

Space Oddity: Exercises in Art and Philosophy

edited by, Giulia Gelmi, Anastasia Kozachenko-Stravinsky,
Andrea Nalesso

The Stravinsky's Family. The Home as a Strategy of Life and Creation

Apartment on the Kryukov Canal: From an Apartment House to a Communal Apartment

Anastasia Kozachenko-Stravinsky

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italia

Abstract The image of the Home is the topography of our innermost self, and the house is an instrument of analysis of the human soul. The things surrounding a person become like clots of relationships between people or geological strata, by which one can trace the change in ages, tastes, affections, and hobbies. Especially of interest is the analysis of the house as an ark of family traditions. Its evolution and transformation in material and geographical terms. The analysis of the toponymy of the Home space can provide insight into the structure of the daily life of a particular family – Stravinsky's family. Comparing the Home of Stravinsky's family will help to identify in which works the acquisition/movement/loss of home has manifested and in which works we can find a reflection or memory of the past.

Keywords Home. Igor Stravinsky. Fyodor Stravinsky. Stravinsky's family. The Tupikov House. Kommunalka. Communal apartments.

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1 Introduction

One of the leading research subjects in twentieth-century philosophy was the human being, his role, and his place in the world. In contemporary philosophy, the question of man's relationship to home as a primary constant of one's being is paramount. The Home plays a vital role in human life: regarding its being and value and the element of self-determination. As part of the study of this problem, philosophical anthropology is of significance. It describes the main characteristics of human existence (analysis of living space), studies the process of finding one's place in the world, and characterises human activity and mental relationship with the domestic area.

One aspect of the study of the Stravinsky family examines their life in relation to the 'Home'. This approach allows us to examine the complex processes: the connection between space and society, the external and the internal, and the interior and the exterior. The interior opposes the surface, but within the home, these oppositions find harmonious unity. The private and the public are identified with different contexts: the familiar/unconventional, the open/closed, etc. The interaction of these domains in everyday life is determined by the place in which one lives. The distinction between outer and inner space is relative, and for the individual, it is set by different situations that define the actual boundaries of being.

This article presents one of the many addresses of the Stravinsky family, but one that is fundamentally important: the house where Igor Stravinsky spent his childhood and to which he returned as a guest more than half a century later. St. Petersburg, corner house No. 27/6-8 on Dekabristov Street and the Kryukov Canal, built and inhabited by the Stravinsky family based on vital needs and values. The study of this house is philosophically and anthropologically problematic. It allows us to consider the family and specific individuals from the perspective of their mutual influence and development and to reveal the genesis of personality in interaction with the domestic space.

2 The Concept of Home: (Self)-Identity

First and foremost, the Home, acting as an archetype of sedentarisation, allows us to approach an understanding of the social strategy of the modern world – nomadism with its archetype of the Road. The primordial man begins by withdrawing from his natural habitat – nature – and creating a unique refuge that guarantees a relatively secure existence. Home (*oikos*) becomes such a place. The subject humanises through the presence of Home, the space of his life, and his existence in the world. We believe that the Neolithic epoch can be

rightly called 'the epoch of the house' or 'the epoch of the birth of the house'. Because of the Neolithic revolution's essence in domestication, man transitioned from 'conquering' the macro-space of the ikumen to mastering his own home's micro-space. In this connection, the original thoughts of O. Shpengler become clear:

The prime form of the house is everywhere a product of feeling and of growth, never at all of knowledge. Like the shell of the nautilus, the hive of the bee, the nest of the bird [...]. (Shpengler 1922, 129)

If we turn to Heidegger, we realise that the place of enlightenment, where the man 'gathers' in his radiant qualities, where he can be human, is a *topos*, a kind of Home. *Topos* is rooted in one's place, which sets the intensity of being. Man and the things around him are juxtaposed in the world, and the world is juxtaposed to him. Heidegger's place of being in the space of *Dasein* is where the divine and the human, the earthly and the heavenly, converge in the act of the event (Heidegger 1977). Man exists and finds himself within the boundaries of these modes.

Gaston Bachelard speaks of topophilia's attachment to a particular place. The researcher must identify the human value of spaces belonging to man. Spaces defended against hostile forces and beloved spaces (Bachelard 2014). The image of Home is the topography of our innermost self. Home is an instrument of analysis of the human soul. J. Baudrillard puts forward the following idea:

Human beings and objects are indeed bound together in a collusion in which the objects take on a certain density, an emotional value - what might be called a 'presence'. (Baudrillard 1996, 16)

The symbolic contours of the figure of a dwelling, the formation of the Home, is why we are so imprinted with the image of one's Home in this conception of space. The home environment is one of the phenomena of a person's life experience.

