholy presented at this exhibition were ten illustrations he had done for a Prague production of the play *Die Menschen* (The Peo-

12 Borchardt-Hume, "Two Bauhaus Histories," 67–72; Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, xv; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 15–17; Lucia Moholy, *Marginalien*, 51–55; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 18, 37; Botar, *Technical*, 86–100; Englebrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 97–108, 118–20, 129; Moholy-Nagy to Iván Hevesy, April 5, 1920, in Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 704–8.

ple) by the German Expressionist poet Walter Hasenclever, whom he had met through Lucia. Moholy found that he was able to combine his modernist formal sensibility and his leftist sympathies into set designs for theatrical productions. Among Moholy's friends in the Berlin theater scene was the communist dramatist Lajos Barta, whom Moholy had known in Budapest as the head of the Writers' Directorate during the Soviet Republic. Barta had arrived in Berlin around the same time as Moholy, and by the fall of 1920 he had become acquainted with Erwin Piscator, the leader of a proletarian theater project. Piscator trusted Barta as a fellow communist and commissioned him to write a one-act play. Through Barta, and perhaps also on the basis of his drawings for *Die Menschen*, Piscator hired Moholy to design the sets for his theater's production of *Prince Hagen*, an anti-capitalist play by the American Upton Sinclair, which premiered in December at a packed venue in a working-class neighborhood. Through these works Moholy was learning how to express progressive politics through the stark contrasts and abstract forms that would become a hallmark of the modernist movement. Moholy embraced the functional qualities and angular aesthetic of industrial civilization while rejecting its exploitative structure of capitalistic labor relations.¹³

Moholy married Lucia on January 18, 1921. Shortly thereafter he went to Vienna to help his friend Nemes-Lampérth, who was suffering through a psychiatric episode and needed assistance. During this time Moholy reintegrated himself into the community of exiled Hungarian communists and the circle around Kassák's *Ma* journal, and he made a portrait of his "comrade," the journalist Lipót Katz. When he returned home more than a month later, Moholy became the Berlin representative of *Ma*. He also began to publish his own political articles and essays in a variety of other avant-garde journals. Moholy was often allied with other Hungarian émigré artist-intellectuals in Berlin such as László Péri, Alfréd Kemény, and Ernő Kállai, whom he joined in signing a manifesto calling for artists to align with the proletariat in striving for a communist society. They rejected the isolation of the individual artist, stating their belief in a collective society and the collaboration of creative activities.

Moholy's leftist sympathies were combined in his art with a fascination for modern industry and architecture. Kállai wrote in *Ma* that Moholy had combined the principles of Dadaism and Cubism and converted the "kinetic system" of the modern machine into art. Moholy warned against the antitechnology path of the Luddites, encouraging workers to instead embrace the machine as a tool in their class struggle. The articles Moholy published in Hungarian for

13 Botar, *Technical*, 101–6; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 110–26.

the small audience of exiles tended to be more overtly political, explicitly calling for a radical art that would help to bring about a proletarian revolution. His German-language writings, in contrast, were toned down for the more widely-circulated and less stridently political, even “bourgeois,” periodicals such as Walden’s *Der Sturm* and also *De Stijl*, the Dutch journal edited by Theo van Doesburg. Yet even within his circle of communist exiles, Moholy had always been more of a fellow traveler than a hardliner, and he never formally joined the party. He always maintained the views of a utopian leftist, but he funneled his politics into his art and teaching. According to Anna Wessely, the writings of Moholy and his cohort expressed an ideal communist society that was the “vanishing point where the different perspectives of the various emigrant factions might peacefully merge.”¹⁴

Moholy came to believe that the distinction between art and non-art, and between the various forms of art, were no longer meaningful categories. Radical movements in art after the war, particularly Dadaism, would deliberately scramble these categories and produce new genres like photomontage and collage. Despite the skepticism and bewilderment that was his first response to the exhibition at Galerie der Sturm, Moholy would grow to appreciate the collage forms developed by Schwitters, and he would grow close to the Dadaists Hannah Höch and Raoul Hausmann. He also appreciated Dadaism’s playfulness and the element of occasionally blasphemous social criticism that was its primary motivation, particularly when it came to ridiculing expressions of reactionary German nationalism. He would incorporate some Dadaist innovations into his own work, such as the sardonic use of text and typography and the dissociated textual combinations that Schwitters was fond of. Moholy’s *F in Feld*, a gouache painting and collage from 1920, suggests an early Dadaist influence. But the nihilistic, sometimes cruel antics of the Dada crowd offended Moholy, who always remained an earnest, optimistic idealist who did not indulge much in irony. Because of his positive attitude and belief in social progress, Moholy was put off by the ultimate meanness and meaninglessness of Dada. What he did take from it was mostly its openness to formal experimentation and the playful mashing-up of genres through such things as collage. The influence of these styles on Moholy would be more clearly evident as early as the late winter

14 Wessely, “Exile’s Career,” 82; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 20–34; Ernő Kállai, “Moholy-Nagy,” *Ma 9* (1921): 119, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 412–13; “Position Statement of the Group MA in Vienna to the First Congress of Progressive Artists in Düsseldorf, Germany (1921),” in Kostelanetz, 186–87; Moholy Nagy, “Az új tartalom és az új forma problémájáról [On the problem of new content and new form],” *Akaszott Ember* 3–4 (1922): 3, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 287–88; Margolin, *Struggle*, 63–75; Botar, *Technical*, 156–58; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 126–28.

of 1921. His works from this period playfully combined wheels and gears to produce a kind of useless, aestheticized machinery.¹⁵

The constructed objects of the urban environment, and particularly such things as bridges, cranes, and the complex structures of railway stations, became a source of fascination for Moholy. “We need the machine,” Moholy wrote. “It is not the machine that is bad, but today’s social order.” Moholy’s belief in technology and the machine as the basis for a new socialism and communist way of life led him to become an adherent of the avant-garde movement known as Constructivism, a derivation of Russian Suprematism that was defined by the work of artists including El Lissitzky, Kazimir Malevich, and Alexander Rodchenko. A friend of Moholy’s from the cohort of exiled Hungarian Activists, the artist Béla Uitz, had traveled to the Soviet Union in 1921, where he attended the Third International in Moscow and visited Rodchenko at the industrial arts school where he was a professor. On a visit to Berlin in the fall, Uitz vigorously made the case for the merits of Constructivism to Moholy. Kemény had also gone to Moscow and returned to Berlin proselytizing the ideas of the Russian avant-garde. The Constructivist idea was also promoted in Berlin through van Doesburg’s *De Stijl*, which was both a journal and a movement. Constructivism sought a radical break from past art forms and embraced the idea of the artist as an engineer who could make art by experimenting with abstract forms. Along with Raoul Hausmann, Hans Arp, and Ivan Puni, Moholy signed onto a Constructivist manifesto published in *De Stijl* in late 1921, calling for “Elementarist Art” as a formal expression of the times. The abstract forms of Constructivism, which found beauty and formal interest in the rigid angularity of modern industry and the built environment, were meant to be part of a revolution in social relations. The function of the artist in society was to translate industrial technology into formal beauty, to imbue it with a positive spirit. In contrast to the nihilism and destructiveness of Dadaism, Constructivism denied irrationality and embraced the positive potential of industry. In this way it aligned with Moholy’s generally optimistic outlook and his interest in the potential of industrial design to produce order and balance in society.¹⁶

The relationship between art and industry, and the fruitful combination thereof, increasingly became a source of fascination and productive possibility

15 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 16–32; Moholy-Nagy, *New Vision*, 76–80; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 18–22; “El Lissitzky,” Moscow, letter to Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers, September 15, 1925, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 391, 434; Botar, *Technical*, 99–115; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 132.

16 Margolin, *Struggle*, 45–53; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 20–28, 32; Moholy Nagy, “Az új tartalom és az új forma problémájáról,” *Akasztott Ember* 3–4 (1922): 3, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 287–88; Botar, *Technical*, 120–58; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 142–59.

for Moholy. He became so self-effacing that he stopped signing his paintings, instead numbering them as though they were cars or other industrial products. “The collector’s desire for the unique can hardly be justified,” Moholy later wrote of the way he was reconceptualizing art in this period. “It hampers the cultural potential of mass consumption.” Following the ideal of making industrial art that could be adaptable for mass production, Moholy once produced original artworks by delivering precise instructions for a series of pictures to the foreman of an enamel factory. When the pictures arrived and matched precisely the specifications he had provided, he enthusiastically declared to Lucia that the procedure was so simple and efficient that he might have even ordered them over the telephone. The idea of ordering paintings over the telephone had the overtones of a kind of Dadaist prank, but for Moholy it served an ultimate, constructive purpose. Moholy would display these works in an exhibition at Der Sturm in 1924. The story of the “telephone pictures,” which Moholy would tell frequently over the years, became part of the Moholy mythology. For the artist himself it served a pedagogical interest insofar as it illustrated the potentially useful alliance of art and industry, in this case through the modern medium of the telephone. Lucia later recalled that Moholy’s “telescopic mind” may have altered the details of the story to fit this pedagogical and ideological purpose.¹⁷

Increasingly, Moholy began to see art as fundamentally political, not in its specific content but in its *form*. He did less and less representational painting as he hopefully saw abstract art as the visual counterpart to a “more purposeful, cooperative human society.” He also began to imagine experimental films that were “purely visual” in their explorations of the possibilities offered by the camera.¹⁸ Moholy also initiated experiments with the “photogram,” a cameraless and nonrepresentational form of photography that he believed he had invented, which would become one of his trademarks.¹⁹ Just as the photogram produced images directly on photosensitive paper, Moholy would propose the production of music by means of the direct incision of grooves on phono-

17 Lucia Moholy, *Marginalien*, 75–76; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 32; Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, 79; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 317–18.

18 Moholy-Nagy, “Dynamics of a Metropolis: A Film Sketch,” ca. 1921–22, in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 123; Botar, *Technical*, 105–6.

19 Moholy said that he did not know about Man Ray’s “Rayographs” when he first experimented with photograms. He said that he came to the method intuitively as part of his desire to remove the intermediary in producing photographic and sonic art. Moholy also said that he had invented the term “photogram” as a derivation of “telegram,” though he would learn later that it had been used previously in other contexts. See Moholy-Nagy to Beaumont Newhall, April 7, 1937, in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 57; see also Moholy to Gropius, December 16, 1935, Gropius Nachlass [hereafter, “GN”], Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, and reprinted in Appendix 4, Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 329–32.

graphic discs.²⁰ In these experiments Moholy increasingly came to see the means of artistic production as essential to the mediums themselves. What he wanted to express was not some intimate feeling but rather the lived experience of the modern industrial world and the insinuation of its own aesthetic forms on the human psyche.

These major trends in the avant-garde art of the industrial, which merged political allusions with formal abstractions, would be summarized in an anthology edited by Moholy and Kassák called *Buch neuer Künstler* (Book of New Artists), a project which they began in late 1921 but which would be published nearly a year later. The illustrations in the book juxtaposed works by modernist artists with images of airplanes, automobiles, and other machinery of modern industry. The book included works by Dutch artists from the *De Stijl* movement like Piet Mondrian and van Doesburg, as well as works by Russian Constructivists like El Lissitzky, and Rodchenko; Supremacists such as Malevich were also represented. Binding these various national avant-garde trends together in a single volume did much to articulate the contours of the international movement of Constructivist art. Moholy himself was to become one of the foremost representatives of this movement.²¹

Moholy's early years in Berlin, and his emerging identity as a Constructivist artist, culminated in his first major solo show in February 1922 at Walden's Galerie der Sturm. The exhibit, which would be the first of four for Moholy at the gallery, consisted of thirty-eight pieces in a variety of media: tempera and oil paintings, watercolors, drawings, and reliefs and sculptures from wood and metal. The pieces were executed in what the art historian Oliver A. I. Botar calls Moholy's "new post-mechano-Dada style" and "materials-based abstraction" that clearly marked him as a Constructivist. Art historian and Moholy biographer Lloyd C. Engelbrecht characterized the exhibit as "Constructivist work with a Dada aura." None of the works that Moholy included were portraits. Instead, he presented abstract sculptures with titles like *Holzplastik* (wood sculpture) and *Nickelplastik* (nickel construction), assemblage reliefs, and paintings that abstracted recognizable forms from the world of modern industry, like gears. El Lissitzky would observe that there was a "clear geometry" in Moholy's work, a phrase that indicated his nascent Constructivism. Indeed, through his gallery and journal, Walden was a key figure in the popularization of the "International" (as opposed to specifically Russian) Constructivist movement, even

20 Moholy-Nagy, "Neue Gestaltung in der Musik: Möglichkeiten des Grammophons [New Form in Music: Possibilities of the Phonograph]," *Der Sturm*, July 1923, no. 14, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 291.

21 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 141–48.

though some in that circle spurned him as a bourgeois influence, despite his leftist leanings. Some of the artists exhibited at Walden's gallery would go on to teach at the Bauhaus design school.

The February 1922 exhibit at Galerie der Sturm aroused "intense interest" in the art world. It was effusively praised by Adolf Behne, who advised his friend, the architect Walter Gropius, to meet Moholy. Through the exhibition and meeting, Gropius became deeply interested in the "character and direction" of Moholy's work. Gropius had founded the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar in 1919, and he was looking for a new teacher for the school's *Vorkurs* or foundation course. The course had been taught by Johannes Itten, whose inward-looking, Expressionist sensibilities were increasingly at odds with Gropius's interest in the movement called *die neue Sachlichkeit*, "the new objectivity." Gropius wanted to encourage cooperative, practical work in service of positive social ends, and Expressionism increasingly seemed to have a stifling, bourgeois air to it. Gropius also wanted to establish a relationship between the Bauhaus and the exciting new Constructivist groups and the movement's leading figures, such as El Lissitzky. But Moholy would turn out to be just what Gropius was looking for. Gropius was attracted to Moholy's socially informed Constructivism, open-mindedness, eagerness to experiment with a variety of materials and media, lack of academic bias, and his boundless enthusiasm.²²

The educational program of the Bauhaus was ideally suited for Moholy's talents and ambitions, and his lack of formal training may have been more of an advantage than a hindrance. Gropius had trained under the architect Peter Behrens, a prominent member of the Deutsche Werkbund, which was an association intended to unite art, industry, and handicraft with an emphasis on quality. Gropius would go on to set up his own architectural practice in 1910. But after the devastation of the war, Gropius envisioned a new kind of school that would unite all branches of design, encompass every form of industry, and culminate in architecture, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art) or *Einheitskunstwerk* (unified work of art) of design. In Weimar in April 1919, Gropius combined the academy of fine arts and the school of arts and crafts into a single "cosmic entity" that would bring together the speculative activities of the academy and the practical work of a vocational school. This unified school of design was the Bauhaus. "Bauhaus" was a word Gropius coined as a variation on *Bauhütte*; but Gropius's "building-house" relied on the expansive meaning of the verbal form

22 Engelbrecht, "Association," 249; Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, xv; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 30; Eckart von Sydow, "Hannover—Ausstellungsrevue," *Der Cicerone* (1923): 485, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 414; Botar, *Technical*, 92, 122–23, 130–1; Allen, *Romance*, 50; Forgács, *Bauhaus Idea*, 94; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 150–51; Moholy-Nagy, *New Vision*, 5; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus de Chicago*, 25–27.

bauen, which may be applied not only to the building of houses or structures but also to the building of character. Gropius was looking to create a totally new kind of design school, and so the invented term was appropriate. He wanted to embrace the world of modern industry and its constructive potential while moving away from the paralyzing concept of enslavement by the machine. The practical outcome would serve practical needs such as residential housing, but the project also served to reinforce the concept of a social collective.

For Gropius, *building* was an art that required coordinated teamwork; its “orchestral cooperation” symbolized “the cooperative organism we call society.” The Bauhaus workshops trained students and, at the same time, fulfilled a social responsibility as laboratories for the development of new designs and model-types for such things as furniture, utensils, textiles, and light fixtures. These were not fetish objects of a bourgeois elite but rather designs suitable for mass production. At the Bauhaus, the abstract ambitions of the artist and quotidian concerns of the craftsman were equally important. “Our ambition,” Gropius later recalled, “was to rouse the creative artist from his other-worldliness and to re-integrate him into the work-a-day world of realities.” The school cultivated enduring relationships with industrial concerns, which purchased licenses to produce Bauhaus designs and sponsored apprenticeships for promising students. Its goal was to combine the figure of the fine artist and the industrial craftsman into a single person: the total designer. Gropius wanted to change the relationship of the individual to the product of his work, and he wanted to remove artists from isolation in their studios and incorporate them into the practical world. The Bauhaus was more than a practical design school; it was also an idea. As the historian Éva Forgács has observed, its masters and students intended it to be a “model of a democratic creative community, providing by their own example that a better world does exist.”

Moholy’s February 1922 exhibition at Galerie der Sturm first piqued Gropius’s interest in Moholy, but it would be another year before Gropius formally offered the young artist a position as a teacher of the school’s important foundation course. In the meantime, Moholy continued to make a name for himself as an up-and-coming Constructivist artist. He exhibited works at an international art exhibition in Düsseldorf in May and July, and in September he participated in a congress of prominent Constructivists and Dadaists in Weimar and Jena, hosted by van Doesburg. During the course of the congress Moholy became increasingly annoyed by the antics of the Dada crowd, and at one point he clashed with van Doesburg on the issue of communism, which Moholy felt had a tendency to subordinate art when it threatened its strictly orthodox politics. However, Moholy, along with Kállai, Kemény, and Péri, did sign onto the aforemen-

tioned manifesto published in the Hungarian magazine *Egység* that condemned the aestheticism of “bourgeois” constructivists while calling for a constructive art springing from a communist society in alliance with the proletariat. By the winter of 1923 Moholy and Lucia were considering a change of scenery and even thinking of moving to America, where Moholy had the idea of making films.

But the direction of Moholy’s career would be determined around the time of his second exhibition at Galerie der Sturm in February 1923, the positive reviews of which may have reaffirmed Gropius’s interest in Moholy. In March, Gropius proposed to the Bauhaus faculty the prospect of Moholy as a replacement for Itten, who had announced his forthcoming resignation the previous October. Gropius had long been skeptical of Itten’s impractical methods, and he was frustrated by Itten’s disinterest in forging ties with industry. He believed that Moholy’s Constructivism would help move the school in a new, more economically integrated and less isolated direction. Moholy visited the Weimar campus and was offered a professorship, which he accepted. At the age of twenty-seven, Moholy began in April as a master in the foundation course and the metals workshop. Following Gropius’s direction, Moholy redesigned the foundation course toward the end of educating the “whole man.” Rather than structuring training for the narrow requirements of the specialist, Gropius and Moholy would educate the total designer whose labor was not diminished by the machine but rather enhanced by the new possibilities it presented. The designer him- or herself (the Bauhaus was coeducational) would be a sort of *Gesamtkunstwerk* in motion, able to deploy their wide-ranging skills to a great variety of projects. Gropius would later refer to Moholy as “the great stimulator,” and indeed he was Gropius’s most important colleague in building up the Bauhaus through to the time of their mutual departure from the school in 1928.²³

In many ways the Bauhaus was the perfect venue for Moholy to develop as an artist, educator, socialist, and industrial idealist. Its pedagogical aims were socially progressive, idealist, and yet enormously practical. Its program was meant to adapt the functions and forms of dwellings and commodities to modern industrial processes. Students there were recognized as members of a work-

23 Moholy-Nagy, *New Vision*, 5; Gropius, *New Architecture*, 33–51; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 34–35; Wingler, *The Bauhaus*, 6; Gropius, “Design and Industry,” address at Blackstone Hotel, April 17, 1950, box 4, folder 114, Institute of Design Collection [hereafter, “ID”], UIC; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 39; Gropius, “László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946),” eulogy at funeral of Moholy-Nagy, November, 1946, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 432; Forgács, *Bauhaus Idea*, 1–33, 96, 142–43; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 153–227; Ernő Kállai, Alfréd Kemény, László Moholy-Nagy, László Péri, “Nyilatkozat” [Manifesto], *Egység*, 1923. No. 4, p. 51, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 288–89; Gropius, “Idee und Aufbau des Staatlichen Bauhauses [The Idea and Realization of the State Bauhaus],” 7–17; Moholy-Nagy, “Das Bauhaus in Dessau,” *Qualität* 4, no. 5/6 (May/June 1925), in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 295–99.

ing community engaged in a collective project. The method of instruction was meant to awaken the creativity of the individual to the extent that he or she could contribute a unique element which could be integrated into the whole. Gropius believed that building required contributions from the members of the community that would come together to express the spirit of the whole. Artistic production was not some decadent luxury but rather an essential expression of a forward-looking community that was integrated in economic relations.

At first Moholy taught the foundation course with the assistance of Josef Albers; later, when it became a yearlong course, they taught it independently on alternate semesters. The idea was to introduce students to the variety of materials they would be working with, and it was the prerequisite for the various workshops in carpentry, metal, weaving, printing, and modeling. Students produced designs for all kinds of consumer goods and public and private structures, from small household objects to large apartment blocks, which would be suitable for mass production by industrial concerns. After three years of instruction, students could earn a journeyman's certificate that would qualify them to work as apprentices in industry. Beyond this, students could qualify for training in architecture, which was the final synthesis of all Bauhaus activity. The Bauhaus cooperated with industry from its inception, licensing models for mass production. Royalties from products that went into production would be put back into the Bauhaus and in some cases paid directly to students.

The idea of the Bauhaus as a collective educational enterprise was to produce practical, inexpensive products that were also attractive in design. Students were instructed not to dream of "utopian" objects but to always have in mind the means of mass production, even at the initial stages of conception. Marcel Breuer's designs for tubular furniture would become a classic example of this approach. The Bauhaus even achieved the production of an experimental house, which demonstrated the school's capacity for fruitful collaboration with industry on a large scale. The house, along with other products and models produced in the Bauhaus workshops, were presented for the public at a large exhibition in the summer of 1923. The large catalogue for the exhibition featured a cover designed by Herbert Bayer, while Moholy designed the title page, which incorporated the "New Typography" inspired by the *De Stijl* movement that would come to be associated with the typographical designer Jan Tschichold.²⁴ Included in the catalogue was an essay by Moholy, "Die neue Typog-

24 Although they would become close friends, Tschichold and Moholy were also, to some extent, rivals, and the matter of who was responsible for originating the "New Typography" was somewhat controversial. See Moholy to Gropius, December 16, 1935, GN, and reprinted in Appendix 4, Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 329–32.

graphie,” which described a radically streamlined approach to typography that would increasingly become identified with the Bauhaus. Even capital letters would not be spared from the Bauhaus impulse to remove all unnecessary ornament from typography, which was a new kind of art that was distinct from the old trade of typesetting.

Despite its successful collaborations with industry, the Bauhaus became increasingly unwelcome in Weimar, where craft traditions were firmly entrenched. The Bauhaus faced opposition from local artisans who felt that their livelihoods were threatened by the school’s radical new methods of design and production. Eventually, the Bauhaus would lose the support of the rightist municipal government of Weimar, and the conservative government of the state of Thuringia would move to shut down its activities. But many other more forward-looking German cities supported the Bauhaus. Offers to relocate came from such cities as Frankfurt, Munich, and Hamburg. Eventually, at the invitation of the mayor, Fritz Hesse, the Bauhaus would move to the industrial city of Dessau, which was centered in a coal-producing region. The city, with its “far-sighted” administration, was much more welcoming to the Bauhaus ideal—at least at first. Dessau’s applied arts school was merged with the Bauhaus in 1925, and city authorities permitted the construction of new buildings for the school, which included a central building and individual dwellings for professors and their families. The buildings were designed by Gropius and opened in December of 1926. They would become iconic symbols of the school and the Bauhaus movement. While in Weimar the workshops had been taught jointly by a design teacher and a “practical” instructor, in Dessau workshops would be led by a single master.

Over the next several years, the Bauhaus would become known internationally as being at the forefront of modern design. The school would be visited by the likes of Alfred H. Barr, who would become the founding director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Moholy, meanwhile, furthered his own status as a master of modernism, mingling with the leaders of the movement in Paris at the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts) in July 1925 and presenting works at the *Exposition Internationale l’Art d’Aujourd’hui* (International Exposition of the Art of Today) in November.²⁵

The Bauhaus also fulfilled its social function by publishing a series of textbooks on a variety of topics encompassing the theory and practice of design.

25 Moholy-Nagy, “Das Bauhaus in Dessau”; Gropius, “Idee und Aufbau des Staatlichen Bauhauses,” 7–17; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 199–284; Gropius, *New Architecture*, 63; Moholy-Nagy, “Some Principles of Typography,” 1928, Appendix 4 in Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 334–35.

These *Bauhausbücher* were edited by Gropius and Moholy, though Moholy took a much more active role in putting the books together. The two had originally planned a series of Bauhaus brochures, which would have more explicitly addressed political and social issues. These brochures would have been written by specialists in various fields, such as Rodchenko, who was asked to write about Constructivism. But in 1924 Moholy and Gropius worked out a book series, which would be fully illustrated and directly concerned with art and design. Despite their high quality, the books were meant to be mass-produced and widely distributed at a relatively low cost, keeping with the spirit of the Bauhaus. The revised plan for the book series called for a wide-ranging collection of some fifty volumes on topics covering the totality of the Bauhaus worldview, including such things as science and music. At one point, Moholy would even meet with Albert Einstein to discuss the possibility of his writing one of the books. In the end, only fourteen books would be published, each written by someone within the orbit of modern art, if not specifically associated with the Bauhaus. The books were produced with the assistance of Lucia, who had formal training and experience in proofreading, typographical rules, book printing, bookbinding, and publishing. Moholy designed the typography and layout for most of the books, including most of the covers and dust jackets. The lettering on the spines ran from top to bottom rather than bottom to top (permitting the titles to be read if the books were stacked face-up on a table or shelf), which was an innovation in Germany at the time. Artists such as Paul Klee, Piet Mondrian, and van Doesburg would contribute to the series of books, the first eight of which would appear in October 1925. Gropius wrote the book on architecture.

Along with coauthors Oskar Schlemmer and Farkas Molnár, Moholy contributed to the writing of a book on theater, *Die Bühne im Bauhaus*. Moholy would write two of the *Bauhausbücher* on his own. His first, *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* (Painting, Photography, Film), was the eighth volume in the series. In the book, Moholy posited that, because of the superior capacity for representation possible with photography and film, the future of painting was in pure color composition. Photography, in contrast, was a medium meant for the use of light as a “creative agent” that could employ “chiaroscuro in place of pigment.” Moholy realized this idea in his photographs, which abstracted natural and manmade phenomena, and especially in his camera-less “photograms,” which were pure experiments in light. Although Moholy was not the first to experiment with photograms, he may have been the first to apply a theoretical apparatus to their production. Moholy embraced photography as a medium that allowed for virtually unlimited machine production of artworks, which would

replace the domination of handmade artworks and their attendant market value. Moholy also imagined a “phototext” narrative that could replace words with “typophoto.” He envisioned films that would not simply reproduce staged theatrical action but embrace the radical potential of the medium for “optical action.” An early example of this was his “Dynamic of the Metropolis,” a manuscript of which was published in *Ma* in September 1924. Consistent with his views on the integration of art and society, he also called for a *Gesamtwerk*—not merely a *Gesamtkunstwerk*—which would encompass not just the arts but also the full range of life.²⁶

Over the course of his career at the Bauhaus, Moholy became a valued teacher, particularly in the foundation course. He would articulate the Bauhaus pedagogy in the fourteenth and last in the series of Bauhaus books, *Von Material zu Architektur* (From Material to Architecture), written in 1928 and published in 1929. Moholy also designed the cover, which would be later honored in an exhibition of foreign photography in New York. The book was translated into English in 1930 and retitled *The New Vision*, and it was also published in Japan in 1931. Moholy used his lectures as the basis for a detailed explication of his own teaching methods and the overall philosophy of Bauhaus education. At the heart of the Bauhaus instructional method was an effort to eliminate the distinction between fine and applied arts, and to remove the artist from solipsistic social isolation and position him or her in the practical world of industry. According to Bauhaus philosophy, there were no geniuses with innate gifts; instead, design was believed to be something that could be taught and learned. The foundation course was meant to introduce students to a broad range of creative possibilities, and Moholy attempted to revive in his adult students a child’s “sincerity of emotion, his truth of observation, his fantasy and his creativeness.” The Bauhaus created an intentional community of students who were educated in a cooperative environment and made to recognize their social responsibility. “The powers latent in each individual were welded into a free collective body,” Moholy wrote. As it made them aware of the social context, the foundation course also served to encourage students to explore, as designers, their fundamental relationship to all kinds of mediums and materials, from wood to metal to paper to light.

Technical progress was to be embraced, but the Bauhaus would seek to “humanize” the strictly material concerns of the manufacturer with an eye toward social responsibility. Although machine production had been used by capital-

26 Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 42–49; Moholy-Nagy to Alexander Rodchenko, December 18, 1923, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 392–93; Lucia Moholy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 84–86; Moholy-Nagy, *Painting, Photography, Film*; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 286–304, 352.

ists to oppress workers and “squeeze out profits” under a system of Taylorization, Moholy believed that it held the potential to serve the social good by satisfying basic mass requirements for consumer goods and housing. The goal of the education was to produce “man as a whole,” and the goal of the specialized workshops was to produce standardized, commonly usable types of goods. The Bauhaus had workshops in design, textiles, color, modeling, and “light,” which included photography, motion pictures, and advertising. Students and masters working in these workshops would design lighting fixtures, household appliances, and a new kind of typography. Although the products would become recognizable for their nonornamental look, they were not consciously designed to conform to any superficial style.

As the culmination of the Bauhaus education, architecture would require an additional four semesters through which students could earn a master’s degree. The Bauhaus is perhaps best known for its distinctive architecture, which featured flat roofs and light exterior walls that could accommodate very large windows because they were not load-bearing structures as in conventional architecture. The Bauhaus buildings tended to have these features in common, but in fact there was no such thing as a “Bauhaus Style” or even a preconceived form in any of its architecture, furniture, or other designs. Rather, Gropius had a philosophy of design that emphasized functionality, mass producibility, and a lack of ornament. The products of this design ethos tended to have certain aesthetic traits in common, but the overall look of the Bauhaus was the outward appearance of an ideological commitment to functional design, not something strived toward superficially as a formal ideal. To have a rigid aesthetic requirement, in fact, would have been contrary to the Bauhaus philosophy.²⁷

Under pressure from municipal authorities, however, the Bauhaus began to move away from its socialist idealism toward a more vocational direction that would increasingly alienate many of the masters. Moholy began to think about departing when Hannes Meyer, who had accused him of “romanticism,” was appointed to teach architecture courses. Moholy announced his decision to resign from the Bauhaus on January 17, 1928, complaining that the technical and strictly commercial aspects of design were beginning to overwhelm the unique Bauhaus pedagogy in the workshops. Moholy would remain until the end of the semester, though he had contemplated leaving immediately after his announcement when he was further admonished by Meyer. Gropius would also soon re-

27 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 37; Gropius, *New Architecture*, 60–65; Moholy-Nagy, *New Vision*, 6, 11–22; Moholy-Nagy, “Education and the Bauhaus,” *Focus* 2 (London, Winter, 1938), in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 163–70; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 390–1, 510.

sign, along with Herbert Bayer and Xanti Schawinsky, whom Moholy would later invite to join his “New Bauhaus” faculty in Chicago a decade later. The Bauhaus in Germany was eventually taken over by Meyer, and later by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe—Moholy’s future nemesis in Chicago—who would move the school to Berlin in 1932 before it was finally shuttered by the Nazis in 1933.²⁸

Moholy was an indefatigable optimist, and the end of the Bauhaus as an institution conforming to his pedagogical ideal in no way deflated his passion for using his talents to unite art, design, and industry. He and Lucia returned to Berlin in the summer of 1928 where they would restart the lives they had left for the Bauhaus. They moved into a house at Spichernstraße 20 that was equipped with a darkroom and studio. As their working relationship flourished their romantic relationship would begin to fade, however. Within about a year they would be living apart, though they would not formally divorce until several years later, and they would remain friends and colleagues.

Moholy quickly reintegrated himself into the art scene in Berlin. He lectured periodically, participated in the stimulating discourse on modern art in the avant-garde journals, and showed his works in exhibitions of both modern art and graphic and industrial design in Germany, Hungary, and around Europe. He encountered important figures in the world of modern art, such as Solomon Guggenheim and the curator of his collection, Hilla Rebay, whom he introduced to Piet Mondrian and Fernand Léger. With Gropius, Moholy put together an exhibition on inexpensive modernist housing principles and methods, *Bauen und Wohnen*, on a commission from the real-estate developer Adolf Sommerfeld. Moholy contributed pieces and designed display panels for a touring exhibition on the “new typography,” which opened in the Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Decorative Arts) in Berlin in the spring of 1929. He also helped to organize and install a “film and photo” (*FiFo*) exhibit sponsored by the Werkbund in Stuttgart around the same time. The *FiFo* exhibition, for which Moholy designed the prospectus, did much to establish Moholy’s reputation as a photographer who could work well with commercial concerns, particularly the advertising industry.

Through these exhibitions and other collaborative projects, Moholy would become better acquainted with the aforementioned typographic designer Jan Tschichold and the art historian Sigfried Giedion, who would become lifelong friends and colleagues. Moholy started to get involved in commercial projects, such as book jacket designs and advertisements for a chain of menswear stores. He also did graphic design work for an upscale fashion magazine, *die neue linie*

28 Allen, *Romance*, 53; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 276–77; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus de Chicago*, 30–31.

(the new line), for which he would design interior layouts as well as covers, using techniques such as photomontage and his photograms. Moholy also started his own studio in Charlottenburg, where he would work with a number of other ex-Bauhäusler such as Max Gebhard. Moholy also collaborated with his friends from the community of exiled Hungarian artists, such as György Kepes, who would develop a close working relationship with Moholy and would later join him in London and Chicago.

Moholy also began working as a stage designer, at first making sets for Berlin's Krolloper. Officially the Staatsoper am Platz der Republik, the Krolloper was one of the largest opera houses in Germany. Moholy first worked on stage sets for Jacques Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann* (*Hoffmanns Erzählungen*), which would premiere at the Krolloper in February of 1929 and go on to a successful run of sixty-one performances. Shortly after its debut, it was denounced by conservative Prussian politicians and some reactionary critics as part of the trend of "cultural Bolshevism," a term of abuse with anti-Semitic undertones that would later gain currency under the Nazi regime and lead to the final demise of the Bauhaus. Other critics, however, such as the Marxian cultural theorist Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, praised the performance and Moholy's stage designs in particular. Adorno was delighted by Moholy's innovative use of light, which, he wrote, went beyond the tricks and illusions of Expressionist theater to produce dramatic depth and volume to enliven the space of the theatrical stage. Moholy's unorthodox use of light in the production even included a projected film, one of Moholy's first, which was incorporated into the action of the third act.

The play was an early instance of Moholy's idea for the "total theater," a subject he had written an essay on that was reprinted in the playbill. Moholy called for an all-encompassing work that incorporated all the theatrical qualities of light, color, sound, movement, and form as functional elements on equal ground with the human performers. This complete work of art would become synthesized through the performance as a new "organism." Moholy would follow these principles for other productions he worked on for the Krolloper, including *Hin und Zurück* (Back and Forth) in 1930 and *Madama Butterfly* in 1931, which incorporated complicated lighting changes. During the run of *Madama Butterfly*, Moholy would meet his future wife and the mother of his two children, Sibyl Pietzsch, an actress, writer, journalist, editor—and occasional strip-tease artist—who was working as the head of the scenario office for Tobis, a major motion-picture company in Berlin. Sibyl's knowledge of filmmaking was a major draw for Moholy, who was becoming increasingly interested in working in the medium. By her own account, before their meeting Sibyl had

FIGURE 3
László Moholy-Nagy,
photographed by Hugo Erfurth,
ca. 1930.



been leading a “queer life,” but her growing devotion to Moholy would inspire her to leave behind her bohemian existence and somewhat cavalier attitude toward sexual relationships with men.

As mentioned above, Moholy had worked on stage designs for the leftist director Erwin Piscator when he first lived in Berlin. Upon his return, he would collaborate with him once again. Piscator’s theater received some funding from the wealthy heir Felix Weil, who was also the main backer of the Institut für Sozialforschung (Institute for Social Research) in Frankfurt, where Adorno was an associate. Moholy had many contacts who worked in Piscator’s theater, including his assistant Stefan Sebök and Ellen Frank, an actress who would become a close friend and likely love interest of Moholy’s. Moholy designed the dust jacket and binding of Piscator’s book, *Das Politische Theater*, and he may have taught stage design briefly for Piscator’s theater. Piscator also engaged him to design the stage sets for a new play that would premiere in September of 1929,

Der Kaufmann von Berlin, ein historisches Schauspiel aus der deutschen Inflation (The Merchant of Berlin, a Historical Play of the German Inflation). Walter Mehring's play told the story of an Eastern Jew who immigrated to Berlin during the period of hyperinflation in the 1920s. Through his stage design, Moholy realized Piscator's vision by spatially literalizing the relations of the classes. He created a moveable, tiered stage, the levels of which were connected by elevators and bridges to represent the proletariat, the middle class, and the upper class. Through these complicated constructions, combined with colored and filtered light projections, Moholy dramatized the social conditions and the relations of the classes and realized the concept of the "total theater."

Future-oriented as he was, Moholy also began to experiment more seriously with film. It was a medium that, he felt, artists did not comprehend as being fundamentally *light*. Too many filmmakers, he believed, blandly imitated the compositions of easel paintings and failed to embrace the possibilities of "mobile space projection."²⁹ Moholy completed a number of experimental short films in the late 1920s and early 1930s, such as a film on the old port in Marseille (*Impressionen vom alten Marseiller Hafen*), a documentary film about urban gypsies (*Großstadt Zigeuner*), and a film documenting the summer 1933 meeting of the architectural group Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne aboard a cruise ship in the Mediterranean.

Moholy's black-and-white films are striking for their stark contrasts of light and shadow, and for the composition within the frame, which often suggested Moholy's Constructivist outlook. Moholy's best-known avant-garde film, the silent, six-minute *Lichtspiel: Schwarz – Weiss – Grau* (Light Display: Black – White – Grey), which he completed in 1930, featured the movements of his most famous mobile sculpture, the *Lichtrequisit* (*Light-space Modulator*, as it is known in English), which he had been planning for years. The *Lichtrequisit* was a complicated machine made of perforated, polished metal and glass, which Moholy built with the assistance of a Hungarian engineer. He intended it to demonstrate various forms of light and "kinetic phenomena." Powered by an electric motor, it rotated on an axis and reflected light that was projected onto it, producing silhouettes, shadows, and refractions. With the help of the German company AEG (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft), the piece was adapted for exhibition as part of the Werkbund display in the German section at the Exposition de la Société des Artistes Décorateurs, which was held in the Grand Palais in Paris. Moholy believed that the "Light display" film featuring his cre-

29 Moholy-Nagy, "Problems of the Modern Film," *Cahiers d'Art* 7, no. 6–7 (1932), in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 131–38.

ation could help “build a sensory bridge to our capacity for creating abstract concepts.” He saw the socially progressive potential of film not in its value as overt propaganda, socialist or otherwise, but rather as a medium through which the “energies of the subconscious” might be activated to reveal the oppressiveness of modern capitalism.³⁰

By this time, however, Moholy had become disillusioned by the combative politics of Communists and Social Democrats, and he came to believe in the possibility of a creative revolution within the professions. Increasingly he became involved in commercial work, and in 1931 he became the artistic director for *Der Konfektionär*, a trade magazine for garment manufacturers and retailers that was supported by the Social Democrats. After the Nazis “Aryanized” the publication in the spring of 1933, however, the Jewish publisher, Ludwig Katz, was forced out of his position; he fled to Amsterdam in October, where he formed a new publishing company, Pallas Studio, as a subsidiary of the Haarlem publisher Spaarnestadt. Katz established a new publication, *International Textiles*, and he called on Moholy to design the layout of the inaugural issue, which appeared in December of 1933. Moholy began to work for long periods in Amsterdam as his future prospects in Germany became more and more grim.³¹

It became increasingly apparent that Nazism would destroy Moholy’s political and professional ambitions on the Continent. The Bauhaus had been denounced in the Nazi press as a breeding ground of Bolshevism. Following Hitler’s rise to power, it was effectively shut down in the spring of 1933 (it was formally dissolved later that summer by its director at the time, Mies), forcing its members to scatter around the world as refugees. Moholy—“a reliable fellow in all situations,” according to Schawinsky—was quick to aid the persecuted, offering them clothes, money, and shelter in his studio in Berlin. Moholy himself was identified as a subversive by the SS for his association with the Bauhaus and for his refusal to submit several of his paintings to the Nazi censors. By January of 1934 he declared the situation in the arts “devastating and sterile,” stifled by

30 Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 52–59; “In Answer to Your Interview,” *Little Review* (May 1929), in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 404; Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, xvi; Moholy-Nagy, “Lichtrequisit einer elektrischen Bühne [Light Prop for an Electric Stage],” *Die Form* 5, nos. 11–12 (1930), in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 310; Moholy-Nagy, “Az új film problémái [Problems of the Modern Film],” *Korunk* 10 (1930): 712–19, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 315; Moholy-Nagy, “Fényjáték-film [Light-Display Film],” *Korunk* 12 (1931): 866–67, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 316; Moholy-Nagy, “Festészet és fényképészet [Painting and Photography],” *Korunk* 2 (1932): 104–5, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 318–19; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 249, 263, 333–422, 439–79, 505–6; Moholy-Nagy, “A jövő színháza a teljes színház [Total Theater is the Theater of the Future],” *Dokumentum*, March 1927, pp. 6–7, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 300; Steckel, “László Moholy-Nagy 1895–1946,” 237–40; Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 4–10, 48; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy to Robert Wolff, July 16, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID.

31 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 395–423; Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 14–15.

Nazi propaganda that forced artists into an “insane solipsism.” He finally resolved to leave Germany, and he had London on his mind as a destination, where there was some possibility of reviving the Bauhaus with Gropius. In the meantime, his commercial work in Amsterdam would increasingly identify him as an artist who knew how to make modern design work for industry. The turn of events in Europe, however, depressed him, and he lamented the failure of efforts to build a planned economy on a “socialist basis,” which were inevitably met with the “conscious or instinctive resistance of the ruling caste of society.”³²

Conclusion

László Moholy-Nagy’s philosophy of art and industrial design embraced the potential of technology and the machine but at the same time opposed the radical individualism, wastefulness, frivolity, dehumanization, and alienation of modern capitalism. Moholy’s belief that art could be used in the service of industrial civilization was fundamentally socialist insofar as it privileged cooperation toward a common goal, the denial of individual genius, and the production of useful, beautiful, well-made objects available to ordinary workers through the means of mass production. Designers, in Moholy’s view, ought to be socially conscious and acutely aware of their obligation to meet basic human needs. The post-World War I Hungarian Activist movement that Moholy participated in encouraged him to view art not as a decadent privilege but as an important element in the struggle for social democracy. Increasingly, Moholy’s art became abstract and non-representational, inspired by the new forms of industrial society. When the Hungarian Soviet republic collapsed in 1919, Moholy fled to Vienna and eventually went to Berlin to pursue his artistic ambitions. He experimented with film and photography, which he appreciated for their mechanical reproducibility. He published articles in art and politics journals in which he expressed the compatibility of his artistic vision with his socialist commitment. His first major solo show at Galerie der Sturm in 1922 brought him to the attention of Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius, who would invite him to join the faculty of his design school and thus set the course for his career. Moholy was able to fulfill his vision of the union of art and industry at the Bauhaus, where he

32 Wingerler, *Bauhaus*, 9–11; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 85–138; Moholy-Nagy, “The Bauhaus Problem Today,” statement, Dessau, January 1928, box 7, folder 209, 1D; Moholy-Nagy to Herbert Read, January 24, 1934, in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 19; Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 61–62; Senter, “Moholy-Nagy: The Transitional Years,” 85–91; Moholy-Nagy to Fra. Kalivoda, ca. 1934, published in *Telehor* (Brno, 1936), trans. F.D. Klingender and P. Morton Shand, reprinted in Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, 37–41; Xanti Schawinsky to Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, August 25, 1948, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 410–11.

taught the foundation course and metal workshop and edited a series of books on the Bauhaus teaching methods, design principles, and social philosophy. He taught art and design not as a matter of individual genius and eccentricity, but as a socially useful collective project to make products suitable for mass production. Though he left the Bauhaus in 1928 when its emphasis shifted under a new director, the principles of its pedagogy remained with him. His social consciousness deepened as he experimented with using formal abstractions to represent social conditions in the theater. Identified as a subversive for his socialist views and association with the Bauhaus, Moholy would be forced to flee Nazi Germany in 1934.



EXILE AND UNDERGROUND

4

**The Art of Asking “Why?”:
Lazarsfeld in America**

Simultaneous with the April 1933 approval of Paul Lazarsfeld’s application for a travelling fellowship to the United States from the Rockefeller Foundation, which he had been awarded partly because anti-Semitism in Austria had frustrated his academic career there, the new Nazi Reich’s law for the “restoration” of the professional civil service went into effect. The new law began the forced exodus of university faculty members and *Privatdozenten* who were deemed inimical to the German state, and thus unsuitable for their positions, either by virtue of their “race” as Jews or “non-Aryans,” or for their political identity as social democrats, communists, or liberals. They did not only lose their positions, but they were also denied any possibility of earning a living in Germany. The Nazis’ aim, which was supported by many students, was to restore the “fundamental German character” of the universities. Yet in their determination to refashion German universities as centers of anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi indoctrination, they instantly destroyed the German tradition of *Lern- und Lehrfreiheit*, which had protected the freedom of academic inquiry.

More than a thousand academics would lose their jobs by the end of the year, and more than two thousand would be dismissed by the end of the 1930s, a trend that was intensified by the 1935 Nuremberg Laws and the 1938 pogroms. About one-third of all faculty positions were terminated altogether. Another ten thousand may be added to the number of dismissals when artists, writers, and professionals are included in the total. Jewish centers such as the University of Frankfurt—which had been founded by Jewish merchants before the First World War as a center of the new social sciences—were particularly hard hit. Relative to the half-million German refugees created by Nazi expulsions during the Reich, the number of intellectual émigrés was small, yet entire schools of

thought were eliminated, especially in the social sciences. About sixty percent of the dismissed academics emigrated, which immediately produced about 650 refugees in the first wave of 1933. Because of its extensive experience funding European researchers and arranging transatlantic scholarly exchanges, the Rockefeller Foundation was well positioned to become one of the most important institutions in placing the exiled scholars and funding their new positions at universities around the world.¹

It was in this context that Lazarsfeld arrived in New York on September 29, 1933, equipped with a letter of introduction from the assistant director of social sciences at the Rockefeller Foundation, noting his particular interest in “the contribution of psychology to social and economic research.” As one of the “bright young promising people” chosen by the Rockefeller Foundation, Lazarsfeld had the freedom to travel where he wished, with no specific duties or obligations.² By this time, Lazarsfeld’s study of the unemployed in the Austrian village of Marienthal had been introduced to the American audience in a report that appeared in *The Nation* magazine, and at least one major American publisher had expressed interest in publishing a translation of the study.³ Just before his departure, Lazarsfeld’s Vienna research center, the Österreichische Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle, had begun a study on the living conditions in the new *Gemeindebauten*, the great public housing projects of the Social Democratic municipal government. Lazarsfeld, as a representative of his

1 Ash and Söllner, “Introduction,” 1–7; Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile*, 11–15, 32–34; “University Disturbances, Dismissal of Professors by the Minister of Education” [translation from the German], *Frankfurter Zeitung*, May 12, 1933, box 172, folder 4, Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars Records [hereafter, “EC”], Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; Duggan and Drury, *Rescue of Science*, 3–4.

2 “LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, Rockefeller Foundation Records [hereafter, “RF”], Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York [hereafter, “RAC”]; Stacy May to Whom It May Concern, September 30, 1933, Blau Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, Paul F. Lazarsfeld Archiv, Institut für Soziologie, Universität Wien [hereafter, “PFL Vienna”]; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, Columbia Oral History [hereafter, “COH”], November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

3 McMurry, “When Men Eat Dogs,” 1933, 15–18; Charles [Lears?] to Lazarsfeld, December 20, 1933, Blau Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna. According to Lazarsfeld, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) produced a “typewritten” English translation in 1933. But by the time *Marienthal* had been canonized as a classic of social research in the 1960s, Lazarsfeld strongly resisted the publication of an English translation. He was somewhat embarrassed by its crude methodology, and he thought that it should be treated as a “historical document” and not a work with contemporary relevance. He pleaded in vain with his collaborators Marie Jahoda and Hans Zeisel not to publish an English translation. Lazarsfeld to Herman Lants, December 12, 1966, Blau Mappen 36, Correspondence, 1966–1968, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Jahoda, January 23, 1967, Blue Mappen 61, “Marienthal,” PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Zeisel, March 28, 1967, Blau Mappen 19, Bio-3, PFL Vienna.

research center, was looking to make contacts with "housing people" in the US in the hopes of arranging some financing for these studies.⁴

Lazarsfeld immediately sought the guidance of the recently-appointed Columbia University sociologist Robert Lynd, who would become a friend, colleague, and mentor to whom Lazarsfeld would later credit his entire "American existence" and his "whole professional career."⁵ Just as Lazarsfeld had been inspired by the methodology of the *Middletown* study carried out by Lynd and his wife, Helen, Lynd believed that the Marienthal study demonstrated Lazarsfeld's dedication to producing useful knowledge for the socialist movement.⁶ Lynd immediately arranged for Lazarsfeld to give a talk on the Marienthal study before a meeting of sociologists in New York, and he set up another talk that Lazarsfeld would give before a group of marketing consultants. Lynd also contacted a New York publisher about a manuscript on the psychology of marketing that Lazarsfeld was working on. After taking up residence in New York, Lazarsfeld spent several weeks that fall visiting the psychologist Gordon Allport, as well as other contacts in the Business School at Harvard, before he returned to Columbia.⁷

It was fortuitous that Lazarsfeld arrived in the United States at the dawn of the New Deal era, perhaps the most dramatic break from American political traditions since the Civil War, which ushered in an age of "unprecedented" economic justice, as historian Jefferson Cowie has put it.⁸ Seeing an ally in Lazarsfeld, Lynd helped his protégé to get involved working on various New Deal programs, a regime of progressive reform that was deeply attractive to the Social Democrat in Lazarsfeld. "You know as an old Viennese socialist," Lazarsfeld recalled, "I really felt completely at home with the New Deal—with the Roosevelt administration."⁹ The findings of the Marienthal study convinced Lazarsfeld

4 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, "Biography Tapes," PFL Vienna; "Anweisung für die Hausbesuche in den alten Wohnungen der Siedler [Instructions for the house visits in the old homes of the settlers]," ca. February 1934, Blaue Mappen 131 (WiFo-1), PFL Vienna; "Stadtrandsiedlung Leopoldau, Bericht I [Leopoldau Suburban Settlement, Report I]," February 5, 1934, Blaue Mappen 133 (WiFo-3), PFL Vienna.

5 Lazarsfeld, "Robert Staughton Lynd," 265–67; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

6 Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Personal Notes for a History of the Department of Sociology at Columbia," Blaue Mappen 3, (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna.

7 Frederic Thrasher to Lazarsfeld, November 14, 1933; Lynd to Lazarsfeld, November 15, 1933; Ordway Tead to Lazarsfeld, December 14, 1933; V.H. Pelz to Lynd, February 2, 1934; V.H. Pelz to Lazarsfeld, February 26, 1934, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; "LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish)," Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA.426, RF, RAC.

8 Cowie, *Great Exception*, 89.

9 Quoted in Morrison, "Transference of Experience," 192.

that the American policy of work relief was preferable to the European standard of the dole, which, he found, led to apathy and, eventually, a greater vulnerability to the regressive temptations of fascism.¹⁰ Lynd had been working on a study of the effects of unemployment on the middle and upper classes in Montclair, New Jersey, for which he had received a major grant. Lazarsfeld, whose work was already funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, wanted and expected to work with Lynd as his assistant, analyzing the hundreds of detailed questionnaires gathered for the project. However, Lynd, who was a strict moralist, refused, believing that employing Lazarsfeld in this way would amount to “exploitation.” As a result, Lynd’s Montclair questionnaires were never properly analyzed, according to Lazarsfeld.¹¹

Yet Lynd was determined to help Lazarsfeld make connections in the world of American social research. “During the first few years of my life in this country pretty much everything that I had I owed in some way to Lynd,” Lazarsfeld recalled. “There’s really hardly anything I don’t owe to him.” With the help of Lynd and through his reputation as an expert in the study of unemployment from the Marienthal study, Lazarsfeld was invited to work on research projects for the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in Washington, where he stayed from December of 1933 through February of 1934. Although he did not exactly think of himself as a sociologist at the time—he only reluctantly categorized himself as such when he came to the US—Lazarsfeld ingratiated himself with a group of empirical sociologists at FERA who analyzed census data and would later form the Sociological Research Organization.¹² The FERA sociologists were planning to undertake a comprehensive, nationwide study of the occupational characteristics of the unemployed, and that spring they would call on Lazarsfeld to undertake an “intensive inquiry” into the “more obscure” psychological and sociological effects of unemployment along the lines of his Marienthal study.¹³ Through this work, Lazarsfeld became increasingly invested in seeing the success of the New Deal project, and he embraced his emerging identity as a sociologist to contribute to its programs. Just as he had

10 Lazarsfeld, “Methodological Problems,” 231.

11 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 16, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

12 Lazarsfeld, “Episode,” 293–94; Lazarsfeld to John Egermeier, April 20, 1973, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 16, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna. A December 16, 1933 letter to Lynd from Hazel Stiebeling of the US Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Home Economics offers Lazarsfeld a job working on a study concerning family expenditures on food: box 2B, folder 10, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld Collection [hereafter, “PFL”], Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

13 “LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, RF, RAC.

undertaken surveys on the success of socialist propaganda in Austria, Lazarsfeld proposed to a federal government agency a study on public attitudes toward New Deal policies.¹⁴

Lazarsfeld and Lynd both used the experience of consumers as an empirical basis for social research, though Lazarsfeld appreciated any kind of market research as a venue to develop new methodologies, while Lynd saw consumer surveys mainly as a means to social reform and a way to champion progressive politics. Lynd had published a lengthy report on "The People as Consumers" for the President's Research Committee on Social Trends. Lynd's social-democratic impulses were evident in his discussion of consumer advocacy groups like Consumers' Research and the National Consumers' League, and in his call for a federal agency with the specific charge of defending the consumer's interest.¹⁵ That idea would come to fruition with the Consumers' Advisory Board (CAB) under Roosevelt's National Recovery Administration (NRA). As a Board member, Lynd arranged for Lazarsfeld to direct studies of consumer demand, buying habits, and the organization of consumer advocacy groups.¹⁶ In an article published in an Austrian journal in February of 1934, Lazarsfeld reported the results of his American studies and the NRA's innovative price-fixing market interventions and attempts to limit unfair competition, noting Lynd's work defending consumers' interests for the CAB. He observed the business community's opposition to an Office of Consumer Standards which, with the application of product grading, would threaten to nullify the years of work corporations had spent building up the public's appreciation of brand names through advertising. Lazarsfeld foreshadowed the Supreme Court's eventual dismantling of the NRA by observing American conservatives' anxiety over its "collectivist" or socialist elements, the lack of a truly socialist labor movement in the US, and the frustrating ideology of individualism, which tended to reduce consumer interests to those of a rational "economic man."¹⁷

Lynd preferred to see Lazarsfeld as an innovative researcher who was committed to using the empirical tools of sociology to advance progressive social reforms. Unlike Lazarsfeld, Lynd had grown up without political interest. Lazarsfeld believed that Lynd spent the rest of his life atoning for "not having seen the

14 Joseph Mayer to Lazarsfeld, February 23, 1934, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933-1946, PFL Vienna.

15 Lynd and Hanson, "The People as Consumers," 857-911.

16 Alexis Sommaripa to Dexter Keezer, January 16, 1934; Lynd to Mrs. J.J. Daniels, January 24, 1934; Ruth Boynton to Lazarsfeld, January 27, 1934; Dexter Keezer, to Alexis Sommaripa, January 29, 1934, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933-1946, PFL Vienna.

17 Lazarsfeld, "Die NRA und der Konsument," *Die Österreichische [Weltsicht?]* 26, no. 22, February 24, 1934, 479-82, Rote Mappen, "Vienna Marktforschungsstelle," PFL Vienna.

light earlier” through younger surrogates like Lazarsfeld himself. But Lazarsfeld’s work with the Böhlers’ Psychological Institute, his interest in human motivations and decision-making, and his experience directing market research at the Forschungsstelle in Vienna identified him as a new kind of social psychologist who was increasingly of great interest to American businessmen and marketing specialists for purely practical reasons. Lazarsfeld was drawn to such studies not because he had a particular interest in marketing problems, *per se*, but mainly because this field could provide him with the opportunity—and, importantly, the money—to practice his empirical methods of investigating choices and motivations. During the winter and spring of 1934, Lynd’s efforts to promote Lazarsfeld’s work elicited many invitations for speaking engagements and other inquiries from trade, professional, and academic associations, as well as from advocacy organizations, such as Consumers’ Research.¹⁸ Lazarsfeld once substituted for Lynd at a speaking engagement before a group of consumer researchers in Washington, presenting his Viennese market research studies to an “extremely interested” audience. He became increasingly “fashionable” in the world of consumer research, receiving invitation after invitation for speaking engagements, making himself known to important people in the world of public opinion polling such as George Gallup.¹⁹

In May of 1934, Lazarsfeld took a tour of the Midwest, visiting H.H. Maynard in the Department of Business Organization at Ohio State University. Lazarsfeld also visited David R. Craig, Director of the Research Bureau for Retail Training at the University of Pittsburgh, with whom he would establish a working relationship that would lead to further collaboration. In June, Lazarsfeld returned to New York, where he would periodically work with Lynd on empirical research projects on the effects of the Depression. But instead of undertaking to properly analyze the questionnaires from the Montclair study, Lazarsfeld assisted Lynd in giving a seminar on the material at Columbia.²⁰

By that time, it had become increasingly clear to Lazarsfeld that his prospects in the US were much better than they were in Vienna. In February, the Austrian civil war had ended with the fascist Engelbert Dollfuss outlawing the Social Democratic Party, which had been at the center of Lazarsfeld’s social, political, and professional life since his childhood. Like many prominent socialists, Lazarsfeld’s family members, including his parents and his wife, Marie Ja-

18 John Hader to Lazarsfeld, February 20, 1934, Blau Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 16, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

19 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

20 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 16, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

hoda, were imprisoned for their political activities. Lazarsfeld's parents had hidden Otto Bauer's wife Helena in their house for several days after her husband, the leader of the Social Democrats' revolt, had fled the country. A member of the Jahoda clan later helped her to escape, and Lazarsfeld's father spent three months in jail when police discovered the offense. Although Dollfuss was assassinated in a failed Nazi coup in July, his successor, Kurt von Schuschnigg, maintained the newly-established fascist regime and was hardly more tolerant. As a Jewish socialist, Lazarsfeld's already dim prospects for a career at the University grew unimaginable under these conditions. The fate of the Forschungsstelle, which Lazarsfeld's friend and colleague Hans Zeisel had been temporarily overseeing, seemed uncertain. Lazarsfeld decided that he did not want to go back to Austria. Given the circumstances, officers of the Rockefeller Foundation were, in Lazarsfeld's view, "very decent" and agreed to renew his fellowship for another year, beginning September 30, 1934. At the time of his application renewal, Lazarsfeld had envisioned spending part of the second half of his fellowship in Europe, but he would soon become so busily involved in the world of American market research studies and government unemployment surveys that he would end up staying in the US for the duration.²¹

As an "Austrian with a method," Lazarsfeld began to gain confidence in the novelty and usefulness of his research techniques. He spent about a month during the summer of 1934 working with Craig in Pittsburgh, using interview techniques he had developed at the Vienna Forschungsstelle. They collaborated on a study on the use of rayon fabrics by eight hundred Pittsburgh women, finding, among other things, that women of a higher "intellectual level" were more likely to reject rayon. Lazarsfeld found the collaboration with Craig productive, and he would later propose expanding the investigation to the problems of department stores, but he quickly moved on in his tour of American academic psychology and social research. He spent a considerable amount of time working with and studying under Luther Fry at the University of Rochester and J.G. Jenkins in the Department of Psychology at Cornell University, with whom he would also spend some time observing business operations at General Electric in Schenectady, New York. Although there was, at the time, only one proper sociological research center in the United States—Howard W. Odum's Institute for

21 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 276; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Daniel Bell, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, February 9, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; "LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish)," Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, RF, RAC; Leo Gold to Lazarsfeld, January 5, 1934, Rote Mappen, "Vienna Marktforschungsstelle," PFL Vienna.

Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina—Lazarsfeld did not visit it because, firstly, he still did not properly view himself as a sociologist at the time (he identified more as a “social psychologist”), and, secondly, he was “not very much interested in the racial problem,” which was the main object of study there. “So race relations, the racial issues, didn’t make any sense to me, coming from Europe, so I never went to North Carolina,” Lazarsfeld confessed. “I would go where they would make studies on unemployment, on market research, adolescents.”²²

One of the places Lazarsfeld visited was the Psychological Corporation (PSC) in New York. In 1921, a group of applied psychologists led by James McKee Cattell—who had obtained his doctoral degree under Wilhelm Wundt in Leipzig—launched the consulting firm PSC in an effort to make their services available beyond the limited sphere of academia. The advertising business was still struggling to shed its nineteenth-century Barnum image and establish itself as a serious profession. Up to then, market research had consisted mostly of tabulating brand preferences, indexing media coverage, and calculating the “buying power” in particular regions, but PSC was one of the first American consulting firms to employ trained psychologists to consider the subjective experience of consumers as they were relevant to marketing problems. By the early 1930s, the company was directed by Henry C. Link, a former student of Walter Dill Scott, who developed the Psychological Barometer or “Link Audit,” a semiannual household survey on consumer products and brands. The Vienna Forschungsstelle would even cooperate with the PSC on the publication of an Austrian Sales Barometer in 1935.²³ At least at first glance, the work of the PSC appeared to Lazarsfeld to be interesting and innovative. Among Lazarsfeld’s colleagues there was Rensis Likert, who became so impressed by the work of the Forschungsstelle that he would translate one of its studies on tea consumption.²⁴ Likert, who would go on to found the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, was Lazarsfeld’s only ally in the “anti-behaviorist stand” he would take at the PSC.²⁵

22 Craig and Lazarsfeld, “Some Measurements of the Acceptance and Rejection of Rayon by Pittsburgh Women: An Experimental Study of 800 Consumers,” *American Society for Testing Materials*, New York, October 18, 1934, Rote Mappen, T/UI, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Craig, January 18, 1935, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; “LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, RF, RAC; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

23 Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 8–9, 69–76; Friedman, *Birth of a Salesman*, 236; Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul*, 247; Fleck and Stehr, “Introduction,” 6–8.

24 Lazarsfeld to John Popplestone, October 11, 1966, Blaue Mappen 19, Bio-3, PFL Vienna.

25 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

While working at the PSC, Lazarsfeld proposed a number of projects that would employ his method of motivational research, such as a study on the psychological aspects of people involved in stock market activities. He was suspicious of economic thinking which, he believed, did not take psychology into account or consider the social status and background of important economic actors. He wanted to conduct a study based on "several thousand" qualitative interviews that were designed to reveal unconscious motivations. Yet Lazarsfeld's keen interest in decision-making and motivation ran contrary to the behaviorist psychology that had held sway in the US since the 1920s. Behaviorism considered obscure and unmeasurable mental processes to be unscientific, privileging instead the analysis of observable phenomena and stimulus-response mechanisms as a means of understanding human action.²⁶ Although the director of the Psychological Corporation would later enlist the Vienna Forschungsstelle as its European liaison, Lazarsfeld's unorthodox methods were generally met with resistance by his behaviorist supervisor.²⁷

Lazarsfeld soon grew frustrated with the "radical behaviorism" and poor management of the PSC's director, Link, who objected to Lazarsfeld's efforts to develop more sophisticated questionnaires that were designed to avoid the problem of "rationalization."²⁸ Lazarsfeld preferred the technique of the "open-ended" interview: rather than the rote "yes-no" type of questioning preferred by the PSC president, the field researcher conducting an open-ended interview would try to elicit past experiences that might reveal basic psychological drives.²⁹

26 Lazarsfeld, "Proposal for a Study of the Psychological Aspects of Stock Market Activities," Psychological Corporation, ca. 1933/34; "TENTATIVE OUTLINE, Indicating nature of data to be obtained by carefully trained interviewers concerning Interviewees (Iee) and their dealings in the stock market," ca. 1933/34, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933-1946, PFL Vienna; Cohen-Cole, *Open Mind*, 5-6, 142-46.

27 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 295; [Paul S. Achilles?] Managing Director, Psychological Corporation, draft letter to Dr. Chalkey, ca. 1935, Rote Mappen, Biography I, PFL Vienna.

28 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 295; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, April 19, 1975, Rote Mappen, "Biography Tapes," PFL Vienna. One of Lazarsfeld's studies for the Milk Research Council acknowledged the problem of respondents' rationalizations—which were evident from the contradictory conclusions of the study—but it fell short in developing a method to probe their unconscious motivations. The study was based on 2,000 interviews and questionnaires, the results of which were categorized with punch-cards and tabulated by a machine that sorted the data into categories defined by economic class and sex. The study found a widespread belief in the nourishing quality of milk, which served as a sort of all-purpose health aid that could help consumers to both put on weight or slenderize; induce sleep or combat fatigue; and soothe the nerves or act as a stimulant. "A Study of the Psychological Factors Influencing the Drinking of Plain Milk by Adults," made for the Milk Research Council, Inc. by the Psychological Corporation of New York, Special Counsel: Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Ph.D., Psychological Department, University of Vienna (Rockefeller Fellow in U.S.A., 1934-35), January 29, 1935, Folder Foo50-1, Box 1, Bureau of Applied Social Research Archive [hereafter, "BASR"], Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

29 Lazarsfeld, "The Controversy over Detailed Interviews—An Offer for Negotiation," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Spring 1944, 38-60.

Lazarsfeld became disillusioned by the banal, “very stupid” surveys that the PSC conducted in the manner of commercial marketing agencies that had no academic incentive to refine their research methods. He believed that his methods were technically much more advanced than those practiced by the Americans. Lazarsfeld chafed at the American behaviorist methodology that took “objective” data, such as purchasing behavior, as worthy of analysis, but largely ignored “subjective” data, meaning mainly consumers’ conscious or unconscious *motives* for their purchasing behavior. Lazarsfeld did not deny the problem of “false motive,” but he believed that it could be avoided with the proper questioning technique used in combination with objective data.³⁰

Lazarsfeld soon had an opportunity to clearly articulate his techniques for an American audience. In October of 1934, he published an article in *The Harvard Business Review* on “The Psychological Aspect of Market Research,” in which he explained his method of using the statistical analysis of data drawn from interviews to develop a generic profile of the psychological motivations of the typical buyer of a particular commodity. Lazarsfeld described the “accent” of motivation, which included three stages: the *attributes* of the commodity purchased, including its color, packaging, etc.; the *influences* coming from the outside world, including advertisements, shopping environments, and sales pitches; and, finally, the *impulses* experienced by the consumer-respondent, which were his or her personal attitudes and predilections. This matrix of affective forces combined to produce the motivation for a decision or behavior. The job of the researcher was to isolate these factors through a directed interview, and then carefully tabulate and interpret the results.³¹ The article received much attention in commercial market research circles, giving Lazarsfeld many professional contacts which he would later exploit to find jobs for his colleagues from the Forschungsstelle when they began to arrive in America as refugees after Hitler’s *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938.³² By November of 1934, only one year after his arrival in the States, Lazarsfeld had caused such a stir that the

30 Lazarsfeld, “Principles of Sociography” [unpublished manuscript], ca. 1934, T/UI (1 bis 2-3b), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, December 8, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

31 Lazarsfeld, “Psychological Aspect,” 54–71. In a footnote on page 69, Lazarsfeld expressed his gratitude to Charlotte and Karl Bühler, the former for her psychological insight into human development, the latter for his theory of language. Lazarsfeld had been eager to explain his empirical study of action to an academic audience, but he said that “only market research people were interested.” Lazarsfeld, “Working with Mer-ton,” 47.

32 Lazarsfeld, “Austrian Sociologists in the United States,” speech, Austrian Institute in New York, ca. 1972, Rote Mappen, No Dates III, PFL Vienna. Among Lazarsfeld’s émigré colleagues was the motivational analyst Ernest Dichter, who would later sensationalize motivation research in postwar America.

“portly, bespectacled” psychologist from Vienna was flatteringly profiled in the marketing periodical *Tide* as a guru to marketers and a master analyst of hidden consumer “motives.”³³

In December, Lazarsfeld was summoned by the sociologist George A. Lundberg, the “great prophet of quantification,” to work once again on the unemployment project for FERA.³⁴ In January of 1935, Lazarsfeld went to the University of Chicago, where FERA had established and funded a “special tabulation outfit” for Lazarsfeld to direct. Lazarsfeld would work on the project through the spring. As a visiting fellow for the Social Science Research Council, Lazarsfeld undertook an analysis of data that was compiled in FERA’s Occupational Characteristics Survey, which covered some 150,000 relief cases. He attempted to apply a secondary “psychological” analysis to interpret the data. Lazarsfeld’s system of cross-tabulation led him to a finding that his American fellows, working with the same data, had missed. They saw the correlation between education and employment and had determined that lower education led to higher unemployment, but Lazarsfeld pointed out that younger people were generally more educated, and age, not education, was the determining factor in rates of unemployment. Age was the key element in prolonging the *duration* of unemployment because older workers had virtually no chance of being re-hired. Lazarsfeld’s analysis was later published by the Works Progress Administration (WPA).³⁵

Lazarsfeld’s confidence in the superiority of his methods over those of the disinterested behaviorists and the rote questionnaire tabulators would be publicized in the summer of 1935 with the publication of his article, “The Art of Asking WHY in Marketing Research” in *National Marketing Review*.³⁶ Lazarsfeld used the opportunity to disparage market researchers’ exclusive use of “ste-

33 “Doctor in America,” 58–62.

34 Lazarsfeld respected Lundberg’s talents in quantitative sociology, but he lamented the “very right-wing” turn he would take later as a member of America First. According to Lazarsfeld, Lundberg rationalized anti-Semitism as a kind of open-mindedness, characterizing his position thusly: “You should be objective. What’s wrong with the anti-Semites? Why don’t you study what’s wrong with Jews?” Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 16, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

35 Lazarsfeld to Howard Myers, December 20, 1935, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “Factors Influencing Length of Unemployment as Found in the Occupational Characteristics Survey: Findings of a Special Analysis,” Works Progress Administration, Division of Social Research (Washington), April 1936; Lazarsfeld, “Age and Other Modifying Factors in Unemployment,” 1936, Rote Mappen, T/U II, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

36 Lazarsfeld, “Art of Asking WHY,” 26–38. The scholar David Jenemann describes Lazarsfeld’s method as the stabilization of “volatile and fickle subjects” as “consistent and coherent objects along standardized axes.” Jenemann, *Adorno*, 5.

reotyped” questionnaires, which were unreliable, he argued, because respondents, whose knowledge of their own motivations may be rather “hazy,” inevitably interpreted them in peculiar and idiosyncratic ways. The only way to determine consumers’ motivations in a consistent and usable way was through the qualitative interview technique, which came to be known as the “depth” interview. Interviewers recorded their subjects’ responses verbatim and later classified, tabulated, compared, and quantified their data.

Because his fellowship would be ending in the fall and he needed to return to Austria to acquire a visa, Lazarsfeld arranged a trip to Europe in July of 1935. He had planned to finish the remainder of the Rockefeller Fellowship in Europe before returning to the United States. Lazarsfeld had a daughter with Marie Jahoda; their marriage, however, had by this time dissolved. Jahoda would remain in Vienna, where she had taken over the directorship of the Forschungsstelle.³⁷ Herta Herzog, an associate in market research at the Forschungsstelle who would become Lazarsfeld’s second wife, planned to join him on his return to the US.³⁸ Lazarsfeld had a position lined up with David Craig at the University of Pittsburgh that earned him a visa, but when that job ultimately fell through, Lazarsfeld decided to emigrate anyway, despite the somewhat shaky validity of his papers. “I thus arrived in New York as the classic immigrant, penniless,” recalled Lazarsfeld, a bit facetiously.³⁹

In fact, Lazarsfeld had already established so many contacts that he had no trouble at all finding a job, and he had even kept the room he was renting at 113th Street and Broadway in New York. Lynd very quickly found him a position at the University of Newark.⁴⁰ Lazarsfeld would serve as the supervisor of

37 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, “Biography Tapes,” PFL Vienna; “LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, RF, RAC; Sills, “Paul F. Lazarsfeld,” 251–82. During the winter and spring of 1935, Charlotte Bühler was also touring the United States as a Rockefeller Fellow and visiting lecturer. “BÜHLER, Prof. Charlotte,” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, RF, RAC.

38 René Greiner to Lazarsfeld, November 13, 1935, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; Personnel Security Questionnaire [form DD-48] completed by Lazarsfeld, February 23, 1951, Rote Mappen, Biography I, PFL Vienna.

39 Lazarsfeld, “An Episode,” 304; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, “Biography Tapes,” PFL Vienna.

40 As much as he appreciated Lynd’s help, Lazarsfeld would also note the “social anti-Semitism” that his mentor participated in. “Lynd always was, without knowing it, an anti-Semite, there is not the slightest doubt,” Lazarsfeld said. In scouting out job opportunities for Lazarsfeld, Lynd, in a letter to a prospective employer, gave Lazarsfeld the “compliment” of noting that he did not “look very Jewish.” In a reply, the potential employer noted that, indeed, he had heard very good things about Lazarsfeld but that, on the contrary, he did clearly show the marks of his “race.” (In one telling of this anecdote, it was Edward Day in the Social Science division of the Rockefeller Foundation who said Lazarsfeld “shows all the signs of his race.”) While La-

students' analyses of thousands of questionnaires that had been filled out by unemployed youth for the National Youth Administration (NYA), a New Deal program. Not unlike the unemployed socialist students who had worked at his Forschungsstelle in Vienna, Lazarsfeld recalled that these students "transferred an inclination for common action into an acceptance of academic teamwork." The students' work studying the problem of unemployment was itself a form of work relief for the poor students, whom Lazarsfeld kept busy analyzing data for dozens of studies on a variety of topics. "The supervisor was supposed to invent work...because that was the problem," Lazarsfeld recalled. The students worked as data analysts; they were the human computers for Lazarsfeld's studies. Lazarsfeld envisioned building up a research center at Newark along the lines of the Forschungsstelle, and he had a willing partner in the president of the university, Frank Kingdon. "I convinced...Kingdon...that if he wanted to make that a great university he had to have a research center," Lazarsfeld remembered.⁴¹

As he had done at his Vienna research center, Lazarsfeld would use contracts with corporations, government entities, and private organizations to fund the activities of the Newark Research Center, which was informally organized in October of 1935 and officially established on May 21, 1936. The field studies done by the Center had the purpose of training students, giving them an employment opportunity, developing research methods, publishing studies, helping the city of Newark to understand its social and political problems, acting as a consulting service for local businesses, and, finally, raising more funds for the "perpetuation and enlargement" of the Center's activities. Student workers—of whom there were about sixteen in addition to thirty-one NYA relief students—would not only be given employment for the time being but also training that could lead to jobs later on. Funding came from many sources, including the National Research Project of the WPA, but for the first several months of its existence, the principal financial support for the Research Center came from La-

zarsfeld was on his travelling fellowship, he was typically introduced not as being Austrian but as being "Viennese," which he felt to be a big advantage in terms of intellectual impressions, and sometimes his general Viennese foreignness concealed his Jewishness. Yet Lazarsfeld actually felt more comfortable in American business circles than in academic circles, where he believed that the latent anti-Semitism was much more marked and that he was more readily identified as being Jewish. That kind of "social anti-Semitism" did not exist as much in business circles, where he "propagandized" the use of social science in market research, simply because Jewishness was virtually non-existent as a social category in those spaces. "I felt completely unembarrassed in these business circles and never quite at ease in academic," he recalled, partly because most of those businessmen "had never seen a Jew." Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 300; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

41 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November, 29 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Bernard Bailyn, February 7, 1968, Rote Mappen, "miscelle scientific II," PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

zarsfeld's old allies in social research, Max Horkheimer's Institute of Social Research, which was by that time exiled in New York.⁴²

The Nazis had shut down the Frankfurt-based Institut für Sozialforschung in March of 1933, and after some time spent in exile in Geneva, Horkheimer's group would end up relocating to New York in May of 1934. At its new quarters near the Columbia University campus at 429 West 117th Street, it would be rechristened as the "International Institute of Social Research." Just as he had worked to integrate Lazarsfeld into the American academic scene, Lynd would be a key figure in orchestrating the transatlantic relocation of Horkheimer's Institute to Columbia. The historian Thomas Wheatland has pointed out that the interpersonal politics of the sociology department at Columbia would have given Lynd a strong incentive to endorse the incorporation of the Institute, the members of which he would have viewed as intellectual allies. Indeed, the Institute would specifically thank Lynd, along with Robert MacIver, chair of the sociology department, and especially Nicholas Murray Butler, president of the university, for his "expression of scientific solidarity" in offering a building in Morningside Heights. When Horkheimer received the disappointing news that Lazarsfeld might be heading to Pittsburgh, he would note that their "mutual and respected friend, Professor Lynd" was aiming to reestablish their collaboration in New York. Lazarsfeld never did go to Pittsburgh, and when he got the Newark Research Center up and running, he would welcome the financial support that the Institute might offer, and their collaboration continued.

