

ADELE TUTTER

**Angel With a Missing Wing:
Loss, Restitution, and the Embodied Self
in the Photography of Josef Sudek**

It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes
the world into paintings.

—Merleau-Ponty

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse/
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

—Isaiah XI.1

Angel With a Missing Wing

The Czech photographer Josef Sudek (1896–1976) was a bit of a recluse. He nevertheless had a large circle of friends, many of them fellow music lovers, and his Tuesday evening salons, at which he entertained those who crowded into his tiny studio with recordings of classical music from his large collection, were legendary.

Sudek lost his right arm in the First World War, fighting for Austria-Hungary at the Italian front. In 1926, ten years after his injury, some of his musician friends persuaded him to accompany them on a tour of Italy—where, one night, he disappeared.

One day I just couldn't resist it. When the musicians of the Czech Philharmonic told me: Josef, come with us, we are going to Italy to play music, I told myself, fool that you are, you were there, and you did not enjoy that beautiful country when you served as a soldier for the

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emperor's army. And so I went with them on this unusual excursion. In Milan we had a lot of applause and acclaim and we traveled down the Italian boot until one day we came to that place—I had to disappear in the middle of the concert; in the dark I got lost but *I had to search*. Far outside the city toward dawn, in the fields bathed by the morning dew, I finally found the place. *But my arm wasn't there*—only the poor peasant farmhouse was still standing in its place. They had brought me into it that day when I was shot in the right arm. They could never put it together again, and for years I was going from hospital to hospital . . . The Philharmonic people apparently even made the police look for me, but I somehow could not get myself to return from this country. I turned up in Prague some two months later . . . from that time on I never went anywhere anymore and I never will. (Sudek, quoted in Bullaty, 1978, p. 27, emphasis added)

Although Sudek kept this promise, he did not abandon his search. His quest would prove a recurrent theme in his sparse remarks about his own work, as well as those of his commentators, such as the art historian *Antonín Dufek*, who described him as “the creator who did not construct, but who rather searched and found” (1996, p. 21). Contextualized within his life story and his political and cultural milieu, I will interpret Sudek's search as a driving force behind his life's work. Further, through the analysis of his photographic oeuvre, this essay will build a conceptual bridge between Sigmund Freud's formulations on mourning and identification and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory of the embodied self. Synthesizing these contributions with Melanie Klein's theories on mourning and reparation, Hannah Segal's application of Klein to Proust, Freud's concept of *Nachträglichkeit*, and its contemporary elaboration, *après-coup*, I will posit Sudek's work as an extension, reclamation, and re-creation of the self, and of the world that comprises the embodied self.

In 1915, Austria-Hungary conscripted the nineteen year old Josef Sudek into its armed forces. In the twilight of the

Habsburg Empire, and against the backdrop of cresting Czech nationalism, Sudek was sent to Italy to fight for the powers that had ruled his country for three centuries (Fig. 1, left). Within months of his arrival, he was fired upon by his own regiment and suffered a wound to his right arm, which developed gangrene. Despite several surgeries, the arm could not be saved, and ultimately required amputation at the shoulder.

It was a full year into his four-year convalescence when Sudek finally wrote his mother and told her about his injury. He tried to reassure her:

[June 1917] Dear Mommy, I have been wounded in my right shoulder. It was shrapnel but the fragment went clean through . . . This is why I must write with my left hand . . . The wound is not big at all . . . (Sudek, quoted in Fárová, 1990a, p. 9)

One month later, he gently informed her that he would be coming home:

[July 1917] Dearest Mommy, forgive me for not writing for so long, but I had an operation some days ago. I will be allowed to return to Kolín in about 5 or 6 weeks, however, dear Mother, without my right arm . . . (p. 9)

As a young man before the war, Sudek had been interested in the camera, no doubt sparked by his younger sister Božena, who was as a teenager apprenticed to a cousin, Bohumila Bloudilová, one of the rare female photographers at the time. Sudek was especially fond of landscape pictures and self-portraits, and even brought a camera along to the front. Unable with only one hand to resume his apprenticeship to a bookbinder, he could, however, manipulate a camera and tripod, sometimes using his teeth to adjust the lens; he enrolled in photography school and the one-time hobby blossomed into a calling. Sudek became a familiar sight in Prague, the one-armed man lugging his bulky old wooden camera up and down the city's terraced hills (Fig. 1, right).



Figure 1. Left: Sudek with camera at the Italian front, c. 1916–1917, unknown photographer. Right: Prague, 1967, photograph by Timm Rautert.

The loss of limb is a profound one, warranting comparison to the loss of a loved one (Thomas & Siller, 1999). It is said that Sudek never complained about his disability and sometimes even joked about it—e.g., “The war destroyed my arm, later I lost it. Of course I did not enjoy that, but I was consoling myself that at least I did not lose my head. That would have been worse” (Bullaty, 1978, p. 24). But if he tried to conceal the psychic trauma of his amputation, the transformation evident in a remarkable sequence of self-portraits made after the war reveals volumes (Fig. 2). The nattily dressed, boat-hatted man before the war is younger but no more dapper than the dashing man in a picture taken right after the war: striking a clever pose, he conceals the absence of his missing limb. A few years later, he is a more somber man, his right arm purposefully cut off by the picture frame—at once causing and ignoring his deformity. Eventually, he becomes a shabby, unkempt man, his amputation finally, wincingly demonstrated. In later life, Sudek’s lack of self-care was such that he was often taken for a vagrant, and he was once almost barred from attending the opening of one of his own exhibitions. Still, his friend and curatorial champion Anna Fárová—who, along with his former assistant and fellow photographer Sonja Bullaty, helped introduce Sudek to Western audiences¹—recalls how he would tell “close friends that he

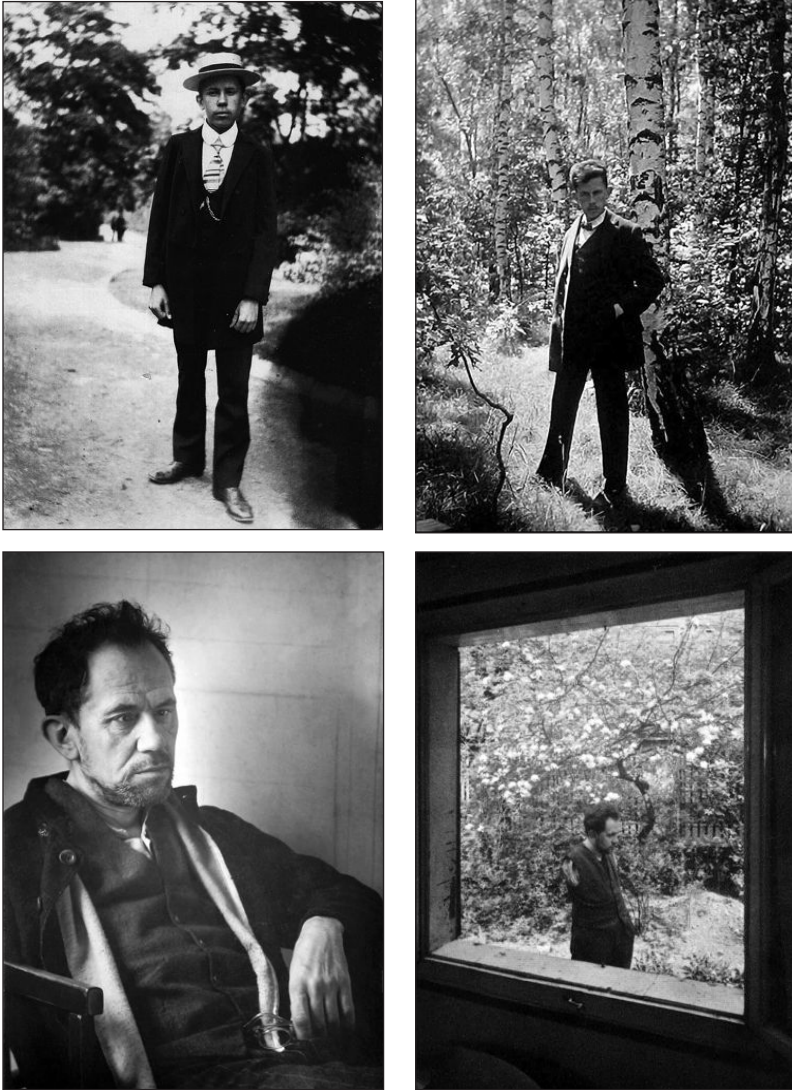


Figure 2. Self-portraits of Josef Sudek. Upper left: c. 1910–1914, pre-injury. Upper right: 1920, post-injury. Lower left: c. 1930s, the absence of his right arm still not apparent. Lower right: c. late 1930s, the amputation finally evident.

wanted to show them photographs of himself with both arms, show them how good he had looked before” (1990a, p. 9).

Sudek’s physical self-neglect paralleled his lack of intimate relationships: he never married, nor had as far as anyone knew

any significant romantic involvements after the war. “But,” as his friend and curator Zdeněk Kirschner (1993) relates,

he never failed to turn around when passing a beautiful woman either. Anything that bordered on what he considered “wickedness”—even, for that matter, the mention of a pretty face—was blamed on his invented “brother”. “Oh, my brother would love that” he would say and deliver it with a poker face. Many people thought Sudek had a brother (notes to plates 120–122, n.p.)

This mischievous story hints at a distinction drawn between the romantic feelings and sexual desires of Sudek’s previous intact self—his so-called “brother”—and their subsequent abdication, a stance at odds with the mostly gentle, sometimes visceral eroticism evident in his art. He may have considered his mutilated body undeserving of love; and, to the extent to which his injury was felt as a castration, incapable of giving it. Having already lost part of his body, might it have been too threatening to entertain the prospect of giving himself over to passion, and becoming even more physically and emotionally vulnerable? For the intimacy he valued, Sudek turned instead to intensely invested friendships, many of them life-long. But for the most part, other than concerts, occasional dinners with close friends, and his weekly “Musical Tuesdays,” he lived like a monk, wholly committed to his art, through which he worked through, symbolized, and transformed his loss.

In *Detail with Baroque Wing*, Sudek positions a female nude in front of a sculpted fragment of a wing, her torso bisected by the right border of the photographic frame (Fig. 3, left). This composition is reminiscent of a self-portrait in which not only his arm but the entire side of his body is dematerialized, swallowed by darkness (Fig. 3, right); note, in both images, the prominent central placement of the arm with its bent elbow. In the self-portrait, Sudek’s clenched hand holds a dagger poised where his arm was severed, suggesting the fact and manner of its lack, but also replacing it; again, he renders volitional his loss of limb, subsumed by an aesthetic device that he wields like a knife. In contrast, the hovering wing in *Baroque Wing* seems almost a natural appendage, balancing the absence of

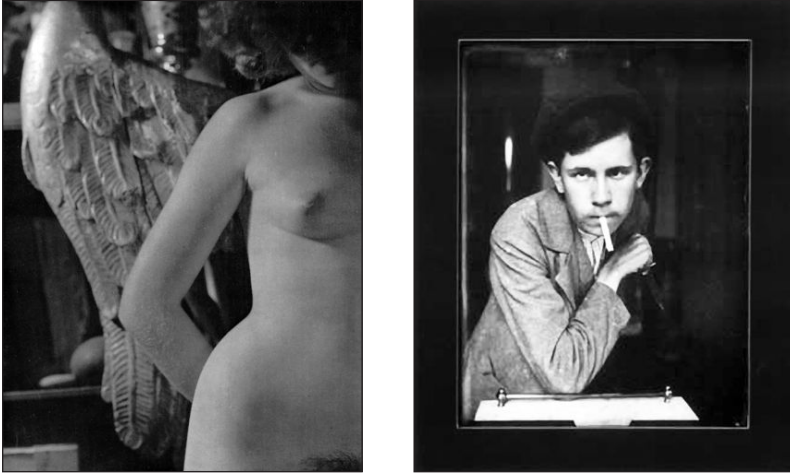


Figure 3. Left: *Detail with Baroque Wing*, c. 1951–1954. Right: Self-portrait, c. 1920s. It is not clear whether the reversal of this image was intentional on Sudek's part, an artifact of a contact print, or a subsequent error in reproduction.

the woman's right arm. And thus the loss of flesh and bone is elevated and transformed into the magical reconstitution of an angel from flesh and stone.

