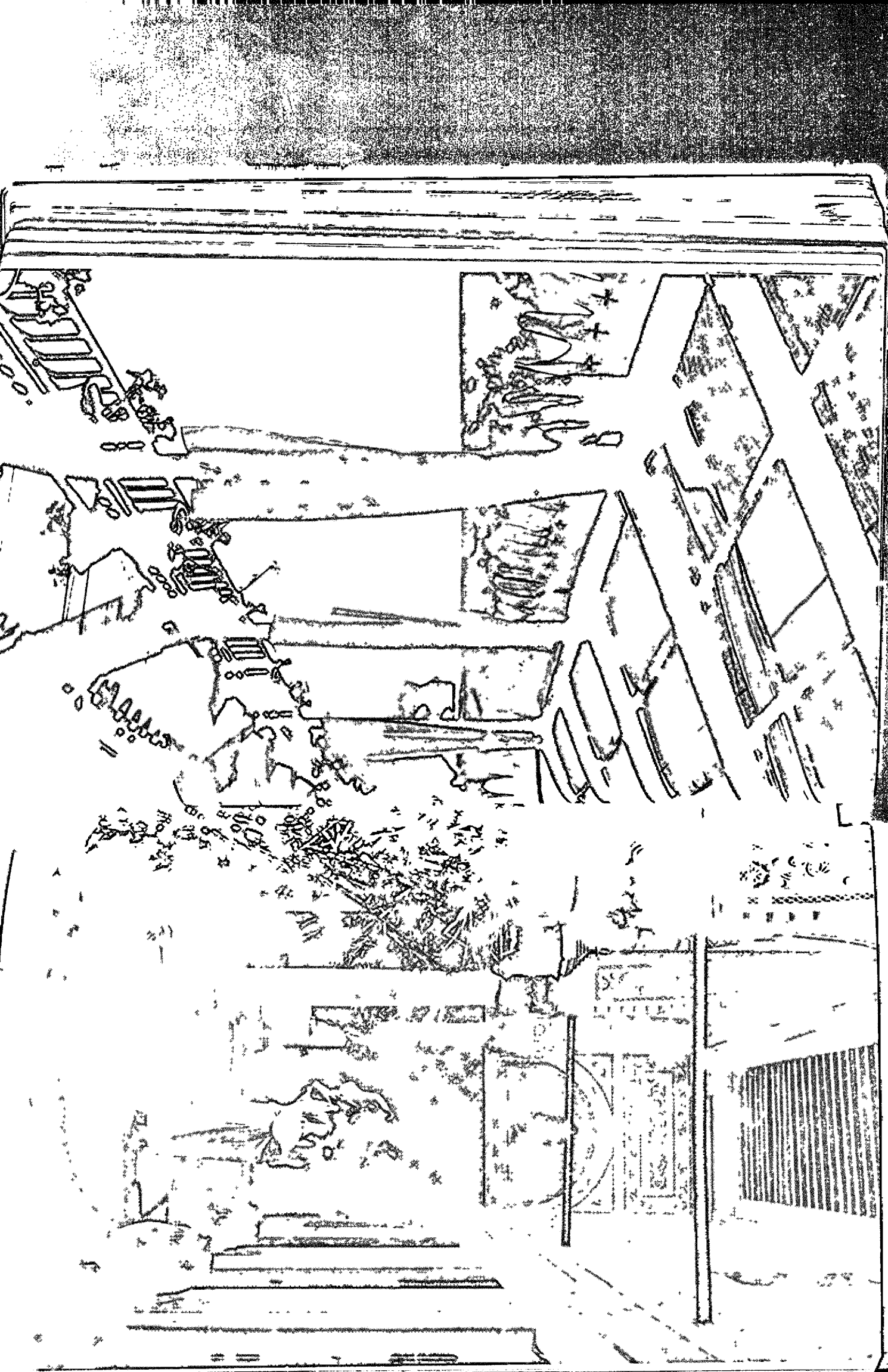