Lazarsfeld's Vienna Forschungsstelle had done empirical studies for the *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (Studies on Authority and the Family), which would ultimately conclude that the German working class had been vulnerable to Hitler and Nazism because the patriarchal German family structure fostered submission to authority. The project had been suspended when the Institut was shut down by the Nazis, but work would resume in Newark in 1935. Lazarsfeld analyzed inquiries that had been carried out by Käthe Leichter in Switzerland, and *Studien über Autorität und Familie* would eventually be published by a Paris publishing house in 1936. The Institute was generally happy to delegate much of its quantitative analysis to Lazarsfeld, even if, in the view of member Erich Fromm at least, he did not have a "sufficiently good grasp" of the Institute's "theoretical points of view." Nevertheless, Lazarsfeld did in some sense help to ease the Institute's transition into the American social research scene. For the purpose of demonstrating its interest in its host country, the Institute also conceived of a study of the authority structure of American fami-

42 Lazarsfeld to Frank Kingdon, ca. 1937, Rote Mappen, about bureau I, PFL Vienna.

lies, which began as the dissertation project of the sociologist Mirra Komarovsky and would be carried out under Lazarsfeld's supervision. The study was based on interviews with fifty-nine families in Newark, which were coded and put through the typological classifications typical of the Forschungsstelle's analyses. The study, eventually published by the Institute in 1940 as *The Unemployed Man and His Family*, with an introduction by Lazarsfeld, would find that the condition of unemployment diminished the authority of the father within the family.

Horkheimer would thank Lazarsfeld for the "great speed" with which he had carried out his work for the Institute. Lazarsfeld was often listed as a member of the Institute of Social Research on its letterhead from the period, and the Newark Research Center would collaborate with Horkheimer and Fromm on research studies related to unemployment and working-class culture, some of which would never be published. Several of the Institute's permanent members, including Leo Lowenthal and Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, would later work on projects for Lazarsfeld's American research centers in their various incarnations. Another benefit of the collaboration with the Horkheimer Institute, at least in the view of historian Rolf Wiggershaus, was that it gave Lazarsfeld "the feeling that he had not entirely betrayed his Austrian Marxist past."⁴³

The many commercial contacts Lazarsfeld had established during his various visits, lectures, and speeches during the Rockefeller Fellowship proved to be very valuable for getting contracts for the Research Center.⁴⁴ The Newark Research Center's funding scheme relied on outside contracts to cover half of Lazarsfeld's salary and the Center's expenses, while the University provided space, a portion of the secretary's salary, and telephones. Among the contracts taken by the Center was a study sponsored by the WPA of Millville, New Jersey,

43 Lazarsfeld, "Sociology" in *The Human Sciences*, n.d., Rote Mappen, Papers Va, PFL Vienna; Michael Polak, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld: A Socio-Intellectual Biography," Program on Science, Technology and Society, Cornell University, n.d., Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Leichter, "Erhebung bei Jugendlichen über Autorität und Familie [Survey of Youth on Authority and the Family]," 353–415; Wheatland, *Frankfurt School in Exile*, 29–30, 39–60; Jay, *Dialectical Imagination*, 39; "International Institute of Social Research: A Report on Its History, Aims and Activities, 1933–1938," n.d., box 1, folder 19, Alfred E. Cohn Papers, RAC; "International Institute of Social Research: A Short Description of Its History and Aims," 1935, box 142, folder 35, Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars Records [hereafter, "EC"], Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; "List of Foreign Scholars holding Positions in the United States, excluding Grantees of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars," May 4, 1939, box 142, folder 35, EC; Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld, "Psychological Effects of Unemployment," 358–90; Horkheimer, "Preface," in Komarovsky, *Unemployed Man*; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Wiggershaus, *Frankfurt School*, 165–77.

44 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

which, like Marienthal, had suffered from chronic unemployment. The study was commissioned by the Social Science Research Council and the University of Chicago sociologist Samuel Stouffer, who directed a series of studies looking at the effects of the Depression on the family.⁴⁵ Another Research Center study found that “personal contacts” was the most important factor in finding a job.⁴⁶ The Center also did consumer studies on topics such as youth milk consumption, finding that milk drinking was a habit that needed to be conditioned.⁴⁷ The workers provided by the NYA, under the supervision of an official from the Federal Writers Project, also worked on a study on the class, racial, and age stratification of magazine readership.⁴⁸ Among the corporate jobs done at the Center were studies on consumers’ perception of fabrics for the Du Pont corporation and the use of home movies for the Eastman Kodak company.⁴⁹

While he directed the Research Center and occasionally taught seminars at the University of Newark, Lazarsfeld also continued his own writing on the methods of market research.⁵⁰ He was commissioned to write four chapters for a textbook produced by the American Marketing Association, *The Technique of Marketing Research*. According to Lazarsfeld, this was the first textbook describing market research in a systematic way.⁵¹ One of the chapters considered the practice of “depth psychology,” which Lazarsfeld cited as the beginning of “motivation research.” As he had done in “The Art of Asking WHY,” Lazarsfeld divided the psychological, reason-analysis of the purchasing decision into three parts: internal tendencies, outside influences, and product attributes. Lazarsfeld’s chapters guided readers on the proper conduct of interviews, helping as

45 Lazarsfeld, “An Episode,” 276, 288–89; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Frank Kingdon, ca. 1937, Rote Mappen, “about bureau I,” PFL Vienna.

46 Lazarsfeld and Gaudet, “Who Gets a Job?” 64–77; Lazarsfeld, et al., *Coming of Age in Essex County*.

47 “Dislike of Milk among Young People: Development of a Method to Measure and Analyze This Dislike,” Milk Research Council, Inc. and the University of Newark Research Centre, August 1936, Rote Mappen, T/UI (3 bis 7), PFL Vienna; “Milk Drinking Habits Among Young People,” a Psychological Study made cooperatively by the Milk Research Council, Inc. and the University of Newark Research Centre, 1938, Rote Mappen, T/UI II, PFL Vienna.

48 Lazarsfeld and Wyant, “Magazines in 90 Cities,” 29–41. The study found, for example, that industrial workers were avid readers of *True Story*, African Americans were fond of *True Confessions*, and the highly-educated on the East Coast read the *Atlantic Monthly*. Lazarsfeld decided to use the findings to determine the most “average” city, which turned out to be Muncie, Indiana—literally Lynd’s *Middletown*. Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann K. Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

49 Lazarsfeld to Frank Kingdon, ca. 1937, Rote Mappen, “about bureau I,” PFL Vienna.

50 “LAZARSELD, Dr. Paul Felix (Jewish),” Box 3, RG 10.2, Fellowship Recorder Cards, Discipline 5: Humanities Fellows, FA426, RF, RAC.

51 Lazarsfeld, “Progress and Fad in Motivation Research,” *Proceedings of the Third Annual Seminar on Social Science for Industry—Motivation, held in San Francisco by Stanford Research Institute*, March 23, 1955, p. 16, Rote Mappen, Papers IIIB (Mappe 1/2), PFL Vienna.

piring market researchers to identify their subjects’ psychological “rationalizations,” which were evasive responses that disguised genuine motivations. Lazarsfeld advised readers on how to get resistant respondents to withdraw their defenses so that they would submit to embarrassing revelations, such as a habit of reading a low-brow magazine. Lazarsfeld summarized useful concepts from the field of psychoanalysis, such as the Freudian concept of repression. He referenced Fromm and the famed Viennese psychologist Alfred Adler, whose theory of the “inferiority complex”—that a desire for security drove human behavior in a quest for dominance over others—had been frequently applied in the work of the Forschungsstelle.⁵²

All was not well, however, at the Forschungsstelle in Vienna, nor were things well with the members of Lazarsfeld’s family who remained in his home city. In December of 1936, Lazarsfeld received a letter from a friend from the Forschungsstelle who had fled to London, notifying him that the headquarters of the Forschungsstelle had been raided by the fascist police and that Marie Jahoda, its acting director, had been arrested and imprisoned for “revolutionary socialist activities” and for being a leader of the now-illegal socialists. A raid of Jahoda’s house also revealed evidence—including letters from Lazarsfeld, from whom she had separated by then—which indicated that Jahoda was associated with the leading figures of the Second International in Paris. The police charged employees of the Forschungsstelle with possessing and distributing newspapers, brochures, and pamphlets from banned “revolutionary socialist” organizations in Austria and other European countries. Since the Dollfuss regime had banned the Social Democratic Party after the Austrian civil war in February of 1934, Austrian socialists had gone underground, maintaining an organization called the Revolutionary Socialists, which coordinated with exiled party leaders Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch, who had set up in Brno, Czechoslovakia, just across the Austrian border. The Revolutionary Socialists organized a central committee in Vienna, and they managed to continue publication of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, distributing as many as fifty thousand copies of each weekly issue. The Forschungsstelle itself, which the police had been monitoring for months if not years, was believed to be under the direction of the banned socialists and a center for their organizational efforts. Police listed the addresses and occupations of each employee of the Forschungsstelle, fifteen of whom had already been convicted of participating in the illegal socialist or communist movements. In

52 Lazarsfeld, “An Episode,” 297; Wheeler, *Technique of Marketing Research*. Compared to Freud, Adler emphasized the importance of social relations and a sense of community in the development of both “normal” and neurotic personalities. Lazarsfeld, “Austrian Sociologists in the United States,” speech, Austrian Institute in New York, ca. 1972, PFL Vienna, Rote Mappen, “No Dates III.”

addition to Jahoda, several other Forschungsstelle employees were imprisoned for their socialist activities. Another twenty-eight were known to police as “radical Marxists,” and the rest belonged to the socialist parties. Sixty-seven were identified as Jewish. The police also identified Lazarsfeld as the founder of the “social psychological” organization, the Forschungsstelle, and listed his present occupation at the University of Newark.⁵³

In the summer of 1937, Lazarsfeld returned to Austria for what would be the last time before the war. With the help of the Labour government in England, he managed to get Jahoda out of prison, and they fled Austria with their daughter. Jahoda went to England, where she would stay for the duration of the war, and Lazarsfeld’s daughter would accompany him back to America.⁵⁴

Conclusion

Although Paul Lazarsfeld did not come to the United States in 1933 as an émigré, anti-Semitism was partly the reason for his taking the opportunity presented by a travelling fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation. By the end of the fellowship term in 1935, he had essentially *become* an émigré due to the rise of fascism in Austria. What limited opportunities Lazarsfeld would have had to pursue a career in Austria were eliminated with the regimes of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg. He thus became part of a larger intellectual migration of Jewish refugee scholars from Germany, among whom were members of Max Horkheimer’s Institut für Sozialforschung. With the assistance of Lazarsfeld’s mentor Robert Lynd, the “Frankfurt School” of scholars would end up exiled at Columbia University in New York, where they resumed their collaborations with Lazarsfeld.

The refugees were assisted by international aid organizations, academic associations, Jewish groups, and philanthropies such as the Rockefeller Foundation. Academics such as Lynd were all fully aware that these were some of the brightest minds in the world, capable of tackling important social problems

53 Gertrud Wagner to Lazarsfeld, December 16, 1936, Blaue Mappe 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; “Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Mitarbeiter der österreichischen wirtschaftspsychologischen Forschungsstelle [Working Group of the Employees of the Austrian Economic-Psychological Research Center],” *Revolutionärsozialistische Umtriebe* [revolutionary-socialist activities]; Dr. Jahoda-Lazarsfeld Maria, Ing. Jähnel Friedrich, “Betätigung im Zentralkomitee der Revolutionären Sozialisten [Active in the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Socialists],” Bundespolizeidirektion in Wien, An das Bundeskanzleramt, Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit, Staatspolizeiliches Büro, in Wien [Federal Police Headquarters in Vienna, to the Federal Chancellery, General Directorate for Public Safety, State Police Office, in Vienna], December 15, 1936, Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 342.

54 Michael Pollak, “Paul F. Lazarsfeld: A Socio-Intellectual Biography,” Program on Science, Technology and Society, Cornell University, n.d., Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, “Biography Tapes,” PFL Vienna.

such as unemployment and other ill effects of the Depression. Lynd viewed Lazarsfeld as something of a protégé and saw to it that he succeeded in establishing himself in the world of American sociography. The many New Deal programs and organizations of the early Roosevelt years provided Lazarsfeld, already known for his Marienthal study of the unemployed, with ample opportunities to practice his methods of social research and make contacts with important people in the field in the US.

Yet, increasingly, Lazarsfeld became known as a sophisticated survey researcher who analyzed qualitative interviews with quantitative methods to produce new insights into human motivations. These unorthodox methods challenged the behavioristic tendencies of American researchers, and they made his work highly interesting to American businessmen and market researchers. Lazarsfeld's methods had been developed in a research organization staffed with socialists, but their usefulness in the context of the American consumer marketplace suggests that competitive actors in a capitalist economy will adapt and use whatever methods work, regardless of their ideological origins. While Lynd had seen consumer research as a means to an end with respect to progressive social reform, Lazarsfeld saw any kind of survey research—no matter who the client was—as valuable in itself to the extent that it allowed for the practice of research methods and the employment of researchers. This was entirely in line with his practice in Vienna, though it would increasingly strike Lynd as a kind of "selling out."

5

**Little Dictators, Little Theaters, Little Shops:
Street Commerce and Underground Socialism
in Vienna before the Anschluss**

When the four-foot-eleven-inch Austrian chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss made himself dictator in March of 1933, and then outlawed the Social Democratic Party after the civil war in February of 1934, he effectively ended the First Austrian Republic. A new constitution promulgated on May 1 solidified the formation of a fascist state in Austria under the absolute rule of Dollfuss's new party, the Fatherland Front. All opposition parties, including the Nazis and the Communists, were banned; the Social Democrats were forced underground, reorganized as the "Revolutionary Socialists," and the party's leaders went into exile. Dollfuss's fascist state was partly modeled on Italy under Mussolini, whose appeasement was a key part of the Austro-fascists' ultimately futile plan to keep Austria independent against Hitler's Germany. Although Dollfuss was assassinated on July 25 in a failed coup attempt by Austrian Nazis, the fascist regime would retain power under Dollfuss's successor, Kurt von Schuschnigg. Dollfuss and Schuschnigg had no official policy of anti-Semitism, but the banning of the Social Democrats, the political party to which most Jews belonged, and the abolition of democracy under Catholic-fascist rule effectively removed them from government jobs and public political life in general. Despite regular police harassment and imprisonment, the socialist underground thrived and still managed to publish and distribute socialist newspapers—which would lead to Paul Lazarsfeld's *Forschungsstelle* being shut down.¹

For Victor Gruen, the Vienna underground in those years was a literal phenomenon. Shut down by the fascist government, the Political Cabaret and its

¹ Pauley, *Prejudice to Persecution*, 260–67; Berkley, *Vienna and its Jews*, 216–18, 226–32, 251; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 215–16, 342.

provincial counterpart, the Red Players, ceased to exist after February 1934. However, Gruen's life in the theater continued with the *Kleinkunsthöhlen*, the "little art stages" that popped up as makeshift theaters during the period of Austro-fascism. These underground theaters were often literally underground in wine cellars or coffeehouse basements, or out of public view in the concealed courtyards of the ubiquitous Viennese *Heurigen*, or wine gardens. These little theaters were, Gruen recalled, "the refuge of talented young artists of liberal thinking." Copies of the illicit socialist newspaper, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, were hidden inside the legal newspapers in the coffeehouses where the stages were set up. The censors prohibited any kind of political expression, but the *Kleinkunsthöhlen* managed to evade these restrictions by performing on small stages and by using clever rhetorical evasions, allusions, and suggestions that could not quite be pinned down by the censors. A permit would have been required for any performance before an audience of 150² or more, a decree that was intended to stifle the political theater, since no proper venue in the city was that small. The tiny cabarets, however, which were performed in intimate cafes on improvised pop-up stages, avoided the official restriction.

The stages were small, but the performances were many: on any given night, ten different little theaters might put on sold-out performances. These little theaters became famous all over Central Europe for their "daring" satirical sketches in a time of increasingly oppressive fascism. They were oases of "real wit" in an increasingly reactionary culture. "We developed a style of our own to say things," the troupe of socialist players recalled in a later publication, "and the democratic man in Austria understood us." Indeed, that was part of the thrill for audiences, who came "expecting to hear the forbidden." Playwrights of the legitimate stage had been struck "dumb" for fear of the repercussions of any overtly political or even obviously suggestive utterances, the result being that these theaters were devoid of any interesting social and political content. For the socialist workers and intellectuals, however the "legitimate" theater in fact presented a "foreign and artificial" society, and the only true theater was the political satire of the *Kleinkunsthöhlen*. On the stage, the former members of the Political Cabaret were sometimes joined by new arrivals: Jewish and socialist refugees who had fled Nazi Germany for the somewhat less repressive regime of the Austro-fascists. Hitler was, of course, the chief target of much of the satire, however implicit and suggestive it might have been.³

2 Sometimes Gruen records this number as 50, e.g., Gruen, *Shopping Town*, 6.

3 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 49–51; "From Vienna," The Playbill, *The Music Box*, July 24, 1939; H.B. Kranz, "All Is Not Waltz Time in Vienna," *New York Times*, February 6, 1938; "And Now 'From Vienna,'" *New York Times*, June 18, 1939; "Refugee Actors of Vienna to Present Revue June 12," *New York World-Tele-*

As Gruen's social and political life went underground, his professional life increasingly became an above-ground spectacle of the street. After leaving Melcher & Steiner, his benefactor's architectural firm, at the end of 1932 to set up his own private design firm, Gruen continued his work doing interior remodeling of apartments, furnishing, and facade renovations for his friends from the socialist movement. He also accumulated a list of wealthier clients from the socialist intelligentsia, some of whom learned of his services after his own job remodeling the rooms he shared with his wife Lizzie Kardos in his family's Riemergasse apartment was profiled in the socialist photo-magazine, *Der Kuckuck*, in 1933. But beginning in 1934, Gruen began doing more commercial jobs, first remodeling the storefront and interior of a travel agency, a laundry, and several other Vienna shop interiors, storefronts, and display windows. This kind of commercial work would provide the basis for his later American career.⁴

Gruen's big break came with a commission for the complete remodeling of the interior and storefront of the Bristol-Parfumerie on the Ringstrasse, just down the boulevard from the grand Staatsoper. Gruen used design to make the most of the tiny dimensions of the shop. Though its frontage was a mere eleven feet (two and a half meters) across, Gruen's all-glass front had the effect of turning it into a virtual display that merged the store with the street. He also amplified the cramped interior by installing a long band of mirrors on the ceiling—an old theater trick used to visually enlarge a space, he said—and he added a modern flair by encasing the furniture in white lacquer. The design received much attention in the trade press, including a favorable notice in the August 1935 issue of the English-language trade journal *Display*.⁵ The positive attention in the architectural journals led to many more commercial commissions. In 1936, Gruen designed a recessed “arcade” entrance for a fabric shop, J. Singer, which allowed pedestrians to step to the side of the flow of sidewalk traffic and into an “intermediate” zone between shop and street that showcased the store's wares. The intent of the design was to transform curious passersby into customers. Gruen became well known for his skills in retail architecture, and he designed several other storefronts and shop interiors in Vienna, including a bookstore, a cosmetics shop, a beauty parlor, a coffee shop, a haberdashery, a millinery, a menswear shop, a confectionery, and even an automatic buffet (similar to an automat). His

gram, May 24, 1939; “Here Is a Reunion From Vienna: They're Happy Not To Be There,” *N.Y. Herald-Tribune*, June 11, 1939; “From Vienna and To a Reunion in New York,” *New York Times*, March 10, 1940.

4 “List of Work Done in the Years 1924–1937,” May 15, 1937, box 75, folder 10, Victor Gruen Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC [hereafter, “Gruen LOC”]; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 52–54.

5 “Initials in the Decorative Scheme,” *Display*, August 1935, p. 233.

1936 design for the menswear shop Josef Deutsch on Adlegasse was featured in *The Architectural Review*. At the same time, he continued his regular work remodeling apartments.⁶

Gruen's professional success in the capitalistic aboveground was tempered by the repressive tactics of the Austro-fascists and their harassment of socialists who were confined to the underground, if not imprisoned. Gruen's close friend from the *Kleinkunsthöfen*, the writer and poet Jura Soyfer, was apprehended by the police in November of 1937 and was forced to confess his participation in the underground theater and his socialist affiliations, including his friendship with Gruen. While Dollfuss and Schuschnigg had sought to appease Mussolini by banning the Social Democrats, in the end it was their banning of the Nazis that brought Austria as an independent nation to a final confrontation with Hitler. When Schuschnigg met Hitler at his *Berghof* near Berchtesgaden on the Austria-Germany border on February 12, 1938, Hitler presented Schuschnigg with an ultimatum: continued Austrian national sovereignty would require Schuschnigg to grant immediate amnesty for all imprisoned Austrian Nazis. Schuschnigg met the demand, but at the same time also released nearly all imprisoned Communists and Social Democrats. Hitler soon indicated that Austria's independence was not guaranteed after all, and, in early March, Schuschnigg rather feebly sought out the Social Democrats—who were once again permitted to meet publicly—as allies to defend Austria against Hitler. Schuschnigg called for a plebiscite on Austrian independence to be held on March 13. Despite the referendum's endorsement of a one-party state, the leaders of the Revolutionary Socialists were reluctantly prepared to support it, but it was no matter: on March 11, Schuschnigg finally capitulated to Hitler and resigned. The plebiscite was cancelled, and German troops invaded Austria the following day, meeting no resistance, as directed by Schuschnigg, to avoid spilling "German blood." Indeed, the Nazis were welcomed by many Austrians. Hitler's dreamed-of *Anschluss* of Austria had come to fruition.⁷

The dramatic events collapsed what had been a briefly hopeful period for Gruen following Schuschnigg's amnesty for Social Democrats, when he had

6 Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 27; Guzzardi, "Architect of Environments"; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 51–53, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 54; "List of Work Done in the Years 1924–1937," May 15, 1937, box 75, folder 10, Gruen LOC; Verzeichnis der in den Jahren [Directory of the years], 1924–1937, durchgeführten Arbeiten [work carried out], May 15, 1937, box 75, folder 10, Gruen LOC. The use of arcades—also called the "recessing" system—had appeared in the US in the early-twentieth century and had become increasingly common by the 1920s. Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern*, 25–27.

7 "Niederschrift, aufgenommen bei der Bundespolizeidirektion in Wien [Minutes taken at the federal police headquarters in Vienna]," November, 17 1937, box 77, folder 11, Gruen LOC; Sturmthal, *Tragedy*, 216–19; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 7.

been able to reunite with his politically active friends who had been imprisoned and interrogated. Terrified by the news of March 11, Gruen frantically burned all records of his association with the Social Democrats and the Political Cabaret, though he spared a few of the plays and sketches from the *Kleinkunstabühnen*. “I burned that part of my life which connected me closely with the fight for freedom, the fight against social injustice and the fight against fascism of any sort,” Gruen recalled. He took particular care to destroy the satires on Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, and Himmler, as well as any material related to Dollfuss and Schuschnigg. But he made sure to keep all of the documentation from his professional life, including his certificates, photographs of his work, and a stack of letters of praise from clients.⁸ Although Gruen had never been properly licensed as an architect because he was forced to cut short his training at the Academy of Fine Arts to go to work for Melcher, he had recently received word that his application to officially use the title of “architect”—based on his submission of his professional dossier—had been approved. By this time, however, the *Anschluss* had already occurred, and Gruen had no desire to visit a government ministry for an official swearing-in. So, he would remain uncertified. And, in any case, there was no future for him as a socialist Jew, he rightly believed, in a country that had been subsumed by Nazi Germany and was no longer called Österreich but rather “Ostmark.” He and his wife rapidly began to plan for their emigration to America, where an uncle and an acquaintance were all they had to rely on in the hopes of getting an affidavit.⁹

The last three months of Gruen’s life in Vienna under the Third Reich amounted to a theater of absurdity. He had received a commission in 1937 to design a large men’s and women’s clothing store on Vienna’s main shopping avenue, the Mariahilferstrasse, which was an important advance in his career. He was overseeing the construction of this very project on March 15, 1938, the day that Hitler paraded down the Mariahilferstrasse from the Westbahnhof to declare the *Anschluss* before a massive crowd gathered on the Heldenplatz. Weirdly, in the following months, business operated “normally” at Gruen’s small architectural firm, which continued to do its work and even accept new commissions. However, Gruen suddenly faced the bizarre situation of having an employee, a Mr. Geiser, suddenly reveal himself to be an enthusiastic National Socialist. Mr. Geiser thereupon declared himself, as a newly proud “Aryan,” to be Gruen’s boss and proceeded to badly mistreat his new “employee.” The new

8 For example, Alois Reichmann, in a letter to Viktor Gruenbaum dated April 15, 1937, applauded Gruen’s good taste and speedy work schedule. Box 75, folder 9, Gruen LOC.

9 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 5–8, 54; “Notes for a New Book,” January 4, 1972, box 77, folder 14, Gruen LOC.

business projects Geiser brought to the firm typically involved designs for “Kraft durch Freude” (Strength through Joy) events, the Nazis’ euphemism for reorienting working-class culture toward its nationalistic ideal of *Volksgemeinschaft*. Gruen, the founder of the firm, was reduced to rendering swastika designs for the decoration of great halls at the behest of a Nazi underling.

Gruen was also suddenly subjected to all kinds of anti-Semitic abuse and arbitrary exercises of authority in his everyday life. He received fines for traffic violations and gasoline bills for his rarely-used car, which had been commandeered by a couple of armed Nazi youths. He was then paid a visit by the Gestapo, who complained that his stolen car was parked in their space—of course by then it had come under the use of one of their men. To his disgust, Gruen later spotted a friend of his from the socialist movement behind the wheel of his car. It turned out that his friend had been conscripted into service for the Nazis as an “Aryan” designer, before he was finally able to flee Austria through Switzerland with his Jewish girlfriend. Another time, two officers of the German Wehrmacht appeared at Gruen’s door to inquire obnoxiously about his future plans for “travel,” and they then proceeded to “purchase” large pieces of Gruen’s furniture for an offensively tiny sum. Gruen was also harassed in the street because his passport, which he was required to carry with him at all times, identified him as Jewish. He would be routinely recognized as Jewish simply by failing to bear a swastika or greet passersby with a jubilant “Heil Hitler!” The anti-Semitic bullying Viktor Grünbaum had faced as an adolescent had suddenly reemerged in his transformed hometown of Vienna, but now it was endorsed with the full legitimacy of the state.¹⁰

Gruen was, in the meantime, desperately trying to arrange for his flight from Austria. He first needed to acquire an affidavit of support for himself and his wife so that they could secure a visa to emigrate to the United States. His only two contacts there were his uncle Harry Lowry (formerly “Levi,” his mother’s brother) and an acquaintance, Ruth Yorke, an American actress whom he had met on a train from Paris to Vienna in the early 1930s. The two then became friends while she attended the Max Reinhardt acting seminar in Vienna, and they struck up a correspondence. In the end it turned out that Harry, whom Gruen had imagined as his “rich uncle in America,” was merely a low-level employee at a second-rate hotel in Manhattan who could do little to help Gruen. But Yorke’s boyfriend, Paul Gosman, was a well-connected businessman who

10 Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 53–57, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 14–18; Lizzie Kardos to Gruen, August 7, 1977, box 77, folder 3, Gruen LOC; “Fragen an [questions for] Friedl und Herta Scheu,” July 11, 1977, box 77, folder 11, Gruen LOC.

was able to promise Gruen a job and thus secure him an affidavit to immigrate to the United States as a permanent resident.¹¹

Gruen was forced to pay a bribe to a Nazi lawyer so that he could get an exit permit and passport, and he compiled a stack of flattering letters of recommendation from his many clients that would serve him in exile. On his emigration application, he listed his citizenship as “German-Austrian” and that he and his wife were “non-Aryan.” By early May he had received word from the American Consul General in Vienna that his request for immigration had been approved, and by the middle of the month he was permitted to leave the city. He booked a ticket on an ocean liner from England to the US, and he packed a suitcase with his and his wife’s clothes. He also packed a few small pieces of furniture, some family heirlooms, and his architectural drawing instruments, but while he was staying with his mother-in-law he received a frantic phone call from a friend who told him not to return to his apartment, which had been broken into by the Gestapo. He managed to enlist an old friend from the socialist movement to return to his apartment, dressed in the uniform of a Nazi stormtrooper, to retrieve his few belongings, declaring that he was under orders to confiscate the Jewish architect’s belongings. When Gruen finally did receive permission to leave the country on May 28 on a one-time exit visa, he was not forced to give up his Austrian citizenship—but that fact was moot since the state of Austria “ceased to exist,” as Gruen later put it.¹²

Gruen and his wife Lizzie finally fled the Third Reich on June 9. “I left Vienna on my Austrian passport, and was forced to declare that I would never enter Austria again by the German authorities,” Gruen would later state in a letter to the US attorney general in a declaration of allegiance to his new country. “I could never have become a German citizen,” he explained. He was, rather, a “victim of the Nazi system” because he was identified as being “of the Jewish race.”¹³ Gruen and Lizzie first took a plane to Zurich, where they stayed with friends from the theater; they then took a train to Paris, where they stayed with

11 “Biographical Material, Annotated Chronology,” box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; “May 17 1974,” Box 20, Folder 18, Gruen LOC; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” pp. 78–81; Gruen, *Shopping Town*, 7, 18–19.

12 John Wiley to Harry Lowry, May 6, 1938, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Amtsbestätigung [official confirmation],” May 13, 1938, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Application for a Certificate of Arrival and Preliminary Form for Petition for Naturalization,” form N-400, U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service (Edition of 1-13-41), box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 54–60, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Reisepass, Republik Österreich [Passport, Austrian Republic],” no. 633571, Viktor Grünbaum, box 23, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 18–21; “Polizeidirektion in Wien [Police department in Vienna],” April 22, 1938, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Fragebogen für Auswanderer [Questions for emigrants],” n.d., box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

13 Victor Gruenbaum to Francis Biddle, January 30, 1942, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Lizzie Kardos to Gruen, August 7, 1977, box 77, folder 3, Gruen LOC.



FIGURE 4 Page from Gruen's passport with a stamp from the office of the Nazi chief of police in Vienna, May 28, 1938, when Gruen was issued a one-time exit visa after Hitler's *Anschluss* of Austria.
SOURCE: Viktor Gruen papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

friends for two weeks; and they finally crossed the Channel to London, where they arrived on July 2. Many of Gruen's friends from the socialist political scene and theater world of Vienna were staying there temporarily. He took a little time to learn English, which he had only a rudimentary knowledge of from school. But after only a few days in London, Gruen and Lizzie would depart from Southampton to make their way across the Atlantic to New York as refugees aboard the S.S. *Statendam* on the Holland-America Line. They were brought to the seaport by Gruen's mother, who would later join them in the US. Viktor and Lizzie were joined onboard by several friends and acquaintances from the *Kleinkunstabühnen*, and they played games and enjoyed themselves on the weeklong journey. Despite the difficult circumstances—and a last-minute panic about arriving penniless—Gruen remembered the journey fondly, and he felt optimistic about the future. They arrived in New York on July 13, 1938, where Ruth Yorke and her stockbroker friend picked them up in an open sports car.¹⁴

14 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 15; "Application for a Certificate of Arrival and Preliminary Form for Petition for Naturalization," form N-400, U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service (Edi-

Of course, not all of Gruen's friends from the socialist theater scene in Vienna were so lucky. Jura Soyfer, "thrice-threatened" as a leftist activist, antifascist author, and Jew, attempted to flee Austria after the *Anschluss* on skis over the mountains into Switzerland, but was apprehended by the Nazis and sent to the Dachau concentration camp. From there, he was transferred to the Buchenwald camp in September of 1938. Gruen was successful in getting him a visa to come to the United States, and although he had been formally granted release, he died in the camp from dysentery on February 16, 1939.¹⁵

Conclusion

The center of Victor Gruen's social and political life, the Political Cabaret, was shut down by the Austro-fascists in 1934, but the underground *Kleinkunstbühnen* that sprang up in wine cellars and coffeehouses across the city became some of the last refuges of satirical wit in an increasingly oppressive and reactionary Europe. Gruen also channeled his creative energies into his professional work. When he established his own architectural design firm in 1932, he increasingly began designing and remodeling commercial retail storefronts and shop interiors. His clever innovations, such as shopfronts with mini-arcades and interior designs that made liberal use of glass and mirrors, gained attention in the German- and English-language architectural trade press, which further propelled his career by increasing the interest of prospective clients in Vienna and around the world. The end of social democracy in the Austrian Republic did not manage to stifle his artistic or professional ambitions. But Hitler's *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938 made Gruen's life and career in Vienna impossible. The anti-Semitic ideology and reactionary politics that Gruen's allies in the political theater had made it their mission to attack with satire were suddenly legitimized. The only possibility for a Jewish socialist like Gruen was to flee. He set his sights on America, where he had few contacts but, fortunately, a friend was able provide him and his wife with affidavits of support so that they could secure visas. They arrived in New York in July of 1938 to begin anew.

tion of 1-13-41), box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; "Biographical Material—Gruen, Victor, Annotated Chronology, Mar. 1975, n.d., Early Life to 1938 (1 of 6)," box 20, folder 20, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 73–78, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; "Reisepass Republik Österreich, Viktor Grünbaum," box 23, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Lizzie Kardos to Gruen, August 7, 1977, box 77, folder 3, Gruen LOC.

15 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 14; "Jura Soyfer – Renaissance," Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes, Mitteilungen [Documentation archive of the Austrian resistance, reports], Folge [series] 27, September 1976, Folder 11, Box 77, Gruen LOC.

6

**Design for the Future:
From London to Chicago**

Moholy's future was uncertain before he was invited in 1937 by a group of industrialists who wanted to reestablish the Bauhaus as a new design school in Chicago. Until then, he would spend more than two years in London beginning in May of 1935, working primarily as a commercial designer. He would design shop windows for a menswear store, create sets and special effects for films, and put together advertisements for airlines and transit authorities. At the same time, he would further his own experiments in avant-garde photography and film. The commercial projects that Moholy would pursue in London were not just diversions for him, nor were they merely the means of making a living—though they were certainly that. The commercial contracts were also avenues through which he could realize his optimistic perspective about the potentially fruitful alliance of arts and industry toward the end of social progress. Indeed, as the historian Terence Senter has noted, Moholy took these commissions with “relish” and was a “shrewd commercial operator.” It was the Bauhaus ideal, privately pursued, preserved in spirit in London before being relaunched by Moholy in America.

When the increasingly racist and reactionary policies of the new Nazi regime finally made it clear that any career prospects in Germany were gone, Moholy had begun to consider London as a possible place to seek refuge and reestablish a career. While he was engaged in a project filming the meeting of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) on a Mediterranean cruise ship, which sailed from Marseille to Athens in the summer of 1933, Moholy was vigorously encouraged to visit England by P. Morton Shand. Shand was attending the conference on a scouting mission for modern architects. Moholy took up Shand's suggestion and first made a trip to London in November of

that year. He spent about three weeks investigating the latest developments in color photography and printing, visiting exhibitions of new furniture designs, and discussing commercial projects with potential clients who had already been alerted by Gropius to the genius of Moholy-Nagy. His unorthodox documentary film on the CIAM, *Architects' Congress*, premiered at the Film Society in London on December 10.

The English-speaking world would also take notice of Moholy by virtue of an article he had written on photography that had recently been translated from German and published in a British magazine. Shand was keen on helping Moholy to get a foothold in England, and he enthusiastically promoted him with a profile published in *The Architectural Review* shortly after Moholy's visit. While in London, Moholy also met with Lucia, to whom he was still legally married. She had by that time already emigrated to England. Along with Shand, she would occasionally act as his interpreter. Moholy's films and photographs would be shown in the city over the next year. He had already made a splash in England before he even immigrated there.

Moholy's exploratory trip to London was made partly in his new capacity as the art director for Ludwig Katz's *International Textiles* publication, a position which allowed him to employ his typographical ideas and express his colorful Constructivist aesthetic. At the time, Moholy was working mostly out of the Pallas Studio in Amsterdam, a subsidiary of the publisher Spaarnestadt in nearby Haarlem. The Pallas Studio would soon have an office in London, too, which Moholy would use as an address before he eventually moved there.¹

Moholy had become a father just as he was about to embark on this new period of displacement, exile, and uncertainty. Sibyl gave birth to their daughter, Hattula, in Berlin on October 11, 1933. The reality of Moholy's new family life would begin to settle in, and he would be formally divorced from Lucia in March of 1934. Within a year, Moholy and Sibyl would marry in London. But as Moholy rented rooms and increasingly established himself as a commercial art director in Amsterdam and Haarlem, Sibyl and the baby would remain in Berlin, and György Kepes would manage Moholy's design studio there. Although his base of operations was in Amsterdam, Moholy would frequently visit his family and studio in Berlin. He would collaborate with Sibyl and the designers who remained in his Berlin studio on various commercial graphic design projects, such as a contract he had with the firm Jenaer Glas. Occasionally, Sibyl would

1 Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 1–16, 19–20, 26; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 398–400, 444; Moholy to Gropius, December 16, 1935, Gropius Nachlass [hereafter, "GN"], Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin, 329–32, and Appendix 4, Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 329–32.

leave Hattula with a nanny to visit Moholy in Amsterdam. The couple also sometimes went to Paris to visit Piet Mondrian and other modern artists, and for the occasional exhibit of Moholy's work at galleries such as the one operated by *Abstraction-Création*.²

Despite his new position and his prospects in London, Moholy had become deeply depressed about the worsening political state of affairs in Germany by the winter of 1934, particularly insofar as it concerned the prospects for artists working there, which he described as "devastating and sterile." "We are more sad than gay, and we have good reasons," wrote Moholy to his friend Herbert Read, the English curator, critic, and editor who was a major supporter of the modernist movement in Britain as head of the group Unit One. "[O]ne vegetates in total isolation, as if there were no longer any place in the world for any other form of expression than insignificant journalistic writings." Goebbels's culture ministry, established in September of 1933, had required the registration of all artists, and it summoned three of Moholy's paintings for censorship. By October of 1934, Gropius and his wife Ise had fled the country to find refuge in London, where Gropius hoped to reestablish the Bauhaus. It was at this point that Moholy began to think more seriously about emigrating to Great Britain. Yet he continued his work, both the commercial contracts and his own works, some of which he would exhibit from November to December at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. But all the while he was making moves toward England. He and Sibyl were married in London in January of 1935, and during their visit they were received and assisted by Walter and Ise Gropius. Walter Gropius and Moholy even discussed the possibility of starting up a new leftist art journal. Concerned about the legacy of the Bauhaus, Gropius also consulted with Moholy about compiling a comprehensive record of surviving Bauhaus works, a project that deeply interested Moholy and for which he offered his assistance. At the time, Moholy was thinking seriously about continuing the series of Bauhaus books, and he even had a publisher in mind. Gropius liked the idea, but it would never come to fruition.

Moholy's experience doing commercial contracts would help to pave his way toward London. Along with fellow Bauhäusler Herbert Bayer and Hin Bredendieck, Moholy had designed an exhibition display for the German construction trade unions at the Exposition de la Société des Artistes Décorateurs in Paris in 1930. Drawing on this experience—and looking to deepen his ties to the burgeoning plastics industry—Moholy, with the assistance of Sibyl, de-

2 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 334, 398–399, 404, 422–23, 497–99; Senter, "Moholy-Nagy: The Transitional Years," 86; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus de Chicago*, 33; Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 16–17.

signed and constructed a large exhibition stand of rigid geometric forms for a manufacturer of artificial silk for the 1935 spring trade fair in Utrecht. He also designed a somewhat smaller exhibit for the international exhibition in Brussels that would open in April. By the winter of 1935, Moholy was rapidly winding down his commercial commitments on the Continent, even turning down contracts and complaining that he had no time for private work, as he prepared for the move to Britain. He met with the British consul in Berlin in March. Moholy had the good fortune to encounter an official who had been a supporter of Gropius and the Bauhaus, and the bureaucrat took it upon himself to expedite Moholy's application, which was sponsored by Herbert Read. Meanwhile, Gropius was busy setting up meetings in Berlin between Moholy and potential future commercial clients, such as Charles Hobson, the head of an advertising agency in London, who made a positive impression on Moholy. Gropius himself met with Moholy in Berlin in late April. Still hopeful that the political situation in Germany might improve, Gropius retained a secretary and apartment in Berlin. He was in town to move his belongings out of his large apartment and into a smaller one for storage.³

Moholy finally arrived in London in mid-May of 1935, and Sibyl and Hattula would join him there in June. They took up temporary residence in the Hampstead area of north London in a small apartment on Lawn Road, just next to the flat occupied by their close friends Walter and Ise Gropius. Moholy and Gropius had been working very closely together in this period, before and after Moholy's arrival, preparing the photographs and layout of Shand's English translation of Gropius's book on Bauhaus theory and method, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, which would be published that summer with a cover designed by Moholy.⁴ At this stage, they were not only interested in preserving the Bauhaus legacy but also in reestablishing the school. Moholy had begun work in Littlehampton on another short film about the day-to-day work of lobstering (originally titled *Life of the Lobster*; eventually released as *Lobsters*) which was produced by

3 Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 17–18, 24–41, 52, 196; Senter, "Moholy-Nagy: The Transitional Years," 87; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 423, 487–88, 514; Steckel, "László Moholy-Nagy 1895–1946," 322; Moholy-Nagy to Herbert Read, January 24, 1934, University of Victoria Library, Canada, in Appendix 4, Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 322–23; L. Moholy-Nagy to Ise and Walter Gropius, February 20, 1935, GN, and Appendix 4, Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 324; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, February 24, 1935, in Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 324–25; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, March 28, 1935, GN, and Appendix 4, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 325; Moholy-Nagy to Ise and Walter Gropius, March 31, 1935, GN, and Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 326; Moholy to Gropius, March 31, 1935, GN, and Appendix 4, Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 328.

4 Walter Gropius, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, trans. P. Morton Shand (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1935).

John Mathias. In August, Moholy and Sibyl moved into a modest, semi-detached house at 7 Farm Walk, near the Golders Green station of the London Underground, the next station north of the Hampstead station. As an indication of their continued friendship despite their divorce, Lucia lived with them briefly during this period, though it may have been around the time of Moholy's annual weeks-long summer holiday to La Sarraz, Switzerland, which Gropius and Kepes also attended. A wealthy arts patron, Madame H el ene de Mandrot, hosted these yearly gatherings of artists and intellectuals, mostly men, from all over Europe. Although he had left the Continent, Moholy kept a foothold there, exhibiting in Brno and Bratislava in the spring and summer of 1935.⁵

Both Gropius and Moholy struggled to learn English, which proceeded for Gropius at a "snail's pace," but their difficulties in no way limited their professional pursuits in London. Their personal charms and expressive gestures likely made up for their linguistic deficits. By all accounts, Moholy was a particularly cheerful and enchanting presence, and his broad, easy, toothy smile earned him the nickname, "Kind Crocodile." Moholy and Sibyl frequently hosted guests at their Farm Walk house, including old Bauhaus friends like Marcel Breuer, and other artists and designers like Serge Chermayeff, who would later head Moholy's design institute in Chicago. In arranging such parties, Sibyl acted not merely as Moholy's wife and professional collaborator, but also as his de facto public relations officer.

The artistic community of Hampstead facilitated an easy socialization that could often lead to useful publicity and commissions. At a party at Gropius's Lawn Road flat, for example, Moholy first met E. F. Herbert, the assistant editor of *Shelf Appeal*, a British retail trade and marketing magazine. Moholy was engaged to design the cover of the November 1935 issue, which further introduced him to British marketers and advertisers who were looking for cutting-edge graphic designers. At another party at the Lawn Road flats hosted by the modern architect Wells Coates, Moholy first encountered Ashley Havinden, the head of the design department at the W. S. Crawford advertising agency, which would be a source of many jobs for Moholy. And it was through friendship with Havinden that Moholy would meet Alexander Simpson, for whom he would design department store windows. Gropius's first flat on Lawn Road was owned by Jack Pritchard, who would found a furniture company called Isokon that would provide Moholy with another important early commission. Moholy would also

5 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 423–26, 474–86, 490–501; Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 18–24, 42–55, 61; L. Moholy-Nagy to Walter Gropius, May 13, 1935, GN, and Appendix 4, Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 327–28; Walter Gropius to L. Moholy-Nagy, ca. July 20, 1935, GN, and Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 329.

work with many of his former collaborators, such as Kepes, with whom he would establish a small office to work mostly on advertising jobs with the help of the London representative of *International Textiles*, Hans Juda. According to one account, Kepes would become an “extension” of Moholy in executing his ideas. As it was in Amsterdam, they called it Pallas Studio.⁶

There was little distinction between the social and professional worlds of artists, designers, filmmakers, intellectuals, and designers in Hampstead in these years. Another fixture at Sibyl and Moholy’s parties was Julian Huxley, the evolutionary biologist—and, controversially, eugenicist—who had collaborated with the Hungarian-born filmmaker and former journalist Alexander Korda to produce one of the first-ever nature documentary films, *The Private Life of the Gannets*, in 1934. Huxley would introduce Moholy to the film producer Paul Roth, who would in turn introduce Moholy to C. F. Snowden-Gamble, publicity manager for Imperial Airways, a meeting that would eventually lead to an early commercial commission for Moholy: he would produce posters and other color-accented publicity materials for the airline. Moholy would also design an exhibition called “The Empire’s Airway” and its associated catalogue, which made innovative use of photomontage techniques. Herbert Read also aided his friend Moholy in securing this commission and many others by introducing him to an admirer of the Bauhaus, Marcus Brumwell. Brumwell was managing director of the Stuarts advertising agency, which had Imperial Airways as a client. Vincent Korda, Alexander’s brother and an art director for films, would also come into Moholy and Sibyl’s social sphere, and Moholy showed him and his brother an unedited version of the lobster film as he was putting it together.

The Korda brothers were also present for a showing of Moholy’s short film *Light Display: Black, White, Grey* in September of 1935, which impressed them deeply, and would lead to Moholy’s commission to design sets and special effects for Alexander Korda’s adaptation of H. G. Wells’s 1933 science-fiction novel, *The Shape of Things to Come: The Ultimate Revolution*, the filmic version of which would be released in February of 1936 as *Things to Come*. Alexander Korda had been a longtime admirer of Wells, and he succeeded in persuading him to adapt his novel for the screen. Vincent Korda was the lead art director for the film, and he modeled the sets for his futuristic cities on the works of the modernist architect Le Corbusier. The furniture for the film sets was to be modeled from plastics, and the opportunity to work with such materials presented a special draw for Moholy. Though Moholy would work for months on the project

6 Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 17, 43–57, 151; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 408; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, February 24, 1935, in Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 324–25.

in the fall and winter of 1935 and 1936, most of his contributions would end up cut from the final film. One prominent exception is a single sequence meant to convey a period of rapid technological advance in the central city of “Everytown” over a period of some eighty-four years, for which Moholy’s abstract light patterns and projections were used. Perhaps only ninety seconds of the roughly five-minute sequence used any of Moholy’s effects. He only discovered how little of his work ended up on screen upon seeing a public performance of the film. His name is not listed in the credits.⁷

Moholy’s commercial projects in these years occupied most of his time and brought in most of his income, which would be particularly important given the birth of his second daughter, Claudia, in the spring of 1936. The early jobs were on a smaller scale, for patrons such as Trubenising, a trademarked and patented process for stiffening textiles for collars, and Jack Pritchard’s furniture company, Isokon. Moholy designed a trademark and advertisements for the company, which specialized in lightweight, durable, attractive, and inexpensive plywood furniture.⁸

Moholy’s most important commercial contract, and his most regular and substantial source of income, was for Simpson’s, a menswear store that was opening a new location in Piccadilly. The company would enlist Moholy for his design services. The new store in Piccadilly was meant to be the “shop window” for the parent company, S. Simpson Ltd., in London’s West End. Alexander Simpson, who inherited the company from his father in 1932, was looking to make a splash with the new store, which he wanted to be revolutionary in design. He engaged the aforementioned Ashley Havinden, from the Crawford advertising agency, to lead the design efforts. Havinden brought on Moholy, whom he had, of course, met at the party at the Lawn Road flats. Havinden himself was heavily influenced by the Bauhaus approach to design, and he cherished the Bauhaus books that Moholy had put together, particularly for their novel use of typography. Fortunately for Moholy, Havinden was also his neighbor in the Hampstead area, and he and his wife would frequently have dinner parties with Moholy and Sibyl, where they would exchange ideas about modern design and even get into the very specific problems of window display. Havinden later recounted that it had been a “wild idea” of his to propose Moholy as a design consultant for the project, because at the time, he said, Moholy was known more as a teacher and theoretician. Of course, Moholy did in fact

7 Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 47, 49, 61–77, 107–27, 176–77, 180–86, 230; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 409, 448.

8 Senter, “Moholy-Nagy in England,” 53, 165–75, 258.

have much practical experience in designing exhibitions and displays. He succeeded in charming Havinden's client Simpson and was approved for the job at the rate of £2,000 per annum—an enormous sum for a job that Moholy was to do only half-time.

The main exterior feature of the new, six-story Simpson's Piccadilly store was a pair of very large, non-reflective curved-glass windows which would be used for the displays. As design consultant, Moholy contributed ideas not only for these windows but also for the interior store layout. The Simpson's display window would open on April 29, 1936, preceding the opening of the entire store by a day. Moholy's striking, high-contrast, Constructivist-inspired display made an immediate impression on the public, and it was widely discussed in the trade magazines. After the window display was opened and further modernized by an accompanying aviation exhibition, Moholy would make regular inspections and offer suggestions. It was his assistant Kepes, however, who worked on the project as full-time designer, employing a team of about six other displaymen. Moholy directed his designers to produce a number of innovations for the windows, including dramatic spotlights and cut-outs, which produced a theatrical effect that recalled Moholy's early work in the avant-garde theater in Berlin. Moholy's displays of the merchandise were geometrical, dramatically incorporating clothing and other goods into repetitive arrangements that themselves became abstract constructions.⁹

Moholy worked half-time on commercial projects such as the Simpson's contract and a job designing an exhibit for the British Industries Fair. Yet he still found time for his private works, and he continued to exhibit, not only in London but as far away as New York. He also worked on other commissions such as designs for a series of posters for London Transport and a silent film on the new architecture of the London Zoo, which made use of Moholy's interest in high-contrast chiaroscuro. One of Moholy's commissions was for a series of photographic illustrations for several books from the publisher John Miles, *The Streetmarkets of London*, *Eton Portrait*, and *An Oxford University Chest*. Moholy made the photos for *Streetmarkets* using a small, unobtrusive Leica camera, and his intention was to produce an "impressionistic photo-reportage" that would take as its subject a shopping center and its buyers and sellers, which he viewed as a social necessity and a central part of life for the working classes. It was another instance of Moholy's commitment to documenting and contributing to the vitality of the commercial sphere as a central part of social life.¹⁰

9 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 525–29; Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 128–48, 100–104, 206–7.

10 Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 78–92, 125–26, 168, 208–10, 243; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 504–6.

During the summer of 1936, Moholy received a leave of absence from his work at Simpson's, and initially his plan was to go on holiday in Hungary with his family, but he received a surprise commission to photograph the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, which he seized upon enthusiastically. Moholy went to Berlin as planned, but he soon became so disgusted by the deterioration of the political situation there that he would not stay for long. To his disgust and dismay, he found that old friends defended their conversion to Nazism to him. When he went to retrieve some thirty paintings of his that were being stored by Sibyl's old housekeeper, he discovered, to his horror, that they had been destroyed by her husband, who threatened to have Moholy arrested for "cultural bolshevism." Moholy did not complete his photographic project of the Olympics. Instead, he left early to join Sibyl for their holiday at the resort town of Tihany on Lake Balaton in Hungary. After stopping in Switzerland for his annual retreat at La Sarraz, Moholy returned to London in mid-September.¹¹

The one aspect of Moholy's professional life that was lacking in London was his ability to teach, which he missed dearly. By 1937, his closest companions were beginning to depart, notably Gropius, who had accepted an offer to chair the department of architecture at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. Moholy even designed the menu for his farewell dinner in March. Yet it would not be long before Moholy would join him in America. Apparently out of the blue, Moholy would receive an invitation from an organization of industrialists in Chicago that wanted to reestablish the famous Bauhaus design school in their city. Having just accepted the post at Harvard, Gropius had already turned down the industrialists' offer to lead the school, but he recommended Moholy as the "best man" for the job. Moholy would soon find himself embarking on a new adventure in the United States, just as several of his works were making a tour of Germany, having been seized by the Nazis as part of their infamous exhibit of "degenerate" art (*Entartete Kunst*).¹²

The organization that would invite Moholy to Chicago was the Association of Arts and Industries, which had been formed in 1922 by a group of industrialists, department store executives, financiers, designers, architects, and artists. An artist and designer named Norma K. Stahle was, from the beginning, the dominant figure in the group. She was central to its foundation and served first as the Association's executive secretary and, later, as its executive director. The *raison d'être* of the Association was to establish an industrial arts school that would, in the spirit of the Bauhaus, bring together manufacturers and de-

11 Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 99–100; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 427–28, 492.

12 Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 470, 507–13; Senter, "Moholy-Nagy in England," 101, 175–76, 259–61.

signers in a productive union, and to provide scholarships for young industrial artists. In its first substantial attempt at supporting such a school in 1931, the Association, with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation, lent financial assistance to the School of Industrial Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, the design department of which was headed by Alfonso Iannelli, who had briefly studied at the Bauhaus.

By 1935, however, the members of the Association had become dissatisfied with the School and withdrew their financial support from the Art Institute. Instead, they decided to found their own industrial design school. In addition to a substantial capital fund of more than one-hundred thousand dollars, they could offer a twenty-five-room, nineteenth-century mansion on South Prairie Avenue that had been donated by department store heir Marshall Field III. The house would be remodeled and used to quarter the school's classrooms, and the adjacent stables would be converted to workshops. In May of 1937, Stahle offered the position of director of the new school to the famous founder of the Bauhaus himself, Gropius. Gropius, who had toyed with the idea of reestablishing the Bauhaus in England, thought the idea for the school was "splendid," but he was not about to leave his prestigious new post at Harvard for such a speculative venture. Instead, Gropius recommended his "nearest collaborator" at the Bauhaus, Moholy. Moholy did not have the stature of Gropius, but he was known in modern art circles and through the English translation of his book, *Von Material zu Architektur*, which had appeared as *The New Vision* in a translation by Daphne M. Hoffman in 1928. Gropius said that Moholy was ideally suited for the position, endowed with a "rare creative power" and "most energetic character" that would stimulate students.¹³

Still living in London, Moholy received a terse cablegram from Stahle, offering him the position of director at a new design school in Chicago that would be organized along the lines of the Bauhaus, which was, as far as Stahle was concerned, the paragon of design education. Although Sibyl urged him to decline, Moholy was "highly interested" in the prospect, which struck him "like lightening." He requested more details. Stahle consulted in person with Gropius about Moholy, and in subsequent correspondence she described the Field mansion and the motivations of the Association to establish a design

13 Engelbrecht, "Association of Arts and Industries," 1–2, 33–106, 213–27; Gropius to Stahle, May 18, 1937, in Wingler, *Bauhaus*, 192; Elizabeth Paepcke, "Moholy-Nagy, The New Bauhaus," September 18, 1969, box 62, folder 1, Walter P. Paepcke Papers, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center [hereafter, "WPP"]; Henry Holmes Smith to "Sirs," February 22, 1936, box 7, folder 203, Institute of Design Collection, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois at Chicago [hereafter, "ID"]; "Association of Arts and Industries" [brochure], ca. 1937, box 1, folder 1, ID.

school “without any hampering traditions” in “this great manufacturing district of the Middle West.” Gropius encouraged Moholy to take up the offer, suggesting that the pedagogical methods of the Bauhaus had universal validity and could be applied just as well in America as they had been in Europe. On June 14, Stahle invited Moholy to Chicago for negotiations, and a few days later Moholy had already booked his passage to America. After a weeklong journey across the Atlantic on a steamship, he would arrive in New York on July 8. The skyscrapers that greeted him there impressed him as an “incredible symphony of shape and light.” After a brief rendezvous with Walter and Ise Gropius at their summer house on Cape Cod, Moholy made his way to Chicago, where he arrived in mid-July.

Moholy stayed in the Knickerbocker Hotel, where he would remain for nearly three months. His first impressions of Chicago stimulated his creative, progressive inclinations because he felt the city to be “incomplete” in some fascinating way. The city’s culture was nascent, not static or ossified, Moholy observed; it was “just a million beginnings,” and it was far away from the “paralyzing finality of the European disaster.” He was warmly welcomed by the members of the Association and the industrialists who sponsored them. They were, in Moholy’s view, rather ignorant of the Bauhaus, a bit baroque in their tastes, and generally oblivious to modernism insofar as their own interior decorations and architectural preferences went. However, they were exceedingly pleasant and eager to show off their city to Moholy, who was charmed by their efforts.

In early August, Moholy wrote to Walter and Ise Gropius from his temporary home at the Knickerbocker Hotel about the prospects under discussion for the rapid opening that fall of a new institution, the “New Bauhaus, Chicago School of Design.” Moholy excitedly speculated about a catalogue for courses and the teachers he might get to come to the school. Gropius advised Moholy to secure his contract and a core staff, and he looked forward to meeting Moholy and other exiled Bauhäusler, including Herbert Bayer and Alexander (“Xanti”) Schawinsky, for a late-summer vacation on Cape Cod. On the eve of his big presentation to the Association, Moholy was taken with the sense of possibility, newness, and expectation. He resolved to stay in Chicago, and within a week he had signed a five-year contract to direct what would become the New Bauhaus, *American School of Design*, which would open October 18. He told Sibyl to liquidate their belongings in London in preparation for their new life in America.

On August 22, the Association publicly announced the establishment of the New Bauhaus with Moholy as its director. Opening in less than two months, there would be space for seventy students. The aim of the new school, according

to Stahle, would be to “meet the needs of industry and reintegrate the artist into the life of the nation.” Moholy proposed a four-year course that would, as he put it, produce a new breed of catholic *designers*, not narrow-minded specialists or artists who had no knowledge of practical techniques. Moholy seized the opportunity to return to the original ideas of the Bauhaus, which went beyond mere vocational training and narrow specialization to construct the whole “school and man” in the context of a community. Graduates of the school would learn to work in a variety of materials and media: metals, leather, wood, and plastics, as well as photography and even color itself. The training course would culminate in the design of useful products, such as furniture. After the Bauhaus ideal of universal design was foreclosed by the crude nationalism of the Nazis, the idea of reviving the Bauhaus had become Moholy’s passion. On a trip to New York, he even met with the publisher W. W. Norton about the possibility of publishing a new series of books on the model of the *Bauhausbücher* that he had edited in the 1920s. Moholy also got in touch with the Museum of Modern Art about the possibility of reviving the Bauhaus books.

Moholy got busy giving a series of interviews and presenting lectures before the city’s elite industrialists, businessmen, and arts patrons, explaining his methods and introducing the school to the citizens of Chicago. A month after the opening of the school was made public, Moholy appeared before a crowd of eight hundred in the ballroom of the Knickerbocker Hotel to outline his plans and describe the essence of the Bauhaus philosophy. At the base of Moholy’s approach to design pedagogy, particularly as he had taught it in his preliminary or foundation course, was the idea that everyone is talented. Rather than studying the finished accomplishments and techniques of masters, students would be encouraged to rediscover the “sensorial directness” of a child. This was a method of teaching that emphasized the fundamentals of materials, color, and space, and the relationship between these basic elements and humans’ interaction with them. Moholy imagined an “illiterate of the future” whose ineptitude would be defined less by an inability to produce and interpret texts than by an incapacity to produce and interpret images, forms, spaces, and materials.

Addressing the industrialists in the audience, Moholy promised that students at the school would undergo a program of “universal usefulness” that would ultimately train them as “art engineers.” “We shall work on your problems,” Moholy promised, listing the many areas of industry and mass production for which graduates of the school could provide their services: textiles, wallpaper, murals, typography, layout, photography, motion pictures, commercial art and advertising, packaging, staging, shop displays, expositions, and all kinds of architecture involving all kinds of materials. The students at the New

Bauhaus would also receive a liberal education, including philosophy and psychology, to supplement their technical training in the essential skills of design.¹⁴

Moholy quickly went about assembling a faculty, drafting the course catalogue, and rapidly making preparations to ready the school's quarters at the Marshall Field mansion, which would undergo some dramatic renovations including the addition of a box-like, modernist wing to be used for offices. Moholy sought to bring on several alumni of the German Bauhaus as faculty, and he was successful in getting Hin Bredendieck, his former assistant and a Bauhaus graduate, as an instructor for the Basic Design Workshop. However, a lack of funds for salaries and trouble acquiring visas made it impossible for Moholy to recruit as many Bauhäusler as he would have liked. He could not secure Xanti Schawinsky and Herbert Bayer for the first term, for example. He also struggled to convince some prospects, such as the art historian James J. Sweeney, that the school would be financially stable and sufficiently independent from the vocational demands of the Association's board. To serve as an instructor of drawing and the so-called "light" studio, Moholy called on Kepes, though he would not arrive in Chicago until several weeks after the start of classes: he was delayed by his failed attempt to join the Loyalist antifascist forces fighting Franco in the Spanish Civil War. In the absence of Kepes, Moholy hired the American photographer Henry Holmes Smith, who had been impressed by Moholy's approach to photography as he had described it in *The New Vision*. Also joining the faculty were the Ukrainian-born sculptor Alexander Archipenko, whom Moholy had known in Berlin and who would oversee the modeling workshop, and David Dushkin, who would lead the music and instrument-building workshops. Gropius would serve as an adviser "in all school matters" to the New Bauhaus, which he granted the right to use the name of the school he had founded. Gropius himself would dedicate the school in Chicago on November 9, 1937. In a speech entitled "Education toward Creative Design," he reaffirmed the Bauhaus principles of bringing together the arts and industry in the spirit of social democracy.

14 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 139–50; "Bauhaus Will Open in Chicago in Fall," *New York Times*, August 22, 1937; "Gropius Aide Here to Run Art School," *New York Times*, September 2, 1937; "American School of Design to Open Here this Fall," *Chicago News*, August 23, 1937; "The New Bauhaus, American School of Design," catalog, 1937–38, box 3, folder 53, ID; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 546–60; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 39–48; Engelbrecht, "Association," 227; Moholy-Nagy to Walter and Ise Gropius, August 5, 1937, Inv.Nr. 2249346, Walter Gropius Open Archive, Bauhaus-Archiv/Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin [hereafter, "WGOA"]; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, August 8, 1937, Inv.Nr. 2249346, WGOA; Moholy-Nagy to Ise and Walter Gropius, August 18, 1937, Inv.Nr. 2249346, WGOA; Moholy-Nagy, "The Bauhaus problem today," January 1928, box 7, folder 209, ID; Secretary to Moholy-Nagy to L. Browning, October 1, 1937, WGOA; Stahle to Moholy-Nagy, May 29, 1937, quoted in George Fred Keck, "History of the Institute of Design," transcript, August 1955, box 62, folder 1, WPP.

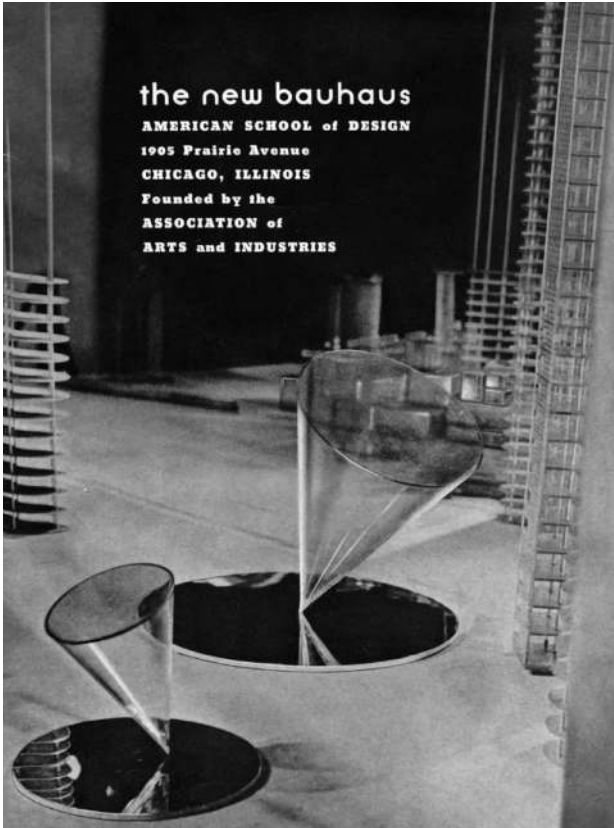


FIGURE 5
Cover of the first catalog of the New Bauhaus, "American School of Design," 1937-38. SOURCE: Institute of Design collection, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois, Chicago.

In reviving the Bauhaus in Chicago, Moholy became invigorated by the work of realizing a holistic educational institution that brought together scientists, designers, artists, and humanists in a collaborative effort to achieve unity and "restore balance to our lives." The New Bauhaus, in Moholy's vision, would train designers to deepen their sense of social responsibility, social conscience, and "social integration," so that they could develop a "universal outlook" and fully comprehend their integral function in the modern world. The school itself would be more than a vocational institution; it would be a cultural community. The training offered by the school would serve the practical task of "reintegrating the artist into the daily work of the nation."

Having received special permission from their president, faculty members from the University of Chicago would teach various supplementary courses in the humanities under the rubric of "intellectual integration." They were mostly from the "Unity of Science" movement led by Charles Morris and the German émigré Rudolf Carnap. Morris was a confidant of John Dewey, the progressive

pedagogy theorist who would find a kindred spirit in Moholy. Carnap had been a member of the “Vienna Circle” of logical positivists, the milieu in which he participated in intellectual debates with Paul Lazarsfeld, who himself had been drawn to the problem-solving possibilities of the Unity of Science concept. Carnap had also lectured at the German Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer. A sense of “social integration” was essential for artists to command the “instruments and materials of the modern world,” according to Morris. “The program of the New Bauhaus,” he continued, “with its stress upon the esthetical and intellectual elements, should lead to a clearer understanding of the nature of art and its relation to other human activities. But science has a second contribution to make: it can give new resources for the fulfillment of the artist-designer’s task.”

The program of the New Bauhaus deliberately followed the model of the German Bauhaus. The Bauhaus ethos centered around the idea that everyone had latent creative talents that could be drawn out through practice and technique, synthesizing art and science. Just like at the German Bauhaus, the preliminary or foundation course was meant to teach students to become conscious of their creative powers by rediscovering the sincere emotions and true observations of their inner child. Two semesters of preliminary courses would be followed by six semesters in specialized workshops. After completing this program, students would have the option of taking two additional years of study to attain a degree in architecture. Students would gain practical and theoretical training as designers of hand- and machine-made products in a variety of materials, and they would also learn stage display, exposition construction, typography, modeling, painting, and the “commercial arts.” The basic aim was to make students conscious of volume and space.

Thirty-five students enrolled for classes the first semester, and an additional forty-five students would enroll for day and night classes for the second semester. To matriculate, prospective students needed only a high school diploma, an example of their work, a statement of work, and two references. Tuition was \$150 per semester, and there were some scholarships available. In response to the requests of “many persons,” the school would, in its second semester, offer night courses for professionals in addition to the regular daytime students. The school would also offer Saturday classes for children aged six through twelve years. Moholy particularly loved the children’s courses for their similarity to the preliminary Bauhaus courses.¹⁵

15 “The New Bauhaus, American School of Design,” catalog, 1937–38, box 3, folder 53, ID; “The New Bauhaus, American School of Design,” catalog, 1938–39, box 3, folder 54, ID; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 150–56; “EXHIBITION: Work from the Preliminary Course, 1937–1938, The New Bauhaus, American School of Design,” box 3, folder 56, ID; Allen, *Romance of Commerce*, 58–60; Margolin, *Struggle for Utopia*,

From the beginning, however, there were obstacles to Moholy's dream of reviving the Bauhaus in Chicago. Some among the first cohort of students had enrolled with a mistaken impression of the Bauhaus, thinking that it was a free-wheeling "community of free artists" and not the disciplined design school that it was. Their desire for self-direction and individuality—which followed the model of the nineteenth-century independent artist that the Bauhaus had specifically rejected—had to be quickly redirected to the socially-conscious design instruction that was at the heart of the Bauhaus idea. Another threat to the viability of the Bauhaus in Chicago was the news that Mies van der Rohe would be coming to Chicago to direct the architecture program at the Armour Institute. Mies, of course, was the last director of the Bauhaus in Berlin before it was shut down by the Nazis, though under Mies the school had drifted from its founding ideals, and Moholy viewed Mies as a competitor, or even something of a nemesis. Moholy sought to neutralize this apparent challenge to his claim to the Bauhaus by proposing a joint architecture program with Mies. However, the Association, which had little interest in architectural education, opposed it. In any case, a simmering resentment would remain between Mies and Moholy, both of whom felt that they had rightful ownership of the "Bauhaus" name, though only Moholy had been given Gropius's blessing to use it. Gropius himself believed that the New Bauhaus would not be fully equipped to manage an architecture program, and the imminent arrival of Mies only affirmed that view.¹⁶

Nevertheless, Moholy maintained his fierce devotion to making the New Bauhaus succeed in Chicago. He worked tirelessly, typically spending twelve hours a day at the school. At the conclusion of the first semester, his optimism was still virtually unbounded. "In spite of the short time our students worked like bulls and they accomplished most wonderful things," Moholy wrote to Gropius, noting that the students' final exhibition had been a "great success." Already looking forward to the next year, Moholy wanted to get the Bauhaus alumni Herbert Bayer, whom he wanted to teach typography, and Xanti Schawinsky, who had the intention of coming. The French painter Jean Hélion had also committed himself to teach the following year. Moholy and Sibyl had, meanwhile, become more deeply integrated into the Chicago art and theater

222–23; Robert J. Wolff, "From Prairie Avenue to Ontario Street—1938–39," n.d., box 7, folder 209, ID; Illustration, February 1941, box 6, folder 172, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Ise and Walter Gropius, October 8, 1937, Inv.Nr. 2249346, WGOA; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 46–78, 188; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 555–69; Invitation to dinner honoring Gropius on the founding of the New Bauhaus, November 9, 1937, box 3, folder 52, ID; Engelbrecht, "Association of Arts and Industries," 273–86; "Night Class and Spring Semester 1938," box 3, folder 55, ID; Moholy-Nagy, "The Bauhaus in Chicago: Moholy-Nagy Explains," letter to the art editor, *New York Times*, January 1, 1939.

¹⁶ Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 78–79, 146; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 574.

scene, which they enjoyed despite its being, in their view, quite subordinate to Berlin. Yet Chicago industrialists were taking an interest in the work of the school, and Moholy believed that they might be able to help him to use technology in the interest of human progress, to eliminate the gap between the “economic and cultural potentialities of the industrial age and its reality.” Gropius was receiving inquiries from people who wanted to send their children to the New Bauhaus, and Moholy made regular tours of the Midwest to promote the school to potential students and financial backers.

The Association’s board of directors, however, struggled to comprehend Moholy’s method of Bauhaus design education, and they questioned his leadership despite his evident popularity with the students. Enrollment for the second semester had exceeded expectations, adding twenty-two students for the daytime classes in addition to the thirty-three from the first semester, all but three of whom successfully completed the course and elected to return for the second semester. An additional eighteen enrolled for the new evening classes, which would include a lecture series on psychology and arts criticism and a class taught by Morris on “Intellectual Integration,” which was the “verbal correlate” to what the Bauhaus sought to do in practice. The class would furnish students with information on physics, biology, physiology, and other topics that had a bearing on their full understanding of their “surroundings and the world of intellectual activity.” The frenzied atmosphere at the school quickly revealed the limitations of the cramped space available for workshops at the Field Mansion. But in a sign of things to come, the Association would not commit to an expansion.¹⁷

Increasingly, the industrialists on the board of the Association would resist Moholy’s direction of the New Bauhaus. According to Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, the members of the board’s executive committee offered an “unending stream of criticism and naïve advice” to the faculty and staff, completely misapprehending Moholy’s pedagogical methods. A few students also complained about the unorthodox Bauhaus approach to design education. In June of 1938, Moholy learned that Stahle was considering replacing him as director, possibly with Archipenko and with the support of Hin Bredendieck. Bredendieck was advocat-

17 Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, January 4, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249371, WGOA; Raymond Stevens to Gropius, January 10, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249371, WGOA; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy to Ise and Walter Gropius, February 7, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2257439, WGOA; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 154–55; “Night Class and Spring Semester 1938,” box 3, folder 55, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, February 8, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249371, WGOA; Gropius to Bayer, February 11, 1938, Inv.Nr. 623895, WGOA; Sibyl to Ise Gropius, April 8, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2257439, WGOA; Gropius to Bayer, May 11, 1938, Inv.Nr. 623895, WGOA; Harris, “New Bauhaus”; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 79–80; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 569; “EXHIBITION: Work from the Preliminary Course, 1937–1938, The New Bauhaus,” box 3, folder 56, ID; C.W. Morris, “Intellectual Integration,” April 2, 1938, box 3, folder 64, ID.

ing for a more vocational, market-based direction for the school. One of his proposed initiatives was to transform the “color” workshop into a more practical course in industrial surface treatments. Nevertheless, Bredendieck, along with Kepes and Archipenko, would commit to returning to teach at the New Bauhaus for the fall term, and eventually they would make amends with Moholy despite their flirting with betrayal.

Knowing that he was in danger of losing the support of the Association’s board and the members of the executive committee, Moholy took it upon himself to tour the industrial cities in the Midwest and along the East Coast in search of support for the New Bauhaus. The arrangement of his tour was somewhat haphazard: he found the names of prospective companies from a Dun and Bradstreet directory and set off on the road with Sibyl. He met with some limited success, and he was able to pique the interest of several industrialists, such as the Du Pont company in Wilmington, Delaware. Having had much experience appealing to and accommodating the desires of industrialists and businesspeople, Moholy managed to convince some of these business leaders of the value of the Bauhaus idea. Their support typically came not in the form of direct grants but rather as arrangements for sponsorships, donations of essential materials, and other kinds of working collaborations. While on his tour, Moholy also visited Gropius, who helped him to arrange a meeting with Frederick Keppel, director of the Carnegie Corporation. Keppel was impressed by Moholy’s pitch and would send an investigator to report on the school’s operations, leaving open the possibility of a future grant.

But by the time Moholy and Sibyl returned to Chicago in the middle of August, they learned that the Association would no longer be able to support the school. Due to its losses in the stock market, the Association’s financial situation had become very dire. Many of the big-name industrialists on the board, it turned out, had merely lent their names and could offer nothing more substantial. Although some members of the Association’s board indicated their desire to support the school, they confessed that the continuing economic depression had so shattered the school’s financial underpinnings that its continuation was no longer viable. Although the catalogue had been printed and the fall term was set to begin on September 26, the president of the Association, E. H. Powell, advised Moholy to notify the faculty that they would likely be relieved of their contracts.

Indeed, the faculty would be notified that the school would probably not open in the fall, and they were advised to look for other positions. The board’s executive committee had made the decision without consulting Moholy, ignoring the time and effort he had spent over the summer building up support for

the school among industrialists. Stahle apologized for the school's having been "hastily organized," and she suggested privately that part of the reason the school did not have better success in fundraising may have been because of the presence of "foreigners"—despite the fact that only three of the ten instructors were recent immigrants. At the same time, Stahle flirted with the possibility of reopening the school, but without Moholy. She even considered getting another one of the Bauhäusler, Josef Albers, for the role. According to a student, her aims were "personal, petty, and trivial," having everything to do with Moholy the man and nothing to do with his intentions and work.

The faculty of the New Bauhaus, including Archipenko, formally pledged their support for Moholy in a declaration prepared by Charles Morris, who felt that the whole situation was a "mess and a great tragedy." They expressed their deep sense of loss to the cultural and educational community of Chicago for the Association's failure to open the school. They lamented the "administrative failure" of the Association to live up to its commitment to the school, and in arranging the statement they complained of the "obstructionist policies" and "unenlightened whims" of the Association's board of directors. Henry Holmes Smith posited that the members of the board wanted "immediate results," but Moholy's goal, as Smith saw it, was a long-term project of "modifying a nation's outlook." Only Bredendieck, who had questioned Moholy's methods, initially hesitated in supporting the declaration of loyalty, but even he ultimately signed the document. However, Sibyl would claim that Bredendieck maintained contact with Stahle and even started instructing a small number of former students "somewhere in a basement" but without the support of the Association.

The declaration of support was not successful in convincing the Association to reverse course, but it did lift Moholy's spirits. Moholy began to frantically search for outside support for the school, possibly from a university in or near Chicago, so that at least the spring semester might be salvaged. At the same time, however, he began to look for work as a commercial designer, and he was lucky to rather quickly find a position as an art advisor for the mail-order house Spiegel, for which he was retained for the substantial sum of \$10,000 per year. He would also receive offers to teach at several schools, though he did not like the idea of being merely a "single professor" when he really wanted to strive toward a "great social achievement" along the lines of the Bauhaus. Yet he felt tremendously betrayed by Stahle and the Association. He had been invited to the United States with a five-year contract, but he was left with nothing at all after only a year. Several of the New Bauhaus instructors, who were now broke and jobless, would be forced to rely on the charity of Moholy and Sibyl, who offered their apartment and other basic necessities. The eighty stu-

dents who had registered for classes at the New Bauhaus that fall would have to put their design education on hold.

On October 16, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that the New Bauhaus would close, and that Moholy had filed a lawsuit against the Association for breaching his five-year contract. He had refused their offer of \$4,200 in compensation, which would come nowhere near the \$800 monthly salary his contract had promised him over the remaining four years of the term. The Association's attorney offered the bizarre defense that they would not stand for anyone trying to "Hitlerize" the school—a strange line of argument against someone whose European career had been effectively destroyed by the Nazis. Provoked by Moholy's lawsuit against the Association for back pay, the Association launched a countersuit against Moholy, seeking \$50,000 in damages. The Association's lawsuit was "the most outrageous accumulation of slander and lies," according to Sibyl, and it was apparently based on Bredendieck's misleading assertions. Because the Association's only real asset was the Field mansion, a settlement would ultimately award Moholy a lien on the mortgage for the mansion and the equipment used at the school. Gropius, too, took steps toward legal action against the Association, seeking ownership over the name "Bauhaus." He secured the pro bono services of a Chicago law firm to represent him. Gropius claimed to have permitted Moholy alone to use the name, and that any design school administered by the Association, but not directed by Moholy, would be forbidden from being called the "Bauhaus." Schawinsky, Hélon, and Bayer supported Moholy's claim to the Bauhaus name.