For many years, Sudek's accomplished technique and sophisticated composition allowed him to draw a substantial income from commercial work. Initially working in advertising, he became a sought-after photographer of art and his careful reproduction of thousands of artworks in the museums and galleries of Prague was a superb art-historical education in itself. Although Sudek spent his life honing his craft and never retouched a print, many of his finest masterpieces date from the beginning of his career, the essence of his singular aesthetic already fully formed. Romantic yet restrained, poetic yet austere, his style was strictly his own and went against the grain of contemporary trends and social pressures; informed by Surrealism, his sensibility was however less in step with European modernism than with the softness and sentiment of the "painterly" photographers he admired, such as Eugene Atget and Clarence White. Sudek was also influenced by the paintings he photographed, including the still lives of Chardin and the Romantic landscapes of the nineteenth-century Czech master Josef Navrátil.² One detects in his portraits the gravity

of Rembrandt and the *grazia* of Leonardo; in his interiors, the depth and integrity of Vermeer; and in his painstaking re-assembly of objects, an intimate appreciation of his contemporary, Giorgio Morandi.

Only recently has Sudek become appreciated as perhaps the most important Czech artist of the twentieth century and his photographic oeuvre as one of the most important in the world. For years his work languished within the confines of the Iron Curtain, remaining virtually unknown outside his country until the landmark 1974 show at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York introduced him to the West. Sudek's haunting photographs of Prague are now iconic images; in his memoir of the city, the writer John Banville calls Prague "Sudek's City" (2003, p. 1). Sudek's other definitive series include enigmatic still lifes; endless, brooding views through his studio window; and majestic, melancholic images of trees.

"Losses, Finds, Trees, and Stones"

Sudek identified his internal stirrings with the annual cycle of birth and renewal. Communing with nature, he experienced it as a living presence:

I like to photograph the first hint of spring and all of springtime. Prague changes and in a person too things change . . . sometimes in Chotek, Belvedere, or Strahov or Lobkovic garden I have a conversation with nature, with the trees and the surroundings—sometimes in my mind, sometimes even aloud. (Sudek, quoted in Bullaty, 1978, p. 18)

In nature, trees were always the essential subjects for Sudek. While many are in full leaf or flower, many more are more forlorn: bent, gnarled, grotesquely shorn of their branches, and summarily reduced to stumps (Fig. 4).

The anthropomorphic characteristics of trees support identification with them; their longevity in particular encourages their nearly universal recruitment as incarnations of the

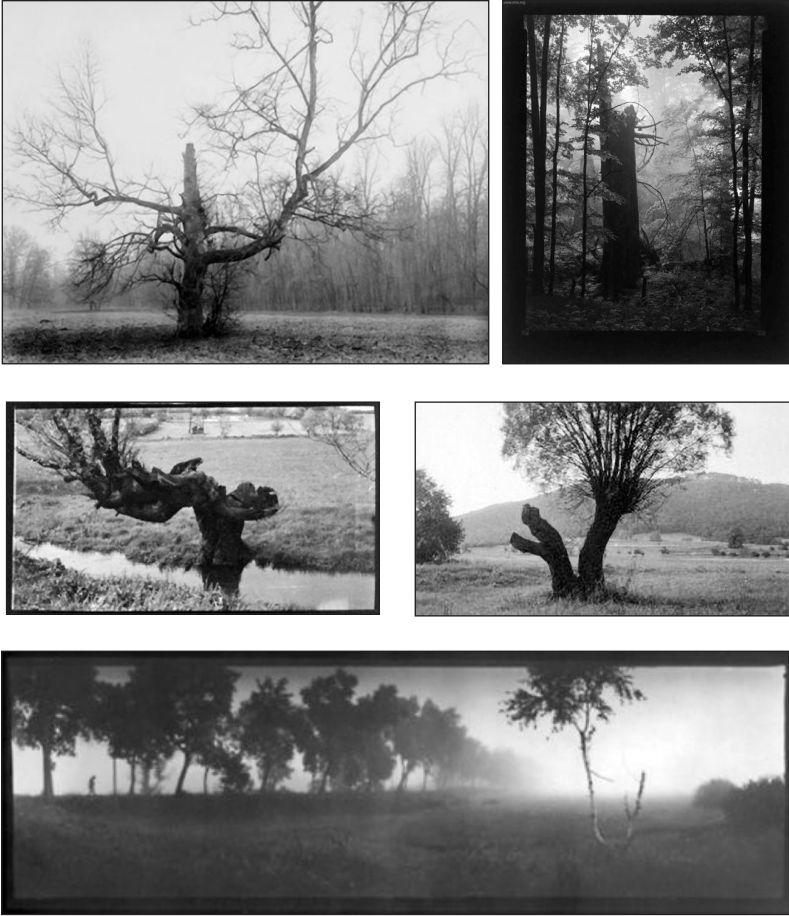


Figure 4. Upper left: *Study of a Tree*, c. 1960. Upper right: from the *Vanished Statues of the Mionší Forest* cycle, 1955–1970. Center left: from the series *From The Bohemian Countryside*, c. 1940–1946. Center right: *Willow Trees in the Beskydy Mountains*, c. 1952–1970. Lower: untitled, c. 1950s.

departed beloved (Tutter, 2011). Sudek intimates this sort of representation in an interview with his friend and assistant, Petr Heilbich (1996):

If someone you love dies on you, you're upset, of course. But after a while, you realize that he isn't fully gone. Suddenly you see that he's somehow, in something, alive. We

don't know how this is, exactly. But it's true even with a tree. When its life ends and its leaves fall off, it becomes a statue. And it signals something to you. And then it's up to you, what you read in it. (p. 215)

This kind of idiosyncratic animism is still common in provincial Czech culture. Sudek was fond of very long exposure times—ranging into hours—and tiny apertures, which allowed an exquisite depth of focus, and, when outside, often resulted in a record of vibratory movement that bestowed his subjects with a quivering sense of life. Yet, his association of the immortal essence of the dead with the notion of the tree as statue—and a communicative one, at that—suggests a more specific form of embodiment, one articulated by Proust (1913/2004):

there is much to be said for the Celtic belief that the souls of those whom we have lost are held captive in some inferior being, in an animal, in a plant, in some inanimate object, and so effectively lost to us until the day (which to many never comes) when we happen to pass by the tree or to obtain possession of the object which forms their prison. Then they start and tremble, they call us by our name, and as soon as we have recognised their voice the spell is broken. We have delivered them: they have overcome death and return to share our life. (p. 31)

Sudek's attenuated trees have been broadly understood as symbolizing his own mutilation, and the legions of soldiers who died around him. Thus, Zdeněk Kirschner (1993) asks, "Is it possible that he saw mirrored in those trees with their broken branches his own severed arm? (note to plates 81–87, n.p.); Allan Porter, editor of *Camera*, observes that Sudek portrays trees "as he does people . . . He does not shun scarred and wounded veterans" (1976, p. 39). Yet while the stumps and truncated branches of Sudek's maimed trees—especially ones with major asymmetric amputations (see Fig. 4, center and lower)—make such conclusions inevitable, maybe even inescapable, Banville (2003) sensitively objects, averring: "It is perhaps too obvious, given Sudek's poised reticence as an artist, to see in the many

images he fixed of these maimed giants a composite, covert self-portrait” (p. 61). Banville is correct, I think, to suggest that this is too simple an interpretation for an artist as subtle as Sudek. But in my view, it is not so much an inaccurate one as an incomplete one, for Sudek’s own musings about his predilection for trees support the proposition that, if invested with a representation of his mutilated self, they were also invested with *another* personification, another wound—one which did not receive the attention granted his right arm:

Trees have followed me from the beginning. Once . . . I was looking through some monograph about Mr. Rembrandt. There was a drawing there where there was a great oak tree with a building crouching under it. You could see that the tree was protecting the cottage and that they were friends together. Did it only seem so to me? . . . So I found out that trees are really living things. (Sudek, quoted in Řezáč, 1999, n.p.)

Trees are really living things. Could this be the drawing that affected Sudek so? (Fig. 5) “Friends together,” Rembrandt’s “great oak tree” towers over the snug little house, “protecting” it. At the age of two, Sudek lost such a towering protector: his father died quite suddenly from pneumonia, leaving him and his family without means of support. And so perhaps the ravaged trees Sudek was drawn to and possibly identified with also represented for him a fallen father, the father he lost—an impressive figure to any two-year old boy—providing a comforting embodiment of the person who, had he lived, would have been a “protector,” a “friend” . . . maybe even a “right-hand man.” Endorsing this notion is the repetitive motif of paired stumps: varying in size, but suggestive in their proximity and formal similarity (Fig. 6).

New growth from old is a favorite theme for Sudek, elaborated in studies of devastation juxtaposed with reassuring signs of life: the hollow, two-legged carcass of an ancient colossus stands magnificent amidst willowy saplings (Fig. 6, lower left); and a broad horse-chestnut stump surprises with a leafy sprout, a symbol of rebirth and rejuvenation in Christian iconography:



Figure 5. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Cottage among Trees*, 1648–1650,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

“there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, / and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit” (Isaiah XI.1) (Fig. 6, lower right). And over and over again, the familiar twisted apple tree in the window is paired with a flower on the windowsill—usually a twig taken from that very tree. In one example, their alignment suggests parent and child (Fig. 7, left); in a less sanguine interpretation, the flowering twig recalls the arm plucked from Sudek’s body, as his self-portrait, standing next to the same tree, might indicate (see Fig. 2). Photographing his maimed body next to a maimed, yet flowering tree, he documents his generativity; the continual juxtaposition of growth and decay conveys a Stoic acceptance of the cycle of life and the recognition that growth follows, and can even be promoted by, catastrophic loss. In another image, twig and tree are magically rejoined at the stump of a pruned branch, evoking all sorts of reunions (Fig. 7, right). Perhaps his prodigious material output, and the weighty, functional materiality of the tools of his trade—Sudek never abandoned his heavy wooden cameras and tripod—helped to mitigate or even symbolically undo the sacrifice of his arm. Indeed, his many exquisite images of flowers can be construed as both mirroring and achieving a generative “blossoming” after injury—his photographs the crafted “fruit,” the visible evidence of his disciplined, exacting creative practice.



Figure 6. Upper left, upper right, and lower left: from the *Vanished Statues of the Mionší Forest* cycle, 1955–1970. Lower right: *Stump of a Horse Chestnut Tree*, from the series *Arrival of Spring in Prague*, c. 1959–1969.

After Sudek's father died, his mother moved her family from their home in Kolín, thirty miles from Prague, to the nearby village of Nové Dvory, where they were taken in by an elderly relative, Josef Hyskly, who lived with his wife above the bakery they owned and operated. But within a few years, they too died; childless, they left their estate to the eight-year-old Josef, ensuring the family a means of support. Fárová (1990a) intuits the central importance of these kind parental figures:

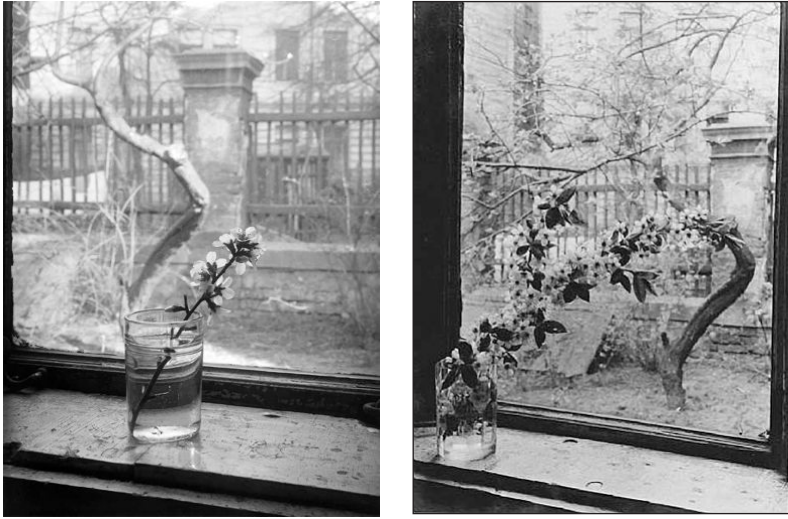


Figure 7. From the series *The Window of My Studio*, 1940–1954.

Sudek “remained grateful to the Hylsky family, always keeping a white sugar bowl decorated with a golden stripe and bearing the name Joseph Hille [the German form] on his round table, and including it in numerous still lives” (p. 7) (Fig. 8, left). The constant presence of the Hyskly’s sugar bowl is a steadfast, quiet memorial to these kindly parental figures. There may also be something of homage to the Hysklys in Sudek’s still lives of bread and eggs: stark portraits of humble sustenance, they are suffused with tactile warmth. An egg provides all the nourishment needed by the nascent being it harbors; such images allude to less tangible, yet no less important forms of emotional nourishment that the Hysklys, and their bakery, offered the Sudeks (Fig. 8, right).