Although there are many definitions and components of the Home, I propose focusing on just a few. It is these definitions that have become a tool in the study of three generations of Stravinsky. In this research, I want to consider the function of the Home not only as a social, architectural, and symbolic space but also as a place of human existence through philosophical and anthropological functions, such as a human portrait.

I used two known parameters of home research. The first is context. Contextual events are inherently connected with the experience of ancestors, family, and the collective unconscious. External factors always determine context. And the Home is built from these very molecules - what surrounds us. Most important is belonging to a specific place and clan ('identity').

Another important parameter that defines most homes with a capital letter is things and objects. This science is called realogy (from the Latin *res*, meaning 'thing'). The subject of realogy is the essence of the item and is not reducible to the product's technical qualities, the commodity's economic properties, or the work's aesthetic attributes. The item has a unique lyrical and memorial essence and increases with the technological novelty, commodity value, and aesthetic appeal. The acquisition or systematisation of objects is a way of ordering the world in the daily organisation of individual existence. And their definition makes it possible to understand the awareness of oneself ('self-identification'). In this case, the transfer of objects has a special ritual and sacredness. It leads us to the term Yuri Lotman 'semiosphere' (Lotman 1984). Semiosphere is, above all, the domain that allows culture to define itself and situate itself to dialogue with other cultures. If we analyse, the life and artwork of any individual semiosphere can be understood as the worldview. This fundamental cognitive orientation of an individual or society encompasses the whole of the individual's or society's knowledge and point of view. It can include natural philosophy; fundamental, existential, and normative postulates; or themes, values, emotions, and ethics.

3 The Tupikov House: An Apartment Building

Corner House No. 27/6-8 at Dekabristov Street and the Kryukov Canal has a rich history of an old profitable house, once owned by the merchant of the second guild and Kolomna landlord A.M. Tupikov, because it is closely connected with the history of the city and its tenants - the most famous figures of national culture and science. Particular attention should be paid to the fact that it is an apartment building. The architecture of the nineteenth-twentieth century is developing quite dynamically in the direction of architectural diversity. The architectural appearance of a building depends on the so-called client. Apartment houses in cities arose in connection with the growth of city dwellers and the formation of an urban way of life. The internal space of an apartment house is zoned according to the rank of the dwelling, corresponding to the owners' financial position. The building as a whole has a cellular structure. Hence its external appearance is significant, with closely spaced rows of windows, with a rectangular gateway leading into the courtyard. The town was more and more densely built up, acquiring the character of a solid façade [fig. 1].

The Stravinsky family settled in house No. 27/6-8 on the corner of Officerskaya Street (now Dekabristov Street) and the Kryukov Canal, in flat No. 66. In the summer of 1881, the composer's father was searching for a new flat for the family. As early as 1881, in a letter



Figure 1 The Tupikov House, Saint-Petersburg, 2015.
Courtesy of Stravinsky Family Fund

to his wife, Fyodor Stravinsky complains on 16 pages about his ‘ordeal’ in the search, excusing himself that it is on the third floor and not on the second:

Я пытался, пытался и пытался и все понапрасну. Искал того, чего нельзя было найти, ибо то, что мы с тобой проектировали, были розовые надежды, которые и растаяли после двухдневных моих походов в поисках квартиры. Но как всякий труд, как всякая тяжелая работа по большей части венчается успехом, так и мое горькое прозябание и угнетенное существование с 22-го и по сей день, проведенное в страшных трудах, неестественно напряженных и тому подобных усилий, все же наконец увенчаются успехом, хотя и не во втором этаже, но не меньше блестящем третьем.

I tried and tried and tried, and all in vain. I searched for what could not be found, for what you and I had projected were rosy hopes, which melted away after two days of my adventures in search of a flat. But just as all labour, just as all hard work is for the most part crowned with success, so my bitter misery and oppressive exist-

ence from the 22nd to the present day, spent in terrible labour, unnaturally strenuous and the like, is finally crowned with success, though not in the first floor, but no less brilliantly in the third.¹

He describes all the details of the future flat and draws a detailed plan, marking each room: living room, dining room, maid's room, and Petrushka's room [fig. 2].

Три комнаты и передняя на канал, на солнце весь день, все три комнаты огромные, в первой три окна, в остальных по два, простенки такие, что каминное гарвальское зеркало свободно войдет, четыре комнаты и кухня таким порядком: две комнаты и большая (вроде нашей детской) по два окна и две по одному окну, при чем та, которая по соседству с кухней больше, чем ее соседка, то есть шире. Затем громадная кухня, на концах коридора два клозета: наш и людям.