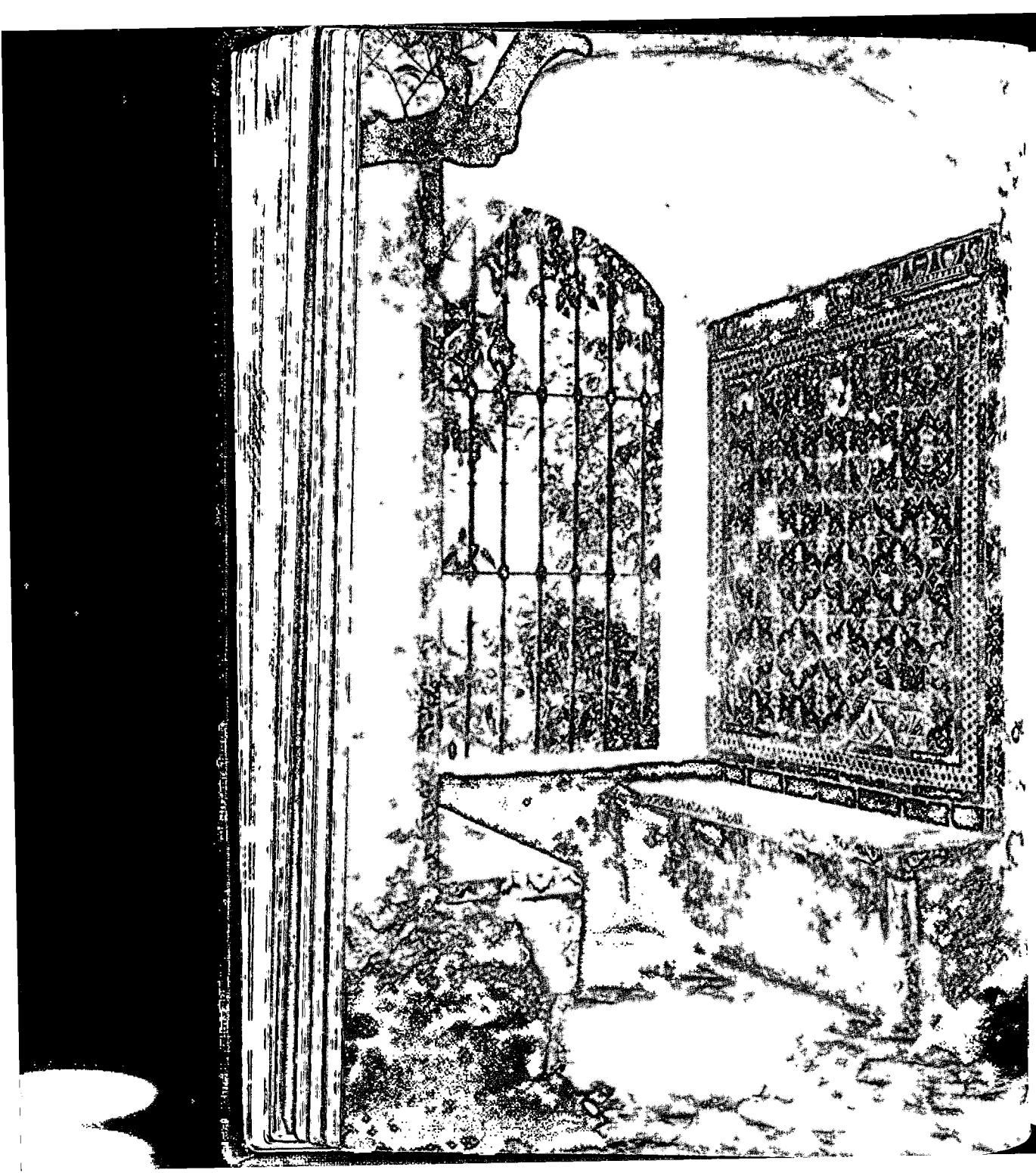