Sudek’s relationship to his sister, Božena Sudková, or “Sudka,” as she was known, recapitulated certain stabilizing, supportive aspects of life with the Hysklys (Fig. 9). Like her brother, “Sudka” never married and had no children. Instead, she devoted her life to taking care of him and supporting his work, laundering, cooking, and helping with the preparation of photographic plates. At first she commuted from her home in Kolín, and later she moved into the studio where she slept, like Sudek, on a folding cot. They were, like the Hysklys, childless

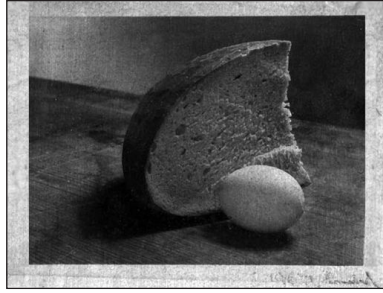


Figure 8. Left: sugar bowl to left of framed picture, from the *Labrynth* cycle, 1948–1973. Right: *Still Life with Bread and Egg*, c. 1951.



Figure 9. *Sudková, Spring in My Little Garden* (Božena Sudková), c. 1930s.

professional partners; by living together and forfeiting ordinary adult life, they perpetuated aspects of their childhood.

A series of reverential photographs of the tiny stone tomb of a young girl suggests the lingering ghost of yet another loss (Fig. 10, upper left & right). A year before Sudek was born, another sister had died shortly after birth. Judging from his mother's vacant-eyed, disengaged presence in a family portrait taken when her son was about seven, the premature death of her husband and first-born baby took its toll; her children may have lost not only a father and would-be older sister, but also a happy mother (Fig. 10, lower left). Her morbid orientation is implicit in one of Sudek's school assignments. Instructed to describe his family's Christmas Eve traditions, he wrote, "Mommy lighted the candles and said: whose candle goes out first, he will die first," and he illustrated his homework with a drawing of two skulls (Fárová, 1990a, p. 7). This reminiscence is remarkable for its association of *light*, the very thing on which his chosen medium depended, with *life*; note how strange patches of light mark the pictures of the little girl's tomb, as if a lit candle was standing guard. In a close-up, fresh flowers and ferns dress the child's sculpted likeness, telling us that although her grave is pitted with age, the one buried there is not forgotten (Fig. 10, lower right).

The following war recollection—related with Sudek's typical (and typically Czech) black humor—seems to reflect the lingering survival guilt often bequeathed to "replacement children," those whose candles still glow:³

In . . . the trenches, I was taking it easy, hanging as far back as I could. As punishment, I was assigned the worst placement . . . It was a hole next to the latrines, wet and reeking. And we were the last to get chow. Naturally, by the time food reached us, it was cold. But when the tenth offensive took place, I was happy to find the place had a great advantage. When the Italians started a barrage, the shells kept flying above the hole, ending in the latrines. We were quite safe there. The next day when we got our rations, they were hot, because the poor buggers *who had come first were all dead now*. (Sudek, quoted in Fárová, 1990a p. 9, emphasis added)



Figure 10. Upper left, upper right, and lower right: from the series *A Walk in the Malá Strana Cemetery*, c. 1952–1954. Lower left: Sudek family, photograph by Bohumila Bloudilová, to whom Božena Sudková was apprenticed.

Taking the place of the sister who preceded him, and punished for trying to survive the mass death of trench warfare, Sudek twice outlived the ones “who had come first.”

In the foreground of an early, dreamy image of a family gathering in Sudek’s hometown of Kolín, a little girl in her Sunday best sits with her back toward us, facing a group sitting at a table, their backs toward her (Fig. 11, left). We watch her watching the family she is somehow separate from, but we cannot see her face, as excluded from her experience as she is from theirs. Does this faceless, faraway girl watching over the others invoke a faceless, faraway older sister? In any case, loss is certainly conveyed by the progressive disappearance of people in Sudek’s work. First they face away, then they recede; pedestrians, horse-drawn carts, and trolley cars hurry past the camera’s lens (Fig. 11, right). After the 1930s, people that remain in the frame are even more remote, as if seen from an unreachable distance. Only partly ironically, Sudek once said,

I don’t have many people in my photographs, especially in the landscapes. To explain this, you see, it takes me a while before I prepare everything. Sometimes there are people there, but *before I’m ready they go away*, so what can I do, I won’t chase them back. (quoted in Bullaty, 1978, p. 27, emphasis added)

In *Forgotten Hat*, a straw boater like the one from Sudek’s youth lies on the ground as if left behind during a hasty departure—simultaneously signifying the leave-taker, his former presence, and his current absence (Fig. 12, left). Might it belong to Sudek’s “brother,” his prior, intact self? Or to one of the others who left “before he was ready”? A tree leans in, watching over the vacated chair, “protecting” it. In one of many similar images, a sentinel row of beech trees backs an empty bench like a permanently assembled meeting of elders, silently remembering those who no longer join them (Fig. 12, right). Although their leaves fall like tears, there grows between them a new row of seedlings. These are only some of many interpretations of these works, which, like the rest of Sudek’s oeuvre, resist simple explanation. Rather, they offer a rich, symbolic panoply of presence, absence, and the promise of remembrance.

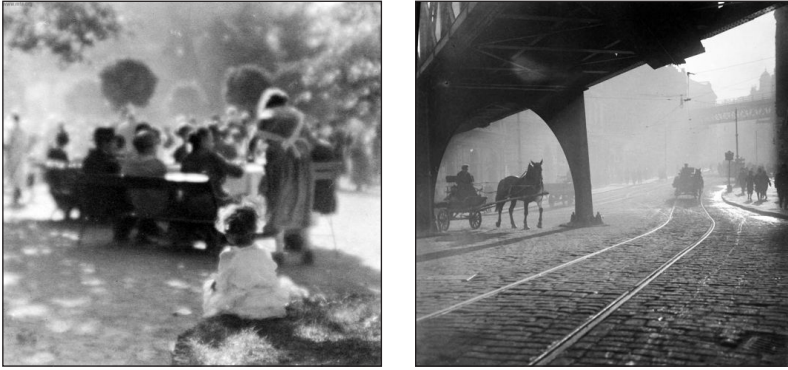


Figure 11. Left: from the series *Sunday afternoon on Kolín island*, c. 1924–1926.
Right: *Morning Viaducts, Prague*, 1926.

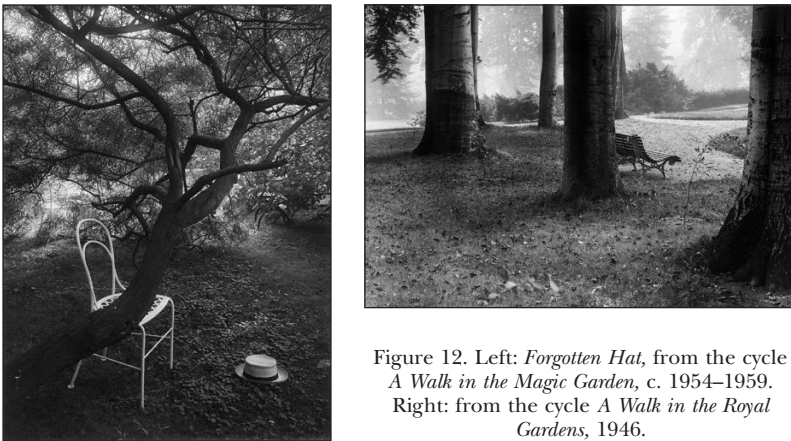


Figure 12. Left: *Forgotten Hat*, from the cycle *A Walk in the Magic Garden*, c. 1954–1959.
Right: from the cycle *A Walk in the Royal Gardens*, 1946.

In the 1960s, Sudek gave joint exhibitions with the artist Václav Sivko, who considered him as a mentor. Sivko organized one series of shows around the themes of *Losses, Finds, Trees, and Stones*. The poet Karel Šiktanc wrote in a catalog essay “it is not mere chance” that these subjects are “of such key significance to human life . . . because we continually find and lose things until we get to stones and trees” (quoted in Kroutvor, 1996, p. 37). Amidst the chaos and caprice of human life, there is something reassuringly permanent about trees and stones—things that won’t “go away before I’m ready.” Ancient links connect them: the mythical figures that transform into trees and stones

are formally related to the immobile solidity of figurative statuary, as is the personified memorial tree (Tutter, 2011). Sudek consciously articulates the embodied relationship between trees and statuary (“when its life ends, it becomes a statue”), and underlines it with the name he gave the stunning cycle of images of the virgin Mionší forest—*Vanished Statues*.

Like his trees, many of Sudek’s sculptures lack limbs. Whereas the mutilated statues of antiquity are a classic trope, Sudek’s portraits convey a powerful intimacy. A decapitated infant Jesus grasps his effaced mother’s garment with his right arm, his only remaining appendage; their attachment survived the most calamitous of losses (Fig. 13, upper left). And the missing hands of a medieval Madonna and child fail to interfere with their joy (Fig. 13, upper right). Others—again like Sudek’s trees—are distinguished by their setting amidst signs of life, like the smiling, one-armed mannequin adrift in a sea of tiny flowers, her left arm raised in a friendly gesture (Fig. 13, lower). Or perhaps she is saying *nashledanou*, which Czechs say when parting—which does not mean “good-bye,” but is most exactly translated as “until we *find* each other again.”⁴

Phyllis Greenacre (1963) posited that the crucial dynamic motivating much creativity is “the eternal search for the father” (p. 14). Even if this conjecture is correct in Sudek’s case, his search to reconstitute his father aesthetically *cannot* be disarticulated from his search to find and symbolically repair other losses. Melanie Klein (1940) stresses that when adults experience loss, they also feel as if the earliest objects, the parents, are lost again. Klein’s theory draws heavily on *Nachträglichkeit* (“deferred action”), Freud’s term for the re-shaping of present experience as a function of the past. More recently, French psychoanalysts have expanded *Nachträglichkeit* into the concept of *après-coup*, which also includes “the movement of time from present to past, a restructuring of the past in function of the present” (Birksted-Breen, 2003, p. 1508). In the circular working of *après-coup*, Sudek’s later losses must have reverberated with earlier ones, amplifying, reinforcing, and signifying each other. Losing his father, his older sister, and the Hysklys before his own developing identity had fully consolidated and his objects were fully internalized, Sudek also (at least temporarily) lost those parts of his self that were identified with or in the



Figure 13. Upper left: untitled, undated. Upper right: *Madonna from Kamenný Újezd*, c. 1930s. Lower: *Mannequin*, c. 1953–1957.

process of identifying with those objects (Tyson, 1983). And as we shall soon see, to the extent that he identified with his homeland, he was also vulnerable to experiencing its repeated dismemberment as a repetition of his previous traumas. Thus, I maintain, it cannot be claimed that any single trauma is represented in any single image.

Rather than reject the idea that Sudek symbolizes the loss of his arm in images of ravaged trees and statues, I wish to enlarge upon that notion by proposing that his mutilated body served as a literal, even reflexive *embodiment* of cumulative layers of traumatic losses. Perhaps this was unavoidable. The philosopher Paul Ricoeur (2005) writes, “The loss of the other is in a way the loss of self . . . [T]o the extent that the relation with the one who has disappeared forms an integral part of one’s self-identity, [loss] *constitutes a genuine amputation of oneself*” (p. 359). Conversely, as an emblematic incarnation of previous and subsequent losses, Sudek’s lost limb could have powered their external re-symbolization in such natural metaphors of mutilation as dismembered trees and statues. Within this proposition, his amputation was not just a *site* of trauma, but an ever-present signifier and reminder of trauma in all its painful totality, a *totem* of trauma—a constant, potent locus for the bodily inscription of loss.⁵

“The Very Stuff of the Body”

Creative individuals, theorizes Phyllis Greenacre, are born with an unusually “sensitive responsiveness”—in particular, “a special awareness of form and rhythm, lending then to an unusual ability to perceive patterned relationships” (1963, p. 14). As a result,

The perception of [physical] objects and the relationship to them become endowed with a multiplicity of allied kindred forms, the *collective alternates* to the original objects . . . This leads to a multiplicity of experience with greater ease in and even necessity for symbolization and a richness in the texture and pile of the fabric of sensation. (p. 15, emphasis in original)

Greenacre adds that although creative individuals face “the changes and stresses of personal life poignantly and even drastically,” when working through them, they often turn to symbolized physical substitutes of their love objects, the (rather unfortunately) termed “collective alternates” (p. 15), the fore-runners of created objects (Weissman, 1971). These observations seem apropos of Sudek’s images of quotidian yet clearly very important “things” and his uncanny ability to wrench from these ordinary physical objects seemingly human feelings, as in his ineffable pairings of leaves that touch each other with profound, practically palpable emotion (Fig. 14, left). In another image, a glass carafe and an egg meet in silent union; the intimacy of this profound encounter is enhanced by their shared organic form and unblemished, powdery substance (Fig. 14, right).