Ironically, just as the New Bauhaus was collapsing, its reputation in the United States was growing. An issue of the trade periodical *More Business* devoted an entire issue to the school in November of 1938. The issue featured an article by Moholy in which he articulated the principles of the Bauhaus pedagogical method and design ethos for an audience of American industrialists. Moholy described the school's workshops in wood, metal, textiles, color, glass, clay, plastics, display, and "light," which included photography, motion pictures, and the commercial arts. He also emphasized the basic principles of the Bauhaus. "Based upon the conviction that contemporary education easily leads into isolated specialization," Moholy wrote, "the Bauhaus education gives first the fundamentals of design, a comprehensive knowledge of all fields connected with the future tasks of a designer." Through Morris, Moholy had become acquainted with the progressive educational philosophy of John Dewey, with whom he conferred late in 1938. Dewey was positively impressed by Moholy's approach to design education, and Moholy was, in turn, enthralled by Dewey's recently-published book, *Experience and Education*. At the same time, a new ex-

hibition had opened at the Museum of Modern Art, *Bauhaus 1919–1928*, which included some works by students at the New Bauhaus and made the school newly relevant to an American audience. A new edition of Moholy's *New Vision* also appeared that fall from publisher W. W. Norton, which included photographs of students' work at the New Bauhaus. It had sold out of its first print run by Christmas. Moholy hoped to use it as propaganda for the foundation of a new school, or a "reconstruction."¹⁸

Conclusion

London was both a place of refuge and a time of transition for Moholy, as he re-adjusted to life in exile and tried to plan for the future despite the difficult circumstances of the present. After being forced out of Berlin by the Nazi regime's attack on modernism as a degenerate form of "cultural bolshevism," Moholy became increasingly involved in commercial projects for industrial exhibitions and advertising campaigns in Amsterdam, which he would continue in London. Moholy's personal connections to Gropius and other prominent figures in the world of modern art, and his association with the famous Bauhaus school of design, would be essential to the success he had in finding commercial commissions and other opportunities to make a living and support his growing family. In London in the 1930s, the worlds of commercial design, modern art, and radical politics frequently and productively intersected. Although the activist bent to Moholy's politics began to soften in these years, he became increasingly in-

18 Edna Vergonet to Henry Smith, August 16, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Stahle to George Fred Keck, September 12, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Grace Seelig to Henry Smith, September 27, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; "New Bauhaus School Closes; Director Sues," *Chicago Tribune*, October 16, 1938; Morris to Henry Smith, October 16, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 156–63; "Moholy-Nagy to Sándor Bortnyik," January 24, 1939, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 406–7; Wingler, *Bauhaus*, 196–97; Moholy-Nagy, "New Approach to Fundamentals of Design"; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 80–85; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, August 5, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249448, WGOA; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, August 9, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249448, WGOA; Sibyl to Ise Gropius, August 16, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2257439, WGOA; Morris to Henry Smith, October 16, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; C.A. Coolidge to Gropius, October 24, 1938, and C.A. Coolidge to J.R. Kohler, Esquire, October 24, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249491, WGOA; J.R. Cohler to C.A. Coolidge, October 26, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249491, WGOA; Sibyl to Gropius, November 9, 1938, Inv.Nr. 2249491, WGOA; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 576–84, 591; Moholy-Nagy to Henry Smith, December 7, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Henry Smith to Moholy-Nagy, December 10, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Nathan Lerner to Henry Smith, December 18, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Morris to Henry Smith, December 25, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Moholy-Nagy, "The Bauhaus in Chicago: Moholy-Nagy Explains"; C.A. Coolidge to Gropius, January 10, 1939, Inv.Nr. 2249531, WGOA; J.R. Cohler to Ropes, Gray, Boyden & Perkins, January 7, 1939, Inv.Nr. 2249531, WGOA; J.R. Cohler to Xanti Shawinsky, Jean Hélon, and Herbert Bayer, January 7, 1939, Inv.Nr. 2249531, WGOA; Morris to Engelbrecht, June 3, 1968, box 7, folder 196, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Henry Smith, December 1, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID; Henry Smith to Leonard Nederkorn, December 10, 1938, box 7, folder 203, ID.

terested in the ways in which a progressive, social-democratic politics could be expressed via commercial arts and consumer goods. He saw no contradiction in working on avant-garde films and at the same time designing displays for an upscale menswear store. Working with collaborators such as György Kepes, Moholy established himself as a modern artist who knew how to work well with industry in the true spirit of the Bauhaus. Moholy's intractable optimism would get him through these years, and it was an attribute that would mark him as the best man to start up the Bauhaus once again in America.

Having turned down the Association of Arts and Industries' offer himself, Gropius vigorously recommended his close confidant Moholy to lead the New Bauhaus in Chicago. Moholy embraced the role enthusiastically, which he saw as an opportunity to reestablish the Bauhaus and fulfill its pedagogical role and design potential as both an educational institution and a cooperative community that brought together art, science, and modern industry. Moholy had mixed results in his attempts to put together a faculty with experience at the original Bauhaus, but given the extremely compressed timeframe he was forced to work with he did well enough, and the basic program of the Bauhaus was reproduced in Chicago with some success in its first year. Yet the withdrawal of support from the Association—and the difficulty Moholy had in securing support from industry—was an indication of the limits of fully executing the Bauhaus concept in the American context. Still, Moholy's school had won some prominent academic supporters, including John Dewey, and the business world was beginning to pay more attention. Fortunately, for Moholy and the New Bauhaus, an industrialist with a penchant for modern art would take it upon himself to rescue the school from oblivion.



NEW DEAL IN A NEW COUNTRY

7

**Rockefeller's Radio:
Lazarsfeld and Mass Communications Research**

In the fall of 1936, just as Paul Lazarsfeld was settling into his role as director of the Research Center at the University of Newark, John Marshall of the Humanities division at the Rockefeller Foundation approached Hadley Cantril, a professor in the social sciences at Princeton, about setting up a radio research project under the auspices of the university. Cantril was then in the process of founding the journal *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and with co-author Gordon Allport he had produced one of the first important studies on how radio was creating a “new mental world” in *The Psychology of Radio*, published in 1935. Marshall was an amateur radio enthusiast and an early supporter of research into the social effects of mass communications, and, on this basis, the Trustees of the Foundation had called on him to see what kind of study could be done about radio. They wanted to know who was listening and why, and what they liked and disliked. Ultimately, they wanted to find a way to demonstrate that there was an audience for programs of a “higher educational value,” so that broadcasters might develop such more culturally “valuable” kinds of programs.

Marshall had come across *The Psychology of Radio*, which led him to reach out to Cantril. Although Cantril was considered to be an expert in the field, he initially expressed little interest in Marshall’s proposal to investigate the transformative impact of radio on American society, despite the fact that Marshall was evidently “anxious” to give him the money. He notified Frank Stanton, head of research at the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), about the opportunity. “I told Marshall that you were the sort of person who should do a thing like this and he wonders if you and I would like to cook up a program of research, have it ‘sponsored’ by Princeton, with you engineering the thing and perhaps getting ‘leave’ from CBS,” wrote Cantril. “It is quite vague and may all fall

through. I personally don't give a damn about it since my interests are elsewhere. But if you should want it I think we could get something out of Marshall."¹

The social power of radio in the 1930s was indisputable, but the precise nature of its effects, particularly as a commercial medium, were little understood. The contemporaneous development of radio and the rise of dictators like Mussolini and Hitler, who had used it to antidemocratic ends, had also contributed to fears that the new medium could undermine democracy and create the conditions for mass dictatorship.² The idea of studying radio as a mass medium, and using it positively as a tool of education, was first considered by the Rockefeller Foundation around 1936, when its support for the humanities originated in the meetings of the General Education Board. David H. Stevens, director of Education, became the first full-time director of Humanities at the Rockefeller Foundation in 1932, and Marshall came on as assistant director in 1933. In 1934, the Foundation's Trustees issued a report suggesting that the Humanities division should direct its attention to supporting the study of the new media of mass communication, particularly radio, in the educational interest of widening the "area of public appreciation."³ It was the view of the Trustees of the Foundation that the Humanities and Social Sciences programs ought to reform their efforts with greater attention to contemporary society and efforts to influence the tastes and ideas of large masses of people.⁴

The officers at the Rockefeller Foundation and the General Education Board were becoming increasingly interested in the potential of radio for cultural enrichment and social progress, even as they lamented the almost universally

1 Cantril to Stanton, October 26, [1936], box 20, folder 11, Frank Stanton Papers [hereafter, "FS"], Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.); Marshall to Lazarsfeld, January 12, 1969, Blau Mappen 20, Bio-4, Paul F. Lazarsfeld Archiv, Institut für Soziologie, Universität Wien [hereafter, "PFL Vienna"]; Douglas, *Listening In*, 131; Cantril and Allport, *The Psychology of Radio* (New York: Peter Smith, 1941) [original 1935]; Converse, *Survey Research*, 149. Stanton later recalled that he was "one of two who brought [Lazarsfeld] to this country," and he took great pleasure in the success of Lazarsfeld, whom he called "one of the giants in the social sciences." Bartos and Pearson, "Founding Fathers," 1–32; Morrison, "Beginning of Modern Mass Communication Research," 347–59, Blau Mappen 4, (about PFL-2), PFL Vienna.

2 See Alpers, *Dictators*.

3 John Marshall, untitled manuscript, 1959, box 3, folder 36, FA053, John Marshall Papers [hereafter, "JM"], Rockefeller Archive Center [hereafter, "RAC"], Sleepy Hollow, New York; "Time in the Humanities Program," Report to the Trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation, June 1, 1949, box 4, folder 15, RG IV2A34, David H. Stevens Papers [hereafter, "DHS"], RAC; John Marshall, untitled manuscript, June 23, 1949, box 1, folder 4a, Series 911, RG 3, Administration, Program and Policy [hereafter, "APP"], FA112, Rockefeller Foundation Records [hereafter, "RF"], RAC; A.W. Armour, memorandum to David Stevens, June 3, 1931, box 358, folder 3696, Series 1.2, FA058, General Education Board Records [hereafter, "GEB"], RAC.

4 David Stevens, "The Humanities Program of the Rockefeller Foundation: A Review of the Period 1934 to 1939," October 25, 1939, box 3, folder 12, RG IV2A34, RAC; Morrison, "Beginning of Modern Mass Communication Research," 347–59.

commercial nature of American radio and other mass media in the 1930s. At the time, the broadcasting industry was, Marshall said, "more or less exclusively concerned with the listener as a prospective purchaser," and was only interested in identifying the audience "most likely to buy the product advertised on the radio."⁵ They supported projects meant to experiment with the development of radio programs that had "cultural and educational value," such as language-learning programs.⁶ In April of 1935, the Trustees of the Foundation indicated their support for "cooperative efforts" of the radio industry and non-commercial groups toward the end of improving the "cultural effectiveness" of radio and its usefulness as a public service. Through the Humanities program, the Foundation made grants for the development of cultural and educational radio programs, and in support of experimental public-service radio stations and networks like WIXAL in Boston and the Rocky Mountain Radio Council. Edward R. Murrow, who by 1936 had left his positions at the Institute of International Education and the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars to become the Director of Talks at CBS, coordinated with John Marshall on the development of educational broadcasting. By the middle of 1937, the Foundation had spent \$288,870 on research and development of educational, culturally-enriching radio. Foundation officers also began to sponsor studies that employed personal interviews to examine listeners' likes and dislikes, with the hope that their full range of interests, until then unknown to commercial broadcasters, might be revealed. One of those studies was to be carried out by a group of social psychologists at Princeton University.⁷

In May of 1937, the Foundation awarded \$67,000 to the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University for the first two years of a proposed four-year study on the "value of radio to listeners" in the interest of "broadening radio's range of public service." Despite his initial disinterest, Cantril would serve alongside Stanton as associate directors of the study, which would use the School as its headquarters. There would also be an Executive Committee composed of educators as well as representatives of major commercial broadcasters. Beyond basic questions of who listens to what and when, the

5 "Radio in the Schools," memorandum, November 30, 1934, box 358, folder 3696, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; David Stevens, memorandum, January 22, 1936, box 5, folder 50, RG 3.1, APP, FA112, RF, RAC.

6 "Radio Programs—Development—Boston," June 21, 1935, box 1, folder 7, RG IV2A34, DHS, RAC.

7 John Marshall, "JM's statement on radio," June 1936, box 5, folder 50, Series 911, RG 3, APP, FA112, RF, RAC; "E.R. Murrow, Director of Talks, CBS, at Danvers, Mass.," box 359, folder 3704, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; "The Foundation and Broadcasting," ca. 1937, box 5, folder 50, Series 911, RG 3.1, APP, FA112, RF, RAC; John Marshall, "Radio in RF and GEB Program: Retrospect and Prospect," June 1937, box 358, folder 3696, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; David Stevens, "The Humanities Program of the Rockefeller Foundation: A Review of the Period 1934 to 1939," October 25, 1939, box 3, folder 12, RG IV2A34, RAC.

proposed study aimed to discover the role of radio in the lives of listeners and the social effects of radio-listening. The research on radio listening that had been done up to that point had been almost exclusively of a commercial nature and in the interest of increasing the mass appeal of radio for the industry and its advertising sponsors. To some extent, the industry even had an interest in remaining ignorant about some aspects of radio-listening: studies might show that there were not as many listeners as they claimed, or that certain programs lacked the mass appeal that advertisers desired.⁸ The Foundation's efforts finally coalesced as the "Princeton Radio Research Project," which aimed to discover those "public needs which radio can satisfy."⁹

The project still needed a director, though. Cantril, Allport, and Stanton had encountered the promising young social researcher Paul Lazarsfeld while he was touring the country on his Rockefeller fellowship from 1933–35, and they had him in mind as a possible director of the Radio Research Project, given his experience surveying radio listeners as director of the *Österreichische Wirtschaftspsychologische Forschungsstelle* in Vienna. Similar to the "Link Audit" discussed in Chapter 4, Lazarsfeld had considered establishing a "barometer" based on survey research to record and analyze the radio listening habits of the general population. Lazarsfeld admitted that he had no expertise in studying the medium, and that for him "there was little difference between chocolate research and the radio research," but he had also shared with Cantril and Allport studies done on radio at the *Forschungsstelle* by Herta Herzog, which they evidently appreciated. It appears that Lazarsfeld had also asked Allport about a fellowship for Herzog.¹⁰

Stanton, who would later serve as president of CBS from 1946 to 1971, was immediately impressed with Lazarsfeld's ability. Cantril had his doubts—possibly because he considered Lazarsfeld to be his rival—but Lazarsfeld's American savior, the Columbia sociologist Robert Lynd, once again came to the rescue, convincing Cantril that Lazarsfeld would be perfect for the position. That summer of 1937, Lazarsfeld had returned to Austria to help his first wife, Marie Jahoda—the acting director of the *Forschungsstelle* who had been imprisoned for her illegal socialist activities—to get out of jail and out of the country. With

8 "Princeton University–School of Public and International Affairs–Study of Radio," RF 37072, May 21, 1937, in "Humanities Appropriations, 1936–1940," box 2, folder 8, RG IV2A34, DHS, RAC.

9 John Marshall, "Next Jobs in Radio and Film," memorandum, September 13, 1938, box 5, folder 50, Series 911, RG 3.1, APP, FA112, RF, RAC.

10 Jahoda, "The emergence of social psychology in Vienna," 347. Cantril to Lazarsfeld, December 11, 1933; Allport to Lazarsfeld, November 22, 1933; Allport to Lazarsfeld, December 22, 1933, *Blaue Mappe* 17, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna. Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, *Rote Mappen*, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

the help of the British Labour government, Lazarsfeld had been assisting her in her efforts to migrate to England. Lazarsfeld and Jahoda had separated, but they had a daughter together, Lotte, whom Lazarsfeld wanted to bring to the United States because "England wasn't so pleasant a place anymore by this time."

In August of 1937, Cantril wrote to Lazarsfeld in Europe. He notified Lazarsfeld that the Rockefeller Foundation had awarded a grant to the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton for the purpose of establishing a center for radio research. The aim was to "determine eventually the role of radio in the lives of different types of listeners, the value of radio to people psychologically, and the various reasons why they like it." Cantril noted that Marshall was quite excited about the project getting at "some of the 'why' questions so long neglected." Lazarsfeld of course had become well known in public opinion research circles for his articles on motivation research and the problems of choice—precisely those "why" questions. Echoing the writing of Walter Lippmann, perhaps, Cantril wanted to test the reliability of listeners' judgments and the role of stereotypes in their appraisals.

Cantril rather awkwardly noted that Lazarsfeld was not his first choice for the directorship of this project—that would be Frank Stanton, who was unfortunately determined to remain at CBS. For himself, Cantril admitted that his heart was not in this type of research, nor was he very good at it. Cantril revealed that he had written Lynd for a recommendation, seeking "someone like Lazarsfeld" but not the man himself, on the presumption that Lazarsfeld would want to stay at Newark. But when Lynd replied that Lazarsfeld was the best man for the job, Cantril finally acceded, and reluctantly offered Lazarsfeld the directorship. He also noted that Stanton and the pollster George Gallup thought very highly of him. "Lord, but I'd be relieved and happy if you would accept," he admitted. He noted that he and Stanton, acting as associate directors, would only occasionally submit ideas, and Lazarsfeld would be the sole director and true "boss" of the job. Cantril sweetened the deal by offering an assistantship to Herzog, who would become Lazarsfeld's second wife. Herzog had written a dissertation on the effects of radio and Lazarsfeld reported that she had been trained in Vienna by the Bùhlers in introspection, which equipped her with skills to help him with those aspects of his research and writing. Cantril initially rejected Lazarsfeld's request to base the research in Newark, but suggested that much of the work could possibly be done there.¹¹

11 Cantril to Lazarsfeld, August 9, 1937, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Austrian Sociologists in the United States," speech, Austrian Institute in New York, ca. 1972, Rote Mappen, No Dates III, PFL Vienna; Personnel Security Questionnaire [form DD-48] completed by Paul F. Lazarsfeld, February 23, 1951, Rote Mappen, Biography I, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pas-

Lazarsfeld was impressed by the offer and the “fabulous” salary of seven thousand dollars, but he was hesitant to abandon the Newark Research Center, which he was convinced he could develop into a “great bureau.” He was attached to his research institutes as though they were “super-personalities” through which he could practice methodology and train students who would become his living legacy. He would even sometimes sign articles he had written with aliases to avoid taking too much credit. He said this institution-building desire was part of his self-effacing “European attitude” which made him hesitant to “go ahead alone.” Lazarsfeld was certain that the Newark Center was dependent on his leadership and would collapse if he left. He also feared losing contact with his friends and colleagues at Columbia, including Max Horkheimer and others from the exiled Institute of Social Research, the so-called “Frankfurt School.”

Lazarsfeld had wanted to continue on with his “art of asking why”-style of survey research, and he hesitated before accepting Cantril’s offer because he was far from certain that that kind of research would apply to surveys of radio audiences. Lazarsfeld consulted with Lynd on the matter, and he resolved to follow Lynd’s advice since he essentially owed his entire American career to him, as he very often said. “You see, even when I am a few thousand miles away you are controlling my destiny,” he wrote to Lynd. Despite Cantril’s initial resistance to the idea of a remote directorship, Lazarsfeld was finally able to convince him that he could head the project—which became the “Princeton Office of Radio Research”—from his center at Newark. Lazarsfeld was also given the title of “Research Associate” at Princeton, the official recipient of the grant, where he would maintain a “fictitious office.” But he neither worked nor lived there. “It had nothing to do with Princeton,” said Lazarsfeld. “Princeton was only a name on it, the university that got the grant.”¹² Lazarsfeld would be the real director, while Cantril’s job was to make sure Lazarsfeld did not “run away with the money.” Stanton, meanwhile, made sure Lazarsfeld knew what he was doing.¹³

anella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Cantril and Stanton, May 5, 1938, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna.

12 Lazarsfeld to Lynd, ca. 1937, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Cantril, August 8, 1937, Rote Mappen, PFL ancillary, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, Columbia Oral History [hereafter, “COH”], November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna. Lazarsfeld’s reply predates Cantril’s offer because they had been communicating over the wire. Lazarsfeld usually refers to the “Office of Radio Research,” but it is commonly referred to in Rockefeller Foundation memos and secondary accounts as the “Princeton Radio Research Project.” According to Lazarsfeld, the directorship had been “offered to everyone,” but no one accepted because they did not want to take a leave of absence from their respective professorships.

13 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

In their initial discussions, Lazarsfeld and his associate directors, Cantril and Stanton, laid out their broad goals for the "Princeton Radio Research Project." Following guidelines of the grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, they intended to use social research to answer the questions of *to whom*, *what*, and *why* one should broadcast. This would roughly follow Harold Lasswell's later formulation of communications research as "who does what to whom with what effect," where "what" was content analysis and "to whom" was audience analysis. At the same time, they were interested in improving the field of broadcasting "from a social point of view as much as it has been improved technically." They were keenly aware of radio as a "social institution" which could not merely be studied on an individual level, and that its effects were inextricably tied to larger social trends. In selecting listener panels for their studies, they intended to collect information concerning the effects of radio on all social groups, taking care to gather samples of respondents that were representative on the basis of age, occupation, economic status, sex, nationality, and residence. "Our attention will be directed toward the psychological and social factors which determine the trends and limitations of radio's influence," they stated. In anticipation of the "panel method" that would be developed at Lazarsfeld's research bureau, the directors proposed the collection of "radio biographies" which would study the changing attitudes and experiences of the same listeners over long periods of study. Lazarsfeld would also apply his interest in human motivation to the study of radio listening, which would be dealt with not through isolated studies of individuals but through quantitative analysis and the "cross-sectional interpretation" of the many studies of the Project. The directors also planned to invite psychoanalysts to conduct content analyses of radio programs and design interviewing techniques for discovering listeners' subjective experiences. "This approach might be especially helpful in our effort to clarify the rather loose pseudo-psychological vocabulary which is in vogue in the radio field," the directors hoped. "People speak indiscriminately of entertainment when such different phenomena as the emotional relief given by soft music, the thrill incited by detective stories, or the identification suggested by a play are at stake."¹⁴

Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research, as he usually referred to it, was one of the first centers devoted to the study of mass communications. Lazarsfeld was initially resistant to the idea of studying radio because he was dedicated to the scientific study of motivation, which did not appear to apply directly to the study of radio because, he thought, listeners' habits were not as concrete or mea-

14 Lazarsfeld, memorandum on "Princeton Radio Research Project" to Cantril and Stanton, ca. January 1, 1938, Rote Mappen, about bureau I, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

asurable as consumers' choices. But he came to see how the data of radio research could be used to study psychological problems, social policy, and social action. Commercial radio research was, at the time, still in an embryonic stage, and Lazarsfeld observed conspicuous logical flaws in the ways it had been done. For example, he pointed to a pollster's presumption that, because listeners of the "Ford Symphony Hour" were more likely to own a Ford, the program served as a successful advertisement. But Lazarsfeld noted that the survey researchers had failed to consider the possibility that Ford owners tuned in simply to reassure themselves of the wisdom of their purchase. Researchers at the Office of Radio Research began to develop more sophisticated methods to interpret the effects of radio on purchasing decisions. Herta Herzog, in particular, developed a method of combining qualitative and quantitative market research techniques, typically beginning studies with detailed interviews, which were followed by larger sampling for "statistical verification."

With Lazarsfeld at the helm and Herzog joining him as a close collaborator, the Office of Radio Research would become an important refuge for émigré scholars from Europe, particularly after Hitler's *Anschluss* of Austria in March of 1938, which occurred only months after the Office's founding.¹⁵ Many were helped by American aid agencies, such as the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars¹⁶ and the Committee on Displaced Foreign Psychologists, which secured a position for Karl Bühler, who had been the president of Lazarsfeld's Vienna Forschungsstelle. Indeed, nearly all of Lazarsfeld's colleagues from the Forschungsstelle were forced to flee in 1938, including Hans Zeisel, his coauthor on the Marienthal study, and Hermann Spitzer, who had briefly served as the Forschungsstelle's director and sought the Emergency Committee's support for a position at the Bureau for Retail Training at the University of Pittsburgh, where Lazarsfeld had worked with David Craig while on his Rockefeller fellowship.¹⁷ Lazarsfeld's own research centers ended up taking

15 Lazarsfeld was also able to arrange visas for his father, mother, sister, and brother-in-law after they had fled Austria for France after the *Anschluss*. They were under Lazarsfeld's financial guarantee, which helped them to avoid conviction. However, after Hitler's invasion of France, Lazarsfeld's father died of cancer in a French hospital because he received no attention under the German occupation. Lazarsfeld's sister and brother-in-law joined the French Resistance. Lazarsfeld's mother fled to the South of France to join the socialists, and she would emigrate to the United States a few weeks before Pearl Harbor. Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

16 The Committee changed its name from the "Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars" to the "Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars" after the *Anschluss* broadened the refugees crisis.

17 Betty Drury, "Minutes of the Luncheon Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars," October 6, 1939, box 6, folder 23, FA802, Alfred E. Cohn Papers [hereafter, "AEC"], RAC.

many of the refugees, including Zeisel. "I was the main source of support for Austrian refugees," Lazarsfeld recalled, as a director of a social research bureau. "That was the main source of livelihood for many people."¹⁸ According to one of Lazarsfeld's students, this was the "usual political solidarity" for a Viennese socialist, "part of which was to help others when help was needed."¹⁹

These scholars were all concerned with the issue of social stratification that had driven Lazarsfeld from his days as a Social Democrat in Vienna. Radio turned out to be the perfect medium for a corps of researchers interested in the daily lives of ordinary workers and consumers. It was unique among media for its accessibility, because after the initial investment for the radio receiver, it was virtually free. There were few geographic or economic barriers to its use—unlike magazines, newspapers, or movies, which were limited in their distribution and required a purchase for each use. Radio was ephemeral but its effects were cumulative because it continued in time, becoming part of the daily or weekly habits of listeners. Radio, furthermore, played a different role in the lives of different kinds of listeners, depending on their occupational or socio-economic status, and it was particularly relevant in the life of a housewife.

Not only the habits of listening (the effect or the "to whom") but the narrative content (the "what") of the programming was relevant to the Office's sociological analyses. Radio stories could reveal the prevalence of stratified social roles, sexist or racist stereotypes, and capitalistic ideology. A "negro character," for example, may have been reduced to a caricatured representation of "doglike devotion to his master with little or no portrayal of any individual thoughts, feelings or individuality of his own." Researchers also offered critical interpretations of the so-called "true-life" stories of radio serials, which, rather than tackling social or economic problems, could, in their view, inhibit a critical attitude and imbue the listener with a fatalistic philosophy of life, e.g., "husbands never understand their wives."²⁰

The prodigious output of the Office of Radio Research included four published volumes and two special issues of the *Journal of Applied Psychology* edited

18 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

19 Paul Neurath to David Sills, May 3, 1983, Blaue Mappen 3, (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna. Neurath was the son of Otto Neurath and the founder of the Lazarsfeld archive at the University of Vienna.

20 Lazarsfeld, "Episode," 311; Paul Neurath, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the institutionalization of empirical social research," paper, Columbia University Seminars on Content and Method of the Social Sciences, November 11, 1981, p. 6, box 185, folder 7.19, Robert K. Merton Papers [hereafter, "RKM"], Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University (New York); Fiske and Lazarsfeld, "Columbia Office," 51–59; Fiske and Lazarsfeld, "Office of Radio Research," 351–69; "Paul F. Lazarsfeld and the Office of Radio Research," June 15, 1947, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2, Biographie 1947–1960, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Richard Conweiser, n.d., T/U XI, PFL Vienna.

by Lazarsfeld that documented the myriad analytical modes the researchers used to understand the American public and its various segments through the medium of radio.²¹ Lazarsfeld's group continued to collaborate with Max Horkheimer's Institute of Social Research, and in 1941 the scholars would produce a special joint volume of the Institute's journal, *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, that attempted to bridge the methodological and epistemological divide between the Institute's dialectical "Critical Theory" and Lazarsfeld's "administrative" brand of empirical social research. Horkheimer hoped that it would impress American readers and help to reconcile Critical Theory with empirical research.²² "It gives us great satisfaction that for the first time some of our ideas have been applied specifically to American subject matters and introduced into the American methodological debate," wrote Horkheimer in the preface. "We feel particularly indebted to Paul F. Lazarsfeld who has taken categories developed by us in a totally different, highly abstract context, and attempted to present them in terms of the concrete desiderata confronting today's social research."²³

This collaboration between Lazarsfeld and the Institute had begun in Europe, continued at Newark, and became even closer when Lazarsfeld invited the Institute associate Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno to direct a study on music in late 1937. The study was part of Rockefeller's efforts to encourage broadcasters to experiment more with "cultural" programming.²⁴ At the time, Adorno was living in England, studying at Merton College, Oxford, but the Horkheimer group desperately wanted him to join them in the US. Lazarsfeld, who was listed as a research associate at the Institute, felt indebted to its members for their support of his work at the Newark center. He was intrigued by Adorno's writings on the "contradictory," or critical—in a dialectical sense—role of music in society.²⁵ "I

21 Cantril, Gaudet, and Herzog, *Invasion from Mars*; Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page*; Lazarsfeld and Stanton, *Radio Research, 1941*; Lazarsfeld and Stanton, *Radio Research, 1942–1943*; *Journal of Applied Psychology* 23 (February 1939); *Journal of Applied Psychology* 24 (December 1940).

22 Fleck, *Transatlantic History*, 224.

23 Horkheimer, "Preface," *Studies*, 1. The secondary reevaluation of empirical data occasionally went in the other direction, as in Frances Holter's article in the radio project's special February 1939 issue of the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Holter examined materials from the Institute's *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (Studies on Authority and the Family) concerning the effects of unemployment on parental authority. As discussed in Chapter 4, the study was carried out in Germany—with some methodological assistance from Lazarsfeld—before the emigration of the Institute scholars, who later assembled the research data in 1935. Holter was specifically looking for the role of radio in these families and found that it was crucially important to the psychological well-being and status of families that had no money for other entertainments or diversions. When families were forced to sell their radios, the loss was particularly acute for the children, who felt a sharp decline in status because they could no longer invite their friends into their homes to listen to the radio. Holter, "Radio Among the Unemployed," 163–69.

24 Morrison, "Beginning of Modern Mass Communication Research," 347–59.

25 Morrison, *Search for a Method*, 107; Wheatland, *Frankfurt School*, 62.

considered it a challenge to see whether I could induce Adorno to try to link his ideas with empirical research," recalled Lazarsfeld.²⁶ Lazarsfeld sought a "European approach" to the study of music that was more theoretical in stating its research problem and more pessimistic in its attitude toward "an instrument of technical progress."²⁷ At the same time, the Institute was integrating some Anglo-American empirical methodology into its practice of social science. Indeed, the original conception of Critical Theory, as first articulated by Horkheimer, was a dialectical attempt to merge sociology and social philosophy. Critical Theory was designed to incorporate empirical research to discover why the revolutionary aspects of orthodox Marxism had failed to materialize. Horkheimer encouraged Adorno to take the job, and Adorno was interested, emphasizing his openness to empirical methods, which he believed to be essential to the Institute's dialectical method in conjunction with theoretical problems.²⁸

Lazarsfeld began lobbying Cantril and Stanton early in his tenure at the Radio Research Project to bring Adorno on board. "I think that he is another case where a foreigner can be gotten at half the price we would have to pay an American of equal competence," reasoned Lazarsfeld, perhaps in a facetious attempt to demonstrate his American-style pragmatism. "I see Frank [Stanton] in conflict between his desire as director to save money and his distrust of foreigners as a native of Ohio."²⁹ Lazarsfeld's plan was to pair Adorno with an American empiricist, whom he found in the psychologist and jazz musician (with a very German name), Gerhard Wiebe, to develop "a convergence of European theory and American empiricism."³⁰ Lazarsfeld believed that some sociologists' obsessive analysis of Max Weber's work and other "manifestos of the representatives of the tradition" was unproductive. He thought that it would be more socially useful for them to analyze empirical studies.³¹ Ultimately, Cantril and Stanton submitted to Lazarsfeld's wishes, but in order "not to prejudice the project," Lazarsfeld would write his official invitation to Adorno on the letterhead of the Newark Research Center, together with the invitation from the Institute of Social Research. It was an effort to provide a "well-coordinated basis for him getting a visa."³²

26 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 322.

27 Lazarsfeld to Adorno, November 29, 1937, quoted in Fleck, *Transatlantic History*, 176.

28 Wheatland, *Frankfurt School*, 202–5; Wiggershaus, *Frankfurt School*, 237–39.

29 Lazarsfeld to Cantril and Stanton, December 15, 1937, box 3A, folder 7, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld Collection [hereafter, "PFL"], Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

30 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 322.

31 Lazarsfeld, "Philosophy of Science," 466.

32 Lazarsfeld to Cantril and Stanton, April 27, 1938, Rote Mappen, about bureau I, PFL Vienna.

But it would turn out to be a difficult tenure at the radio project for the notoriously misanthropic Adorno. Almost immediately after Adorno arrived in February of 1938, Lazarsfeld found himself forced to defend, on intellectual grounds, the odd-looking, “very absent-minded German professor” to the other project directors. Adorno’s resolute foreignness made the immigrant Lazarsfeld feel, relatively speaking, “like a member of the Mayflower Society.”³³ But Lazarsfeld fiercely defended him at first, saying that he wanted to keep him “as long as possible,” and insisting that none of the directors take up the matter of Adorno without consulting him first. He defended Adorno by noting how “stimulating” his observations and theories were “once they are translated into understandable language.” Lazarsfeld maintained that Adorno was earnest and helpful, and considered himself to be “definitely a part of the project.”³⁴ Lazarsfeld sided with Adorno against the growing skepticism of the other directors of the Office of Radio Research, a position owing partly to Lazarsfeld’s confidence in Adorno’s brilliance and partly to an empathy stemming from their common European, Jewish heritage.³⁵ Yet Lazarsfeld could not ignore Adorno’s obstinate attitude and somewhat sloppy work, and he would chide him for being relatively uninformed about empirical research and yet speaking about it with absolute authority.³⁶

Indeed, the incompatibility of Lazarsfeld’s chosen American empiricist and the German dialectician was revealed in early meetings between the two. Adorno expressed his impatience with empirical methods, which interested him only insofar as they might help to prove his theories. In discussing a project to investigate audience members’ responses to popular music, Adorno asserted

33 Lazarsfeld, “An Episode,” 300–301. To some degree, Lazarsfeld took advantage of his own foreignness to avoid being categorized as a Jew (Coser, *Refugee Scholars*, 119). As a heavyset, “funny man” with an “ever-present” cigar, he embraced the charming affectations of the stereotypical Viennese intellectual. His cigars were such an essential part of his personality that he once avoided a customs tax by claiming, successfully, that they were his “working tools.” Sills, “Paul Lazarsfeld... ‘He taught us what sociology is—or should be,’” 41–42; “Roundletter No. 2” [from Oslo], August 25, 1948, Rote Mappen, Biography II, PFL Vienna. Yet his colleague and close friend Samuel Stouffer, who vouched for Lazarsfeld in his petition for naturalization, noted that some people were prejudiced against him because of his strong accent and “distinctly foreign appearance.” By Lazarsfeld’s own account, he had a “heavy accent,” “marked Jewish features,” and a “marked Jewish name.” Stouffer said he had a “rather heavy Germanic way” about him which struck some as arrogance, but Stouffer insisted that he was “one of the most modest of men.” Stouffer to Frederick C. Mills, February 17, 1941, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna; “Americans Who Are Well and Intimately Acquainted with Professor Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and Have Not Been Witnesses on His Petition for Naturalization,” November 18, 1942, Rote Mappen, Biography II, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

34 Lazarsfeld to Cantril and Stanton, April 27, 1938, Rote Mappen, about bureau I, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld [probably], memorandum, ca. 1938, Rote Mappen, about bureau I, PFL Vienna.

35 Lazarsfeld to Bernard Bailyn, February 13, 1968, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, PFL Vienna.

36 Wiggershaus, *Frankfurt School*, 242.

that “the reaction of people takes place in a very commodity-like way.” He quickly concluded: “Although we are all convinced that this will come out, it will be valuable to check it at any rate.”³⁷ For Adorno, empiricism was not a path to knowledge but a rather tedious proof of true insight derived from introspection. Despite a genuine interest on the part of both parties to bridge the divide between empiricism and Critical Theory, the fundamental conflict would remain. David Morrison, writing on the dispute between Lazarsfeld and Adorno, observes that the latter had a personality “not easily given to recognizing the power of facts where they did not accord with his own suppositions about the world.”³⁸ Within a year of Adorno’s arrival Lazarsfeld was complaining to Stanton that the “hard laws of social contacts” were making much trouble for the admittedly brilliant theorist.³⁹ By the summer of 1939, Lazarsfeld wrote a lengthy personal letter to Adorno to express his grave disappointment with his fellow émigré’s stubborn devotion to speculative theory in the context of the empirical methods that dominated the Office of Radio Research.⁴⁰

Lazarsfeld had consciously resisted his own inclinations to straight empiricism in his desire to incorporate Critical Theory into his program. In addition to inviting Frankfurt School scholars such as Adorno and Leo Lowenthal to work on the Radio Research Project, Lazarsfeld would express a wish to unite the two modes of inquiry: his own “administrative” research and the opposed “critical” research. In his 1941 contribution to Horkheimer’s journal, Lazarsfeld would write: “The idea of critical research is posed against the practice of administrative research, requiring that, prior to and in addition to whatever special purpose is to be served, the general rule of our media of communication in the present social system should be studied.”⁴¹ But even though Lazarsfeld felt that “only a very catholic conception of the task of research can lead to valuable results,”⁴² he ultimately remained ambivalent about Critical Theory. While it seemed to have “a core of intellectual integrity,” he ultimately felt that it was also “foolish and irresponsible,” summarizing his feelings toward the practice as “a mixture of curiosity, interest, respect and irritation.”⁴³ But beyond his distaste for the application of social research in the service of capital-

37 “Results of the Meeting with T.W.A. [Adorno] and G.B. Wiebe, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 30 and 31, 1938, 7, box 1, folder B0070, Bureau of Applied Social Research Archive [hereafter, “BASR”] Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

38 Morrison, “Kultur,” 337.

39 Lazarsfeld to Stanton, December 5, 1938, Folder 6, Box 3A, PFL.

40 Jay, *Dialectical Imagination*, 222.

41 Lazarsfeld, “Remarks,” 9.

42 Lazarsfeld, “Remarks,” 16.

43 Quoted in Morrison, “Kultur,” 352.

ist industry, Adorno, despite some initial effort, simply could not reconcile empirical methods with Critical Theory, which was deeply engaged with the problem of commodity fetishism, a Marxian idea that posited a distortion in the consumer's subjective relationship to a commodity good. According to Martin Jay, this was the crux of Adorno's conflict with Lazarsfeld: "Questionnaires or interviews were inadequate because the opinions of the listeners themselves were unreliable."⁴⁴

In his own account, Adorno admitted his initial naïveté about the American situation and the degree to which "rationalization" had "permeated the so-called mass media."⁴⁵ In contrast to Lazarsfeld and his corps of empiricist social researchers, Adorno insisted that his role was to interpret social phenomena, "not to ascertain, sift, and classify facts and make them available as information."⁴⁶ Adorno was never interested in shedding his European sensibilities or methods to accommodate the American context. Indeed, the exoticism of Newark, New Jersey struck him upon his arrival in February 1938: "When I traveled there through the tunnel under the Hudson, I felt a little as if I were in Kafka's Nature Theater of Oklahoma."⁴⁷ He had been invited to direct Lazarsfeld's music study, but he was not prepared to abandon his critical methods, nor would he make any effort to suppress what others might have viewed as his "foreignness." He chafed at the charter from the Rockefeller Foundation, which limited the study to the commercial radio system and did not encourage probes into the broader sociological consequences of the system itself. Moreover, Adorno believed that the basic method of American-style empirical research was fundamentally flawed: "What was axiomatic according to the prevalent rules of social research, namely, to proceed from the subjects' reactions as if they were a primary and final source of sociological knowledge, seemed to me thoroughly superficial and misguided."⁴⁸ For Adorno, such responses were corrupted because subjects engaged with the medium of radio like a commodity fetish.

Adorno was particularly disturbed by a machine called the "program analyzer" that had been developed by Lazarsfeld and Stanton to measure and

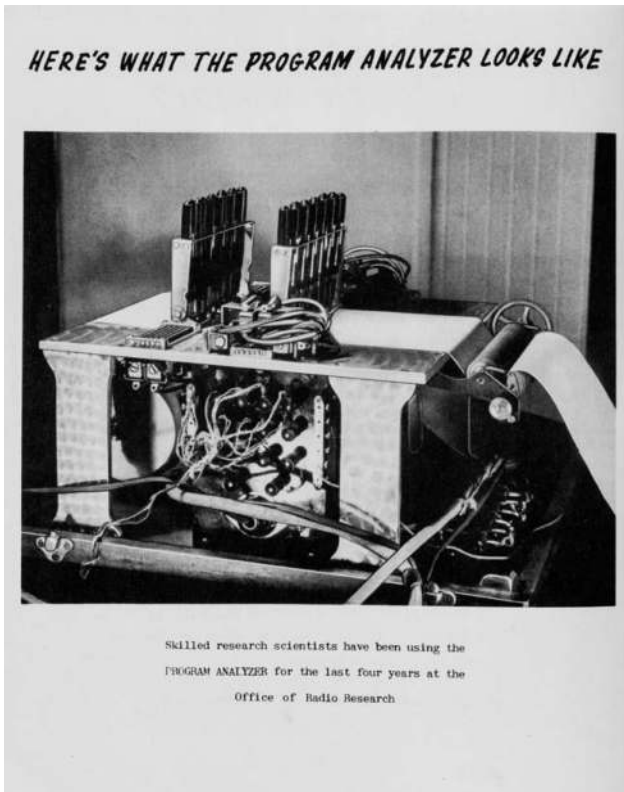
44 Jay, *Dialectical*, 190. Literature scholar David Jenemann defends Adorno on this count, arguing that, if the truth of subjectivity is mutability, then the fixing of subjective elements to a graph amounts to the "liquidation" of subjects, or subject-murder. Jenemann, *Adorno in America*, 6.

45 Adorno, "Scientific Experiences," 340.

46 Adorno, "Scientific Experiences," 339.

47 Adorno, "Scientific Experiences," 342. The reference to the bizarre final chapter of Franz Kafka's novel *Amerika* offers a nice analogue to Adorno's predilection for the purity of theory over the messiness of empirical observation: Kafka himself had relied on no firsthand account or experience, but only vague secondhand impressions, for his story set in the United States.

48 Adorno, "Scientific Experiences," 343.

**FIGURE 6**

Photograph of the Program Analyzer from the brochure, "Listen to Your Listeners: How to Improve Your Program with the Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program Analyzer," Columbia University's Office of Radio Research, Consulting Division, ca. 1942.

SOURCE: Frank Stanton papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

quantify audience members' responses to radio programs and commercials. Lazarsfeld had been measuring audience responses to a music program using penciled checks on paper that were synchronized with a metronome, and he challenged the technically-proficient Stanton to develop a more sophisticated machine.⁴⁹ The Program Analyzer was a simple mechanical device by which subjects indicated their approval, disapproval, or indifference to program content in real time through electronic push-buttons. It would attract attention in the marketing trade press as a breakthrough in audience research.⁵⁰ A promotional brochure hailed the machine as a revolutionary invention in the science of audience analysis. It proclaimed that the Program Analyzer "points out the straight road from radio advertising to sales," and would help marketers attract the right audience for a particular product, hold their interest, and sustain it

49 Douglas, *Listening In*, 138.

50 "Program Analyzer: That's the name of an interesting new gadget developed for radio research," *Tide*, May 1, 1940; Creamer and Allen, "Ups and Downs," 32-36, 68.

through regular listeners.⁵¹ Lazarsfeld wanted to use the device in the music study, and Adorno was mentioned in one article as an “expert in music research” who had initiated experiments with the gadget.⁵² Adorno, however, was appalled by the thing:

A small machine which enabled a listener to indicate what he liked and didn't like by pushing a button during the performance of a piece of music appeared to be highly inadequate to the complexity of what had to be discovered; and in spite of the seeming objectivity of the data supplied. [...] I was particularly disturbed by the danger of a methodological circle: that in order to grasp the phenomenon of cultural reification according to the prevalent norms of empirical sociology one would have to use reified methods as they stood so threateningly before my eyes in the form of that machine, the program analyzer. When I was confronted with the demand to “measure culture,” I reflected that culture might be precisely that condition that excludes a mentality capable of measuring it.⁵³

Adorno felt that Lazarsfeld's empirical methods did nothing to expose *reification*, or the naturalization of historically contingent social phenomena. Rather, the technique of quantification ultimately reinforced the artificial norms of capitalist production. After some initial openness to empirical methods, Adorno ultimately recoiled from the demand that he produce not insight but, rather, information. He resisted by devoting himself at Lazarsfeld's Office mostly to analyzing content rather than reception, the field of analysis which brought out his tendency to make broad theoretical suppositions, without evidence, about audience responses. Adorno felt that to deny the mass media's standardization, commodification, and “pseudo-individualization” of artistic products would be to submit to reification. For Adorno, it was futile to analyze society on the basis of its own artificial, institutionalized terms, rather than by critical, historical, and epistemological inquiry—that is, through the practice of Critical Theory.⁵⁴

Another Frankfurt School scholar working on Lazarsfeld's Radio Research Project, Leo Lowenthal, also chafed at what he believed to be the reified methods of empirical social research. American social science, he would later write,

51 “Listen to Your Listeners: How to Improve Your Program with the Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program Analyzer,” Consulting Division, Columbia University's Office of Radio Research, ca. 1942, box 20, folder 11, FS.

52 “Program Analyzer: That's the name of an interesting new gadget developed for radio research,” *Tide*, May 1, 1940; Lazarsfeld to Cantril and Stanton, May 12, 1938, Rote Mappen, miscelle scientific I, PFL Vienna.

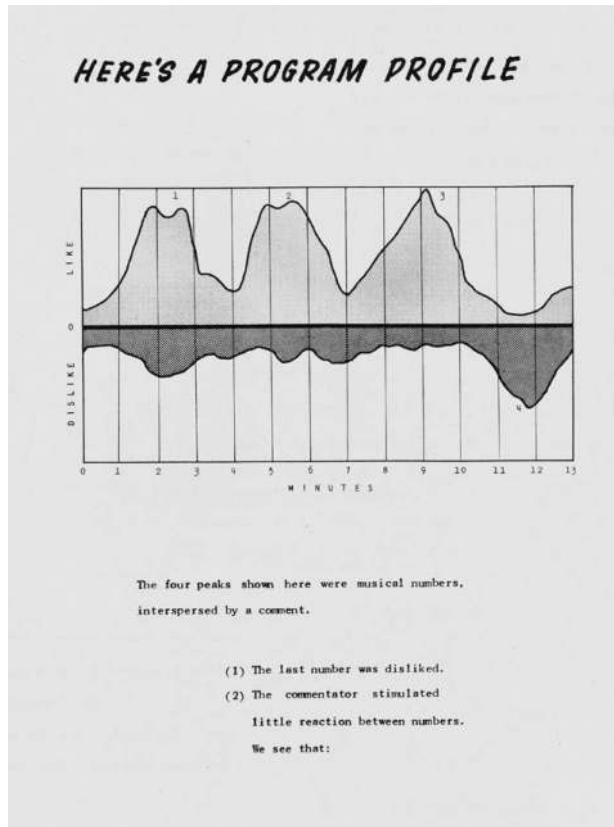
53 Adorno, “Scientific Experiences,” 344, 347.

54 Adorno, “Scientific Experiences,” 346.

FIGURE 7

Graph generated by data from the Program Analyzer depicting audience responses to a series of four musical numbers on a radio program, the last of which was disliked by the panel of respondents. From the brochure, "Listen to Your Listeners: How to Improve Your Program with the Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program Analyzer," Columbia University's Office of Radio Research, Consulting Division, ca. 1942.

SOURCE: Frank Stanton papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



refused to “enter the sphere of meaning” and, in its obsession with artificially isolated social sectors, was much too close to market research and all its associated expediency and tendency to manipulation. “It imagines that horizontal segments constitute its research laboratory,” Lowenthal lamented, “and it seems to forget that the only social science laboratories that are properly admissible are historical situations.”⁵⁵ While the pragmatic, mathematically-minded Lazarsfeld accepted and quite willingly used the reified categories and social strata that made a science of empirical research, these dialectical critical theorists resisted the empirical-analytical mode’s practical usefulness for business as an applied science. But despite their resistance to empirical methodologies, Lowenthal and Adorno did produce substantial work for the Radio Research Project, generally in the field of content analysis (as opposed to audience *reception*), some of which made it to publication. Lowenthal’s “Biographies in Popular

55 Lowenthal, “Historical Perspectives,” 52.

Magazines,” for example, appeared in *Radio Research, 1942–1943*, and it was in many ways characteristic of the mass culture criticism that would become characteristic of the Frankfurt School scholars.⁵⁶

Adorno—who would come to resent the American sociologist David Riesman’s “popularization” of the Institute’s style of critique in *The Lonely Crowd*⁵⁷—ultimately published three works from his time at Lazarsfeld’s Office of Radio Research, but only one with its imprimatur: an essay on the “Radio Symphony” that appeared in *Radio Research, 1941*.⁵⁸ Adorno had been inspired by an essay on “the work of art in the age of technical reproducibility” written by his friend Walter Benjamin, an associate of the Frankfurt School scholars who had remained living in exile in Paris, resisting pleas from his colleagues to leave Europe as the Nazi threat mounted. While Adorno generally agreed with the content of Benjamin’s analysis, he had a much more pessimistic attitude concerning the social implications of the mass culture industries.⁵⁹ While developing his ideas for the “Radio Symphony” essay, Adorno gave a lecture to Lazarsfeld’s group of researchers in which the influence of Benjamin’s idea of the aura was clear. “Not only does the ideal of the original become falsified by radio,” said Adorno, “but the adequacy and sincerity of mass reproduction is spoiled by the cult of the original.”⁶⁰ Adorno developed many of the same themes in an unpublished study on the “NBC Music Appreciation Hour,” ostensibly an educational program designed to encourage a fuller enjoyment of music. For Adorno, however, the program encouraged not the enjoyment of music itself, but rather the awareness that one knows music. He concluded, cynically: “The pleasure involved consists of a fetishistic hoarding of information about music, which one enjoys as a miser enjoys the gold he has accumulated.”⁶¹

56 Lowenthal, “Biographies,” 546.

57 Jay, *Permanent Exiles*, 49.

58 Adorno, “Radio Symphony,” 110–39.

59 Adorno, “Scientific Experiences,” 342.

60 Theodore Wiesengrund-Adorno, lecture, January 1939, box 1, folder Boo72, BASR. In the published essay that followed, Adorno resisted the notion that symphonic music transmitted over the radio waves was bringing high culture to the masses, because the aura of the original, its very essence and capacity as a negative (in a dialectical sense) art form, was inevitably lost. It became a mere “medley or potpourri”; it was a commodified, reified “quotation” that was passively consumed by the listener. Adorno, “Radio Symphony,” 131.

61 Adorno, “Analytical Study of the NBC Music Appreciation Hour,” n.d. [ca. 1940], 63, box 2, folder B107, BASR. Though not listed as an author, Adorno also contributed to Duncan MacDougald’s study on song “plugging” by Tin Pan Alley, published as an essay titled “The Popular Music Industry” in the 1941 radio research volume. MacDougald decried the tastes of the general public, which seemed to prefer “obvious songs with simple melodies and commonplace lyrics” over the superior compositions of Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Cole Porter. But the masses were forgiven, for what made a song a “hit” had little to do with its inherent qualities and more to do with the incessant, aggressive marketing, or “plugging,” of the industry. MacDougald, “Popular Music Industry,” 109.

With the collaboration of George Simpson, Adorno produced two other essays on popular music while working at the Office of Radio Research. A version of the first was later published as "A Social Critique of Radio Music" in the Spring 1945 issue of *Kenyon Review*,⁶² but was initially presented as a candid lecture in October of 1939 to his fellows at the Office. In the lecture, Adorno emphasized the commodity and fetish character of radio music. While he did reference some tentative empirical studies of radio listeners, he implicitly critiqued the Program Analyzer and its reduction of listener responses to "like" and "dislike." And he went further in his critique of the whole enterprise of empirical listener studies—the very aim of the Radio Research Project—which, he argued, were clouded by "pseudo-individualization," or the mere illusion of free choice in the face of standardized production. Against the empirical method, he defended Critical Theory, which could come closer to reality than the tainted "facts" that empirical research produced.⁶³

As the historian David Morrison has pointed out, Adorno's work for Lazarsfeld's organization was alien to the "administrative" work that prevailed there and made its studies so valuable to marketers and mass media corporations.⁶⁴ Lazarsfeld sincerely tried to bridge the divide between intellectuals and mass-media producers,⁶⁵ but he would regretfully admit that, partly due to his own administrative distractions, his aims ultimately fell short. "Adorno and I agreed that he would establish a more discriminating typology; then a questionnaire might lead to a quantitative distribution of different types of music listeners," Lazarsfeld recalled. "But no indicators for such a typology were developed because the direction he gave could hardly be translated into empirical terms."⁶⁶

Ultimately, John Marshall cut off the Rockefeller Foundation's funding for Adorno's music study. Adorno's position had always been somewhat tenuous, and Marshall found his work on music aggressively critical, unscientific, and unverifiable.⁶⁷ Marshall respected Adorno's intellect, and he later remembered

62 Adorno, "Social Critique," 208–17.

63 Adorno, "On a Social Critique of Radio Music," paper, Princeton Radio Research Project, October 26, 1939, box 1, folder B0076, BASR. Adorno continued his mass culture assault in the essay "On Popular Music," which appeared in the special 1941 journal issue produced collaboratively by Horkheimer's Institute and Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research. Adorno slammed the music industry for differentiating content that was actually undifferentiated, and he sketched an argument—which would later come to fruition in the "Culture Industry" essay in his and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*—that diversions of mass culture entertainment merely served to reproduce working capacity. Adorno, "Popular Music," 17–48.

64 Morrison, "Kultur," 343.

65 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 315.

66 Lazarsfeld, "An Episode," 324.

67 Morrison, "Kultur," 347, 352; Lazarsfeld to Cantril and Stanton, July 19, 1939, Blau Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933–1946, PFL Vienna.

being generally in favor of the project and “very impressed” by Adorno’s approach. He hesitated in his decision, but he ultimately decided that the project involved too much “scatter” and called for a sharper focus.⁶⁸ Marshall was seeking to legitimate the field of mass communications research, and the general direction of the recently-formed Communications Group of scholars was towards more behaviorist, empirical research that focused on the effects of communications, something Adorno speculated about but did not study. Adorno’s work was compelling as social theory, but it was not in line with the public relations objectives of the Rockefeller Foundation. Marshall did support the qualitative analyses of Institute associates like Siegfried Kracauer—who critiqued Nazi propaganda films—which could be defended as part of the Foundation’s anti-fascist, pro-democratic agenda. Adorno’s more speculative approach, however, did not fall within that purview.⁶⁹ Adorno was also personally abrasive to many of his colleagues. “Adorno was very intolerant, and I think after a while I felt embarrassed by Adorno,” remembered Marshall. “He never made any concessions in his behaviour, he remained foreign and aggressive.” Marshall had introduced some musicians to Adorno, whom Adorno derided as “idiots.” “Now Adorno was absolutely right,” said Marshall, “but that’s not the way you conduct an investigation, a study...you have to listen.”⁷⁰

Adorno’s experience at the Office of Radio Research, however, was atypical. Usually, Lazarsfeld and his radio researchers more or less agreed on their methods and enthusiastically sought out new projects, of which there was no shortage in the late 1930s and early 1940s. When Orson Welles’s adaptation of H. G. Wells’s novel *War of the Worlds* was broadcast as part of the *Mercury Theatre* series in a special Halloween episode on October 30, 1938, causing what many commentators at the time called a “mass hysteria,” the directors of the Radio Research Project and their supporters at the Rockefeller Foundation and General Education Board saw an opportunity to make a major study. Indeed, Lazarsfeld and Herta Herzog resolved on the very night of the broadcast to conduct a study of the phenomenon, and they contacted Stanton the next morning to give them “CBS money” to interview the people who had fled the so-called “invasion.”⁷¹ The episode—“so realistic that a number of people have been led

68 Marshall to Lazarsfeld, January 12, 1969, Blau Mappen 20, Bio-4, PFL Vienna; Fleck, *Transatlantic History*, 199; Jenemann, *Adorno*, 50.

69 Gary, *Nervous Liberals*, 87–101.

70 Morrison, “Beginning of Modern Mass Communication Research,” 347–59.

71 Fleck, *Transatlantic History*, 186; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

to immediate action,” according to Welles⁷²—provided a perfect example of the potential social effects resulting from the technologies of mass media. Lazarsfeld and his researchers began making preliminary interviews in New Jersey, his base of operations and where many reports of the public hysteria came from. He estimated that a complete study would cost about \$6,000, and he and Cantril sought support from the General Education Board for a full study to be done in cooperation with the Institute for Propaganda Analysis.⁷³ The Board approved a grant of \$3,000 for a six-month study.⁷⁴

Lazarsfeld's first report on the study in December noted that many respondents who reacted to the broadcast with panic, particularly those of lower income and educational levels, were predisposed to believe an apocalyptic news event because of the steady stream of stories over the radio about the deteriorating situation in Europe and the persecution of Jews there. Many had come to rely on radio over newspapers for news, but their faith in the truth of the new medium as a reliable source was sometimes mixed with a vague anxiety. In some cases, quasi-racist ideas about the supernatural capacities and ambitions of the Japanese contributed to the panic. Some Jewish respondents immediately came to the conclusion that it was an uprising against the Jews. The study provided an excellent opportunity for the practice of research techniques, and Lazarsfeld reported that it nicely demonstrated his method of quantifying the data acquired from qualitative interviews conducted in case studies, which functioned to objectify them for general applicability.⁷⁵

Although Hadley Cantril is credited as the principal author of the 1940 published report, *The Invasion from Mars: A Study in the Psychology of Panic*,⁷⁶ he had practically begged Lazarsfeld to enlist Herta Herzog for help on the study. She came on to conduct a secondary analysis of the interviews, but she ultimately became something more than a coauthor. Lazarsfeld said that Cantril took

72 Welles to Cantril and Stanton, November 13, 1938, about bureau I, PFL Vienna.

73 LKF to David Stevens, November 21, 1938, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; David Stevens to S. Howard Evans, November 22, 1938, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; “Interview with Professor Hadley Cantril and Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, Directors of the Princeton Radio Research Project,” November 22, 1938, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; Cantril, “Proposed Study of ‘Mass Hysteria,’” November 29, 1938, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC.

74 “Grant-in-Aid—General Education,” November 29, 1938, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC.

75 “Inter-Office Memorandum (Orson Welles Broadcast),” December 5, 1938, enclosed in David Stevens, “Princeton radio project,” memorandum, December 5, 1938, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; Lazarsfeld and Robinson, “Quantification of Case Studies,” 820.

76 “Such rare occurrences are opportunities for the social scientist to study mass behavior,” wrote Cantril in the preface. He argued that a study of the widespread panic “should give us insight into the psychology of the common man and, more especially, the psychology of the common man of our times.” Cantril, Gaudet, and Herzog, *Invasion*, vii.

credit for the project despite Herzog having done most of the work. Cantril could not tolerate or did not understand Lazarsfeld's methodological instructions, though his objections had no moral or philosophical basis like Adorno's; he simply seemed to delegate much of the work to subordinates. In reference to the Welles study, Lazarsfeld later complained that Cantril "had practically nothing to do with it." Cantril's insistence on assuming authorship for the book would contribute to their falling out and Lazarsfeld's decision to move the radio project from its fictional base at Princeton.⁷⁷ A second volume from 1940, *Radio and the Printed Page*, which was dedicated to Robert and Helen Lynd, had anthologized the early work of the radio project and expanded on the themes of social stratification and the emergence of radio as a mass medium that threatened to overwhelm print. The manuscript was so impressive to officers at the Rockefeller Foundation that it won Lazarsfeld's Office a renewal of their grant.⁷⁸

Some historians, such as Rolf Wiggershaus, have observed that, as Lazarsfeld increasingly immersed himself in media studies and market research, he accepted the American system "just as it was" and was only "slightly troubled by memories reminding him of his social-revolutionary beginnings in Vienna."⁷⁹ Yet perhaps the clearest lineage from the social-democratic heritage of much of the Lazarsfeld cohort to the concerns of project reports may be found in the attention given to market segments, which might be considered a commercial application of socialism's critique of class stratification. An article by Lazarsfeld in the first special issue of the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, for example, found that psychological criteria, apart from income, could be just as valid in determining the socioeconomic status of a subject.⁸⁰ Similarly, an undated report from the early 1940s, completed as part of a broad study of daytime radio serials directed by Herzog, looked at the reaction of respondents to a series of radio commercials. It found that women of lower socioeconomic levels generally preferred highly dramatized, narrative commercials, whereas college-educated women tended to favor descriptive commercials.⁸¹

77 Cantril to Lazarsfeld, ca. 1939, Blau Mappen 38, Correspondence 1966–1976, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Cantril, October 12, 1939, Rote Mappen, Biography II, PFL Vienna; Cantril to Marshall, December 2, 1939, and Cantril to Lazarsfeld, December 2, 1939, box 361, folder 3723, Series 1.2, FA058, GEB, RAC; Ann Pasanella, "The Mind Traveller: A Guide to Paul F. Lazarsfeld's Communication Research Papers," The Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, Columbia University, 1994, p. 30, box 444, folder 5, RKM.

78 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna. The book contained a study by Herzog on the "Professor Quiz" radio program which found that the quiz program served as an outlet for listeners who lacked much formal education to relieve their class resentment towards "college people." Herzog, "Professor Quiz," 64–93.

79 Wiggershaus, *Frankfurt School*, 241.

80 Lazarsfeld, "Interchangeability of Indices," 33–45.

81 "Preliminary Test of Six Kolynos Commercials," n.d. [ca. 1942], box 2, BASR.

Drawing on Herzog's studies and the work of another of his fellow radio researchers, Rudolf Arnheim, Lazarsfeld emphasized the failure of the serials to present social conditions as the cause of protagonists' problems. "The disturbing incidents are usually introduced by individuals; individuals also solve the problems," argued Lazarsfeld, adding that those individuals were usually men. "Social forces, discords inherent in general economic conditions, are seldom introduced," said Lazarsfeld in 1942. He was lecturing a group of advertisers, radio executives, and public opinion pollsters at CBS about how to make the programming more socially relevant. He felt that radio serials could be improved "from a social point of view," and he wanted to use research toward this end. Most of the characters in the daytime "stories" belonged to the middle class, while the working class was completely ignored and the rich were belittled as incompetent. Lazarsfeld complained that the programs promoted a fatalistic attitude by "highlighting with approval" the group to which the listeners themselves belonged while doing nothing to encourage self-criticism or any efforts toward self-improvement.⁸²

Lazarsfeld was referring mainly to the research of Herzog, who had directed a series of studies on daytime radio serials for the Office of Radio Research. In the special collaborative 1941 issue of *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, Herzog published "On Borrowed Experience," one of the first critical analyses of daytime radio serials.⁸³ Herzog often employed "depth" interviews and other methods of motivational research in her preliminary research.⁸⁴ She used these early pilot studies as the basis for larger, more systematic studies of daytime serials and their commercial sponsors. She led a study in November and December of 1941 for the advertising firm Blackett-Sample-Hummert, directing interviews

82 Lazarsfeld, "What we really know about daytime serials," talk at CBS, October 21, 1942, Rote Mappen, Papers Iia, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Research Problems."

83 Herzog found that each housewife listened to, on average, about six and a half different serials to help "keep her company" while working at home alone. The serials all had roughly the same formula: "getting into trouble and out again." Listeners would interpret the "trouble" situation through the filter of their own experience, and it would give them an outlet for pent-up anxieties and aggressiveness that could be relieved vicariously as a "short-lived pseudo-catharsis" through the characters in the serials. Though listeners enjoyed this "borrowed experience," they did not desire such intense drama in their own lives. However, they were able to incorporate some small sliver of that experience into their lives through the products, such as beauty creams, that were advertised in the programs. Herzog, "Borrowed Experience," 65–95.

84 In a series of studies testing the effectiveness of several commercials for household products, Herzog had found that women on the "lower cultural level," lacking higher education and income, were more likely to listen to daytime serials and preferred commercials with "dramatic" presentations and money-back guarantees. In contrast, the college-educated group preferred commercials with "straight talk" that presented scientific arguments for the merits of various products. Herzog, "Test on Bisodol Commercials," Office of Radio Research—Consulting Division, June 1942; "Preliminary Test of Six Kolynos Commercials," n.d., Box 2, BASR.

of nearly 5,000 married and unmarried women representing a cross-sample of age and income groups.⁸⁵ The American Home Products Corporation had offered premiums through some of its programs, such as “The Romance of Helen Trent,” and Herzog’s study examined the market group exposed to such promotions. She found typical daytime serial listeners to have a lower income and less education, and they were more likely to live in smaller towns.⁸⁶

The project’s concern for social stratification was also evident in its fourth published volume, *Radio Research, 1942–1943*, which received a notice in *Time*.⁸⁷ The anthology contained a multifaceted study directed by Herzog on listeners of daytime radio serials, which would become better known as “soap operas,” an allusion to their mass-market commercial sponsors.⁸⁸ That study included an analysis of the narrative content of the programs by Rudolf Arnheim.⁸⁹ Arnheim argued that, due to the attentiveness with which the commercial producers of the serials met the desires of their intended market, much could be revealed about that audience through an analysis of the substance of the programs. Arnheim found the working classes totally unrepresented by the protagonists of the serials he analyzed, but he also found that personal qualities—accessible to all and independent of political economy—were the means by which social

85 Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Herta Herzog, “Daytime Serials: Their Audience and Their Effect on Buying,” report for Blackett-Sample-Hummert by the Office of Radio Research, December 1941 – February 1942, Folder “B-0131-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; BSH – Commercial Studies,” Box 2, BASR.

86 Lazarsfeld’s cohort of researchers frequently emphasized class stratification in their market studies. A 1944 study of wine-drinking habits found that, while both upper-class and working-class consumers enjoyed wine as an “escape,” their psychological motivations were entirely different. Working-class drinkers desired wine for its “pep and stimulation,” as an exciting diversion from monotony, whereas high-income drinkers enjoyed it as an aid to relaxation. Goodwin Watson, “A Socio-Psychological Study of Wine Drinking: Final Summary Report,” Office of Radio Research (A Division of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Director), Consulting Division, April 7, 1944, box 113, BASR. A cover letter from Lazarsfeld to the company that had commissioned the report noted that higher income groups tend to prefer more subdued sensations, like dry rather than sweet wines. “Sweet rather than bitter chocolate, strongly smelling flower perfumes, louder colors are better liked in the lower income groups,” observed Lazarsfeld. “This should give leads as to what one should stress in advertising in magazines which are known to reach different social strata.” “Wine Drinking—Motives, Kinds and Conditions: Interim Report Number III,” BASR, March 27, 1944, box 113, BASR. Lazarsfeld frequently cited this anecdote—which was from his early market studies in Vienna—suggesting his lasting sensitivity to the variable tastes, desires, and motivations of different social strata. See also Lazarsfeld, “Sociological Reflections on Business.”

87 “Suds,” *Time*, May 8, 1944.

88 Herzog concluded that the typical listener of daytime serials was also less inclined toward newspapers and a critical attitude, and more inclined toward the “true story” kind of sensational magazine. Listeners with little formal education were drawn to the radio serial because it provided these “naïve” individuals with the vicarious experience of more “sophisticated” persons. Herzog, “What Do We Really Know,” 3–22. In 1949, W. Lloyd Warner published *Social Class in America*, which became a guidebook for marketers looking to understand the class basis of consumer markets. Warner referred to research showing that soap operas were particularly appealing to women of the class level of the “Common Man.” Warner, *Social Class*, 31.

89 Arnheim, “World of the Daytime Serial,” 34–85.

inequality was countered. Moreover, the problems that the principal characters encountered were caused not by social, economic, or political conditions, but rather by individuals, and particularly by male individuals. Arnheim speculated that these vaguely ill but incomprehensible social forces unconsciously took human shape in unambiguously “bad” villains whose actual position in the social context was never interrogated. Any dissatisfaction present in the protagonist, with whom the listener identified, did not produce a desire for improvement or reformation, but was instead “drained off by substitute gratification.”⁹⁰ “As long as pleasure and satisfaction are considered the principal aims of art,” Arnheim concluded pessimistically, “there is no justification for reforming programs which undoubtedly please and satisfy more widely and strongly than any art produced on a higher cultural level.”⁹¹

Lazarsfeld maintained that it was difficult for the producers of media content—the writers—to comprehend its effects; that was the special province of the social researcher trained in the analysis of media and its effects.⁹² For the culture industry and the advertisers who made the enterprise viable, Lazarsfeld’s research bureau revealed the social role of media in the lives of American readers, listeners, and viewers. A 1943 report for a consultant to the National Association of Broadcasters examined radio as a “social force” and a way of life for listeners.⁹³ The author of the report, Marjorie Fiske—who collaborated with Leo Lowenthal, her future spouse—found that daytime serials helped listeners to forget their troubles while commercial advertisements instructed them on what to buy. Listeners were grateful for the programs, and they expressed their gratitude by buying the products advertised. Radio was a particularly powerful medium for advertising because, unlike print, commercials reached audiences without competition from adjacent advertisements or editorial content, and thus the medium reduced the modern consumer’s confusion in making choices. The voice of radio had a “surplus value” over print, because trained actors could inflect their speech in such a way that listeners would be inclined to adopt the announcer’s positive attitude toward the product under consideration. Radio could also produce commercials incorporating short narrative dialogue that permitted audiences to “listen in,” a subtler form of persuasion than print’s tendency to bombard readers with exhortations to buy. Listeners did not merely tolerate commercials; most actually liked them. Radio, moreover, was a better

90 Arnheim, “Daytime Serial,” 78.

91 Arnheim, “Daytime Serial,” 85.

92 Lazarsfeld and Merton, “Psychological Analysis of Propaganda,” 362–80.

93 Marjorie Fiske, “Survey of Materials on the Psychology of Radio Listening,” Office of Radio Research, December 1943, box 113, BASR.

medium than the newspaper to tap the consuming potential of the typical household, because housewives, who did most of the shopping, were more likely to tune in to the radio than to read the newspaper.

As Lazarsfeld's radio research increasingly drew him and his researchers to studying the culture industry, the fate of his corps of researchers was increasingly intertwined with that of the scholars at the International Institute of Social Research. Beyond its own scholarship, the Institute also offered courses and seminars through the Extension Division at Columbia, which included a seminar on social science research taught by Lazarsfeld; a seminar on psychoanalysis and social psychology taught by Erich Fromm; and a seminar on the music of Richard Wagner taught by Adorno. The Institute also hosted public lectures by its members, including a series of talks on authoritarianism given by Horkheimer.⁹⁴ But by the mid-1930s, the Institute began to suffer financial difficulties due to poor investments and misguided real-estate deals. Because Institute bylaws forbade drawing off the principal of the endowment, Horkheimer was forced to cut salaries, and he even had to let some members go, including, most prominently, Fromm.⁹⁵ Although its offices were provided by Columbia, the Institute was not, according to its assistant director Friedrich (Frederick) Pollock, an institution "in the legal sense." For years it had channeled its finances through the Social Studies Association, which was formed merely as a membership association with Lynd, Robert MacIver, and other Columbia colleagues.⁹⁶ When the war broke out in 1939, about \$200,000 of the Institute's capital became blocked in Europe, and it was forced to step up its fundraising efforts.⁹⁷

By 1939, the University of Newark "began to deteriorate," and it became clear to Lazarsfeld that it would never become a great university and a proper host for his research center. The Rockefeller Foundation grant had come up for renewal, and by then Lazarsfeld's relationship with Cantril had also begun to deteriorate. Lazarsfeld had an excellent working relationship with Stanton, "a very good man," but he did not exactly respect Cantril as a research colleague, especially when Cantril would claim credit for work done by others, notably Lazarsfeld's wife, Herta Herzog. For Lazarsfeld, Cantril was not really a colleague, but rather the "watch-dog of Princeton, wanting to know what this foreigner would do." So, either the Radio Research Project would remain nominally at

94 Wheatland, *Frankfurt*, 77; "International Institute of Social Research: A Report on Its History, Aims and Activities, 1933-1938," n.d., box 1, folder 19, AEC, RAC.

95 Wheatland, *Frankfurt*, 82.

96 Frederick Pollock to Fred Stein, July 7, 1941, box 142, folder 37, EC.

97 TBK, memorandum, April 2, 1941, box 14, folder 313, Cox and Reece Investigations (FA418), RF, RAC.

Princeton under a new director, or it would move with Lazarsfeld. Once again, Lazarsfeld's protector Robert Lynd came to the rescue to help him orchestrate a move to Columbia.⁹⁸

Since Erich Fromm's departure, Lynd had become disillusioned with the Institute of Social Research because, according to historian Thomas Wheatland, it "signaled an elimination of empirical research for the sociology department." In his capacity on the advisory board to the Rockefeller Foundation, Lynd would vigorously support Lazarsfeld's move to Columbia to fill this "empiricism gap" emerging in his own department, whose chair, Robert MacIver, had come to champion the direction of the Institute. Ultimately, the Rockefeller Foundation let Lazarsfeld choose his place, and he chose Columbia.⁹⁹ The Office of Radio Research would become part of the university's Council for Research in the Social Sciences, attached to the sociology department as a "research laboratory" with the aim of developing research methods and providing apprentice training and access to empirical data for graduate students. Lazarsfeld's radio researchers moved into offices first in Union Square, and then in Columbia's Vanderbilt Building, the quarters of the old medical school at Fifty-Ninth Street and Amsterdam.¹⁰⁰

When Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research arrived at Columbia, it increasingly undertook studies beyond the scope of radio, considering other forms of mass communication, marketing and advertising, and other social phenomena that involved Lazarsfeld's chief interests: choice and motivation. These factors were central to the first major study undertaken at Columbia. With support from the Rockefeller Foundation, *Life* magazine, and the pollster Elmo Roper, the Office conducted a study of voting in the 1940 presidential election, which would later be published as *The People's Choice* in 1944.¹⁰¹ The study employed the *panel* method, which Lazarsfeld had developed in the first two years of the Office of Radio Research to study the *effects* of radio by interviewing the same group, or panel, of respondents periodically over a long period of time to measure the changes in their attitudes, opinions, habits, and choices.¹⁰²

98 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

99 Wheatland, *Frankfurt*, 84–90.

100 Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, November, 29, 1961, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

101 Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, *People's Choice*.

102 "Proposal for Continuation of Radio Research Project for a Final Three Years at Columbia University," ca. 1940, Rote Mappen, "about bureau I," PFL Vienna.

For the 1940 voting study, Lazarsfeld's researchers conducted interviews with the same group of about 600 respondents at regular intervals in the months leading up to the election in an effort to identify the factors which led voters to make up their minds or change their minds. For this study, the Office used a stratified sample taken from Erie County, Ohio, which was chosen for its demographic representativeness of the nation as a whole. Lazarsfeld and his corps of researchers became known for their studies of mass communications, and the most notable finding from this study—and similar studies which would follow, such as *Personal Influence*¹⁰³—was the *limited* effect that mass communications had on people's opinions. Lazarsfeld's researchers found that particularly informed and articulate *opinion leaders* emerged in social groups to serve as mediators between the mass media and ordinary citizens. Lazarsfeld called this the “two-step” flow of mass communications, whereby information flowed from the mass media to the opinion leaders, who were not elite figures but who existed *horizontally* in every social stratum; hence the phrase, *personal influence*. The panel method could easily identify those who changed their minds, and it turned out that these voters were generally less interested in the outcome of the election and more inclined to change their vote in the direction of whatever social group was dominant in their lives—their family, their business associates, their ethnic community, their friends, etc. Voting was a social phenomenon in that voters not only voted *with* their social group but also, in effect, *for* it. The irony was that the kind of voter whom propaganda sought to persuade—the undecided—was in fact the least likely to be exposed to it and the most likely to be swayed instead by opinion leaders in his or her social group—whose views were essentially “constant” and impervious to the propaganda of opposing viewpoints.

