

Church and in the world before God. The sacramental art-forms in which believers make sense of their existence require an organized discipline and a willingness to submit to rules and standards; inspiration is not enough, and without a fair degree of craftsmanship can become simply pernicious. *Homo faber* who alone is met by and communicates with the creator God needs a measure of patience and slowness in experimentation with new styles or revived techniques if his handiwork is not to be just whimsy. Manners, 'a culture's hum and buzz of implications, its half-uttered or unuttered or unutterable expressions of value', can be ignored only at the peril of a particular church failing to be in love and charity with the Church universal. Yet equally, as the recent Council reminded us, 'when the liturgy is celebrated, something more is required than the mere observance of the rules governing valid and licit celebration'. One element of that something more is a reflective understanding of what Christians are about when they celebrate the one sacrament which is Christ in one or other of its modalities.

He it is who reveals a whole reality inaccessible to other means of knowledge. In him nature and history are humanized, as God is en-man-ed. What that ultimately means does not yet appear, and the final appearance will itself be the meaning. But each of the aspects of the present life of Christ in his Church which are made accessible, though not transparent, in the seven sacraments, can already (even in their very transitoriness) speak significantly of the ultimate meaning which is God himself. Following articles will try to suggest how each of the seven significant moments in the life of the Church expresses and realizes what God is for us as in faith we allow ourselves to be interpreted to ourselves through the medium of activities which are our own and God's, as God in us creates a new universe in and out of a medium which he has created for his own self-realization, Jesus of Nazareth.

## Man in the City

### by Thomas A. Markus

This paper asks some questions about man and nature from one point of view, that of an interest in the city. It puts forward a few current concepts of the city with emphasis on recent social studies. It asks to what extent the making of cities and living in them is 'natural' to man; to what extent they have always been a deliberate statement about man's relationship to the world of nature (is there a conflict here?); and it tries to show the direction in which cities are developing and the degree to which these developments may be

said to enhance and enrich experience or to impoverish and destroy it. It is a personal statement and is not in any way an attempt to give a critical summary of current sociological, planning and artistic critiques of the city.

### *The City as Experience*

After some weeks of reading in preparation for writing this paper I was preparing to make a concentrated start on it one evening. It happened that I had cause to visit a friend in a local hospital that same evening. The journey was short, through a decaying industrial/housing part of the city. The hospital itself is entered through an arch over a narrow carriage way, unaltered since horse and carriage days as witnessed by the width of the opening and the stone cart tracks leading into a cobbled yard; the hospital building, an agglomeration of bits and pieces from the last 100 years or so. The pub next to the hospital, on a Friday night, is crowded and noisy and a refuge for both patients and staff.

On the journey home, outside what was once a great hotel and is now a dosshouse, lies an unconscious elderly man drunk or injured. Such injuries as he has could have been caused by falling or perhaps by attack. Police arrive and an ambulance is called. The next part of the journey is through a shopping, restaurant, cinema and dance hall area and ultimately finishes in an area of nineteenth-century housing at a density of over 200 persons per acre.

Through this bit of time I tried consciously to ask myself questions as to how far the events which caused these everyday experiences and impressions could be explained by social and behavioural sciences; would they account in any general way for the number and type of persons who found themselves in the hospital situation? Which would explain the pattern of use of the dosshouse? What economic city theories based on the demand for services, or social theories based on interactions, explain the pub, the cinema and dance halls? I tried to place these events in the context of the historical and theoretical work in which I had recently been immersed. One or two immediate conclusions seemed evident. First, that the attraction of a city to an individual will be very largely a question of his expected or learnt experiences; that is, the city for an individual is a complex *set* of experiences and that generalized theories which observe and attempt to explain the behaviour of large aggregates of individuals deal with the tip of an iceberg. The submerged portion is that which accounts in detail for the inner dynamics of this experience. The tip is that which deals with the observation of social class and interaction, work patterns, political and social institutions, patterns of industry and commerce, land values, transportation and with the physical fabric and visible structure of the city. To say this is not to criticize the empirical and theoretical work, for these shortcomings are inevitable in the process

of generalization. It is simply to emphasize that we should interpret the theoretical and experimental work in the light of the knowledge it can give us of the way people experience cities; for, in the end, it is bound to be in terms of experience that one answers the question whether cities today are natural to man and the extent to which they will be so tomorrow.