Esther Bick (1968) theorizes that failures in the development and introjection of the mother’s containing function, what she calls the “primary skin,”

can lead to a development of a “second-skin” formation through which dependence on the object is replaced by a pseudo-independence, by the inappropriate use of certain mental functions, or perhaps innate talents, for the purpose of creating a substitute for this skin container function . . . The need for a containing object would seem . . . to produce *a frantic search for an object*—a light, a voice, a smell, or other sensual object—which can hold the attention and thereby be experienced, momentarily at least, as holding the parts of the personality together . . . this containing object is experienced concretely as a skin. (p. 484, emphasis added)

Taking up where Bick leaves off, Didier Anzieu (1985/1989) proposes that a “psychic envelope,” which he terms *le moi-peau*—“the skin-ego”—normally functions to describe and maintain the projected contours of the embodied self, and to bind and organize its contents. I venture that even when earliest needs for containment appear adequately met, a second skin can compensate for an otherwise damaged or compromised skin-

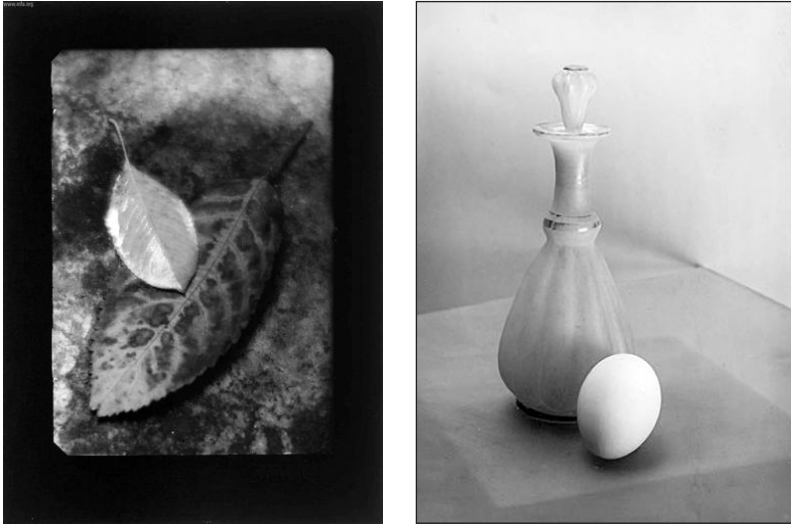


Figure 14. Left: *The Coming of Autumn*, 1932. Right: *Carafe and Egg*, 1956.

ego—in Sudek’s case, the wake of fragmenting trauma and physical violation. I am suggesting that his “innate talents,” his driven, what Bick would call “muscular,” artistic practice, and the various “sensual objects” he photographed may all have served critical containing and organizing functions—a concretized, aesthetic auxiliary skin-ego that acts as a second skin. One of Sudek’s unusual signature elements—the wide black border that corresponded to the unexposed area around the exposure and that he often left intact (see Figs. 6, 10, 13, & 14)—hints that the photographic frame, and the nested frames and boundaries embedded therein, itself acted as a second skin: the man who had lost part of his body was famous for never cropping a print.

The egg, one of Sudek’s perpetual subjects, encodes a fragile, yet total embryonic potentiality: as yet unsullied, it epitomizes all that can still be. The refraction of the egg into component parts by a faceted glass of water reflects the unfolding multiplicity of that growing self (Fig. 15, left). Shells of all sorts fascinated Sudek. A natural, physical container, the living egg in its shell confuses animate and inanimate, ephemeral and permanent. Sudek also photographed seashells, which like eggshells are both product and protector of the living be-

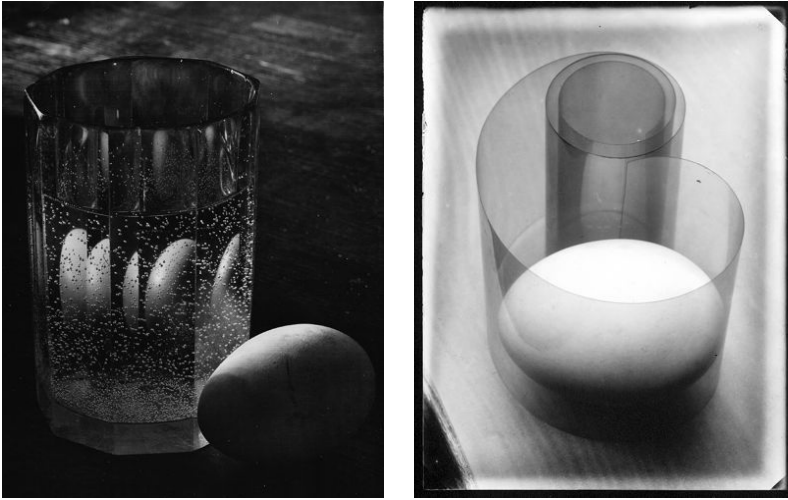


Figure 15. Left: *Still Life*, c. 1950–1954.
Right: *Composition*, c. 1950–1954.

ings they once enclosed, but unlike the eggshell the seashell outlives that being—a cast of it, a memory of it—exemplifying how, in Bill Brown’s (2001) words, “inanimate objects organize the temporality of the animate world” (p. 16). Structurally and temporally, the shell thus superbly emblemizes the guarding, preserving, skin-like function of Sudek’s art. In particular, the capacity of the medium of photography to shield Sudek’s vulnerable being and nurture its germinating essence is poignantly illustrated by an image of an egg, delicately, securely nestled in a roll of transparent photographic film (Fig. 15, right). Coiled like a nautilus, the film holds the egg like a shell around a shell—like a second skin.

In her elegant application to Proust of Melanie Klein’s (1940) theory of creativity as reparation, Hannah Segal (1952) explains:

Writing a book is for [Proust] like the work of mourning in that gradually the external objects are given up, they are re-instated in the ego, and re-created in the book . . . Melanie Klein has shown how mourning in grown-up life is a re-living of the early depressive anxieties; not only is the present object in the external world felt to be

lost, but also the early objects, the parents; and they are lost as internal objects as well as in the external world. In the process of mourning it is these earliest objects which are lost again, and then re-created. Proust describes how this mourning leads to a wish to re-create the lost world . . . all creation is really a re-creation of a once loved and once whole, but now lost and ruined object, a ruined internal world and self. It is when the world within us is destroyed, when it is dead and loveless, when our loved ones are in fragments, and we ourselves in helpless despair—it is then that we must re-create our world anew, re-assemble the pieces, infuse life into dead fragments, re-create life. (pp. 198–199)

What better representation of these ideas than Sudek's images of cast off eggshells, their fragility immediate and vivid—especially in contrast to their flawless, unbroken counterparts. The barely intact status of cracked eggshells in one example (Fig. 16, left) is similar to that of ground rock, fragmented *in situ*, pictured in a striking, atypical photograph (Fig. 16, right). Such images symbolically elaborate a self that is badly damaged, prone to fragmentation, and in need of external containment. Just as the egg is held by its shell; just as the eggshell's crazed reticulum is stabilized by its invisible membrane; just as the shattered pieces of stone are kept together by the surrounding matrix of earth; so does Sudek reassemble and contain himself within the holding matrix of the photograph, within the holding matrix of his art.

In *Camera Lucida*, the writer Roland Barthes (1981) relates his own frustrating search to “find” in photographs the essence of his mother after her death:

In order to “find” my mother, fugitively alas, and without ever being able to hold on to this resurrection for long, I must, much later, discover in several photographs the objects she kept on her dressing table, an ivory powder box (I loved the sound of its lid), a cut-crystal flagon, or else a low chair, which is now near my own bed . . . [C]ontemplating a photograph in which she is hugging me, a child, against her, I can waken in myself the

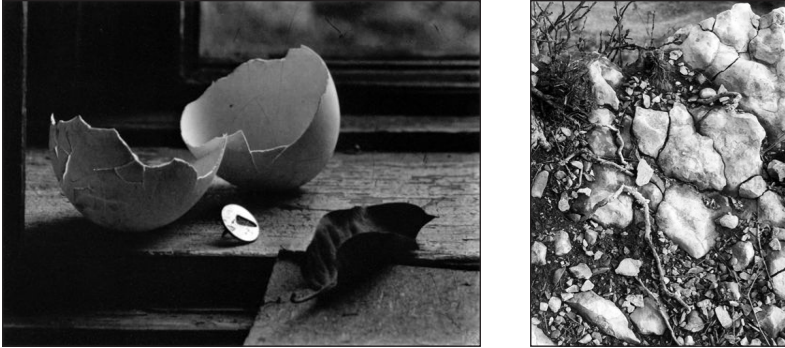


Figure 16. Left: from the series *The Window of My Studio*, c. 1950–1954.
Right: *Cracked Ground Rock*, c. 1930–1935.

rumpiled softness of her crêpe de Chine and the perfume of her rice powder. (pp. 64–65)

One hears in Barthes an echo of Proust’s famous comment, “The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm, beyond the reach of intellect, in some material object” (Proust, 1913/2004, p. 31). For Barthes, as for Proust, only photographs of his mother’s *things*—or, more precisely, the exquisitely sensate reminiscences they evoked—could “resurrect” her quintessence.

The much-photographed souvenir from the Hysklys’ bakery, the sugar bowl (see Fig. 8), suggests that this was also true in Sudek’s case. He was in fact ineluctably attracted to and surrounded himself with things associated with his beloved; some of them letters, most of them gifts, he continually resurrected and re-memorialized the object relations they personified in still-lives, some of which he entitled *Remembrances*.⁶ For Sudek, “the object’s life was interwoven with the life of the friends to whom they [had] belonged,” confirms Sonja Bullaty (1978, p. 10), writer of the airmail letters that, when combined with cellophane and feathers, convey the weightless, yet tangible nature of attachments that survive across oceans (Fig. 17, left). Another photograph juxtaposes a sheaf of letters—lines of communication, of connection across distance—with small female figurines: gifts, perhaps, and perhaps effigies, of the letter-writer (Fig. 17, right).



Figure 17. Left: *Aerial Remembrances, for Sonja and Angelo*, 1971.
Right: from the series *Remembrances*, c. 1950–1970.

The psychoanalyst Paul Lerner (1990) describes how a woman, during the course of her treatment, began to search for photographs and other evidence of the father she lost when she was five; as a consequence, she recovered previously inaccessible memories of their relationship, which she could then mourn and internalize. Lerner describes other patients who had suffered early object loss and who also display “a compelling need to search in the external world, find, and symbolically reclaim the lost object”; “perplexed” by their “compulsion to take action in the real world and to recover something concrete and directly related to the lost object” (p. 86), Lerner concludes that such patients are “filling in missing parts of the internal representation of the object,” which then allows them to “fully mourn the object’s loss and, in turn, recapture lost aspects of the self” (p. 79). Thus the relative endurance of *things*—whether symbolic objects or second skins—can somehow mitigate the totality of past and future losses and the temporality of all attachments. How is this possible, if “things” are mere symbols or artifacts?

In his attention to grain, texture, and tonality, Sudek is arguably no more concerned with form than with the substrate, the tissue, the elemental parenchyma of *things*. The French phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty (1993) argues that the indi-

vidual exists in physical continuity with the environment, and experiences that environment and the things in it as embodied extensions of the corporeal self: “the body is a thing among things; it is one of them. Things are an annex or prolongation of [the body]; they are incrustated in its flesh, they are part of its full definition; the world is made of the very stuff of the body” (p. 125). A similar view evolved in parallel in the psychoanalytic literature. Freud (1923) asserts that “the ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; not merely a surface entity, but the projection of a surface” (p. 26), indicating that the subjective experience of the embodied self and its delimitation transcends the mere physical limits of the body; rather it is a projection, a construct of the mind.⁷ The Austrian psychoanalyst Paul Schilder (who, like Merleau-Ponty, was heavily influenced by the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl) takes this a step further, writing that what he called the “body-image” (*Körperschema*) can give parts to the outside world and can take other parts from the outside world into itself” (1935/1950, p. 202). Synthesizing the thoughts of Schilder and Freud, Robert Fliess (1961) concludes that “the body-ego can extend into and co-opt elements of the outside world” (p. 209).⁸ If Sudek’s works (and the things they picture) functioned as a second skin, it follows that they were experienced as corporeal—as part of *him*.⁹

Extending this argument to its natural conclusion, I contend that if things can be experienced as part of the embodied self, then it follows that things can also be experienced as part of the embodied other. Let us take the chair, an object that both Barthes and Sudek return to, as an example (e.g., Fig. 12). As intimate as a garment, the chair inhabits the contours of the physical body it supports; like that other preoccupying motif, the shell, the chair supports and contains a body like a scaffold, an exoskeleton, or alternatively, a holding other. An empty chair is a cast of its former occupant; the chair in which Barthes’ mother sat once held her body, just as she held his, and is thus irrevocably, *exquisitely* privileged. The “chair now sits near [Barthes’] own bed,” and it—and she in it—guards against the desperation of loss and the desolation of sleep. But unlike Barthes’ mother, her chair still exists, a durable presence in the present tense—material, sensual, substantial.