We know now, that every building and every town is made of patterns which repeat themselves throughout its fabric, and that it gets its character from just those patterns of which it is made.

Yet it is obvious, intuitively, that some towns and buildings are more full of life: and others less. If they all get their character from the patterns they are made of, then somehow the greater sense of life which fills one place, and which is missing from another, must be created by these patterns too.

In this chapter, and the next, we shall see just how certain patterns do create this special sense of life.

They create it in the first place, by liberating man. They create life, by allowing people to release their energy, by allowing people, themselves, to become alive. Or, in other places, they prevent it, they destroy the sense of life, they destroy the very possibility of life, by creating conditions under which people cannot possibly be free.

Let us now try to understand the mechanism by which this works.

A man is alive when he is wholehearted, true to himself, true to his own inner forces, and able to act freely according to the nature of the situations he is in.

This is the central kernel of truth already expressed in chapter 3.

To be happy, and to be alive, in this sense, are almost the same. Of course, a man who is alive, is not always happy in the sense of feeling pleasant; experiences of joy

are balanced by experiences of sorrow. But the experiences are all deeply felt; and above all, the man is whole; and conscious of being real.

To be alive, in this sense, is not a matter of suppressing some forces or tendencies, at the expense of others; it is a state of being in which all forces which arise in a man can find expression; he lives in balance among the forces which arise in him; he is unique as the pattern of forces which arises is unique; he is at peace, since there are no disturbances created by underground forces which have no outlet, at one with himself and his surroundings.

This state cannot be reached merely by inner work.

There is a myth, sometimes widespread, that a person need do only inner work, in order to be alive like this; that a man is entirely responsible for his own problems; and that to cure himself, he need only change himself. This teaching has some value, since it is so easy for a man to imagine that his problems are caused by "others." But it is a one-sided and mistaken view which also maintains the arrogance of the belief that the individual is self-sufficient, and not dependent in any essential way on his surroundings.

The fact is, a person is so far formed by his surroundings, that his state of harmony depends entirely on his harmony with his surroundings.

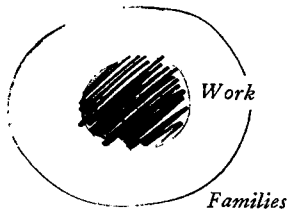
Some kinds of physical and social circumstances help a person come to life. Others make it very difficult.

For instance, in some towns, the pattern of relationships between workplaces and families helps us to come to life.

Workshops mix with houses, children run around the places where the work is going on, the members of the family help in the work, the family may possibly eat lunch together, or eat lunch together with the people who are working there.

The fact that family and play are part of one continuous stream, helps nourish everyone. Children see how work happens, they learn what it is that makes the adult world function, they get an overall coherent view of things; men are able to connect the possibility of play and laughter, and attention to children, without having to separate them sharply in their minds, from work. Men and women are able to work, and to pay attention to their families more or less equally, as they wish to; love and work are connected, able to be one, understood and felt as coherent by the people who are living there.

Work and families together



In other towns where work and family life are physi-

cally separate, people are harassed by inner conflicts which they can't escape.

A man wants to live in his work and he wants to be close to his family; but in a town where work and family are physically separate, he is forced to make impossible choices among these desires. He is exposed to the greatest emotional pressure from his family, at that moment when he is most tired—when he just comes home from work. He is confused by a subtle identification of his wife and children with "leisure," "weekends," and hence not the daily stuff of life.

A woman wants to be a loving woman, sustaining to her children; and also to take part in the outer business of the world; to have relationships with "what is going on." But, in a town where work and family are completely separate, she is forced to make another impossible choice. She either has to become a stereotyped "housewife," or a stereotyped masculine "working woman." The possibility of both realizing her feminine nature, and also having a place in the world beyond her family, is all but lost to her.