The city has always been a powerful image to poets and more recently to novelists and artists. From the late middle ages to the eighteenth century it was seen as an ordered expression of political structure and stability. Voltaire, and later Fichte in Germany, saw the city as essentially a civilizing force and as a force for civilized virtue. Adam Smith in England whilst seeing the economic and moral virtues of the city still contrasted it with the stability and honesty of life on the land. He saw the city as a stimulant but the country as the place in which to be fulfilled. Schorske<sup>1</sup> points out that Smith pressed his psychological prejudices in favour of the country even at the expense of his economic logic. However, soon all this was to be changed by the romantic poets and the novelists of the mid-nineteenth century who began to see the city as a centre of poverty and squalor, grime and social crime and gradually in fact transformed it into a symbol of evil and vice. Both Ruskin and Morris returned to an ideal of medieval life and form, and it was not until the end of his life that Engels began to see the city not, indeed, as something in itself desirable or virtuous, but nevertheless as a necessary context within which lay the only possible hope of emancipation for the workers. 'Only the proletariat herded together in the big cities is in a position to accomplish the great social transformation which will put an end to all class exploitation and all class rule.' So whilst the city was for him the scene of industrial oppression it was also potentially the place where liberation would take place.

This ambivalent attitude to the city amongst artists and politicians has reached our present time. The argument however is now no longer at the level of choice, as clearly urban life is the inevitable lot of the vast majority of people in the West.

The argument now centres around the kind of social and political structure that is appropriate in terms of democracy and the quality of life and the corresponding physical structures and communication networks that adequately express the former. On the one hand proposals for urban renewal and agglomerative approaches are linked to a reform of city government. On the other hand, proposals for vast expansions of the metropolis into the city region with corresponding restructuring of local government, social services, and health and educational services is foreseen and all kinds of radial, linear and starlike physical patterns are envisaged as possible

<sup>1</sup>Carl E. Schorske, 'The Idea of the City in European Thought: Voltaire to Spengler' in *The Historian and the City*, ed. Oscar Handlin and John Burchard (MIT Press and Harvard University Press, 1963).

physical interpretations of such growth. Whilst the planners and politicians debate at this level the artists are still drawing from the city a major source of inspiration. *Midnight Cowboy* presents a picture of innocence and loyalty whose essence is a chance relationship such as can only occur in the city and it is established on a firm footing in the bars and disused tenements of a city. Saul Bellow uses New York not as a backcloth but as a symbol for confused idealism and social vitality; the descriptions of the buses and undergrounds; the observed petty thefts; the street fight and Central Park at night are central images in his novels. It is inconceivable to imagine the novelist today not relying on the city as the source for chance encounter, accident, the making and breaking of relationships and the place for social conflict, and clearly for most of them the vast randomness and vitality of the city is a positive characteristic. This is, perhaps, a successful bridge between social realism and romanticism. Most important of all, artists now find in the city those images of decay, degeneration and death which are vital to their message and which the pastoral setting of Hardy's novels can only provide at a more abstract level.

#### *City as an Artifact*

Some historians, planners, and ecologists have regarded the city basically in terms of its visible and changing fabric—a created artifact. Because this is an obvious approach—after all the fabric is the first and most concrete evidence of a historical process and makes the first and most concrete impact on a newcomer—it should not necessarily be dismissed. However, the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century sociologists developed the theory of the city in terms of social/ecological processes by careful observation of the way groups assembled for defence and political advantage; by tracing the increase in the size of cities, especially from the late middle ages on, and the change in social structures from simple military and economic ones to complex service structures. This has given us an evolutionary picture in which political (military) and economic laws result not so much in natural selection as natural growth and decay. A marked tendency has been observed for increased centralization initially, followed by decentralization in the post-industrial revolution era. Processes which have resulted in increased differentiation and segregation of functions have been carefully observed and with them corresponding changes in the social stratification, land values and the skeletal structure of cities. The changes have been interpreted as 'invasions' resulting from changes in routes, obsolescence, the creation of physical structures and the arrival of new industries.