One of Sudek's favorite subjects was the "Magic Garden" of his friend, the architect Otto Rothmayer (or, as Sudek called him, "Mr. Magician"), and the chairs that Rothmayer designed for it—chairs which once held the bodies of these close friends (Fig. 18, upper). After Rothmayer's death, Sudek documented the contents of his studio in a series of works expressing the static silence of wordless grief, of barely comprehensible loss. In an affectionate portrait of the objects carefully arranged on Rothmayer's desk, one sees alongside the little wire models of his chairs, movingly, his glasses and watch (Fig. 18, lower). Never to be worn again, they carry the imprint of the body that wore them, imparting them with an animated intimacy. I argue that such objects are entirely different from fetishistic talismans, such as the revived transitional objects that Vamik Volkan (1981) terms "linking objects," and are more than symbolic transference objects. Weighty and substantive, derived from and offered by the other, they are experienced as and responded to as *part* of the beloved other, physical extensions of the other. They are, essentially, *relics*, rather than revenants: sacred pieces of the other that now inhabit Sudek's photographs, now form part of Sudek's self. Correspondingly, his photographs function as reliquaries, preserving his connection to the ones he loves. The tenderness and love he extends to all these heavily cathected "things" shed light on the pull of *nostalgia*, which permeates Sudek's sensibility with its powerful and melancholy longing.

"Writing a book is for [Proust] like the work of mourning in that gradually the external objects are given up, they are re-instated in the ego, and re-created in the book," explains Segal; indeed, "all his lost, destroyed, and loved objects are being brought back to life . . . By virtue of his art he can give his objects an eternal life in his work" (1952, p. 198). If, as she asserts, the work of making art is "like the work of mourning," then making art may also *carry out* part of the reparative work of mourning. Otto Kernberg (2010) reminds us that Goethe considers the death of a loved one the death of a shared world. Nostalgia, I offer, is a yearning, a compulsion, to piece together the physical remnants of that formerly shared world, to remember and repair it, to refuse to ever fully relinquish it. Sudek's oeuvre embodies a sustained, creative effort to look for



Figure 18. Upper: from *A Walk in the Magic Garden*, c. 1954–1959.
Lower: *Remembrances of Architect Rothmayer, Mr. Magician*, 1960.

and restore a longed-for, lost world; symbolized, reclaimed, and conserved within the photographic frame, it is remembered and mourned in a transformative lifework of regeneration and repair.

“An Invisible City”

Sudek’s Prague is a solitary city, but no less an intimate one; “only an artist who loved the city to excess could have photographed it so obsessively,” notes the critic Ian Jeffrey (1998, p. 11). His observation of the city’s iconography never devolves into kitsch, but exercises a consistent and highly personal subjectivity: no one has shared Prague as graciously and generously (Fig. 19). “Prague has more famous sons,” Banville (2003) observes in his memoir of time spent there,

but none of them, not even Kafka, managed to capture so movingly the essence of the place, its mystery and weary charm, its tragic beauty, its light and shadow, and that something in between, the peculiar, veiled radiance of this city on the Vltava. (p. 69)

And it was only through Sudek, Banville writes, that he finally could “find” Prague:

All day I had been walking about the city without seeing it, and suddenly now Sudek’s photographs, even the private, interior studies, showed it to me . . . Here, with this sheaf of pictures on my knees, I had finally arrived. (pp. 58–59)

Describing the fictional city of Zaira, a place that, like Prague, is full of memories and steps, Italo Calvino in *Invisible Cities* (*Le città invisibili*) writes:

The city, however, does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the street, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning-rods, the poles of the flags. Every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls. (1972/1974, p. 11)

In these few words, Calvino describes the essential mystery of the city. A city is much like a body, Calvino tells us: full of stories that cannot be told in words—*like the lines of a hand*.



Figure 19. Upper left: *View of Prague from Seminarška Garden*, c. 1946–1955.
 Upper right, *Svatý Vít*, 1924–1928. Lower left: *Jewish Cemetery*, Prague, c. 1950.
 Lower right: *Riverside at Night*, c. 1960s.

Nor does Prague give up its stories so easily. A place upon whose squares and boulevards the traumatic events of the last century are indelibly engraved (Demetz, 1997; Paces, 2009), Sudek's visual grammar registers and recovers its scars and markings, often under the dark cover of night. His song of the city is a song without words, inflected by the silent cries

and echoes of the shadow capital of a country that for over three centuries had no name—and then, once named, was for decades lost and all but forgotten by the West: *an invisible city*.

Kirschner (1996) remembers how in conversation, Sudek “moved in history with a complete certainty of argument . . . it was as if [he] had the codes of Antique, Gothic mysticism, and Baroque amplification in [his] blood” (p. 32). Pervading his imagery of Prague is the sense that what is being documented—preserved, perhaps—might one day exist *only* in history, and indeed could disappear at any moment. The peculiar, static quality of Sudek’s city counteracts this anxiety; in his eye, Prague is preternaturally still, unchanging, almost ageless—lost in time, as if it had always been.

Never aggrandized, always wholly human, the “tragic beauty” of Prague mirrors and preserves the dimmed glory of Sudek’s intact, receding youth. But this city of stone is also inexplicably fragile, as sensitive as a body, qualities Sudek drew out by attending to intricate architectural detail (Fig. 19, upper and lower right) and by tenderly layering the city with delicate natural life (Fig. 19, upper and lower left; Fig. 20, upper right, lower). A graceful wrought-iron gate stands open, inviting us into a garden (Fig. 20, upper left). Trees veil the landmarks of instantly recognizable views: leafless branches trace the outline of the National Theatre reflected in the Vltava river (Fig. 20, upper right); a flowering horse chestnut tree, recalling “Mr. Rembrandt’s” drawing, entwines the familiar tower and dome of Svatý Mikuláš (St Nicolas), evoking the gentlest of rescues (Fig. 20, lower). Sudek chose a majestic view of Prague, emphatically foregrounded by his common hat (Fig. 21), to grace the cover of his acclaimed *Praha Panoramatická* (1959), making plain just how *embedded* his identity was in his city—and how central that city was to his identity. As a Czech in Prague, Sudek’s relationship to his city must be situated within political and historical context: his lost world included his country, whose freedom as a nation would inexplicably come and go during his lifetime.

On October 1918, the Habsburg Empire in shambles, the Czech nationalists Tomáš Masaryk, Milan Štefánik, and Edward Beneš read the Declaration of Czech-Slovak Independence from the Habsburg monarchy, which they had drafted in exile



Figure 20. Upper left: c. 1933. Upper right: *Prague, The National Theater Across the River*, c. 1950–1960. Lower: *Spring in Strahov Garden*, from the series *The Coming of Spring to Prague*, 1963.

in Paris and which outlined a provisional government for the proposed new state. In the first decade after the creation of the independent First Republic, Sudek formally withdrew from the Catholic church, but this action seems less an expression of non-belief than a gesture against the institutions of the Catholic Austro-Hungarian state, not uncommon at the time (Kirschner, personal communication, 2013).¹⁰ He kept a crucifix hung over his narrow cot: an armless one (Fig. 22). Even if he doubted the presence of a protective God or the promise of an afterlife,

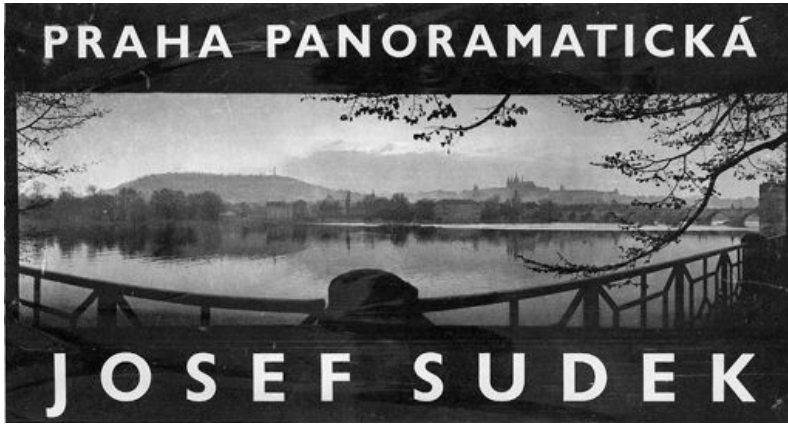


Figure 21. Cover, *Praha Panoramatická* (Sudek, 1959).

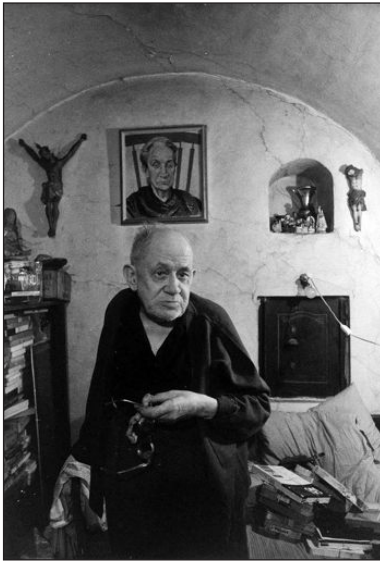


Figure 22. Left: *Portrait of Sudek on his Eightieth Birthday*, March 17, 1976, photograph by Sonja Bullaty. Right: detail.

Prague, the capital of his ‘fatherland,’ could have supplied a strong paternal presence for its ‘son’—perhaps even more so given the loss of his own father and his bodily integrity.

On the other hand, Prague was long known as *Praga mater urbium*—mother of cities—a fitting name for a capital that was

in legend founded by Libuše, a woman with a gift for prophecy, Athena to Prague's Athens. Sudek positions a silhouetted female statue at the center of a lyrical portrait of Prague (Fig. 23, upper): could she be Libuše? Echoed by the arched branches of her leafy deputies, she holds out her hands, as if receiving the chorus that venerates Athena in Euripides' *Heraclidae*: "yours is the land and the city, and you are its mother, its mistress, and its guardian" (l. 770–775, Loeb Classical Library). And Sudek, claiming the city for the maternal imago, opens *Praha Panoramatická* with an image of a statue of the generative female deity, the goddess Flora (Fig. 23, lower). Thus personified, his sparsely peopled city seems less lonesome, and its portrayal, the deepest expression of love.

In honor of the tenth anniversary of the First Republic in 1928, Sudek published a commemorative folio of recent pictures of the cathedral of Svatý Vít (St. Vitus), a subject of intensive investigation since his convalescence (Fig. 24). If Prague is the prime signifier of the Czech lands, then Svatý Vít is the prime signifier of Prague, filled with the tombs of Czech martyrs and the crown jewels of the emperors and kings coronated there. Located on the foundations of a Romanesque basilica dating to the eleventh century, the construction of the Gothic cathedral



Figure 23. Upper: *View of Prague from Pálffy Garden*, c. 1950–1955. Lower: *Statue of Flora*, from *Praha Panoramatická* (Sudek, 1959).

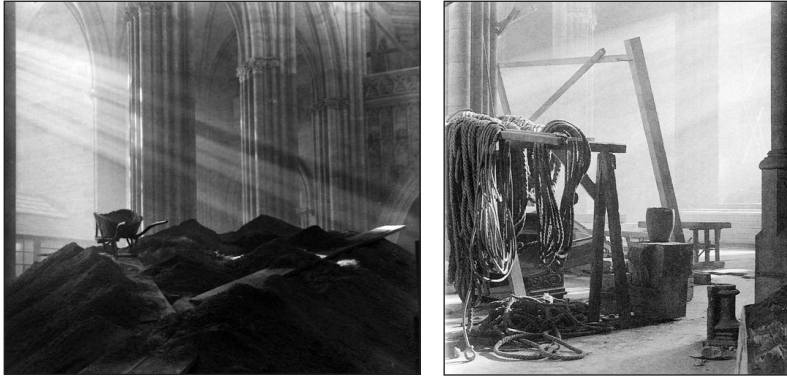


Figure 24. From the series *Reconstruction of Svatý Vít*, c. 1924–1928.

began in the 1300s. It remained unfinished for seven hundred years, reaching completion only in the 1920s, when the rebuilding of the Hradčany (Prague castle) complex, to which the cathedral belongs, was finally and hastily brought to a close in time for the First Republic's tenth jubilee.