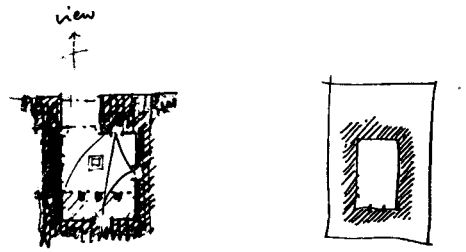
A young boy wants to be close to his family, and to understand the workings of the world and to explore them. But, in a town where work and family are separated, he, too, is forced to make impossible choices. He has to choose to be either loving to his family, or to be a truant who can experience the world. There is no way he can reconcile his two opposing needs; and he is likely to end up either as a juvenile delinquent, who has torn himself entirely from his family's love, or as a child who clings too tightly to his mother's skirts.

In the same way, a courtyard which is properly formed, helps people come to life in it.

Consider the forces at work in a courtyard. Most fundamental of all, people seek some kind of private outdoor space, where they can sit under the sky, see the stars, enjoy the sun, perhaps plant flowers. This is obvious. But there are more subtle forces too. For instance, when a courtyard is too tightly enclosed, has no view out, people feel uncomfortable, and tend to stay away . . . they need to see out into some larger and more distant space. Or again, people are creatures of habit. If they pass in and out of the courtyard, every day, in the course of their normal lives, the courtyard becomes familiar, a natural place to go . . . and it is used. But a courtyard with only one way in, a place you only go when you "want" to go there, is an unfamiliar place, tends to stay unused . . . people go more often to places which are familiar. Or again, there is a certain abruptness about suddenly stepping out, from the inside, directly to the outside . . . it is subtle, but enough to inhibit you. If there is a transitional space, a porch or a veranda, under cover, but open to the air, this is psychologically half way between indoors and outdoors, and makes it much easier, more simple, to take each of the smaller steps that brings you out into the courtyard . . .

When a courtyard has a view out to a larger space, has crossing paths from different rooms, and has a veranda or a porch, these forces can resolve themselves. The view out makes it comfortable, the crossing paths help generate a sense of habit there, the porch makes it easier to go out more often . . . and gradually the courtyard becomes a pleasant customary place to be.

But in a courtyard where the pattern of the opening and veranda and crossing paths is missing, there are forces which conflict in such a way that no one can resolve them for himself.



A living courtyard *Dead courtyard*

Consider, for example, dead courtyard surrounded by walls on all sides, with no porch or halfway space between the indoors and the outdoors, and with no more than one path leading out to it.

In this place, the forces are in conflict. People want to go out, but their timidity, which makes them seek a place halfway to the outdoors, prevents them. They want to stay out, but the claustrophobic quality, and the enclosure, sends them back inside again. They hope to be there, but the lack of paths across the courtyard make it a dead and rarely visited place, which does not beckon them, and which instead tends to be filled with dead leaves, and forgotten plants. This does not help them come to life—instead it only causes tension, and frustrates them, and perpetuates their conflicts.

And the same can happen even in a window: A window with a "window place" helps a person come to life.

Everyone knows how beautiful a room is when it has a bay window in it, or a window seat, or a special ledge next to the window, or a small alcove which is entirely glassed. The feeling that rooms with these kinds of places in them are especially beautiful is not merely whimsy. It has a fundamental organic reason behind it.

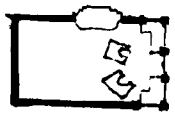
When you are in a living room for any length of time, two of the many forces acting on you are the following:

1. You have a tendency to go towards the light. People are phototropic, biologically, so that it is often comfortable to place yourself where the light is.
2. If you are in the room for any length of time, you probably want to sit down, and make yourself comfortable.

In a room which has at least one window that is a "place"—a window seat, a bay window, a window with a wide low windowsill that invites you to pull your favorite chair over to it because you can see out so easily, a special ledge next to the window, or a small alcove which is entirely glassed—in this room you can give in to both forces: you can resolve the conflict for yourself.

In short, you can be comfortable.

But a room which has no window place, in which the windows are just "holes," sets up a hopeless inner conflict in me which I can't resolve.