The early theories were of an ecological kind (Park, Burgess and McKenzie). The difficulties of this approach were that the interpretations were over-emphasized in the direction of geophysical explanations; the concepts of social structure were primitive and the

study of sociological groups was omitted. The first great urban sociological theory was that of Simmel.<sup>1</sup> He approached the subject with greater psychological insights and this led naturally on to Max Weber's work on the city.<sup>2</sup> He tackles, for the first time, the city in terms of a theory which attempts to explain social institutions and social evolution. Weber looked at the form as well as the content of social interactions—by which he meant social actions, social relations and social institutions; he developed a notion of the community as being the 'order' of the institutions. His work is still the foundation of much modern city theory.

Wirth<sup>3</sup> developed a theory of the city in which he tried to show that size, density and heterogeneity are three correlated features of cities and explain many of the empirically observed events. He showed, for instance, that in the city there were relatively weak bonds amongst people living in the same areas and because of the greater complexity of their functional links connected with work, education, religion, social life, etc., there was more *formal* social control and also bigger physical separation of the separate sub-groups. With it, he maintained, went difficulties in getting to know the persons involved in these contacts which led to somewhat impersonal, superficial relationships which were treated as means to ends. Into this picture he fits the division of labour, specialization, both functional and in terms of city areas, the need for mass media and the need for readily perceptible symbols. These symbols are a means by which roles are identified and stereotypes established, but stereotypes tend now to be no longer 'strangers', or people from the next village, or having a certain family name, but rather perhaps those of an occupational group, social class or political party. Although several sociologists have discussed the use of symbols in urban contacts and made reference to house types, fashion and other ways of expressing distinctiveness or exclusiveness, few people have thoroughly probed the rich symbolism of urban form.

Another completely different approach to the study of cities examines the concepts and rituals connected with the establishment of cities as part of the total world view, or cosmology of the societies which created them. Rykwert<sup>4</sup> shows in his study of the planning and creation of Etruscan and Roman cities the central role played by ancient and rich rites; the ploughing of a furrow to mark where the city walls were to be; the raising of the plough as it crossed the point where the city gates were to take place; the sacredness of this furrow and later of the wall itself (transgressions such as jumping

<sup>1</sup>Georg Simmel, *Die Grossstädte und das Geistesleben*, Dresden 1903, also Wolff, Kurt, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, Glencoe (The Free Press, 1950).

<sup>2</sup>Max Weber, *The City*, translated and edited by Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth (The Free Press, New York, and Collier-McMillan Ltd, London, 1958).

<sup>3</sup>Louis Wirth, *Urbanism as a Way of Life* (American Journal of Sociology, Vol. XLIV, 1938), pp. 1-24.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Rykwert, 'The Idea of a Town', from *Lectura Architectonica*, pub. by G. van Saane, Hilversum (distributors in the U.K., St George's Gallery, London, 1963).

over the furrow or the wall were often punished by death); the connexion with fertility rites involving both animal and human sacrifice; the symbolism of mazes and the cosmological ideas in the layout of the main streets, and the main religious and social centres in the city. All these are vital expressions of a permanent relationship to nature, as represented both by the universe and by the country outside the walls. The four elements he traces are:

- '(i) The acting out of the founding of any settlement (or temple, maybe even a mere house) as a dramatic show of the creation of the world;
- (ii) the incarnation of that drama in the plan of the settlement as well as in its social and religious institution;
- (iii) the achieving of this second aim by the alignment of its axes with those of the universe; and finally
- (iv) the rehearsal of the foundation cosmogony in regular recurrent festivals and its commemorative embodiment in the monuments of the settlement.'

' . . . Such a powerful complex must have roots in the actual biological structure of man, and it must receive support in the formal movement of natural recurrence: day and night, the phases of the moon, the seasons, the changes of the night sky.' He goes on to say that urban life in a sense is 'a parasitical form of existence, a form of social disease'. It is against these dangers that in classical and prehistoric times the symbols of the town itself were used for healing and continuous reconciliation, 'male with female, supernal with infernal gods, town and country, people and land'. We have lost the beautiful certainty which these cosmologies and the associated city plans represented but we now have to look for the order and centres of certainty 'inside ourselves'. This is perhaps where he and the social theorists meet, for, instead of the certainties of the early cosmologies and later the certainties of sciences which are now dissolving all around us, their theories are trying to give us new certainties related to social interaction—that is, a new science. It is worth speculating whether the concrete forms of the city fabric are not in fact the means whereby the transition is shown from cosmology and natural science to social science.