Composed during this massive reconstruction, the first *Svatý Vít* cycle was aptly entitled *Contrasts*: its radical, highly praised pictures set the sacrosanct cultural icon with its Czech heroes and saints against the humanity of the common workers who built it, represented by their humble implements—wheel-

barrows, ropes, and scaffolding. These stunning images had tremendous popular appeal, making Sudek something of a local celebrity; this was at least in part because of the national meaning innate to their juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane: in myth, Queen Libuše chose as her husband the peasant farmer Přemysl—a ploughman—with whom she founded the Přemyslid dynasty that in the ninth century united the Czech lands.¹¹

In a comment uncannily like Banville's reservations concerning the traditional interpretations of Sudek's trees, Charles Sawyer (1980) notes that Sudek's images of Svatý Vít "can all too easily be taken as a metaphor for his personal struggle to reconstruct his own life" (n.p.). Sawyer and Banville are correct to question limiting interpretations of Sudek's oeuvre, but some of their apprehension may stem from the work's accessible, even naked vulnerability, its virtual self-disclosure. In point of fact, it is hard *not* to believe that Sudek saw himself in Prague's incomplete cathedral: both as a *Czech* whose identity as such had been denied and as a *man* whose dismembered body was sacrificed by the same forces that for three centuries had relentlessly suppressed his mother tongue and arrogated the sovereignty of his fatherland. Symbolizing the reconstruction of a dismantled internal world, the scaffolded Svatý Vít (Fig. 24, lower) may have thereby functioned as a veritable scaffold for his personal reconstruction—helping, in Segal's words, to "re-assemble the pieces, infuse life into dead fragments" (1952, p. 198).

The fledgling country's twentieth anniversary year was not as happy as its tenth. In 1938, the Munich Accord ceded control of the Czech Sudetenland to Nazi Germany. One year later, with no resistance from the West, Hitler freely invaded what Neville Chamberlain called "a far away country about which we know nothing." Lasting until 1945, the mercenary Nazi occupation was characterized by vicious retaliation for any real or perceived acts of resistance: Hitler's *Vernichtungskrieg* (total war) aimed to obliterate all expression of political opposition by murdering Czech intellectuals, artists, and musicians, and sending many more to concentration camps, including Sudek's good friend, the painter Emil Filla.

During the Nazi occupation, Sudek returned to Hradčany and began another cycle of photographs, including the reconstructed Třetí nádvoří (Third Courtyard) in which Svatý Vít stands. If Sudek's images of Svatý Vít's stone statue of Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia (Fig. 25, upper left) indicates reverence for Prague as the capital of the historic Czech lands, his preoccupation with the Třetí nádvoří indicates similar sentiments toward Prague as the capital city of the First Czechoslovak Republic: "the royal crown set on the head of [Sudek's] beloved country" (Kirschner, 1993, n.p.). The Třetí nádvoří overlies the foundations of the oldest structures of Hradčany, which date from the ninth century and were discovered only when excavated during the 1920s. When rebuilt, the courtyard was paved with squares of granite quarried from every region of the country—a virtual geological atlas of the new Czecho-Slovak state that united the old kingdoms of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia— fashioning a quilted stone blanket to protect Prague's most hallowed spaces (Fig. 25, upper right). Sudek highlights this meaning-soaked mosaic with rain, and observation from above, an encoded tribute to the territories it represents and the legacy it conceals (Fig. 25, lower). The understated images of the Třetí nádvoří comprise a private act of defiance and guardianship; a gesture of solidarity with his fellow artists; and a quiet reassertion of his country's sovereign status in the face of a politics of terror.

In another view of the Třetí nádvoří (not shown), it is pointedly, securely enclosed by the Svatý Vít and Hradčany walls, a testimony to the city as a source of fortitude, resilience, and tenacity, shoring up a sense of safety and agency that was yet again badly shaken: like Prague, Sudek was a survivor against all odds. "For," states Nietzsche, "we are tough and not to be uprooted over night":

[H]istory belongs to the preserving and revering soul—to him who with loyalty and love looks back on his origins . . . The history of his city becomes for him the history of his self; he understands the wall, the turreted gate, the ordinance of the town council, the national festival like an illustrated diary of his youth and finds himself,



Figure 25. Upper left: portrait bust, Charles IV, Triforium, Svatý Vít, c. 1942–1945. Upper right: Třetí nádvoří, from the tower of Svatý Vít, c. 1937. Lower: Třetí nádvoří, c. 1954.

his strength, his diligence, his pleasure, his judgment, his folly and rudeness, in all of them. Here one could live, he says to himself, for here one can live and will be able to live, for we are tough and not to be uprooted over night. And so, with this "We," he looks beyond the ephemeral, curious, individual life and feels like the spirit of the house, the generation, and the city. Occasionally he will greet the soul of his people as his own soul even across the wide, obscuring and confusing centuries; and power of empathy and divination, of scenting an almost cold trail, of instinctively reading aright the past however much it be written over . . . are his gifts and virtues. (1874/1980, p. 19)

Positing a reverent civic consciousness ("the soul of one's people"), Nietzsche intimates an imperative to "read aright the past" and thereby preserve the "spirit of the city"—the city with which, "like an illustrated diary," one is identified. Thus does Sudek trace Prague's unspoken history, which, having been repeatedly erased and paved over, had become "an almost cold trail." In telling its story, he tells his own.

Likewise, Freud reveals the devastating impact of the First World War in "Mourning and Melancholia" (1917), wherein he writes that mourning is the "reaction to the loss of a loved one, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal" (p. 243). "One's country, liberty, and ideals" can also stand for one's self, as in traditional psychoanalytic interpretations of nationalism as an enlarged projection of the self (Schoenfeld, 1974). By extension, I argue, the loss of one's country and liberty can also be experienced as *the loss of oneself*: in a grim repetition of history, Sudek's country lost its liberty in only its twentieth year, the same age at which he lost his arm.

And yet the notion of *identification* with Prague, and with all the things it contains and signifies, is perhaps too limited to be a fully accurate or complete description of what Jeffrey (1998) calls Sudek's "incommensurable, intimate relationship" to it (p. 12). For one, the notion of differentiation from the other is prerequisite for processes of identification. Might the

undifferentiated contours of the embodied self be capable of extending from the proximal surroundings and the things in it, to the city it calls home, and all the way to the essentially plastic but still, and necessarily physical concept of the bounded nation-state? The sociologist and psychoanalyst Jeffrey Prager (1993) may well intuit this when he places the subjective relationship between self and nation in a transitional place, “a social terrain neither subjective nor objective”:

It is a terrain that I call the realm of experience, but experience that is neither self nor object . . . the modern citizen experiences politics as simultaneously about self and other, about closing the chasm between the private self and the public world. (p. 566)

Spanning the personal and the political, the proposition that the embodied self may incorporate the abstraction of the state is entirely consistent with and deepens the psychoanalytic formulation of political identity, linking, in Nietzsche’s words, the “spirit of the house, the generation, and the city.” The notion that Sudek envisaged himself thus is encouraged by his image of a man whose shadow precedes him—a projected, larger-than-life silhouette framed by a little alley at the summit of the city at the center of the country (Fig. 26, left). The largeness of this shadow avatar speaks to what the French phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard calls “the dignity of the admiring being”: by honoring Prague and its immense beauty, Sudek attains this mode of transcendence, whereby “even if aware of our paltry selves . . . we become aware of grandeur” (1958, p. 184). Aware of the city’s grandeur, yes, and also able to absorb and attain it. A faded view of the Charles Bridge and the Vlatava river, pierced by a piece of driftwood, alludes to the dignified sense of restitution available to a citizen of the city: duplicated via its mirror image in the water and incorporated into the reflected cityscape, one arm becomes two (Fig. 26, right).

Conversely, these considerations support a deeper reading of the promise Sudek made after failing to “find” the arm he lost in Italy, “from that time on I never went anywhere anymore and I never will”: if by stepping over the borders of

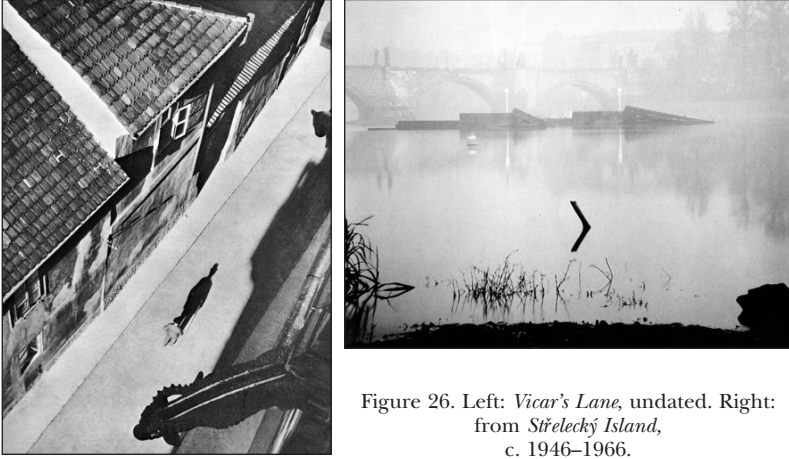


Figure 26. Left: *Vicar's Lane*, undated. Right: from *Sřelečský Island*, c. 1946–1966.

his homeland, he forfeited the borders of his body, he would never cross that frontier again. Correlated with and invoking a physical perimeter, such an embodied sense of fortification may have provided an additional layer of protection, another boundary or skin to circumscribe and cohere a self that had been torn into pieces—a function I have posited for the photograph itself.

Yet the benefits of patriotic identification come at great cost, for to experience one's country as an extension of the self is to experience any assault on that country as a profoundly personal, threatening, and disorganizing one. Totalitarian states levy a negation of the individual on the order of what Lichtenstein (1971) terms a "malignant no"; when endorsed by invading forces, apocalyptic violence destroys not only the integrity of the state, but also the integrity of the individual identified with that state, undermined by the terror of utter corporeal vulnerability. One instinctive response to imminent invasion is the potentiation of patriotic sentiment—a manifest resistance to erasure that elicits a reciprocal, reinforcing affirmation. Can we not better understand the utter disorientation and distress of the displaced, the dispossessed, the refugee? Does the difficulty with which people abandon their country, even if staying means death, not seem a bit less inexplicable? And might staying in that country sometimes mean something

other than masochism, but rather the choosing to defy a different kind of death, the death of the self?

“Nothing is as offensive to a group as the destruction of its monuments,” the cultural historian Peter Homans (1989, p. 272), acutely observes; moreover, monuments are “entirely material: they are to the group what the body is to the ego—the material soul of the group” (p. 277). Encountering a monument reopens the mourning process, Homans contends, invoking the “uncanny feeling . . . that we are, in some mysterious and disturbingly inexplicable way, ‘a part of all that,’ and further, that apart from ‘all that,’ we might not be at all” (p. 272). I argue that it is when facing the prospect of destruction—the idea of “not being at all”—that we seek the most to feel “a part of it all.” Perhaps this is why Sudek so meticulously documented his Prague, and why it is so miraculously intact; after Prague was liberated, he photographed only a handful of ruined monuments, including the iconic Clock Tower (Fig. 27, left). Indeed, when sampling his pictures of the city, one could easily come away with the impression that they all date from the prewar years, a temporal distortion that achieves a negation—their own “no”—of the serial catastrophes that his city and country did sustain. In the working of *après-coup*, political crises would have multiplied personal crises, as evidenced by a 1940 photograph of a weary Sudek, seemingly near collapse, in Svatý Vít—an undefiled sanctuary at the heart of a desecrated city (Fig. 27, right). Surely the burdens he endured were metabolized and palliated by the sustaining, symbolizing, organizing functions of his art.

After the end of the Second World War, Sonja Bullaty, a young Czech Jew who survived Nazi concentration camps and death marches, returned to Prague. Her head shaved, she answered Sudek’s advertisement for a helper and became his assistant (Fig. 28, left). The two worked together until 1947, when Bullaty immigrated to New York; they remained close friends, exchanging letters, musical recordings and photographs. Bullaty (1978) recalls that when they met, “there was an immediate understanding between us and neither spoke of what was too painful. It was good to face each day at a time, to just be; to see what the weather was like and where we wanted to photograph” (p. 13). One can recognize the depths of Sudek’s trauma by



Figure 27. Left: *Prague After Bombing*, the astronomical clock tower in Old Town Square, 1945. Right: Josef Sudek in Svatý Vít, 1940, photo by Josef Ehm.



Figure 28. Left: shortly before his death, Sudek tries out Sonja Bullaty's new Nikon, Prague, May 1976. Right: *Prague rooftops*, c. 1940.

his ability to recognize hers. Their quiet, contemplative work, consolatory and restorative, restates lines from *Mnemosyne*, a poem by the German poet Freidrich Hölderlin (1770–1843) titled after the Greek goddess of Memory:

But what about the things we love?
 We see sun shining on the ground, and the dry dust,
 And at home the forest deep with shadows,
 And smoke flowering from the rooftops,
 Peacefully, near the ancient crowning towers
 These signs of daily life are good
 Even when in contrast something divine
 Has injured the soul. (2004, p. 50)

In Sudek’s work—its “forest deep with shadows” (see Figs. 4 & 6), its city with its “ancient crowning towers”(see Figs. 19 & 20), and its “smoke flowering from the rooftops” (Fig. 28, right)—live all the fleeting, timeless “things we love.” Found in his profoundly empathic lens, Sudek humanized a dehumanized world and brought to light an invisible city.