The *People's Choice* study established a style of empirical survey research that Lazarsfeld would become known for, and it inaugurated a panoply of techniques that he would use throughout his career, such as the panel method. Of more immediate importance for Lazarsfeld, the manuscript of the study led to his appointment as an associate professor in the sociology department at Columbia, where he had already been teaching seminars on communications research. Once again, the “social anti-Semitism” of academia came into play, and Lazarsfeld was convinced that he would not have received the appointment if his “being an Austrian didn't so overcome being Jewish.” Lazarsfeld spent several weekends at the home of the chair of the sociology department, Robert MacIver, playing bridge. It was MacIver's way of seeing if Lazarsfeld could “behave,” and

103 Katz and Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence*.

if he could get used to the idea of having a Jew in the department. MacIver had sought a theoretical sociologist, while Lynd had been advocating for an empiricist, namely Lazarsfeld. The “compromise” was that the department would get both: Lazarsfeld, the empiricist, and Robert Merton, the theoretical sociologist, thus resolving a dispute between MacIver and Lynd over the department’s methodological direction. To everyone’s surprise, Merton would work closely with Lazarsfeld on the radio project, and he became its associate director when it was later rechristened as the “Bureau of Applied Social Research” in 1944. At Columbia, Lazarsfeld’s group continued to collaborate with Horkheimer’s Institute, and Lazarsfeld would be instrumental in helping the Institute secure a major research grant from the American Jewish Committee for a project on anti-Semitism that led to the *Studies in Prejudice* series.¹⁰⁴

Lazarsfeld’s skill at organizing and leading research bureaus, along with his empiricism and inclination towards applied research, would make him a peculiar sort of émigré and a “doyen of American sociology,” according to historian Anthony Heilbut.¹⁰⁵ Lazarsfeld’s champion Lynd had initially been attracted to the Institute of Social Research members’ espousal of social reform and to Lazarsfeld’s demonstrated commitment to social democracy, but he was also impressed by Lazarsfeld’s devotion to empirical methods, which was partly inspired by Lynd’s own approach to social research.¹⁰⁶ But Lynd may not have anticipated the degree to which Lazarsfeld would employ sociology in the service of commercial interests, and he would later ask Lazarsfeld where his *conscience* had gone. “He felt again that I am a kind of a traitor,” Lazarsfeld remembered. “He always said that someone who is concerned with big social issues shouldn’t do this kind of stupid research.” Lynd thought that the commercial studies amounted to “selling out to the capitalists,” as Lazarsfeld put it, whereas Lazarsfeld merely saw them as a way to practice methods, train graduate students, and fund the Bureau’s operations.¹⁰⁷ “Lynd expected that once settled as a tenured professor of Columbia, that Paul would be free to return to politically relevant topics,” wrote Seymour Martin Lipset, who was a graduate student under Lazarsfeld, Lynd, and Merton. “Lynd was doomed to disappointment, a fact he did not keep hidden from graduate students and others.” For

104 Wheatland, “Not-Such-Odd Couples,” 180; Wheatland, *Frankfurt*, 91; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, March 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, February 21, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

105 Heilbut, *Exiled in Paradise*, 77, 95.

106 Wheatland, “Not-Such-Odd Couples,” 172, 181.

107 Stehr, “Conversation,” 152; Lazarsfeld interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 16, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

Lynd, it seems, Lazarsfeld had the method but lost the progressive commitment, while the Frankfurt School scholars were committed socialists who had lost the method.

During the war years, many of the most prominent Institute scholars, including Herbert Marcuse and Franz Neumann, had left to work for the Office of Strategic Services, and Adorno and Horkheimer would go to the West Coast, where they wrote *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* and began the work that led to *The Authoritarian Personality*. Despite the disintegrated intellectual community, an internal investigation into the work of the Institute, conducted in 1945–46, produced a positive assessment based in large part on the strong endorsement of Lazarsfeld, who had recommended splitting it into “empirical” and “theoretical” branches. In the end, the investigators recommended the Institute’s continued affiliation with the university on the condition that it orientate itself toward empirical and quantitative methods. This was something Horkheimer could not abide, however, and he turned down the offer. It was the official end of the Institute’s affiliation with Columbia, though some of its members occasionally taught classes there through the late 1940s, and Neumann was brought onto the faculty. After the war, in 1949, Horkheimer repatriated the Institute to Frankfurt.¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

The Rockefeller Foundation’s interest in sponsoring a major study of radio stemmed from two concerns: (1) a desire to improve radio’s “cultural” programming, so that its educational potential might match its commercial potential; and (2) a worry over radio’s influence as a mass medium that could threaten democracy in an age of rising dictatorships. The founding of Lazarsfeld’s Office of Radio Research coincided with Hitler’s *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938, and it provided a livelihood for many of the Jewish refugees displaced from Austria who had previously worked at Lazarsfeld’s research center in Vienna. Many of these scholars had been part of the socialist movement, and their style of research was deeply influenced by their sensitivity to class stratification and the cultural differences of workers, intellectuals, and the members of the bourgeoisie. Also, importantly, they were interested in the daily lives of ordinary workers and consumers, which provided the essential content for research on the behavioral habits of listening and consuming. As they began to publish their monographs and edit journal issues and anthologies of their work, Lazarsfeld’s corps of re-

¹⁰⁸ Wheatland, *Frankfurt*, 91–94.

searchers became known as experts in the study of radio and, more generally, the modern phenomenon of mass communication. Radio research, and especially radio *listener* research, turned out to be an excellent way to study the views, habits, and preferences of ordinary Americans. It was a style of social research that would become a paradigm for market research, the importance of which would only intensify as the American economy consolidated as a consumer society in the years after World War II.

Although the researchers' interpretations of listeners and consumers might strike the reader of today as being somewhat condescending, they were mostly written from the perspective of progressive socialists, and their interpretations were much more charitable than the views expressed by some of Lazarsfeld's émigré colleagues in social research such as Theodor Adorno. Lazarsfeld's empirical research had grown out of the Austrian socialists' pragmatic interest in the applied uses of social science, while the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory derived from the German tradition of dialectical Marxism, which spurned practical application. The former would turn out to be highly useful for American business enterprises, while the latter was largely restricted to the academic sphere. The fate of Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research and the Institute of Social Research would become more intimately intertwined when Lazarsfeld's Office moved from Newark to Columbia, partly to fill an "empiricism gap" that the Institute had unfortunately failed to fill. Robert Lynd, who was so instrumental in determining Lazarsfeld's fate in America, was again the key player in bringing him and his research group to Columbia. As the newly-christened "Bureau of Applied Social Research," Lazarsfeld's researchers would increasingly conduct commercial contract studies, and Lynd would come to believe that Lazarsfeld had lost his commitment to progressive social research.

8

Planning for Postwar: Gruen and Krummeck in New York and Los Angeles

Before their arrival as refugees from Nazism in New York on July 13, 1938, Victor Gruen—who was then still Viktor Grünbaum—and his wife, Lizzie Kardos, had two main contacts in the city: Gruen’s uncle, Harry, whose image in Gruen’s mind as a wealthy man stemmed from his childhood memories of gifts of five or ten dollars sent from America; and Ruth Yorke, the American actress whom he had met by chance and befriended on a railway car from Paris to Vienna. Yorke’s well-off boyfriend, Paul Gosman, was able to promise Gruen a job and thus secure an affidavit for him and his wife to immigrate to the US as permanent residents. Gruen and Kardos first stayed in the Upper West Side apartment of Yorke, who was the star of a long-running radio serial, and whose personal connections and contacts in the theater world would prove to be very useful to Gruen. Yorke soon found the refugee couple a “pleasant” apartment on Central Park West. Gruen looked forward to the future and was annoyed by some of his fellow refugees who bemoaned their fate. An optimist, he accepted his new life in America, and he immediately set about making his place in it.¹

By August, Gosman was able to get Gruen a job at the Ivel Corporation Display Company—so named for its owner, a Mr. Levi, spelled backwards—which specialized in designing exhibitions for large conferences. It was there that Gruen met a beautiful young woman, Elsie Krummeck, who was, by his account, the most talented designer in the firm, earning a wage more than three times higher than his. Only in her mid-twenties, the New York-born, Parsons-

¹ “Biographical Material—Gruen, Victor, Annotated Chronology, March 1975, n.d., 1938–50 (2 of 6),” box 20, folder 18, Victor Gruen Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.) [hereafter, “Gruen LOC”]; “May 17 1974,” box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 78–81, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

educated designer was an up-and-coming artist who was already gaining wide recognition for her metal sculptures. Gruen was smitten, and a romantic affair ensued, which was, according to him, more or less sanctioned since he and his wife had agreed that they would divorce after arriving in America and gaining the means to be independent. Only months after arriving, they were already living apart. Gruen liked the work at Ivel and believed that he was valuable to the company, where he became known for his live translations of broadcasts of Hitler's speeches, to which Mr. Levi would listen attentively. Gruen built up the courage to ask his boss for a raise, but when Levi refused his offer, Gruen jumped at another employment opportunity across the East River.²

Like many other designers who immigrated to New York in the same period, Gruen found a job working on exhibits for the 1939–40 World's Fair in Queens. Gruen's position was with the G. Wittbold Company, which employed about two hundred designers, almost none of whom were native-born Americans. At the time, Gruen saw himself more as a designer than as an architect, and the Fair would become a showcase for the emerging field of *industrial design*. The Fair was also a massive public relations opportunity for major US corporations, which sought to counter the socialistic elements of the New Deal by "educating" the public about their value as institutions that could imagine a better future in a free-enterprise system. The Wittbold firm was producing Norman Bel Geddes's spectacular "Futurama" exhibit for General Motors, which included as its climax a full-scale city model that segregated pedestrian and automobile traffic, a design which would become a central principle of Gruen's later plans for shopping centers.³ Gruen, who shared with Bel Geddes a background in theatrical staging, worked on a section called "Highways and Byways of the Future," thus playing a part in the invention of a national network of inter-state freeways. "Without any limits to our imagination," Gruen recalled, "we developed the most amazing ideas for underpasses and overpasses, for multistory sections of roads, for traffic cloverleaves and automatic signals." The exhibit demonstrated the ways in which urban planners and corporations could work in concert to refashion cities—but, as Gruen later lamented, it may have succeeded *too well* in selling the public on highways and cars. "We could not foresee that this would become real."⁴

2 Gruenbaum and Krummeck, "Face to face," 52; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," pp. 81–84; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 62.

3 Among those visitors impressed by the exhibits in the General Motors pavilion was a Hungarian artist-designer and recent immigrant, László Moholy-Nagy. Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 385.

4 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 17–20; "Application for a Certificate of Arrival and Preliminary Form for Petition for Naturalization," form N-400, U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service

Gruen's job with Wittbold, however, only lasted a few months, and by the winter of 1939 he was unemployed. But he was still busy: at the same time that Gruen was laying the foundation for his professional career in the United States, he was also attending to his theatrical passions by working to reconstitute his cabaret troupe from the *Kleinkunstbühnen* in Vienna, as he had promised to do. The group would become the "Refugee Artists Group" when its members reconvened as exiles in New York. The troupe, composed mostly of Jews and Social Democrats, expressed their tragic sincerity about the political potential of the theater: "We felt that the catastrophe would come and raised our voices," they later recalled in a New York *Playbill* for one of their performances. "We hoped satire and pointed ridicule would kill the adversary." Some of the company's members did not make it out of Austria in time, most notably Gruen's close friend Jura Soyfer, who was captured by the Nazis while attempting to cross the border into Switzerland. He died in the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1939.⁵

But for those who made it out of Austria—smuggling scripts and scores with them through Italy, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia—and to New York, there was a community of fellow refugees and sympathetic American Jews eager to welcome them, teach them English, and integrate them into their community. Among their early supporters was the physicist Albert Einstein, who knew Gruen personally, and who believed in the political power of the theater to help the American people in their "battle against the forces of fascism and race hatred."⁶ Their supporters also included the performers Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Orson Welles, and Harpo and Zeppo Marx. Irving Berlin rehearsed musical numbers with them, and the lyricist Irving Caesar put new lyrics to music by the Viennese composer Rudolf Siczynski in 1938. In counterpoint to the nostalgia of "Vienna Dreams," Caesar wrote the heartbreaking

(Edition of 1-13-41), box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; "Victor Gruen Associates," *Interiors*, July 1960; "Biographical Data," Outline to Public Relations Material for Book, n.d., box 10, folder "Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980," Victor Gruen Papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie [hereafter, "Gruen AHC"]; "Biography of the Founder," box 10, folder "Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980," Gruen AHC; Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul*, 283–310; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 83–5, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 65–66; "The Legacy of Jura Soyfer, 1912–1939," promotional pamphlet for book (Engendra Press, Spring 1977), box 71, folder 23, Gruen LOC.

5 "From Vienna," *Playbill*, The Music Box, July 24, 1939, box 71, folder 6, Gruen LOC; "From Vienna and To a Reunion in New York," *New York Times*, March 10, 1940; Steinbach, "Jobless Refugee"; "Friends of 'Reunion in New York' [stationery], n.d., box OV59, "Scrapbooks: Refugee Artists Group, Dec. 1939–June 1940, n.d.," Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 39–45, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

6 Einstein to Refugee Artists Group, September 28, 1938, box 71, folder 4, Gruen LOC.

“Vienna Cries”: “Weep while the soul of Vienna dies, Out of her life the joy has fled, Even the Blue Danube turns to red; Hushed are her melodies, Stilled are the hearts of the Viennese, Night rides the skies, The world hides its eyes, While old Vienna dies.” Gruen kept a copy of the sheet music with a handwritten note from Caesar on the cover.⁷

In November 1938, the newly-incorporated Refugee Artists Group announced its plans for a theatrical revue to premiere in January of 1939—though the performance would not be ready until June.⁸ The group promised to “puncture, through the medium of satire, the spiritual decadence of race hatred, war, fascism and dictatorship.” The social-democratic ideology of the group was clear in its promotional manifesto, which promised a “unity” with the audience as well as a unity among the actors, dancers, musicians, directors, authors, and scene-builders: that is, among each member of the theater ensemble. They would produce their ideal form of theater, constituted by a “union of workers, all equal and no one a star.”⁹ “We are a group,” said one of the members to a New York reporter. “We don’t star a single actor—we are starring the idea of a group and what you in America call teamwork, which means the ideal of the modern theatre to us.”¹⁰ Defying the American tradition of listing “Who’s Who” in the show program, a spokesman for the group explained: “Personalities don’t count with us.”¹¹

Gruen was among the first to arrive in New York, and as general manager he had quickly set about assembling the members together and arranging their English lessons.¹² They secured a playwright, George S. Kaufman—who “worked wonders” by suggesting the format of an intimate revue—and a director, Herman Berghof, who arrived in February 1939. The performers had taken a variety of jobs to make ends meet while rehearsals were in progress, and a fund had been arranged to take care of their living expenses. Indeed, one of Gruen’s main incen-

7 “Vienna Dreams (1937)/Vienna Cries (1938),” sheet music, English lyric by Irving Caesar, music by Rudolf Siczynski (New York: Harms Inc.), box 71, folder 6, Gruen LOC; “And Now ‘From Vienna,’” *New York Times*, June 18, 1939; “The Refugee Artists Group in Their Own Musical Revue, ‘From Vienna,’” [program] Music Box Theatre, June 20, 1939, box 71, folder 5, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 68.

8 “Refugee Artists to Give Play Here,” *Daily Mirror*, November 3, 1938; “Program for Refugee Theatre,” *The New York Times*, November 10, 1938; “Refugee Artists to Produce Play,” *Sunday Mirror*, November 13, 1938.

9 “Refugee Artists Group: Aims and Purpose of the Refugee Artists Theatre,” n.d., ca. 1939, box 71, folder 6, Gruen LOC.

10 “‘All for One and One for All’ In Force at the Music Box: Viennese Refugee Artists Sign Agreement to Stick Together Two Years,” *New York Post*, June 23, 1939.

11 “‘Vienna’ Cast Puts Unity Before Ego,” *New York Journal American*, July 2, 1939.

12 Gruen recalled that he was the only one among the theater group who was completely unable to shed his thick Viennese accent. Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 89, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

tives in arranging the performances was to provide much-needed jobs to his fellow refugees.¹³ The Group, which claimed twenty-four members, even managed to get an exemption from a requirement of the actors' union. The special exemption allowed its players to pay a small fee in lieu of the normal dues and initiation fees, and, given that it was a non-profit venture, the proceeds would partially go to aid other refugees.¹⁴ The Group began rehearsals in April, and by May they had secured a venue for their show, the Music Box Theatre. Gruen's mother would arrive from England just in time for the first performance on June 20.¹⁵

The reviews of the Group's first revue, *From Vienna*, were generally positive, but they tended to focus on the lighthearted and comedic nature of the performance despite the difficult circumstances of the players, who were exiled from "what was once the center of European culture, Vienna," according to one reviewer.¹⁶ It was, according to *The Nation*, the first "successful appearance" of a refugee theater on Broadway.¹⁷ Like many reviews, the *Daily Worker* complimented the performers' good English, and noted that the revue had no star; it was truly an ensemble production.¹⁸ The *Wall Street Journal* took pleasure in America's acquisition of talented artists and intellectuals as a result of their forced exile from Germany and Austria.¹⁹ The *New York Post* was in awe of this group of "gay spirits" who had, according to the *New York Times*, "lost everything except their integrity as human beings."²⁰

The show ran for eleven weeks that summer of 1939, and on February 21, 1940, the Group premiered its second revue, *Reunion in New York*, at the Little Theatre.²¹ The second show was as warmly reviewed as the first; many reviewers

13 "May 17 1974," box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; "And Now 'From Vienna,'" *New York Times*, June 18, 1939; Michel Mok, "When Viennese Meets Viennese in Exile, They Turn Their Experience Into a Revue," *New York Post*, June 14, 1939; "It's Gemuetlich—Like Vienna," *New York World-Telegram*, July 1, 1939; Joseph T. Shipley, "Keep It Up!" [review of "From Vienna"], unknown publication, n.d. [ca. June 1939], box 71, folder 5, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 68.

14 "'Wuthering Heights' to Be Fourth Saturday Closing—Equity Sanctions Last Refugee Acting Group," *The New York Times*, May 3, n.d. [probably 1939], box OV59, "Scrapbooks: Refugee Artists Group, Dec. 1939–June 1940, n.d.," Gruen LOC; "Reunion in New York" [program for performance], box OV59, "Scrapbooks: Refugee Artists Group, Dec. 1939–June 1940, n.d.," Gruen LOC.

15 "Refugee Actors of Vienna to Present Revue June 12," *New York World-Telegram*, May 24, 1939; "Reunion in New York," *The Playbill*, Little Theatre, February 21, 1940, box 71, folder 23, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 80.

16 Whipple, "Fine European Revue." See also Gibbs, "From Vienna."

17 Review of "From Vienna," *The Nation*, July 22, 1939.

18 John Cambridge, "'From Vienna' Is Lively Revue by Refugee Group," *Daily Worker*, June 22, 1939.

19 R.P.C., "Reunion in New York," *Wall Street Journal*, June 22, 1939.

20 Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, "Strike a Balance," *New York Post*, July 11, 1939; Brooks Atkinson, "The Revue 'From Vienna,' Adds to the Resources of Our Theatre," *New York Times*, July 2, 1939.

21 "Vienna Exiles Find Broadway More to Liking," *New York Herald Tribune*, February 18, 1940.

**FIGURE 8**

Poster promoting *Reunion in New York*, the musical revue performed by Gruen's Refugee Artists Group (here billed as the "Viennese Theatre Group") at New York's Little Theatre, which premiered on February 21, 1940. "Attractive and touching," opined *The New Yorker* (March 2, 1940). SOURCE: Victor Gruen papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

noted the good spirits of the troupe despite their difficult circumstances, as well as the players' improved English. Included in the performance was a serious poem by Jura Soyfer, "The Dachau Song," which he was able to have smuggled out of the concentration camp before his death. While there were occasional jabs at "Hitlerism," the show featured a bittersweet tribute to the performers' lost city, including a stage set in a Viennese wine garden and a song-and-dance number called "A Party With Our Memories."²²

Gruen's integration with the Viennese-Jewish refugee community, which had settled in a neighborhood on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, would be essential to his establishing a career as an architect in America. His first major commercial design job in the US was for Ludwig Lederer, a fellow Viennese

22 Richard Watts Jr., "Exiles," *New York Herald Tribune*, February 22, 1940; Arthur Pollock, "'Reunion in New York' Is a Gracious Show," *Brooklyn Eagle*, February 22, 1940; Wolcott Gibbs, review in *The New Yorker*, March 2, 1940; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 82.

émigré who had fled the Nazis. The appropriately-named Lederer owned an eponymous chain of high-end leather goods retail shops in Europe, and he was looking to open his first store in the US on New York's Fifth Avenue. Lederer had admired Gruen's storefront designs in Vienna and had been trying to track him down for weeks—but Gruen had no telephone. By chance, Lederer managed to hail the unemployed Gruen as he was wandering along Fifth Avenue, where he commissioned the designer on the spot. Because Lederer's landlord insisted that the job be performed by a certified architect—a credential that Gruen lacked at the time—Morris Ketchum was brought on as Gruen's partner. Ketchum agreed to put his name on the project as architect on the condition that Gruen assist him with another commission he had just received for a jewelry shop, *Ciro*, right next to the Lederer shop on Fifth Avenue. Gruen rented half of Ketchum's drawing table at his office, where the two designed the shops, both of which opened in 1939 to much acclaim from the architectural press.²³

As he had done in Vienna, Gruen recessed the storefront of the Lederer shop, which he preceded with a deep arcade that was “dramatically lit” with a ceiling of ripple glass. Both sides of the mini-arcade were lined with glass display cases, and there was also a “table-type” case in the center.²⁴ The idea was to create an open “atrium” along the Fifth Avenue sidewalk, where pedestrians could “collect like water in a reservoir.” As they ogled the goods, they would be protected from the weather and from the “crush of passersby.”²⁵ Famed architecture critic Lewis Mumford, writing for *The New Yorker*, scoffed at the design as a “mousetrap” plan that would likely have “few imitators,” but *Architectural Forum* celebrated it as a “highly original interpretation” of the arcade-type of retail store that would distinguish the shop from the typical flush fronts along Fifth Avenue.²⁶

The positive publicity from the Lederer job led to a series of other design jobs for Gruen and Ketchum, including a menswear shop, a women's wear boutique, and several candy shops. Blurring the lines between exterior and interior became known as Gruen's characteristic style. For a furnishings shop on the Upper West Side, Gruen used an all-glass front and an illuminated interior to

23 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 23; Guzzardi, “Architect of Environments”; “Biography of the Founder” [manuscript], box 10, folder “Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980,” Gruen AHC; “Biographical Material—Gruen, Victor, Annotated Chronology, Mar. 1975, n.d., 1938–50 (2 of 6),” box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 90–92, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 67.

24 “‘Sets’ Star in New Accessor[y Shop?],” *Women's Wear Daily*, June 9, 1939; “Lederer de Paris Front Is New Departure,” *Women's Wear Daily*, June 16, 1939.

25 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 69.

26 “The Sky Line: New Faces on the Avenue,” *The New Yorker*, September 9, 1939, 62–63; “Stores,” *Architectural Forum*, December 1939, 427.

distinguish the storefront from others on the street that merely relied on “surface brilliance” to attract attention. In contrast, Gruen’s design looked “as though it had been picked up at some ultra-Continental spot and transported to this neighborhood section of New York,” according to one review.²⁷ Gruen’s recessed storefronts and arcades, meanwhile, were both attractive and functional, from a sales point of view, by merging street with store—in effect “pulling” the sidewalk right into the store. Passersby were free to gawk without obstructing sidewalk traffic, and the arcades provided up to three times as much display space as did a store front flush with the sidewalk. The design was highly economical for shops with little frontage, a typical characteristic in Manhattan. Such displays also did a better job attracting the pedestrian’s eye than windows that were parallel to the street.²⁸

Given their success, Ketchum had proposed that he and Gruen form their own architectural firm. However, after a discussion with his “blue-blooded” wife, Ketchum decided that he—as a native-born American of old Protestant, New England stock—could not become an equal partner with an immigrant like Gruen. He offered to hire Gruen as an employee, but Gruen declined, and the two went their separate ways.²⁹ In November of 1939, Gruen instead formed a business partnership with Elsie Krummeck. Because neither of them had a license to practice architecture, they called their firm Gruenbaum & Krummeck, Designers.³⁰

Several of Gruen and Krummeck’s earliest commissions came from Viennese émigrés, beginning with Stephen³¹ Klein, the proprietor of a chain of confectionery shops that offered typical Viennese-style chocolates. He had known and admired Gruen’s work in Vienna. Gruen and Krummeck provided Klein with an evocative name, “Barton’s Bonbonniere,” and designed the first six stores—as well as its trademark, stationery, and signage—for a chain that would grow rapidly in the 1940s. Their color scheme was intended to set off the color of the chocolate itself and produce a “playful state of mind” conducive to candy-

27 KEW, “Glamour in Glass...” *Men’s Wear*, November 1939, 24.

28 “What Makes a 1940 Store Obsolete?” *Architectural Forum*, August 1950.

29 Gruen’s Jewish identity was also likely a factor in Ketchum’s hesitation to establish an equal partnership. Ketchum himself went on to become a prominent designer of shopping centers, and he also became president of the Institute of American Architects. In that position, he bestowed upon Gruen the honorable title of “fellow.” Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 92–94, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 168–69, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC.

30 Gruenbaum and Krummeck, “Face to face,” 52; “Recent Work by Gruenbaum, Krummeck & Auer,” *The Architectural Forum*, September 1941; “Wives, February 26, 1974,” box 20, Gruen LOC; “Biographical Material—Gruen, Victor, Annotated Chronology, Mar. 1975, n.d., 1938–50 (2 of 6),” box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Guzzardi, “Architect of Environments”; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 95–96, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

31 Sometimes “Stefan,” e.g. Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 75.

buying. The “Continental decor” of the first store was designed to attract the patronage of recently-arrived Europeans in the Jewish sections of the Upper West Side, but the charming character of the store drew a broad clientele. Another of the new firm’s early jobs was for a Fifth Avenue candy shop, Altman & Kühne, which was also owned by Viennese refugees and was located right across the street from the first shop Gruen designed, Lederer’s. Gruen and Krummeck completely illuminated the interior of the shop using indirect fluorescent lighting, a novelty at the time. “We had the idea to present chocolates as jewels,” Gruen recalled. It was, according to one of many positive reviews in the architectural trade press, an example of the new trend toward using an entire shop interior “as the show window.”³²

Gruen and Krummeck emphasized the theatrical elements of their storefront designs, which also functioned as a “constant advertisement” for a business. The retail merchants of New York put on “ten thousand glamorous little shows,” the stages of which were the store fronts.³³ Gruen and Krummeck believed that the purpose of their designs was to catch the interest of the “window-shy” shopper and bring her *unconsciously* into the shop. The arcade fronts, one of their trademark designs, were intended to create a sense of continuity between inside and outside. “The psychological effect of this system,” wrote the designers, “to overcome the ‘phobia’ of entering a store by minimizing the difference between the room where the customer stands already and the one he has to enter, should not be underestimated.”³⁴ The designers used glass doors and large windows to help bridge the gap between the street and the store, and the display cases in the arcade were generally on the same plane as the interior displays, furthering the illusion that there was no barrier between inside and out.³⁵

32 “How a small chain grew,” *Chain Store Age*, March 1952, 27; “Gruen, Functional fantasy in a desert setting,” *Interiors*, June 1959; “Candy Shop for Altman & Kuhne, New York City,” *The Architectural Forum*, February 1940; “Fifth Avenue Candy Shop: Very Sweet,” *The Store of Greater New York*, n.d. [ca. 1939], box OV11, “Scrapbooks: General, Dec. 1935–Nov. 1965,” Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 95–99, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC. An early innovator in the use of light in commercial settings was Frederick Kiesler, another Austrian émigré designer and architect famous for his simplified, “spotlighted” windows at Saks Fifth Avenue in the late 1920s. Kiesler was part of a group of designers inspired by the German *Werkbund* and Bauhaus movements who sought to improve the aesthetic quality of American mass-produced goods. Leach, *Land of Desire*, 305–6; Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern*, 40–43; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 75, 78.

33 The theatrics of merchandising, where spectacle took precedence over substance, was also a specialty of L. Frank Baum—best known as the author of the children’s book, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*—who entered the discursive world of American commerce with his journal of shop display, *The Show Window*, which first appeared in 1897. Leach, *Land of Desire*, 56–61.

34 Gruenbaum and Krummeck, “Face to face,” 52.

35 Earl W. Elhart, “Novel Design Proves To Have Customer Pulling Power,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, February 24, 1941; Gruenbaum, “Case of Displayman.”

Gruen and his wife Lizzie Kardos had been living apart for years, and their divorce was finalized in May of 1941. The following June, Gruen and Krummeck were married.³⁶ By that time, the couple had moved from New York to Los Angeles to work on a large design commission for the California-based Grayson chain of ready-to-wear women's apparel shops (known colloquially as "Grayson's"). Gruen and Krummeck had accepted an offer from the company's flamboyant owner, the Russian-Jewish émigré Walter Kirschner, to redesign the Grayson store in Seattle in 1940. Kirschner was so invested in the couple that he had even orchestrated their marriage and move to LA. For their new boss, they produced a dramatic, three-story, sleekly modern storefront capped by a giant "Grayson" sign. As they had done in New York, Gruen and Krummeck fronted the store with an arcade of glass display cases, but on a scale unlike anything they had done before; it achieved the effect of "bringing the interior of the store outward," according to one review. The team duplicated the Seattle design, complete with a "majestic entrance arcade," in Santa Monica in November of 1940, the second of dozens of stores that Gruen and Krummeck would design for Grayson in the 1940s.³⁷ The firm established a principal office in Hollywood and a branch in San Francisco, and it added several associates, including Michael Auer, Karl Van Leuven, and Rudi Baumfeld, Gruen's childhood friend and longtime partner.³⁸

When the United States entered the Second World War in December of 1941, Gruen decided to apply for naturalization as a US citizen. Yet as an "Alien Enemy" from a country that had become part of Germany, he was initially compelled to carry a special permit simply to travel by car in the Los Angeles area. However, in a letter to the US attorney general in January of 1942, Gruen declared that he did not intend to register as an "enemy alien." He claimed, quite correctly, that, as a Jew, he was a victim of Nazism, and that he was in "full agreement" with the fight against Hitlerism and Fascism. Gruen pleaded: "I desire to

36 "Separation Agreement: Alice Kardos Gruenbaum with Victor Gruenbaum," March 1941; "Victor Gruenbaum, plaintiff, v. Alice Kardos Gruenbaum, defendant," decree of divorce, May 8, 1941; "We take great pleasure..." wedding announcement [ca. 1941], box 22, folder 16, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 104–7, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

37 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 49–50; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 37; "Design and Features of New Grayson Shop Delight Women," *Seattle Times*, October 30, 1940; "Grayson's 'Most Unique Store In America' Opens Here Tomorrow!" *Evening Outlook* [Santa Monica, Calif.], November 29, 1940; "Statement of Facts To Be Used by the Clerk in Making and Filing My Petition for Naturalization," form 16-1131, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; "May 17 1974," box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 87, 90–91.

38 Gruen was so close to Baumfeld that he listed him as a contact in case of death on his passport. "Passports—Gruen, Victor David, July 1961, Mar. 1966 (2 of 3)," box 23, folder 5, Gruen LOC; Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 49; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 41; "Recent Work by Gruenbaum, Krummeck & Auer," *The Architectural Forum*, September 1941; "The Practical Touch," *Designs*, August 1947.

become a citizen of the United States as soon as possible.”³⁹ Having married an American citizen, his application for US citizenship was expedited and approved on June 25, 1943, at which time Viktor Grünbaum legally changed his name to “Victor David Gruen,” truncating his Jewish surname but adding “David” to acknowledge that heritage.⁴⁰

As the nation mobilized for war, Gruen and Krummeck mobilized for commerce. Despite wartime restrictions on “strategic” building materials, they transformed the storefront with their bold designs for Grayson, which managed to attract customers traveling by automobile as well as those on foot. For a new Grayson store in Inglewood, for example, Gruen and Krummeck designed the store’s rear with equal attention to its front, given that so many customers traveling by car entered from the rear parking lot. The front, meanwhile, was so spectacular that it “would not fail to attract the attention of a single passerby, whether a pedestrian or a motorist,” according to one account: it featured a sixty-foot tower of chartreuse and white, accented with gold and sloping inward to an “island” showcase for pedestrian passersby. The Grayson contract was a blessing for Gruen and Krummeck, allowing them to get through the war years with a steady income.⁴¹

It was in the context of the war that Gruen first articulated the idea that he would become most famous for: the shopping center. In February of 1943, Gruen and Krummeck were invited by Howard Myers, the publisher of the trade journal *Architectural Forum*, to imagine the *postwar* future of retail architecture. A special issue of the journal appeared during a “rather hopeless time period” during the Second World War, Gruen recalled, and it called on contributors to prophesy new building types for the year “194X”—some more hopeful year in the near future. George Nelson, the managing editor of the *Forum*, shared Gruen’s enthusiasm for pedestrianization, but Gruen’s initial proposal for a large, regional shopping center exceeded the neighborhood scale that Nelson had in mind. A revised proposal from Gruen and Krummeck maintained the essential pedestrian elements of the shopping center but brought it down in size. Gruen thought of it as a “neighborhood center.”⁴²

39 “Alien Enemy Permit to Travel,” issued by Wm. Fleet Palmer, United States Attorney, Department of Justice, Southern District of California, Los Angeles, January 12, 1942, box 22, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruenbaum to Mr. Francis Biddle, January 30, 1942, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

40 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 57; Certification of Naturalization for Victor David Gruen, United States of America, No. 5677980, Petition No. 103272, signed by John A. Howe, June 25, 1943, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 107, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

41 “Famed Architect Embodies Unique Design in Grayson’s,” *Inglewood Daily News*, August 20, 1942; “Grayson’s, San Francisco, Calif.,” *Chain Apparel Shop*, October 1944, 89–91, box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 106, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC.

42 Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern*, 148–59. Toward the end of his life, Gruen pointed to this opportunity to bring

Just as they were designing the big and bold storefronts for Grayson, Gruen and Krummeck imagined something very different in the shopping center, which was illustrated in a series of sketches by Krummeck that were submitted to the *Forum*. Gruen contributed the descriptive text. In contrast to the garish signs that were appearing in commercial strips along major highways—which had taxed Gruen’s nerves as a new resident of Los Angeles—the exterior of the shopping center would be “modest” in character with the exception of its main entrance. Rather than projecting its advertising appeals toward the street, the shopping center would be inward-looking: it would preserve the quiet sanctity of the residential streets and instead position its storefronts toward a landscaped courtyard surrounded by covered walkways—something like a cloister, and not unlike the *Hof-Haus* style of architecture typical for the Viennese public housing blocks, the *Gemeindebauten*. Each shop would be permitted to express its individuality through its storefront, within agreed-upon limits, but their appearance would be unified by the line of columns and common canopy. The stores’ individual idiosyncrasies would contribute to the collective idea—diversity with a purpose. The shopping center was designed to protect the shopper from the hazards of automobile traffic and provide a “restful atmosphere” for shopping. Parking spaces would be reserved on the periphery of the center, and all deliveries would occur “behind screen walls” so as not to disturb the pleasantness of the shopping experience. All the stores would be connected by a covered walkway that would protect the shopper from the elements and integrate the stores. “Shopping thus becomes a pleasure, recreation instead of a chore,” wrote Gruen and Krummeck. Furthermore, the center would not be exclusively commercial: it would also include such things as a post office, library, dentists’ offices, and rooms for “club activities.” It would, in short, be more than a shopping center; it would be a *community center*.⁴³

Gruen’s grand vision, however, would remain unrealized for another decade. In the meantime, Gruen and Krummeck continued to design stores for Grayson, which expanded beyond the West Coast with the purchase in December 1945 of Robinson’s Women’s Apparel, a chain of seventeen “popular-priced”

his vision “to paper” as the moment that he “invented” the shopping center. Gruen, “Shopping Centres, Why, Where, How?” speech for Third Annual European Conference of the International Council of Shopping Centres, Hilton Hotel, London, February 28, 1978, box 5, folder “Speeches, 1970–1978,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 97.

43 “Shopping Center: Gruenbaum & Krummeck, Designers, Hollywood, Calif.,” *The Architectural Forum*, May 1943; Victor Gruen, “The Shape of Things to Come,” speech at Chain Store Age 14th Annual Seminar, Marriott Motor Hotel, Philadelphia, February 26, 1968, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XVI, 1968), Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 97.

dress shops.⁴⁴ Gruen and Krummeck boasted that, because of their work, “no other chain can pride itself on a similar amount of publicity for the architectural features of their stores.” Yet they severed their relationship with the company in 1948 as the result of a dispute over a design for a suburban store on Crenshaw Boulevard in Los Angeles. Because they believed that the shop would receive very little foot traffic, Gruen and Krummeck proposed a simple, striking street front designed to catch the attention of drivers in automobiles. They planned an “open front treatment” for the rear parking lot elevation that would have made visible the entire store’s interior from the parking lot. But executives at Grayson-Robinson insisted on arcades and show windows on the street front, as Gruen and Krummeck had done in previous store designs. On principle, Gruen and Krummeck refused to comply, and they resigned from the project, ending their long relationship with the company.⁴⁵

Gruen and Krummeck continued to design retail shops, including both their storefronts and interiors, throughout the 1940s, particularly in California and the West. Their modern designs for Joseph Magnin shops—in such places as Sacramento, Oakland, and Palo Alto—integrated striking storefronts for passing motorists and intriguing street-level displays for pedestrians.⁴⁶ In a 1947 design for a Los Angeles furniture store on a major suburban boulevard with light pedestrian traffic, Gruen and Krummeck produced a storefront with a colorful, angular design featuring a “huge vertical fin” that served no purpose other than to attract the attention of passing motorists.⁴⁷ The designers were

44 For the Philadelphia branch of Robinson’s on Market Street, Gruen and Krummeck dramatically remodeled the facade of an “ancient” (probably nineteenth-century) five-story dime-store building. They completely replaced the brick front with a sloped concrete face set with hundreds of thousands of pieces of glass mosaic which were illuminated by built-in louvered lights set in a canopy above. Upon this surface they placed a giant neon “Robinson” sign, the first letter of which was thirty-two feet high. The billboard-like storefront was designed to draw the attention of passing motorists as well as pedestrians on the opposite sidewalk. For passersby on the near side, Gruen and Krummeck included an arcade of glass display cases, which had become one of their trademark design features. “Dress Shop on Philadelphia’s busy Market Street makes its name a dramatic merchandising feature,” *Architectural Forum*, July 1947, 111.

45 “Facade with a Flourish,” *Business Week*, September 14, 1946; Gruen & Krummeck Associates, “Architect Bites Client,” letter to the editor, *Architectural Forum*, February 1948; “Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 1946, Grayson-Robinson Stores, Inc.,” March 31, 1947, box OV14, “Scrapbooks: General, Dec. 1935–Nov. 1965,” Gruen LOC.

46 “Public is Bid to Preview of Joseph Magnin Store,” *The Sacramento Bee*, September 3, 1946; “Modern Architectural Design for Sacramento: The Joseph Magnin New Store,” *Architect and Engineer*, December 1946, 12. A later Gruen design for a Las Vegas Magnin shop managed to incorporate the “vertical sweep of palm trees” into its architectural scheme, which resembled an Indian Pueblo. “Gruen, Functional fantasy in a desert setting,” *Interiors*, June 1959; “Another Novel Store is Born in JM Family!” *Oakland Tribune*, November 25, 1948.

47 “Furniture Store in Los Angeles is designed for motorist attention and minimum cost,” *Architectural Forum*, April 1947, 88; “Modern store is roadside display case,” *Chain Store Age*, October 1947, 212.

highly skilled at producing eye-catching facades that were, at the same time, tasteful and modern-looking. Their signs attractively integrated lettering and backgrounds, rather than focusing on large lettering alone—the “literary approach” that Gruen detested. And rather than treating the facade and interior as entirely separate features, Gruen made the case that modern architecture, as opposed to traditional architecture, integrated the two.⁴⁸

Gruen and Krummeck were as attentive to interiors as they were to exteriors. For the men’s department of a California shoe store, Gruen and Krummeck engineered a “clubby” atmosphere that used dark colors and carpet treatments to “strike a strong masculine note.” Their “easy-to-look-at” lighting fixtures had the effect of putting a shopper “in the mood to buy,” according to one reviewer in a menswear trade magazine.⁴⁹ Gruen, as a former manager of the theater, knew well how to use light to produce emotional effects, which were responses to environmental conditions that might arise naturally or artificially. He claimed to know how to use light to create a variety of sensations, “from awe-filled admiration to homey coziness, from cool efficiency to sweet romance.” New and more widely-available technologies, such as air conditioning and fluorescent lighting, aided designers in their efforts to produce the right environmental conditions; the retail space of the 1940s was transformed into the optimum platform for selling. In order to better showcase the merchandise, designers were able to cloak the functional elements of the shop, which disappeared or receded into the background.⁵⁰

When addressing audiences of retailers and designers, Gruen was philosophical about the theatrical elements of the store, but he also expressed an intimate knowledge of the technical requirements to produce an almost magical effect on the shopper. He said that stores led a “double life,” as “factories with machinery” that were concealed by their “gayer” side as showplaces for merchandise, designed inside and out with the intent of arousing consumers’ desires. Gruen maintained that the work of the designers of a commercial structure was not so different from the business of the theater in that it required a keen attention to “showmanship.” Gruen believed that an intelligent design could create the right “atmosphere”—a feeling of restfulness, luxury, and good

48 Gruen, “Debunking the Fads,” 38–40.

49 “New C.H. Baker Store to Open in Glendale,” *Valley Times*, March 3, 1948; Joe Bevash, “Kutler’s: A Store that Sells Itself,” *California Men’s and Boys’ Stylist*, February 1949.

50 Victor Gruen, “Architects and Lighting Engineers Use Similar Approach to the Problem of Suitable Lighting,” *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, April 28, 1950; “What Makes a 1940 Store Obsolete?” *Architectural Forum*, August 1950; Victor Gruen, “The Case for the Flexible Ceiling,” *Electrical West*, September 1949.

taste—which would encourage shoppers, who were usually women, to linger longer and spend more money.⁵¹

The most complete realization of Gruen and Krummeck's design ethos, which incorporated elements of their storefront and interior designs while, at the same time, nodding to Gruen's later, more ambitious planning of shopping centers, was a new branch of the Milliron's department store. The architects designed not only the building itself but also the store's entire merchandising layout, including its furniture, fixtures, and a color scheme that designated the departments. The large, one-story building, which opened in 1949, was located in the rapidly-developing suburban community of Westchester in southern California. The municipality was only eight years old, spurred into existence by the nearby harbor and by the war-related industries of greater Los Angeles. Unlike Grayson's and the other stores that Gruen and Krummeck had designed, most of the customers at the new Milliron's were expected to arrive by car. Attracting the attention of foot traffic was of secondary importance, and so there were no show windows in the building proper. Instead, there were four free-standing display cases, angled at thirty degrees to catch the attention of passing motorists. One of the building's most striking features, hailed when the project was announced in 1947, was its distinctive rooftop parking lot with space for 220 cars. The rooftop was lined with shops on the periphery, and it featured a "penthouse" through which auto-borne shoppers would enter the store. The single-story design—though the building appeared to be two stories high from both street fronts—allowed the developer to save money on the "vertical transportation" (elevators and escalators) that would have been required for a three-story structure without losing any parking space due to the larger footprint.⁵²

51 This could be accomplished through technical means, such as "flexible" paneled ceilings which hid the purely functional "arteries and veins" of the building's electrical, plumbing, and ventilation systems. Such ceilings also allowed the interior designer to arrange lighting systems exactly where they were needed, and to move them if necessary. This permitted merchants to arrange their goods without the interference of structural or mechanical impediments. Gruen would later apply this "flexible" design to other building types, such as supermarkets like Penn Fruit in Audubon, New Jersey, which employed "soaring, 114-ft laminated wood arches" to create a huge open space completely unobstructed by columns. "Commercial Buildings: Prototype Supermarket," *Progressive Architecture*, July 1956; Gruen, "Modernized Store Layout," speech, Store Modernization Show, July 8, 1947, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Modernization for More Efficient Operation," speech, N.R.D.G.A., San Francisco, June 14, 1948, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Notes for Talk to Be Delivered to the Southern California Display Club," May 26, 1949, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC.

52 "Future Westchester Development of Milliron's Department Store to Feature Roof Parking," *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, May 23, 1947, 16; "Milliron's Reveals Plans for Store at Sepulveda, La Tijera Blvds.," *California Apparel News*, June 20, 1947; "Notes Concerning 'Economy in Design,' Milliron's Department Store," Gruen and Krummeck, February 15, 1949, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gru-

The positive publicity from the novel design for Milliron's, which "splashed large in architectural magazines all over the country," coupled with ecstatic coverage of the striking storefronts for Grayson-Robinson, made Gruen and Krummeck rising stars in the world of commercial architecture.⁵³ But the partnership of Gruen and Krummeck would not last. As the firm's contracts grew larger, Gruen's personal and professional relationship with Elsie Krummeck began to deteriorate. By his account, although Krummeck was an excellent artist and drawer, she began to feel "inferior" to Gruen as his celebrity status as a visionary architect grew, and in her devotion to their two children she lost interest in professional activities. They kept separate bedrooms and drifted apart, and Gruen first suggested divorce in 1949. He believed that they would separate amicably, but when he confessed to an affair, Krummeck got a lawyer and managed to get a divorce on terms that Gruen believed to be unreasonable. Gruen was quickly remarried to his mistress, Lazette Van Houten, an American fashion editor for the furnishings trade paper *Retailing Daily*. In this position, Van Houten had been a "prime mover" in the postwar home furnishings field, and she had covered Gruen's work in the course of writing a series of articles in 1949 on how architectural changes were affecting home-goods production.⁵⁴

Gruen's habit of mixing the business and personal sides of his life carried over to his new architectural firm, which, as a condition of its founding, jointly bore the responsibility of his rather substantial alimony payments to Elsie Krummeck. While Gruen had been working in the field of architectural design

en AHC; Victor Gruen, "Milliron's - Modern at a Price" *Stores*, March 1949, 20-1; Gruen, "A New Kind of Department Store is Born," speech, Milliron's Westchester Store, March 29, 1949, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC; "New L.A. Store Has Parking Lot on Roof," *Business Week*, April 23, 1949; "Something New in Stores," *Architectural Forum*, June 1949, 105-11; Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 93; Gruen, "Modernized Store Layout," speech, Store Modernization Show, July 8, 1947, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC.

53 They would win other major contracts to redesign large department stores, such as the R.H. Macy & Co. store in Kansas City, where they introduced their "total flexibility" ideas in redesigning the ceilings, lighting fixtures, walls, and merchandising fixtures on several floors. Relative to the "frozen architecture" of the past, the new interiors made it easier for retailers to hide utilities and change displays based on the season, and to adjust to evolving consumer tastes. "Constructed for quick change," *Chain Store Age*, January 1950; "Total Flexibility at Macy's, Kansas City," *Stores*, January 1950; "Branch Stores," *Stores*, February 1951, 44-45; Guzzardi, "Architect of Environments."

54 Morris Pfaelzer to Elsie Gruen, March 14, 1951, box 66, Gruen LOC; "Modification Agreement," July 20, 1951, box 22, folder 16, Gruen LOC.; "Marriage Certificate," New York State, box 22, folder 16, Gruen LOC; "Life Facts about Names from the News: Gruen, Victor," *The Monthly Supplement* [adjunct to *Who's Who*], June 1953; "Simplicity of Forms Marks Selections for 'Good Design,'" *Retailing Daily*, December 8, 1953; Mary Morris, "How Miss Van Houten Became Mrs. Gruen," *The Detroit News*, February 15, 1954; "Miss Van Houten, 1st Fashion Editor of 'Retailing', Dies," *Home Furnishings Daily*, July 17, 1962; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, p. 109, box 76, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 114-18, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC.

since his arrival in the US, he lacked a proper license until 1948, when he was finally certified as an architect in the state of California. The new credential, along with the severing of his partnership with Krummeck, made possible the founding of Victor Gruen Associates in 1950. Gruen conceived the new organization not as a traditional architectural firm, but rather as a team devoted to “environmental planning” that would be composed of specialists in a variety of disciplines. His partners included his old friend from Vienna, Rudi Baumfeld, who specialized in design; Edgardo Contini, a structural and civil engineer who was a refugee from fascist Italy; and Karl Van Leuven, a California-born draftsman and designer who had worked as an artist for Walt Disney, producing training and educational films for the US military.⁵⁵

As his partnership with Krummeck headed toward dissolution, Gruen had been cultivating his public persona as a prophet of the suburban shopping center. Along with his former New York colleague Morris Ketchum, Gruen became one of the first planners and perhaps the most articulate advocate of a new concept: the regional shopping center organized around a pedestrian mall. In a series of trade journal articles and speeches in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Gruen would lay out his idealistic vision for the postwar shopping center with much greater detail than he and Krummeck had done in their 1943 sketch in *The Architectural Forum*. Gruen lamented the loss of the pleasant character of the old, European-style marketplaces with the advent of the automobile, and his plan for the shopping center was designed to ameliorate the new conditions of contemporary society.

Conclusion

Shortly after Victor Gruen’s arrival in New York in the summer of 1938, he met Elsie Krummeck, who would become his second wife and his partner in their architectural design firm, Gruenbaum & Krummeck. After working on Norman Bel Geddes’s “Futura” exhibit for General Motors at the 1939–40 World’s Fair, and as he worked to reconstitute the socialist players of the *Kleinkunstabühnen* of Vienna for two bittersweet revues as the Refugee Artists

55 The other partners were Ben Southland, a planner; Herman Guttman, an industrial architect; and Beda Zwicker, a Swiss designer and architect. “Wives, February 26, 1974,” box 20, Gruen LOC; “Biography of the Founder,” box 10, folder “Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980,” Gruen AHC; Guzzardi, “Architect of Environments”; “Victor Gruen Associates: Architecture, Planning, Engineering” [brochure], n.d. [ca. 1967], box 74, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Biographical Material—Gruen, Victor, Annotated Chronology, Mar. 1975, n.d., 1938–50 (2 of 6),” box 20, folder 18, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 214–15, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC.

Group, Gruen reentered the world of commercial architecture that he had left when he fled Austria. Many of his first commissions came from fellow Viennese émigrés, such as Ludwig Lederer and Stephen (Stefan) Klein. His and Krummeck's architectural innovations—which were very conscious of pedestrian flows and the theatrical presentation of goods, such as his mini-arcades and display cases—caught the attention of the architectural trade press, and the publicity got them more jobs. Their designs added drama to merchandising while using space to direct purchasing.

Gruen and Krummeck continued designing storefronts throughout the war years and the rest of the 1940s, and they were long sustained by their work for the Grayson chain of ready-to-wear women's apparel shops. Gruen became naturalized as a US citizen during the war, and he would finally acquire his architect's license in 1948. But Gruen's great idea during these years was an inversion of the storefront: the shopping center, which was modest on its street-facing exterior; instead, storefronts would face an interior courtyard accessible only to pedestrian traffic. The idea came both from Gruen's abhorrence at the cacophony of the car-clogged Los Angeles streets, and it recalled the form of the Viennese *Hof-Haus* style of architecture. Furthermore, like the Viennese *Gemeindebauten*, the shopping center would also be a *community* center, equipped with libraries, dentists' offices, meeting rooms, and other kinds of community spaces. But the idea, first articulated in 1943, would remain unrealized until the early 1950s, when Gruen began to evangelize for the shopping center.

9

**The Industrialist and the Artist:
Walter Paepcke Rescues the Bauhaus**

Despite the withdrawal of support from the Association of Arts and Industries and the closing of the design school it had established, Moholy would not give up on his dream of reviving the Bauhaus. He scoured the yellow pages for various manufacturers that might be interested in the services of the school. Along with Sibyl, he embarked on another tour of the industrial cities of the Midwest, seeking the support of forward-thinking, progressive industrialists for a new school. He returned to Chicago in January of 1939, where one evening he hosted a meeting in his apartment with Charles Morris, György Kepes, the architect George Fred Keck, the painter and sculptor Robert Jay Wolff, and the workshop assistant Andi Schlitz, who agreed to join Moholy in his new venture, teaching without pay for at least the first semester. On January 17, they sent out an announcement to students of their plan to open a new design school with the same program as the New Bauhaus. If they could get sufficient enrollment, the new “School of Design”—a “modest and colorless name,” in Moholy’s estimation—would open at the end of February. Tuition would be one hundred and fifty dollars for the day school and sixty for the night class. Within two weeks, they would receive sixty inquiries about the school.

Several guest lecturers also signed the announcement, including Morris and David Dushkin. Moholy also made personal appeals to other teachers from the New Bauhaus, including Henry Holmes Smith, who was excited by the idea. But Moholy was unable to promise salaries, and whatever tuition would have to be used for rent, equipment, and other operating expenses. “However,” Moholy speculated hopefully, “it is very possible that we shall have some contributions from the outside, and then we can fill the gap between present reality and wish fulfillment.” Moholy would need more substantial help, and he would find it in

the most sympathetic board member of the Association: Walter Paepcke, the “enlightened industrialist.” According to Sibyl, Paepcke fully understood Moholy’s obsession with the interrelatedness of art, science, and industry. He was, according to Sibyl, “one of those rare men whose awareness of and respect for creativity was stronger than his material prudence.”¹

Walter Paepcke was born in Chicago in 1896, the son of a German immigrant, Hermann Paepcke. After he had married Elizabeth Nitze and graduated from Yale, Walter inherited his father’s milling and lumber company in 1922. The company also made wooden crates, and it had begun moving into the business of corrugated paper containers, which were lighter and thus cheaper to ship. When the young Walter Paepcke took over, he consolidated the family business with several companies in the burgeoning paperboard container industry to form the Container Corporation of America (CCA) in 1926. Within two years, it would be operating more than a dozen plants from Chicago to Philadelphia, and within ten years it would be the largest manufacturer of paperboard shipping containers in the US. Because eighty percent of its raw materials were wastepaper (the rest was pulp wood, mostly from slash-pine trees), the company preferred to locate its plants near the source of such waste—in metropolitan centers.

The company provided boxes and other packaging containers of all kinds for use in wholesale and resale, to all kinds of manufacturers, from cigarette companies to sugar refiners. As demand for packaged, branded goods rose in the first half of the twentieth century, the company expanded dramatically, and Paepcke saw an increased need for industrial designers. The trend away from barrels and crates and toward smaller packages and containers in the 1920s and 1930s, and the emergence of self-service in retailing, was a great boon to Paepcke’s business. About half of all paper went into manufacturing boxes. “Fastidious consumers nowadays want even their whisky bottles and cold cream jars boxed,” as one contemporaneous account put it. As a free-market-oriented businessman skeptical of government intervention in economic matters, Paepcke hated Roosevelt’s New Deal, but he welcomed another change that marked the beginning of the Roosevelt era: the end of Prohibition, which was, in his view, just another

1 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, “Chicago Years,” 22–26; George Fred Keck, “History of the Institute of Design,” August 1955, box 62, folder 1, Walter P. Paepcke Papers, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center [hereafter, “WPP”]; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 164–73; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 85–86; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 584–85; Moholy-Nagy, et al. to New Bauhaus supporters, January 17, 1939, box 7, folder 203, Institute of Design Collection, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois at Chicago [hereafter, “ID”]; Henry Smith to Moholy-Nagy, January 18, 1939, box 7, folder 203, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Henry Smith, January 23, 1939, box 7, folder 203, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Nikolaus Pevsner, March 8, 1943, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 407–8.

packaging opportunity for the Corporation. Ultimately, Paepcke was a pragmatic and opportunistic businessman with a soft spot for the arts.

Given the nature of his business, the application of art to industry was a longtime concern of Paepcke's, so his involvement in the Association and its attempts to establish a design school were perfectly consistent. The container business afforded many opportunities for design, not only in the aesthetics of its products but in their physical construction. CCA made paperboard constructions of various thicknesses for three basic types of containers: the solid-fiber shipping containers, which included corrugated containers or boxes, into which various packages or products would be packed; folding boxes or cartons; and finally paperboard or cardboard boxes, which the company called "setup" boxes. Setup boxes consisted of a mounting board onto which some high-grade paper would be pasted; CCA provided these basic materials but not the final construction. These boxes, and particularly the setup boxes, played a practical role in protecting and shipping merchandise en route to a retail outlet, but they also played a promotional or advertising role by virtue of the text, images, and colors used to adorn the boxes. CCA provided a template for those manufacturers and retailers to merchandise their goods, which was the basis for its interest in design, but good design was also central to its own institutional advertising as a business used by manufacturers and retailers. Although it did not typically sell directly to consumers, CCA would become one of the most image-conscious companies in America.

Walter Paepcke's wife, Elizabeth, was a serious art lover, and she cultivated in her husband an interest in both philanthropy and modern art, which would turn out to be deeply relevant to his interest in improving the public image of his company, particularly in the climate of the 1930s, when trust in big corporations had eroded. Elizabeth made a habit of sharing the German commercial design journal *Gebrauchsgraphik* with her husband, and eventually she convinced him to refashion CCA's image and embrace "good design" as a fundamental business principle. Accordingly, Paepcke hired an art director, who initiated a total redesign of the Corporation, from its stationery to its delivery trucks. This aesthetic undertaking succeeded in creating in the public mind an association between the company and modern design. Even more important in conveying this impression was CCA's institutional advertising of the late 1930s, which employed the works of modern artists such as A. M. Cassandre, Herbert Bayer, Jean Hélion, Fernand Léger, and Man Ray—Moholy's contemporaries in the world of modern design. As the historian Victor Margolin has pointed out, Paepcke well understood that his association with the modern art world was not merely an act of philanthropy; it was also a calculated business

decision that added value to his company. Cultivating a refined image was part of Paepcke's business, and it did not hurt that he was, by one account, blonde, athletic, and "Habsburg-handsome." Moholy would become a central player in the menagerie of "interesting" people that Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke liked to surround themselves with.²

Moholy's early impression of Paepcke centered on his "public spirit" and "invaluable activities in cultural matters." Desperate after the Association had abandoned him, Moholy wrote to Paepcke on January 17, 1939 to inform him of his plans to open a new school of design at the end of February, and to ask for his support. "I believe I can promise you one thing sure for your help," Moholy wrote, "a sound and progressive education which may be valuable for the community." Paepcke agreed to help, using his prominence in the business community to begin a campaign to enlist support for the project from foundations and other interested industrialists. He also provided grants to the School through his own company. Paepcke even offered a group of farm buildings on his rural estate, the "Rumney Farm," at Somonauk, Illinois, about seventy miles southwest of Chicago, for use as a summer school, which would begin that July for a period of some six weeks. Moholy was extremely grateful for Paepcke's gifts and support, returning the favor with the gift of one of his pictures. It was the beginning of what would be a close friendship. Paepcke managed to gather a number of prominent supporters for the new school, a "Sponsors Committee," which would include Joseph Hudnut, the dean of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard, the publisher W. W. Norton, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, Walter Gropius, and John Dewey. Officially, Moholy would serve as president and executive director. The charter also authorized the formation of the "Friends of the School of Design" for supporters. Given the school's precarious finances at the outset, only a caretaker and secretary were paid. Sibyl would serve a variety of duties as secretary, bookkeeper, registrar, and "auxiliary janitor."

With the help of a core group of faculty members who agreed to teach for a semester without pay, the School of Design opened on February 22, 1939, in a new location, the second floor of an old commercial building with very high

2 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 164–66; Paepcke to Spencer Trask, February 7, 1928, box 1, folder 4, WPP; "Money Talks," WMAQ radio broadcast transcript, April 7, 1937, box 1, folder 6, WPP; "Containers: Paperboard Is Money-Maker for Paepcke Firm," *News-Week*, July 31, 1937; "Walter Paepcke, Art Patron, Dies," *The New York Times*, April 14, 1960; Allen, *Romance*, 17–31; Margolin, *Struggle*, 238; Paepcke, address before the Art Directors Club of Chicago, May 19, 1936, box 1, folder 5, WPP; "Container Kraft," *Time*, June 1, 1936, 58–60; "How Container Corporation Forecasts Profits," *American Business Magazine*, August 1937, 37–44; Paepcke to Moholy-Nagy, March 5, 1940, box 6, folder 184, ID.

ceilings on Ontario Street. Moholy had managed to get the space at the very low rent of seventy-five dollars per month; only later did they realize that the space they had acquired was below the dance rehearsal hall for one of the city's most rollicking nightclubs, the Chez-Paree (a phonetic spelling of the French pronunciation of Paris). Although the Association had sold off much of the equipment, what remained was moved from the Field mansion as part of the settlement. There were eighteen day students and twenty-nine night students enrolled. At least in the beginning, the many workshops typical of the Bauhaus were effectively consolidated into one large workshop, with each student responsible for occupying themselves.

In greeting students, Moholy likened the school to an “experimental collective” that would concern itself with the “needs of the community” and “mass production problems.” “If you succeed in organizing among each other a working community,” Moholy said, “your combined strength will surpass in its results any technical school with the finest equipment.” Following the ethos of the Bauhaus, the corporate charter for the School of Design pledged that it would develop a new system of education based on the “integrated training in arts, science and technology, leading to a thorough consciousness of human needs and of the creative power of the individual student,” and that it would “develop and promote American industry, arts and science, and otherwise to stimulate interest in improving the products of American industry and creating new and useful methods in such industry.” The school would seek to invent and license products for mass manufacture, but being more than a mere vocational school, the School of Design would strive to become a “cultural working center” that would “further and develop a new related and integrated research for artists, technologists, scientists and persons engaged in other professions and occupations, including persons engaged in industrial and commercial pursuits.” Moholy's head hummed with “figures and projects” for the school. Excited though he was, he trembled at the thought that “this cold heartless thing called reality might thwart all these day dreams.”³

3 Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, January 25, 1939, box 61, folder 1, WPP; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, February 24, 1939, box 61, folder 1, WPP; Paepcke to Henry Allen Moe, November 30, 1939, box 61, folder 1, WPP; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 166–75; Daiter, *Light and Vision*; Charles Morris to Lloyd Engelbrecht, June 3, 1968, box 7, folder 196, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Henry Smith, February 3, 1939, box 7, folder 203, ID; “Application for a Corporate Charter in the State of Illinois, for the Founding of the School of Design,” ca. 1939, box 1, folder 3, ID; “2 Summer Sessions of the School of Design, July 10–August 18, 1939,” box 3, folder 65, ID; Paepcke to “Gentlemen,” November 1, 1944, box 6, folder 184, ID; Findeli, “Design Education,” 97–113; Robert Wolff, “From Prairie Avenue to Ontario Street—1938–39,” n.d., box 7, folder 209, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, March 6, 1939, box 61, folder 1, WPP; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 585–88; Moholy-Nagy to Elizabeth Paepcke, April 20, 1939, box 61, folder 1, WPP; “Minutes of the First and Joint Meeting of the Board

As much if not more than the New Bauhaus, the School of Design embodied the moral principles and educational methods of the original German Bauhaus, with its emphasis on uniting art, science, and industry toward the end of good design for mass production. The school's basic course was meant to forge a "working union" among students. Together with their teachers, students would form a "community with common interests and work." Teachers would refrain from "formal influence" upon students, instead observing and helping them to shape their work "in congruity" with their talents. The students of the School of Design would learn to produce better furniture and fountain pens, but also better buildings and motion pictures, through their deep appreciation of the essence of things and their ability to develop new "habits of imagination." They would not be designers of things planned for obsolescence or novelty for the sake of novelty; rather, their deep consciousness of the relation between form and function would lead them to produce enduring designs of the highest quality. Freed from the "repressions and hindrances" of tradition and the "depressing clichés" of their previous studies, students would be able to produce new forms in a "spirit of co-operation." Rather than studying the work of masters, students would study the fundamental principles and facts of design, working in the basic materials of construction—wood, metal, plastic, glass, and textiles—and the forms and media of display—typography, photography, modeling, and painting.

Following the Bauhaus ethos, the School's pedagogy spurned the isolation of individuals which deprived them of the "powerful creative stimulus" that came from "social integration." Moholy insisted that designers were not merely technicians but also analysts of the production process who understood their important *social* obligations and their responsibilities to the group. They were not concerned solely with *function* in the sense of a "limited mechanical task." Rather, their purpose was to produce enduring and socially meaningful designs that avoided the temptation of fads, "the easy way out of economic and social responsibilities." Technology had become part of man's "metabolism," and the task of the designer was to reevaluate human needs that had been warped by the "machine civilization" and devise solutions not based on tradition but on experimentation with the fundamentals of design. Cooperation between artists, scientists, and technicians was the ideal of the Bauhaus, and, according to Moholy, the designer had a "sociological responsibility which is founded in mass-production."⁴

of Directors, Incorporators and Members of School of Design," March 1, 1939, box 1, folder 10, ID; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 87–88; Moholy-Nagy to Nelson Rockefeller, June 10, 1939, box 37, folder 252, RG III2G, Office of the Messers Rockefeller: Educational Interests [hereafter, "Educational Interests"], Rockefeller Archive Center (Sleepy Hollow, New York) [hereafter, "RAC"].

4 "School of Design," catalog, 1939–40, box 3, folder 62, ID; *Millar's Chicago Letter* 2, no. 23 (August 5, 1940),

The faculty members of the School of Design participated in the common “work of the community” at the School of Design, guiding students but ensuring that they developed their own approaches and did not merely imitate their teachers. They encouraged students to discard their preconceived notions about what proper art or design should be in an effort to help them get over their inferiority complexes. Breaking down design to the fundamentals in this way reduced it to pure form, which helped students to be more creative in their later designs of functional objects and typefaces. This kind of free art, absent the “hindrances of a utilitarian nature,” as Moholy put it, could provide a “good lead to future problems” that might not be discovered through a narrower kind of training. Similarly, experimentation with abstract photographs, photograms, and films in György Kepes’s “light” workshops led to more creative applications of commercial art and advertising. Early, basic exercises like the sculpting of wood blocks helped students to build an appreciation of form and volume that they would draw on in their more advanced designs in the specialized workshops in plastics, textiles, and other materials for mass production. As at the Bauhaus, the specialized workshops, which also included exhibition and display, culminated in courses on architecture and urban design. There were no marks or grades at the School of Design; instead, there were exhibitions at the conclusion of the semester in which the teachers would either approve or reject students’ designs. Moholy was particularly satisfied with a student exhibition held in July, which, he felt, revived the school’s reputation after it was nearly ruined by the “gangsters” in the Association.⁵

Moholy and Paepcke constantly sought grants for the School. Among those major figures to whom Moholy made appeals for financial support was Nelson Rockefeller, then president of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Writing in the late spring of 1939, Moholy reported the School’s early successes, which included the enrollment of about fifty students in day and night classes and sufficient interest to run two summer sessions. Yet the finances of the school were dire. “I fear that my teachers, sacrificing their time and reducing greatly their standards of living, will not be able to continue their teaching without salaries,”

box 9, folder 261, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, January 7, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy, “New Trends in Design,” 48–51, 67–68; Moholy-Nagy, “New Education: Organic Approach,” *Art and Industry*, March 1946, box 6, folder 187, ID; Moholy-Nagy, “Art in Industry: Part Two,” *Arts and Architecture* (1947), box 6, folder 188, ID; “School of Design in Chicago,” catalog, 1941–42, box 3, folder 63, ID; “Evening Session: School of Design in Chicago,” 1941–42, box 3, folder 71, ID; Moholy-Nagy, “Design Potentialities,” 675–87.

5 “School of Design in Chicago, Moholy-Nagy, Director, Day and Evening Classes, 1940–41,” box 3, folder 67, ID; “School of Design in Chicago,” 1941–42, box 3, folder 63, ID; “Evening Session: School of Design in Chicago,” 1941–42, box 3, folder 71, ID; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 585–86; Moholy-Nagy to Nikolaus Pevsner, March 8, 1943, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 407–8.

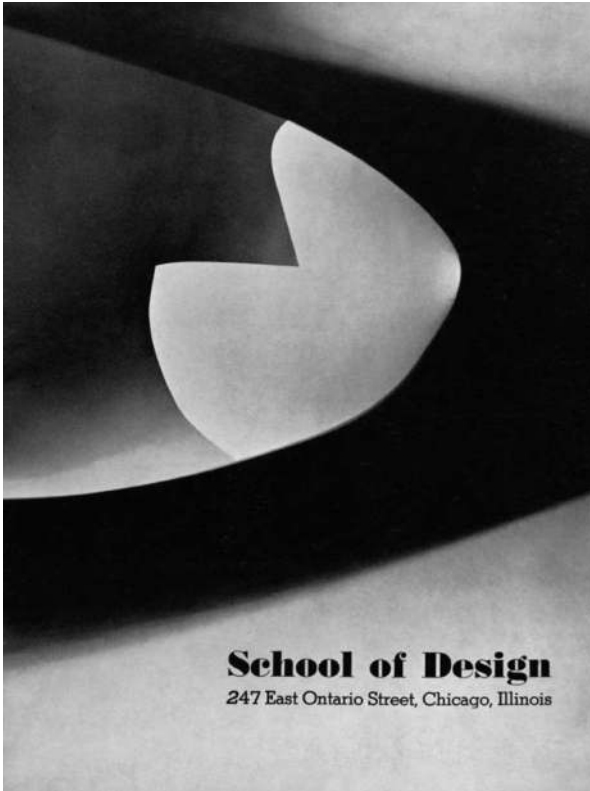


FIGURE 9
Cover of catalog for the School of Design, 1939–40.
SOURCE: Institute of Design collection, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois, Chicago.

Moholy pleaded. “So I have to do everything to secure some means, at least for small salaries, for next year.” Moholy had, at that point, already been turned down by several foundations, including the Rockefeller Foundation, which had “no means” to support the industrial arts, yet the Foundation officers insisted that they believed “firmly” in the “necessity” of the School’s educational methods. Moholy was worried that the early closing of the New Bauhaus might give the impression that its methods were “not right, at least not for this country.” He therefore appealed to Rockefeller’s “far-sighted leadership” and sense of an obligation to “culture.” Rockefeller politely declined.⁶

Despite the precarious financial situation, Moholy was confident about the future of the School of Design at the start of the fall semester in September of 1939. He expressed faith in the school’s mission as an “experimental collective” that could meet the needs of community life and tackle the problems of mass

⁶ Moholy-Nagy to Nelson Rockefeller, June 10, 1939; Nelson Rockefeller to Moholy-Nagy, June 26, 1939, in box 37, folder 252, RG III2G, Educational Interests, RAC.

production. Enrollment, including both day and night students, had grown from forty-seven in the first semester in the spring to seventy-five that fall; eighty-five would enroll for the following spring term. Moholy's "infectious enthusiasm" spread not only to the students and faculty members, but also to prospective industrial supporters of the school. The faculty members were also beginning to establish themselves in the Chicago art scene. Kepes, for example, had a solo exhibition featuring his photograms at the Katherine Kuh Gallery.⁷

The School made an impact not only in the Midwest but also on the West Coast. Beginning in the summer of 1939, Moholy began corresponding with Alfred Neumeyer, director of the art gallery at Mills College in Oakland and an admirer of the Bauhaus. Neumeyer wanted to bring the School of Design to Mills College for a summer session, and he sent an emissary, Dean Rusk, to Chicago that summer to extend a formal invitation to Moholy. Moholy was flattered by the offer and "definitely interested" in the proposition. He consulted his faculty, who were "very favorable" to the idea, and agreed to move forward with planning for a 1940 summer session. Moholy regretted that the Mills session would preclude another summer school at Paepcke's Somonauk country home, but the opportunity was simply too tempting to pass up.

Neumeyer arranged to have the Museum of Modern Art's Bauhaus exhibition, *The Bauhaus: 1919–28*, show at Mills in May to arouse interest in the summer school. It was a "living example" of the Bauhaus effort to reconcile art with industrial society in a spirit of "internationalism," according to contemporary reviews. The exhibition debuted in the Mills College art gallery in April of 1940 in anticipation of the School of Design summer session, which ran from June 23 to August 3. The session was self-consciously a part of the American dispersion of the Bauhaus mission to break down the division between applied and fine arts toward the creation of a "modern form of beauty." Moholy himself offered a range of courses on "contemporary problems" in painting, sculpture, architecture, advertising, typography, product design, and educational matters. Joining Moholy for the summer session at Mills were Kepes and the Bauhaus alumnus Marli Ehrmann, a specialist in weaving and textiles. The summer session was, in Moholy's view, a great success, with "super attendance" that even allowed Mills to make a small profit.⁸

7 Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 89; "Report of the Progress of The School of Design in Chicago under the Grant of the Carnegie Corporation of New York of \$10,000," December 1940, box 1, folder 14, ID; George Fred Keck, "History of the Institute of Design," August 1955, Box 62, folder 1, WPP; "György Kepes," Katharine Kuh Gallery, Chicago, September 26–October 28, 1939, box 6, folder 170, ID.

8 Moholy-Nagy to Neumeyer, July 3, 1939, box 3, folder 61, ID; Neumeyer to Moholy Nagy, July 3, 1939, box 3, folder 61, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Neumeyer, July 14, 1939, box 3, folder 62, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Neumeyer,

Nevertheless, the School of Design was constantly in need of financial support in its early years. Despite steadily growing enrollment, which would reach 122 day and night students by the fourth semester in the fall of 1940, the School needed to supplement the insufficient income from tuition fees. Moholy and Paepcke endeavored to raise the School's profile by making it a "nucleus for a community center for contemporary thought," sponsoring evening lectures that would bring in close to two-thousand people over the course of the year. Paepcke also organized luncheons to solicit the support of major Chicago businessmen, gaining donations from Marshall Field and Company, Sears Roebuck, United Airlines, and other major Chicago firms and industrial concerns, which sometimes offered materials in lieu of money. Paepcke appealed not only to their sense of civic duty and philanthropy but also to their practical need for skilled designers, offering evening classes in design for people employed during the day at department stores and companies such as Florsheim Shoe and Chicago Moulded Products. "Your counsel will be sought in planning part time training of persons now employed in product design (to increase the value of their services to their employers)," Paepcke wrote to one prospect, "and in developing a method of bringing particular design problems from industry into the School for solution." The commercial designers, in turn, would raise the profile of the School through displays that made innovative use of volume and "light organization."

Courses were offered in such things as exhibition and window display, stage design, product design, sound production, architectural design, and advertising arts, which included not only technical instruction in such things as layout and lettering, but also lectures on consumer psychology. Kepes, who had made innovations in the use of photography in advertising and produced "striking work" to publicize Paepcke's Container Corporation, led the advertising arts session. Strengthening the ties between the design school and the businesses that could use the services of students was a "most important" idea, according to one interested wholesaler. Moholy personally asked Oscar G. Mayer, president of the Chicago Association of Commerce, to serve on the School's advisory

August 4, 1939, box 3, folder 61, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Neumeyer, September 30, 1939, box 3, folder 61, ID; Neumeyer to Thomas Howe, October 17, 1939, box 3, folder 60, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Neumeyer, October 31, 1939, box 3, folder 61, ID; Neumeyer to Moholy-Nagy, November 11, 1939, box 3, folder 61, ID; "Bauhaus Exhibit at Mills College," *Tribune* [Oakland], April 14, 1940; Moholy-Nagy to Neumeyer, May 17, 1940, box 3, folder 61, ID; "Summer Session for Men and Women, Mills College, 1940: June 23–August 3," *Bulletin of Mills College*, Series 30, No. 1, Summer Session, February 1940, box 3, folder 57, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Henry Smith, October 22, 1940, box 7, folder 203, ID; "Bauhaus Exhibition Opens In Art Gallery," *Mills College Weekly*, April 3, 1940; Glenn Wessels, "The Art World," *Argonaut*, March 29, 1940; Sibyl to Paepcke, February 7, 1940, box 6, folder 194, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, March 1, 1940, box 6, folder 183, ID.

committee, which would plan “mutually beneficial co-operation between the School and local enterprise” including a night school and a research institute. Moholy also sought recommendations for other businessmen who might also be interested in taking on that role.

Although it was a “most unusual type of school,” according to one supporter, the School of Design’s workshops produced practical designs for such varied things as plywood furniture, radio cabinets, lamps, glass tumblers, dishes, jewelry, wire-mesh shock-absorbers, new fabrics, wallpaper, ergonomic screwdriver handles, and airplane doors. Students’ experiments designing constructions with various new kinds of plastics would be a sign of things to come in the burgeoning market for consumer durables in the postwar era. Public exhibitions of students’ designs were another way to arouse the interest and support of business leaders and industrial associations. The Kaufmann Department Store in Pittsburgh engaged the school to design an exhibition room for a contemporary apartment, and Lord and Taylor was interested in the potential of a prototype from the weaving workshop. Some of these designs, such as a tea table for the Artek-Pascoe company of New York, went into mass production, from which the School and its student designers received royalties. Though the School had been asked to sell its interesting furniture prototypes, it generally declined in the interest of securing royalties from the sale of mass-produced furniture licensed to major manufacturers.⁹

Over the next several years, Moholy and Paepcke would be successful in winning grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and from the Carnegie Corporation. Carnegie awarded the School a \$10,000 grant in 1940, enough to start paying its staff small salaries and eventually bring on new faculty, including Ehrmann, who would head the weaving workshop. Moholy also attempted to get his ex-wife Lucia to come to Chicago to join the faculty, but he was ultimately unsuccessful in this effort. Without outside help, Moholy suggested, the School would be unable to sustain the salaries. Less than half of the School’s annual ex-

9 “Report of the Progress of The School of Design in Chicago under the Grant of the Carnegie Corporation of New York of \$10,000,” February 1, 1940, box 1, folder 14, ID; Paepcke to J.J. Finlay, May 29, 1940, box 2, folder 33, ID; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 183–87; Paepcke, “Form Letter A, School of Design Fund Campaign 1942,” box 2, folder 34, ID; “December 1, 1943–March 30, 1944 Contributions to The Institute of Design,” box 1, folder 14, ID; Paepcke to E.P. Brooks, December 29, 1943, box 2, folder 38, ID; Frank Cornell to Paepcke, May 31, 1940, box 2, folder 33, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Oscar Mayer, June 6, 1940, box 6, folder 183, ID; John Millar to Paepcke, June 20, 1940, box 2, folder 37, ID; John Millar to Paepcke, July 24, 1940, box 2, folder 37, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Mr. Lester, September 27, 1941, box 6, folder 183, ID; “School of Design in Chicago,” 1941–42, box 3, folder 63, ID; “Evening Session: School of Design in Chicago,” 1941–42, box 3, folder 71, ID; *Illustration*, February 1941, box 6, folder 172, ID; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 611; “School of Design on Threshold of Fourth Year,” *Chicago Sun*, January 3, 1942.

penses of roughly \$25,000 were covered by tuition fees, and gifts, design fees, and royalties brought in at most \$2,000. “Any suggestion on your part as to people and companies whom we may approach, and any personal effort of your own would be received by me and my faculty with the greatest enthusiasm and gratitude,” Moholy wrote to potential supporter David Rockefeller. “I feel in this time of rapidly expanding industry that we need, more than ever, properly trained men responsible for the common welfare of the community.” Initially, Rockefeller offered only a tepid response and little real support.