A window place

Holes in the wall

If the windows are just holes in the wall, and there are no places where the windows are, one force pulls me towards the window; but another force pulls me toward the natural "places" in the room, where the comfortable chairs and tables are. So long as I am in this room, I am pushed and pulled by these two forces; there is nothing I can do to prevent the inner conflict they create in me.

The instinctive knowledge that a room is beautiful when it has a window place in it, is thus not an aesthetic whim. It is an instinctive expression of the fact that a room without a window place is filled with actual, palpable organic tension; and that a room which has one lacks this tension, and is, from a simple organic point of view, a better place to live.

In each of these cases we have an example of a pattern which helps us resolve our conflicts, and an example of a pattern which prevents us.

In each case, the first pattern allows us to resolve our forces for ourselves. It imposes nothing on us: but merely allows us to resolve our forces, as they are.

On the other hand, the second pattern prevents us from resolving our forces for ourselves. It makes it impossible for us to find an activity which will allow us to resolve our

inner forces, and to make ourselves whole. We turn this way, then that way, rats in a trap, searching for some activity by which we can make ourselves whole. But there are none. We cannot find a way of work which keeps us at one with our family; we cannot enjoy our presence in the courtyard; and in the room without a window place, we cannot even wholeheartedly sit down. These surroundings will not let us take the steps we want to take, to be at peace with ourselves. We experience constant stress.

Of course, stress and conflict are a normal and healthy part of human life.

We constantly meet conflicts, or problems, during the course of the day: and each time, the body goes into a state of "stress" to mobilize itself, to deal with the conflict, to resolve the conflict:

This effect is physiological. We have, within our bodies, a specific physiological mechanism which produces stress. It produces, within us, a highly mobilized state of readiness, a state in which we have extra adrenalin, more alertness, faster heartbeat, higher muscle tone, more blood to the brain, more mental alertness . . . this highly alerted state, which is the state that we call "stress," arises whenever we encounter difficulty, or conflict . . . any situation in which we have to react, to solve a problem, meet a challenge . . .

Under normal conditions, when we solve the difficulty, cope with the threat, resolve the conflict, the stress then disappears, and all goes back to normal. In this normal

sense, stress and conflict are an ordinary healthy part of everyday life. An organism could only exist without stress in an environment in which there were no conflicts or challenges at all—and under such circumstances the organism would atrophy and die.

But a pattern which prevents us from resolving our conflicting forces, leaves us almost perpetually in a state of tension.

For, if we live in a world where work is separated from family life, or where courtyards turn us away, or where windows are merely holes in the wall, we experience the stress of these inner and conflicting forces constantly. We can never come to rest. We are living then, in a world so made, so patterned, that we cannot, by any stratagem, defeat the tension, solve the problem, or resolve the conflict. In this kind of world the conflicts do not go away. They stay within us, nagging, tense . . . The build-up of stress, however minor, stays within us. We live in a state of heightened alertness, higher stress, more adrenalin, *all the time*.

This stress is then no longer functional at all. It becomes a huge drain on the system. Since the organism's capacity to enter the stressed state is already partly "used up" because it is perpetually in this state, our capacity to react to real new problems, dangers, and conflicts goes down, because the organism is contantly exhausted by the perpetual state of stress.

And so the "bad" patterns—the window which doesn't work, the dead courtyard, the badly located workplace—

these stress us, undermine us, affect us continuously. Indeed, in this fashion, each bad pattern in our environment constantly reduces us, cuts us down, reduces our ability to meet new challenges, reduces our capacity to live, and helps to make us dead . . .

While, on the other hand, the corresponding "good" patterns, when they are correctly made, help us to be alive, because they allow us to resolve our conflicts for ourselves. As we encounter them, we are always fresh, in the face of new encounters, new problems . . . and we are continuously renewed, and made alive . . .

It is therefore clear that patterns play a concrete and objective role in determining the extent to which we come to life in any given place.

Each pattern that creates conditions in which people can resolve the conflicts they experience, for themselves, reduces people's inner conflict, helps to put them in a state where they can meet more new challenges, and helps them to be more alive.