“The New Rays of Light”

For the most part, Sudek withdrew from the streets of Prague during the harrowing, lean years of the ruthless Nazi occupation, turning his acutely felt sense of place toward his tiny, cluttered studio. In the safety of this circumscribed environment, he arranged and photographed minute tableaux of objects in a conscious, considered process of animation (Fig. 29):

I believe that photography loves banal objects, and I love the life of objects. I am sure you know the fairy tales of Andersen: when the children go to bed, *the objects come to life*, toys, for example. I like to tell stories about the life of inanimate objects, to relate something mysterious: *the seventh side of a dice*. (Sudek, quoted in Fárová, 1976, p. 36, emphasis added)

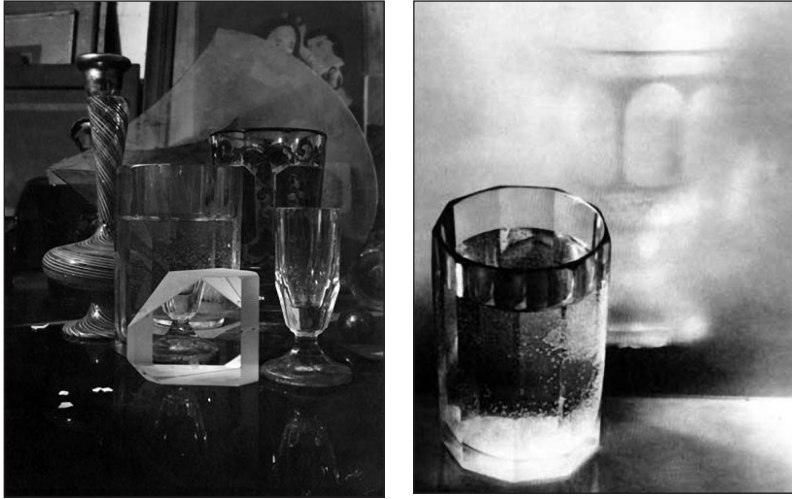


Figure 29. Left: *Still Life*, from the series, *Glass Labyrinths*, c. 1963–1972.
Right: *Two Glasses*, c. 1950–1954.

Jan Řezáč, Sudek’s friend and editor, was asked to transcribe some of Sudek’s early memories. In one, Sudek recalls, “From the beginning Mummy would always read us fairy tales by the light of an oil lamp” (quoted in Řezáč, 1999, n.p.). This vivid, evocative image, so resonant with his luminous pictures of lamps, shows that Sudek’s relationship to light was saturated with memory, intimacy, and alchemy (Fig. 30). He once marveled how, just as in the fairy tales of which he was so fond, “in the eyes of a crazy photographer . . . a seemingly dead object comes to life through light” (Sudek, quoted in Bullaty, 1978, p. 27)—like the lit candle that divines survival, another link between light and life.

Freud (1905) understood that children “are afraid in the dark because in the dark they cannot see the person they love” (p. 224); their fear of the dark is in fact the fear of “the absence of someone he loved” and the attendant need to know that they are indeed there (p. 224fn). Without light, neither the eye nor the camera can “see”; without light, the chair in which Barthes’ mother sits cannot be seen, and it, and she, may not *be*. Recall the little girl’s tomb, glowing with patches of light: as long as it is illuminated, it can be seen, and the girl interred there remains alive, if only in memory. So does Sudek travel between searching



Figure 30. Left: *The Coming of Evening*, 1961. Right: Unnamed, undated. Accessed Jan. 23, 2013, <http://www.visualindependence.com/blog-sudek.html>.

for what once was and is now lost to searching for the unseen and inexplicable—“the seventh side of a dice.”

During the war years, Sudek became enchanted with the detail and nuanced tonality of the contact print—an impression, a mirror image borne of an actual “point of contact.” He soon stopped making enlargements altogether, and, returning to his old negatives, made new contact prints from them, sometimes using a laborious process called pigment printing. In one simple, profoundly textured image, an apple and a pear bear the bruises of life; wizened and gendered, they lean on each other like an old married couple (Fig. 31, left). Their reality is weighty, palpable; they nearly breathe. By circumventing the enlargement process, Sudek narrows the distance between object and image, locating “that place where there persists, like the original solution still present within crystal, the undividedness of the sensing and the sensed” (Merleau-Ponty, 1993, p. 125). Beads of air in water, one of Sudek’s signature tropes, also evoke the cryptic unknown in the purest, most translucent of substances; in a wonderful realization of the embodied environment, a glass of water acts as a magical lens to transform a lemon’s rounded, dimpled form into the smooth, unmistakable contours of a woman’s body, animated by the familiar glimmer of light (Fig. 31, right).

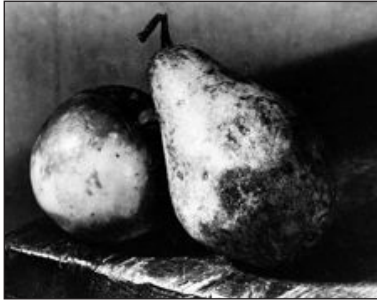


Figure 31. Left: *Still Life with Apple and Pear*, 1950–1954.
Right: *Still Life with Glass and Lemon*, c. 1960s.

Sudek's greatest achievement may be *The Window of My Studio*, a cycle he began in 1940 and worked on for the rest of his life (Fig. 32; also see Fig. 7). Here, the transparent boundary of his glass window acts as a kaleidoscope, the chance effect of light and condensation creating an encapsulated, yet boundless galaxy of worlds. This increasingly abstracted meditation elaborates a fluid continuity between interior and exterior, outlining an explicit metaphor for the inner life and its expansion to the external world. The unmitigated generosity of these intensely personal images stems from their unguarded porosity, their utter lack of self-consciousness: it is as if by looking outward, Sudek simultaneously looks inward, opening a window—a door, really—through which we step into, see, and share his experience, his vision of the world.

Like his closely observed still lives, the microscopic, intensely private environments detailed in *The Window of My Studio* are nonetheless profound in their enormity—as much as the macroscopic views of Prague that Sudek made with an antiquated Kodak camera when, in the 1950s, he ventured out into the city again (Fig. 33). Lingering in the sweeping horizon of many of these expansive panoramas is the tiny outline of

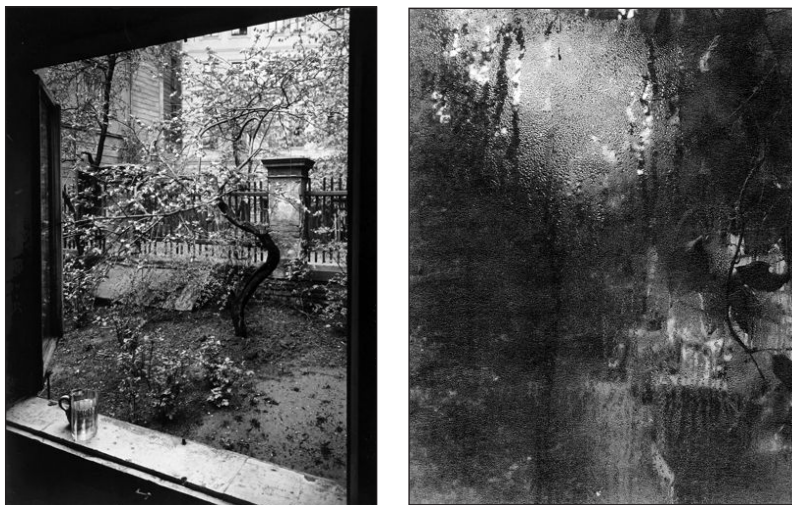


Figure 32. From *The Window of my Studio* series.

Hradčany, which although distant and hazy, remains an unmistakable landmark, an absolute and orienting reference—an unequivocal designation of place. And, like the flag that still stands, as long as it is seen, the physical persistence of this silhouette—“the material soul of the group” (Homans, 1989, p.

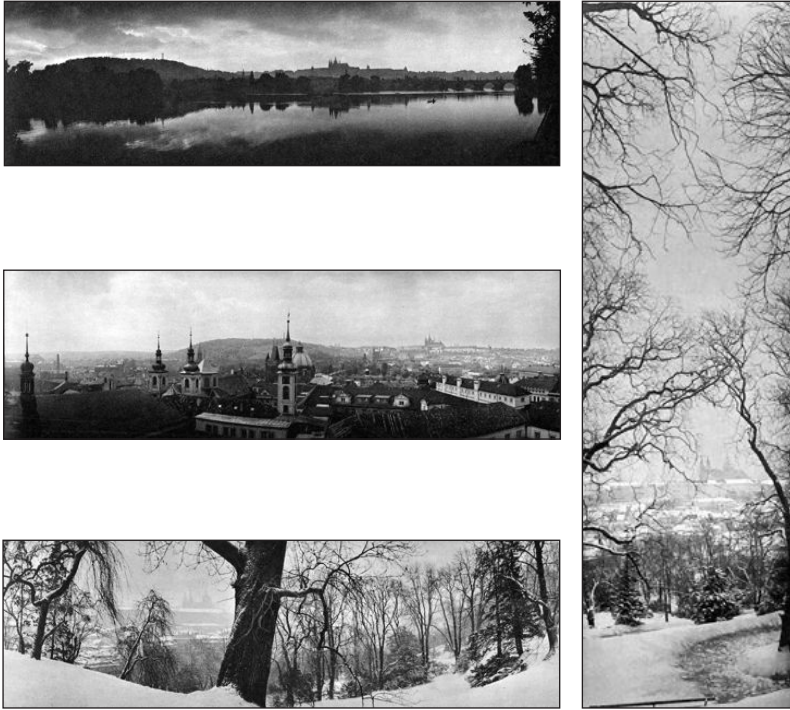


Figure 33. From *Prague Panoramas*, 1959.

277)—is promise and proof that the city and the country—and thus we and I—still exist. How essential such evidence must have been to Sudek: having experienced firsthand the Habsburgs’ institutionalization of cultural erasure, he celebrated with the rest of his generation the jubilant birth of the First Republic, only to witness its attenuated life and precipitous death. He saw his demoralized country repeatedly violated: by the Nazis’ murderous occupation, by reprisals against resistance, and, ultimately, by the extermination of Czech Jews, only to be virtually handed over to the Soviets, who plundered and raped what they claimed to have liberated, who maneuvered to control and dehistoricize the already completely destabilized nation before the war was even over (Applebaum, 2012), who blatantly engineered the 1948 Communist coup d’état and assassination of Jan Masyrak, Prime Minister and son of Tomáš Masyrak, and who in 1968 used tanks and tear gas to crush the nonviolent political reform movement so hopefully called the “Prague Spring.”