Three rooms and a canal forecourt, in the sun all day, all three rooms are enormous. The first has three windows, the others have two, and the partitions are so large that a Harvel fireplace mirror would fit through. Four rooms and the kitchen are like this: two rooms and the big one (like our nursery) have two windows, and two have one window, with the one next to the kitchen more extensive than its neighbour, which is more expansive. Then the vast kitchen, two toilets at the ends of the corridor: ours and people's.²

At this time, the family already had two sons, Roman and Yuri. A couple of months later, the Stravinskys discovered that a third child would be born in the summer. He - little Igor - was brought to the flat on the Kryukov Canal in September 1882 from Oranienbaum. He spent his childhood and youth sharing a room with his younger brother Yuriy. It was this very room that was 'Petrushka's room'.

The flat where Stravinsky spent his childhood is a very important *topos* on the map of his artistic life. Considering this place not just as a living space but as a cluster of creative and social energies will reveal the main points for topographical analysis of the human soul, the soul of the composer.

The uniqueness of this flat lies first and foremost in its geographical location. It was a five-minute walk from the Mariinsky Theatre. It was the place where the composer's father, bass Fyodor Stravinsky,

¹ Stravinsky, F. *Letter from F. Stravinsky to A. Stravinsky* 30 August 1881. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the Author.

² Stravinsky, F. *Letter from F. Stravinsky to A. Stravinsky* 30 August 1881. Letter from F. Stravinsky to A. Stravinsky, 30 August 1881, Saint Petersburg.



Figure 2 Stravinsky's flat plan no. 66, Saint-Petersburg, 1881. Paper, pencil. Courtesy of Stravinsky Family Fund

served as a soloist at the theatre. Also across the road was the conservatoire, where Igor Stravinsky did not study but which certainly influenced him. From the memoirs of Robert Craft:

Contrast this with his reaction, around the corner, to the Conservatory and the Mariinsky Theater. As soon as he recognizes the former, an involuntary 'Glazunov' comes out (after fifty years!). He then looks the other way, at the green-and-white Mariinsky, and his whole face ripples with pleasure. Anyone seeing this could not doubt that he had learned to hate music at the one place and to love it at the other. (Stravinsky, Craft 1963, 255)

The life of the head of the family was within the same neighbourhood, where he created his creative and social world of being. Fyodor took the form of a space of 'rest' with the perceptible boundaries of his way of life when he settled in this flat. His choice to be in this 'rest' rather than movement, in a 'point' (Razova 2006) rather than a line, is linked to the death of his firstborn son, Roman - Igor's older brother. As a man of faith, he sought to realise a God-like identity with his being. He compensated for his desolation and abandonment with the Home, which fulfilled his existence, local and personal. It allows us to characterise Fyodor's type of life as sedentary.

Secondly, the social status of the house is essential. It was called the 'artistic' house. The building, erected on this site in 1750, was one of the first stone residential buildings to form Theatre Square. Many prominent Russian music art figures lived in the corner house No. 27/6-8 at different times. Edward Napravnik, the famous Russian conductor and composer, lived in Apartment No. 72 from 1877 to 1916. A Czech by nationality, he spent most of his life in Russia. From 1863 to the day of his death in 1916, Napravnik was the permanent conductor of the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg and was the first director of many famous Russian operas, including works by Tchaikovsky. In this house, in the early twentieth century, the brilliant Tamara Karsavina, daughter of Platon Karsavin, a former ballet soloist with the Mariinsky Ballet Company, also rented a flat. Her flat was one floor above the Stravinsky family apartments. The appearance of Karsavina was an actual event and a new stage in the Russian ballet theatre's history. In addition, the Stravinskys' flat No. 66 was where notable guests came to visit - famous musicians, singers, and artists: Dostoevsky, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Shestakova (nè Glinka), Stelletsy, and many others.

