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what nature intended. Architects designed the "geometrical city." Each building was to be a monument of public utility, radiating the simple grandeur of geometry. But as the "Terror" became the third act of the revolution, so too darkness and irrationality reappeared in art. Goya's *Pradera of San Isidro* (1787) typifies the change. It depicts a crowd of people enjoying themselves—"a multicolored murmur." The chance encounters it portrays foreshadow the "essential instability" that marks the artist's later paintings.

**ALL THAT IS SOLID  
MELTS INTO AIR:  
The Experience of  
Modernity**  
by Marshall Berman  
Simon & Schuster, 1982  
383 pp. \$17.50

Nothing could be less fashionable amid the "new traditionalism" of the 1980s than a spirited defense of "modernism." But this is precisely what Berman offers, invoking artists and thinkers (Goethe, Marx) whom he believes have responded most creatively to the social and economic changes of the last two centuries. These are not the modernists of more recent decades—Samuel Beckett or other high priests of despair and alienation. They are, rather, the innovators who preached survival and adaptation—making oneself "at home in the maelstrom." Goethe's *Faust* is exemplary: The epitome of the modern "developer," Faust translates his drive for power and self-aggrandizement into a sprawling corporate empire. Berman does not overlook Faust's tragedy—the human costs of development (which include Faust's own obsolescence)—but he admires Faust as one who never retreats to the "little world" of his origins. He lauds Marx, Baudelaire, and the great St. Petersburg writers, from Gogol in the mid-19th century to Biely in the early 20th, for showing a similar courage. Berman, a political scientist at the City University of New York, approaches literature, philosophy, urban planning, the arts, and architecture with strong biases—reviling, for example, such modernists as Le Corbusier and Robert Moses for designing the life out of cities. His impassioned criticism is engaging even when most outrageous.