In a moment of adamant dissent and self-affirmation in the face of Soviet hegemony, Sudek refused in 1955 to attend the ceremony where he would be awarded the Municipal Prize by the Mayor of Prague, a Soviet puppet. Instead, he sent a photograph of Prague—in his words, “*in lieu of myself*” (Fárová, 1990b, p. 88, emphasis added). His reaction to the Soviet Union’s 1968 invasion was less prosaic: Kirschner recalls, “Russian tanks in Czechoslovakia so deeply shook [Sudek’s] relationship with Russian classical music that, as he personally admitted, he had to literally learn again how to love that music” (p. 31). In a melancholic echo of *après-coup*, the events of 1968 resulted, yet again, in *the surrender of something he loved*. For Sudek, as for many other Czechs, nationalism was borne out of a love for his fatherland and a longing for its liberty, potentiated by centuries of political and cultural oppression; refusing to legitimize the Communist regime, he persevered, “living in the spiritual existence of the once-upon-a-time free Czecho-slovakia” (Kirschner, personal communication, 2013)—an era he tenderly preserves, like a wishful fairy tale, in his lyrical portraits of Prague. His “power of empathy and divination, of scenting an almost cold trail, of instinctively reading aright the past” (Nietzsche, 1874, p. 19) is revealed in enigmatic photographs of strangely illuminated steps that ascend, turn, and vanish. Articulating the sacrifices of the past, the anxiety of the future, and the tension of the captive present, they are documents of mystery, and of disappearance (Fig. 34).¹²

Such images reiterate how, regardless of subject or theme, light was Sudek’s overriding concern. Allan Porter, long-time editor of *Camera* magazine and early champion of Sudek’s work, believes that it is his treatment of light that imbues his images with their peculiarly ineffable quality:

With Sudek, the subject is placed in the light and not the light on the subject . . . with his seepage of light, his rays of light, his blankets of light, he pierces the darkness just enough to let us wonder and yet remain mystified. (1976, p. 4)

Sudek’s preoccupation with light was effortful—recalling the muscularity of Bick’s “second skin” (1968, p. 484)—and



Figure 34. Upper left: untitled, undated. Upper right and Lower: *The Forgotten Staircase*, from *Remembrances*, 1950.

demanded stamina and patience. His friend, the Czech poet Jaroslav Seifert who sometimes accompanied him around Prague, remembers how he

rounded his palm and fingers to form a telescope of sorts in front of his eye [Fig. 35] . . . He waited for a long time for the right light. Maybe half an hour, maybe an hour. When it did not materialize, he picked up the camera and we moved to a higher place. And we waited again. He wrestled with the light like Jacob wrestled with the angel . . . He did not speak . . . The entire ceremony was very slow, but severe and exact. (quoted in Fárová, 1990b, p. 87)

Sonja Bullaty (1978) tells another story:

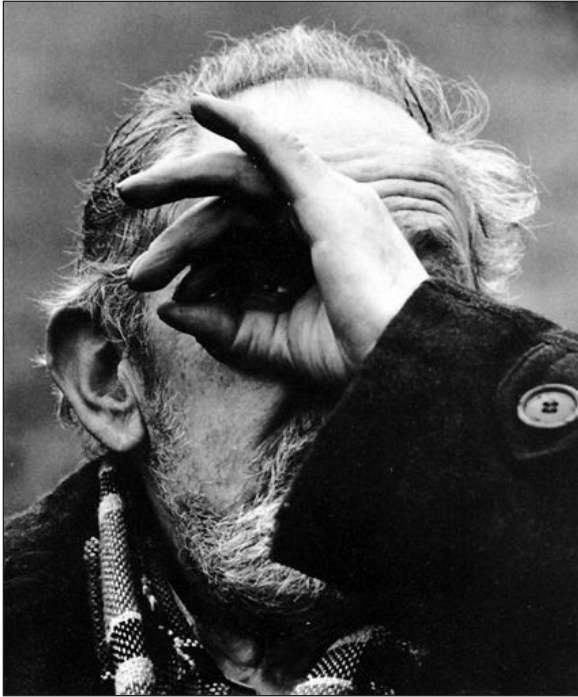


Figure 35. Sudek, photographed by J. Prosek, 1961.

[T]he whole of Sudek's life seemed to revolve around light. I remember one time, in one of the Romanesque halls, deep below the spires of the cathedral [Svatý Vít]—it was as dark as in the catacombs—with just a small window below street level inside the massive medieval walls. [Sudek and I] set up the tripod and then sat down on the floor and talked. Suddenly Sudek was up like lightning. A ray of sun had entered the darkness and both of us were waving cloths to raise mountains of ancient dust “to see the light,” as Sudek said. Obviously he had known that the sun would reach here perhaps two or three times and he was waiting for it. (p. 14)

From the start, Sudek searched for and found light everywhere: from his hometown of Kolín to Z Invalidovna, the veteran's hospital where he convalesced, from the “Magic Garden” to the Mionší forest. Indeed, Sudek *illuminated* light—its rays refracted by prisms and mirrors, outlined in shadows and dust, filtered through glass and gauze, revealed by ice and dew, smoke and snow, pouring from above and glowing in the dark, *bringing to light* the invisible, “the seventh side of a dice” (Fig. 36). Barthes (1981) contends that “more than other arts, Photography offers an immediate presence to the world” (p. 84): “with the Photograph, my certainty is immediate; no one in the world can undecieve me” (p. 115). Perhaps this is why Sudek's medium was photography, and photography alone: wholly reliant on the light and the material reality that it registers, it allowed him to demonstrate, with *certainty*, the *immediate presence* of the immaterial—the sum total of the sensed and unseen, the sum total of the self.

Like a dream, the visual imagery in a photograph can also summon the presence of invisible dead. Yet there is nothing of the fetish in Sudek's work, which maintains an unassailable gravity. As Dufek (1996) points out, his photographs do not “exhaust themselves in an attempt to replace the depicted” (p. 20). Rather, his oeuvre is squarely, resolutely situated between mournful elegy and the search to find, transform, and memorialize the ineffable objects, the phantoms that “*left before he was ready*.” He who had to search for his missing arm in the Italian countryside acknowledged as much when, at the end of

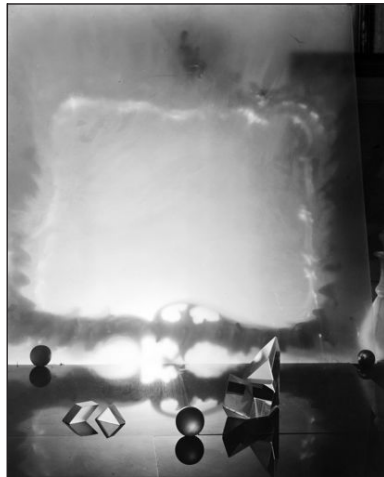


Figure 36. Upper left: *Zlatý uličky* (*Golden Lane*), 1930. Upper right: *Jelení příkop* (*Stag's moat*), c. 1942–1946. Center left: from the cycle *Contrasts*, c. 1942 (perhaps the “Romanesque hall, deep below the spires of the cathedral”). Center right: from the cycle *A Summer Shower in the Magic Garden*, c. 1954–1959. Lower left: from the cycle *Z Invalidovny*, c. 1922–1927. Lower right: from the series *Glass Labyrinths*, 1968.

his life, he wrote to Sonja Bullaty in New York that he would take on no more projects: “Years of searching, but at a certain moment there does not remain enough time” (quoted in Bullaty, 1978, p. 28).

Sudek had not one muse, but many. In Greek mythology, Mnemosyne, the goddess of Memory, was mother to the nine Muses. In the *Theaetetus*, Plato quotes Socrates:

[A]ssume, then, for the sake of argument, that there is in our souls a block of wax . . . Let us, then, say that this is the gift of Mnemosyne, the mother of the Muses, and that whenever we wish to remember anything we see or hear or think of in our own minds, we hold this wax under the perceptions and thoughts and imprint them upon it, just as we make impressions from seal rings; and whatever is imprinted we remember and know as long as its image lasts, but whatever is rubbed out or cannot be imprinted we forget and do not know. (191c, Loeb Classical Library)

Conjuring and capturing light is the other side of Sudek’s search for *what-is-there-but-yet-not-there*. And this is the distinguishing essence of memory: quintessentially ephemeral, yet able to reconstitute what once was and is now gone. I propose that Sudek’s irreducible muse was in fact Memory, and that his photographs are inscribed with impressions of his “perceptions and thoughts” in order to “remember and know as long as its image lasts.” His preoccupation with light—and, I suggest, his entire oeuvre—can be construed as working toward a *pure phenomenology of remembrance*. The work of remembering, Ricoeur (2004) explains, is the *benefit* as well as the work of mourning. And the sometimes painful work of memory is the step that must be taken before the literally *re-creative* work of mourning—the rebuilding and repair of the self—can be done.

In this brave new century, a team of artists and architects responded to the destruction of a New York landmark: every year, on September 11, twin beams of light reach into the sky, a transparency of the buildings that fell that day (Fig. 37).¹³ To witness *Tribute in Light* is to experience a strange array of



Figure 37. *Tribute in Light*, photograph by Mike Hvozda, September 9, 2004.

feelings—a disoriented, wild hope that the towers have miraculously been found, coupled with the melancholy knowledge that they have not. But they are remembered, and the scarred skyline mended, when, for a few nights out of the year, they come to light.

After his death, Anna Fárová found among Sudek's personal belongings a most unusual photograph, an image of a page from a book with the text of an unidentified poem (Fárová, 1990b, p. 92). It is in fact *Sonnet X* by Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Yet, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
 And worthy of acceptance. Fire is bright,
 Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light
 Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or weed:
 And love is fire. And when I say at need
 I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee—in thy sight
 I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
 With conscience of the new rays that proceed
 Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
 In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures
 Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
 And what I feel, across the inferior features
 Of what I am, doth flash itself, and show
 How that great work of Love enhances Nature's. (1998,
 p 21)

Like the poetess, in “*the new rays*” of his art, Sudek, too, was “*transfigured*”: from a mutilated “*weed*” whose “*inferior features*” made him one of the “*meanest creatures*,” to one whose “*veiled radiance*” shines, “*glorified aright*.” This was Sudek’s transcendence, his “*great work of Love*,” the wing that took flight (Fig. 38).



Figure 38. *In My Studio*
 (Újezd), c. 1950.

Dedication



In Memoriam: Václav Havel (1936–2011)

Václav Havel in Prague, 1989. Petar Kujundzic, Reuters.

Notes

1. The author is indebted to the historical summaries and valuable personal reminiscences of Sonja Bullaty (1978), Anna Fárová (1990a, 1990b), and Zdeněk Kirschner (1993), from which the data in this paper is drawn.
2. For a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between Sudek and his contemporary Czech photographers and their cultural milieu, see Kirschner (1996).
3. See Schwab (2009) for an enlightening discussion of creativity and the replacement child.
4. I am grateful to Eva Papiasvili for clarifying that although the common meaning of *nashledanou* is “until we meet again,” the root of the word *hledat* means “to look for”; thus the more literal translation is “until we *find* each other again.”
5. Anne Golub Hoffman’s sensitive and revealing essay, “Archival Bodies,” explores the history of the body as an archive of data, meaning, and experience (Hoffman, 2009).
6. Similarly, J. David Miller (2011) has suggested that the objects painted by Giorgio Morandi are concrete representations of the artist’s object relationships.
7. In a footnote, Freud continues: “I.e., the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body. It may thus be regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body, besides, as we have seen above, representing the superficialities of the mental apparatus.” The editors of the *Standard Edition* remark, “This footnote first appeared in the English translation of 1927, in which it was described as having been authorized by Freud. It does not appear in the German editions” (1923, p. 26).
8. The synthetic, radical work of Paul Schilder, an Austrian psychoanalyst and student of Freud, who emigrated to the United States, was also influenced by the work of Carl Wernicke. Fliess agrees with Schilder that the incorporation of the world into the subjective experience of self is a dynamic, fluid, and oscillatory process. After this essay was written, I became aware of the concept of *vinculo*, a construct formulated by Pichon-Rivière and the topic of several recent articles in *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* (Vol. 81, 2012), which comes very close to describing the totality of the relationship of the self and other to the environment that I am describing here. Revealing the influence of Merleau-Ponty, whose work Pichon-

- Rivière studied, *vínculo* describes the conception of the other “not in an abstract or isolated way, but with the inanimate objects, the habitat, and the circumstances that surround experience and nourish the construction of the bodily scheme” (Bernardi & de León de Bernardi, 2012, p. 537).
9. In what may be a similar process, Kristeva argues that Proust attempts to reconstitute his body and sensorium within textual narration via what Proust called “transubstantiation” (Sabbadini, 2000).
 10. Days after the founding of the Czecho-Slovakia, a frenzied mob of (mostly Catholic) Prague citizens toppled the Marian Column erected by the Habsburgs in 1650 in Old Town Square (Paces, 2009), an action encapsulating the resentment felt toward the Catholic powers that had over the centuries succeeded in eradicating Czech and Slovak Protestantism.
 11. This mythic ethos was perpetuated by the election of Tomáš Masyrak, son of an illegitimate serf, as the first President of the new Czech state.
 12. Sadly, Sudek did not live to see the Velvet Revolution liberate his country in 1989. But he seemed to find a more private peace in his work and in music, especially that of his favorite composer, Leoš Janáček. In a parallel to his return to Svatý Vít in 1939, Sudek broke his self-imposed injunction after the coup d’état in 1948 and traveled to Janáček’s home in the Moravian village of Hukvaldy, and explored the nearby Mionší forest. Thereafter, he made annual pilgrimages to the region, usually in the spring. The implications of this ritual, and his special relationship to Janáček, will be taken up in a forthcoming essay.
 13. “Tribute in Light” was designed by John Bennett, Gustavo Bonevardi, Richard Nash Gould, Julian Laverdiere, and Paul Myoda, together with lighting consultant Paul Marantz, and produced under the auspices of the Municipal Art Society and Creative Time.

References

- The author recommends *Josef Sudek*, a DVD compilation of three short documentary films about Sudek (Krátký Film, 2004): *Zít svůj život* [To live one’s life], directed by Ewald Schorm, 1963; *Fotograf v zahradě* [Photographer in the garden], directed by Maric Šandová, 2000; *Fotograf a muzika* [Photographer and music], directed by Eva Marie Bergerová, 1974. http://www.nostalghia.cz/dvd/txt/sudek_kf.php
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