The School also promoted itself by sponsoring lectures by Gropius and other major figures, and Moholy and Paepcke continually sought the support of industrialists, whom they flattered and dotingly nursed along, “each according to his own private interest in the school.” Circulating exhibitions of the school’s work also served to raise its profile. The Friends of the School of Design, composed of both industrialists and laymen, furthered their cause through financial contributions and professional advice. Moholy boasted of inventions derived from the design workshops for which the School submitted patent applications. While he emphasized the School’s innovative pedagogy before audiences of designers and educators, Moholy pointed to the practical benefits of the School when addressing businessmen and foundation officers. Yet he had a knack for reversing an implicit critique from conservative industrialists, who sometimes rolled their eyes at his “utopianism”; instead, Moholy insisted that “utopian” planning had not even sufficiently mastered the present situation.¹⁰

The direction of American industry would shift radically with the entrance of the US into the Second World War in December of 1941. Moholy was prepared, though, sensing that such a need might arise long before the attack on Pearl Harbor. He had been working for months on “defense matters” and had organized a “Defense Council” at the School to investigate ways of giving students a “good feeling of their usefulness at these times.” The School’s supporters contacted the US Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) and the War Production Board to notify the agencies of the valuable services the School could provide to the war effort. When the School reopened in February of 1942, Gropius came to Chicago to give a lecture on the “contemporary problem” of “Site and Shelter.”

10 Margolin, *Struggle*, 239–40; Moholy-Nagy to David Rockefeller, December 10, 1940, box 37, folder 252, RG III2G, Educational Interests, RAC; David Rockefeller to Moholy-Nagy, January 11, 1941, box 37, folder 252, Record Group III2G, Educational Interests, RAC; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 90; Inez Cunningham Stark to Moholy-Nagy, May 8, 1940, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Mr. Lester, September 27, 1941, box 6, folder 183, ID; “Designs for a Future World—Moholy-Nagy Speaks on Art,” *New York Herald Tribune*, September 14, 1941; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 595–96.

In addition to a series of lectures by faculty members and guests on the social usefulness of art and its relation to nations mobilizing for war, the School offered two new “National Defense” courses directed specifically to achieving “maximum results” for the war effort: a course on the uses and design of camouflage, taught by Kepes, and a course on “visual propaganda” in wartime, taught by Robert Jay Wolff. The School would also offer practical courses on soldering, brazing, welding, and mechanical drafting, and students would produce experimental designs for such things with wartime applications as barbed wire. Moholy believed that the Bauhaus approach of integrating art, science, and technology was particularly well suited to the needs of the moment, and he speculated about myriad ways the School could contribute, such as improving the design of the standard army field pack. He even considered such prosaic things as alternatives for wooden dowels. In April and May of 1942, the Arts and Crafts Project of the Works Progress Administration sponsored an exhibition, *War Art*, which featured designs produced by students at the School intended to “meet the requirements of defense.” Kepes also designed posters for the “Buy Victory Bonds” campaign.

Kepes himself had been trained in camouflage techniques by the Army. His camouflage course registered 134 students and was the only one in the area approved by the OCD to certify competence in camouflage. Some students who successfully completed the course would go on to enter the army’s camouflage corps. The School had issued about sixty certificates by January of 1943. As Kepes saw it, camouflage was basically a problem of design that required “protective concealment” in disguising targets from the enemy. The School staged an exhibition to promote the work of students in the course and as an advertisement to boost enrollment. Moholy also hoped that the School’s deep involvement in the war effort would raise its profile more generally and be cited in its appeals for donations.

The School initially lost a good number of students to the army. Moholy sardonically reassured one departing student, Myron Kozman—who would later return to the School as an instructor—that he could be confident in his ability in aiming a rifle because the abstract painting in which he excelled required the “sharpest discrimination for the smallest values, distance or shapes.” Kozman would serve as a sort of envoy for the School as it adjusted to the changes of wartime and made plans for a future, postwar return of veterans looking to receive training as they reintegrated into society. Registration at the School of Design had recovered by the fall 1942 semester, when enrollment reached a record of more than 200 students. There were fewer day students, but this deficiency was more than made up for by the high enrollment in the camouflage course taught by Kepes.

In addition to the courses on camouflage, mechanical drafting, war photography, blueprint reading, soldering, welding, machine shop work, and practical skills in industrial design, the School began offering courses in occupational therapy in the summer of 1943. The occupational therapy course was intended to train therapists, nurses, and laymen in the physical and psychological rehabilitation of physically disabled and psychologically traumatized servicemen with the aim of restoring their consciousness of their own “creative abilities” and their ability to participate in “purposeful production.” It followed the Bauhaus aim of arousing hidden creative capacities toward the end of increasing self-confidence. The course made use of “tactile charts,” which were specially designed constructions that arranged a variety of contrasting textures and materials. Tactile charts were tested by blind people, and they were meant to engage disabled servicemen in a sensory experience that would exercise their hands and fingers and help them to rebuild their skills of coordination and manual articulation. The idea was to “permit emotional experience to be gained from their organized relationships”; this would be accomplished through the tactile experience with or manipulation of ergonomic wooden hand sculptures, for example. Moholy, of course, had personal experience using art as a way to rehabilitate himself after suffering severe injuries and psychological trauma from warfare.

The rationing of essential materials during the war inspired Moholy and students at the School to produce innovative designs from non-rationed materials, such as bedsprings made of wood to replace those that would have been made of war-rationed metals. One student, Charles Niedringhaus, experimented extensively with the idea and would go on to a position as a designer at a plywood company. By the summer of 1942, the School’s wooden springs were on display at an exhibition at the Chicago Furniture Mart’s summer show, and their durability was proved through rigorous testing. Moholy’s association with the Bauhaus, where tubular furniture had been invented and adopted for mass use, piqued the interest of manufacturers in whatever material innovations might arise from the School’s design experiments. The Seng Company of Chicago, a major furniture hardware manufacturer, paid the School \$2,500 in advance royalties for the right to produce one of its designs for a wooden bedspring. It was called the “V” or “Victory” spring, named for both its shape and its small part in contributing to the war effort. Paepcke would reach out to the chairman of the War Production Board, convinced that the School could be put into service to design new household goods and appliances for the Consumer Product Branch.¹¹

11 “Outline of the Camouflage Course at the School of Design in Chicago 1941–1942,” box 3, folder 64, ID; “Two Summer Sessions of the School of Design in Chicago,” 1943, box 3, folder 77, ID; Betty Prosser, “De-

During the course of the war, Moholy also became involved with a group of exiles called the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy (*Amerikai Magyar Demokratikus Tanács*), which sought to return the exiled Count Mihály Károlyi as prime minister in a democratic Hungary. The Hungarian actor Béla Lugosi was president and headed the Hollywood chapter; Moholy headed the Chicago chapter, and he even traveled to Washington to meet with Eleanor Roosevelt to gain support for the cause. Despite Moholy's clear democratic intentions, this association and its implication of leftist allegiances would later become a problem when he applied for US citizenship toward the end of World War II. Apparently, a government bureaucrat believed that Moholy's support for Károlyi, a socialist, indicated a propensity for subversion, and for that reason Moholy's application was brought under special scrutiny. After being delayed for some three years as the charge was investigated, Moholy would ultimately be granted citizenship in April of 1946.¹²

Paepcke, meanwhile, continued to vigorously seek funding for the School, making the case that the services of industrial designers would be even more important in the "coming post war era," when they would be needed for "prod-

sign for Wartime Living and When Peace Comes," ca. June 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy, "Better than Before," 21–23, 42–50; Moholy-Nagy to F.P. Keppel, January 7, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Mr. Lester, September 27, 1941, box 6, folder 183, ID; "Wooden Springs Ease Tension on Furniture Men," *Chicago Daily News*, July 9, 1942; "Wooden Springs," *Business Week*, October 31, 1942, 35–36; Paepcke to B.L. Robbins, January 25, 1946, box 2, folder 42, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Henry Smith, December 22, 1941, box 7, folder 203, ID; "School of Design on Threshold of Fourth Year," *Chicago Sun*, January 3, 1942; Flyer, School of Design, 1942, box 3, folder 70, ID; "School of Design in Chicago: 1942–43," box 3, folder 73, ID; "War Art," exhibit catalogue, The School of Design in Chicago and the W.P.A. Art and Craft Project, 1942; Schuldenfrei, "Assimilating Unease," 109; Julian Huxley to Moholy-Nagy, February 12, 1942, box 6, folder 184, ID; Julian Huxley to Dean James Landis, February 12, 1942; box 6, folder 184, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Local Board No. 9, Harris County, Selective Service, Houston, February 23, 1942, box 7, folder 197, ID; Moholy-Nagy to F.J. Kelly, March 13, 1942, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Wolff, May 14, 1942, box 7, folder 209, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Wolff, September 23, 1942, box 7, folder 209, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Wolff, October 6, 1942, box 7, folder 209, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Robert Preusser August 10, 1942, box 7, folder 197, ID; Kepes "Summary of the Introductory Lecture for the Camouflage Course," September 15, 1942, box 6, folder 174, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Walter Jessup, October 19, 1942, box 6, folder 183, ID; "The course in the Principles of Camouflage," ca. 1943, box 3, folder 76, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, December 14, 1942, box 1, folder 2, Myron Kozman Papers, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections and University Archives, The University of Illinois at Chicago [hereafter, "MK"]; "Two Summer Sessions of the School of Design in Chicago," 1943, box 3, folder 77, ID; "School of Design in Chicago: Evening Photo Class," 1943, box 3, folder 78, ID; Moholy-Nagy, "New Approach to Occupational Therapy," ca. 1943, box 6, folder 186, ID; Paepcke to Kepes, January 4, 1943, box 61, folder 1, WPP; Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, January 21, 1943, box 1, folder 2, MK; Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, January 27, 1943, box 1, folder 2, MK; Moholy-Nagy, "New Approach to Occupational Therapy," ca. May 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, July 22, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to Donald Nelson, February 3, 1944, box 2, folder 42, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, August 15, 1944, box 1, folder 2, MK; L. Moholy-Nagy to L. Gould, June 28, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID.

12 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 189; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 684–89; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 231.

ucts to-be-developed.” Coordinating their efforts and refining the rhetorical slant of their appeals in letters and lectures, Paepcke and Moholy also promoted the immediate practical business applications of the School’s training in the use of various industrial materials such as plastics, as well as its experiments with modern machines such as airbrushes and infra-red ovens. Due mostly to the camouflage courses, the School’s record enrollment numbers were also a source of pride. Paepcke pointed to the School’s success in winning grants from major foundations with “fine standing” such as Carnegie and Rockefeller. A visit to the School in the spring of 1942 by David Stevens, director of Humanities at the Rockefeller Foundation, was sufficient to secure the School a grant that summer of \$7,500. The money was to be used for the purpose of developing its motion picture department, especially for educational films and documentaries, which would include one about the work of the School itself. Paepcke was not ashamed to resort to extreme flattery in his appeals, fawningly pointing out the “cultured and esoteric surroundings” that prevailed in the humanities division of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Despite Stevens’s interest in and positive impression of the School, Moholy’s and Paepcke’s continued pleas for additional grants from Rockefeller were frequently declined. However, by January of 1943, Paepcke had secured a total of \$8,000 for the School from other big Chicago companies including Marshall Field’s, Sears Roebuck, and United Airlines. His own company provided a grant of \$2,500 to the School. Interested industrialists were invited to present their own special manufacturing, merchandising, and advertising problems to the School, where such challenges would be tackled by students and faculty in the experimental workshops. “Slowly we will be discovered,” Moholy wrote optimistically to Paepcke, encouraged by visits to the school from curious journalists and industrialists and favorable coverage in business trade journals as well as mass-market magazines. Yet he still thought it was “something like a miracle” that the School continued to exist.¹³

13 Paepcke to David Rockefeller, December 9, 1943, box 37, folder 252, RG III2G, Educational Interests, RAC; Paepcke, “Form Letter A, School of Design Fund Campaign 1942,” box 2, folder 34, ID; Moholy-Nagy to F.P. Keppel, January 7, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to David Stevens, April 14, 1942, box 61, folder 1, WPP; Paepcke to David Stevens and John Marshall, April 17, 1942, box 2, folder 42, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Wolff, May 14, 1942, box 7, folder 209, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, June 26, 1942, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Walter Jessup, October 19, 1942, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to F.P. Keppel, January 29, 1943, box 2, folder 41, ID; John Marshall to Moholy-Nagy, May 5, 1943, box 6, folder 184, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, May 17, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to E.P. Brooks, December 29, 1943, box 2, folder 38, ID; David Stevens to Paepcke, February 19, 1944, box 2, folder 37, ID; Paepcke to William Yates, March 30, 1944, box 2, folder 42, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, March 14, 1942, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, March 14, 1942, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Wolff, June 7, 1942, box 7, folder 209, ID; Paepcke to Moholy-Nagy, October 16, 1942, box 6, folder 184, ID; “December 1, 1943–March 30,

Paepcke began to take on the cause of the School with a zeal that would rival Moholy's passion for reestablishing the Bauhaus. In February of 1944, Paepcke wired Gropius to request copies of *Bauhaus 1919–1928*, the catalogue from the celebrated MoMA exhibition. Paepcke planned to use the book to promote the School's famous pedigree as he assembled a "rather distinguished board of directors" and sought additional industrial support. Moholy, for his part, seemed content to have Paepcke take on this more prominent role in shaping the direction of the School, even as he continued his efforts to promote it and seek grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and other philanthropies. But Moholy deferred to Paepcke for his ability to engage industrialists and civic leaders, reporting to Gropius that he "collects money now for the school and his initial success warrants good hopes." By that time Gropius had been engaged in correspondence with Paepcke, whom he found to be "very active" in getting a board together. Indeed, Paepcke vigorously pursued the top Chicago industrialists, enticing them at luncheons and constantly reminding them that their financial support for the school was not mere altruism but might "lead to something quite important." Businessmen at big companies like Marshall Field's and United Airlines would soon begin to see receipts for their investment: their designers were invited to screenings of the School's promotional films, for example, and were eventually enrolled in its night classes. Paepcke's industry-centric mindset also began to leave its mark, and it especially had an effect on the constitution of its board: for example, he rejected a proposal to include representatives of labor unions on the board, which, he feared, the other businessmen would find "perhaps a little ultra-liberal."¹⁴

Paepcke's board quickly began to reshape the School as a more bureaucratic institution that was constituted more on the developing norms of the industrial design profession than on Moholy's personality or the legacy and ethos of the Bauhaus. In a significant gesture that would inaugurate a new era, on March 27, 1944, the Board of Directors passed a resolution to amend its articles of incor-

1944 Contributions to The Institute of Design," box 1, folder 14, ID; Moholy-Nagy to H. Beardsley, May 22, 1943, box 6, folder 185, ID; Moholy-Nagy to L.A. Heuer, May 22, 1943, box 6, folder 185, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, June 24, 1943, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Wolff, July 1, 1943, box 7, folder 209, ID; Paepcke to Marshall Field, III, December 10, 1943, box 2, folder 40, ID; Paepcke to E.P. Brooks, December 29, 1943, box 2, folder 38, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Nikolaus Pevsner, March 8, 1943, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 407–8.

14 Paepcke to Gropius, February 7, 1944, box 2, folder 40, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, February 10, 1944, Inv.Nr. 2252414, WGOA; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, February 16, 1944, Inv.Nr. 2252414, WGOA; Paepcke to Hughston McBain, January 17, 1944, box 2, folder 41, ID; Paepcke to W.A. Patterson, February 7, 1944, box 2, folder 37, ID; Paepcke to E.J. Condon, February 10, 1944, box 2, folder 38, ID; Paepcke to John Cuneo, April 4, 1944, box 2, folder 38, ID; George Fred Keck to Paepcke, January 24, 1944, box 2, folder 36, ID; Paepcke to George Fred Keck, February 8, 1944, box 2, folder 41, ID; Allen, *Romance*, 67.

poration to rename the School of Design: henceforth, it would be known as the *Institute of Design*. With Paepcke as chairman, the board, which met monthly, voted to increase the number of directors to fifteen and to re-elect Moholy as president and executive director for an indefinite term. Gropius was among those newly admitted as directors; other members of the board included the president of United Airlines and vice presidents of Sears Roebuck and Marshall Field's. Straightaway, the board would commence with the institutionalization of the school, overseeing its finances, public relations, and the establishment of an administrative bureaucracy that would include a manager, executive secretary, and accountant.

As he took greater control in managing the future of the newly-christened Institute of Design, Paepcke expressed serious concern about Moholy's health, which, in his view, appeared to have been adversely impacted by his intense devotion to the school and to managing every aspect of it. "For about five years you were trying to prove to yourself, to your public in general that the idea and ideals of the School...could, from a very humble beginning, gradually and slowly grow in the perhaps potentially fertile but not too well cultivated soil of the Middle West," Paepcke explained to Moholy at the time. "Now the condition is materially changed." Paepcke wanted Moholy to focus on his strengths as an educator, artist, author, lecturer, and "general educational administrator." In the interest of his health, Paepcke advised, Moholy would no longer be expected to supervise "all of the one hundred and one details" of managing the school, which would no longer hinge on the well-being of a single person. "You must, therefore, delegate everything you possibly can," Paepcke concluded. With the help of Gropius, with whom he had begun to cultivate a friendship, Paepcke attempted to convince Moholy of the value of these changes, and Moholy would ultimately relieve himself of the administrative burdens that he had assumed as he fought for several years to keep the school alive and manage it at the same time.

Moholy had ambivalent feelings on the role of businessmen vis-à-vis the arts and humanities. On the one hand, he appreciated their philanthropic role in supporting universities, theaters, museums, and other cultural institutions. Moreover, according to Sibyl, it was on the basis of his "philosophy of total involvement," that he accepted businessmen "as readily as artists" as "functioning elements in the totality of contemporary life." And yet, he knew that the vulgarities of profit incentives and free-market competition could drive them to devalue artists, whom they often derided, implicitly or explicitly, as "effeminate" who lacked the endurance to vigorously participate as economic actors. Businessmen often failed to think in "human proportions," Moholy lamented, but

artists were compelled to humor them because they were ultimately at their mercy. “The provocative statement of modern art is constantly annulled by checkbook and cocktail party,” Moholy joked sardonically. The purported hard-headedness of the typical businessman was ironic, Moholy believed, since he saw himself as the practical realist and the figure of the businessman as a romantic, whimsically dreaming of Horatio Alger stories and ridiculously unattainable financial windfalls. But Paepcke’s board and the business managers that came with it would simply become a fact that Moholy would have to deal with. In the opinion of Sibyl, at least, the business acumen of these professional managers did not carry over well into the field of art education; however, given that she had been handling the school’s administration prior to the reorganization, her view may have been colored by her suddenly diminished role.

New letterhead announced that the Institute was “formerly” the School of Design, but it would, at least officially, retain much of the animating Bauhaus ethos. Particularly important among those ideas was the integration of art and science, or “bridging the gap between the creative artist and the production machine.” Yet the Institute’s public relations communications under the new corporate structure would begin to take on a somewhat more vocational tone, noting that its designers would be equipped to “turn out anything from a kitchen utensil to a prefabricated housing unit.” As noted in the new catalogue, it was “harder to design a first-rate chair than to paint a second-rate painting, and much more useful.” Broad training in a range of materials and techniques would be the special character of the graduates of the Institute of Design. Such training would make them particularly adaptable to whatever new technologies or problems might appear in the rapidly changing industrial landscape. The new, bureaucratized staff of the Institute was on the lookout for practical applications that might have material benefits, such as a contract with an ink company that had the potential to yield a “mass production item,” the royalty returns for which could be “very satisfactory.” In the view of historian James Sloan Allen, the Institute’s new trajectory would amount to “loosening its ties to the early twentieth-century Bauhaus and joining mid-century American culture,” and, as historian Alain Findeli puts it, the board would begin its attempts, “little by little,” to convince Moholy to abandon his Bauhaus ideal in favor of a direction preferred by industry. According to Sibyl, for Moholy it was a matter of steering a “precarious course” between a “board mentality” and his own integrity.¹⁵

15 Paepcke to Moholy-Nagy, April 4, 1944, box 6, folder 184, ID; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 213–19; “Minutes of Adjourned Joint Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors and Members of School of Design,” March 27, 1944, box 1, folder 10, ID; “Articles of Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of School of Design,” March 27, 1944, box 1, folder 32, ID; “Minutes of a Special Joint Meeting of the Members and

**FIGURE 10**

Cover of the catalog for the Institute of Design, 1944–45.

SOURCE: Institute of Design collection, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois, Chicago.

To some extent, Moholy embraced the somewhat more vocational, consumer-oriented direction of the Institute, proposing new courses on salesmanship, lectures aimed at executives, typographers, and the art directors of advertising agencies, and courses on dress design to engage the garment industry. He celebrated the Institute's cooperation with large Chicago firms like Sears Roebuck and Marshall Field's. Field's partially subsidized their employees' night classes at the Institute, especially in advertising and product design, which were

Board of Directors of Institute of Design," March 29, 1944, box 1, folder 10, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, April 10, 1944, box 1, folder 2, MK; Press release, "Exclusive to the Chicago Tribune," n.d., box 1, folder 20, ID; Loyal Baker to Paepcke, April 17, 1944, box 2, folder 36, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, June 23, 1944, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, August 15, 1944, box 1, folder 2, MK; Catalog, Institute of Design, 1944–45, box 3, folder 85, ID; "The Institute of Design," ca. 1945, box 6, folder 186; Allen, *Romance*, 67–69; Findeli, *Bauhaus*, 111 [my translation].

seen as a “good investment.” Moholy considered the school’s offering “consultative services” to businesses, and he proposed a research institute on product development that would take special orders from industrial concerns. He also envisioned the establishment of a marketing department for the Institute’s furniture models and appliances. He became concerned about “a gap between our productive capacity of new materials and public acceptance of the new designs which can be produced with the help of the new technology,” and he believed that the reluctance of the public to take up new designs might be countered with “educational work and active propaganda.” Moholy believed that his school was, in a way, reviving a nineteenth-century tradition of American furniture-making that had been extinguished by the importation of heavily ornamental, Victorian styles that had stifled the public’s willingness to accept modern, functional forms. As a newly-elected board member of the American Designers’ Institute and the Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne, Moholy believed himself to be in a strong position to influence the direction of design and the tastes of consumers.

As a means of propagandizing the school’s novel pedagogical methods and interesting designs, a documentary color film financed by the grant from the Rockefeller Foundation was produced and shown before a large group of industrialists and artists at MoMA in March of 1944. MoMA would also include a number of designs produced by the Institute in the museum’s “Design for Use” exhibition, which opened in May. Already looking over the horizon to the post-war period, Moholy saw his students’ innovations and odd inventions as essential to the reconversion of industry toward the malleable interests of consumers upon their being freed from wartime restrictions.

The film was shown again in September before a group of Chicago executives from department stores and other industries alongside the first in a new “executive lecture series” on the work of the Institute. These extension courses for executives would inform businesspeople on the latest developments in design, and they were also meant to entice them to send their employees to the school’s “Evening Professional courses for business people” on subjects such as Product Design and Advertising Arts, and to hire graduates of the Institute’s two-year program of day classes. A scholarship program sponsored by industry was also announced to support employee training at the Institute. Engineering, retail, and publishing firms were among the many companies that sent their employees to attend night classes at the Institute. Paepcke even sent a letter to thousands of graduates of Chicago high schools, noting that the Institute’s graduates had found “desirable positions in the industrial life of Chicago.” Such promotional activities worked alongside Paepcke’s relentless correspondence and

fruitful fundraising for the Institute, which sparked discussions of collaborations with furniture manufacturers and other businesses. Paepcke liked to dangle the prospect of the forthcoming postwar era before executives, when ravenous consumers with newly disposable income and leisure time would demand professionally-redesigned products that were “attractive and streamlined.” In addition to this practical businessman’s outlook, Paepcke was also high-minded about the role of the Institute in the community, boasting that its lecture series, which brought the likes of Fernand Léger and Jean Carlu, contributed “not a little to the cultural life of Chicago.”

Paepcke himself donated shares of Container Corporation stock worth more than \$10,000, which he hoped would help to “secure the permanency and the future of the institution for the Institute to have an able and efficient business management,” including staff and an assistant to the director who could protect the Institute against any unforeseen “illness or accident which might conceivably befall the Director.” Paepcke’s efforts to bureaucratize the Institute were meant to assuage supporters and Board members, and to convince them that the school was more than “just a one-man show.” The Institute would bring on Crombie Taylor as secretary-treasurer, Loyal Baker as business manager, and Madeline Miller as registrar, a professionalized administration that greatly pleased Paepcke as it gave Moholy someone to delegate things to. The Institute also hired a public relations director, Donald Fairchild, to better publicize its activities, and trade publications once again took an active interest in the activities of the school. According to one flattering contemporary account, the Institute seemed “like a cross between a modern art museum, a well-equipped factory shop and the back-stage of a theater.” Another somewhat prejudiced profile of the Institute assured readers that, although Moholy’s personal finances were in an “interesting state” on account of his being Hungarian, those of his school were well administered by an “array of practical business talent,” including Paepcke, who knew how to effectively mobilize his ideas for commercial design to “enhance American industry and comfort.”¹⁶

16 “Institute of Design President’s Report,” June 22, 1944, box 1, folder 13, ID; Paepcke to William Yates, March 30, 1944, box 2, folder 42, ID; Loyal Baker to Paepcke, July 25, 1944, box 2, folder 36, ID; Emery Hutchison, “Stories of the Day,” *The Daily News*, June 28, 1944; Wm. Street to Samuel Hypes, August 28, 1944, box 1, folder 23, ID; Moholy-Nagy to J.V. Spachner, September 27, 1944, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Hughston McBain, September 27, 1944, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to Donald Fairchild, October 3, 1944, box 2, folder 40, ID; Leverett Lyon to Paepcke, October 9, 1944, box 2, folder 36, ID; Moholy-Nagy to F.L. Bateman, October 20, 1944, box 6, folder 183, ID; “President’s Report,” November 14, 1944, box 1, folder 13, ID; “Design Scholarships of the Institute of Design, Chicago,” n.d., box 1, folder 20, ID; Paepcke to “Gentlemen,” November 1, 1944, box 6, folder 184, ID; Paepcke to Arnold Epstein, January 9, 1945, box 2, folder 39, ID; “Design for Use, Museum of Modern Art, 15th Anniversary Show: Art in Prog-

These publicity items and promotional films captured the unique character of Bauhaus design education just as the Institute was beginning its bureaucratic transformation, which would diminish Sibyl's role as an administrator of the school. By her own account, it was the beginning of the end of Bauhaus idealism, for while Moholy had been selling prospective donors "a stake in a future world," the "professional money-raiser" merely wanted to sell "an income tax deduction." Yet Moholy would soon be able to redirect his creative energies to another project. Not long after Paepcke's quasi-coup, Moholy learned that he had been given the opportunity to finally put down his pedagogical philosophy and design ethos for posterity: he received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to complete the book that he had been writing for several years and would work on more intensively for the last two years of his life. It would be published shortly after his death as *Vision in Motion*, the final, cumulative statement of his career.

Moholy travelled to Harvard in November of 1944 to give a lecture and to meet his old mentor Gropius, whom he was courting to design a new central building for the Institute. He would also show the Rockefeller-financed color film on the work of the Institute, called "Design Workshops," and he made a side-trip to New York to give a lecture at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. Perhaps unconsciously, Moholy had begun the process of documenting his life's work just as his control over the Institute began to slip away from him. Yet he admitted that the new board was "working well" under Paepcke's leadership, and that the institutional reforms would help to ensure supporters of the school that its method and mission were sound.

Paepcke, meanwhile, had begun to ingratiate himself with Gropius, whom he had invited to be a consultant for the Container Corporation, possibly to design one of its new plants. Gropius would visit Chicago in February of 1945 to deliver a lecture on "Rebuilding our Communities after the War," which would later be published. The well-attended event, deemed a "great success," was sponsored by the Chicago Association of Commerce, the Chicago Plan Commission, and the Institute. On the occasion of his visit, Paepcke invited Gropius and his wife, Ise, to be a guest at his home and at his Racquet Club. He meticulously

ress, May–October 1944, box 8, folder 250, ID; Paepcke to "Dear Graduate," January 22, 1945, box 2, folder 42, ID; Press release, February 2, 1945, box 1, folder 20, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Crombie Taylor, November 15, 1944, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to Crombie Taylor, March 21, 1945, box 2, folder 42, ID; "Reunion in Chicago: an investigation into the work of L. Moholy-Nagy," *Mimicam Photography*, January 1945, 64–71; Paepcke to Jesse Jacobs, December 20, 1944, box 2, folder 40, ID; E.P. Brooks to Paepcke, January 10, 1945, box 2, folder 36, ID; Paepcke to 272 Chicago firms, January 30, 1945, box 2, folder 42, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Robert Wolff, March 20, 1945, box 7, folder 209, ID; "Institute of Design," catalog, 1945–46, box 3, folder 86, ID.

arranged Gropius's itinerary to give the best possible impression of the Institute, which would include a brief talk with students, a luncheon with the directors, and a dinner party. Paepcke was maneuvering to bring Gropius into his circle, and he also sought to use this towering figure of industrial design to lend legitimacy to his Institute in the view of the Board and the elite of the Chicago business community. Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke were masters in the art of flattery, and their prodigious wealth and generous hospitality would earn them considerable social dividends. "You represent for me the rare exception of a man in power and leadership who seriously tries to fuse business with cultural progress," Gropius wrote to Paepcke upon returning home, feeling "deeply satisfied" after his Chicago trip. As the ultimate authority on matters of Bauhaus education, Gropius also assured Paepcke that Moholy would be able to "change some of the debatable features which seem to hurt his prestige" in the view of some of the more practical-minded members of the board. Gropius reasoned that they were "puzzled" by the Bauhaus-style curriculum of the school because they failed to appreciate that the object of the instruction was to "stimulate the inventiveness of the designer."¹⁷

As genuine as Paepcke's friendship with Moholy certainly was, there was a discernable instrumentalism with which Paepcke brought himself into the circle of exiled Bauhäusler as he pursued his own designs, which would extend beyond the Institute. When Paepcke endeavored to rapidly stage an exhibition at the Art Institute to display the last several years of Container Corporation advertisements, he did not engage the experienced exhibit designer Moholy for the task but rather Herbert Bayer, whom Gropius had enthusiastically recommended and whom Elizabeth had succeeded in charming over lunch in New York. Sibyl took Paepcke's new interest in Bayer as a slight, particularly as Paepcke continued to pass off smaller, lower-profile contract design jobs to Moholy. Succumbing to the Paepckes' charms, Bayer was "delighted" by the idea of designing the exhibition, which he hoped would become a traveling show. Fea-

17 Moholy-Nagy to Kozman, August 15, 1944, box 1, folder 2, MK; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, October 30, 1944, Inv. Nr. 2252414, WGOA; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, January 29, 1945, Inv. Nr. 2252433, WGOA; "Institute of Design," *Tide*, January 1, 1945; "Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting of Institute of Design," January 9, 1945, box 1, folder 6, ID; "Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting," November 14, 1944, box 1, folder 6, ID; "President's Report," January 9, 1945, box 1, folder 13, ID; Memorandum to Members of the Board, February 6, 1945, box 1, folder 13, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, February 28, 1945, box 8, folder 227, ID; Findeli, *Bauhaus*, 116–18; Paepcke to Gropius, January 27, 1945, box 24, folder 7, WPP; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, October 28, 1944, Inv. Nr. 2252414, WGOA; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, January 30, 1945, Inv. Nr. 2252433, WGOA; Moholy-Nagy to Robert Wolff, February 13, 1945, box 7, folder 209, ID; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 616–21; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 217; Memorandum to Members of the Board, March 3, 1945, box 1, folder 13, ID; "The President's Report," May 1, 1945, box 1, folder 13, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Jenő Nagy, May 21, 1946, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 409.

turing eighty-nine works by forty-four artists—including Cassandre, Carlu, and Bayer himself—“Modern Art in Advertising” opened at the Art Institute on April 27, 1945. Through these advertisements, Paepcke fancied himself as bringing modern art to the masses. Participation in the celebrated series of ads had seriously interested artists such as Man Ray, who offered a photograph for the campaign and received a dinner invitation from the Paepckes—and the possibility of a peacetime contract. The exhibit was a major success, and it was, in Paepcke’s view, a celebration of the fruitful alliance of “the artist and the businessman” who could “learn much from one another.” With Bayer, Paepcke had found a new artist to confide in, to whom he would confess to being “quite discouraged at times.” He even began to subtly complain about his difficulty in relaying to Moholy the importance of the efficient bureaucratic operation of the Institute, so that potential sponsors, those “somewhat impatient” businessmen, might see the “rapid strides of progress” that they witnessed daily in their own operations. Bayer, in contrast, had a sharp grasp of commercial affairs, and his style of design was immediately amenable to the graphical displays that would interest businessmen. Bayer had his own concerns, and he arranged to meet privately in New York with Paepcke, Sigfried Giedion, and Gropius to discuss the matter of the Institute—without Moholy’s knowledge of the meeting.¹⁸

As he reorganized the Institute, Paepcke was already looking ahead to his next big project: the redevelopment of Aspen, Colorado, which was then a dilapidated old mining town that, in Paepcke’s view, had great potential as a ski resort. A new ski lift was in the works, Paepcke boasted, and a group of “Austrian ski experts” were there making plans for a ski school. Paepcke owned a ranch near there, and he was considering buying several additional properties in Aspen that he wished to renovate. He pegged Bayer as a potential cultural ambassador of sorts who might civilize this still-rather-wild western town. He began a campaign to entice Bayer, whom he flattered as a “lover of beautiful things,” to move from New York to Aspen with his wife, Joella, offering romantic comparisons to Switzerland and the Bavarian Alps. As the war came to an end, the Bayers had been contemplating a possible return to Europe to start a skiing inn, but Paepcke intervened to make a vigorous case that they stake their

18 Walter Paepcke to Elizabeth Paepcke, March 2, 1945, WPP; Findeli, *Bauhaus*, 118; Dyja, *Third Coast*, 102; Allen, *Romance*, 70–71, 128–39; Bayer to Paepcke, March 5, 1945, WPP; Paepcke to Moholy-Nagy, July 30, 1945, box 6, folder 184, ID; L. Moholy-Nagy to Ernest Byfield, August 2, 1945, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to Bayer, June 15, 1945, box 2, folder 38, ID; Man Ray to Paepcke, May 22, 1945, box 23, folder 5, WPP; Paepcke to Man Ray, May 25, 1945, box 23, folder 5, WPP; Paepcke, “Broadened Horizons for American Business,” WENR, Chicago, May 13, 1945, box 1, folder 8, WPP; Bayer to Paepcke, June 13, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP.

claim in Aspen instead. Paepcke plotted to bring the Bayers—and Walter and Ise Gropius—to his Colorado ranch, looking to “expose them to the charms of Aspen.” He promised Walter and Ise rest, lovely scenery, horse-riding, and plenty of wine-drinking, which they would take him up on. He also sought to engage Gropius to serve as a consultant for a redevelopment plan for the town. Paepcke succeeded spectacularly in charming the “father of the whole idea” of the Bauhaus at his ranch and in “the old ghost town” of Aspen, and Gropius would later reciprocate the hospitality with an invitation to his Cambridge house. Although the Bayers would not make it to Colorado that summer of 1945, Paepcke did not cease in his campaign to involve them in his designs for Aspen, and his plans would later bear fruit.¹⁹

Conclusion

After the Association of Arts and Industries closed the New Bauhaus, Walter Paepcke, the arts patron and president of the Container Corporation, would help Moholy to reestablish the School of Design in 1939 with himself as the chairman of its board, which was packed with prominent industrialists. Moholy’s close, personal friendship with Paepcke would form the basis of a partnership that would lead to the institutionalization of the school. In its charter, the School adopted the cooperative, socialistic pedagogy of the Bauhaus, which affirmed the project of merging art and industry toward the end of designing useful products for mass production. The designers at the School would be trained to be fully conscious of their social obligations as designers of everyday objects and images, and as architects they would be mindful of creating spaces for harmonious, cooperative living. The openness to experimentation that was established in the foundation courses would help students to arrive at innovative solutions to whatever design problems they would later encounter. With the war came an array of new design challenges, some deriving from the necessity of working with fewer materials due to rationing. Moholy’s School would prove its practical value by producing useful things such as wooden bedsprings, providing training in the use of camouflage, and teaching students to create striking and effective poster art for use as wartime propaganda.

19 Paepcke to Bayer, May 22, 1945, WPP; Paepcke to Bayer, May 31, 1945, box 3, folder 8, WPP; Joella Bayer to Paepcke, June 10, 1945, box 3, folder 8, WPP; Paepcke to Suzie Hamill, June 27, 1945, box 2, folder 40, ID; Paepcke to Gropius, June 15, 1945, box 2, folder 40, ID; Paepcke to Gropius, June 15, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP; Paepcke to Herbert and Joella Bayer, June 14, 1945, box 3, folder 8, WPP; Paepcke to Bayer, June 15, 1945, box 2, folder 38, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, October 30, 1945, box 8, folder 227, ID; Paepcke to Bayer, October 23, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP.

Although the School would receive recognition in the world of art, architecture, and modern design as the inheritor of the Bauhaus tradition, that positive reputation did not necessarily carry over to the sphere of business. Much of Moholy's time was occupied by making endless appeals to industrialists and foundation officers for financial support. Although the School produced design prototypes and design training at evening courses for the employees of local businesses—which gave industry a direct interest in the school—securing sufficient financial support was a constant struggle. In an effort to relieve Moholy of administrative and fundraising duties, which appeared to be taking a toll on his health, Paepcke successfully lobbied for a reorganization of the School of Design, which would become the *Institute of Design* in 1944. The reorganized Institute was directed by the board and run by professional managers who would standardize the admissions process and begin to take the school in a more vocational direction. As the Institute became less tied to Moholy the person, Paepcke would increasingly turn his attention to other Bauhäusler, especially Gropius and Herbert Bayer, who would be central to executing his next enterprise uniting arts and industry: the renaissance of Aspen as a haven for the cultured business elite.

IV

MAKING POSTWAR AMERICA

10

**The Focused Interview becomes the “Focus Group”:
Lazarsfeld and Market Research**

Paul Lazarsfeld’s approach to market research, which he shared with many of his students and colleagues at Columbia University’s Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR or “the Bureau”)—the organization that grew out of the Rockefeller Foundation-sponsored Office of Radio Research—merged the quantitative methods of empirical social research with the psychological approach of motivation research. Yet among survey researchers and opinion pollsters in the 1930s and 1940s, Lazarsfeld came to be associated with psychological methods and the concept of the “depth interview,” which created serious interest but also skepticism and confusion among many market researchers. Some of those in the field, such as Henry C. Link, flatly dismissed the research value of the depth interview as he understood it. Link, whom Lazarsfeld had dismissed as a “radical” behaviorist, was the director of the Psychological Corporation, where Lazarsfeld had found an environment inhospitable to his ideas as a Rockefeller fellow in the early 1930s. There was no proof, Link maintained, that the depth interview could actually do what its name implied: to “dig deeper” into the respondent’s mind than an ordinary interview could. Link argued that the claims of the method’s proponents—that it could reveal unconscious motivations through a probing interview—was incorrect, because probing only produced more rationalizations on the part of the respondent. The more immediate response, which the subject gave without thinking, was actually closer to the truth and further from rationalization, Link believed. Link would only credit the depth interview method with producing a greater *quantity* and *variety* of information—but not a greater *quality* of information, relative to the standard survey questions he used. The main problem was the interviewer himself, who could not be trusted not to taint the responses of the subject through sugges-



FIGURE 11
Paul Felix Lazarsfeld, ca. 1941.

tion. In Link's view, this was an entirely unscientific method, and the rigorous market researcher would be better off designing a questionnaire which could produce "depth" results through its specific wording and sequencing, which the interviewer would then be obligated to follow precisely. For this reason Link preferred the term *informal* (not "depth") interview to refer to the unstructured format, which was useful only as a preliminary step; this was in contrast to the *formal* interview, which, he believed, could arrive at the same results that the proponents of the "depth" approach proclaimed. Moreover, Link argued, the formal interview was much more amenable to tabulation and quantification, and was therefore more useful as a tool of market research.¹

Ever eager to bridge the divide between qualitative and quantitative forms of social research, Lazarsfeld entered the fray in an effort to quell the "controversy" over "detailed" or, as he preferred to call them, "open-ended" interviews—"OI" for short. Such interviews could last an hour or longer. The interviewer would be equipped with a set of ten or fifteen questions which the respondent would be invited to elaborate on; if the interviewee should prove to be reticent, the ques-

¹ Friedman, *Birth of a Salesman*, 236; Link, "Experiment," 267–79.

tioner was instructed to "probe." This kind of questioning differed from the "straight poll" question which only required the respondent to answer "Yes," "No," "Don't know," or to make a choice among a very small list of options. By establishing a rapport between the researcher and subject, the aim of the OI was to permit the subject to elaborate on a response with *qualifications* that may later prove to be fundamental to understanding his or her motivations. Lazarsfeld saw the OI as useful principally at an early stage of a study for collecting a variety of impressions and experiences which the researcher could then assemble into a "picture" of some more basic motivation that could be generalized beyond the individual. Lazarsfeld acknowledged that the procedure could be slow and expensive, and that it might best be used as a first step in the design of an "interlocking" system of poll questions which could, through the cross-tabulation of results by the researcher, bring to light a pattern of motivations. Such poll questions could be applied to a larger study and later be subjected to statistical analysis to determine the distribution of motivations among various populations. Ultimately, Lazarsfeld sought a resolution to the problem through a *combination* of methods.²

Researchers at the Bureau continued to practice various interview methods, and they came upon a technique they called the "focused interview," which was developed by Herta Herzog and Patricia Kendall (Lazarsfeld's second and third wives, respectively) while working on studies of daytime radio serials and broadcasts of quiz-show competitions.³ The *focused interview* was a kind of investigation in which respondents were subjected to questioning by a researcher in reference to a particular concrete situation or media stimulus to which they had been exposed—such as an advertisement, a radio program, or a pamphlet. In preparation for the interview, the researcher would perform a *content analysis* on that particular text; from that analysis, he or she would develop hypotheses regarding its meaning and potential effects. The interviewer would then fashion an interview guide that would set out the major areas of inquiry. The interview itself would focus on the *subjective experience* of respondents with reference to the pre-analyzed situation or text, against which the investigator would test the validity of his or her hypotheses. Having already performed a content analysis, the interviewer would be equipped to distinguish between *objective facts* and the *subjective definitions* or "private logics" of the respondent.

The method of the focused interview differed from the typical "depth" interview which often lacked reference to such specific subject matter and was thus

2 Lazarsfeld, "Controversy," 38–60.

3 Herzog, "Borrowed Experience," 65–95; Herzog, "Day-Time Serial Listeners," 3–22; and Herzog, "Professor Quiz," 64–93.

more difficult for the interviewer to direct and interpret. The “nondirective” approach of the depth interview had some advantages over the more direct approach of the standard polling interview—which did not usually permit respondents to express themselves freely—but it often resulted in unproductive digressions that the *focused* interview, because of its attention to a particular text or situation, avoided. Ultimately, the *depth* which was sought in a focused interview referred to a researcher’s interpretation of the ways in which a respondent’s previous experiences and predispositions affected their *particular* response to the stimulus material. The qualitative material produced by a focused interview could either precede a statistical study as a source of hypotheses, or it could follow a statistical study as a means of interpretation; in either case, its ideal use was in conjunction with a quantitative survey.⁴

The techniques of market research had applications beyond contract work for corporate clients. In fact, Lazarsfeld was, by the early 1940s, a major authority in the related field of public opinion.⁵ Lazarsfeld’s “panel technique” of survey research, which had been developed at the Office of Radio Research and was prominently used for the *People’s Choice* voting study of the 1940 presidential election, was a method for measuring changes in public opinion and behavior over time that was “unique in the field of public opinion” when it was introduced. It could be used to equal effect by both political pollsters and market researchers, and it was one of the methodological means by which Lazarsfeld attempted to make market research “acceptable” to sociologists. The essence of the panel method was simple: rather than taking a new sample for each poll, researchers would use follow-up interviews with the same group of people in a representative sample. Lazarsfeld claimed that the panel method could improve statistical reliability even with a relatively small sample, and he argued that there were a number of other advantages to the method. In the course of repeated interviews, researchers could gather knowledge about the habits and “personal characteristics” of respondents, which could supplement basic demographic information to provide a more complete picture of significant market segments. For example, researchers could relate respondents’ opinions and behaviors to their tastes in leisure-time activities and the types of magazines to which they subscribed. In the study of propaganda, where the intent was to

4 Merton and Kendall, “Focused Interview,” 541–57; later elaborated as Merton, Fiske, and Kendall, *Focused Interview*.

5 Lazarsfeld was so close to pollster George Gallup that the two made a friendly, if somewhat competitive, wager on the outcome of the 1944 presidential election. Lazarsfeld to Gallup, November 3, 1944, Rote Mappen, Biography II, Mappe 1/2, Paul F. Lazarsfeld Archiv, Institut für Soziologie, Universität Wien [hereafter, “PFL Vienna”].

measure the cumulative effects of a sustained media campaign, the panel method could isolate those individuals whose opinions were affected by the propaganda and those individuals who were resistant to it. In this way, even "slight tendencies" in public opinion could be detected. Furthermore, the method allowed researchers to differentiate between mutable and more fundamental, unchangeable traits and behaviors.⁶

The research methods of the Bureau, which combined qualitative and quantitative techniques to conduct and analyze its surveys and interviews, were summarized in Hans Zeisel's *Say It With Figures*, a major work in social research methodology which would go through many editions. Lazarsfeld called it the "programmatic manifesto" of the Bureau's work, and he saw it as representing the union of the psychological training—which he and Zeisel had received from the Bühlern at the Psychological Institute in Vienna—with the statistical methods of American social researchers. What interested Lazarsfeld and his Bureau colleagues was the problem of *choice* and the motivations that produced it; whether it occurred in the field of voting or buying was immaterial. Zeisel's book demonstrated the ways that Bureau researchers used percentages, tables, indices, and other statistical methods to illuminate social behaviors and problems. They believed that quantification was a procedure which could be applied to any kind of data, including qualitative data concerning psychological phenomena. Although Zeisel did express some skepticism about the merits of motivation research, he laid out a similar procedure called *reason analysis*, which sought to transform "highly individual" reasons for decisions into "precise knowledge" about how people more generally make up their minds. This method, which he distinguished from the "depth" interview of motivation research, established causation through an interviewer's cross-examination (a kind of *probing*) of a subject's reasons for action; this was followed by the researcher's cross-tabulation of responses to those questions. Statistical analysis began with *straight* tabulation, or the division of respondents into sub-groups on the basis of characteristics such as sex or economic status. The process of *cross* tabulation—whereby elements are juxtaposed on a multivariate table—could provide an *explanatory* function by demonstrating theretofore unknown correlations between variables.

The techniques developed in Lazarsfeld's research bureaus would reveal

6 Lazarsfeld and Fiske, "The 'Panel' as a Tool," 596–612; Lazarsfeld, "'Panel' Studies," 120–28; Lazarsfeld, "Repeated Interviews," 3–7; Lazarsfeld and Durant, "National Morale," 150–158; Memorandum to Rockefeller Foundation, ca. May 16, 1947, Rote Mappen, miscelle scientific I, Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Use of Panels," 405–10; Lazarsfeld to Messrs. Dahl and Haire, November 7, 1958, Rote Mappen, Papers IIIb, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

their broader applications during the war years. The communications researcher Harold Lasswell—who would become known for his basic formulation of media studies, “Who says what to whom with what effects?”—wanted to study the impact of mass media content on public opinion, presuming that people could “harden” themselves against the effects of propaganda if they understood how it worked. These methods were mobilized by the US government, as in its Research Project on Totalitarian Communication, which greatly advanced the development of communications research. Laswell directed the government’s Experimental Division for the Study of Wartime Communications, which studied enemy radio broadcasts and other mass media communications in foreign nations. Domestically, the US government studied native broadcasts from suspected subversives as well as the content of radio broadcasts and commentaries in domestic periodicals that were sponsored by the government.

Lazarsfeld, who had become a naturalized citizen of the US in 1943, worked during the war years as an occasional consultant for the Office of War Information. He used the Program Analyzer (discussed in Chapter 7) to study the effects of indoctrination films on American soldiers, and he also used the panel technique to study the effects of the US government’s war propaganda in mass magazines. He found among respondents a remarkable capacity to assimilate propaganda into existing systems of belief, which could produce the so-called “boomerang effect”: the reversal of propaganda to suit pre-existing prejudices. For example, an anti-Semitic respondent might interpret a pro-tolerance message as a license to express bigotry. Lazarsfeld advised that, in the interest of propaganda, mass media should be used in conjunction with social groups that exert influence through face-to-face contact, which had been a key finding from the *People’s Choice* study. The superfluity of mass media propaganda and advertising messages, finally, could lead Americans to become so skeptical that they may wonder if there was “anything left in which they can believe.”⁷

Lazarsfeld advised that advertisers should be aware of the different media experiences of magazines versus newspapers, which were read by a broader range of socioeconomic groups. Magazines, even of the mass variety, were more specialized than newspapers, and because they were kept in the home for longer

7 Lazarsfeld to Bureau of Intelligence, Office of War Information, November 1942, T/U IIIb (24 bis 32-33), Mapped 1/2, PFL Vienna; Elmer Davis to Lazarsfeld, June 29, 1944, Blaue Mappen 17, Bio-1, Biographie 1933-1946, Mapped 3/3, PFL Vienna; Personnel Security Questionnaire [form DD-48] completed by Lazarsfeld, February 23, 1951, Rote Mapped, Biography I, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld and Salter, “Problems and Techniques” (Sept. 1945), 34-36; Lazarsfeld, “Tolerance Propaganda and Mass Media of Communication,” statement, President’s Committee on Civil Rights,” n.d., Rote Mapped, T/U III b (32-33a bis 34-35d), Mapped 2/2, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, “Audience Research,” 160-68; Lazarsfeld, “Communication Research and the Social Psychologist,” 256; Lazarsfeld, “Trends in Broadcasting Research,” 49-66.

periods, they tended to advertise products that required long-range buying decisions. They also very often served as a kind of "extra-curricular" education for many people, particularly through their biographical sketches, the topic Leo Lowenthal had studied under Lazarsfeld's direction.⁸ In general, educated people of a higher "cultural" level tended to prefer print to radio, and there was a larger percentage of these high-class individuals among readers of magazines than among readers of newspapers.⁹ A 1943 study of *Life* found that the photo-magazine clarified in pictures the abstract news of the week; it was an easy and enjoyable way for readers to get "culture." The magazine was even aspirational for many, an expression of "better things," believed to be read by a "higher class of people," according to one respondent. But *Life's* very large circulation justified it as worthy reading material: it had intrinsic value by virtue of being a mass publication.¹⁰ Lazarsfeld and his researchers did studies for other major magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Cosmopolitan*, *American*, and *Time*. He made the case for a deeper analysis of audience characteristics, which "cut across" the traditional demographic categories of age, sex, and economic level. Other kinds of personality characteristics—such as an interest in politics or a belief that "a woman's place is in the home"—were often more important to the advertiser looking for the right vehicle for their message. These categories were essential to the special medium of magazines, which were generally more specialized than other media: they paved the way for the segmentation of consumer markets. This kind of study required an understanding of *motivation*, which was, of course, one of Lazarsfeld's main research interests.¹¹

Much of the communications research done at the Bureau was sponsored by the big mass magazines and commercial advertisers of the day. This "combination of commercial data and academic analysis" gave the Bureau its "characteristic imprint," as Lazarsfeld said. He was proud of his "alliance" with Frank Stanton, a man from the communications industry as CBS research director and later president. Lazarsfeld did not believe in the sanctity of "pure research" that was not "contaminated by contact with applied problems and by the use of data which were collected for commercial purposes." Rather, he was always looking and waiting for a new commercial contract that would allow him to pro-

8 Lowenthal, "Biographies," 546.

9 Lazarsfeld, "Daily Newspaper," 32–43; Lazarsfeld and Salter, "Problems and Techniques" (November 1945), 34–36; Lazarsfeld and Salter, "Problems and Techniques" (February 1946), 38–39, 45.

10 "Some Observations of Life Readers," January 1943, box 113, Bureau of Applied Social Research Archive [hereafter, "BASR Archive"], Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

11 Lazarsfeld and Salter, "Problems and Techniques of Magazine Audience Research," 16–18, 32; Lazarsfeld and Salter, "Magazine Research," 17–18.

duce an interesting study, without which his Bureau would not exist. He scoffed at sociologists who insisted on only “basic” research, which rarely had the scope or raised the kinds of interesting social questions that inevitably arose in his commercial studies. Even Lazarsfeld’s major study of voting behavior, *The People’s Choice*, had been sponsored by *Life* magazine, which had secured the rights to publish the results after the 1940 election. Being director of a commercially-oriented research bureau at a university suited Lazarsfeld perfectly because, while he enjoyed bargaining and competition, he needed, psychologically, to be part of a bureaucracy, a secure institution. He enjoyed the competitive work that he had to do to get commercial contracts: giving speeches, publishing articles, and making pitches with his endless examples. At the same time, he demanded the safety of a stable organization. He had nothing against business, per se, but he could not handle the insecurity of being a free agent in the free market. “I was in the game of free enterprise, because I could go on getting contracts, making money, or occasionally or very often making deficits,” Lazarsfeld said. “I had the full game of the market, without personal risk, and also without the excessive rewards. I have always known that that was a very important part of my enjoying the directorship so much.”¹²

Although it was not the path that Lazarsfeld would choose for himself, it was not long before many of the émigré market researchers who were trained at Lazarsfeld’s research centers began to enter the world of corporate market research. In 1943, for example, Zeisel and Herta Herzog joined the research department of the McCann-Erickson advertising agency, hired away for their expertise in radio research. One of the more enterprising, and controversial, of Lazarsfeld’s fellow émigré researchers was Ernest Dichter, who popularized the practice of motivation research—albeit with a Freudian twist and without Lazarsfeld’s methodological rigor—in the 1950s.

Some of Lazarsfeld’s colleagues in social research increasingly began to worry about the implications of their style of research and the ways in which it was being applied by commercial interests. Lazarsfeld’s chief sponsor at Columbia, Robert Lynd, tended to view the “whole world” as “an immoral conspiracy,” remembered Lazarsfeld. He began to feel “very uneasy” about the Bureau after the war due to its contracts with big corporations and media companies. Increasingly, Lynd developed a “critical socialist position” which led him to dislike the commercial ties of the Bureau. Lazarsfeld’s success actually worked against him

12 Lazarsfeld to Alfred de Grazia, September 28, 1966, Blaue Mappen 19, Bio-3, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna; “PFL’s REMARKS,” n.d., ca. 1957, box 123, folder 11, Hans Zeisel Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library [hereafter, “HZP”]; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, Columbia Oral History [hereafter, “COH”], January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

in the mind of Lynd, who always preferred underdogs because he believed that American society was morally inverted, so that success, according to prevalent values, was nothing more than a demonstration that "you are the wrong fellow."

But while Lynd grew increasingly skeptical, he still remained generally—or at least officially—supportive. This would not be the case for another of Lazarsfeld's colleagues, C. Wright Mills, whom Lazarsfeld had brought to Columbia, having heard that he was a "clever and initiative boy," but who would become Lazarsfeld's bitter enemy. The hostile feeling would become mutual. "Mills says we have to save the world," said Lazarsfeld in an interview conducted only a few months before Mills's death in 1962. Lazarsfeld said that Mills lived on his "leftist political engagement" and "the books he can sell on it," but had "never done any decent piece of research." "I find what Mills writes, you see, just ridiculous," he said. Although Lazarsfeld agreed with Mills's critiques of power, he found it to be "contemptible, disreputable, that he says it" because that was not the job of the sociologist, in his view. "Nothing he wrote had any respectability," Lazarsfeld said. Lazarsfeld had very good reason to question Mill's capacities as a social researcher.¹³

Mills started out working part-time at the Bureau in 1944, and he would become full-time by 1945. He had been strongly supported by Daniel Bell, who was then a writer for the leftist "little magazines" of the New York Intellectuals, and who would later join Lazarsfeld on the sociology faculty at Columbia. Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton, associate director of the Bureau, had even gone so far as to woo Mills by throwing "parties with pretty girls."¹⁴ Though Mills worried that he might be perceived as "selling out" at the Bureau, he nevertheless became engaged in the work. As a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, Mills had studied under the German émigré sociologist Hans H. Gerth (himself a student of Karl Mannheim), who introduced him to the more structural approach that was typical of the Continental style of sociology. But Mills was also interested in the empirical techniques used at Lazarsfeld's Bureau, which, he believed, could produce a better understanding of social stratification.¹⁵

Lazarsfeld and Merton promptly sent Mills on a research trip to Decatur, Illinois to conduct a study funded by a magazine publisher, MacFadden, known for its pulpy *True Story* and other sensational titles. The study was meant to examine the extent of media influence and the role of personal influence and "opinion leaders" in affecting individuals' decisions. Lazarsfeld had discovered

13 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, December 8, 1961; January 8, 1962; August 16, 1962; August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

14 Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills*, 77.

15 Geary, "C. Wright Mills," 141–47.

the importance of such “horizontal” influence in the *People’s Choice* study on the decision-making process of voters in the 1940 presidential election. He wanted to employ a method of “snowball sampling” to trace chains of influence by interviewing opinion leaders and their followers. MacFadden was interested in sponsoring the study partly because a previous Bureau study for *Time* magazine had shown that that magazine’s readers were only influential within their own horizontal social stratum. This was not at all the result that publisher Henry Luce had been seeking for his newsweekly, and the magazine attempted to suppress the study but had already agreed to let the Bureau publish it. (This was, for Lazarsfeld, evidence that the sponsor of the study could not pervert its results, and that his studies were free of any taint from their corporate sponsorship.) MacFadden believed that they could finance a study to prove the existence of “the influential low-class person,” likely a reader of their publications, who had previously been dismissed as irrelevant and certainly not an influential “opinion leader,” like the presumed reader of *Time*.¹⁶

However, Mills—who would earn a reputation as something of a renegade academic—did not perfectly carry out Lazarsfeld’s carefully prescribed quantitative methodology for the study. Although Mills reported “fascinating material” to Lazarsfeld based on his interviews in Decatur, in Lazarsfeld’s view he “completely messed up” the sampling aspect and the questionnaire part of the study. Lazarsfeld had dreamed of a more sophisticated kind of *Middletown* study, or an update of the Marienthal study; it would be a “new era in social research where you would have both sampling and careful interviewing and then this more microscopic assessment of the community.” Although Mills had done a good job on the “Lyndian” aspect of the study—the qualitative interviews—he had “completely neglected” the technical, survey aspects of the study. In the view of the mathematically-minded, quantitative researcher Lazarsfeld, this was the most important part. “It became a miserable tussle because I couldn’t give in on wanting a decent sample,” Lazarsfeld recalled. Though he had wanted to do “chain interviewing” to trace personal influences, Mills completely failed to follow through with the procedure. Around 1946, Mills went to Reno to get a divorce, and he wrote to Lazarsfeld that he had dispensed completely with the tabulation machinery, which to him made “no sense,” and that he wished to stay in Reno for two months to write the manuscript without it. This so angered Lazarsfeld that he immediately dismissed Mills from the Bureau. Lazarsfeld was

16 Barton, “Paul Lazarsfeld,” 44–45; Sills, “Stanton, Lazarsfeld, and Merton,” 110; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna. The public relations expert Edward Bernays resented Lazarsfeld for stealing his concept of “opinion leaders” for the *Time* magazine study. Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, April 19, 1975, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

horrified at the idea of not delivering the study to the client, the publisher MacFadden. Nevertheless, Mills's contract dictated that he would remain on the sociology faculty for at least another year.¹⁷

Despite this unpleasant beginning to their relationship, Mills was successful in persuading Lazarsfeld to establish a Labor Research Division, which Mills would lead while staying on in the sociology department at Columbia. He coexisted incongruously with Lazarsfeld, who observed Mills's unorthodox style with a "mixture of respect, envy, resignation and interest." Lazarsfeld would occasionally visit Mills at his bohemian apartment in Greenwich Village, and even though there was tension—"do I hate him, does he hate me"—the two were able to share their work with each other and appreciate each other's intellects. Mills suggested a number of books to Lazarsfeld that he had never read, and he also took a great interest in some of Lazarsfeld's research on relating classical political theory to modern research, as well as a study on social-democratic planning in Norway, which he called "the most magnificent research on relating social research with a significant problem I have ever seen." Lazarsfeld admired Mills for his sociological ideas, which he found "utterly stimulating." He also appreciated Mills's knack for well articulating a "position of a modern leftist" that their ideological allies like Lynd had failed to produce. Lazarsfeld was surprised when, in 1948, Mills, apparently feeling guilty about how the Decatur study had turned out and that he owed Lazarsfeld something, volunteered to do a Bureau study on Puerto Rico, which was successfully published in 1950 as *The Puerto Rican Journey*.

Nevertheless, Lazarsfeld found their respective styles so drastically different that it appeared to him to be a "mere historical accident" that he and Mills had ended up in the same department. Although he had always collaborated with people very different from him, and had indeed sought out such collaborations, the clash with Mills would become too much for him. Lazarsfeld was offended at some of Mills's actions and his "exploitativeness," ruthlessness, and irresponsibility. Mills's behavior made him "academically unacceptable" in the department, and Lazarsfeld found him to be "utterly immoral and repulsive," motivated only by a "ruthless egotism." He had "some episodes" with a few female staff members that "hurt him very much," and he married one "who then ended in an insane asylum, so that certainly from my side contributed to the difficulties," said Lazarsfeld. Although he had a tenured position in the college, Mills "was never accepted" in the graduate department, and Lazarsfeld presided over a committee that issued a negative report on his performance and collegiality, deliberately blocking his career. "So in the end Mills was quite justified in feel-

17 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

ing that I persecuted him,” Lazarsfeld recalled. “I had made up my mind that he was utterly unfair.” Although Lazarsfeld felt that he may have been at times “too rigid” with Mills, since their conflict occurred at the peak of his commitment to quantification, he also deeply resented Mills’s using his popular writing as a “weapon” against him and the department.¹⁸ Their conflict would become so legendary that it was even fictionalized in a 1959 novel called *False Coin* by Mills’s friend Harvey Swados.¹⁹

Mills ended up using the interviews from the Decatur study, along with material from another Bureau study on “Everyday Life in America,” as the basis for his broad analysis of bureaucracy and social organization in the American middle classes, published in 1951 as *White Collar*.²⁰ Lazarsfeld noted that the Bureau had paid for many of the interviews Mills used, most of which were done by staffers and graduate students, and he was “horrified by the irresponsibility” with which Mills had used the material.²¹ The book was grand in its ambitions, tracing a great cultural and economic transformation from nineteenth-century individual craftsmanship to mid-twentieth-century corporate organization, but Mills’s polemical prose and shaky methodology did not win universal praise among sociologists.²² Nevertheless, *White Collar* would become a classic of mid-century American sociology, establishing Mills as an important social critic, and Lazarsfeld would later reluctantly cite it positively for popularizing an idea of social stratification.²³ Privately, however, Lazarsfeld was not impressed with the book, which he found to be impressionistic and ultimately “very dumb,” because Mills had mixed up interviews from a variety of respondents in very different social categories. In his mind, it was a poor analysis and bastardization of the Bureau-sponsored studies that had spawned it. But by the time it was published, Lazarsfeld had stopped paying attention to Mills. “Instead of debating or fighting it,” he recalled, “I just wrote him off. I made slowly at one point and then definitely up my mind: this is a man with whom you cannot live.” When Mills died, Lazarsfeld did not go to the funeral or write his wife;

18 Lazarsfeld to Mills, November 2, 1948, Blau Mappen 38, Correspondence 1966–1976, mixed dates, Mappe 1/6, PFL Vienna. Lazarsfeld could not deny the popular impact of Mills’s book *White Collar*, and he uncritically referred to its findings in some published writings—see, for example, Barton and Lazarsfeld, “Some Functions,” 321–57. Geary, “C. Wright Mills,” 147; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

19 Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills*, 228. The character modeled on Lazarsfeld, Victor Vollbauch, is described as “a leading figure in a new kind of sociology apparently more interested in finding out new ways of measuring human behavior than in coming to conclusions about it.” Swados, *False Coin*, 8.

20 Mills, *White Collar*; Geary, “C. Wright Mills,” 151.

21 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

22 Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills*, 227–53.

23 Lazarsfeld, “A Sociologist Looks at Historians,” 56.

he simply refused to have anything to do with him. "That is to say," he said, "I never regretted whatever harm I might have done."²⁴

Lazarsfeld was ultimately able to salvage the material from the Decatur study. His analysis was published in 1955 as *Personal Influence*, which was truer to his original intentions for the project.²⁵ It became the most successful book that the Bureau had ever published, selling some five hundred thousand copies each year.²⁶ Historian Jean Converse has called it "a dogged effort by the Bureau to wrest social theory from market research."²⁷ The book, co-authored by Elihu Katz, who did an "outstanding piece of analysis" according to Lazarsfeld, emphasized the limits on the effective power of mass media, the messages of which were "refracted" by the "personal environment of the ultimate consumer."²⁸ It was a seminal work that would establish the "limited effects" paradigm in communications studies; indeed, the sociologist and historian Todd Gitlin has called it the "founding document of an entire field of inquiry." The study would depart from a prevalent style of media and communications studies that did not fully consider the social context in which messages were received, interpreted, and distributed. The presumption that media messages operated on a more direct stimulus-response mechanism would be retroactively referred to as the "hypodermic" model, and a challenge to such a model had the effect of ameliorating concerns about the absolute power of mass media. In the view of critics like Mills and Gitlin, however, the "administrative" approach to research practiced at the Bureau had become so entwined with its corporate and government backers that it was effectively neutered, incapable of executing a real social criticism that might consider longer-term influence. The Bureau's strictly empirical approach may have eased Lazarsfeld's way into the American social science scene relative to the critical theorists in Horkheimer's circle, for example, but it would tarnish his standing among more radical scholars later on.²⁹

24 Summers, "Perpetual Revelations," 25–40; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

25 Katz and Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence*.

26 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

27 Converse, *Survey Research*, 292.

28 Katz and Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence*, 7.

29 Gitlin, "Media Sociology," 205–53. Historian Neil Verma has a different view of the effect of Lazarsfeld's style of research, which, he contends, did little to interrogate the producers of messages in the media of mass communications. He argues that Lazarsfeld's empirical method reduced the listener to the passive position of a mere "container of opinions and allegiances." Verma, *Theater of the Mind*, 122. Jefferson Pooley has pointed out that the study's findings were embraced because the "limited effects" model—which had been intended more as technical advice to would-be influencers—had the convenient effect of lending ideological support to an intellectual defense of American popular culture in the context of cold-war liberalism. Pooley, "Fifteen Pages," 130–56.

By the time *Personal Influence* appeared, Mills's relationship with Lazarsfeld was broken beyond repair, and neither made much effort to conceal his contempt for the other. The purist Mills was horrified that Daniel Bell had gone to work for a "capitalist" Luce publication, *Fortune*, and he famously eviscerated the quantitative sociology practiced by Lazarsfeld as "abstracted empiricism" in *The Sociological Imagination*, which was published in 1959.³⁰ Six months before the book appeared, Mills shared the sections pertaining to Lazarsfeld with him to see whether he had any comments, yet at the same time he was absolutely unwilling to change a word.³¹ In the book, Mills argued that Lazarsfeld's empirical method lacked the proper historical and structural framework through which to interpret its results, and that it could not address theoretical problems such as class and status consciousness. Empiricists could say nothing about society unless it had been through the "fine little mill" of "The Statistical Ritual," which manipulated infinite facts as its raw materials. Lazarsfeld, whom Mills placed "among the more sophisticated" of the empirical practitioners, was still more interested in the philosophy of science than in the study of society itself. Because the empirical studies were so expensive, they usually had to be sponsored by some corporation or institution—certainly this was the case at the Bureau. The inherent interests of the client would, argued Mills, inevitably taint the study, and the researchers would necessarily assume the politics of their bureaucratic "chieftains." Not only did this require the codification of procedures and the use of "technicians," but—most problematically for Mills—it destroyed the practice of social science as an "autonomous" enterprise.

Yet Mills's principled opposition to Lazarsfeld's willingness to take commercial contracts for market research was not without its practical downsides, and it revealed his insensitivity to Lazarsfeld's background. In Vienna, Lazarsfeld ran his research center with only a vague, unofficial university affiliation and without university funding, partly because his Jewish heritage precluded full status at the university.³² And while Mills dismissed Lazarsfeld as an employee of the sensational pulp magazine *True Story*, Mills's refusal to take commercial work sometimes put him in awkward position. "Do you know anywhere I can get two or three thousand dollars for this summer and fall in order to continue my work," wrote a desperate Mills to Lazarsfeld in 1959, after having been denied grants from government, foundations, and the university.³³

30 Mills, *Sociological Imagination*, 50–118.

31 Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, August 26, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

32 David E. Morrison, "Paul Lazarsfeld 1901–1976: A Tribute," *Redaktionelles*, 7–9, Rote Mappen, PFL ancillary, PFL Vienna.

33 Mills to Lazarsfeld, May 6, 1959, Blaue Mappen 35, Correspondences 1933–1965, Mappe 2/3, PFL Vienna.

The Mills drama was, however, atypical for the Bureau, which was governed more by methodology than by personality. From its inception, Lazarsfeld had seen the Bureau, like his other research institutes, as a kind of "Boy Scout affair" through which he could develop protégés through a program of practical training, whereupon he would "send them out into the world." Lazarsfeld said that the Bureau was so "custom tailored" to his needs that it must have felt like a "straight-jacket" to everyone else involved. Though he remained constantly involved in its activities and would stay on as an associate director, Lazarsfeld relinquished the directorship of the Bureau to Kinsley Davis in 1948.³⁴ The Bureau became somewhat less of an extension of Lazarsfeld's personality, with a Board of Governors composed of "leading representatives of the social sciences" at Columbia. In 1951 it had a staff of roughly seventy-five research associates and assistants, typically younger scholars with advanced degrees as well as advanced graduate students, and it maintained four programs: Communications and Opinion Formation, Political Behavior, Comparative Urban Research, and the Sociology of the Professions. Lazarsfeld became the chair of the Department of Sociology, a position he believed would give him the leverage to convince the Columbia administration to provide more financial support for the Bureau. Along with Merton and Davis, he believed that the greater availability of government grants would allow them to "reduce drastically" the Bureau's commercial studies. Indeed, the commercial work of the Bureau had begun to wane significantly by this time.³⁵

Lazarsfeld had begun to travel to Europe more frequently in the postwar years, participating in the reimportation of "American" quantitative methods that had actually originated in interwar Europe.³⁶ He lectured in his beloved

Jonathan Sterne has pointed out the irony that Mills's practice of "critical" sociology was only made possible by the tiresome "administrative" work—the empirical research—he did under Lazarsfeld's direction at the Bureau. Sterne, "C. Wright Mills," 65–94.

- 34 Lazarsfeld complained in 1951 that Davis was a "very bad director" of the Bureau and an "inefficient leader" of group research. Lazarsfeld to Edmund de S. Brunner, May 16, 1951, Rote Mappen, about bureau II, PFL Vienna.
- 35 Lazarsfeld to Merton, October 11, 1948, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947–1960), Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; "Columbia Picks Dr. Davis To Head Social Research," *New York Herald Tribune*, July 2, 1949; Barton, "Paul Lazarsfeld," 17–83; Lazarsfeld to George [surname unknown], March 2, 1950, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947–1960), Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; "Mankind—the eternal puzzle," *Columbia Alumni News*, March 1953; "Research and Training Program of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University (First Draft for Internal Circulation Only)," ca. 1954, Rote Mappen, about bureau II, PFL Vienna; "An Historical Review and Current Report on the Operations of the Bureau of Applied Social Research," prepared for the Information of the Board of Governors, Spring 1951, Rote Mappen, about bureau I, PFL Vienna.
- 36 Lazarsfeld to Gene Lyons, June 4, 1973, Blaue Mappen 37, Correspondence 1969–1974, Mappe 2/2, "von Argyns Chris–21.03.1973 bis Lazarsfeld Paul F.–02.01.1964," PFL Vienna.

city of Paris in the summer of 1948, and in the fall he served as a visiting professor at the University of Oslo, where, for the first time, he said, he began to feel like an “American.” He lectured and worked to establish an institute of social research, which was old-hat for him by this point.³⁷ He also got to know a socialist economist, Ragnar Frisch, a “great man,” according to Lazarsfeld. Frisch, an academic who became an economic planner for the Labour-party government in Norway, seemed to reinvigorate Lazarsfeld’s interest in socialist politics.³⁸ He was fascinated by the fact that, in Scandinavian countries, stringent economic controls had evolved in harmonious coexistence with complete political freedom. “In America, we tend to assume that economic laissez-faire and political liberty go together,” Lazarsfeld later reported to an American audience. He called for the study of the “independent development” of the two principles.³⁹ Before their falling out, Lazarsfeld would even admit to his nemesis, Mills—who was nevertheless an ally on the left—that he had been “quite seduced” by the policies of the Norwegian labour party. He even expressed sympathy for the idea of the “corporate state,” which, he said, had been an idea that was appealing to leftists when it was detached from its unfortunate “historical tie-up” with Italian fascism. At the same time, Lazarsfeld saw no reason why an “intelligent” capitalism could not become a stable system.⁴⁰

Lazarsfeld returned to Central Europe, too, visiting a devastated Frankfurt with Max Horkheimer in 1951.⁴¹ When he returned to his hometown of Vienna as a representative of the Ford Foundation with the mission of developing Austrian social research, he was disheartened to discover that the practice barely existed. But he was proud that his “Columbia group” had a nearly “legendary reputation” in social science circles abroad.⁴² Lazarsfeld also worked for a time in Santa Monica, California, where he was employed as a researcher for the RAND Corporation. There, he enjoyed socializing with the many European refugees who had made careers in Hollywood.⁴³ He became

37 “Roundletter No. 1” [from Oslo], August 1948, Rote Mappen, Biography II, Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; E.H. Gammons to Hans Olav, July 27, 1948; Lazarsfeld to Sam Stouffer, September 25, 1948; Lazarsfeld to Francois Coguel, July 27, 1948, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947–1960), Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna.

38 Lazarsfeld to Stoughton Lynd, October 6, 1948, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947–1960), Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna.

39 Lazarsfeld, “Prognosis,” 487.

40 Lazarsfeld to Mills, November 2, 1948, Blaue Mappen 38, Correspondence 1966–1976, mixed dates, Mappe 1/6, PFL Vienna.

41 Lazarsfeld, letter from Frankfurt, January 21, 1951, box 3A, folder 003/2, “Correspondence, Round Letters I,” Paul Felix Lazarsfeld Collection [hereafter, “PFL Columbia”], Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York.

42 Lazarsfeld, “roundletter,” February 7, ca. 1958, box 3A, folder 003/2, PFL Columbia.

43 Lazarsfeld, “roundletter,” n.d. ca. April 1950, box 3A, folder 003/2, PFL Columbia.

known in the US as a mass-media expert, and he testified before a Senate subcommittee in 1953 on whether TV crime and violence were causing juvenile delinquency. (He reported that more study was necessary to draw any firm conclusions.)⁴⁴ Lazarsfeld would solidify his academic credentials as chair of one of the top sociology departments and later as president of the American Sociological Association.⁴⁵

Yet, in 1954, in the midst of McCarthyism, Lazarsfeld became the subject of an investigation by the International Organizations Employees Loyalty Board, part of the US Civil Service Commission. His case came to the attention of the agency in the course of his attempt to get a security clearance required for a post with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Lazarsfeld expressed astonishment that even his close friend and colleague Samuel Stouffer, "an old Republican from Iowa," had been, for a time, refused a security clearance on the basis of his association with certain "Harvard professors."⁴⁶ Lazarsfeld was accused of actions and associations that created a "doubt" concerning his "loyalty" to the government of the US.⁴⁷

The charges against him, prefaced by the passive construction "it has been alleged," were enumerated: he attended sessions of the American Writers Congress in 1943 at the University of California, Los Angeles, sponsored by the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, an organization with alleged communist ties; he appeared on a "free speech forum" with Earl Browder, a "former Communist Party functionary"; he spoke at a meeting of the Greenwich Club of the Communist Political Association in 1945; he canceled a summer teaching appointment at the University of California in 1950 in protest of a loyalty oath; he chaired a committee on radio for an organization charged with being a front for communist propaganda; and he discussed confidential information with an "unauthorized person" while employed by the Office of War Information in 1942. The Board also questioned Lazarsfeld about his association with his former wife Marie Jahoda, who was alleged to be an "adherent to Communist ideology," and about his use of an alias, "Elias Smith." The interrogatory concluded, bluntly: "Are you now or have you ever been a member of, or in any manner affiliated with the Communist Party, U. S. A.?" Lazarsfeld wrote, simply, "No."⁴⁸

44 Milton Berliner, "The Insight into TV Programming Is Dim," *Washington Daily News*, April 8, 1953.

45 Ted Princiotto, "Sociologist Says Job Grows More Complex," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, April 22, 1961.