Thirdly, the physical world of this flat is fascinating. The main attraction of flat No. 66 was a room with massive bookshelves and the family library, lovingly collected by the head of the family, Fyodor Stravinsky. It was always proudly displayed to friends and guests of the house. Rare books were admired by contemporaries and were the secret en-

vy of metropolitan booksellers. Fyodor Stravinsky regularly enlarged his collection and always worked with books when receiving new roles and opera roles at the theatre. Through research, we can say with certainty that Igor Stravinsky sought to recreate such a library, seeing it not just as a unique intellectual unit but as a link to the space of his childhood (Baranova-Monighetti 2021). The properties of personality and a person's individuality are refracted in its 'private' material field. A person's personal 'thing-sphere' is those attributes of his social being that create feelings of comfort, security, well-being, belonging, satisfaction, and solvency. There was, for example, an 'altar' for composers in Stravinsky's room, a likeness of which is also fun in Igor's house in Hollywood fifty years later. From Robert Craft's memoirs [fig. 3]:

In a photograph of I.S. in his room, dated 1899, the walls are crowded with pictures and mementos as they are now in Hollywood, except that Berlioz and Wagner were prominent among the deities then. (Stravinsky, Craft 1963, 256)

In addition, the Childhood Room appears in works by Stravinsky. In his 1910 ballet *Petrushka*, Igor Stravinsky introduces this place of childhood. He described it as a small and gloomy space where Petrushka (or Igor himself) is all alone and not wanted, where he desperately tries to break through the room wall and get into the bright and bustling world of fairground festivities.

4 **Kommunalka: Communal Apartments**

The flat, which can rightly be called an essential *topos* in Stravinsky's creative constellation, became empty. Fyodor Stravinsky died in 1902. After that, three sons – Yuri, Igor, and Guriy – and their mother lived in the house. After the 1917 revolution, Anna Stravinsky lived alone in the flat for some time and was appointed custodian of her late husband's library. However, the apartments began to be 'condensed' by moving in neighbours. Through some bargains and exchanges, they agreed on settling not quite strangers but the Holodovsky's family – Anna Stravinsky's relatives and other acquaintances – so that the landlady of the nine-room flat had only two rooms left. In 1922 she went to join Igor in France, while Yuri – Igor's elder brother – returned to St. Petersburg with his family from the Crimea. Between 1938 and 1942, the rooms were further partitioned and divided, with little space left. During the Siege of Leningrad, the Stravinsky family managed to move to another flat in a nearby entrance with a warrant for two rooms. It was Napravnik's flat, the inhabitants of which had already died. The once elite house had finally become a communal flat. In principle, the phenomenon could be considered predomi-



Figure 3 Igor Stravinsky, Saint-Petersburg, 1899.
Courtesy of Stravinsky Family Fund

nantly Russian. The space of the apartment was divided between the tenants, leaving a communal area. The communal organisation of life contributed to a specific relationship within the collective. The communal living space facilitated a reorientation of everyday life from the family to the collective. Communal life illustrated the way the home space influenced people's lifestyles. Living by the established rules in a communal flat clearly defines the boundaries of private and public spaces. Here private and public spaces overlap, and each resident is an equal master of their own and the communal areas.

In 1962, Igor visited Leningrad and visited his childhood home. It was not the flat his father had rented fifty years earlier, but it was next door, across the wall. The family of Xenia Stravinsky, the composer's niece, lived in the two rooms. Many things have been preserved: furniture, interior items, portraits, and photographs. Xenia tried to recreate the atmosphere of the past for her uncle: two rooms in which five people lived were turned into a 'living room' and a 'dining room'. The neighbours were persuaded not to show themselves during the visit. Igor Stravinsky never realised that this was a communal flat. The composer recalls the view from his window - the apartment where he was brought in the autumn of 1882 and where he lived for twenty-two years:

I remember the rattling of the horse-drawn tram, especially the squeaking of the wheels, as it turned the corner of our house, where it picked up speed to get to the bridge over the Kryukov Canal. On the other side of the canal stood a very handsome Empire-style building, yellow in color, like the Villa Medici in Rome, but a prison, unfortunately. (Stravinsky, Craft 1960, 23)

The view from the window became different. Instead of the prison, there was a residential building. Instead of the Lithuanian Market, there was the House of Culture of the First Five-Year Plan.

This view from the flat's window, from Igor and Guriy's room, was captured twice in drawings. The first drawing is stored in the Stravinsky Family Fund - a watercolour, author unknown [fig. 4]. There's an expanse, a horse-drawn carriage, the Lithuanian castle opposite and the Lithuanian market. Another drawing was made in 1903 by Igor Stravinsky's sister-in-law, his elder brother Yuri's wife Elena Stravinsky, born Novoselova, an artist and a pupil of Ian Zyanglinsky. It was published in Robert Craft's *Dialogues* in Russian translation. It shows the same view of the Lithuanian castle, the same stretch of Officers' Street, and the synagogue's dome.

The Lithuanian castle (prison) was demolished in the late 1920s. The new building of the Mariinsky Theatre (Mariinsky 2) now stands on the site of the Litovsky Market. Stravinsky's 'Petrushka's room' windows offer a view of the foyer.