On the other hand, each pattern that creates conditions in which people experience conflicts which they cannot resolve for themselves, increases their inner stress, reduces their capacity to resolve other conflicts and meet other challenges, and therefore makes them less alive, more dead.

But, beyond that, patterns are not merely instruments which help us live: they are themselves alive or dead.

For, valuable as it is, the concept of patterns as life-giving

or life-destroying does not go far enough. The arguments of the last few pages could make it seem as though a good pattern is merely one which is good for *us*. Yet this view, in its simple form, would lead to the same anthropocentric view of the world which has done so much damage in the past. And above all, it would lead, in the end, to the question—well, if it is to be good for us, then we must decide what we want—and all the arbitrariness which that entails.

It is time now, to recognize that this quality without a name in our surroundings which lets us become ourselves, is not, and cannot be created there, by any effort to make it "for" man.

Good patterns are good because to some extent each one of them reaches the quality without a name itself.

After all, the criterion of being good for *us* could never be a general criterion for patterns—because obviously, there are many patterns, essential to the harmonious ongoing life of the seas, the deserts, the forests—which are not directly good for us at all.

If the only criterion for a good pattern were its goodness for *us*, we should be forced to judge the ripples in a pond, or the crash of an ocean wave, according to whether we could get nice fish from it, or whether we liked the sound—and this would be ridiculous.

Certain patterns are simply resolved within themselves, within their proper contexts—in these contexts they are intrinsically alive—and it is this which makes them good.

And this is as true for the pattern of an ocean wave as it is for the pattern of a courtyard in a house.

Consider the ripples in a patch of wind-blown sand.

When the wind blows, at any given speed, it picks up grains of sand, and carries them a few inches. It carries the smaller grains slightly farther, and the bigger grains not so far. Now, in any patch of sand, there are always a few irregularities—places where the sand is a little higher—and of course, as the wind sweeps over the sand, it is just the grains on these little ridges which get picked up and blown. Since, for any given wind speed the wind carries all the grains roughly the same distance, the blowing wind now gradually deposits a second ridge a certain fixed distance from the first, and parallel to it. This second ridge, as it builds up, is also especially vulnerable, so the grains from its top, once again, get blown on to form another ridge, the same distance again, and so on . . . .

This pattern is a recognizable and constant pattern, because it is a truth about the laws which govern sand and wind.

Within the proper context, this pattern creates and re-creates itself over and over again. It creates and re-creates itself whenever the wind blows on the sand.

Its goodness comes from the fact that it is true to its own inner forces, not from any special sense of purpose.

The same can happen in a garden, where the plants, and wind, and animals are perfectly in balance.

Consider, for example, a corner of an orchard, where the sun warms the ground, the marrows grow, the bees pollinate the apple blossom, the worms bring air to the soil, the apple leaves fertilize the soil . . . . This pattern repeats itself, hundreds of times, in a thousand different gardens, and is always a source of life.

But the life of the pattern does not depend on the fact that it does something for "us"—but simply on the self-sustaining harmony, in which each process helps sustain the other processes, and in which the whole system of forces and processes keeps itself going, over and again, without creating extra forces that will tear it down.

In short, saying these patterns are alive is more or less the same as saying they are stable.

Compare the eroding gully, of chapter 2, with these patterns. The gully is unstable. It destroys itself. Its own action, gradually tears it down. These patterns on the other hand, have the quality, that their own action helps keep them alive.

You may wonder: what about cancer. Cancer is stable. It maintains itself. And "in the small" this is true. But it only maintains *itself*. Since, in order to maintain itself, it must in the end destroy what is around it—the very organism where it lives—it ultimately too destroys itself, by helping to destroy its surroundings.

And although it is true that nothing is perfectly stable,

and true that everything changes in the end, there are still great differences of degree. The patterns which are alive maintain themselves in the long run, because they do nothing to destroy their own immediate surroundings, and they do nothing drastic, in the short run, to destroy themselves. As far as it is ever possible, they are alive, because they are so much in harmony, that they support themselves, and keep themselves alive, through their own inner structure.