46 Lazarsfeld to Dr. Otto Klineberg, July 15, 1954; Otto Klineberg to Lazarsfeld, July 21, 1954: Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947-1960), Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

47 Pierce J. Gerety to Lazarsfeld, July 26, 1954, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947-1960), Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

48 "Interrogatory: Mr. Paul Felix Lazarsfeld," International Organizations Employees Loyalty Board, Washington, D.C., August 1954, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947-1960), Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

In fact, Lazarsfeld had invented the pseudonym “Elias Smith” while directing the Newark Research Center to disguise the fact that he had a very small staff and had to write many of the articles himself. He responded “no” to the question about using an alias on the questionnaire because he presumed that, in that context, it meant for political purposes. That was the response that got his case flagged by the FBI. Lazarsfeld was eventually able to resolve the situation and get his clearance, but the invasion into his personal affairs shocked him. “I’m sure they had a dossier on the naturalized,” he remembered. “I suppose my Socialist background was known.”⁴⁹

This unsettling experience motivated Lazarsfeld to conduct a study on the effect of McCarthyism on the American professoriate, which was ultimately published with co-author Wagner Thielens in 1958 as *The Academic Mind*.⁵⁰ The results were first published in the journal *Social Problems*. The report was based on lengthy interviews with 2,451 university professors in social science disciplines from 165 colleges. The study found that these professors, who largely supported the Democratic Party, felt that congressmen and businessmen would give them a “low prestige” rating. The professors tended to be more liberal or “permissive” than the population at large, though they were not a group of “Communist sympathizers.” The more liberal the professor, the more apprehensive he or she was about anti-communist crusading in the “difficult years” of the early 1950s. Professors at “high quality” colleges felt particularly vulnerable, and most withdrew from the larger community during these years, refusing to give speeches or write in general magazines on controversial issues.⁵¹

The study used mathematical considerations to analyze manifest data and derive a “latent” sentiment.⁵² Lazarsfeld called this “Latent Structure Analysis,” a mathematical technique he had developed to make sense of sociological findings by revealing the underlying social dimensions that had a probabilistic relationship to certain behaviors.⁵³ The idea attracted great interest from social psychologists.⁵⁴ Lazarsfeld wanted to develop “a direct line of logical continuity from qualitative classification to the most rigorous forms of measurement” in order to “express the statistics of living processes in numbers.” For Lazarsfeld, qualitative social research was the work of turning social and psychological

49 Lazarsfeld, “Episode,” 308; Lazarsfeld, interview by Joan Gordon, COH, January 8, 1962, Rote Mappen, PFL Vienna.

50 Lazarsfeld and Thielens, *Academic Mind*.

51 Lazarsfeld and Thielens, “Social Scientists,” 244–66.

52 Lazarsfeld, “Latent Structure Analysis,” 1.

53 Converse, *Survey Research*, 142; Coser, *Refugee Scholars*, 116.

54 Samuel A. Stouffer to Lazarsfeld, September 14, 1948, Box, Blau Mappen 18, Bio-2 (Biographie 1947–1960) Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna.

conceptions into "measures or indices by which large numbers of individuals or larger social units can be characterized." He sometimes referred to this as sub-structure: the procedure of finding the "attribute space" in which a given system of characterological types belonged. The problem with qualitative data was not so much that it was murky; the problem was that it was super-abundant. The purpose of Lazarsfeld's mathematical tools and indices was, therefore, to "reduce the multiplicity of the original information into a smaller number of dimensions" in order to make it meaningful.⁵⁵ The raw material of Latent Structure Analysis was the manifest data produced by subjects in interviews—that is, their responses to questions that had been designed to reveal an underlying trait, e.g., ethnocentrism. The task of the researcher was to arrange the manifest data as a quantifiable, probabilistic expression of an underlying, unexpressed trait. It was a kind of mathematical psychoanalysis—a way to access an unconscious, social disposition through objectively identifiable characteristics.⁵⁶ "He used numbers in a humanistic way," remembered Robert Merton.⁵⁷

Despite its official status as a research institute at Columbia University, the Bureau relied entirely on outside funding for its first ten years of existence. From 1951 until the Bureau's dissolution in 1977, the Bureau received some financial support from the University, but it composed only a very small percentage of its total budget. In the 1940s, the Bureau received most of its funding from businesses and foundations, and some from non-profit organizations. But by 1952, the Bureau received only 17 percent of its outside funding from these sources and 82 percent from government. By 1956, government funding had dropped to 18 percent of the budget, and business and foundation support had risen to 24 and 51 percent, respectively. From that point on, however, business and foundation funding would dwindle, while funding from non-profit organizations peaked at 32 percent in 1961 and slowly diminished to zero by 1974. Government funding, meanwhile, steadily increased from 1955 until it composed nearly all the Bureau's budget in 1974.⁵⁸

These shifting sources of funding changed the Bureau's research priorities, so that its market studies would progressively diminish. But as the Bureau reached the end of the period of its most intensive commercial contract work, it

55 Lazarsfeld and Barton, "Qualitative Measurement," 155–92; Barton and Lazarsfeld, "Methodology," 153; Lazarsfeld, "Statistics for Fieldworkers in Psychology," translated by John G. Jenkins, 1935 [original German version 1931], Rote Mappen, T/UI (3 bis 7), Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "Some Remarks on the Typological Procedures in Social Research," adapted from *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 6 (1937): 119–139, Rote Mappen, Papers Ia, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

56 Lazarsfeld, "Conceptual Introduction," 349–87.

57 "Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld Dies; Sociologist at Columbia," *The New York Times*, September 1, 1976, 38.

58 Barton, "Paul Lazarsfeld," 17–83.

did a series of large studies for Ford Motor Company in the mid and late 1950s. In many ways, these studies are representative of the commercial work of the Bureau after Lazarsfeld's departure as director. The giant automaker enlisted the Bureau as it prepared to launch its new mid-priced car, the Edsel. Ford first commissioned the Bureau to undertake a series of studies of the US car market in 1955 as it planned to introduce another line of automobiles, tentatively called "car E," in the "medium-price" field.⁵⁹ Over the next several years, the Bureau's Ford and Edsel studies would lead to a series of miscommunications and misinterpretations between Bureau researchers and Ford executives, and the Edsel would famously flop with American consumers when it appeared in the fall of 1957. The episode also involved a conflict among managers over methodology and the very direction of the Bureau. The quality and scientific integrity of its applied studies was crucial to all Bureau work; in fact, it was the only thing that justified its commercial research. Yet, as one Bureau manager complained, the Bureau's commercial projects were disdained by academics and, at the same time, resented by the Bureau's "downtown competitors"—commercial market research firms—whom it undercut in costs due to the cheap labor of its researchers, many of whom were graduate students in sociology.⁶⁰ After the disappointing outcome of the Ford studies, the Bureau would increasingly disengage from commercial market research.

The Edsel episode occurred at a turning point for the Bureau and for applied social research more generally, and it indicated that the clients sponsoring market research were often more interested in appeasing superiors than in attaining true, usable results. In the view of many Bureau researchers, this tendency would contribute to the progressive devolution of market research methods in the 1960s and 1970s. Much later in his career, Robert Merton would lament the fact that the Bureau's careful development of the *focused interview* method had been bastardized to become known as the "focus group" by the 1970s, which lacked the quantitative element that was essential to all Bureau work as a means of demonstrating the distribution of findings from qualitative studies. According to Merton, the "focus group" was being misused for "quick-and-easy claims" for the validity of research without the time, expense, knowledge, and skill required to verify the findings. The *focused interview* could be conducted either individually or in group settings, but its inventors were keenly aware of the prob-

59 "Social Stereotypes of Automobile Makes (Report #1)," report prepared for Special Products Division, Ford Motor Company, June 1956, box 125, BASR Archive.

60 Lee Wiggins to Clara Shapiro, David Sills, Barbara Silverblatt, David Wallace, "Re: Silverblatt Report on Innovation in a Recession, Edsel Project," July 20, 1958, box 18, folder "Subject File, Ford Motor Company-Edsel Study," PFL Columbia.

lems which could arise from group interviews—such as a few dominant participants stifling the views of others, and a more-or-less permanent corps of professional respondents who were not representative of the wider population. This did not much concern contemporary market researchers who, to Merton's dismay, were more interested in impressing clients (with two-way mirrors at focus-group meetings, for example) than in proving results scientifically.⁶¹

Lazarsfeld's work began to move in a more institutional direction by the 1960s. With the support of the Ford Foundation, he would attempt to organize social research and market research in American business schools. The Foundation was eager to bring about a "liaison" between the behavioral sciences and the business schools, and Lazarsfeld was, by his own admission, "one of the few sociologists who since way back have worked in this borderline field and advocated its respectability." He believed that the business community lacked properly trained researchers, while social scientists tended to avoid business subjects. He wanted to reform the case studies used by Harvard Business School to better incorporate the insights and concepts of social science.⁶² The Ford Foundation also sponsored Lazarsfeld's involvement in setting up the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna in an attempt to influence the development of the social sciences in Central and Eastern Europe.⁶³

Lazarsfeld was more of an analyst than a partisan, but he observed the lack of class consciousness among the American working class and its failure to see business interests as basic antagonists, as was the case in Europe.⁶⁴ But his engagement with the business community made him vulnerable to an attack by some radical student activists in the late 1960s as a "henchman of the capitalists."⁶⁵ Lazarsfeld had been invited to the Sorbonne in Paris for the 1967–1968 academic year, and in the spring he found himself "commuting between two revolutions" in Paris and at Columbia. He left Paris just before the general strike in May of 1968, only to return to Columbia to find it in "complete disorganiza-

61 Merton, "The Focussed Interview and Focus Groups," 550–566.

62 Lazarsfeld to Eric Moonman, February 2, 1961, Blaue Mappen 19, Bio-3, Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Oscar Harkavy, May 22, 1961, Rote Mappen, miscelle scientific I, Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, "A Program for Training in Market Research," ca. 1964, T/U IX (T/U 80-81 bis T/U 83 'Innovation in Higher Education'), Mappe 1/3, PFL Vienna; Helen Hudouskova to The Dean of the School of Business, University of Illinois, October 27, 1966, Blaue Mappen 19, Bio-3, Mappe 2/2; Lazarsfeld to Everett Hughes, January 16, 1959, Blaue Mappen 18, Bio-2, Biographie 1947–1960, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

63 Michael Pollak, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld: A Socio-Intellectual Biography" [MS], Program on Science, Technology and Society, Cornell University, n.d., Blaue Mappen 3 (about PFL-1), PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld, interview by Ann Pasanella, April 12, 1975, Rote Mappen, Biography Tapes, PFL Vienna.

64 Lazarsfeld, "Political Behavior," 178.

65 Baidya Nath Varma, "Paul Felix Lazarsfeld (1901–1976)" [manuscript version], *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology*, Rote Mappen, "Biography I," PFL Vienna.

tion.” He found the turmoil at Columbia to be merely nonsensical and disruptive, and he fled to Paris to “liquidate” his affairs there.⁶⁶

Beyond his visiting professorships, Lazarsfeld had been aggressively courted by the University of Chicago, but he remained at Columbia until his retirement in 1969. Around that time he was invited by his son-in-law, Bernard Bailyn, to write a memoir for an anthology that would be called *The Intellectual Migration*. Lazarsfeld recounted his early experience in the US, and his essay was paired with an account of the same period by Theodor Adorno.⁶⁷ He occasionally taught courses as a visiting professor at the New School for Social Research, and he became a University Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. Merton would leave the Bureau in 1971. Lazarsfeld kept an office at Columbia and remained the chairman of the board of the Bureau. He commuted to Pittsburgh, where he was developing a degree program in applied sociology supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation.⁶⁸ He got involved in a study on the psychology of smoking sponsored by the tobacco giant Philip Morris, in which he remained explicitly “neutral” on the health dangers of smoking and the anti-smoking campaign.⁶⁹

Lazarsfeld maintained his affiliation with Pittsburgh until the time of his death from cancer on August 30, 1976. The Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia dissolved a year later, and its operations were incorporated into the new Center for the Social Sciences at Columbia. Toward the end of his life, La-

66 Lazarsfeld to Herbert H. Hyman, April 11, 1967, Blaue Mappen 19, Bio-3, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna. Lazarsfeld to Bert Leefmans, June 4, 1968; Lazarsfeld to S. Friedman, June 11, 1968; Lazarsfeld to Alfred R. Oxenfeldt, June 21, 1968; Lazarsfeld to Alice Myers, June 26, 1968, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 1/4, PFL Vienna. Lazarsfeld, “Sorbonne,” August 8, 1968, Rote Mappen, Biography II, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna.

67 Fleming and Bailyn, *Intellectual Migration*; Lazarsfeld, “From Vienna to Columbia,” 31–36. Lazarsfeld found a draft of Adorno’s memoir “dull” because it was merely “propaganda for his philosophical ideas.” Lazarsfeld to Bernard Bailyn, February 7, 1968, Rote Mappen, miscelle scientific II, PFL Vienna.

68 Press release on the death of Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Office of Public Information, Columbia, August 31, 1976, Rote Mappen, Biography I, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Mirra Kamorovsky, April 18, 1973, Rote Mappen, Biography II, Mappe 2/2, PFL Vienna; Wesley Posvar to Lazarsfeld, January 23, 1973; Lazarsfeld to H. Weaver, June 18, 1973; Lazarsfeld to Mark Abrams, September 21, 1973, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 4/4, PFL Vienna; Merton to Lazarsfeld, February 4, 1971, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 3/4, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to Dean George Fraenkel, April 24, 1969, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 2/4, PFL Vienna. George Beadle to Lazarsfeld, December 22, 1961; Lazarsfeld to Merton, March 19, 1962, Blaue Mappen 19, Bio-3, Mappe 1/2, PFL Vienna; Joseph Greenbaum to Lazarsfeld, April 14, 1971, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 3/4, PFL Vienna; Lazarsfeld to John Howard, October 27, 1971, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 3/4, PFL Vienna.

69 Lazarsfeld to Dr. W.L. Dunn, Jr., December 28, 1971, Blaue Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 3/4, PFL Vienna; Alan S. Meyer, Lucy N. Friedman, and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, “Motivational Conflicts Engendered by the On-going Discussion of Cigarette Smoking,” January 1972, box 37, folder, “Manuscripts (Research Papers by PFL),” “Motivational Conflicts Engendered by the On-going Discussion of Cigarette Smoking,” PFL Columbia.

zarsfeld expressed some regret for not studying the "inside" or production-side of the communications industry. He lamented the state of communications research in 1973, noting that, because the television industry was so successful, it had lost all interest in sponsoring research.⁷⁰ But, sociologist James S. Coleman noted at the time of his death, if "research in mass communications had a single father, it was Paul Lazarsfeld."⁷¹ Indeed, his renown was such that he was recruited in his later years to revive the studies of daytime serials in television, for which he had become famous in the 1940s through his studies with Herzog.⁷² Lazarsfeld was always most interested in studying the effects of media, and his commercial work was just one part of his total research agenda. He remained concerned about the "cultural and social dangers" of commercial advertising.⁷³ Lazarsfeld, to the end, maintained his commitment to social science and the development of research methods.

Conclusion

The synthesis of qualitative and quantitative techniques was essential to the research methods practiced at Paul Lazarsfeld's Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University. Among other techniques, the Bureau standardized the practice of "motivation" research, which had broad application beyond the sphere of academia in business, government, and in the war effort. The "panel" method, "reason analysis," and the "focused" interview were among the Bureau techniques that eventually made their way into standard market research practices. Hans Zeisel provided the consummate statement of the Bureau's methods in *Say It With Figures*, which would become a standard handbook for many social researchers.

From its founding by Lazarsfeld, the Bureau had used its commercial contract studies to develop and practice research methods, train graduate students, test ideas, and fund its operations. The results, which were always published,

70 Ann Pasanella, "The Mind Traveller: A Guide to Paul F. Lazarsfeld's Communication Research Papers," The Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, Columbia University, 1994, box 444, folder 5, Robert K. Merton Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York; Allen H. Barton, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld, 1901–1976," *The Bureau Reporter* [newsletter of BASR] XXIII, no. 1 (October 1976), 1–2; Lazarsfeld to Phillips Davidson, October 5, 1973, Blau Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 4/4, PFL Vienna.

71 James S. Coleman, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld" [obituary], *ASA Footnotes*, December 1976, 7.

72 Lazarsfeld to William McGuire, March 9, 1973, Blau Mappen 38, Correspondence 1966–1976, mixed dates, Mappe 1/6, PFL Vienna. Lazarsfeld presumed that, given the rapidly changing role of women in the context of Second-Wave Feminism, the content of daytime serials, as well as their role in the lives of women, would be very different. Lazarsfeld to Phillips Davidson, October 5, 1973, Blau Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 4/4, PFL Vienna.

73 Lazarsfeld to S. Friedman, November 15, 1971, Blau Mappen 20, Bio-4, Mappe 3/4, PFL Vienna.

were useful both to the client and the community of social researchers, who could apply the methods to any kind of study. However, the Bureau would retreat from market studies in the late 1950s, partly as a result of a disastrous job for the Ford Motor Company that many felt had damaged its reputation. The “failure” of the studies seemed to have demoralized Bureau researchers and led to the further diminishment of commercial market research on their part. Increasingly, market research would serve a function within corporate bureaucracies, but it would no longer have the kind of general applicability that had come from the Bureau’s published reports. Moreover, commercial practitioners did not always adhere to the strict methods of the Bureau and, for that reason, the scientific quality of market research would diminish by the late 1960s.

Part of the reason why the Bureau moved away from market studies was that such studies were looked down upon by many academic researchers. Increasingly, many sociologists, notably Robert Lynd and C. Wright Mills, grew to see the commercial studies as an unacceptable compromise that tainted what they viewed as the progressive purpose of social research. Mills would eviscerate Lazarsfeld as a compromised researcher in his book, *The Sociological Imagination*, but Lazarsfeld thought that Mills was a very bad, sloppy sociologist and a contemptible person. He could not deny, however, that he was a successful writer. Mills’s book, *White Collar*, which he had derived from a number of Bureau studies, would become part of the canon of midcentury sociological literature, and Mills himself would be hailed as a hero of the New Left. Despite his socialist past and commitment to social democracy, Lazarsfeld, at least in the view of a new generation of sociologists such as Todd Gitlin, would be denigrated as a sellout who served corporations at the expense of ordinary people.

11

**A Downtown for the Suburbs:
Gruen and the Shopping Center**

In the spring of 1949, the Warner Brothers studio assembled about 250 architects in Los Angeles for a preview screening of its new film, an adaptation of the 1943 Ayn Rand novel *The Fountainhead*.¹ Among those in attendance was Victor Gruen, the Viennese émigré who would become best known as the inventor of the regional shopping center. The architect was appalled by what he believed to be a gross misrepresentation of the work and values of his profession, and he was disgusted by the antisocial, egotistical message of the film and book. Gruen channeled his anger into a devastating review of the film, which was published in the May 1949 issue of *Arts and Architecture*.² The dramatic high point of the film occurs when a jury finds the protagonist, architect Howard Roark, to be *not guilty* for the crime of destroying a large housing project that failed to conform to his design. According to Gruen, the author knew absolutely nothing of contemporary architecture, which she had, apparently, confused with “*contemptuous*” architecture. Gruen charged that Rand did not know that the very purpose of the contemporary architect was service to society and to the client; his mission was to fulfill the needs of a community—not to erect monuments to his ego that stood in complete disregard to human needs. Gruen worried that the non-conformist ideology of Rand’s hero would be so deeply attractive to young people that they would overlook the “anti-social, anti-democratic and anti-human message” of the novel. “Nonconformism, as such, is not a laudable quality,” Gruen argued. “Nonconformism is positive only when its basis is ethical. [...]”

1 “Hollywood’s Fountainhead: all dynamite will be charged to clients,” *The Architectural Forum*, June 1949, 13–14.

2 Gruen, “Mountain Heads from Mole Hills.”

True nonconformity is constructive. Roarke's nonconformity is destructive and anarchistic." Gruen concluded by finding the author Rand to be *guilty* of a state of mind which he called "contempt of mankind."³

Gruen reacted so strongly to the message of *The Fountainhead* because it was a perverse representation of his profession, but also because Rand's libertarian ideology was an affront to his deepest values as a social democrat.⁴ Although his most famous invention, the regional shopping center, would become an emblem of American postwar consumer capitalism, Gruen himself always retained the sensibilities of a Viennese Social Democrat: he believed in the potential for large-scale social planning enterprises—either in physical forms as architecture or in institutional forms as social programs—to improve the lives of working people and contribute to the common good. To the extent that it celebrated the individual as a being independent from society, he chafed at the ideology of "free enterprise." Although he submitted to the postwar predominance of transportation by automobile for his American shopping center designs, he generally regarded automobiles as very inefficient means of public transit, and he felt that cars were a hazard to the health and happiness of the pedestrian. His shopping centers were intended to create a centralized community space, free from the interference of automobile traffic, in a place where there had been no center: the sprawling, unorganized suburbs. Similarly, Gruen's plans for downtown urban renewal—many of which never came to fruition—were designed to reclaim the space for pedestrians against the tyranny of the automobile.

Gruen was unimpressed by what passed for a "shopping center" in the late 1940s, and in 1949 he claimed that no center "in the real sense of the word" had yet been constructed. The so-called shopping centers that had been developed merely used the "old formula" of "more or less correlated" stores on two sides of a busy highway. Postwar suburban shopping areas were typically located in strips or "Miracle Miles" along main thoroughfares. These strips taxed shoppers' nerves with noise, gasoline odors, the danger of crossing busy streets, and even by the steady reflection of moving objects—cars—in the show windows of

3 Like Gruen, Rand was a Jewish émigré, but she was a refugee from Russian Bolshevism, not from German Nazism. Rand's extreme individualism grew out of her deep hatred for Communism, which had consumed her father's business in a wave of nationalization. She was among the first intellectuals to articulate a *moral* defense of capitalism, which she disseminated not only through her novels, but also through her position as a public intellectual who wrote syndicated columns, lectured at college campuses, and frequently appeared on radio and television programs. Burns, "Godless Capitalism," 273–87.

4 Rand would end up associating with members of the Austrian School of economics, including the economist Friedrich Hayek, prophet of neoliberalism, who became the principal adversary to John Maynard Keynes after he left Vienna for the London School of Economics in 1931. See Williams, "Road Less Traveled," 213–27.

stores. They were, Gruen said, nothing more than newly-created Main Streets with all of the disadvantages and none of the advantages of the Main Street setup. While the downtown stores were designed to serve the pedestrian, suburban stores served only the driver, yet developers had failed to change the design of shopping centers for the suburban context. They made no attempt to incorporate themselves into the character of the residential neighborhood, and they employed garish designs in a “never-ending race” to attract the attention of shoppers. “A suburban store wants to become part of the community,” Gruen maintained. “It should fit into the community by its architectural treatment, just as well as by its neighborly merchandising methods.”⁵

The main design feature of the shopping center was to segregate pedestrian traffic from automobile traffic, parking, and store deliveries in order to create “psychological comfort” for shoppers. The stores of a shopping center did not face the street; instead, they lined colonnades that surrounded a central courtyard or landscaped area—the *mall* that would later become a synecdoche for the total idea of the shopping center. The mall would be “enlivened” by such things as kiosks and juice stands, and it would be landscaped with trees, shrubbery, flower beds, and fountains, giving it the character of a large park. “It is difficult to prove that a tree ever sold one penny’s worth of merchandise,” said Gruen, but “the eye needs respite from observing thousands of cars and large groups of buildings.” The communal atmosphere would be encouraged through benches, walkways, and public announcement boards, which would invite “leisurely shopping.” This “inward-looking” orientation was intended to create a restful atmosphere in which patrons would spend long periods of time strolling, socializing, having meals, and, of course, purchasing goods. Rather than a strip of individualized stores, patrons would tend to think of the complex as a whole, and the mall plan with shops on both sides had the advantage of doubling the frontage along any particular strip.⁶

Designed with the perspective of the shopper in mind, nothing was to interfere with the pleasantness of the shopping experience. All the service areas, utilities, and functional elements of the shopping center were to be hidden from the shopping areas. Service roads would run on a lower level to underground receiving areas, and in no place would the service roads cross any roads or walkways that were used by customers. Foot traffic would be directed from the parking lots to the center, and direct access to individual stores would not be permitted

5 Gruen, “What’s Wrong with Store Design?” 62; Gruen, “What to look for in shopping centers”; Gruen, “Yardstick.”

6 Gruen, “What to look for in shopping centers”; Gruen, “Yardstick.” See also Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall*, 307–32.

from the parking areas. This was an important element of the plan: shoppers would be exposed to other shops even if they only intended to visit one, and the single entrance and exit to shops facilitated the proper display of “impulse” items. As he had done in his earlier designs of shopfronts, which made creative use of exterior arcades to funnel potential customers into the showroom, Gruen reimaged the retail space. His shopping center would be more than the sum of its parts: individual stores would benefit from being part of a collective, and they would also be served by the co-location of a large department store, which would serve as an “anchor.” The entire development would have a cohesive architectural treatment, and tenants would be subject to certain restrictions on the size of signs, the use of neon, and the choice of colors and materials in storefronts. Yet they would be given the freedom to express their individuality so long as they did it in a “harmonious and esthetically pleasant manner.” Gruen proposed other amenities such as theaters, exhibit halls, public meeting rooms, and even nurseries where mothers could deposit their small children as they shopped. Overall, the center was designed to be more than just a place for suburbanites to shop. Customers would associate the shopping center with “all activities of cultural enrichment and relaxation,” argued Gruen.⁷

Gruen’s innovative plans began to attract the attention of developers. He was hired in 1950 by the Houston developer Russel Nix to design a very large shopping center in Houston that was to be called “Montclair.” Gruen’s ambitious design for Montclair, which he completed with Houston architect Irving Klein, featured a covered, air-conditioned mall that was seventy feet wide and nine hundred feet long. The fully enclosed mall would be entirely separated from automobile traffic. Montclair was to have an underpass that would eliminate pedestrian crossings and would provide a service function by permitting access for trucks. The center was to be anchored by a “major” department store and a “junior” department store, along with several variety stores. However, the design was, perhaps, too forward-looking, and its financing ultimately fell through. In the process, though, Gruen met Lawrence Smith, a real estate analyst and economic advisor who would become a key partner of Gruen’s in the coming years.⁸

With the help of Larry Smith, Gruen’s concept of the shopping center evolved to become a social theory and a financial arrangement as well as an architectural plan. Writing in 1952 in the journal *Progressive Architecture*, Gruen and Smith defined the shopping center as a “conscious and conscientious cooperative effort by

7 Gruen, “What to look for in shopping centers.”

8 Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 111–15; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 79; Mickey Jones, “109-Store Houston Shopping Center of 1952 to Feature Pedestrian Mall,” *Women’s Wear Daily*, January 3, 1951.

many private commercial enterprises to achieve a specific purpose: more and better business.” But while the center was a cooperative commercial enterprise, it would also serve a social function by filling the “vacuum” created by the absence of civic “crystallization points” in the suburbs. Gruen and Smith acknowledged that city centers were shrinking, both in terms of population and social importance, while the suburbs were expanding. The regional shopping center would serve as a “satellite” downtown area to provide the social function of a city center for suburbanites. But it was also an opportunity to build a better downtown, designed “scientifically” to disguise the “ugly rash” on the body of cities, namely the utilitarian elements, those smoke stacks, electrical lines, roadways, and signs that had accumulated ad hoc. In contrast, the shopping center would be a planned, coordinated design that would produce a pleasing atmosphere with “magnetic powers” to attract people and keep them there. (Some later observers would describe this somewhat ineffable attribute as the “Gruen effect.”) It would be a pedestrian oasis in an automobile age, with conformity, but not uniformity, as its aim. Gruen drew inspiration from his native Vienna as well as Turkish and Arabian bazaars and the commercial arcades of nineteenth-century Paris, which were the product of a cooperative effort by merchants to create a safe, weather-protected space for shoppers. While he accepted the dominance of the “auto-borne” consumer in postwar suburban life, he ultimately aimed to extract that consumer from her car for a pleasant stroll along a shopping mall.⁹

The idea of a *shopping center*, which was sometimes referred to by other names such as a “suburban retail district,” began to take hold in the trade press. Its advantage over existing arrangements was that it facilitated “one-stop” shopping for suburbanites. The deliberate placement of competitive stores in the same district was based on the belief among many retailers that American housewives liked to compare prices at several shops before committing to a purchase. Gruen wanted to create a “balanced store grouping” and a “harmonious interplay between stores,” but he also recognized the role of “private initiative” in the American system. The counterintuitive idea of “planning for competition” was intended to produce efficiencies in the *distribution* of retail goods that would, ultimately, benefit all vendors at a particular site. Gruen argued that such centers should be anchored by a “branch” department store—that is, a suburban outpost of a downtown store. The theory was that the co-location of a diverse assortment of shops around a large, well-known department store,

9 Gruen and Smith, “Shopping Centers, the New Building Type”; Gruen, “The Planning of Shopping Centers,” *Michigan Society of Architects Monthly Bulletin*, February 1952, 15–25, box OV19, Victor Gruen Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.) [hereafter, “Gruen LOC”]; Gruen, “The Chains’ Stake”; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 14.

would be beneficial for both the shops and the department store. The specialty shops would benefit from the draw of the department store, while the department store could exert control over surrounding commercial developments in the context of the shopping center.¹⁰

By the late 1940s, Gruen was commuting frequently between Los Angeles and New York on business (and to visit his mistress, Lazette Van Houten, who would become his third wife). One day in 1948, he found himself stranded in Detroit, where his plane had made an emergency landing due to bad weather. He decided to make use of his time there by visiting the famous J. L. Hudson department store. The mammoth Hudson's was a landmark in downtown Detroit. Occupying an entire city block, it was a bulwark of consumption in the city center. Yet even an institution like Hudson's was threatened by the new wave of post-war suburbanization and the trend toward decentralization, driven by the democratization of automobile transportation. Though he was warned that it would be impossible for an outsider, and particularly a Jew, to get a meeting with Oscar Webber, the president of the company, Gruen persisted in engaging Webber's subordinates, and, eventually—on a later visit—he got a meeting with Webber himself. Despite Webber's reluctance to diminish the mightiness of the downtown store with smaller satellites, Gruen managed to convince him of the wisdom of planning suburban branch stores around his own “shopping towns,” and that Gruen was the man for the job. This gave Webber the opportunity to take on the role of more than a merchant: he could become a civic leader.¹¹

Webber's shopping centers would be named for their location relative to Detroit: Northland, Eastland, Westland, and Southland. The plan for the first of four branch stores, Eastland, was announced in the summer of 1950, and it was originally scheduled to open in 1952. The plan called for a Hudson's store with a circular layout at the end of a ring of shops upon colonnaded walkways facing an inner parking lot. Gruen's cylindrical design for the Hudson's store was intended to conceal stock rooms on the periphery, while the parking lot at the center of the ring was intended to put shoppers close their destination. This design, however, contradicted Gruen's ideal of an automobile-free pedestrian mall at the heart of the shopping center. Fortunately, for Gruen's legacy, progress on the Eastland

10 “Suburban Retail Districts,” *Architectural Forum*, August 1950; Gruen, “New Trends in Branch Store Design,” address, National Convention of the N.R.D.G.A., New York, March 3, 1953, box 1, binder “Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1,” Victor Gruen Papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming (Laramie) [hereafter, “Gruen AHC”]; Gruen, “Twelve Check Points”; Gruen to Peggi, October 13, 1964, box 4, folder “Speeches—Jan 1964—Nov 1965,” Gruen AHC.

11 Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, pp. 121–28, 181, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 109–17.

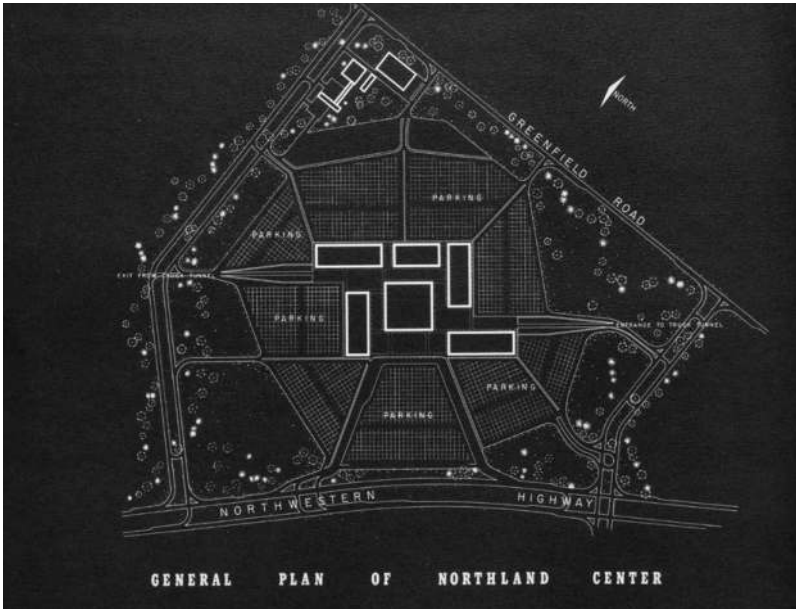


FIGURE 12 General plan of Gruen's first major regional shopping center, Northland, ca. January 1952.
SOURCE: Victor Gruen papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

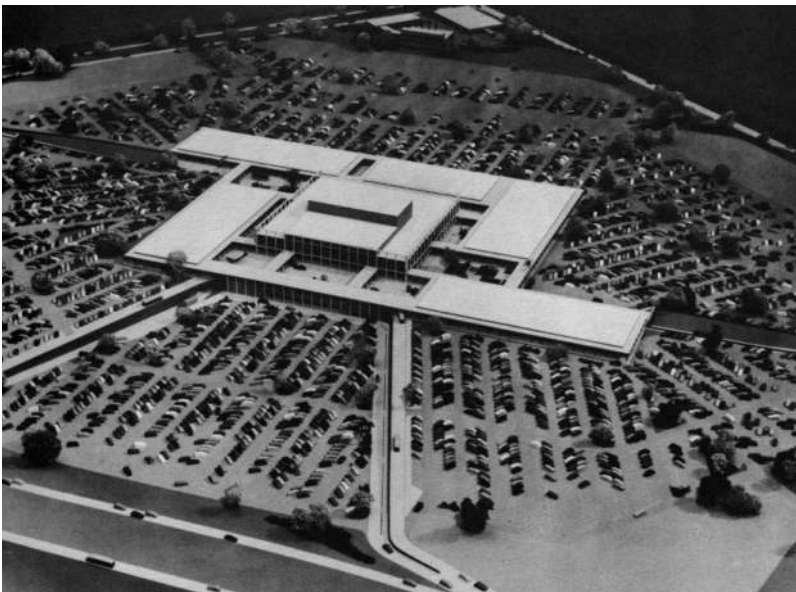


FIGURE 13 Architectural model of Gruen's first major regional shopping center, Northland, ca. January 1952.
SOURCE: Victor Gruen papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

development was stalled in late 1951 because of zoning obstacles and the onset of the Korean War, which introduced new restrictions on building materials. Instead, work proceeded on the Northland center, which had been approved by municipal officials. The plan, which included an interior courtyard rather than a parking lot, was much truer to Gruen's ideal of the shopping center.¹²

Gruen introduced his plan for Northland to the Detroit Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in January of 1952.¹³ The plan called for sixty different types of merchandising and service facilities, ranging from dress shops to cigar kiosks, with parking space for 5,500 customer cars and nine hundred employee cars. The entire center would cover eighty acres, but the area surrounding the plot would be held "in reserve" as a buffer against the residential area, and for the future expansion of the center's shops and parking lots. Northland was designed specifically for the customer behind the wheel, but the design strictly segregated customer car traffic from delivery truck traffic, which was directed to underground tunnels. Each store would have access to these basement loading docks. The shops would also be integrated by a central heating and air conditioning system. Covered colonnades would provide shoppers protection from the weather. The Hudson's branch store (at 470,000 square feet, it would be the largest ever built to that point) would be at the heart of the store group, surrounded on three sides by tenant buildings. The idea was to direct customers through the inner malls with the hope of creating an intensity of pedestrian traffic "comparable to downtown streets." While each shop along the mall would be free to express its own character, all would be subject to certain controls designed to create a pleasant harmony rather than a "dissonant" relationship between adjacent shops. A standard lettering type for all signs, set in Mondrian-like frames, was created by a graphics consultant to further integrate the collection of shops.¹⁴ Gruen also believed that the shopping center should be a community "focal point," and so his plans included club rooms, meeting halls, a public auditorium, a common kitchen, public toilets, and a nursery "where children can be checked while Mother shops."¹⁵

The opening of Northland in March of 1954, six years after Webber's decision to build the four regional centers, was a major event. Eleanor Roosevelt, who had

12 Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, pp. 121–28, 181, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC.

13 Gruen, "Shopping Centers," address, Detroit Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, January 16, 1952, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC.

14 Gruen claimed that tenants initially resisted the restrictions on their signage, but they ultimately expressed relief that they had been freed from the obligation of trying to outdo each other. Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 31.

15 "Northland Center," planning book, n.d., box 22, folder "Shopping Centers—Northland Center (Detroit, MI), 1954," Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 28.

been given a preview tour, marveled that the designers of Northland had maintained a park-like atmosphere, complete with large-scale modern artworks, despite the center's "combination of every type of shop which can be found in the center of town."¹⁶ At a press review of Northland a week before its opening, Gruen acknowledged that it was not the first shopping center to be built, but it was the largest: it featured the biggest branch store and the greatest number of shops on the largest site ever acquired. More importantly, though, Northland was the first true realization of the shopping center *concept*. As important as the buildings were the spaces between them, which were designed as courts, malls, terraces, and lanes that resembled the market squares of European cities or the commons of old colonial towns. These pleasant, open spaces provided a commercial-free respite from shopping. Distinct from the few existing shopping centers, such as John Graham's Northgate center near Seattle, Northland employed a "cluster" organization of buildings that avoided long, linear malls and great walking distances. Also important was the space around the center—three hundred acres owned by the developer to control future developments that would create a "harmonious link" between Northland and the surrounding area.¹⁷

When it opened on March 22, the \$22.5 million, eighty-store Northland Center was an immediate sensation for the shopping public, exceeding all sales expectations with daily visits averaging forty- to fifty-thousand customers. It was also revelation for architects and developers. *Architectural Forum* called it a "planning classic" on the level of Rockefeller Center in New York; it was the "first modern pedestrian commercial center" based on the "market town" plan that was both physically and psychologically suited to shopping. In this sense, it was a "rediscovery" rather than an invention; it had all of the "visual vigor" of downtown but with an architectural unity imposed by Gruen. Even the center's public sculptures were, according to Gruen, an "integral portion" of the architectural treatment of the outdoor space. Gruen instructed the artists and sculptors to "create an atmosphere of untroubled joy." Northland was immediately recognized as a potential model for city planners looking to revitalize "blight-spotted decaying shopping districts" downtown. "The things we learn in building shopping centers are the things that can save the cities," said Gruen.¹⁸

16 Eleanor Roosevelt, "Model' Suburban Town at Detroit Interesting," *New York World-Telegram & The Sun*, February 9, 1954; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 26.

17 Gruen, speech at press review of Northland, March 15, 1954, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC; Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern*, 196–216.

18 "Northland Center, Detroit," *Michigan Tradesman*, March 24, 1954; "Northland: a new yardstick for shopping center planning," *Architectural Forum*, June 1954; Soderlind, "Architect Says Southdale"; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 129.



FIGURE 14 Gruen on the Margaret Arlen television program, January 25, 1953.
SOURCE: Victor Gruen papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Reviews in the popular press were equally enthusiastic. The journalist Dorothy Thompson, writing for the *Ladies' Home Journal*, called Northland a “tiny city” and a “model of enlightened planning.” It was the perfect example of “social co-operation” between merchants, architects, sculptors, artists and civic-minded citizens, and yet it was “entirely the creation of private enterprise.” While shopping had been typically regarded as an exhausting activity—a job—Thompson managed to shop at Northland for six hours, she claimed, without feeling any fatigue. The labor of shopping was transformed into the pleasure of consumption.¹⁹ *Life* magazine called it the “most elegant” of the new shopping centers in the US, having the air of a bazaar with its fanciful sculptures, fine architecture, music, and “pure gaiety.” *Family Circle* observed that this “spirit of gaiety” created an atmosphere friendly to children and adults alike. *McCall's* profiled a resident of suburban Detroit who exclaimed that Northland was “like a park with stores!” that made shopping “fun” to the extent that even her hus-

19 Thompson, “Commercialism takes—and wears—a new look.”

band was eager to join her on Saturday shopping trips. About a year into its operation, the *New York Times* called Northland a “fabulous success” that was projected to have sales of \$80 million for the first year, \$30 million more than initial projections. By 1960, the fifty thousand shoppers who daily visited Northland—accommodated by 10,000 parking spaces—would be driving more than \$100 million in annual sales.²⁰

Gruen later said that Northland was recognized as “the first large and successful experiment to have created, in an environmentally conscious way, an oasis of community, culture, and shopping in the endless desert of suburban America.” He praised Oscar Webber for his “ethical attitude and his entrepreneurship restrained by conservatism,” without which they “never could have breached the prevailing practice of focusing on short-term profit movies.” It helped Gruen to convince future clients of the benefits of “long-term planning, thinking, and acting.”²¹

Even before Northland opened in 1954, Gruen had become an evangelist for the concept of the shopping center through his appearances in the popular media, his writing in trade publications, and through his speaking engagements at professional conferences. On a daytime television program broadcast in New York in 1953, Gruen explained his shopping center design, with its many pedestrian malls and courts, to an audience of housewives: “We can really shop in a park. And you can imagine what that means to the housewife who doesn’t have to worry that she has kids all over the street and get run over, who doesn’t hear the noise of automobiles and smell the fumes they make.”²² The shopping center concept was a revelation for the suburban housewife: not only did it bring downtown to the suburbs, but it was a *better* downtown, allowing her to park in one spot and stroll through arcades and plazas that were completely free of the congested motor traffic that had come to plague downtown. The *New York Times Magazine* called it a “woman’s dream world: an isolated,

20 “20th Century Bazaar,” *Life*, August 30, 1954; “Adventure in Shopping,” *Family Circle*, September 1954, 49; Eleanor Pollock, “The \$290 Pair of Shoes,” *McCall’s*, March 1955; “Sales of Center Surprise Owners,” *The New York Times*, February 22, 1955; “Victor Gruen: Biographical Data,” n.d. [ca. 1963], box 5, folder “Speech File 1963,” Gruen AHC.

21 Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 122–123.

22 “Victor Gruen Shows Model Shopping Center of the Future,” transcript, *Radio Reports, Inc.*, January 25, 1953, box 71, folder 2, Gruen LOC. On a New York radio program, Gruen emphasized his aim to strictly segregate pedestrian and automobile traffic in order to create spaces where people could “promenade like people used to promenade in the old days and as they still do in some of the European cities.” Gruen would introduce the concept of a fully enclosed shopping center he was planning in Minneapolis, where the pedestrian malls were heated in winter and air-conditioned in summer to create a climate of “eternal spring.” “Future on File,” radio broadcast, WEVD, New York, February 26, 1953, transcript by *Radio Reports, Inc.*, box 1, binder “Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1,” Gruen AHC.

coordinated, well-designed, comfortable arrangement of nothing but shops and service." It was a national "retail revolution" in the suburbs, where developers were creating completely new business districts in the form of shopping centers to serve the new population.²³

Gruen was not the only shopping mall designer. The first shopping center implemented in a "completely planned fashion" was the aforementioned Northgate in Seattle, designed by John Graham, which opened in 1950. Gruen's former colleague Morris Ketchum was also busily designing centers, and his Shoppers' World opened near Boston in 1951. But Gruen was, perhaps, the most articulate and visionary of the architects, and his firm had completed fifteen shopping center designs by the fall of 1954.²⁴ By the fall of 1955, in addition to the large regional centers like Northland, there were an estimated 1,000 smaller shopping centers in operation with another 2,000 under construction or in the planning stage. The new centers served a surging suburban population, which was growing at four times the rate of the country as a whole.²⁵

From 1954 to 1955, the American Federation of Arts sponsored a traveling exhibition in the US and Canada, "Shopping Centers of Tomorrow," which was prepared by Gruen's firm, Victor Gruen Associates (VGA). The exhibit was designed to educate the public, as well as businessmen and community planners, on the commercial potential and social value of future shopping center developments. It featured twenty-two display units of photographic murals, architectural drawings and renderings, scale models, and a slide film narrated by Gruen. The exhibit clearly served the business interests of Gruen's firm by traveling to cities where Gruen had commissions, including Minneapolis, Detroit, Oakland, and Wichita. It included models of VGA-designed centers and previews of in-the-works projects like the indoor "Southdale" shopping center in suburban Minneapolis. Despite its future-orientation, the exhibit also examined the town marketplaces and bazaars that were the historical precedents for the concept of the modern shopping center. Gruen, as spokesman for his firm, insisted that shopping centers would serve a social and civic function as well as a commercial purpose; they were a form of democratized architecture for the people. The exhibit's promoters promised that shopping centers would provide "more leisure through greater efficiency

23 Palmer, "Shopping Center Goes to the Shopper," 15; "Suburban Mart Starts Retail Revolution," *New York Herald Tribune*, October 31, 1954.

24 "Living by Design," television broadcast, WOR-TV, January 19, 1954, transcript by *Radio Reports, Inc.*, box 1, binder "Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "The Shape of Things to Come," speech, Chain Store Age 14th Annual Seminar, Philadelphia, February 26, 1968, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVI, 1968), Gruen AHC.

25 Smith, "Shopping centers: more, bigger, better," 21.

plus cultural and social facilities” that would become centers for suburban family social and community life—as well as shopping. Shopping centers were described as satellite downtowns that offered the full range of retail outlets without the trouble, noise, and danger of downtown. Unlike downtown, the shopping center provided a safe, car-free place for mothers to take their children.²⁶

The development of shopping centers presented an opportunity for businessmen like Oscar Webber to take on the role of community leaders responsible for fashioning the public life of the suburbs as they integrated it with their own commercial interests. They could also claim to be serving the national interest through the Cold War-era ideal of “decentralization,” the process of preparing for the threat of bombing attacks by dispersing the population to the suburbs. Gruen explained that the growth of the suburbs was, “from a defense point-of-view, a desirable factor as it spreads the population of our big cities over a large area, less vulnerable to bombing attacks than crowded city areas are.” But Gruen argued that the suburbs still needed “crystallization centers” that could be used as relocation, evacuation, and welfare service centers in the case of emergency. It would be unlikely, Gruen argued, that public funds would become available for such centers, but regional shopping centers—which were useful in peacetime as well—could serve this purpose. They were built with very large parking lots and basements for utilities and deliveries which could double as fallout shelters in the case of nuclear warfare.²⁷

Gruen was more than an architect or contractor—he was the spokesman of a movement for a “truly new building type.” Because the shopping center was a new concept, he had to convince town planners, developers, financiers, and the general public that the idea had both commercial and social value, and that there was a right way to do it that required “conscientious, scientific planning.”

26 “Exhibition Charts a Better Way of Life,” Shopping Centers of Tomorrow, VGA [press release], ca. 1954, box OV-1, Gruen LOC; “Shopping Centers of Tomorrow,” American Federation of Arts Traveling Exhibitions, 1954–1955 [brochure], box OV-1, Gruen LOC; “Victor Gruen Associates, Shopping Centers of Tomorrow: An Architectural Exhibition” [exhibition brochure], American Federation of Arts, 1954, box OV-1, Gruen LOC; “Model Shopping Center Coming Here This Summer,” *Boston Globe*, February 7, 1954; “Traveling exhibition brings design to the public,” *Progressive Architecture*, July 1954; “Shopping Center Birth Told at Art Institute,” *The Dayton Daily News*, August 8, 1954, box OV-1, Gruen LOC; “Exhibit of Shopping Centers,” *New York Times*, October 19, 1954; “Future Shoppers to Buy in Ease,” *Newsday* [Garden City, N.Y.], October 29, 1954; Soderlind, “Architect Says Southdale.”

27 “Tomorrow’s Landscape: The Planned Shopping Center,” *California Stylist*, January 1956, 260–61, 287. Gruen, “Notes for a Regional Conference on the Effect of Current War Conditions on Real Estate Market and Valuation Problems; Notes for the introduction of Mr. Foster Winter by the Chairman,” speech, n.d.; “Defense on the Periphery,” speech, National Convention of the A.I.A., Chicago, May 8, 1951; Gruen, “Regional Shopping Centers and Civilian Defense: A Memorandum With Special Reference to the Eastland Shopping Center in Detroit,” 1953; box 1, binder “Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1, Gruen AHC

He spoke out against the “archaic hodgepodge” of unplanned, “anarchistically-growing” shopping districts in favor of his planned, integrated shopping *centers* which avoided the “honky-tonk” appearance of such “helter-skelter” developments. Rather than one long mall, Gruen’s many malls and courts made more efficient use of space and increased customer traffic. Gruen sometimes also “stacked” his shopping streets with two-levels of storefronts facing his malls, effectively doubling the selling space. The centralization of services and utilities, furthermore, made operations cheaper for tenants and allowed them to devote their space completely to merchandising.²⁸

Gruen understood the shopping center as the organization of separate architectural elements into an integrated whole that was coordinated with the surrounding area and its sociological composition. He made the case for “premerchandising”: the deliberate selection of tenants to produce a balanced retail market that maintained competition while avoiding redundancies. Premerchandising was one of many ways in which the planned shopping center relied on the studies of economic analysts, traffic consultants, and other specialists who lent their knowledge to the planning of the center. Gruen did not withhold his disdain for the unplanned, haphazard suburban development of the postwar years, and he laid much of the blame for the “vast desert” of unhappy shopping on the “tyranny” of the automobile. When Northland was built and its success was proven, Gruen had a ready example of his ideal of the planned shopping center that was predicated on the separation of automobile and shopper and the pleasant atmosphere of the pedestrian malls. Despite the prevalence of the automobile, Gruen insisted that people were still not only willing but happy to walk—so long as they were in a pleasant environment. Centers like Northland were, according to Gruen, the natural heirs of the Greek agora and European and New England towns where commerce, culture, and society were woven together in a town center. And the shopping center idea was not just for the suburbs: Gruen immediately recognized the shopping center as a model for the redevelopment of American downtowns, a mission that would come to define his later career. He distanced himself from architects like Frank Lloyd Wright, who had, he claimed, all but abandoned the city.²⁹

28 Gruen, “Financing Shopping Centers,” address, Annual Savings and Mortgage Conference of the American Bankers Association, New York City, March 4, 1953, box 1, binder “Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1,” Gruen AHC; “\$25 Million Shopping Center Is Announced,” *Independent* [Pasadena, CA], May 3, 1953; Gruen, “Twelve Check Points.”

29 “Northland: A Regional Shopping Center for Detroit, Michigan,” *Michigan Society of Architects Monthly Bulletin*, March 1954, 33–48, box 27, folder “Shopping Malls–Northland (Detroit, MI), 1954–1955,” Gruen AHC; “Shopping Centers,” *Art Digest*, November 15, 1954; Gruen, “Dynamic Planning,” 53–62.

Gruen was well aware that his arguments for the planned shopping center went against the grain of a prevalent American ideology that resisted the idea of planning. Gruen understood planning simply as the “application of wisdom and heart to the task of organizing and regulating the relations between people and people, people and nature, people and machine.”³⁰ Devotion to an anti-planning mentality may have been merely rhetorical, however, and Gruen noted that Americans were, in fact, excellent planners: they planned their suburban homes, their assembly lines, and their office buildings, for example. Still, a persistent idea of “rugged individualism” could frustrate attempts to plan on a grander scale, so that “our homes receive pure air by air conditioning and the public air becomes more polluted; our private garden plots bloom while our public parks wither; and as our TV screens grow larger, audiences in theatres and museums dwindle.”³¹ But business leaders’ skepticism toward large-scale planning schemes was not only misguided, according to Gruen; it was a willful negation of the real history of planning. “Few people seem to realize that all of our American cities are the products of planning,” insisted Gruen. “Thus, we planners are not suddenly proposing to force [an] organically grown human environment into the strait jacket of planning; we are only suggesting that it is imperative to bring old, out-moded plans up to date.” For Gruen, the architecture of the shopping center was a way to exert discipline on the individual expressions of shop owners who, when left unrestrained, produced “the ugly rash of blatant signs, blinking cascades of neon, paper streamers” that lined suburban commercial strips. The suburbs were not the prewar, pastoral ideal; they had been littered by the “ugliness and inconvenience” of the commercial strip. In contrast, the shopping center was the “first large scale, conscious planning effort made by the forces usually considered as upholders of rugged individualism.” By developing a “planning consciousness” and by submitting to certain rules, individual business interests could promote their own welfare.³²

30 Gruen, “City Planning for the Year 2000,” address, Cooper Union, New York City, January 9, 1956, box 1, Speeches, Volume II, 1955, 1956, Gruen AHC.

31 Gruen, “City in the Automobile Age,” 45–54. A couple of years later, the Canadian-American economist John Kenneth Galbraith famously observed the disharmony between American conceptions of public and private goods: “The family which takes its mauve and cerise, air-conditioned, power-steered and power-braked automobile out for a tour passes through cities that are badly paved, made hideous by litter, blighted buildings, billboards and posts for wires that should long since have been put underground.” Galbraith, *Affluent Society*, 187–88.

32 Gruen, “Cityscape and Landscape,” speech at International Design Conference, Aspen, June 1955, box 1, Speeches, Volume II, 1955, 1956, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Planning for Shopping,” speech, Boston Conference on Distribution, October 18, 1955, box 1, Speeches, Volume II, 1955, 1956, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “The Shopping Center: A Responsibility of the Local Official,” *County Government*, Summer 1960, box 27, “Shopping Malls—general, 1960–1963,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Can Your Neighborhood Survive the Suburban Sprawl?” *New Homes Guide*, June 16, 1965, box 9, folder “Clippings, 1960–1965,” Gruen AHC.

Gruen's work for Oscar Webber on the Northland and Eastland shopping centers led directly to a major contract with the Dayton Company of Minnesota, which operated the Dayton's (as it was known colloquially in the possessive) department store. Like Webber, the Dayton brothers were what Gruen called "merchant princes." The members of this kind of family business were motivated not only by commercial interests but also by a desire to improve the reputation of their family "empires." They felt a responsibility to future generations, and they tended over their stores in a "paternalistic" manner, as though they were little fiefdoms. Gruen believed that these were the ideal clients for a designer of shopping centers, and it did not hurt that Webber, a close friend of the Dayton family, virtually insisted that the brothers hire Gruen for the job.³³

In June 1952, Donald C. Dayton, president of the company, announced plans for a \$10 million "shopping and residential project" in the Minneapolis suburb of Edina. Envisioned as a "satellite downtown" serving a population of 250,000 within a fifteen-minute drive, it would resemble Northland and other Gruen-designed projects with its emphasis on social and cultural integration in the community. It was to be the first of several suburban centers ringing the city. In addition to the shopping center, the ambitious development plan called for a school, a park, a playground, an amusement center, restaurants, nurseries, office buildings, a medical center, an auto service station, and a fire station. The center would occupy only eighty-six acres of a 500-acre plot purchased by the Dayton Company. The "buffer" zone surrounding the center was meant to control future development and prevent parasitic "commercial slum areas." Indeed, the Dayton Company planned to profit from this "blight-proof" area by leasing the property, whose value would have increased due to the very presence of the center, which would be called "Southdale."³⁴

But Southdale also included an important innovation that distinguished it from Northland. The harsh Minnesota climate permitted an average of only 126 "ideal weather shopping days" a year, so the center would be connected by malls and a central plaza that were completely closed off from the outdoors. While working on another department store project for Dayton's, Gruen had experienced the extreme climate of Minnesota, with its very cold winters and very hot

33 "Biographical Material, Annotated Chronology," box 20, folder 19, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 33; Victor Gruen, "Shopping Centres, Why, Where, How?," speech, Third Annual European Conference of the International Council of Shopping Centres, London, February 28, 1978, box 5, folder "Speeches, 1970-1978," Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 131.

34 "Dayton Company Announces \$10,000,000 Shopping Center Project in Edina-Richfield," *The Minneapolis Star*, June 17, 1952; Soderlind, "Architect Says Southdale"; "Dayton's Again Takes the Lead with Southdale," *The Dayton News*, July 1952, box OV-4, Gruen LOC.

summers, and he became convinced that a covered and “climatized” public area was required for Southdale. The enclosed center would most fully realize what Gruen called the “introverted” design, which went beyond the “cluster” arrangement of buildings at Northland. He also presented his typical allusions to the nineteenth-century arcades and classic department stores in European cities that served as an inspiration. Open shopfronts would face malls and courts that would be centrally heated in the winter and cooled in the summer to maximize efficiency. The glass enclosure would be “scientifically lighted” to give visitors the illusion of being out-of-doors in a paradise of “perpetual spring.” Gruen’s central market square would be surrounded by the aforementioned “stacked” streets, which merely meant two levels of store frontage.³⁵

Dayton’s faced another shopping center development planned by its chief rival, the L. S. Donaldson Company, but Dayton’s convinced its competitor to locate its new branch store at Southdale so that both firms could avoid cannibalizing each other at competing centers. This gave Southdale *two* department store anchors to complement its seventy-two stores. When the \$20 million shopping center finally opened in the fall of 1956, it was a “shopper’s dream” come true, celebrated in local papers like the *Minneapolis Tribune* with large sections devoted to the opening. *Life* magazine called it the “splashiest” shopping center yet to open, and the world’s largest under one roof. One of the Dayton brothers, Bruce, was an arts patron who commissioned prominent contemporary artists to produce original modern artworks for Southdale, including large sculptures that decorated the plazas and malls. The center court—with its fountains, sidewalk café, benches, and landscaped gardens with California flora including orchids, Eucalyptus and Magnolia trees, and an aviary—was compared to a public square. The aim was to create a “psychological connection” with nature.³⁶

35 “The New Southdale Center,” brochure, [ca. 1952], box OV-4, Gruen LOC; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” 220–23, box 76, Gruen LOC; “New Thinking on Shopping Centers,” *Architectural Forum*, March 1953; untitled document, [ca. 1956], box 1, vol. II, Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 33.

36 Amidst all the praise, a lone dissenting voice came from the famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright, who compared Southdale to a military “barracks.” “The very appearance of the place repels me,” he said, comparing the exterior to a “cardboard box ready to ship something in.” Indeed, in Gruen’s “introverted” center, the exterior was intentionally plain. Carl Spielvogel, “Shopper’s Dream Near Completion,” *New York Times*, September 24, 1956; “Southdale is 11th of Its Kind in Nation,” *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, October 7, 1956; John K. Sherman, “Center Breaks Art Barrier With Sculpture, Murals,” *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, October 7, 1956; “40,000 Visitors See New Stores,” *The New York Times*, October 9, 1956; “Retail Trade: Pleasure-Domes with Parking,” *Time*, October 15, 1956, 96–98; “The Splashiest Shopping Center in the U.S.,” *Life*, December 10, 1956, 61–65; Joe F. Kane, “Minneapolis Crucified By Architect,” *Rapid City Journal*, November 19, 1956; “Wright ‘Condemns’ Mill City Structures,” *St. Paul Pioneer-Press*, November 28, 1956; “Brisk Business for a Bright Shopping Center,” *Fortune*, February 1957, 141–44; Gruen, “The Future of Planned Shopping Centers,” Tobe Lectures, Retail Distribution, Harvard University, April 17, 1957, box 4, folder “Speeches—Oct 1956–May, 1957,” Gruen AHC; Victor Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, 36.

The architectural and retail professions were generally very kind to Gruen's Southdale design. *Architectural Forum* marveled at the success of the artificial environment, which "uncannily" conveyed the feeling of a metropolitan downtown within the confines of a single building. Yet Southdale was not downtown, precisely; it was an "imaginative distillation" of the magnetic elements of downtown: the variety, the lights and color, and the business and the bustle. The *Forum* opined that Southdale had actually *improved* on downtown by eliminating the dirtiness and chaos, and by adding sidewalk cafes, art, plants, attractive pavements, a charming central court, and the many quaint lanes leading to it. While other shopping centers had fallen short in their efforts to mimic downtown, Southdale made the *real* Minneapolis downtown appear "pokey and provincial" relative to its manufactured metropolitan atmosphere. It was, somehow, more than the sum of its parts.³⁷

The opening of Southdale in the fall of 1956 coincided with a national eruption of new regional shopping centers that was presumed to have resulted from "pent-up" demand after the downturn in building during the Korean War. There were about 2,500 shopping centers operating in the US by 1958, grossing roughly \$35 billion annually, and they would continue to open at a rapid pace before plateauing in the mid-1960s. They were occupied mostly by chain stores, which landlords presumed to be less risky. Smaller retailers in downtowns began to feel the harsh effects of lost business. Downtown became the new frontier for urban planning visionaries like Gruen.³⁸

In the fall of 1954, Gruen published an article in the *Harvard Business Review* in which he blamed the "tyranny of the automobile" for "hardening the arteries" of American cities.³⁹ Gruen presented his recently-opened Northland shopping center, where automobile and pedestrian traffic were strictly segregated, as an ideal alternative to the car-clogged downtown. He posited that the lessons of planning suburban shopping centers could be applied to city centers—downtowns, in American parlance—which could be organized into various "land-usage" elements with their own parking and green areas. The entire downtown would be surrounded by traffic arteries, but the city center itself would be an exclusively pedestrian zone, just like Gruen's shopping centers. Gruen, who had become increasingly outspoken on American social problems, made a moral case for this kind of urban renewal, calling it a "*democratic re-*

37 "Southdale Shopping Center," *Architectural Forum*, April 1957.

38 "Too Many Shopping Centers?" *Business Week*, November 17, 1956; Art Zuckerman, "America's Shopping-Center Revolution," *Dun's Review and Modern Industry*, May 1958, 36; Michael Creedman, "New Shopping Centers Open at Slower Rate as Competition Grows," *Wall Street Journal*, April 23, 1963.

39 Gruen, "Dynamic Planning," 53–62.

sponsibility.” “The time has come,” Gruen wrote, “for action on a broad scale: slum clearance, creation of green areas within our city cores, provision of parking areas, improvement of traffic arteries, and enrichment of our social, cultural, and civic life.”

J. B. Thomas, the president of the Texas Electric Service Company in Fort Worth, was deeply impressed by Gruen’s article. Thomas had been pondering the problems of downtown Fort Worth, and upon reading the article he promptly invited Gruen to “prove his words with deeds” and develop a revitalization plan for Fort Worth.⁴⁰ Gruen began to publicize the idea of downtown revitalization on the model of his shopping centers, both in general terms and with reference to a specific project called “City X,” as the Fort Worth plan was known before its identity was revealed in the spring of 1956.

Gruen said that the lessons learned in developing his regional shopping centers could be the “salvation” of downtown if properly applied. The trees and benches of Gruen’s suburban shopping centers were just as applicable downtown, which Gruen wanted to redesign as an integrated architectural space. He had already begun work on a redevelopment project near downtown Detroit called Gratiot, which strove for an ideal integration of races, classes, and commercial and residential buildings. Gruen believed deeply in the concept of urban planning, but he struggled to convince “men in the business world” that planning was essential to progress and not antithetical to the “free expression of individual initiative,” as some seemed to believe, or at least insofar as they deferred to the prevailing dogma. Gruen also called for a public relations campaign to educate the public about the problems of downtown and the potential of revitalization. In a sense, Gruen wanted to pay back a debt he felt he owed to the downtown districts, which had been suffering as his suburban shopping centers had flourished, and partly as a result of their flourishing.

In his plan for “City X,” the entire downtown district would be integrated as a pedestrian island, surrounded by a multi-lane belt highway that would feed six multi-level parking garages—complete with helicopter landing pads—on the periphery. The basic design evoked Vienna’s Ringstrasse, which encircles the pedestrian-friendly Innere Stadt, the central district. Much like a shopping center, Gruen’s “City X” would be completely free of automobiles and any uses that were “uneconomical or inconsistent” with its purpose as a business district. Besides the occasional fire truck or ambulance, the only vehicles that would be

40 “Master Plan for Revitalizing Ft. Worth’s Central Core,” 70–74; “Typical Downtown Transformed,” *Architectural Forum*, May 1956; “Biography of the Founder” box 10, folder “Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980,” Gruen AHC; William Percival, “We Can Build a Better City,” *World-Telegram and Sun Saturday Magazine*, March 18, 1956, 10.

permitted would be “small, quiet, rather slow-moving electrically powered shuttle cars” similar to those used at world’s fairs of the time. As was the case at his shopping centers, all service and delivery traffic would be directed to underground tunnels. Gruen sought to revive civic pride and integrate commercial and non-commercial activities, and he would make the pedestrian “king.” With the additional space gained from eliminating “cluttered” surface streets, he planned pedestrian malls, courts, plazas, parks, flowerbeds, sculptures, fountains, and reflecting pools. It was, in short, the ideal of the suburban shopping center applied to downtown.⁴¹

After months of publicity, Fort Worth was finally revealed as “City X” in March of 1956. VGA, which had grown to a staff of about two hundred, had been working on the project for more than a year. To address the problem of downtown, Gruen applied the lessons learned from designing shopping centers in cities including Oakland, Indianapolis, and San Jose. Gruen and his partner Edgardo Contini, an engineer, presented their plan for a “Greater Fort Worth Tomorrow” in a three-hour presentation before about one hundred fifty civic and business leaders, who sat “spellbound” before congratulating the presenters with an enthusiastic ovation. “Hard-headed men and women stood up and cheered when the presentation was over,” reported *Business Week*. Gruen was exceedingly confident that the plan would work, because the success of his shopping centers—an “experimental workshop” for the salvation of downtown—had proved it. The “breath-taking,” “revolutionary” plan to turn Fort Worth into the “dream city of America” was met with great interest by the local press and members of the business community who were impressed by the “Texas-like immensity” of the project. Gruen’s patron J. B. Thomas announced that a group of thirty Fort Worth leaders, who were motivated partly by a keen competition with nearby Dallas, had banded together to figure out how to finance the plan—estimated to cost \$100 million—without the help of the federal government, in true Texas-style.⁴²

41 “Downtown Needs a Lesson from the Suburbs,” *Business Week*, October 22, 1955, 64–66; Samuel Feinberg, “Master Plan for ‘City X,’” *Women’s Wear Daily*, November 18, 1955; Victor Gruen, speech, San Francisco Planning and Housing Commission, Commercial Club, January 31, 1956, box 1, Speeches, (Volume III, 1956), Gruen AHC; “A Greater Fort Worth Tomorrow” [redevelopment plan], VGA, 1956, box OV80, Gruen LOC; “Master Planning Study for the Central District of the City of Fort Worth, Texas,” outline VGA, ca. 1956, box 1, Speeches, Volume II, 1955, 1956, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “The City in the Automobile Age,” 45–54; “Basic Plan To Vitalize Fort Worth District,” *The American City*, June 1956.

42 “Planners Kept City X Identity Under Wraps,” *Fort Worth Press*, March 11, 1956; “Pattern for Vigorous City Growth,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 11, 1956; Jim Vachule, “Plan for ‘City of Tomorrow’ Outlined to Civic Leaders,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 11, 1956; “City Leaders Throw Solid Support Behind Futuristic Municipal Plan,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 11, 1956; “Gruen Hopes Plan Will Shock People,” *Fort Worth Press*, March 11, 1956; “City Free to Follow Gruen Plan,” *Fort Worth Press*, March 11, 1956;

The “Gruen Plan,” as it came to be known, was warmly embraced by many in the Fort Worth community, and the architecture and urban planning professions hailed it as visionary. One local mother looked forward to the “leisurely walking” that the plan would allow, in contrast to the noise and confusion that she tolerated on trips downtown. In the months after the plan was announced, the citizens’ planning committee became an official city body, which drafted legislation to authorize a parking authority. Gruen and J. B. Thomas proved to be deft managers of public relations, explaining the plan in a series of meetings and reaching tens of thousands of citizens through specially-arranged “slide-tape” presentations. The local newspapers provided daily coverage, and civic pride swelled as the “imagination-stirring” Gruen Plan drew the attention of the national and international media, including *Time* and *Life*. Even Jane Jacobs, one of the foremost critics of so-called “urban renewal” projects, praised the “excellent” Gruen plan, which would make the streets “more surprising, more compact, more variegated, and busier than before.”⁴³

Yet the Gruen Plan for Fort Worth met resistance from entrenched business interests, and it would never come to fruition. The leader of the opposition movement was George Thompson, the president of a large Fort Worth bank and the part-owner of two downtown parking garages. Thompson and his allies argued that the proposed *public* parking garages—a main source of revenue for the project—would decimate the business of the private garages. Another opposition group was composed of small-property owners with no interests in downtown property who feared rising taxes to pay for the project. A bill in the Texas legislature that would have given cities the power to condemn and clear “blighted” areas and then resell them for redevelopment—a common practice in cities pushing for federal urban renewal funds—was defeated by legislators who feared that it would infringe on the rights of property owners. The citizens of Fort Worth, finally, voted down a series of civic improvements and bonds in the fall of 1958, which seemed to doom the project. Gruen later reasoned that the project was ahead of its time, but he remained bitter about the “violent” opposition it faced from powerful “economic forces” and “people who believe that the automobile is the only means of transportation.”⁴⁴

Dick Johnson, “J.B. Thomas: West Texas Seer,” *Dallas Morning News*, March 18, 1956; “Master Plan for Revitalizing Ft. Worth’s Central Core,” 70–74; “Footpaths in Fort Worth,” *Time*, March 19, 1956, 26.

43 Harley Pershing, “Women Predict Downtown Business to Gain by Gruen Plan Development,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 9, 1956; “Typical Downtown Transformed”; “Gruen Plan Wins Fort Worth Title ‘City of Tomorrow’ in U.S., Abroad,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 29, 1956; Jacobs, “Downtown Is for People,” 137–39.

44 Jeanne R. Lowe, “What’s happened in Fort Worth?” *Architectural Forum*, May 1959, 137; Bernard Judy, “Fort Worth’s \$100 Million Rebuilding Project Stalled,” *Toledo Blade*, July 15, 1959; Hardwick, *Mall Maker*,

Although the plan was never executed, it would become highly influential among urban planners who used it as a model for urban renewal projects. One well-known city planner, Edmund Bacon of Philadelphia, later referred to it as “the only unborn child I know which has dozens of grandchildren.” The project made Gruen famous not only as an architect of shopping centers but as a visionary urban planner. The Fort Worth Plan was also an early iteration of Gruen’s “cluster” or “cellular” model of urban planning that was analogous to biological and astronomical systems, but it also recalled Otto Wagner’s “modular” plan for cities. The “cells” were composed of residential, commercial, and social activities, which had “nuclei” of greater density and “protoplasm” of lesser density. Each cell was a functional community, but it would be grouped together with other cells to form “clusters” that were, in turn, part of greater “constellations” that would be separated by “agricultural greenbelts.” Each cellular formation would contain working places, shopping centers, and civic and recreational facilities, but specialized activities of the “higher order” that require greater populations would occur at the center of larger clusters, forming a metropolitan core. Gruen imagined “planetary” systems in which these metropolitan centers were the stars around which satellite “clusterizations” orbited, which had their own smaller moons. Each formation would be connected by public transit and auto freeways, but within them walking would be the predominant mode of transport.⁴⁵

Gruen contrasted this modern vision to the outdated “pattern of the string” that prevailed in most cities. In this old model, the streets were like strings that together formed a spiderweb-like structure (or a grid in American cities): they were both the guidelines along which buildings were constructed *and* the means of transportation between them. These functions were in “violent conflict” with one another, Gruen argued, because the rushing stream of vehicles interfered with the safety, health, and “quietude” of the people in the adjoining structures. The inhabitants of those structures, moreover, interfered with the “congested torrents of mechanized traffic” in their movement between the banks, crossing the street and moving their vehicles in and out of the struc-

188–89; Gruen, letter to the editor of *U.S. News & World Report*, January 16, 1968, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XV, 1966–1967), Gruen AHC; Victor Gruen, “Shopping Centres, Why, Where, How?” speech, Third Annual European Conference of the International Council of Shopping Centres, London, February 28, 1978, box 5, folder “Speeches, 1970–1978,” Gruen AHC.

45 Gruen, “Who is to Save Our Cities?” 107–15; Edward T. Chase, “Future of the City,” *The Commonweal*, October 11, 1957, 39–42; Gruen, “The City as Designed Structure,” speech, Urban Design Series, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, December 6, 1961, box 5, folder “Speeches, 10-3-47,” Gruen AHC; Victor Gruen, “New Forms of Community,” speech, Princeton University Conference on Design in America, May 1964, box 2 (Speeches), Vol. XIII), Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 188, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC.

tures. The “pattern of the string” was a largely organic development, but the cellular plan—although it mimicked nature—would be created through conscious and conscientious human planning. Gruen called his planned shopping center, as a product of the automotive age, “the only new architectural and planning concept created in our time and of our time.” It provided a formula for the cellular approach to regional planning, and it was the best example of the theory translated into practice.⁴⁶

While there was a utopian, futurist element to Gruen’s plans,⁴⁷ he freely acknowledged, and many commentators noticed, the European heritage of many of his ideas, and of Gruen himself. One reviewer observed that Gruen’s firm was a kind of “junior-grade United Nations team” that included an Italian, a Swiss, and a Corsican. The Viennese Gruen was a “plump, restless man with a decided accent” who tended to wave his hands in wild gestures as he talked. Relative to one of his elegantly dressed, “California-bred” colleagues, Gruen was described as “dumpy and disheveled.”⁴⁸ Gruen was inspired not only by his native Vienna, but also by the other great cities of Europe. Beginning with his first return trip to the Continent in 1948, Gruen would spend two months annually in Europe to “recharge” himself, staying at least for a few days in Vienna. “I needed these visits to my hometown, and they touched me deeply,” he recalled. He also visited dozens of cities in search of inspiration. In 1956, he toured Rome, Milan, London, and Paris to gather “impressions” as the basis for further work on city planning and architecture.

On his tour, Gruen reported hearing laments about the “Americanization” of European architecture, but he reminded his interlocutors that much of the “American” style of architecture had originally come from Europe. It was imported by Gruen and other immigrants such as the Bauhaus architects Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Gruen admired the creations of his “close friend” Gropius, because “his deep humanism broke all formalistic chains.” (On the other hand, he found Mies to be a “humorless, hardheaded

46 “Victor Gruen Discusses the theory of City Planning and Applies the Theory to Valencia,” *Highrise* 1, no. 2 (May 1966): 18–22, box 39, folder “Manuscripts, 1963–1966,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “The Future of Planned Shopping Centers,” Tobe Lectures, Retail Distribution, Harvard University, April 17, 1957, box 4, folder “Speeches—Oct 1956–May, 1957,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Shopping Centers, Suburban and Urban,” 1960 *Appraisal and Valuation Manual of the American Society of Appraisers* (Washington, D.C., 1960): 287–94, box 31, folder, “Articles, 1960,” Gruen AHC.

47 In 1955, for example, Gruen was hired by NBC as a consultant on a special program imagining future developments in the fanciful year “1976.” Victor Gruen, “Urban Renewal,” Lambda Alpha University Club, July 21, 1955, box 4, folder “Speeches—1953–Sept. 1956,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “1976: Rough Outline of Ideas,” August 5, 1955, box 1, Speeches, Volume II, 1955, 1956, Gruen AHC.

48 While Gruen had respected Oscar Webber, the man could be highly critical, and he often ridiculed Gruen for his shabby clothing. Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 140, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC.

man.”) But Gruen believed in a transnational *exchange* of ideas, and he thought that what was called “American” often involved mechanization and industrialization, while what was “European” merely referred to something “humane and spiritual.” At the same time, he acknowledged a quality to European life that was lacking in the US. “Life for the European has three dimensions in contrast to the two dimensions which ours has,” said Gruen. “We have work and home. They have work, home and their city. Their environment plays as big a part in their lives as their home and work does.” Gruen believed that the fact of millions of American tourists visiting Europe each year proved that there was a strong interest in “public social life” in the US as well as in Europe.⁴⁹

The Fort Worth Plan and the malls of Gruen’s shopping centers exemplified his commitment to creating spaces exclusively for the pedestrian: automobile traffic was strictly excluded and unsightly utilities were hidden away. “We will either have to keep the cars out from where we want to walk, or we’ll have to keep the pedestrians out from where the cars want to drive,” said Gruen. As a native of compact Vienna—and as a transplanted resident of sprawling, car-centric Los Angeles—he was acutely aware of the conflict. He wanted to “unscramble the melee of flesh and machines” in order to give the “mechanical monsters” their very own “*lebensraum*”⁵⁰ so that a natural habitat for humans and “their buildings” could be reestablished. The human race and the automobile “race” each deserved its own reservation. Gruen wanted to create an environment where people could promenade in surroundings that provided ever-changing scenes, rest areas, and a peacefulness that made feasible the “contemplation of the interplay of architecture, arts, and landscape.” Just as freeways were the “natural habitat” for the “mechanical being,” the human being deserved its own habitat, free from the noise, odor, and danger of the machines. Gruen argued that the popularity of pedestrian spaces like New York’s Rockefeller Center and his own shopping centers proved that Americans were “hungry” for the experience. He also noted that Americans would travel thousands of miles to places like the Piazza San Marco in Venice (a city Gruen adored) simply for the chance to stroll around somewhere. There, architectural

49 Harley Pershing, “Daring Plan for City Has Roots in Old World,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 11, 1956, 10; “Remarks by Mr. & Mrs. Gruen,” National Home Fashions League, Los Angeles, July 11, 1956, box 1, Speeches, Volume III, 1956, Gruen AHC; Jim Doyle, “Urban Life In America: Nice Houses...Shabby Cities; Fine Bathtubs...Poor Parks,” *Toledo Blade*, February 21, 1960; Gruen, “Light and Shadow of the European Metropolis,” notes on “Vienna speech,” June 11, 1963, box 2 (Speeches), Volume XII, 1963, Gruen AHC; Guzzardi, “Architect of Environments,” 164, 201–2.