One may easily see in the layout of cities and buildings constant reference to these universal phenomena. Sun worship in its many and varied forms; the placing of openings in city walls and in buildings to admit shafts of sunlight at critical times and on to critical spots; the treatment of hills and mountains as sacred platforms for the living or the dead; these are all part of the nature/cosmology/form complex. What is less obvious but nevertheless clear on examination is that using post-industrial, social and technological objectives as vehicles, similar form-controlling myths survive. For instance throughout North-Western Europe, national and regional codes and building regulations prescribe minimum amounts of sunshine

penetration into houses, carefully explained by means of angles and orientations. We do not have to look much further than the advertising of food, drink, tobacco, travel and sex to see how near to the surface sun worship and symbolism is in our daily life. The question to be answered by research and forward planning is whether these symbols are still potent and whether they can be meaningfully expressed in new languages and new forms appropriate to the post-industrial city.

The idea of creating geometrically coherent, ideal city forms has persisted from Roman time; medieval 'heavenly Jerusalem' representations; the thirteenth-century 'bastide' towns; the Renaissance star-shaped ideal forms of Alberti, Leonardo and others; the great Baroque palace cities such as Karlsruhe; the eighteenth-century circle, grid and star patterns of Ledoux and Boullée. Today, Corbusier's 'ville radieuse' and Doxiadis's linear city simply carry on the Platonic pattern-making which, mercifully, society can no longer tackle for lack of resources. Ebenezer Howard's and Patrick Geddes's garden city concept is a deliberate breakaway from this formalism—an English pragmatic approach to planning, which has not only influenced the post-war New Towns but is now being applied in sub-urban planning.

### *Territory in Space*

Parallel with the ecological studies from the school of sociology based on Chicago, and the cosmological studies, have been more recent social and psychological studies of the spatial behaviour of individuals in small groups. They have drawn on the territorial concepts of zoologists, on psychological studies of conflict and aggression, and more recently on artistic notions of space. Certain commonalities appear. First that form, space or territory as a symbol for self-identity, power, status, or belonging to a group, are fundamental to personal and social behaviour. The fact that the Paris/Vietnam peace negotiators spent the first year on detailed arguments about the shape of the conference table and the layout of the participants' seating around it is no accident. The literature is full of similar case histories, in Houses of Parliament, committee rooms, lecture rooms and so on. Studies by Sommer<sup>1</sup> and Hall<sup>2</sup> have shown that the territory around a patient's hospital bed, around the house, around the seat by a library table, and in terms of allocation of rooms to teachers in schools, can fundamentally affect social relationships and satisfaction. Festinger<sup>3</sup> and others have shown that spatial propinquity affects social networks, choice of marriage partners, and

<sup>1</sup>Robert Sommer, *Personal Space; the Behavioural Basis of Design* (Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey, 1969).

<sup>2</sup>E. T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1959).

<sup>3</sup>L. Festinger, S. Schachter and K. Back, *Social Pressures in Informal Groups; a Study of Human Factors in Housing* (Stanford University Press, California, 1950, and Tavistock Publications, London, 1963).

the development of group cohesion. Clearly even with rapid and radical changes in communication techniques proximity will largely affect with whom, and how frequently, potential contact exists and actual relationships develop. If it is possible, as Wells<sup>1</sup> has shown, for an office clerk sitting in the corner of a large open office to become a social isolate compared to her friend sitting in the centre—and this is in the most advanced management and communication structure of a modern insurance company—then it is certainly possible for a sub-group in a densely built-up urban housing area to become a ghetto; in fact definition of ghetto mentality has been put forward in just such terms by Buttimer.<sup>2</sup> In the city ghetto the various contacts for work, leisure, family and service support can all be shown to be similar and to be relatively densely concentrated within or immediately around the area itself. Socially this might look like the structure of a village community; but whereas the village community is self-sufficient in the open country the ghetto community erects deliberate social and sometimes corresponding physical barriers against similar communities all around it. The mentality within it is likely to be defensive, hostile, suspicious of newcomers and change, and introverted. Buttimer poses an opposite picture of the 'city dweller' whose contacts for each functional purpose are different and this variation is spread over a large part of the city and even to other regions outside it. Such a dweller uses to the full the information flow coming in; he is adaptable and likely to be receptive to change.