And just this also happens in patterns from the human realm. Their quality does not depend on purpose, but on their intrinsic stability.

Consider two human patterns. On the one hand, consider the fact that certain Greek village streets have a band of whitewash, four or five feet wide, outside every house, so that people can pull their chairs out into the street, into a realm which is half theirs, half street, and so contribute to the life around them.

And on the other hand, consider the fact that cafés in Los Angeles are indoors, away from the sidewalk, in order to prevent the food from being contaminated.

Both these patterns have a purpose. One has the purpose of allowing people to contribute to the street life and to be part of it—to the extent they desire—by marking a domain which makes it possible. The other has the purpose of keeping people healthy, by making sure that they will not eat food that has dust particles on it. Yet one is alive; the other dead.

One, like the ripples in the sand, sustains itself and heals itself because it is in harmony with its own forces. The other one can only be maintained by force of law.

The whitewashed band is so congruent with the forces in people's lives and with their feelings that it sustains itself—when the whitewash gets dirty or worn people take care of it themselves because the pattern is deeply connected to their own experience. From outside, it seems as though the whitewash maintains itself almost as if by magic.

The indoor café in Los Angeles is almost opposite: it has no such congruence with people's inner forces. It has to be maintained by force, by force of law—because, under the impact of its own forces, it would gradually deteriorate, and disappear. People want to be outdoors on a spring day, want to drink their beer or coffee in the open, to watch the world go by, but they are imprisoned in the café by the laws of public health. The situation is self-destroying, not only because it will change as soon as the law which upholds it disappears, but also in the more subtle sense that it is continuously creating just those inner conflicts, just those reservoirs of stress I spoke of earlier which will, unsatisfied, soon well up like a gigantic boil and leak out in some other form of destruction or refusal to cooperate with the situation.

In short, a pattern lives when it allows its own internal forces to resolve themselves.

And a pattern dies when it fails to provide a framework in

which forces can resolve themselves, so that instead, the action of the forces, unresolved, works to destroy the pattern.

That is the distinction between the two patterns in the last example. The fact that both of them are based on human "purposes" is quite irrelevant.

And this explains the importance of the courtyard pattern which inspires use.

It is the self-sustaining character the living courtyard has, which is the essence of its life.

As time goes on, the courtyard which lives is also growing. More and more happens there. Because people enjoy being there, they plant flowers there, and look after them; they keep the garden furniture painted; and even if you go there when no one else is there, you can "feel" the presence of life there, because you can sense that people are taking care of it.

But the other lifeless courtyard, as time goes on, becomes more and more forgotten. No one enjoys going out there—so the paint is peeling; the gravel has weeds in it; even the sculpture standing there somehow looks abandoned. The courtyard which is whole, becomes richer and more whole; the courtyard which is unwhole slowly fades away and dies.

And so we see the wholeness of the living courtyard does not depend on any human values, external to the courtyard, invented by you, or by me, or by the people who live there. It is a fact intrinsic to its own organization.

And now we see just how the circle of the argument completes itself.

In our own lives, we have the quality without a name when we are most intense, most happy, most wholehearted.

This comes about when we allow the forces we experience to run freely in us, to fly past each other, when we are able to allow our forces to escape the locked-in conflict which oppresses us.

But this freedom, this limpidity, occurs in us most easily when we are in a world whose patterns also let their forces loose . . . because, just as we are free when our own forces run most freely within us, so the places we are in are also free when their own forces (which include the forces that arise in us) themselves run free, and are themselves resolved . . .

The quality without a name in us, our liveliness, our thirst for life, depends directly on the patterns in the world, and the extent to which they have this quality themselves.

Patterns which live, release this quality in us.

But they release this quality in us, essentially because they have it in themselves.

CHAPTER 7

THE MULTIPLICITY OF LIVING PATTERNS

The more living patterns there are in a thing—a room, a building, or a town—the more it comes to life as an entirety, the more it glows, the more it has this self-maintaining fire, which is the quality without a name.