50 Gruen likely employed the German term (literally, “living space”), which the Nazis used to refer to their desire for Continental expansion, as an ironic way of expressing his antipathy to the total domination of the automobile.

beauty counted for more than anywhere else because it could be contemplated on foot, undisturbed by “motor noises.”⁵¹

Gruen’s eloquence in describing the Fort Worth Plan and his vision for creating pedestrian spaces caught the imagination of city planners around the country, but their ability to implement his grand plans was strictly limited. In the midst of the national publicity over the Fort Worth Plan in the spring of 1957, a group of property owners and businessmen in Kalamazoo, Michigan, who incorporated as the Downtown Kalamazoo Planning Committee, hired Gruen to plan the redevelopment of their downtown. Gruen’s firm produced a grand plan, *Kalamazoo: 1980*, that had many elements of the Fort Worth Plan, but only one part of that plan was implemented: a downtown pedestrian mall called “Burdick Mall.” The mall was the first permanent installation of its kind in the nation, and it was an instant success, inspiring dozens of imitators across the country, which the press dubbed “Gruenization.” Yet Gruen was displeased that the city had failed to implement the *complete* plan. In fact, the pedestrian mall was the *last* element in the sequence of his plan, but the city elected to do it *first*. Gruen believed that the pedestrian mall could not function as he envisioned it when divorced from the other elements of the total redevelopment plan. Such “partial” developments that lacked associated belt highways and parking structures were “dangerous” undertakings that could do more harm than good, in Gruen’s view. They had the disadvantage of giving foot traffic exclusively to some merchants while saddling adjacent business proprietors with more car traffic. Gruen dismissed the pedestrian mall by itself as a mere “promotional measure” that misunderstood the whole problem, and he later disclaimed “paternity” for the idea. “This is like giving a raisin to someone who asks for a raisin cake,” said Gruen, adding that the “present rash of downtown malls” showed the desire of some downtown merchants to “do quickly and cheaply something spectacular and to rely on patent medicines rather than a thorough treatment.”⁵²

51 “Future on File,” radio broadcast, WEVD, New York, February 26, 1953, transcript by *Radio Reports, Inc.*, New York, box 1, binder “Collected Writings, Speeches, Vol. 1,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “How to Handle This Chaos of Congestion, This Anarchy of Scatteration,” *Architectural Forum*, September 1956, 130–35; Gruen, “The Roots, The Growth and the Consequences,” talk, Municipal Art Gallery, Barnsdall Park, Los Angeles, September 23, [probably 1956], box 1, Speeches, Volume III, 1956, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Main Street 1969,” speech, Hotel Marion, Little Rock, Arkansas, June 9–12, 1957, box 4, folder “Speeches—June 1957–May 1958,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Land Use and Misuse,” speech, Women’s City Club of New York, November 25, 1958, box 2 (Speeches), Volume VII, 1958–1959, Gruen AHC; Faye Baker, “Victor Gruen: ‘maybe it is all improvisation,’” *Los Angeles Magazine*, November 1962, 30; Bernard Taper, “The City that Puts People First,” *McCall’s*, April 1966; Gruen, *Heart of Our Cities*, 10; Rudi Baumfeld to Gruen, January 7, 1969, box 11, folder 13, Gruen LOC; Gruen to Rudi Baumfeld, January 20, 1969, box 11, folder 13, Gruen LOC.

52 Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 138; Hayden Bradford, “Keep Plan Moving: Gruen,” *Kalamazoo Gazette*, February 14, 1960; “Will downtown malls work?” *Chain Store Age*, October 1959, E 19; Gruen, “The Design of Urban

Yet the idea acquired a life of its own, and Gruen's protests were largely ineffectual. He reluctantly admitted that the pedestrian mall in Kalamazoo was regarded as a success, but he continued to stress that a truly thriving pedestrian environment in the city could only be created through the application of "over-all planning." He even avoided using the term "pedestrian mall," which had become fashionable by the early 1960s, because he felt that it suggested a superficial response to the problems of downtown. Nevertheless, Gruen worked on other downtown pedestrian malls in places like Urbana, Illinois and Fresno, California, where coalitions of business interests and government authorities hired his firm to do the job. Gruen was almost embarrassed by the lack of ambition in these projects, but contemporary accounts generally praised them as being among his most influential works. They also signaled his emergence as an urban planner who could inject new life into American cities at a time when they were experiencing a state of crisis.⁵³

Gruen's experience working on downtown redevelopment elevated him as a public figure, but it also exposed him to the political and ideological frustrations of working in the American system. Gruen was particularly bothered by the antipathy to *planning* that he so frequently encountered; the very concept seemed to have acquired a Cold War-era association with Soviet-style social engineering schemes in contradistinction to the alleged free market society of the US. Described in one account as "one of the most articulate men in his profession," Gruen became increasingly outspoken about this problem. *Planning* was practically a dirty word in the US, almost as bad "as if Lenin had invented it," he said. As an old Viennese Social Democrat, Gruen lamented that his adopted country suffered from the notion that planning was "a terrible thing, like socialism or worse, and that we have to leave everything to rugged individualism." But Gruen argued that the success of shopping centers like Northland was, in fact, proof that planning meant good business, and that some mer-

Centers," talk, Urban Design Conference, Harvard University, April 12, 1957, box 1, Speeches, Volume V, 1957, Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Save Urbia for New Urbanites," speech, National Conference on Government of the National Municipal League, Springfield, Massachusetts, November 18, 1959, box 2 (Speeches), Volume VIII, 1959-1960, Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Biographische Notizen," April 2, 1975, p. 189, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC; Jim Doyle, "Planner Favors Ban on Automobiles in Downtown Sections of U. S. Cities," *Denver Post*, February 21, 1960; "Retailing and the Automobile: Downtown Revitalization," *Architectural Record*, March 1960, 207-8; Herbert, "Rebirth of Nation's Cities"; Gruen, *The Heart of Our Cities*, 222.

53 Gruen, "The Planner's Viewpoint," presentation, National Institute of Real Estate Brokers, Chicago, May 6-7, 1960, box 27, folder "Shopping Malls—Midtown Plaza (Rochester, NY), 1962-1963," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Downtown U.S.A.," speech, Inland Empire Downtown Redevelopment Conference, January 14, 1964, box 2 (Speeches), Vol. XIII, Gruen AHC; "The Shopping Center Moves Back to Midtown," *Fortune*, January 1965; Wolf Von Eckardt, "Fresno's Mall Is Fine Place for a Ball," *Washington Post*, May 16, 1965; Bernard Taper, "The City that Puts People First," *McCall's*, April 1966.

chants seemed to know this better than politicians. He scoffed at the absurd outcomes from the obstinate idea that any kind of planning presented a threat to liberty: “How much liberty does a man have sitting in a 90-mile-an-hour car in a frozen traffic jam?”⁵⁴

Gruen struggled against the idea that planning was something that only an authoritarian Communist or a Stalinist would favor. While it was, indeed, *easier* for a totalitarian government to plan large projects like the Moscow Metro, Gruen insisted that truly good planning was only possible in a democratic society.⁵⁵ What Gruen called *democratic* planning sought to enrich human life by producing a “physical and sociological framework” that did not force individuals to conform, but rather created the “shapes and patterns” in which harmonious coexistence and individual expression were possible. He sought to calm the nerves of those who saw the “threat of socialism” in urban redevelopment and renewal projects by reminding them that they were constituted by a partnership of private businesses, community leaders, and federal government officials. Moreover, he noted that private enterprise and private consultants designed, constructed, and profited from those projects. The goal of planning was not to autocratically determine people’s actions, but to establish the basis for the “greatest achievable individualistic expressions” that could coexist harmoniously. By the mid-1960s, as the role of government in building a public infrastructure and preserving the social welfare became more firmly established, Gruen witnessed a wider public acceptance of the idea of planning, to the point where it had even become a fashionable activity.⁵⁶

Gruen’s idealistic belief in the possibilities of planning led to his firm’s involvement in two prominent public housing projects in Detroit and Boston. In Detroit, Gruen teamed with modernist architects Minoru Yamasaki and Oskar

54 “New City,” *The New Yorker*, March 17, 1956, 33–34; “How to judge a town by its planning: An interview on plant site selection with Victor Gruen, architect and urban planner,” *Management Methods*, 1960; Jim Doyle, “Urban Life In America: Nice Houses...Shabby Cities; Fine Bathtubs...Poor Parks,” *Toledo Blade*, February 21, 1960; Frank Mulcahy, “Scarcity of Land for Urban Use Stresses Need of Proper Planning,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 7, 1960.

55 On a trip to Russia in 1964, however, Gruen expressed some disappointment that a “planned society” seemed intent on looking like a capitalist society: he hoped that it would lack the garish advertisements that marred the landscape in the US, but discovered that there were plenty of ugly neon signs around, but instead of advertising merchandise they advertised political slogans, events, and great enterprises. Gruen to Pegg, October 13, 1964, box 4, folder “Speeches—Jan 1964–Nov 1965,” Gruen AHC.

56 Gruen, “Urban Planning for the Sixties,” United States Conference of Mayors, Chicago, May 11–14, 1960, box 34, folder “Manuscripts, 1962–1978,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “The Architect’s Role in Urban Renewal,” speech, Michigan Society of Architects, Detroit, April 7, 1961, box 2 (Speeches), Volume X, 1961, Gruen AHC; “The Economic and Social Significance of Urban Renewal,” *Architectural Metals*, August 1962, 10–26; Gruen, “The Meaning and Value of Master Planning,” remarks, Goodyear meeting, Phoenix, January 13, 1964, box 2 (Speeches), Vol. XIII, Gruen AHC.

Stonorov on the Gratiot-Orleans redevelopment project, a “slum clearance” initiative in a neighborhood near downtown Detroit. The idea, worked out with United Automobile Workers leader Walter Reuther (whom Gruen greatly admired), was to import suburban-style living into the city in 4,000 units of housing that would be inhabited by “people of all income classes, with people of all races, with people of varying tastes establishing a true democratic neighborhood.” The initial plan for integrated housing, which was negotiated with leaders of the local black community, went so far as to specify a racial percentage for the occupants of the housing project: sixty-percent white and thirty- to forty-percent black. Gruen insisted that, in order to keep with “our democratic ideals,” large housing projects must integrate a mix of races and classes. But VGA was eventually dropped from the project, and the famed modernist and German émigré Mies van der Rohe eventually took the reins of the development that would become Lafayette Park.⁵⁷

Gruen’s idealistic vision for integrated housing would be more completely realized in the Charles River Park development in Boston, but it would also make Gruen a target for critics of urban renewal. VGA designed several apartment buildings of varying sizes and building styles that surrounded a plaza that Gruen hoped would become “the social meeting ground of the 478 families” living there. The plaza was designed as a restful space, much like the central courts of Gruen’s shopping centers, complete with benches, trees and flowers, fountains and ponds, and sculptures and murals. The housing development would be on a super-block that excluded all motorized traffic, creating a zone exclusively for pedestrians and bicyclists, not unlike Gruen’s shopping center designs and the perimeter-block style of construction used for the *Gemeindebauten* in Vienna. Schools, churches, and shopping facilities were to be placed in the development so that the fuss and dangers of automobile traffic could be avoided without interrupting the rhythm of daily life. Yet projects like Charles River Park increasingly became the targets of urban renewal critics like Herbert Gans and Jane Jacobs, who had previously praised Gruen’s Fort Worth Plan. Jacobs’ 1961 book *The Death and Life of America’s Great Cities* was deeply critical of urban renewal efforts. Gans’s 1962 study *The Urban Villagers* would make the Charles River Park project infamous for displacing a working-class Italian-American community on Boston’s West End, disrupting the community’s way

57 Gruen, speech, San Francisco Planning and Housing Commission, San Francisco, January 31, 1956, box 1, Speeches, Volume III, 1956, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “City in the Automobile Age,” 45–54; “Biographical Material—Gruen Victor, Annotated Chronology, Mar. 1975, n.d., 1951–68 (3 of 6),” box 20, folder 19, Gruen LOC; Gruen, “Better Homes Need Better Towns,” talk, National Home Fashions League, New York City, May 9, 1961, box 2 (Speeches), Volume X, 1961, Gruen AHC.

of life, and even destroying the livelihoods of its members. The visionary planner Gruen had suddenly become an autocratic modernist and ruthless developer, insensitive to the subtle variety of American cities.⁵⁸

Even as Gruen ventured into urban planning, he remained most famous as a planner of shopping centers. In 1956, *The New Yorker* referred to Gruen, with his “heavy brows” and “unruly” Viennese accent,” as one of the best-known architects in the country. The giant Northland shopping center was his “most conspicuous” work.⁵⁹ The shopping center had become the nation’s “newest Institution,” according to one contemporary account, and Gruen was the most thoughtful and articulate advocate of the movement for “urban crystallization” points in the suburbs. He gave dozens of speeches, lectures, and addresses before universities, architecture students, planning groups, and laypeople. He wanted to bridge the “deep gulf” between the “thinkers” and critics who wrote about environmental problems, and those who actually worked on such problems as architects, planners, and engineers. He was not shy about touting the revolutionary success of his designs, and he often placed his own invention in a lineage that went back to the “highest flourishing of urban civilization in many European cities.” He cultivated a narrative about his own precience, referring to the “heroic pioneering days” when the Northland scheme appeared too radical to get financing, and Southdale was viewed by many as a “way out” idea.⁶⁰

Gruen’s shopping center designs were distinguished by their attention to details like the incorporation of art into the communal, pedestrian spaces of the malls and courts. The sculptures, fountains, mosaics, and bas reliefs became an “integrated part” of the shopping center, bringing together the spaces between buildings. Gruen, who wanted to “lift the iron curtain between the fine arts and the commercial arts,” often juxtaposed “whimsical,” decorative sculptures with more challenging abstract, modern art. Gruen believed that the architect played an essential role in opening up the fine arts to the public and incorporating them in people’s everyday lives. He loathed the strict segregation of the esoteric art world and the vulgar commercial sphere, and he be-

58 Gruen, “Charles River Park: A Milestone in Urban Redevelopment,” address at groundbreaking ceremony for Charles River Park, Boston, March 8, 1960, box 2 (Speeches), Volume VIII, 1959–1960, Gruen AHC; Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 207; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 163–64, 171.

59 “New City,” *The New Yorker*, March 17, 1956, 33–34.

60 “For diners’ delight,” *Institutions Magazine* 42, no. 2 (1958); Gruen, “Shopping Centers, Suburban and Urban,” 1960 *Appraisal and Valuation Manual of the American Society of Appraisers* (Washington, D.C., 1960): 287–94, box 31, folder, “Articles, 1960,” Gruen AHC; Gruen to Herman Guttman, January 19, 1967, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XV, 1966–1967, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Notes for a Talk to the Associates of V&A,” February 13, 1962, box 2 (Speeches), Volume XI, 1962), Gruen AHC.

lieved that his shopping centers were the perfect places to bring these two worlds together.⁶¹

Gruen cemented his status as the guru of the shopping center with the 1960 publication of *Shopping Towns USA: The Planning of Shopping Centers*, which became a veritable bible among shopping mall planners.⁶² Gruen wrote the book with Larry Smith, the economic analyst who had worked with Gruen on many projects, including Northland. The book examined virtually every technical aspect of mall planning from the perspective of an architect and an economist, but it also advocated the idealist vision of the shopping center that Gruen had been refining for more than a decade. The term “shopping towns” was justified, the authors felt, because shopping centers had taken on the characteristics of “urban organisms” that served myriad human needs and activities. Gruen and Smith presented planned shopping centers as the solution to the “amorphous conglomeration” of suburbia in which merchants struggled to organize their activities. They assuaged the fears of businessmen worried about the authoritarian effects of planning, assuring them that it would create a vibrant, stimulating environment that would encourage the “pursuit of happiness.”

Gruen, who remained based in Los Angeles, continued to design large shopping centers, such as “Valley Fair” and “Bay Fair” in the Bay Area of California. Hired by developer James Rouse, Gruen’s firm designed the Cherry Hill shopping center in New Jersey, near Philadelphia. When it opened in 1961, it was the first large enclosed mall on the East Coast. It was another of Gruen’s “introverted” centers, like Southdale, and its court and malls featured an “exotic atmosphere” of palm trees and tropical gardens and an aviary with toucans, mynas, and parrots. Its central court featured a skylight, a Japanese garden, a bridge with running water, and a “fanciful” wooden gazebo. The Gruen-designed Randhurst shopping center in the suburbs of northwest Chicago opened in 1962. With 1.2 million square feet of rental space in 90 stores, it was the largest enclosed and air-conditioned shopping center in the country. It was everything that Gruen had designed in his previous centers, but more: three department stores (Carson, Pirie, Scott &

61 Gruen, “Sculptor Meets Architect: An Attempt to Reintroduce Two Estranged Professions,” *Architectural Products*, March 1958; Robert Broner, “Eastland Shopping Center, Detroit,” *Art in America*, Spring 1958, 44; Gruen, “Arts, Architecture and the Man-Made Environment,” speech, Architectural League of New York, September 4, 1958, box 1, Speeches, Volume VI, 1958, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “We have Driven Art Underground,” Architects’ Report, Chesapeake Bay Region, Winter 1961, 7, 26, box 39, folder “Manuscripts, 1961–1976,” Gruen AHC.

62 Gruen and Smith, *Shopping Towns USA*; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 111. Even in 1968, the book was still regarded as a “handbook,” and had been translated into Japanese. Gruen, “The Shape of Things to Come,” speech, Chain Store Age 14th Annual Seminar, Philadelphia, February 26, 1968, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XVI, 1968, Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*, x.

Co., Montgomery Ward, and Wieboldt's), three shopping levels under a 160-foot-diameter central dome called the "galleria," and six arcades leading from that central court. Economic analyst Larry Smith's study of the "trade area" for the center showed that the large, affluent community would be more than sufficient to generate \$60 million in sales during the first year of operation.⁶³

Gruen took pleasure in the demise of the "miracle mile" shopping strips and the rise of "scientifically planned" shopping centers that occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Many of them followed Gruen's basic formula: a cluster of store buildings arranged around pedestrian areas consisting of courts, plazas, malls, and lanes protected from the weather by colonnades; a park-like layout of benches, flower beds, trees, fountains, and sculptures, and a carnival-like atmosphere, often buoyed by cheery music; plentiful, free parking and a circulatory road network connected to major streets and highways; the separation of service traffic from customer car traffic by means of underground delivery areas; and a dedicated lane for bus and taxi traffic. By 1962, there were about 5,000 shopping centers in the US, collectively doing roughly \$55 billion in business, about a quarter of all dollars spent in the retail trade, and new centers were being built at the astonishing rate of about a thousand every year.⁶⁴

While the suburban shopping center started out as a competitor to the city center, it ultimately proved to have many superior environmental qualities: it was more easily accessible, for example, and the exclusion of automobiles permitted a peaceful, pleasant atmosphere that became a community gathering space. In their spirited gaiety, shopping centers would take on many of the more romantic qualities that had been associated with downtown areas. It was only a matter of time, Gruen posited, before downtowns would begin to borrow from the lessons of the shopping center. The Fort Worth Plan offered a vision, and the proliferating downtown pedestrian malls were a concrete improvement, but a shopping center-like development in Rochester, New York called Midtown Plaza signaled the closing of a "complex circle," according to Gruen.⁶⁵

63 "Two Gruen Shopping Centers," *Progressive Architecture*, October 1958, 136–45; Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 212; "New Shopping Concept at Cherry Hill," *Rohm & Hass Reporter* 19, no. 6 (November–December, 1961), 15–17; "Growth-planning: a basic problem," *Shopping Center Age*, January 1962, 52–55; "The Anatomy of a New Project: Randhurst Shopping Center," *Architectural & Engineering News*, May 1962; "Randhurst Center: Big Pinwheel on the Prairie," *Architectural Forum*, November 1962, 106–11; "Design for a Better Outdoors Indoors," *Architectural Record*, June 1962.

64 Gruen, "Suburban Regional Shopping Center," 38–53; Dan Wharton, "Those amazing shopping centers," *Plymouth Traveler*, May 1962, 14; Katherine Hamill, "The Squeeze on Shopping Centers," *Fortune*, September 1963, 116.

65 Gruen, "Shopping Centers: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," speech, International Council of Shopping Centers Convention, New York Hilton Hotel, May 5, 1965, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XIV, 1965, Gruen AHC.

Midtown Plaza was explicitly conceived as downtown's response to the threat of retail competition from suburban shopping centers. The project was spearheaded by two department-store owners, Gilbert McCurdy and Fred Forman, who financed the \$40 million project with mostly private money. It was the largest private investment in downtown retailing since the end of the war. Just as his Fort Worth Plan was receiving national publicity in 1956, the developers hired Gruen to design an urban shopping center in an effort to "out-glamorize" the suburban competition. Gruen seized the opportunity to participate in a downtown renewal project that had secure financing, and he engaged his partner Larry Smith to conduct an economic analysis of the region. The development would occupy ten acres of the central business district, surrounded by a loop road, and the Plaza itself would contain some sixty shops with nearly a million square feet of retail space. A two-story, enclosed pedestrian mall with all the Gruen-esque touches—fountains, flowers, benches, sidewalk cafes, a trellised ceiling with skylights—would be lined with shops and flanked by two department stores. It would be a "town square with urbane qualities," according to Gruen. The plans also included an eighteen-story office building capped by a four-story luxury hotel, a telephone company building, an auditorium, a bus terminal, and an underground parking garage with space for nearly two thousand cars.⁶⁶

Unlike the Fort Worth Plan, Gruen's vision was realized in Midtown Plaza, and it was accomplished with no federal financing. It was, Gruen said, the translation of the shopping center idea into the "urban vernacular." When the center opened in the spring of 1962, it was an immediate success. It featured a European-style town square under glass with three air-conditioned arcades radiating from the plaza. Unlike most shopping centers, the common spaces of Midtown Plaza were publicly owned, and the parking was underground rather than on the surface. Another distinguishing characteristic was the "Clock of Nations," a whimsical, animatronic display featuring puppets that represented a dozen foreign nations; the figures stopped crowds every half-hour with an automated performance of folk songs and dance. The success of Midtown Plaza spurred further development in downtown Rochester: three adjacent build-

66 "Rochester Brings Them Back from the Suburbs," *Engineering News-Record*, February 16, 1961; Ogden Tanner, "Conservative Rochester, N.Y. Launches...the first new downtown shopping center in the U.S.," [unknown publication] n.d. [ca. 1959], 105, box 31, folder, "Articles, 1959," Gruen AHC; "The Planning of Midtown Plaza," *Architectural Record*, October 1961; "Center for Rochester," *Architectural Forum*, n.d. [ca. 1962], 109–12, box 16, folder "Fresno," Gruen AHC; "Rochester's New Urban Shopping Center," *Buildings*, August 1962, 32–33; William P. Larkin, "Midtown Plaza...one answer to downtown's problem," *Chain Store Age*, August 1962; Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 201.

ings of more than fifteen stories were constructed in the years after its opening. Midtown Plaza drew national attention, and it became a model for downtown redevelopment.⁶⁷

Midtown Plaza was the kind of downtown redevelopment that Gruen had long sought: it demonstrated the kind of dramatic outcomes that were possible through the cooperative efforts of downtown merchants and city planning boards. The success of the project further proved that the antipathy toward planning from “men in the business world” was misguided. Gruen believed that his shopping centers provided the “model work shop” for the salvation of downtown, and Midtown Plaza stood as proof. He worried that if downtowns were left to deteriorate as the suburbs flourished, American cities would be transformed into “doughnuts with all the dough on the outside and a hole in the middle.” Gruen watched as the cores of American cities were overtaken with “blight conditions” as only the “economically weak” segments of the populations—often segregated not only economically but also racially—remained living adjacent to downtown.⁶⁸

Though his design for Fort Worth featured very large parking garages on the periphery of a pedestrian core, Gruen believed strongly in the value of public transportation in a thriving downtown. In fact, Gruen believed that the dominance of the automobile as a form of mass transportation was a key factor in the degradation of downtowns, and he preferred to relegate these mechanical “slaves” to their proper role as mere major appliances that must perform a useful function. He deplored the way cities like Los Angeles had developed, where the urban characteristic of “compactness” had been lost as two-thirds of the land in the central district was given over to roads, highways, parking lots, and garages. Gruen saw this as a regrettable waste of land. It ran counter to the “diversity and variety” that cities ought to have, turning them into mere places of work; they became factories, not cities. Gruen wanted to integrate the residential, commercial, and business functions of the city while strictly segregating its automobile traffic from its pedestrian traffic.⁶⁹

67 “A New Downtown,” *Washington Star*, November 3, 1963; Wall, *Victor Gruen*, 148; Arthur D. Postal, “The Vision That Saved a City,” *Upstate Special*, April 12, 1970; Gruen, “Suburban Regional Shopping Center,” 38–53.

68 “What Makes a 1940 Store Obsolete?” *Architectural Forum*, August 1950; “Downtown Needs a Lesson From the Suburbs,” *Business Week*, October 22, 1955, 64–66; Gruen, “Cities to Doughnuts,” *National Civic Review*, March 1961, 1–4.

69 Gruen, “The Will, The Ways and the Means,” talk, N.R.D.G.A. National Convention’s General Merchandising Session, “Reversing the Down Trend of ‘Downtown’” Volume, January 8, 1957, box 1, Speeches, Volume IV, 1957, Gruen AHC; Gruen, testimony, Joint Committee on Washington Metropolitan Problems, November 12, 1959, box 2 (Speeches), Volume VIII, 1959–1960, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “The Land Wasters,”

Gruen believed that Americans had concentrated their efforts on improving private living standards while neglecting the public environment. In many ways, Gruen was not a great architect of buildings: individually, his structures were inconspicuous and unremarkable. Instead, Gruen excelled as a planner of public spaces that also had a commercial component. He believed that the spaces between buildings were a part of the built environment.⁷⁰ Gruen came to regard himself as an “environmental” architect who was concerned with the total man-made and “man-influenced” environment. The architecture of an individual structure became “pathetically inconsequential,” Gruen argued, when it was surrounded by the “anarchy” of industrial and commercial slums. Even when he was designing store interiors, he was interested in creating the proper atmosphere through “psychological lighting,” which could affect the mood of the shopper. Gruen had always been sensitive to the “noisiness and disorderliness” of the kind of street signs and billboards that cluttered shopping strips, each seeking to attract more attention than the next, creating a total visual cacophony. His shopping centers—with their nondescript exteriors, introverted character, and pleasant courtyards accented with modern art—were an attempt to ameliorate the environmental chaos of the commercial strip. He knew that schemes to maximize the profit potential of every bit of space—such as a plan to convert the space over the main waiting room in New York’s Grand Central Terminal into three stories of shops and bowling alleys—failed to comprehend the “psychological lift” that came from a pleasant environment.⁷¹

speech, National Convention of the National Association of Home Builders, Chicago, January 31, 1961, box 2 (Speeches), Volume X, 1961), Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Cities and Urban Growth,” *INCO Magazine*, n.d. [reprint, ca. 1962], box 34, folder “Manuscripts, 1960–1966,” Gruen AHC.

70 While some of Gruen’s fellow architects criticized him as a purveyor of mass culture and “air-conditioned nightmares” and derided his work as anonymous and forgettable, many of his colleagues appreciated his particular talent. Architect Philip Johnson said that Gruen went beyond creating beautiful buildings; he produced “civic art” that could play on people and suggest what they should do. His buildings were “clean,” avoiding flights of fancy, but the total effect of walking through one of his complexes was “something beyond the design.” Guzzardi, “Architect of Environments”; Herbert, “Rebirth of Nation’s Cities.”

71 Gruen, “Store Designing for the ‘Feminine Touch’: Famed Store Designer Tells Interior Secrets,” *West Coast Feminine Wear*, April 29, 1947, 12; Gruen, “Design with Light,” speech, January 31, 1950, box 4, folder “Speeches—1943–1952,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, speech, State A.I.A. Convention, Avalon, Catalina Island, October 3, 1947, box 5, folder “Speeches, 10-3-47,” Gruen AHC; Emily Genauer, “Art and Architecture Happily Wed, New Shopping Center Exhibit Proves,” *New York Herald Tribune*, April 3, 1955; Gruen “The Need for an Urban Planning Philosophy,” speech, Washington, D. C. Section, Institute of Traffic Engineers, May 14, 1957, box 1, Speeches, Volume V, 1957, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Grand Central Terminal: Notes Concerning Proposed Changes,” 1960, box 2 (Speeches), Volume VIII, 1959–1960, Gruen AHC; Gruen, “The Changing City: Environmental Architecture,” *Matrix* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1962), box 31, folder, “Articles, 1962,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Environmental Architecture,” *The People’s Architects*, ed. Harry S. Ransom, Rice University, November 1964, 55–61, box OV65, “Scrapbooks: Reprints, May 1943–Oct. 1979 (5 of 12),” Gruen LOC; Gruen, letter to the editor, *Arts & Architecture*, November 1965.

In a reversal of his youthful admiration for Le Corbusier, Gruen increasingly believed that *variety* was essential in the urban environment, both in terms of races and classes, and in the constitution of building clusters. Gruen's ideal development mixed residential, commercial, and business uses, and he decried the "sterile and inhuman" single-use developments such as New York's Lincoln Center: "This concentration of culture in one segregated spot is in part a psychoanalytically interesting expression of the feeling that our cities are so void of culture and so hostile to it that only by putting culture behind figurative barbed wire can it be protected from the vulgarity of urban life. Besides, it robs the rest of the city of enrichment through cultural activities, and gives it the stamp of pure commercialism." Gruen was equally critical of large public housing projects, which often became racial ghettos "where one can live only if one has too little money to live decently," and suburban subdivisions in which "one can afford to live only if one has too much." Such segregated communities not only "destroyed the natural interplay of human activities and the ease and pleasure of direct human contact," but they also vastly increased the need for transportation. Gruen believed that a "true community" provided housing at various income levels and incorporated a blend of commercial and civic functions. Government intervention was necessary to make such a community, Gruen said, because the private housing sector evidently could not.⁷²

The influence of the Fort Worth Plan, the spread of downtown pedestrian malls, and the success of Midtown Plaza made Gruen a national authority on the problems of downtown and the possibilities for urban renewal. He worried that the problems of downtown were only exacerbated by the rapid building of freeways in the late 1950s, which Gruen called a "murder plot" against urban areas. Drawing a biological analogy, Gruen said that the freeways were "poisoning" the city by the "injection of foreign particles into the bloodstream in increasing doses." The foreign particles were *automobiles* that could not be properly absorbed in the body of the city and, therefore, caused "serious circulatory diseases" that ultimately threatened the "heart" of the city. Downtowns were becoming vast parking lots, made "inefficient" by the islands of buildings that remained between them, and although there were more cars downtown, there were fewer people.⁷³

72 Gruen, "New Forms of Community," speech, Princeton University Conference on Design in America, May 1964, box 2 (Speeches), Vol. XIII), Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Can Your Neighborhood Survive the Suburban Sprawl?" *New Homes Guide*, June 16, 1965, box 9, folder "Clippings, 1960-1965," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "The Future of the City and the Central Business District," lecture, Urban Studies Program, University of California, Riverside, May 24, 1972, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVIII, 1972-), Gruen AHC.

73 "What's Happening to U.S. Cities," *U.S. News & World Report*, June 20, 1960, 86.

In a 1963 article in the *Harvard Business Review*, Gruen argued that the task of revitalizing cities could only be accomplished through a partnership of government and “free enterprise.”⁷⁴ He believed that nothing could be accomplished without the cooperation of business, and that merchants knew that planning was good business and could be the salvation of downtown. He had become close with many of his clients—such as department store magnates Oscar Webber and the Dayton brothers—and he sympathized with their manner of thinking. Gruen encouraged business leaders to cooperate with officials in government, because in this area of “vital self-interest,” free enterprise had proved to be “timid, passive, and defeatist.” Merchants had retreated from central business districts to suburbia where they found havens in “new, shiny, Lilliputian towns,” the shopping centers Gruen was famous for designing. A partner in Gruen’s firm suggested that he may have developed a “guilt complex” over having aggravated the problems of downtown with his shopping centers, and it does appear that Gruen felt a moral obligation to get involved in urban renewal. He believed that “enterprise” should be the animating force in such projects, but that government, as a “servant of the people,” should use its authority to implement the project. He cited Midtown Plaza as an example of the successful collaboration of government and business, and he posited that the reason the Fort Worth Plan failed was because cooperation with government was sought only after the plan had been completed.⁷⁵

Gruen synthesized his ideas in a book called *The Heart of Our Cities: The Urban Crisis, Diagnosis and Cure*, published in the fall of 1964. The book, which Gruen had been working on for many years, was very well received. The architecture critic Wolf Von Eckardt welcomed Gruen’s “cellular” urban design plan, and he said that Gruen deserved to be listened to because he had met the “ruling standards” of American society: he “made out” and makes money. Stewart Udall, the US Secretary of the Interior, wrote the publisher with the prediction that the book would surely serve as “a significant catalyst for wise city planning throughout our country.” Another reviewer predicted that it could have an impact on the level of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, and US Senator Joseph Tydings of Maryland said it was the first “completely satisfactory diagnosis of the

74 Writing in 1946, the Austrian management theorist Peter Drucker, who emigrated to the U.S. in the 1930s, posited that, regardless of the prevalent political beliefs and forms of social organization in any particular country, *Big Business* was the “general condition of modern industrial society,” and that the concept of “free enterprise” did not exclude government, but saw its function as “setting the frame within which business is to be conducted.” Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*, 2–5.

75 Gruen, “Who is to Save Our Cities?” 107–15; Guzzardi, “An Architect of Environments”; Gruen to Messrs. Contini, Baumfeld, Van Leuven, Tannen, Duschinsky, June 15, 1956, box 73, folder 14, Gruen LOC.

maladies affecting our great metropolitan areas.” When Lady Bird Johnson, the First Lady of the United States, was assembling her Committee for a More Beautiful Capital, Udall suggested Gruen, and Gruen accepted her invitation.⁷⁶

Gruen took on the role as a prophet and planner of the American city. As Lyndon Johnson won the 1964 presidential election and forwarded the “positive issue campaign” of the Great Society, Gruen believed that that society would be an *urban* society. He had already produced a plan for Washington’s bid for the 1964 World’s Fair (which it ultimately lost to New York City) that would have been the basis for a “New City” that would have converted the fairgrounds and installations into a new satellite community near Largo, Maryland. Gruen’s firm also produced plans for the New Cities of Valencia, near Los Angeles, and Litchfield Park, near Phoenix. VGA was also hired by Secretary Robert Weaver as a consultant on New Cities for the new US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The firm produced a special report for the agency in which it defined New Cities as “new urban entities of metropolitan scale, located at significant distances from existing urban concentrations, established, planned, and developed by intent.” The advantage of New Cities was perceived to be their independence from existing political forces and interests, which would allow for the experimentation with forms and techniques that could not be imposed on existing cities. Because New Cities had no pre-existing population patterns, there would be no status quo to defend, and racial and economic integration could be planned from the beginning as a “taken-for-granted reality.”⁷⁷

Despite his new role as a guru of urban planning, Gruen’s frustration working in the American system had mounted over the years, and he was increasingly disenchanted and pessimistic about the possibilities for reform. The post-war years in the US had been a time of great technological and sociological

76 Gruen would form a friendship with the First Lady, whom he admired for her personal warmth and political intelligence. He was also grateful to her for having left his book on her husband’s nightstand. Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 193, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC; Stewart Udall to Henry Simon, November 3, 1964, box 2 (Speeches), Vol. XIII, Gruen AHC; “Victor Gruen and His Battle for the Heart of the City,” *Camma News*, February 1965, 3, box 32, folder, “Articles, 1965,” Gruen AHC; Joseph Tydings to Gruen, February 26, 1965, box 13, folder “Senator Joseph Tydings, 1965,” Gruen AHC; Gruen to Joseph Tydings, March 11, 1965, box 13, folder “Senator Joseph Tydings, 1965,” Gruen AHC; Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson to Gruen, January 30, 1965, box 8, folder “Correspondence, Lady Bird Johnson, 1965–1966,” Gruen AHC; Wolf Von Eckardt, “Escape from the Automobile,” *The New Republic*, January 2, 1965, 18–19.

77 “Gruen plan for Washington dies: New York gets fair,” *Architectural Forum*, December 1959, 9; Ada Louise Huxtable, “Out of a Fair, a City,” *Horizon* 2, no. 5 (May 1960): 80–88; “Biography of the Founder,” box 10, folder “Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980,” Gruen AHC; *New Cities U.S.A.: A Statement of Purpose and Program*, prepared for the Department of Housing and Urban Development by VGA, Summer 1966, box 29, folder 3, Gruen LOC; Gruen, talk, Architectural Society of the University of Pennsylvania School of Fine Arts, November 16, 1964, box 2 (Speeches), Vol. XIII, Gruen AHC.

change, but the rapid pace of change had led Americans to make “mistake after mistake” that failed to recognize the “essential supremacy of human values.” Gruen felt that his city planning designs repeatedly “ran a foul” when it came to the question of racial integration, and he came to see the failure of US society to live up to the ideal of the Declaration of Independence that all men were created “equal.” He also detested the “one-sided pursuit for ever more money and ever more materialistic growth” that seemed to define the American ideology. He began to resent the artificiality and unhealthiness of the “air-conditioned life” that he found himself living in Los Angeles, and he even sympathized with his children and other “hippies” as they protested against a life defined by material things. (He was even annoyed by newfangled consumer goods such as cellophane, frozen food, electric auto windows, and combination washer-dryers.) The last straw, perhaps, was the “urban crisis” in the US, where city traditions were “weak.” The impossible situation led Gruen to view the entire country almost as a lost cause, and he began to see it as his mission to save Europe from suffering a similar fate.⁷⁸

By the mid-1960s, VGA had designed more than forty shopping centers, and it had established satellite offices in New York and Chicago in addition to its base in Beverly Hills. VGA also operated temporary project offices in cities where it had major clients, such as Detroit, Minneapolis, and San Francisco, and it maintained an international clientele in Australia, South America, and Europe. Its projects included not only shopping centers but also public buildings, churches, schools, office buildings, banks, exhibitions, and New Towns. By 1966, Gruen had six partners and staff of nearly three hundred architects, engineers, transportation planners, merchandising analysts, graphic artists, interior designers, economists, and other specialists. VGA as an institution began to operate more independently of its founder.⁷⁹

In response to the increasing demand for his consulting services abroad, Gruen founded Victor Gruen International (VGI), based in Vienna, where he had established a part-time residence in 1961. Though originally conceived as a branch of VGA, Gruen would eventually dissolve his relationship with his old

78 Gruen, “Schizophrenia in Urban Planning,” speech, Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning, Los Angeles, April 30, 1970, box 5, folder “Speeches, 1970–1976,” Gruen AHC; Victor Gruen, “The Future of the City and the Central Business District,” lecture, Urban Studies Program, University of California, Riverside, May 24, 1972, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XVIII, 1972–), Gruen AHC; Gruen, “Two Americans in Austria: Bicentennial Reflections,” *Vienna News*, October 7, 1976, 4–5; Joyce Haber, “Victor Gruen: Architect, Dreamer and Doer,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 18, 1966, box 9, folder “Victor Gruen, Clippings, 1965, 1966,” Gruen AHC.

79 “Organization for Efficient Practice: Victor Gruen Associates,” *Architectural Record*, October 1961; “Victor Gruen Associates,” brochure, [ca. 1967], box 74, folder 7, Gruen LOC.



FIGURE 15
Gruen at the opening of the offices
of Victor Gruen International in
Vienna, May 17, 1967.

SOURCE: Victor Gruen papers,
Manuscript Division, Library of
Congress, Washington, D.C.

firm and reestablish himself in Europe. At the opening of the new VGI office in May of 1967, Gruen promised to combine his American experience with the European tradition. However, Gruen generally disclaimed the moniker of “American expert” when he spoke before European audiences. He claimed to be a *cosmopolitan*, citing his intimate knowledge of the fundamental differences between the social and cultural conditions on both sides of the Atlantic, and referring to his work experience on several continents. He emphasized that the first thirty-five years of his life were spent in Vienna, where he was educated and had his first architectural office. While he acknowledged his role as a pioneer of regional shopping center design, he insisted that he was a *generalist* in the “much wider battle area of the manmade urban environment.” He also warned his audience that America’s “urban crisis” and the disfiguration of the cityscape—Los Angeles was the most striking example—threatened Europe, too. “During the 29 years I have spent in the United States up to now, I have seen the tragedy with

my own eyes,” said Gruen, gloomily. “You as Europeans have been spectators in the audience of the great American urban tragedy.”⁸⁰

In the spring of 1968, Gruen founded the Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning, with offices in Los Angeles and Vienna, electing himself as president.⁸¹ Upon reaching his sixty-fifth birthday on July 18, 1968, Gruen formally resigned from the presidency of VGA and moved his base of operations to Vienna, where he would direct VGI. (He also had, for a time, a separate company based in Switzerland called Victor Gruen Planning and Architecture AG.) He confessed to leading a “gypsy life,” going back and forth between Vienna and Los Angeles—and also working in France, Belgium (on the new city of Louvain-la-Neuve near Ottignies), Italy, and Germany—but by January of 1969, he had settled more permanently into the city of his birth, where he would live and work for most of the remainder of his life.⁸²

The aim of Gruen’s Foundation, which was directed in Los Angeles by Claudia E. Moholy-Nagy (the daughter of Sibyl and László Moholy-Nagy),⁸³ was to fill the gap between the “actions and conditions” that were shaping the environment—but in “short-sighted, profit-oriented” ways—and the world of academia, which Gruen found to be sadly ineffectual. The Foundation would limit its field of activity to supporting those efforts to influence the “man-made and

80 Gruen, “The Regional (Shopping) Center,” *Technical Bulletin* 104 (June 1963), 25–29, box 27, “Shopping Malls—general, 1960–1963,” Gruen AHC; “Victor Gruen Associates: Architecture, Planning, Engineering” [brochure], n.d. [ca. 1967], box 74, folder 7, “Victor Gruen Associates; Architecture Planning Engineering,” n.d., Gruen LOC; “Rough Translation of Victor Gruen’s Address at the Occasion of the Opening of the European Office,” May 18, 1967, box 5, folder “Speeches 1967–1973,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, talk, Congresso Internazionale, “Commercio e Urbanistica,” Milano, October 14–16, 1967, box 3, Speeches, 1965–1976, Volume XV, 1966–1967, Gruen AHC; Gruen to Herman Guttman and VGA, n.d. [ca. 1972], box 8, folder “Correspondence—Handwritten Letter written shortly after leaving Victor Gruen Associates, n.d.,” Gruen AHC; “Organization for Efficient Practice: Victor Gruen Associates,” *Architectural Record*, October 1961; “Victor Gruen: Biographical Data,” n.d. [ca. 1963], box 5, folder “Speech File 1963,” Gruen AHC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 165.

81 Gruen founded a similar organization based in Europe in 1973, the Zentrum für Umweltplanung, with headquarters in Vienna. Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 213, 226.

82 “Biographical Data,” *Outline to Public Relations Material for Book*, n.d., box 10, folder “Biographical Information, Victor Gruen 1903–1980,” Gruen AHC; “Background Information,” The Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning, n.d., box 13, folder “Professional Files, Victor Gruen Foundation, 1968,” Gruen AHC; Gaby Janoschek to Arthur Lawrence, November 6, 1968, box 5, folder “Speech Requests,” Gruen AHC; Gruen to Jerome Biblit, January 14, 1969, box 5, folder “Speech Requests,” Gruen AHC; Kemija Gruen to John Crosby, January 17, 1969, box 5, folder “Speech Requests,” Gruen AHC; Gaby Janoschek, letter to John Nolen, January 27, 1969, box 5, folder “Speech Requests,” Gruen AHC; Gruen to Stewart Udall, February 12, 1969, box 11, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Gruen, “Biographische Notizen,” April 2, 1975, p. 212, box 76, folder 8, Gruen LOC; Maggie Savoy, “Architect Plans Cities for Humans,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 1969.

83 Claudia Moholy-Nagy died in September of 1971 at age 35. Gruen to the “members and friends” of the Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning,” December 1971, box 13, folder “Professional Files, Victor Gruen Foundation, 1969,” Gruen AHC.

man-influenced environment” through conscious planning. Gruen was troubled that the term “progress” was too often applied to enterprises that were destructive to the human environment. He believed that human ingenuity ought to be redirected toward positive projects that served “human” functions and freed them from the “tyranny of technological gadgets.” Gruen pointed out that the kind of poor planning that created segregated cities—divided not only by race and class but also by function, be it residential or commercial—destroyed the “natural interplay of human activities” and enormously increased the need for transportation, which itself was often destructive. Part of the problem, Gruen believed, was over-specialization, and he hoped to ameliorate environmental degradation by supporting the work of a “multi-disciplined team” of architects, planners, engineers, social scientists, economists, and bureaucrats.⁸⁴

Gruen had long thought of himself as an architect of the “environment,” but in the course of writing his book *The Heart of Our Cities* in the early 1960s, his consciousness as an environmentalist was heightened. The book was the catalyst for a meeting, friendship, and correspondence between Gruen and Stewart Udall. Gruen was “deeply impressed” that the Interior Secretary’s idea of conservationism was not limited to the preservation of “natural beauty,” but also extended to everything that influenced the man-made environment. Gruen believed that Udall, as a well-known conservationist, would be sympathetic to his critique of the “one-sided approach of promoting transportation by private automobile” that had resulted in such a colossal waste of land. Gruen thanked Udall for passing a copy of his book along to the President, and he asked the Secretary to bring it to the attention of his boss that he was “willing and eager” to contribute to Johnson’s urban renewal efforts.⁸⁵

When Udall left office in 1969, he created the Overview Foundation, the mission of which was remarkably similar to Gruen’s own Foundation. Gruen worried about the competition and, at the same time, felt somewhat slighted that he was not asked to serve as an advisor for Udall’s Foundation. The mild rift was soon mended, though, and Gruen asked Udall to serve on the advisory board for his Foundation and write the introduction to his new book, *Centers for the Urban Environment*; Udall agreed. The book appeared in 1973, and Udall flattered

84 “The Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning” [pamphlet], n.d., box 13, folder “Professional Files, Victor Gruen Foundation, 1968,” Gruen AHC; “The Victor Gruen Foundation for the Shaping of the Human Environment,” March 18, 1968, box 13, folder “Professional Files, V.G. Foundation—Formation,” Gruen AHC; “The Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning,” statement of founding and organization, March 17, 1969, box 13, folder “Professional Files, V.G. Foundation—Formation,” Gruen AHC.

85 Gruen to Udall, January 6, 1965, box 11, folder 4, Gruen LOC; “Guardian of Resources: Stewart Lee Udall,” *New York Times*, February 2, 1967; Udall to Gruen, January 30, 1969, box 11, folder 4, Gruen LOC.

Gruen by calling him the foremost “environmental architect” of the time. Gruen built on the themes of his first two books, but he aimed for a more global scope, and he even acknowledged that the “unifunctional” shopping center had contributed to the sprawl of the auto-centric society. Gruen wrote an environmental book instead of updating his classic work, *Shopping Towns USA*, and he seemed, at times, to be atoning for past sins, reluctantly admitting that he was considered to be the “father” of the shopping center, a title that made him somewhat uneasy.⁸⁶

Gruen had resolved to spend the remainder of his life working on improving the urban environment, and he devoted considerable time and resources to his Foundation. He was pleased that consciousness of the “global environmental crisis” was rising in the early 1970s. The prophet of the shopping mall became increasingly sympathetic to John Kenneth Galbraith’s critique of the “affluent society” and the environmental crisis that it appeared to be causing. He worried about the “shortsighted” profit motive that dominated those “materialistic times.” “Man is generally subject to the folly of believing that he is obliged to do everything which he might be capable of doing,” said Gruen before a Beverly Hills audience, “but since progressing science and technology are providing us so richly and constantly with new capabilities, this notion can only be upheld at the danger of causing irreparable environmental damage and human self-destruction.” Gruen welcomed the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, but he criticized what he called the “Nixon doctrine” that, in the face of an energy crisis, continued to advocate for greater consumption and “materialistic growth.” In contrast, Gruen advocated for the conservation of natural resources and precious land by ending the “enforced mobility” that was the result of suburban sprawl and the absolute supremacy of the automobile. Only an “infinitesimal part” of mobility was deliberate, and the rest was *enforced* because of poor planning. Gruen’s planned “cellular” communities would not peter out in the ragged edges of the suburbs, and the city would no longer be a “conglomeration of ghettos and concentration camps for specific functions and social groupings.” Instead, each cell would contain a multiplicity of urban elements—residential, commercial, and civic—that would allow it to function semi-autonomously, without the “enforced mobility” of its inhabitants. Only through wise planning and conservation, Gruen argued, could mankind escape an ecological “holocaust.”⁸⁷

86 Gruen to Udall, February 12, 1969, box 11, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Gruen to Udall, April 16, 1969, box 11, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Victor Gruen to Udall, July 20, 1971, box 11, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Centers for the Urban Environment*.

87 Gruen to Herman Guttman and Victor Gruen Associates, n.d. [ca. 1972], box 8, folder “Correspondence—Handwritten Letter written shortly after leaving Victor Gruen Associates, n.d.,” Gruen AHC; The Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning, *Annual Report*, 1972, box 35, folder “Victor Gruen Foun-

Gruen's concept of "environmental planning" was opposed to the idea of *conservation*, which had a defensive posture. Instead, Gruen advocated an offensive "attack" directed against misguided patterns of human behavior and urban development that perverted natural ecosystems. Gruen's concept of the "environment," moreover, was not limited to nature; it was, rather, the "sum total of everything which surrounds us" and with which we had continuous "relations." This included relationships between individuals, between individuals and their society, and between man and "his own works"—all of his artificial creation. As the United States approached its bicentennial celebration, Gruen reminded an American audience that the ideology of infinite growth was a "utopian" proposition in a finite world. There were no more frontiers; wherever Americans went, "we no longer find even a parking place." In a country that used thirty to forty times as much energy as two-thirds of the world's population in the "undeveloped" world, Gruen called on Americans to recognize that they had reached, if they had not already transgressed, the "load-bearing capacity of nature." "Instead of incessantly growing," Gruen scolded, "we will finally have to grow up."⁸⁸

Gruen had, by this point, almost given up on the possibility of urban renewal of the kind he desired in the US and had instead turned his attention to Europe. In 1972 he drafted a "Charter of Vienna," based on the idea of Le Corbusier's *Charte d'Athènes*, a grand mission statement for architects and planners that attempted to bring that document "into context with our era." Yet Gruen's great ambitions had also become more parochial as he became absorbed in the project of restoring the historic charm of his native city. He said that, under no circumstances, would Vienna be "sacrificed on the altar of the automobile," and he instead advocated the construction of the subway, or U-Bahn. Gruen's most potent rhetorical device in his urban planning advocacy was that, if Vienna's city planners did not follow his advice, their city could "go the way of its U.S. coun-

datation for Environmental Planning—Annual Report, 1972," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Worldwide Problems and Opportunities—Cities," speech, Beverly Hillcrest Hotel, Beverly Hills, California, September 13, 1973, box 5, folder "Speeches, 1970-1978," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Public Planning and Land Ownership," speech, symposium of the Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning, "The Crisis of Controls," September 18, 1973, box 5, folder "Speeches, 1970-1976," Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Dedication of the New Middle School of the American International School of Vienna," address, October 12, 1975, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVIII, 1972-), Gruen AHC; Victor Gruen, "Pitfalls of Enforced Mobility," speech, "Transportation Horizons: Building Urban Environments" conference, Berkeley, September 20-25, 1973, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVIII, 1972-), Gruen AHC.

88 Gruen, "Urban Problems and Planning," Salzburg Seminar, February 3, 1975, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVIII, 1972-), Gruen AHC; Gruen, address, American International School in Vienna, March 27, 1975, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVIII, 1972-), Gruen AHC; Gruen, "Managing the Growth of Cities," address, San Diego, May 25, 1976, box 3 (Speeches, 1965-1976), Volume XVIII, 1972-), Gruen AHC.

terparts,” where the lifeblood of the city core had been “thrown out.” “We don’t want this in Vienna,” said Gruen. Gruen submitted a plan to the Vienna city council in 1973 that was much like his Fort Worth Plan: it proposed the removal of all private automobiles from the city center, to be replaced by the U-Bahn and small buses. Progress on the plan was slow and piecemeal, but more and more of the Innere Stadt became exclusive to the pedestrian over the years, including the famous street, the *Graben*.⁸⁹

Toward the end of his life, Gruen had gone from being the inventor of the shopping center, and its most enthusiastic and articulate evangelist, to being the fiercest critic of what the shopping center had become. In a cruel irony, he discovered on a visit to the site of his mother’s family’s home in Hamburg—where he had cherished memories of vacationing before World War I—that it had been demolished and replaced by a shopping center. In 1974, he declared before an audience in Munich that the shopping center had “no future” and forsook his patrimony as the “father” of the mall. As he reestablished himself in Vienna in the 1970s, he made it his mission to warn European city planners not to make the same mistakes that had been made in the US over the past thirty years. He lamented the fact that the “environmental and humane” concepts which were the basis for his original vision of the shopping center had been completely forgotten in favor of arrangements that were just commercially profitable. Shopping centers were no longer the projects of the “merchant princes” like Oscar Webber and the Daytons of Minnesota, those ambitious clients who had the wherewithal to realize Gruen’s vision. These were the kinds of businessmen Gruen felt fortunate to have worked with, because they were mediators between producers and consumers, and their business demanded that they concern themselves with creating pleasant, enticing, and enjoyable environments that would nurture communities. But shopping centers were now planned by “anonymous” real estate enterprises that had no interest in building a legacy or strengthening a community; instead, these faceless corporations were only interested in making a “fast buck.” Gruen reluctantly admitted that suburban shopping centers had delivered the final “death blow” to the suffering central cities by driving out virtually all commercial activity.⁹⁰

89 Gruen, “Charter of Vienna: for the planning of the human environment,” Victor Gruen Foundation for Environmental Planning, 1972, box 48, folder 5, Gruen LOC; Wolf Von Eckardt, “Pioneering an American Idea,” *Washington Post*, January 15, 1972; “Vienna Stops the Clock,” *Newsweek*, March 20, 1972; Victor Gruen, “The Future of the City and the Central Business District,” lecture, Urban Studies Program, University of California, Riverside, May 24, 1972, box 3 (Speeches, 1965–1976), Volume XVIII, 1972–), Gruen AHC; Fran P. Hosken, “Pedestrianization,” *Design and Environment*, Spring 1975, 40–43; Walter E. Schreier, “Old Vienna Goes Pedestrian,” *Habitat* 1 (1978), 21–23.

90 Gruen, “Das Einkaufszentrum hat Keine Zukunft [The Shopping Center Has no Future],” Vortrag für das

As tragic as this history was in the US, Gruen felt that it would be more tragic in Europe, because American cities were relatively young, and their downtowns never had as much “to offer” as the traditional European central city. Gruen feared that the urban character of cities like his beloved Vienna was threatened by the development of “unifunctional” shopping centers that produced a “mono-culture” that compromised the essential variety of urban life. “The shopping centre is an extreme but by no means the only expression of the effort of substituting naturally and originally grown mixtures of various urban expressions by an artificial and therefore sterile order,” said Gruen in London in 1978, speaking before an audience of shopping center owners who were probably expecting a different tone from the inventor of the shopping mall. The result was the creation of “functional ghettos” on the model of Le Corbusier. These developments served only a single use, which introduced the forced obligation of transportation *between* them as opposed to livability *within* them. Gruen said that the conventional shopping center was a thing of the past, and that the members of his audience should focus on creating “multi-functional” centers “for tomorrow.” While Gruen regretted the way that shopping centers had developed, he stuck to the values that he had articulated in his original concept.⁹¹

Gruen did not soften his criticism after his declaration in London, and in the last two years of his life he became as well known for his antipathy toward shopping centers as for being the man who invented them. “I refuse to pay alimony for those bastard developments,” he was reported to have said of the ubiquitous malls built by “fast-buck promoters and speculators.”⁹² He felt that these devel-

Institut für Gewerbezentren [Lecture for the Institute for Commercial Centers], Starnberg/München, September 19, 1974, box 77, folder 8, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town*, 214.

91 Gruen, “Shopping Centres, Why, Where, How?” speech, Third Annual European Conference of the International Council of Shopping Centres, London, February 28, 1978, box 5, folder “Speeches, 1970–1978,” Gruen AHC.

92 The metaphor was an intimate one to Gruen, who paid large sums in alimony to his second wife, Elsie, and had a relationship with their two children that was strained. Gruen’s third wife, Lazette Van Houten, died suddenly on July 15, 1962. The shock of mortality compelled him to draw up a will, which he would periodically revise over the years, progressively reducing the share allotted to his children, Michael and Peggy, until they were apparently written out of it altogether. They would soon be replaced by Gruen’s new wife, Kemija Salihfendic—thirty-three years his junior—whom he married in 1963. Instead, Peggy and Michael would receive some artworks by the Viennese Secession artists Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele. Gruen owned one painting by Klimt, “Schloss Kammer am Attersee IV” (1910), that was particularly valuable, and which he would occasionally loan out to museums, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. The painting may have been the only significant asset that Gruen left to his children. (However, he may have been sending “loans” to his son as a way of avoiding an inheritance tax.) He pointed out that its value had risen considerably, but he also explained that it was beloved by Kemija, and because of her “self-sacrificing manner” she encouraged Gruen to leave it to his children. However, at the time of their marriage, Gruen and Salihfendic signed an antenuptial agreement which stipulated that the marriage would produce no common property between them. Gruen had first met Kemija, a Bosnian refugee, when she waited

opments were a perversion of his original concept. As he preached the values of urbanity—direct human communications, the easy and free exchange of ideas and goods, and the easy access to a multiplicity of choices—he urged audiences to forget about the “conventional” shopping center. Shopping centers had been reduced to their standardized *malls*, which appeared the same whether in Detroit or in Houston; they were, with few exceptions, fully enclosed no matter what the climate. Rather than being islands of urbanity in the suburban desert, these shopping centers completely lacked identification with their surrounding communities and had no purpose other than merchandising. Gruen even supported a campaign to stop the construction of a mall near Burlington, Vermont which would have constituted “premeditated murder of a city by robbing it of practically all its retailing.” The campaign was ultimately successful, and in the context of the energy crisis and growing environmental consciousness of the late 1970s, it cast a pall over the suburban mall that had so dominated commercial developments over the previous thirty years.⁹³

After a long illness, Gruen died in Vienna on February 14, 1980, at the age of seventy-six. He was remembered in obituaries mainly as the “father” of the shopping center, his firm having designed the famous Northland and Southdale as well as more than seventy other regional centers. Gruen was also remembered as a crusader against the automobile who cherished pedestrian spaces, and as an outspoken critic of what the shopping center had become—a perversion of his original vision. Wolf Von Eckardt said that Gruen was “among the most important architect-planners of our time,” even though he was “lousy” when it came to designing buildings. Gruen’s strength was, rather, in designing *environments*, and according to Von Eckardt he deserved to be put in the com-

on him and his wife Lazette at a restaurant in Vienna. They adored her so much that they brought the girl to live in their Vienna apartment—where they were spending more and more time—and they employed her as a supervisor of its renovation. After Lazette died, Gruen and Salihefendic soon married. Gruen to Peggy Gruen, April 1, 1963, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Thomas M. Messer to Gruen, February 28, 1964, box 69, folder 15, Gruen LOC; Gruen to Michael and Peggy Gruen, October 1979, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen to Michael Gruen, July 1972–June 1975, box 15, folder 2, Gruen LOC; Certificate of Death, issued for Lazette E. Gruen by the State of California, box 22, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Gruen to Messrs. Gerald Kelly and Ralph Erickson, July 20, 1962, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Last Will and Testament of Victor D. Gruen, July 26, 1962, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Antenuptial Agreement,” February 19, 1963, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Marriage Certificate,” State of California, box 22, folder 16, Gruen LOC; Gruen LOC, “Wives, February 26, 1974,” box 20, Gruen LOC; “Last Will and Testament of Victor Gruen,” June 18, 1976, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; “Last Will and Testament of Victor Gruen,” December 3, 1965, box 22, folder 7, Gruen LOC; Gruen, *Shopping Town* (2017), 166.

93 Ian Menzies, “His love for shopping malls is turning sour,” *Boston Sunday Globe*, April 23, 1978; William Severini Kowinski, “The Malling of America,” *New Times*, May 1, 1978, 30–55; Neal R. Peirce, “The Shopping Center and One Man’s Shame,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 22, 1978; “A Pall Over the Suburban Mall,” *Time*, November 13, 1978, 72.

pany of his fellow refugee architects Mies van der Rohe and Walter Gropius—though he never achieved their fame.⁹⁴

Conclusion

Although he would become famous as the inventor of the suburban shopping center, an emblem of American consumer capitalism, Gruen's vision for the building form had a foundation in his Viennese, social-democratic values, which emphasized the importance of community, pedestrian urbanity, and the power of environments to affect social consciousness. While shopping centers would become known as havens for the auto-borne shopper, Gruen's plan was to create a separate pedestrian space as an oasis from the automobile-dominated suburban landscape. Unlike Gruen's eye-catching shopfronts, the shopping center was an *introverted* building—not unlike the *Hof Haus* style of construction used for the *Gemeindebauten* in Vienna—built around a central courtyard or *mall* that was a safe, isolated, and pleasant space for shopping. Indeed, Gruen's buildings were known less for their structural qualities than for the communal spaces between them, and the exteriors of the buildings were modest to the point of drabness.

Although the shopping center would have space for a great diversity of individual merchants, their co-location would serve to benefit everyone. In this sense, it was a cooperative commercial building, summed up in the nicely paradoxical phrase, “planning for competition.” Shopping centers were efficient selling machines, but they were also community centers that were badly needed in the newly-developed suburbs. In addition to providing commercial spaces, the new shopping centers, at least as they were originally conceived, were meant to have libraries, nurseries, medical centers, meeting rooms, and other available community spaces. In the sprawling, centerless American suburbs, booming after World War II, Gruen sought to create a new, *better* downtown—a safe and pleasant environment for the whole family, protected from the noises, fumes, and dangers of the automobile-dominated American streets.

94 “Report of the Death of an American Citizen Abroad,” issued for Victor David Gruen by the American Embassy, Austria, February 26, 1980, box 22, folder 4, Gruen LOC; Kemija Theresa Gruen, death announcement, box 10, folder, “Biographical Information,” Gruen AHC; Jerry Belcher, “Victor Gruen, 76; architect, creator of shopping malls,” *Journal* [Providence, RI], February 15, 1980; Paul Goldberger, “Victor Gruen, 76, Architect, Is Dead,” *New York Times*, February 16, 1980; “Victor Gruen, Developer of U.S. Malls,” *International Herald Tribune*, February 16-17; Wolf Von Eckardt, “The Urban Liberator: Victor Gruen and the Pedestrian Oasis,” *Washington Post*, February 23, 1980; “Father of Mall Fought for Downtown,” *Miami Herald*, February 24, 1980; “Pioneer architect Victor Gruen dies at 76,” *Shopping Centers Today*, March 1980.

An essential part of Gruen's argument was that architectural and indeed social *planning* was not antithetical to consumer capitalism but could in fact make it work better. The success of Northland and Southdale provided Gruen with a ready example as he proselytized the shopping center concept, but he struggled against stubborn American notions of "rugged individualism" that, at least as they would manifest rhetorically, could run counter to his social-democratic ideas. But Gruen insisted that Americans were, in fact, capable planners in many ways even if they often refused to recognize it. Government could cooperate with business to produce positive social and environmental outcomes, and neither entity could accomplish truly great things without the cooperation of the other. Planning, for Gruen, was not about conformity but about creating the "shapes and patterns" necessary for harmonious coexistence.

Although Gruen's shopping centers were designed as *new* downtowns for the centerless, community-starved suburbs, he immediately applied the concept to the redesign and "salvation" of American city centers. His visionary plan for downtown Fort Worth, Texas, would have made the center of that city a pedestrian-only, car-free place, just like his shopping centers, and it might have come to fruition were it not for the opposition of a group of downtown businessmen. Ironically, Gruen's own suburban shopping centers contributed to the hollowing-out of American downtowns in this period, and guilt over this fact likely motivated his campaign to save American downtowns. He synthesized his views on urban planning in his 1964 book, *The Heart of Our Cities*. Some cities adopted Gruen's ideas, but in very limited ways, usually by closing off one main street as a "pedestrian mall." These efforts at "Gruenization" were merely half-measures which often did more harm than good, Gruen lamented.

Gruen also designed a number of "New Cities" for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. But the urban crisis of the 1960s further depressed Gruen and shook his natural optimism about the future of American cities, and his attention increasingly drifted to Europe, which he hoped to save from America's fate. He would eventually repatriate to Austria in 1968 for the remainder of his years, where he found some success in the planning of central Vienna. His personal trajectory made his vision for the shopping center unique, but it was precisely the idealism behind his original design that led him to sour on the shopping center as it ultimately developed. He had masterfully engineered the ideal consumer environment, but the naked demands of capitalism, when divorced from their social-democratic direction, had hollowed out the communal experience that was to have been at its core.

12

Moholy's Death and the Afterlife of the Bauhaus

The end of the war would coincide with a time of great change for the Institute of Design. The building at 247 East Ontario Street that the school had been leasing—in a space one floor down from the noisy rehearsal hall of the Chez Paree dance club—was sold, and the Institute was forced to find new premises in the summer of 1945. Although Walter Paepcke had just learned that the building of the Chicago Historical Society had become available, the Institute had to quickly vacate the Ontario Street location and temporarily move to a new building at 1009 North State Street. Complicating matters further, a large new wave of ex-servicemen students would begin to arrive at the Institute, supported in their studies through the terms of the G.I. Bill, which would include free tuition, fees, materials, and even a subsistence allowance provided by the government. Along with industry-sponsored students, this influx of subsidized veteran students, many of whom were keenly interested in photography, would be a great boon to the Institute, and Moholy was sure to promote the Institute's great legacy of instruction in photography. However, the great tide of new students would strain the school's physical capacity to the extent that it would apply for a government grant to upgrade its facilities. Indeed, by the spring of 1945, the Board was already discussing the possibility of merging the Institute with a larger institution, possibly the University of Chicago or Northwestern University. By the fall, Paepcke had begun active discussions with Henry Heald, president of the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), which was planning to establish a design department, about a merger with his institution. Increasingly, design problems required advanced facilities, such as a chemistry laboratory to experiment with new plastics, and the limited resources of the Institute threatened its future as a viable design school.¹

1 C.P. Barker to Paepcke, January 27, 1945, folder 36, box 2, ID; Paepcke to Joseph Cudahy, April 13, 1945,

As the Institute grew beyond the personality of Moholy and adapted to the new, postwar world, it was called upon to rearticulate its place at the nexus of art and industry. An official with the Rockefeller Foundation, Robert Whitelaw, visited the Institute in the summer of 1945 to observe its operations as the Foundation considered extending a grant. Although he would produce a generally favorable report and revisit the school the following year, he was somewhat confused about whether the school was meant to produce designers or teachers. He believed that the Institute should distance itself somewhat from its Bauhaus origins and that it should be made “more American,” and yet he recognized the unique influence of the Institute on industrial design education in America. He also seemed to put a great deal of faith in the abilities of Paepcke, a “key figure for whatever is to be done in bettering the relation of art to industry,” whom he viewed as steering the ship of the Institute in a way that Moholy could not quite do. Walter Gropius, for his part, found Whitelaw to be inscrutable and “very difficult to get along with.” The Foundation’s capacity for supporting the Institute seemed to be limited to special research and defined practices on the order of \$20,000 annual grants for a five-year period, as opposed to a more sustained, substantial kind of support that Moholy and Paepcke hoped for. Paepcke became convinced that Gropius’s personal intervention with the Foundation would benefit the cause of the Institute.²

A lingering concern among supporters of the Institute was the extent to which Moholy’s peculiar Bauhaus pedagogy could lead to practical applications, even though the Institute regularly took commercial orders, trained students on industry-sponsored scholarships, and was overseen by a board of businessmen. Yet even the president of Marshall Field & Co. would announce that he was withdrawing his support of the Institute, complaining that it excelled

box 2, folder 38, ID; “Institute of Design,” *Chicago Daily News*, September 24, 1945; Press release, February 2, 1945, box 1, folder 20, ID; Institute of Design: Catalog, 1945–46, box 3, folder 86, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” January 15, 1946, box 1, folder 6, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” August 21, 1946, box 1, folder 6, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” May 1, 1945, box 1, folder 6, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” October 2, 1945, box 1, folder 6, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” November 6, 1945, box 1, folder 6, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, October 5, 1945, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy, “Photography in the Study of Design,” *American Annual of Photography*, 1945; Chancellor, “Institute of Design,” 28–35.

2 “The President’s Report,” June 5, 1945, box 1, folder 13, ID; Whitelaw to Paepcke, July 25, 1945, box 2, folder 37, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” October 2, 1945, box 1, folder 6, ID; Whitelaw to Paepcke, December 3, 1945, box 2, folder 37, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, December 12, 1945, box 8, folder 227, ID; Paepcke to Gropius, December 17, 1945, box 2, folder 40, ID; Whitelaw to Paepcke, February 5, 1946, box 2, folder 37, ID; Whitelaw to Paepcke, September 22, 1945, box 61, folder 2, WPP; Paepcke to Whitelaw, December 6, 1945, box 61, folder 2, WPP; “Minutes of the Board of Directors,” March 5, 1946, box 1, folder 6, ID; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, February 6, 1946, Inv.Nr. 2252443, WGOA.

only in “an extremely narrow field” and that his designers found the evening courses to have “but small application to the kind of work they do.” Moholy insisted that the school’s most important product was creative designers themselves, trained to develop the habits of mind to find creative solutions to industrial problems. Some students, however, failed to fully appreciate the Bauhaus pedagogy. Those most likely to be perplexed by the school’s methods tended to be the professionals sent by their employers to attend evening classes; these students generally lacked exposure to the foundation course required of the day students, which introduced them to the unique teaching practices of the Bauhaus. One student found the school to be “stimulating” and helpful in the development of a “tolerant and inquisitive mind,” but felt the Institute was lacking in organization, possibly due to the “European influence” and the somewhat cultish following of the master. Indeed, Moholy, with his “monstrously infectious smile,” could be extraordinarily persuasive in articulating his vision and leading his flock. Moholy vigorously denied the charge of disorganization but, at the same time, it did seem to injure his pride.³

Nevertheless, the reopening of the Institute in its new location adjacent to the Loop on North State Street in the fall of 1945, despite an “unfavorable lease” and a chaotic scene of rapid renovations, seemed to offer the possibility of reimagining the Institute for the postwar era. The summer had not really offered much of a break for Moholy, who had continued to teach during the weekdays, work on design contracts for the Parker Pen Company and other firms in the evenings, and chip away at the manuscript for *Vision in Motion* on Sundays. But the new semester offered a chance for rebirth, and Gropius bestowed a blessing of sorts with what Moholy called a “wonderful” welcome lecture to the new, larger student body. The Institute promised to be increasingly relevant as plans for postwar development would inevitably demand good design for the products consumers would buy as the economy reconverted to the domestic marketplace from its wartime footing. The increasingly professionalized school would offer bachelor’s degrees in industrial design, textile design, visual arts, advertising design, and photography, and master’s degrees in visual arts and architectural design. The essentials of Bauhaus pedagogy and the “principle of educational unity” would remain at the core of the Institute’s philosophy. The program was still based on the yearlong foundation course, which had been designed with the intent of “crystallizing the student’s own talents

3 Zay Smith to W.A. Patterson, July 16, 1945, box 2, folder 37, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Zay Smith, July 26, 1945, box 6, folder 183, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, July 26, 1945, box 6, folder 183, ID; Hughston McBain to Paepcke, February 6, 1946, box 2, folder 37, ID; Chancellor, “Institute of Design,” 28–35.

upon a broad and solid basis of the arts, science, and technology.” This necessary intellectual integration was required of students before they could move on to the more specialized workshops and the architecture courses. The Institute’s series of lectures in the humanities, meant to “broaden the view” of the student, was retained, with Siegfried Giedion and Herbert Bayer among those scheduled to speak.⁴

Buy Moholy’s plans for the Institute and Paepcke’s conception of Moholy’s role in its future would change dramatically in November of 1945, when Moholy was hospitalized for two weeks with a “nasty attack” of leukemia, as Sibyl put it. Although Paepcke assured the Rockefeller officer Whitelaw that it was merely a “little attack,” he very nearly died and was forced to undergo intensive treatments for weeks thereafter, greatly shocking his friends and family, who were “living in fear.” Gropius would encourage Moholy to “take it easy for quite a while” to avoid a relapse—advice that the workaholic Moholy would find difficult to follow. Paepcke was a bit franker with Heald of IIT, reporting Moholy’s illness as “rather frightening.” At the same time, however, Paepcke suggested that they keep the matter of a possible merger in the “forefront” of their minds until Moholy recovered. Moholy would be unable to return to work at the Institute until January, by which time he was still tiring easily and “looking thin and a little drawn,” leading Paepcke to worry that he might risk a relapse by overworking himself.⁵

Paepcke, meanwhile, continued to lobby for foundational support while assuaging the fears of the school’s industry supporters that Moholy’s methods were “questionable” and that the school was a “one-man institution” now threatened by Moholy’s illness. Paepcke was shocked by Marshall Field & Co.’s withdrawal of support for the Institute, and he feared that it would signal to other business concerns that the school was not worth supporting. “It would be too discouraging and almost fatal, if firms such as yours dropped out,” Paepcke pleaded with Hughston McBain, the company’s president. “For the good of the country, the city, design education, and even Marshall Field & Co., this must not happen, and I warn you I am going to do everything I can, short of being a nuisance, to dissuade you.” McBain would eventually relent, agreeing to sup-

4 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 219; Moholy-Nagy to Robert Wolff, September 5, 1945, box 7, folder 209, ID; Institute of Design: Catalog, 1945–46, box 3, folder 86, ID; Paepcke to B.L. Robbins, January 25, 1946, box 2, folder 42, ID.

5 Sibyl to Wolff, November 25, 1945, box 7, folder 210, ID; Moholy-Nagy to Jenő Nagy, December 10, 1945, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 408; Paepcke to Robert Whitelaw, December 1, 1945, box 2, folder 42, ID; Paepcke to Heald, December 21, 1945, box 2, folder 40, ID; Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, January 15, 1946, Inv.Nr. 2252443, WGOA; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, January 23, 1946, Inv.Nr. 2252443; Paepcke to Herbert and Joella Bayer, January 29, 1946, box 96, folder 10, WPP.

port the Institute at a lower rate and continue scholarships and subsidized tuition for employees attending courses there.⁶

But Paepcke had other irons in the fire, and his entreaties to Herbert Bayer—like Moholy, an alumnus of the Bauhaus born under the old Habsburg Empire—would begin to reap dividends. After a personal visit to New York in November of 1945, Paepcke finally convinced Herbert and Joella Bayer to come to Aspen over Christmas on an all-expenses-paid trip where they could enjoy “the country, scenery, skiing and future possibilities.” Paepcke envisioned putting Bayer on a “continuous retainer arrangement” with the Container Corporation of America (CCA), as he had done with Gropius, setting him up in Aspen with two “dependable types of income,” supervising developments for his real estate outfit, the Aspen Supply Company, “on all these matters that require taste.” Bayer would also have an occasional obligation to visit a CCA office in California to work on special projects for the company. All the while, so the plan went, Joella might tend to the envisioned ski lodge, and Herbert would still have half of his time free to paint, write books, and ski. Herbert was flattered by the offer and by Paepcke’s “very touching act of friendship,” recalling the work he had previously done for CCA as one of the “highlights” in his life as a designer. Paepcke even ended up finding a house for the Bayers in Aspen. The Aspen Supply Company also purchased three old brick buildings in the town, two of which he meant to have refurbished and restyled in a modern manner as hotels. Paepcke reported that there were a number of Europeans planning to move to Aspen—including a Swiss hotel man and a Russian princess—some of whom, Paepcke speculated, might form the core of Joella’s “salon.” The Bayers were charmed by Paepcke’s fantastic scenario, and they planned another visit to Aspen in the spring. “We are happier every day about Aspen and the wonderful arrangements you contrived for us,” Joella wrote. The Bayers would move to Aspen in April of 1946.⁷

With the end of the war and Moholy’s tentative recovery, the Institute seemed poised for a promising spring semester in 1946. The flood of federally-

6 Paepcke to Whitelaw, December 1, 1945, box 2, folder 42, ID; Paepcke to Adeline Pynchon, December 9, 1945, box 2, folder 42, ID; Paepcke to B.L. Robbins, January 25, 1946, box 2, folder 42, ID; Paepcke to Hughston McBain, March 21, 1946, box 2, folder 41, ID; Paepcke to Hughston McBain, April 10, 1946, box 2, folder 41, ID; Hughston McBain to Paepcke, March 27, 1946, box 2, folder 37, ID.

7 Joella Bayer to Paepcke, November 3, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP; Paepcke to Herbert and Joella Bayer, November 15, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP; Paepcke to Herbert and Joella Bayer, November 24, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP; Bayer to Paepcke, November 29, 1945, box 96, folder 9, WPP; Herbert and Joella Bayer to Paepcke, January 6, 1946, box 96, folder 10, WPP; Paepcke to Herbert and Joella Bayer, January 14, 1946, box 96, folder 10, WPP; Joella Bayer to Paepcke, January 30, 1946, box 96, folder 10, WPP; Paepcke to Joella and Herbert Bayer, February 1, 1946, box 96, folder 10, WPP; Allen, *Romance*, 138–40.

subsidized veterans produced such demand from prospective students that, with more than four hundred day and night students, the school had to close registration and introduce a wait list for the first time. New faculty were brought on, though some left, including Kepes, who took a job at MIT. An open house brought over a thousand visitors, and an industrial conference sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation was planned. Whitelaw, the Rockefeller officer, noted positively that the school was exerting a “hidden influence” on the organization of other design schools around the country. A flattering profile in *Time* magazine highlighted the creative designs emerging from the school that would aid businesses and improve the quality of life for postwar consumers, such as an infrared oven, a “car that runs by sunlight,” and a “beautyrest” chair that would put an occupant’s head near the floor and feet in the air. If such products might sound a bit fanciful, and if the casual reader might raise an eyebrow at Moholy’s statement that art and design were best used as forms of education to “refine” the emotions of the public, *Time* offered the reassurance that the Institute’s long list of hardheaded industrial backers was evidence that the school “makes as much sense as nonsense.” Still, the Institute’s financial situation remained somewhat precarious, and Moholy even forfeited his own salary, which he donated to the school, surviving instead on his various design commissions with business concerns such as the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Parker Pen Company, for which he did an array of design work including the interiors of the company’s Chicago office. Although Moholy was originally hired as a kind of “stylist”—a very superficial role for the industrial designer that he spurned—he eventually took on a more substantial position. He took great pleasure in refining small details that contributed to the functionality of a useful object, such as the company’s successful “51” pen.⁸

Writing for a forward-looking audience of industrial designers on the cusp of a postwar consumer revolution, Moholy once again took on the role of evangelist for the Institute of Design as the real embodiment of the principles and pedagogy of the Bauhaus: the fusion of art and industry toward the end of mass production, guided by a commitment to “sociological responsibility.” “Now, after a terrible war,” Moholy wrote, “we have more opportunities and greater responsibilities.”