Fifty years later, Stravinsky returned to his homeland, the home of his childhood. It was a different country, culture, and flat, but it was a return. The iron railings on the canal embankment are the same, as he said, so is the wooden footbridge on the corner. The street is still paved with stone, and the trams still brake loudly on their tracks (X. Stravinsky 1978). The visit to the house was special:

Еда должна быть сугубо домашняя. Ведь наш дом был единственный в России частный дом, который посетили Стравинские. И так - пирожки с капустой, пирог с яблоками, домашнее варенье и, конечно, вино, водка и всякие закуски. Все должно было радовать Игоря Федоровича, должно было предстать перед ним наилучшим образом. Сохранились кое-какие вещи - бронза, книжные шкафы, фарфор, портреты и др., - которые принадлежали его родителям и которые ему, без сомнения, приятно будет увидеть, как напоминание о детских и юношеских годах.

The food had to be strictly homemade. After all, our house was the only private house in Russia that the Stravinskys visited. Cabbage cakes, apple pie, homemade jam and wine, vodka and other snacks. Everything must have pleased Igor Fyodorovich and been presented to him in the best possible way. Some things had sur-



Figure 4 View from Stravinsky's family house, Saint-Petersburg. XX century. Paper, watercolour. Courtesy of Stravinsky Family Fund

vived - bronzes, bookcases, china, portraits, etc. - which had belonged to his parents and which he would no doubt enjoy seeing as a reminder of his childhood and adolescent years. (X. Stravinsky 1978, 147-6)

The Home where Igor returned had a particular characteristic, different from the one he had in his childhood home. This characteristic resonates incredibly well with the composer's lifestyle and acts as an antithesis to the sedentary lifestyle of his father, Fyodor. Igor Stravinsky is a nomad. His physical movement, oriented to dispersal through space and, as a result - belongs not to one country but to the whole world, to the blurring of identity in the multicultural environment of the first third of the twentieth century. Nomadism as a tra-

ditional form of nomadic livelihood is revealed in Igor Stravinsky's mode of existence, in his choice of Home, cultural objects and things. At the same time, the impulse for a 'nomadic' way of life was the composer's fear of revolution, rally, or urban procession, from which he always tried to flee to a safe space. Stravinsky lived in at least twelve different addresses, held three nationalities, and in recent years was on constant world tours, so he lived in hotels. His life was dominated not by the Home but by the Road, which called for new journeys and opened up new world horizons. In the Road, one can lose one's identity by being forced to constantly reintroduce one's meanings into new spaces without having a permanent private space.

The communal apartment phenomenon destroys the home's primary function - the privacy of living - and forms collectivism, transparency, openness, and publicity of living. The space of the communal apartment can be seen in the context of archaeology. Archaeology is a metaphor for memory (Bojm 2002). In this sense, the archaeology of the communal apartment leads us to understand it as a place of memory, a cultural and symbolic ruin. The communal apartment is inherently dynamic in its microcosm - shared spaces, kitchen, corridor, bathroom - and in its macrocosm - the constant change of neighbours or changes in their numbers. Under these conditions of man's deterritorialisation, there is his transformation into a nomad, and the Home becomes a kind of 'waiting room'.

When Stravinsky 'returned' to his Home, he found himself in a place whose form and characteristics represent himself if we consider the individual as a *topos* in space.

5 Conclusion

The question of man's place in the world is answered by philosophy and architecture. Unique methods allow it to build strict geometric images of the human lifeworld - the living space of a city, a house, a flat, or a room. It is essential to note the architectural features of different types of housing, their place in the natural and urban environment, and to define the mentality of the 'home man' that changes significantly with the evolution of housing from Home to city flat. It is necessary to move away from defining space only in a geometric sense and approach its expanded understanding in a humanitarian context.

The space of the Home initially acts as an artificial place of human activity. Home, human habitat, everyday life, and topoanalysis is a systematic psychological study of sites that play an essential role in our inner life (Bachelard 2014).

The reflection of a person's destiny in the space of their Home and vice-versa has particular interest for researchers. By juxtaposing the space of the Stravinsky Homes, it is possible to consider the phenom-

enon of the 'Russian house', the 'Russian estate' and its total extermination and then resurrection in emigration after the revolution of 1917 (Dmitrieva 2020). It allows us to identify in which works the acquisition/migration/loss of the Home manifested itself in Stravinsky's work, how it influenced the change in the style of each character, and in which works we can find a reflection or remembrance of the Home.

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