8 Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, January 23, 1946, Inv.Nr. 2252443, WGOA; Moholy-Nagy to Gropius, January 28, 1946, Inv.Nr. 2252443, WGOA; “Message in a Bottle,” *Time*, February 18, 1946, 63; “Minutes of the Board of Directors’ Meeting,” March 5, 1946, box 1, folder 6, ID; “It’s an Art to Savvy Art,” *Chicago Daily News*, February 6, 1946; Moholy-Nagy to Jenő Nagy, April 11, 1946, in Passuth, 408–9; E.P. Brooks to Paepcke, May 1, 1946, box 2, folder 36, ID; Paepcke to B.L. Robbins, January 25, 1946, box 2, folder 42, ID; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 637–38; Moholy-Nagy, “Industrial Design,” *Parker Pen Shoptalker*, June 1946, in Kostelanetz, 91–92.

He applied a favored metaphor that technology had become the metabolism of the modern world, and the role of the designer was to integrate humans' biological needs and social behaviors into the new machine-made environment. What the Institute would cultivate in the designer would be the capacity for *vision in motion*, or the ability to see all things in their complicated, evolving relationships to one another. In addition to these broader philosophical aims, though, Moholy assured those hardheaded businessmen and prospective students in his audience that, after completing the basic courses, they would take on practical design problems in specialized workshops, learning the trade by fulfilling commercial orders and acquiring the means to earn a living. Yet with a view to functionality and social responsibility, they would avoid pernicious capitalistic tendencies in design such as artificial obsolescence and decadent ornamentation. Just as Gropius's Bauhaus looked to train designers who would reimagine postwar Europe, in the second postwar era of the twentieth century Moholy sought to free young designers from the constraints and "depressing clichés" of tradition and allow them to "face new situations fearlessly" in a "spirit of co-operation."⁹

Looking forward to its further development and needing to accommodate a rapidly growing student body and faculty, the Institute would plan yet another move in the spring of 1946, purchasing the late-nineteenth-century Chicago Historical Society Building at 632 North Dearborn Street, where it would move for the following school year. Paepcke managed to use the move as an opportunity for a new fundraising campaign for new equipment and a remodeling plan conceived by Moholy that would make full use of the building's twenty thousand square feet of working space. The Institute would also seek out some government assistance through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act for expanding its educational facilities. The Institute's rapidly rising enrollment numbers would justify the need for additional space, and it became part of Paepcke's pitch to the humanities division of the Rockefeller Foundation in its grant application for one hundred thousand dollars, which would be denied. After observing the Institute for seven years, the trustees of the Foundation would ultimately remain wary of going outside their "customary routines" in the humanities, news that came as a "real shock" to Paepcke. But Paepcke did not give up in his entreaties to the humanities officer David Stevens, convinced that the issue was "not dead," and he would later arrange a meeting between Stevens and Moholy in New York.¹⁰

9 Moholy-Nagy, "New Education: Organic Approach," *Art and Industry*, March 1946; Moholy-Nagy, "Art in Industry," *Arts and Architecture* 9–10 (1947), in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 357–60.

10 Paepcke to Fred Gardner, April 17, 1946, box 2, folder 40, ID; "Institute of Design Buys Permanent Home," *Chicago Sun*, June 2, 1946; Paepcke to Hughston McBain, April 19, 1946, box 2, folder 41, ID; Paepcke to

Mixed with the rising anticipation for the fall semester, however, was a sense of foreboding. While Moholy was looking ahead with trepidation, he was also looking back, having prepared a retrospective of his work for the Society of Contemporary Art in Cincinnati in the spring. By the summer, Moholy's illness had returned, and he, Sibyl, and their daughters, Hattula and Claudia, would move to the farmhouse at Somonauk given to them by Paepcke, where Moholy would put the finishing touches on his manuscript for *Vision in Motion*. Gropius had been begging him to rest, and he was trying not to overexert himself too much and hoping for a return to health amidst the pleasant surroundings of the country. Yet he was clearly gravely concerned about his long-term outlook. Although he described his present condition as "excellent" in a late-July letter to Paepcke, he took it upon himself to suggest possible candidates as his successor should he be "unable to continue" as director of the Institute. Among his suggestions were his old friend Kepes, the Bauhaus master Marcel Breuer, the Spanish architect José Luis Sert, and—if the director simply had to be an American—the Institute's architecture teacher Ralph Rapson or the designer Charles Eames. His main concern was that the director have a keen artistic sensibility, since the Bauhaus idea required an integration of art, science, and technology, and while the latter two were accepted as a matter of course in the field of industrial design, the first was not. Paepcke humored Moholy with his recommendations but assured him that it would be about twenty-five years before he would be "too old and feeble" to lead the school. Meanwhile, Paepcke continued to stock the Institute's board of directors with more corporate leaders from companies including Masonite, Sylvania Electric, Johnson Wax, and Kraft Food Products, and he assured prospective supporters that the Institute was "after all... not a fine arts project but is training young men and women for a business career."¹¹

So it was with a deep sense of uncertainty and possibility that the Institute began its fall term in 1946, mostly maintaining in its program the standard Bauhaus progression: beginning with the foundation courses that were meant to

William T. Bacon, August 1, 1946, box 2, folder 38, ID; "Prominent Chicago Citizens to Inspect Former Chicago Historical Society Building" [press release], n.d., box 1, folder 20, ID; Mildred Bolger, "Directors to Inspect Remodeled Quarters of Institute of Design," *Chicago Daily News*, March 11, 1947; Serge Chermayeff, address to ID students, February 1947, box 5, folder 165, ID; Paepcke to Stevens, May 1, 1946, box 2, folder 42, ID; John Marshall to Paepcke, September 20, 1946, box 2, folder 37, ID; Paepcke to Stevens, September 24, 1946, box 2, folder 42, ID; "Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting of Institute of Design," August 21, 1946, box 1, folder 6, ID; Paepcke to Leslie Lewis, November 13, 1946, box 61, folder 3, WPP.

11 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 226; Moholy-Nagy to Jenő Nagy, June 23, 1946; Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, July 31, 1946, box 6, folder 183, ID; Paepcke to Moholy-Nagy, August 5, 1946, box 61, folder 3, WPP; "Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting," September 10, 1946, box 1, folder 6, ID; Findeli, *Le Bauhaus*, 134–35; Paepcke to Alfred Carton, September 12, 1946, box 2, folder 38, ID.

develop the student's sense for materials, plane, volume, space, motion, and color; then proceeding to the specialized workshops with a focus on industrial applications in such things as photography, product design, and advertising arts; and, finally, architectural design, which was emphasized as "the unifying agent for all branches of the Arts." Celebrated faculty members such as Alexander Archipenko had returned, and there were other newer faculty, such as a popular Swiss sculptor and art historian named Hugo Weber, who delighted Paepcke and his daughter Nina, who was by then a student.¹²

As the school he had founded became a fully-functioning bureaucracy, and as he completed his magnum opus, Moholy made the decision, despite his weakened condition, to travel to New York in mid-November to attend a conference organized by Edgar Kaufmann at MoMA on "Industrial Design as a New Profession." He also took the opportunity to meet with old friends—for the last time, as it would turn out. The conference was attended by other luminaries in the field of design, including Raymond Loewy, Walter Dorwin Teague, and Joseph Hudnut. Moholy was asked to speak on the topic of design education. In contrast to the more business-oriented imperatives emphasized by figures like Loewy and Teague—that is, the role of design in selling—Moholy made his case for the importance of what he called *vision* in art education and industrial design. He wished to counter what he saw as the "insidious paternalism" of industrialists that threatened to strangle the "creative independence" of the artists and designers who worked for them. Precisely because of the rapid change of technology, a capacity for *vision* as a fundamental attitude—as opposed to specialized training—was most important in art education, and along with the traits of sensibility, creativeness, aesthetic awareness, and social responsibility. Skeptical of the capitalistic demand for artificial obsolescence and surface appearances that often took precedence over functionality, Moholy argued for an ethical education that fostered design less as a walled-off profession and more as an open, progressive attitude. Specifically, it was the attitude of the planner who could swiftly adapt to changing social circumstances and technological capabilities. Moholy identified a troubling dialectical movement in industrial civilization: it produced mass literacy but almost simultaneously debased it as a cultural value for the sake of profit. For Moholy, the role of the designer was to ensure that technology did not rob humanity of its creative potential and intellectual capacities. As Gropius saw it, Moholy's comments at the MoMA conference amounted to a brilliant defense against the philistinism of the "reactionaries."

12 Course catalog, Institute of Design, 1946–47, box 3, folder 87, ID; Paepcke to Mary Langhorne, November 12, 1946, box 2, folder 41, ID.

Although Gropius heard reports that Moholy looked well and was “extremely lively” on the occasion, Kaufmann noticed a disconcerting “tautness” in Moholy’s face of the kind that he believed to indicate “unrelenting illness.” But these unmistakable signs of his “bodily weariness” only made his statements more poignant, Kaufmann felt; they were Moholy’s ultimate “testament” as a teacher. With the important exception of his posthumously-published book, *Vision in Motion*, the MoMA conference would, in fact, be the venue for Moholy’s final public statements.¹³

Though frail upon his return to Chicago, Moholy continued to plan for the next semester and even meet with students. He considered whom he might invite as a guest lecturer on philosophical topics such as American Pragmatism, and he speculated about the extent to which students could usefully sublimate their political ideas through their focus on the immediate problems of design and by virtue of the Bauhaus style of art education, which avoided dogma and rigid theory. “All in all,” Moholy observed, “it has been my concern to keep any one-sided doctrines out of the curriculum and to replace the adherence to rigid ‘programs’ with the creative stimulus and the timeless satisfaction of group work.” Ultimately, when freed from “transitory tactics” and “party connotations,” politics was finally a method of “realizing ideas for the welfare of the community.” Moholy was true to his pragmatic, social-democratic ideals to the very end. But in this burst of enthusiasm for the greater Bauhaus project, he may have overestimated his strength: he ruptured his spleen after lifting a heavy projector by himself, an injury that would lead to peritonitis. Because of overcrowding in the hospital, he had to be treated in a general ward, where he was further stressed by the death that he saw around him. He told Sibyl that he thought he would pull through, but after only two days in the hospital he died at the age of 51 on November 24, 1946.¹⁴

A few days later, a memorial service for Moholy was held at the Institute with more than 1,000 people in attendance. Barely able to keep his composure upon losing his dear friend, Gropius eulogized Moholy as “the great stimulator” whose “fiery spirit” was indispensable to the development of the Bauhaus. Gropius believed that there was no one who understood him as well as Moholy did. Stevens of the Rockefeller Foundation had attended the memorial for Moholy,

13 Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy*, 241–43; Margolin, *Struggle*, 245–46; Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., “Moholy,” *Arts and Architecture*, March 1947, 25; Findeli, *Bauhaus*, 139; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 634; Gropius to Lucia Moholy, December 12, 1946, Inv.Nr. 653081, WGOA.

14 Moholy-Nagy to Paepcke, November 21, 1946, box 6, folder 183, ID; “Moholy-Nagy, 51, Director Of Design Institute, Dies,” *Sun* [Chicago], November 25, 1946; Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, 29; Gropius to Lucia Moholy, December 12, 1946, Inv.Nr. 653081, WGOA.

and he was favorably impressed by a glowing report on the Institute's activities presented by the English art historian Herbert Read, who, years ago, had sponsored his friend Moholy's visa application to Great Britain. Read's report provided a document of evidence that Stevens would refer to as the Foundation reconsidered its support for the Institute.

It was not long before Gropius, Paepcke, Sibyl, and the Institute's faculty began thinking seriously about a successor. Although he himself had been considering resigning as chairman of the Board of Directors, Paepcke believed that the Institute's reputation was at an apex, and he became more determined than ever that the school must go on without Moholy. Sibyl, who had been teaching history and philosophy classes at the Institute, also petitioned Paepcke for a salaried staff position for herself at the Institute, partly to compensate for the loss of income from Moholy. Gropius understood that Sibyl's teaching was valued by the faculty, but he strongly cautioned Paepcke about keeping her on because of potential friction that might arise between her and whoever became the new director. Gropius feared that Sibyl would not accept the decisions of someone who might take the school in a different direction than Moholy would have, at least in her view.

The Institute's faculty held an emergency meeting on the evening of Moholy's death, resolving to continue without interruption "along the lines established by Moholy." They declared their support for Gropius as president and director, stating that "no one is closer to the spirit and philosophy of Moholy-Nagy than is Doctor Gropius." Paepcke convened with Gropius, and they agreed to recognize Nathan Lerner, the head of the production design department and dean of faculty and students, as the staff leader until a new director could be appointed. Kepes and Bayer were considered, and Archipenko actively sought the directorship, but Sibyl dismissed him for lacking the requisite "educational breadth." Paepcke wanted Gropius himself for the directorship, but Gropius demurred. He believed that it would be an "act of disloyalty to Harvard" if he were to leave his post there, and, in any event, he believed that a younger person should take the job. So, Gropius was given the task of finding a successor for Moholy. His top choice was the Russian-born, English-educated architect and designer Serge Chermayeff. Chermayeff had immigrated to the US in 1940, and by 1942 he had established a good reputation as the tenured chair of the Department of Design at Brooklyn College. He had put together the "Design for Use" exhibition at MoMA that featured several Institute designs. Gropius reported that Chermayeff was "much devoted" to Moholy, who in turn liked him "more and more" after having come to know him while living in London. On December 16, the Board's Executive Committee announced that Chermayeff had ac-

cepted appointment as president and director of the Institute and would assume the role before January 15, 1947.¹⁵

Chermayeff would be the keeper of Moholy's legacy as the director of the Institute, and Sibyl would capture Moholy's life as his first biographer. But Moholy's work also stood for itself. Within a year a memorial exhibition would be staged for him at the Art Institute of Chicago, and Sibyl would begin to arrange travelling exhibits of Moholy's work. But perhaps more significant than his artworks in terms of his legacy was his final book, *Vision in Motion*, which he had been laboring on for many years. Published in the year after his death, Moholy dedicated this grand statement of his design philosophy and pedagogy to his American patrons, Elizabeth and Walter Paepcke. He also thanked the Rockefeller Foundation for supporting him in the completion of the book, which fully explained the aims and methods of the Institute's educational program.

Moholy argued that the technological transformations of the modern era required a reeducation of the senses, or a development of "emotional literacy," that would ease people's adjustment to social changes and prepare them for progressive reforms. Part of the problem was specialization, which could narrow the capacity of the individual designer to comprehend the whole and to work cooperatively toward social goals. In the American context, social goals were further lost to the immediate demands of capitalistic competition, which led to such things as rapid obsolescence and a superficial conception of design that privileged external appearance, manifesting first in ornamentation and later in "streamlining." The concept of a designer as a mere "stylist" was antithetical to the Bauhaus idea, which held that the designer was an orchestrator of technological means in service of human ends. For that reason, it was insufficient for designers to have merely technical competencies or skills: they also needed to have an understanding of human needs and the ways that people were integrated with the things, machines, and architecture that constituted the material substance of their daily lives. The

15 Frank Holland, "Support of Moholy-Nagy's School Urged as Memorial," *Sun* [Chicago], December 1, 1946; Engelbrecht, *Moholy-Nagy*, 690; Gropius, "László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946)" [eulogy], November 27, 1946, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, 432; Leslie Lewis, memorandum to Members of the Board, December 9, 1946, box 1, folder 12, ID; Gropius to Nathan Lerner, November 29, 1946, box 8, folder 227, ID; Sibyl to Walter Paepcke, November 30, 1946, box 6, folder 194, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, December 3, 1946, box 8, folder 227, ID; Gropius to Lucia Moholy, December 12, 1946, Inv.Nr. 653081, WGOA; Gropius to Paepcke, December 3, 1946, box 8, folder 227, ID; Gropius to Lucia Moholy, December 12, 1946, Inv.Nr. 653081, WGOA; "Announcement" [press release], December 16, 1946, box 1, folder 15, ID; Elizabeth Paepcke to Kepes, box 61, folder 3, WPP; Stevens to Paepcke, January 3, 1947, box 2, folder 37, ID; Chermayeff biography, Annual Exhibition of Design in Chicago Printing, Society of Typographic Arts, Chicago, 1948, box 1, folder 8, Allen Porter Papers, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections and University Archives, The University of Illinois at Chicago [hereafter, "APP"]; ID faculty to the Chairman of the Board, November 24, 1946, box 1, folder 12, ID; Daiter, *Light and Vision*.

relationships between humans and the things in their environment were constantly changing, and for that reason the designer needed to have a capacity for *vision in motion*, or the ability to flexibly plan for a dynamic, evolving future.¹⁶

Moholy's final statement would remain for posterity, but his living legacy would be the Institute. Finally settled into its larger, remodeled quarters for an enlarged student population of some seven hundred day and night students, Chermayeff first addressed the school community in early February of 1947 and presented his first report to the Board in March. He was sure to establish his commitment to the basic Bauhaus pedagogy and principles of design. Yet despite the Bauhaus reverence for architecture as the consummate form of design, and the fact that the Institute offered MA degrees in architecture, Chermayeff did not believe that the Institute had the capacity to establish a separate architecture department that would be commensurate with those of "better equipped" professional schools.

Initially, Sibyl was quite pleased that Chermayeff had taken the reins "with a minimum of friction or disruption and a maximum of tact," and she believed that Moholy would have approved of his direction. She thought he was a "fascinating spectacle," and reported being content "in my passive spectator's role." However, she was hardly a disinterested observer of Institute affairs. Among other roles, she had become the Institute's chief librarian, building up a large visual arts collection with the help of a \$5,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Yet, as Gropius had feared, her tendency to measure Moholy's successor relative to what she believed Moholy would have done would inevitably lead to friction, even as she reminded herself that such a comparison was unfair. Increasingly, Chermayeff would chafe at Sibyl's criticism, and she would recoil at his snobbery and occasionally fall victim to his "explosive" temper. Those areas where the Institute was falling short of Moholy's vision and the Bauhaus ideals would become increasingly apparent, even as the school celebrated record enrollment as it approached its tenth anniversary in Chicago.¹⁷

16 Frank Holland, "Laszlo Moholy-Nagy Memorial Exhibit is Thrilling Show," *Sun* [Chicago], September 21, 1947; Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*; Sibyl to Wolff, January 1, 1948, box 7, folder 210, ID.

17 Chermayeff, address to students, February 1947, box 5, folder 165, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, February 5, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID; Chermayeff, "President's Report" [memo], March 11, 1947, box 1, folder 13, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, May 18, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, May 18, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, July 16, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, August 31, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID; "Resolution Drafted by S. Chermayeff," June 25, 1947, box 1, folder 7, MK; George Eckel, "Chicago Bauhaus Marks a Decade," *New York Times*, August 30, 1947; Mildred Bolger, "Directors to Inspect Remodeled Quarters of Institute of Design," *Chicago Daily News*, March 11, 1947; "Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors," April 14, 1947, box 1, folder 7, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, March 12, 1947, box 7, folder 210, ID; Chancellor, "Institute of Design," 28–35.

Over the course of the first year of his tenure, Sibyl's opinion of Chermayeff's capacities as director would steadily sour, and Chermayeff's resentment towards her interference in the affairs of the Institute would quickly reach a boiling point. "The school is permeated by a miasmatic air of ill-will, suspicion and resignation," Sibyl confided in February of 1948 to Robert Jay Wolff, her friend and a former School of Design teacher. Sibyl said that Chermayeff's handling of a student work exhibition had ended up "offending everyone" and that the faculty was generally "furious and embittered and conscious of their total helplessness." "Chermayeff hates the guts of me and has tried on a truly dirty level to depreciate my standing in the school," Sibyl charged, not without reason. She complained that Chermayeff had neglected the humanities division and courses in art history and sociology in favor of a series of lectures given by "outside people"; that he had done away with teacher training; and that he "hated" the staff members that Moholy had brought on. Such changes, Sibyl believed, would ruin "the school principle which made this school distinctly different from any other school in the country." Sibyl also alleged that some of the newer staff members had grossly misrepresented the origins of the Bauhaus ethos.

Chermayeff, for his part, admitted that he had been warned of possible conflict with Sibyl upon accepting the directorship, and he complained to Paepcke that Sibyl had essentially "appointed herself as a second director and is the nucleus of an opposition caucus." He had a very low opinion of her qualifications and skills, pointing out that she had "failed" as an actress and writer, and that she had refashioned herself as an educator despite her "very superficial" knowledge which was disguised only by her "forty-dollar" words and adroit "verbalization." He labeled her "schizophrenic" and alleged that her "innate frustration" led her to "destroy verbally people and situations with which she comes in contact," leading to a lot of "mischief and stupidity." Reasoning that Sibyl would be well-off financially from the sales of Moholy's paintings, Chermayeff asked Paepcke to call for a vote of confidence from the Board, and he demanded her resignation "at the earliest possible moment."

Feeling scapegoated and helpless against Chermayeff's verbal attacks against her—and unable to reverse a course for the Institute that was, she felt, contrary to the Bauhaus spirit and what Moholy would have done—Sibyl announced to Paepcke that she would resign at the end of March. She had resolved to focus her attention to writing her biography of Moholy rather than continuing to fight for his vision of what the Institute ought to be. She insisted that her decision was not the result of "personal friction," but was rather prompted by her "deep concern" about the educational and financial policies being pursued by the school.

Paepcke was not surprised by her decision and felt that it would be best for all concerned. The Board would accept Sibyl's resignation.

At a faculty meeting in which Sibyl was to present her "case," she described being set up by Chermayeff, railroaded just as she had been when the Nazis forced her from her job as a casting director in Berlin in 1933. She would suffer the indignity of a vote of confidence, which came out twenty-four in favor of Chermayeff and only three against. To her dismay, she also learned that her old friend Gropius had warned Chermayeff about certain troubling aspects of her personality. There was such intense acrimony from the whole affair that Chermayeff insisted that Sibyl leave immediately rather than wait until the end of the month. To the local press, she stated that her departure was a matter of a "difference of opinion in educational policies." Gropius's warning had played out more or less exactly as he had predicted. "I am still quite proud of the fact that I got that mischief-maker out of the Institute before she destroyed it," Chermayeff would later admit. Sibyl would feel so completely ostracized that she even feared returning to the Institute to retrieve Moholy's papers as she began to work on her biography of him. She would secure a contract for that book a little over a year after leaving the Institute, and her biography would appear the following year.¹⁸

Just as Sibyl departed, Paepcke and the Board began once again to seriously consider affiliating the Institute with a larger institution such as a university. Chermayeff and Paepcke had concluded that it was simply too tiresome to continue to make the case for the Institute before business leaders who could never fully appreciate its value and could not come to understand the "seemingly unorthodox trends" in the pedagogy of modern design. The Institute had continued to emphasize the role of its foundation course in a broad design education that introduced students to a variety of materials and developed their capacity for "volume-and-space" consciousness. The Institute's program had always emphasized social obligations, and the path by which a broad, humanistic education prepared students to better solve the problems of industrial mass produc-

18 Sibyl to Wolff, February 10, 1948, box 7, folder 209, ID; Chermayeff to Paepcke, February 26, 1948, box 5, folder 168, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, February 26, 1948, box 7, folder 210, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, March 4, 1948, box 7, folder 210, ID; Sibyl to Paepcke, March 5, 1948, box 6, folder 194, ID; Paepcke to Gropius, March 8, 1948, box 6, folder 194, ID; Paepcke to Sibyl, March 8, 1948, box 6, folder 194, ID; "Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting," March 10, 1948, box 1, folder 7, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, March 11, 1948, box 7, folder 209, ID; "Statement by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy Concerning Her Resignation at the Faculty Meeting on March 10, 1948," box 7, folder 209, ID; "[Sibyl Moholy-Nagy] Resigns in design group rift," *Sun-Times* [Chicago], March 12, 1948, box 6, folder 188, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, March 15, 1948, box 6, folder 194, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, August 19, 1948, box 7, folder 209, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, May 5, 1949, box 7, folder 209, ID; Chermayeff to Wolff, November 7, 1956, box 5, folder 165, ID; S.K., review of *Moholy-Nagy*, a biography by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Architectural Forum*, July 1950, 122, 126, 132.

tion from the holistic perspective of the designer. The training even included field trips to industrial plants to acquaint students with the techniques of fabrication and machine production, and there was, of course, specialized training in architecture, product design, visual design (including advertising, printing, and display), and photography and film. But it had long been difficult to communicate the long-term efficacy of the still-strange Bauhaus method to results-oriented businessmen, even as Paepcke, happy to cite his own experience as president of the Container Corporation, hammered home the point that industrialists' support of the school was not a matter of charity but of real, practical benefit and value to their business that could be measured by improved sales and productivity. In the context of a university or technical school, however, Paepcke and Chermayeff reasoned that its purpose would never be questioned, and it would rely much less on the goodwill of the business community that persisted in thinking of it as a "pro bono" matter. With a strong enrollment of more than four hundred full-time day students and six hundred students taking evening courses, the Institute was in an attractive position for acquisition.

By February of 1949, the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) had emerged as a leading contender, and its president, Henry Heald, grew increasingly interested in the prospect of a merger. By October, a plan for incorporating the Institute of Design into IIT had been drawn up, and by late November the plan was formally ratified by the Board. The Institute would keep its name and, for the moment, remain at its Dearborn Street location, but it would eventually move to the modern IIT "Technology Center" campus on the South Side. It would have the status of a degree-granting department of IIT with Chermayeff as director and professor. The Board would move to dissolve the corporation of the Institute of Design and transfer its assets to IIT. The Institute's trustees would be invited to serve on a new Advisory Board to the Institute of Design, which would include Gropius and have Paepcke as chairman. As he pursued other projects, Paepcke was pleased to assume this much more limited role in Institute affairs and chair a board that met "very infrequently" and eventually not at all. As far as Sibyl was concerned, however, the merger with IIT was merely a "mealticket" for Chermayeff and his "cronies" that compromised Moholy's vision for his school: "the rest goes to hell, is wiped out."

Chermayeff took credit for the idea of the merger which, he said, had saved the Institute of Design's life. He had led the negotiations with Heald, and one early point of agreement was that the Institute would focus its activities not on architecture but on product design, consumer goods, visual design, photography, and "mass-production building equipment elements," which included such things as furniture, appliances, fixtures, and utensils, but also heating and ven-

tilation equipment. The idea was to consider the dwelling “as a product to be produced by industry with the highest level of engineering and technology, comparable to that of the airplane and the automobile.” Under the agreement, architecture students at the Institute would be allowed to complete their courses or transfer to the IIT’s architecture program.

The absence of architecture from the Institute’s program removed the possibility of conflict or overlap with IIT’s Department of Architecture and City Planning, which was directed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Mies, of course, had been the last director of the Bauhaus in Germany. He had been invited to Chicago in 1938, shortly after Moholy’s arrival, to head the architecture department and create a master plan for the campus of the Armour Institute of Technology, which would later become IIT. At the same time, however, lacking an architecture program was immediately contrary to a central Bauhaus tenet: architecture was revered as the consummate form of design, and it was an important field of specialization that culminated in an MA degree. The central elements of the Institute’s instruction, including the foundation course, would remain at IIT, though, and students would even establish a “Moholy-Nagy Memorial Scholarship Fund” to honor the founder, raising money through an annual art auction. Chermayeff would request that students not be required to meet the admissions standards of IIT and that they be given at least a probationary period in the foundation course to prove their competence.¹⁹

19 “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting,” March 10, 1948, box 1, folder 7, ID; “Minutes of Board of Directors’ Meeting of Institute of Design,” February 14, 1949, box 1, folder 7, ID; Chermayeff to Paepcke, October 6, 1949, box 5, folder 165, ID; “Mies van der Rohe,” *Arts & Architecture* 69, no. 3 (March 1952): 16–31; Heald to Chermayeff, October 10, 1949, box 5, folder 165, ID; “Preliminary Draft for April 17 I.I.T. Publication,” ca. November 1949, box 4, folder 112, ID; Sibyl to Wolff, November 4, 1949, box 7, folder 209, ID; News release, Institute of Design, November 10, 1949, box 1, folder 20, ID; Heald to Chermayeff, October 27, 1949, box 5, folder 165, ID; “Institute of Design Minutes of Special Meeting of The Board of Directors,” November 22, 1949, box 1, folder 7, ID; “Institute of Design Minutes of Special Meeting of Members,” November 28, 1949, box 1, folder 7, ID; “Articles of Dissolution, Pursuant to Section 48 of the ‘General Not For Profit Corporation Act’ of Institute of Design,” November 30, 1949, box 1, folder 7, ID; Heald to Paepcke, November 30, 1949, box 1, folder 28, ID; Paepcke to Heald, December 1, 1949, box 2, folder 40, ID; “Illinois Tech Gets a New Design Dept.” *Chicago Daily News*, December 2, 1949; Heald to Nathaniel Owings, December 3, 1949, box 1, folder 28, ID; Chermayeff, “Memorandum on the Admissions Policy for the Institute of Design,” October 2, 1950, box 5, folder 165, ID; “Architecture, Design: Illinois Institute of Technology,” ca. 1950–51, box 4, folder 134, ID; Chermayeff to Wolff, November 7, 1956, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff to Hans Wingler, September 29, 1967, box 5, folder 165, ID; “Bulletin of Illinois Institute of Technology, Institute of Design,” Volume X, No. 3, May 1950, box 4, folder 116, ID; Paepcke to John Brennan, January 27, 1953, box 2, folder 38, ID; Paepcke to Sibyl, May 21, 1951, box 61, folder 4, WPP; Heald to Chermayeff, June 3, 1950, box 5, folder 166, ID; “The Institute of Design—a laboratory for a new education,” *Interiors*, vol. CVIII, no. 3, October 1948, 134–39; Course catalog, Institute of Design, Chicago, 1948–49, box 3, folder 88, ID; Elizabeth Paepcke to Kepes, n.d., box 61, folder 3, WPP; “Bulletin of Illinois Institute of Technology, Institute of Design,” Volume X, No. 3, May 1950, box 4, folder 116, ID; Paepcke to Earl Kribben, August 18, 1950, box 2, folder 41, ID; Paepcke to Earl Kribben, September 20, 1950, box 2,

In some ways, the Institute's becoming part of IIT resolved an old split in the Bauhaus that had occurred when Mies had taken on the directorship of the school in 1930 on Gropius's recommendation. Since then, Mies had felt some ownership over the Bauhaus, and he resented his crosstown rival Moholy for using the name, even though Moholy had been given Gropius's explicit blessing. Moholy and Sibyl also resented Mies for his handling of the closure of the Bauhaus: Mies had opportunistically negotiated with the Nazis to absolve himself of charges of "degeneracy" that smeared the other Bauhäusler and which he feared would stain his career. What was worse, Mies was the only Bauhaus leader to sign a proclamation of support for Hitler in 1934, which Sibyl called a "terrible stab in the back for us."

Nevertheless, at an event held in April of 1950 to celebrate the incorporation of the Institute into IIT, Mies, Gropius, and Chermayeff each gave addresses honoring the continuation of the Bauhaus and the union of its separate American wings in Chicago. In his address, Gropius expressed hope for a "fruitful collaboration," and he reiterated his commitment to the Bauhaus ethos of a "unity of all design in relation to life," an idea which was in diametrical opposition to the concept of "art for art's sake," and even more opposed to the philistine's idea of "business as an end in itself." Gropius expressed his faith that the new union would prove to be "the decisive link between the designer and industry in this country." Chermayeff echoed Gropius's call to develop designers able to work well with industry, particularly to modernize the home and embrace the new media of communication such as television. Privately, however, Chermayeff was turned off by the extent to which the IIT administration was "spellbound" by Mies, about whom they had a "hero complex" on the basis of the great publicity the school had received for his design of the campus. He worried that he risked taking a permanently subordinate position to Mies. "I hope that your speech will counterbalance this," Chermayeff wrote to Gropius. Gropius was also concerned about the new marriage, as it were, confessing that he believed Mies to be a "tyrant teacher" who imposed himself on students rather than allowing them to develop themselves. "I think that he just does not do what we try to develop in the Bauhaus," admitted Gropius, who could not bring himself to "glorify" Mies in his speech.²⁰

folder 41, ID; Chermayeff, "Annual Report for the Academic Year 1949-50," August 4, 1950, box 1, folder 11, ID; Press release, IIT, March 19, 1954, box 1, folder 20, ID.

20 Gropius, "Design and Industry," address at Blackstone Hotel, April 17, 1950, box 4, folder 114, ID; Dyja, *Third Coast*, 57-58; 107; Chermayeff, "Institute of Design," address at Blackstone Hotel, April 17, 1950, box 4, folder 114; Chermayeff to Gropius, March 17, 1950, box 5, folder 165, ID; Gropius to Chermayeff, March 23, 1950, box 8, folder 227, ID; Chermayeff to Gropius, March 29, 1950, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff to Heald, April 3, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chancellor, "Institute of Design," 28-35.

Their misgivings about Mies and IIT would soon turn out to be justified. It immediately became clear to Chermayeff that the Institute would not at all be on equal footing with Mies's architecture department, as had been implied by the merger. Chermayeff quickly got into disputes with Heald over admissions procedures, feeling that IIT's standards, which were very stringent in math, did not apply to Institute of Design applicants. More important, perhaps, was Chermayeff's suspicion that Heald and IIT had merely been using the Institute to secure project grants from local industry. The Institute still enjoyed a good reputation and was featured in a special issue of *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* on the Bauhaus in America. But Chermayeff insisted on the unique, experimental nature of the Institute, and he warned that what he viewed as its degraded status at IIT threatened to destroy that essential characteristic. He complained directly to Heald, stating his opposition to budget cuts that had been proposed on the basis of an anticipated drop in enrollment.

By the spring of 1951, Chermayeff began to signal that he might not stay on as director, and he communicated to Paepcke his inclination to resign as director unless a set of conditions were met, including raising the Institute's status to that of a school rather than a department and granting it control over its admissions process. Gropius was alarmed at the news, advising Chermayeff against acting "in wrath." "Do you realize that your Institute is the stronghold of the modern movement in design education?" he admonished, pointing to the thirty-two-year legacy of the Bauhaus that appeared in jeopardy. Gropius tried to intervene, offering to explain the unique nature of the Institute to Heald. "The Institute," Gropius reasoned, "is such a peculiar setup that it really needs a head who is spiritual and administrative leader in one." Gropius insisted that the Institute was "the leading stronghold for art education in the world," and he pleaded with Heald to grant Chermayeff the freedom and independence he required. Gropius acknowledged that Mies was a problem, but he tried to reassure Chermayeff that Mies was old and therefore "may soon be out." Chermayeff and Paepcke thanked Gropius for the intervention, but they had little faith that it would have an effect on Heald's policy toward the Institute, and Paepcke warned Gropius that he did not expect the conflict to be satisfactorily resolved. Chermayeff promised Gropius that he would seek compromise and "peaceful alternatives," but he seemed to hold out little hope for reform, especially considering that Mies was "the local god" and even if he were to depart a cohort of "younger prophets" would continue his tradition after he was gone. "The strait jacket will remain around the architecture department for many years," he concluded.

By the middle of May, Chermayeff had essentially presented an ultimatum before Heald and the dean of the School of Engineering, John Rettaliata, stating

that his continuing on at IIT would be conditional upon the Institute gaining the status of a school with its own dean and autonomy over hiring, budgeting, and admissions decisions. “They must declare their confidence or otherwise in me,” Chermayeff confided to Gropius, whose intervention in the matter he sought. “In the latter case, I think I should resign.” Rettaliata scoffed at the idea of Chermayeff having complete autonomy in budgetary affairs. Chermayeff openly speculated about taking a chair elsewhere, and he began to worry about the swirling rumors and gossip about the affair. “The repetition of an open battle such as I had to fight with Sibyl for the school’s survival must at all costs be avoided,” Chermayeff told Gropius. Indeed, Sibyl had already heard about Chermayeff’s possible departure, and she immediately presented herself for the position of director to Paepcke, who demurred, pointing to his diminished role on the Institute’s Advisory Board, which by that point had almost ceased to exist. Gropius was becoming increasingly concerned, offering whatever help he could to resolve the matter. “The Institute must not be damaged by this clash,” he wrote to Chermayeff. “It is much too important.”

But whatever help Gropius might have offered came too late, and Chermayeff would submit a letter of resignation to Rettaliata on June 5, 1951, passing his administrative duties along to his assistant director, Crombie Taylor. Ultimately, Chermayeff believed that Rettaliata and Heald were so taken by Mies that the Institute thereafter would essentially follow his pattern, and what Gropius and Moholy had built up from the Bauhaus would be “but a ghost.” Upon stepping down as director, Chermayeff technically remained a tenured professor at the Institute, but upon learning that he had been stripped of his campus office, removed from the Advisory Board, and given the most undesirable teaching duties, he resigned from his professorship as well on September 1.²¹

Paepcke somewhat feebly suggested that Heald talk to Kepes about finding a replacement for Chermayeff, but by that point his attentions had shifted de-

21 Chermayeff to Hans Winkler, September 29, 1967, box 5, folder 165, ID; Gropius to Chermayeff, April 5, 1951, box 8, folder 227, ID; Gropius to Chermayeff, April 10, 1951, box 8, folder 227, ID; Chermayeff to Paepcke, April 12, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff to Heald, April 12, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Gropius to Heald, April 18, 1951, box 8, folder 227, ID; Chermayeff to Gropius, April 20, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Paepcke to Gropius, April 23, 1951, box 8, folder 228, ID; Gropius to Chermayeff, April 24, 1951, box 8, folder 227, ID; Chermayeff, to Gropius, April 26, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Paepcke to Gropius, May 4, 1951, box 8, folder 228, ID; Chermayeff to Paepcke, May 12, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff, to Rettaliata, May 18, 1951; box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff to Gropius, May 16, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Sibyl to Paepcke, May 16, 1951, box 6, folder 194, ID; Paepcke to Sibyl, May 21, 1951, box 61, folder 4, WPP; Gropius to Chermayeff, May 21, 1951, box 8, folder 227, ID; Rettaliata to Chermayeff, May 22, 1951, box 1, folder 30, ID; Chermayeff to Rettaliata, June 5, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff to Paepcke, June 9, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff to Heald, September 1, 1951, box 5, folder 165, ID; Chermayeff, “Annual Report for the Academic Year 1949–50,” August 4, 1950, box 1, folder 11, ID.

cidedly away from the Institute of Design. He felt that he could “no longer carry the burden” of the Institute, as Elizabeth would later put it. Having relinquished the presidency of CCA in 1946, instead taking on the role of chairman and chief executive officer, Paepcke turned his attention more intensely to Aspen. He had continued to invest heavily in the development of the town, having successfully convinced his appointed cultural ambassadors Herbert and Joella Bayer to resettle there to nurture the renaissance in an effort to restore its old “Gay Nineties” atmosphere.

Claiming to prefer productive collaborations with business concerns to pure patronage, Herbert Bayer was on the payroll as a design consultant for CCA and the Aspen Supply Company, doing such things as supervising color schemes for office interiors, designing brochures, and overseeing renovations. Bayer would also help Paepcke to found the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, which organized two-week retreats meant to relax and enlighten business executives and “to bridge the gap between the practical world of U.S. business and the world of philosophical ideas,” as *Time* put it. Between their philosophical seminars and concerts, these executives would be energized by calisthenics and relaxed by baths and massages. As one contemporary reporter observed, Paepcke envisioned “harpichord concerts rather than hot dogs, drama instead of drive-ins, handcraft instead of Hialeah.” Paepcke sometimes couched his support for cultural enrichment in Cold War terms, suggesting that time wasted on “canned entertainment” such as movies and television would sap Americans’ ability to effectively compete with the Russians.

Paepcke’s designs for transforming the derelict mountain town into a sophisticated cultural community seemed to be bearing fruit: the world’s longest ski lift opened there in 1947; the actor Gary Cooper bought property there in 1948; on the suggestion of Robert Hutchins, chancellor of the University of Chicago, Paepcke staged a major cultural festival there in 1949 on the bicentennial of Goethe’s birth; and, by 1950, Bayer had completed his designs for the interior renovations of the town’s opera house. In 1951, Paepcke hosted the first Design Conference in Aspen with the purpose of bringing together “the designer, that is, the artist, and the business man, the mass producer, or mass merchandiser.” Speakers that year included Paepcke, Bayer, Charles Eames, and Josef Albers; in subsequent years, architects and designers such as Kepes, Buckminster Fuller (who had also lectured at the Institute), Walter Dorwin Teague, Victor Gruen, and many others would participate. It was incorporated as the *International Design Conference in Aspen* in 1955, bringing in not only design professionals but also scientists, humanists, and businesspeople for the “cross-fertilization of men’s minds.” The conference would become a major institution

lasting into the twenty-first century. Paepcke's efforts were very much aimed at an elite class of culturally-informed businessmen like himself, and a new health center established in 1956—led by another Austrian whom Paepcke had imported—was meant to help the country's leaders “preserve their health and also gain a new insight on their leadership responsibilities.” Paepcke sought to distinguish himself as an enlightened, sophisticated kind of businessman, even calling himself a “rebel” in his social stratum for holding unorthodox opinions such as his fondness for the labor leader Walter Reuther.²²

After Moholy's death, Paepcke had increasingly turned to Bayer as his design guru, even engaging him to work for many years on a “World Geo-Graphic Atlas,” which would be published by CCA and initially distributed exclusively to its clients. Paepcke's first foray into modern design had come through his art director, Egbert Jacobson, who started at the company in 1935 with his assistant Katherine Chandler. Through their work in the design department, Paepcke's Container Corporation would become known for being at the forefront of modern design, not only in its products but also in its advertising. Jacobson devised an instructional “Color Harmony Manual” that was sold to hundreds of companies, establishing CCA as an expert in color standardization. The company also strictly maintained a consistent corporate identity, which was marked by a tan color—reminiscent of its main product, paperboard boxes—and a sans-serif typeface which was used across everything representing the Corporation, including letterheads, stationery, salesmen's calling cards, purchase orders, annual reports, office interiors, uniforms, and trucks. The company benefitted hugely from the wartime need for containers, and it continued to profit from the industrial “reconversion” that led to the postwar consumer boom and the need for paperboard boxes for all manner of packaged consumer goods. Major customers included General Mills, Procter & Gamble, American Tobacco, and Ar-

22 Paepcke to Heald, September 6, 1951, box 2, folder 40, ID; Allen, *Romance*, 139–69; Sally Luther, “Art-loving Businessman Pushes ‘Small Town’ Trend,” *Minneapolis Star*, November 19, 1948; Paepcke, MS, address at “Design Conference,” Aspen, June 28, 1951, box 1, folder 9, WPP; Paepcke, “Industry in the Arts” address, November 1, 1951, WPP; R. Hunter Middleton and Alexander Ebin, “Impressions from the Design Conference held at Aspen, Colorado, June 28 through July 1, 1951,” box 15, folder 734, International Design Conference in Aspen papers, 1954–1986, Richard J. Daley Library Special Collections and University Archives, The University of Illinois at Chicago [hereafter, “IDCA”]; “How the International Design Conference in Aspen Can Help Your Company” [brochure], 1960, box 15, folder 738, IDCA; “Aspen,” CA, July 1960, 9–22; Janis Bultman, “Many Paths from the Bauhaus,” Darkroom, n.d., 44–50, box 1, folder 5, APP; Dean Sims, “The Town that Came Back—For Management,” *Manage*, November 1956, 22–25; “Adventure at Aspen,” *Time*, July 15, 1957, 86–88; Roy Grimm, “Executives Go Back to Class for New Look at Education,” *Oakland Tribune*, January 30, 1958; Jack Miller, “Businessmen Told ‘Money Is Not All There Is in Life,’” *San Francisco News*, January 30, 1958; “Walter Paepcke, Art Patron, Dies,” *The New York Times*, April 14, 1960; Elizabeth Paepcke to Kepes, n.d., box 61, folder 3, WPP.

mour. The company's design labs mainly tended to the needs of manufacturers, but its innovative products, such as a carry-home beer package, often ended up in the hands of consumers.

Although it sold its products to industry and not directly to consumers, the Container Corporation nevertheless raised its profile among the general public through a campaign of magazine ads—originally suggested by its advertising agent, N. W. Ayer—beginning in 1937 in both trade and mass publications, including *Fortune* and *Time*. The ads featured the work of many well-regarded modern artists such as Bayer, Kepes, Jean Carlu, Fernand Léger, and A. M. Cassandre. Manufacturers, of course, were still part of the general public, and the logic of Paepcke's campaign was to flatter their desire to be at the forefront of a modern movement. At the same time, these institutional advertisements worked to create broad awareness of the company in the public's mind and to give it a distinctive personality associated with "contemporary ideas" in design. The war would lead Paepcke to promote the hopeful cause of postwar internationalism with a series of "United Nations" advertisements that featured the work of artists from around the world and celebrated the ideals of global unity and economic integration. The 1945 exhibit featuring this art, which was put together by Bayer and premiered at the Art Institute, did much to burnish this reputation. The exhibit traveled around the country to some twenty cities, where it was often staged in modern art galleries such as Minneapolis's Walker Art Center. One midwestern reviewer called the exhibit "one of the foremost displays of modern art in the country." It was viewed by more than 200,000 people, promoting the Container Corporation's reputation as a forward-looking organization.

Paepcke would further his effort to promote high culture as he simultaneously promoted his company with another series of ads on the theme of "Great Ideas of Western Man," which began running in 1950. The ads paired modern art with a philosophical, political, or moral quotation from some "savant of the past," such as John Stuart Mill. The quotations were supplied by Mortimer Adler, director of the Institute for Philosophical Research in San Francisco and creator of the Great Books program at the University of Chicago. A committee that included Bayer then sifted through and refined the quotes. Paepcke believed such institutional advertising was meant not just to appeal to industrial clients and consumers; it was also intended for potential employees, consultants, and investors with the goal of inspiring confidence in the company. By avoiding the "hard sell," these interesting ads sold themselves to the kind of reader who aspired to acquire good taste and cultural sophistication along with material wealth. In Paepcke's view, they were designed to "set people to

talking about the company,” and Bayer said the campaign was “radical and revolutionary.” The entire September 1952 issue of the German design magazine *Gebrauchsgraphik* was devoted to an illustrated article by Bayer on the Container Corporation’s design innovations. For the “Great Ideas” campaign, which would be accompanied by another traveling art exhibit, Paepcke would be named “Industrial Advertising Man of the Year” by the publisher of *Advertising Age* and *Industrial Marketing*—the first time the award was given to a non-adman.²³

While Paepcke was having great success with his development plans for Aspen and his corporate design projects with Bayer, his old project, the Institute of Design, mostly kept to its program, including the foundation course, the workshops, and specializations in product design, photography, visual design, or shelter design. But since the departure of Chermayeff it had begun to languish. Enrollment had declined significantly, from 328 in 1950 to only 95 in February 1955. Paepcke suspected that some students might be “abusing” scholarship funds. The Institute lacked a director and was instead led by what Chermayeff called a “junta” that included Crombie Taylor, Konrad Wachsmann, and Hugo Weber who “soon fell out among themselves.” Rattaliata had taken over the presidency of IIT from Heald in 1952, and he sought out Gropius as director of the Institute, who once again declined the position. Gropius and Mies grew concerned about the direction of the Institute, feeling a “moral co-responsibility for the sound future development of this potential stronghold.” But without a leader, they felt that the Institute had arrived at an impasse, and they worried that it would cease to be a creative center and slip into “minor status” as a trade school heavily influenced by commercial interests. They appealed to Rattaliata to once again offer the directorship to Charles Eames, who had already turned

23 “Container Corp. Builds Ahead,” *Business Week*, April 24, 1948, 94–102; Hal Burnett, “Container Corporation’s Design for Business,” *Industrial Marketing*, April 1948, 34–39, 112; Barbara Flanagan, “Firm Shows Paintings Used in Container Ads,” *Minneapolis Morning Tribune*, November 18, 1948; Bill Wundrum, Jr., “Davenport Gallery Expecting Record Crowd This Afternoon for Top Modern Art Exhibit,” *The Democrat and Leader* [Davenport, Iowa], May 1, 1949; “Paepcke: Thought Ads,” *Pathfinder*, June 14, 1950, 36–39; “As We See It,” *This Week in Chicago*, December 9, 1950, 12–13; Paepcke, “The ‘Great Ideas’ Campaign,” *Advertising Review*, no. 2, Autumn 1954, 25–28; “Industrial Adman of the Year” Citation Given to Walter Paepcke by G. D. Crain,” *Advertising Age*, February 21, 1955; “A Matter of Taste,” *Newsweek*, June 10, 1957, 94; “Advertising: Use of Fine Arts Increasing,” *The New York Times*, April 13, 1958; Kenneth Myers to William Moise, June 18, 1959, box 22, folder 6, WPP; Robert Alden, “Advertising: Image of Good Taste Created,” *New York Times*, May 15, 1960; “Packaging with the Stress on Design,” *Business Week*, August 2, 1958; “Walter Paepcke’s Profit Package,” *Forbes*, October 1, 1958, 11–14; Paepcke to Domenico Mortellito, August 10, 1952, box 30, folder 8, WPP; Janis Bultman, “Many Paths from the Bauhaus,” *Darkroom*, n.d., 44–50, box 1, folder 5, APP; J.S. Doughty to Paepcke, January 1953, box 30, folder 8, WPP; Groff Conklin, “Container Corporation’s ‘World Geo-Graphic Atlas,’” *Publisher’s Weekly*, June 5, 1954, 2504–12, box 28, folder 2, WPP.

it down but, they hoped, might have a change of heart when he learned of a proposed reorganization of the school merging several departments. But Eames would not take the position, nor would Bayer or a number of other potential candidates to whom it had been offered. The faculty had a number of suggestions but could not settle on a unified choice.

A controversy erupted in 1955 when the thirty-five-year-old Jay Doblin was nominated for the directorship. Doblin was a designer with the Raymond Loewy firm and former chairman of the evening school of the industrial design division at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute—where Sibyl had been teaching—and he was viewed by many, including Chermayeff, as a strictly “commercial” designer. Gropius was horrified when he learned of the nomination of Doblin, whom he felt was “obviously incompetent.” He believed that the nomination was the realization of his and Moholy's greatest fear of what might come from the Institute's joining IIT. It was, Gropius felt, “an act against good faith because it will change the character of the School altogether into a commercial auxiliary, that is to say, into the opposite of what it was set up to pursue, namely, independent industrial design research.” In a desperate appeal to Rettaliata, Gropius pointed to the Bauhaus heritage of the Institute which, he reasoned, gave him a “moral right” to protest an appointment he believed to be inimical to Bauhaus ideals. As far as Gropius was concerned, Doblin was an inept teacher and a mediocre designer with the reputation of being merely a “business promoter” and “super-salesman.” The nomination, Gropius said, had led to a “state of despair” among faculty and students at the Institute, who foresaw an end to the “lively artistic atmosphere” that was indispensable to design research apart from the commercial field. The faculty agreed that Doblin did not share the “essential convictions” of the Institute, and they submitted an open letter to Rettaliata to express their opposition to the appointment, saying that it represented a “fundamental departure” from their educational purpose. The Institute's Student Council agreed, pointing to the “unsatisfactory feeling” the appointment had generated among students.

Despite the protests, Rettaliata felt that he had already entered into a contract with Doblin and could not break it, and he assured Paepcke that he had spoken with a number of faculty members who believed that they could work with him. The Doblin appointment was approved and announced to all staff members by the engineering dean, Ralph Owens, on April 11, 1955. His term was scheduled to begin on September 1, just as the Institute was finally scheduled to make the move to the IIT South Side campus into a modern, “international-style” steel-and-glass building designed by Mies. Gropius had been defeated, but he held out some hope that Doblin would withdraw in the face of the

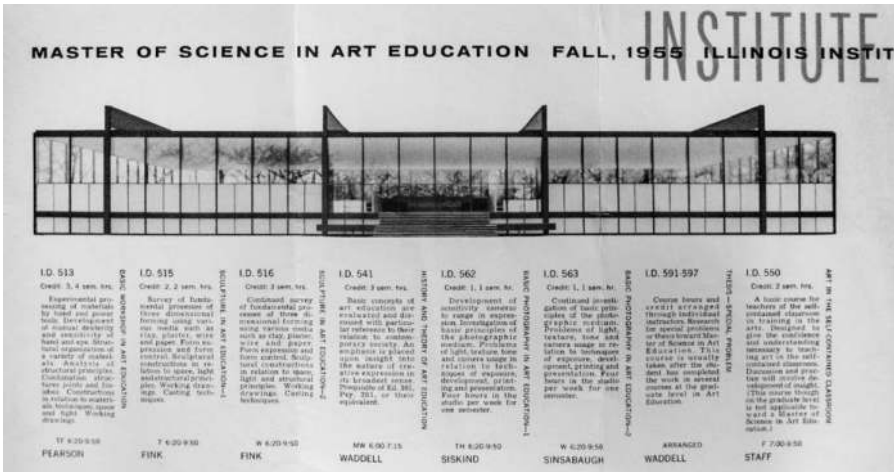


FIGURE 16 Brochure for Master of Science in Art Education courses offered by the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology, 1955, with an illustration of the new Institute building designed by Mies van der Rohe. SOURCE: Institute of Design collection, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois, Chicago.

clear opposition to his appointment. There were press reports of a faculty “re-volt” against the appointment of Doblin, who was reported to have said that he “did not agree” with the ideas of Moholy-Nagy and that the school had been “running downhill” since the departure of Chermayeff. The reports noted that there had been several impending firings and resignations, including that of Crombie Taylor. However, the IIT quickly clarified that two of the eliminated positions were discontinued because of declining enrollment. Though he had announced his resignation for a job at another school on March 22, Peter Selz, an assistant professor of art history, suggested that his leaving was in reaction to the Doblin appointment, which threatened the “whole philosophy” of Moholy. By the summer, nearly half of the faculty of fourteen had left or had signaled that they might. Chermayeff would later remark that the “insurgents” had been gotten rid of, and that he was correct in his gloomy prophecy with regard to Rattaliata’s philosophical misunderstanding of the Institute. Sibyl, for her part, felt no sympathy for the faculty, judging that they had “reaped what they sowed” since Chermayeff’s departure.²⁴

24 Chermayeff to Hans Wingler, September 29, 1967, box 5, folder 165, ID; Rettaliata to Paepcke, February 12, 1952, box 1, folder 30, ID; Rettaliata to Paepcke, January 30, 1953, box 1, folder 30, ID; Gropius and Mies to Rettaliata, November 6, 1954, box 8, folder 227, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, April 4, 1955, box 8, folder 227, ID; Gropius to Rettaliata, March 18, 1955; box 8, folder 227, ID; “Open Letter to President J.T. Rettaliata,” ca. March 1955, box 8, folder 227, ID; R.G. Owens to All Staff Members, April 11, 1955, ox 7, folder 201, ID; Student Council of the Institute of Design to Rettaliata, April 18, 1955, box 4, folder 138, ID; “New Yorker

In many ways the Doblin affair did signal the end of the era of the Institute as the continuation of the Bauhaus and Moholy's revival of it. The Doblin-era Institute's revised promotional materials put much more emphasis on the career opportunities and technical training for industrial designers and much less emphasis on the philosophy of design and social responsibility that stemmed from the Bauhaus. Apart from a hiatus in 1964, when he would temporarily step down to teach and research, Doblin would remain as director through the 1960s. In the view of Chermayeff, the Institute "almost vanished for some years," though he would note with pleasure that he had seen its exhibit at the Montreal Expo in 1967. But by then the Institute's focus had shifted decidedly toward engineering and technology. Paepcke died in April of 1960 at the age of 63, having maintained a close working relationship with Bayer to the end of his life. By that time, the Container Corporation had grown to operate some seventy-four US plants as well as forty-one abroad, employing roughly twenty thousand people, but Paepcke was perhaps better known for being the central figure in making Aspen an "internationally famous resort."

Sibyl herself seemed to turn against the whole Bauhaus idea from the other direction, suggesting in 1957 that it was mistaken to mix art and design, and that art "can only remain Art if it is created for Art's sake," and that it could not be taught but was rather "native to a few chosen and haunted men whose lives should be fenced off from ours by barriers of respect and humility." Later in life, she would directly attack the Bauhaus as the "enemy of art" and call into question the social relevance of design. Robert Jay Wolff—the old friend and collaborator of Moholy and Sibyl, who had gone on to head the design department at Brooklyn College—would regret having defended Sibyl in her dispute with Chermayeff, and Gropius would never forgive her.²⁵

Heads IIT Design Unit," *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 12, 1955; Paepcke to Gropius, April 15, 1955, box 8, folder 228, ID; Gropius to Paepcke, April 20, 1955, box 8, folder 227, ID; "Statement from Illinois Institute of Technology," April 26, 1955, box 1, folder 30, ID; "Staff Revolt at Illinois Tech," *Chicago Daily Sun-Times*, April 26, 1955; "2 Resign, 3 Fired in Faculty Revolt at IIT," *Chicago Daily Sun-Times*, April 26, 1955; "Illinois Tech Faculty Men in Revolt," *Chicago Daily News*, April 26, 1955; Ruther Dunbar, "Students Back Faculty in Opposing New Director at IIT Design School," *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 27, 1955; Peter Selz to Ralph Owens, March 22, 1955, box 7, folder 200, ID; Gene Foley, "'Not resigned yet,' declares Jay Doblin," *Technology News* [ITT], n.d., ca. April 1955, box 2, folder 47, ID; Sibyl to Peter [Selz?], May 12, 1955, box 6, folder 194, ID; Gropius to Nathaniel Owings, October 6, 1955, box 8, folder 227, ID; Paepcke to Crombie Taylor, January 7, 1954, box 2, folder 42, ID; Chancellor, "Institute of Design," 28–35.

²⁵ Chermayeff to Hans Wingler, September 29, 1967, box 5, folder 165, ID; "ID+IIT" [pamphlet], ca. 1955, box 4, folder 127, ID; "Your Career in Design" [brochure], ca. 1955, box 4, folder 135, ID; Chermayeff to Paepcke, February 22, 1956, box 5, folder 165, ID; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, "Architecture—Art or Design?" *Progressive Architecture*, January 1957, 13–16, 22–23, 26, 32; Robert Wolff, [handwritten note], January 4, 1975, attached to Elizabeth Paepcke to Doblin July 21, 1969, box 62, folder 1, WPP; Wolff to Chermayeff, n.d., box 5, folder 166, ID; Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, "History and Psyche: A Reply to A.E. Parr," *Arts & Architec-*

Gropius died at the age of 86 on July 5, 1969, just as Doblin was putting together an exhibition to honor the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus. Despite Gropius's insistence that there was no such thing as a Bauhaus "style," which implied something fixed and superficial and not a process and a philosophy *toward* design, the designs produced by the Bauhäusler and their students had become associated with modernity itself and indicative of the built environment and the world of goods that flooded the Western world in the mid-twentieth century. Upon Gropius's death, Doblin added a symposium to honor Gropius and other luminaries of the Bauhaus, including Moholy, to which he would invite both Sibyl and Elizabeth Paepcke, despite their by-then uneasy relationship.

Moholy was also being honored that very summer with a comprehensive show at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, which included some 150 pieces that spanned his career. The focus on Moholy's works of fine art, put together for exhibitions such as this one, would do much to affirm Moholy's importance as a leading Constructivist artist. He used geometrical abstraction and "aspired to make that purity of style a vehicle for revolutionary social values," as the *New York Times* reviewer Hilton Kramer remarked at the time. Kramer observed that Moholy's "purest painting" had been done in the 1920s, "when his political idealism was strongest." Kramer pointed out Moholy's socialist values, but he lamented that "in the end he brought his ideas and his hopes to bear on an entirely different context—the world of capitalist commerce and product design." Such a role, according to Kramer, "reduces the artist to a cog in the machinery of the advertising industry."²⁶

Moholy the teacher-designer was thus reduced to a collection of works to represent him as the "purest" expression of his values. As such exhibitions solidified his importance in the modernist avant-garde, and as art historians have taken the lead in documenting his career, he has become known more as

ture, May 1966, 17; Wolff to Gropius, December 16, 1968, box 7, folder 209, ID; "Pick Wassmann as Design Head," *Chicago Sun Times*, May 26, 1964; Chuck Murray, "They're the Best: But IIT design graduates are being hired away by foreign firms," *Sunday: The Chicago Tribune Magazine*, October 29, 1989, 12–29; Sibyl to Carroll Bowen, August 26, 1968, box 7, folder 209, ID; Bayer to Paepcke, February 26, 1959, box 30, folder 15, WPP; "W.P. Paepcke Dies; Built Container Corp.," *Chicago Tribune*, April 14, 1960; "Industrialist Walter Paepcke Dies," *Sun-Times*, April 14, 1960.

26 Doblin to Elizabeth Paepcke, July 8, 1969, box 62, folder 1, WPP; Elizabeth Paepcke to Doblin, July 21, 1969, box 62, folder 1, WPP; Hilton Kramer, "In Chicago: A Moholy-Nagy Comprehensive Show," *New York Times*, June 2, 1969; Hilton Kramer, "Utopian Vision of The Arts," *New York Times*, June 8, 1969; Franz Schulze, "Moholy-Nagy: Evangelist of an idea," *Daily News*, June 7, 1969; Steven Heller, ed., *Design & Style Number 7: Bauhaus 1919–1933* (The Pushpin Group, Inc., 1991); "The Idea-Giver," *Time*, July 18, 1969, 49.

Moholy-Nagy (as he signed his works), the artist, and less as Moholy (as his friends and colleagues referred to him during his life), the teacher and institution-builder.

Conclusion

The bureaucratized Institute of Design relieved Moholy of his fundraising duties, but in many ways the new structure diminished the school as an extension of Moholy's personality and compromised his vision of teaching cooperative design with a social conscience in the manner of the Bauhaus. Even as industrialists took on a greater role on the Institute's Board of Directors, their inability to fully appreciate Moholy's methods would cause a strained relationship. Yet Moholy was able to focus their attention on the useful products and creative designers that came out of the program, however those ends were achieved. The use-value of the school could be readily grasped, particularly as the nation entered the postwar era of increased domestic consumption that would demand innovative design solutions. When Moholy's serious illness put him out of commission for months, however, the Institute's backers began to contemplate how the school might go as an institution without its founder. Paepcke did not lose faith in Moholy, but he did become increasingly focused on developing Aspen as a haven for cultured business executives such as himself, and he found a new Bauhaus ambassador in Herbert Bayer, who had put together an exhibit of modern art that had been featured in Container Corporation advertisements.

A flood of new students, many of them war veterans supported by the G.I. Bill, would greatly expand the size of the school and require the larger quarters into which it would move in the fall of 1946. But after having reaffirmed his commitment to Bauhaus ideals and pedagogical techniques before an audience of top-tier industrial designers at MoMA, and just as he completed work on his magnum opus, *Vision in Motion*, Moholy died after his body had been ravaged by leukemia. Gropius would once again prove his influence as the father of the Bauhaus, handpicking Moholy's successor as director, Serge Chermayeff. As Gropius had warned, Sibyl grew to oppose his direction of the Institute and was ultimately forced to resign, further severing Moholy's connection to the Institute. Chermayeff would soon oversee the Institute's merger with IIT, where it gained financial security but lost its independence and was forced to exist in the shadow of Mies, the last German Bauhaus director who ran the architecture department there. Both Gropius and Moholy had viewed Mies as being uninterested in the Bauhaus philosophy and undeserving of the legacy. The diminished

status of the Institute at IIT, combined with disputes over admissions procedures, would eventually lead to Chermayeff's departure. This development alarmed Gropius, who thought the school needed a spiritual leader to maintain its Bauhaus identity. The 1955 appointment of the Institute's directorship to Jay Doblin—a vocationally-minded commercial designer with no connection to the Bauhaus whatsoever, and who was vigorously opposed by the faculty—would be the last straw.

Synthesizing Socialism and Capitalism

Perhaps the most salient ideological conflict of the twentieth century, both within the United States and globally, has pitted a dominant mode of economic relationships called capitalism against various alternatives including socialism and communism which, at least in the view of their adherents, have sought to eradicate the injustices, oppressions, inequalities, and regimes of exploitation that have come to define the prevailing system. On a geopolitical scale, after the success of the Bolshevik Revolution had proved that there were viable alternatives to the capitalist order that could be applied at the level of the nation-state, the conflict would eventually play out as the Cold War, with the US and the Soviet Union as the major international antagonists, despite having been allies in the fight against fascism.

Over the course of the half-century period considered in this book, roughly 1918 to 1968, the clash of capitalism and its alternatives has been, of course, not merely a geopolitical matter, but a fundamental characteristic of intranational politics. Before their descent into fascism, the new republics that arose in Central Europe after World War I would provide real-world laboratories for socialist or social-democratic alternatives. The Austro-Marxists and Social Democrats who held sway in the early years of the First Austrian Republic, and especially in Vienna, presented a “third way” of socialist politics that was heavily invested in social engineering but, at the same time, rejected the political revolution, radical social inversion, and authoritarianism that would come to define communism. It was, in some sense, a practical execution of what James Kloppenberg, alluding to the philosophy of John Dewey, has called the *via media* in the political philosophy of American and European thinkers that arose in the late-

nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, which had a political corollary in progressivism and in movements for social democracy.¹

To the extent that this book has considered capitalism and socialism as state-managed economic systems with cultural corollaries, a major contention has been that these systems are neither absolute nor mutually exclusive, despite the stark distinctions drawn out by the fierce rhetoric of partisans. The experience of the three main protagonists in this narrative—Paul Lazarsfeld, Victor Gruen, and László Moholy-Nagy—is, of course, biographical and anecdotal, and cannot be the basis for definitive conclusions about anything as all-encompassing as economic structures or global politics. At the same time, however, an examination of these three contemporaneous cases over the period of their productive careers provides a window into grand ideologies as they played out vis-à-vis actual historical practice. By looking at these biographical narratives, one may consider the extent to which ideologies may capture some sense of reality or, on the contrary, exist mainly in the world of pure ideas relative to the messiness of the human experience. In many ways, the contradictions, exceptions, and qualifications that arise upon close examination of any particular case are precisely what is interesting and important about history. The advantage of considering the stories of three émigrés as part of a broader examination of ideas is that they provide narratives of individual lives which nevertheless transcended temporal, political, and cultural contexts and exist as nodes within complex political and ideological networks. Although the facts of the historical record must be judged against the proclamations of the protagonists, invariably these professional biographies present ironies that call attention to the gap between ideology and reality.

Moholy, Lazarsfeld, and Gruen were all deeply involved in the socialist movement in their youth, which was a central part of their political awakening and coming of age. Their attachment to the movement was partly based in the social context they found themselves in, coming from middle-class families and having found their identities in the largely socialist milieus of intellectuals, artists, and bohemians of Vienna and Budapest. The trauma of the First World War—which would leave Moholy maimed from battle and would begin a period of fatherless poverty for Gruen—was formative not only for the political and material void it would leave after the fall of the Habsburg Empire, but for the paternal absence that it would make ever more apparent. Moholy's father had never been present in his life, and while Lazarsfeld had come from a stable family, he appears to have sought a more assertive father-figure in Friedrich Adler,

1 Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 3–7.

who had virtually replaced his relatively apolitical father for a time while he was at the front during the war. But with absence and uncertainty comes possibility, and the new postwar republics offered unprecedented potential for something better. Despite their hardships, Moholy, Lazarsfeld, and Gruen would never retreat into despair or disillusionment; instead, they would approach uncertainty with openness and optimism. It was not out of class hatred or a need for the security of dogma that they were drawn to socialism, but for its role as a force for progressive change in a world that was begging to be remade.

Being a socialist was virtually a natural aspect of life given the social worlds these young men occupied in Vienna and Budapest. Both Gruen and Lazarsfeld participated in the “Jahoda-Kreis,” the circle of intellectuals and musicians that gathered at the family home of Marie Jahoda, who would become Lazarsfeld’s first wife and later the director of the Forschungsstelle. Lazarsfeld, Jahoda, and Hans Zeisel would move almost seamlessly from their involvement in the socialist youth movement to their roles as social researchers and innovators of survey research techniques with studies such as *Marienthal*. The center of Gruen’s social life was the socialist Political Cabaret and later the *Kleinkunsthöfen* during the period of Austrian proto-fascism. These leftist theater troupes would carry over to America after Gruen’s immigration, where they were reborn as the Refugee Artists Group. For Moholy, the Hungarian Activist movement centered around the socialist artist Lajos Kassák and the contributors to the *Ma* journal would provide social currency in the art scenes of Budapest, Vienna, and Berlin. The movement also proudly asserted that art was not a decadent, bourgeois privilege but an important element in the movement for socialism. To be a part of these intellectual and artistic communities was to be a socialist.

There was, of course, considerable overlap between the socialist and Jewish communities, though for Moholy, Lazarsfeld, and Gruen, their Jewish identity was not so much positively embraced as it was a fact of life that could serve as a serious impediment to social and professional advancement in their home countries. However, that very impediment could create other opportunities. For Lazarsfeld, being Jewish meant that he could not hope to become a professor at the University as he might have done, and so instead he would found the Forschungsstelle. This alternative academic route would establish him as an innovative social researcher and lend him the requisite qualifications for his Rockefeller fellowship to the US. Lazarsfeld would, of course, go on to establish new research centers in the US that would once again provide jobs for displaced socialists and exiled Jewish researchers. Gruen’s Jewish identity would be the cause of childhood bullying and his forced emigration after the *Anschluss*, but the community of Jewish refugees in New York would provide him with opportunities

to advance his career as a designer of storefronts. Although Moholy never really acknowledged his Jewish heritage, it was almost certainly a relevant fact—along with his association with the Bauhaus, tarred as a haven of “cultural bolshevism”—in his decision to flee Nazi Germany. But again, the community of exiles he joined in London would serve as a launching pad for his career there and ultimately in the US.

The nimbleness with which these figures adapted to radically new circumstances in unfamiliar cities and countries was reflected in their nondogmatic, pragmatic approach to socialism and social democracy. Social democracy was, for them, more of a disposition to solving problems than a fixed program with predetermined outcomes.

Lazarsfeld, for example, was certainly a socialist, but he was intellectually promiscuous and open-minded about any available suite of ideas that might be useful to him—from psychoanalysis to logical empiricism—as he investigated the mysteries of human choice, decision, and motivation. The very nature of Roosevelt’s New Deal, which created an array of social programs to tackle a mammoth problem, the Great Depression, was entirely in line with Lazarsfeld’s approach to social research, which developed methodologies through constant trial and error. When it came to commercial market research, Lazarsfeld was not bothered by who the client was because the goal was to solve a problem or produce a research finding by whatever means were available. Lazarsfeld’s colleagues Robert Lynd and C. Wright Mills were predisposed to wariness about commercial clients, but such strict limitations would ultimately discard research into the lives of ordinary people, which ought to have been the concern of any good social democrat. If Lazarsfeld had followed the Frankfurt School critical theorist Theodor Adorno’s aversion to doing research for a major broadcaster such as NBC or CBS, for example, scholarship on the effects of mass communication would have been poorer for it.

The *Gemeindebauten* of Vienna were designed not only to fulfill a desperate need for housing, but also to perform an ideological function in the creation of the “new people” for the socialist future; yet many elements of that building form—including the *Hof-Haus* design around a central courtyard—would prove adaptable to a similar function in a very different context as the American shopping center. The shopping center remained a *community* center, even if its central function was commerce. What Gruen recognized better than many Americans, who might have been intellectually hobbled by an ideology of “rugged individualism,” was that planning was the means by which major projects were undertaken, and the result of the project was not necessarily corrupted by the identity of the patron.

The whole method of the Bauhaus, which was so fundamental to Moholy's worldview and approach to teaching, emphasized that open-mindedness and experimentation—as opposed to strictly following a prescribed formula—were essential to innovative solutions to design problems. Such problems were abundant in the commercial world, and, for that reason, Moholy was more than happy to take them on, either as an individual contractor or as a representative of a design school such as the New Bauhaus or its later iterations. Bringing together art and industry in the interest of mass production and ultimately for mass consumption was a fundamental Bauhaus principle. Though the commercial aspects of such a disposition toward industrial design might trouble a fine artist or a critic such as the *New York Times* writer who felt that Moholy's "purest painting" had been done in the 1920s when his political idealism was "strongest," Moholy himself felt no betrayal to the cause of social democracy for having done commercial projects at the Bauhaus and elsewhere. When the Second World War came, and Moholy found himself in the US on the side of democracy and against fascism, his design school aided the effort by training experts in camouflage and creating useful products with unconventional materials due to wartime rationing—such as wooden bedsprings.

A willingness to take on any project that interested them allowed Lazarsfeld, Gruen, and Moholy to tackle problems that stimulated their creativity and would lead them to produce innovations in methodology and design. Marketers wanted to understand motivations in consumer decisions, for example, and Lazarsfeld well understood that the study of buying decisions could easily be applied to any decision-making scenario: "Such is the origin of my Vienna market research studies: the result of the methodological equivalence of socialist voting and the buying of soap."² Techniques such as the focused interview, reason analysis, and the panel technique have become standard methods of social research; that they were developed in the context of commercial studies is immaterial to their use-value in the pursuit of knowledge about human behavior. Similarly, Lazarsfeld's radio research—and that of his colleagues such as Herta Herzog—would produce valuable insight into the lives of ordinary people who would not otherwise have been the subjects of major research studies. As part of the mission of Lazarsfeld's research bureaus, research findings with general applicability would not be the proprietary information of the client but would be made available to other scholars and to the general public. Gruen's work designing storefronts gave him insight into consumer psychology, which he would later apply to his shopping center designs. The aim was not to entrap and manip-

2 Lazarsfeld, "Episode," 279.

ulate consumers, as some critics have suggested; rather, the design was done in the interest of making the experience of shopping more pleasurable for shoppers. Though the ideals of Gruen's original conception have been somewhat lost, the shopping center was designed to create a pleasant, walkable urban space, a value that has only become more urgent since Gruen first put it forward in the 1940s.

The projects taken on by Gruen, Moholy, and Lazarsfeld often led to significant and lasting relationships with the officers and executives running the foundations, corporations, and institutions that financed them. The Rockefeller Foundation officer John Marshall, for example, had an interest in the social effects of radio in an age of rising dictatorships; that interest would translate into a long-term commitment to Lazarsfeld's research through the Rockefeller-sponsored Office of Radio Research. Moholy's friendship with Walter Paepcke was, in many ways, reminiscent of the classic patron-artist relationship. However, Paepcke did not generally commission works as such. Instead, he provided the financing, business acumen, and commercial connections to realize grand projects that visionaries like Moholy would not have been able to execute under any other arrangement. Paepcke also served to interpret Moholy's unorthodox methods to perplexed businessmen who might not have otherwise lent their support. The president of Detroit's Hudson's department store, Oscar Webber, served a similar role for Victor Gruen, allowing him to carry out his vision for the shopping center. In both the case of Paepcke and of Webber, flattery, friendship, and financing were mixed to the point of being indistinguishable, but for each party involved the final product or project was what mattered. The automobile-free pedestrian zones of many cities, including Gruen's native city of Vienna, owe something to the relationship of Gruen and Webber, which led to the car-free ideal of the shopping center, a concept that would later be transposed to downtowns.

Ultimately, as creators and leaders of institutions, and as teachers and writers, the influence of Gruen, Moholy, and Lazarsfeld went well beyond the projects they completed or the methods or techniques they devised. On the recommendation of Walter Gropius, Moholy carried on the tradition of the Bauhaus in the US with the New Bauhaus, School of Design, and Institute of Design, which exists to this day as part of the Illinois Institute of Technology. Lazarsfeld led the Office of Radio Research and the Bureau of Applied Social Research, among other research centers, which became models for incorporating the methods of social research in the collective work of researchers. Gruen's architectural firm, Victor Gruen Associates (now Gruen Associates), exists today. As with any institution, the vision of the founder may fade over time, as has been

the case with the Institute of Design discussed in Chapter 12. Still, these institutions serve as testaments to the enduring value of realizing socialist ideas and methods in projects that serve human ends, even in the context of free-market, consumer capitalism where the quest for profits often overshadows the ultimate purpose. “It is a generally accepted premise that capitalism with its industrial technology has to serve in the most economical way for the realization of profit,” Moholy wrote in the final statement of his pedagogical philosophy, *Vision in Motion*. “However, the ‘economical’ should be subordinated to human requirements to make technology a benefit instead of a curse.”³

3 Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, 24.

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The Hungarian artist-designer László Moholy-Nagy, the Austrian sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, and his fellow Viennese Victor Gruen—an architect and urban planner—made careers in different fields. Yet they shared common socialist politics, Jewish backgrounds, and experience as refugees from the Nazis. This book tells the story of their intellectual migration from Central Europe to the United States, beginning with the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, and moving through the heady years of newly independent social-democratic republics before the descent into fascism.

Based on a vast array of original sources, Malherek interweaves the biographies of these three remarkable personalities and those of their wives, colleagues, and friends with whom they collaborated on innovative projects that would shape the material environment and consumer culture of their adopted home. The result is a narrative of immigration and adaptation that challenges the crude binary of capitalism and socialism with a story of creative economic hybridization.

“Joseph Malherek has written a marvelous intellectual and cultural history that traces the seemingly improbable linkages between the socialist ideals that flourished in Red Vienna and the consumer culture that reached its 20th-century apogee in post-World War II America. Among the many connections he illuminates, Malherek shows that without the remarkable influence of emigré socialists like Paul Lazarsfeld and Victor Gruen neither the shopping center, a planned, collaborative, commercial community, nor the marketing survey, which had its origins in socialist studies of class stratification, would have achieved their characteristic American form and pervasiveness.”

NELSON LICHTENSTEIN, Distinguished Professor in the Department of History at University of California, Santa Barbara, author of *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor* and *The Retail Revolution: How Wal-Mart Created a Brave New World of Business*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JOSEPH MALHEREK holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He was recently the Junior Botstiber Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study at Central European University, and he has been a Fulbright Visiting Professor of Austrian-American Studies at the University of Vienna. He has received fellowship awards from the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes, the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Historical Association. His writing on transatlantic migration, twentieth-century intellectual history, and the history of capitalism and consumer culture has been published in many venues, including *the Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, *the Journal of Austrian-American History*, and *the Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*.

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