Some social theorists today would deny the importance of physical structure in affecting social structure. At best, they say, the physical structure is a direct outcome or physical expression of the underlying social pattern. Physical determinists amongst planners and architects, on the other hand, see the physical structure as causal and if not determining, at least strongly influencing, the social structure. What both appear to miss is that the interaction between built form and city structure on the one hand and social structure on the other, is a totally dynamic interdependent one in which causality has little meaning. The kind of homeostasis reached at any moment in time is much more like that in the biological organism.

Gutkind<sup>3</sup> sees three main types of change to account for city development. The first dimension is the change from an I-thou relationship to an I-it relationship between the elements of the city and the surrounding territory, and he traces his examples from the primitive hut settlement through the Roman and medieval town,

<sup>1</sup>B. W. P. Wells, 'Influence of Office size on the Individual and on Supervisory and Managerial Processes' in *Office Design; a Study of Environment*, ed. Peter Manning (Department of Building Science, University of Liverpool, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>A. Buttimer, 'Social Space in Interdisciplinary Perspective', *Geographical Review*, 1969, Vol. LIX, p. 147. 'Social Geography', p. 134 of the *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 1968.

<sup>3</sup>E. A. Gutkind, 'Urban Development in Central Europe', Vol. 1 of *International History of City Development* (The Free Press of Glencoe and Collier-McMillan Ltd, London, 1964).



the industrial city to the post-industrial suburb. The second dimension goes through motivation of fear, defence, confidence, aggression, understanding, and ultimately to responsibility. The third dimension simply relates to scale and, like Wirth, he sees the ever increasing size and scale of cities as an independent dimension of change, related not only to functional and economic pressures but also to changing notions of science and of the universe.

Today, in terms of space, we are faced with increasing city size but decrease in density as a result of which the territory occupied is growing as some exponential function of size and the territory left between cities is rapidly being taken over for city growth. Coupled with this are the recurring waves of occupancy of city centre peripheral areas by the socially disadvantaged groups which generally, as a result of their move into these areas, are depressed even further. Those outside the central areas are living in more or less anonymous and uniform suburbs with increases in spatial separation. Within those communities, because increasingly sophisticated domestic mechanisms are making households more and more self-sufficient, they become independent of services or other households for daily life. With television, telephone, deep freeze, and all the necessary washing and laundering services within the house, face to face contact with the outside world is reduced to a minimum. Although vast tracts of countryside are disappearing, the mechanization of agriculture, needing an ever decreasing labour force, is able to compensate by more intensive use of the remaining cultivated land. Ehrlich<sup>1</sup> has shown that this process cannot go on indefinitely and that population growth coupled to city growth will result in an ecological catastrophe.

### *Participation in Design*

In a family, environmental design is a communal activity, and interwoven with the web of family life. Changing the kitchen wallpaper, selecting curtains, changing the sitting-room seating arrangement are all (small) pieces of environmental design; planning decisions. Executing the decisions by 'do-it-yourself' are small pieces of construction or engineering. Communities much larger than families in the past designed and re-designed their environment and carried out appropriate construction—tribes, city-states, encamped nomads. As design and construction became more complex special designers and constructors emerged. Professionals, working for prince, Pope, Bishop or civic authority. Pressures for democratic control are now frequently seen as pressures for re-gaining control over environmental decisions and their execution; and, with it, the demand to remove from central bureaucracy the resources needed

<sup>1</sup>Paul R. Ehrlich and H. Anne, *Population, Resources, Environment; Issues in Human Ecology* (W. H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco, 1970).

and to control them at the level of the 'suffering' organization—hospital, school, housing area.

Post-industrial technology in mass production, communications and computer control may enable us to return to the more primitive state; with professionals who are no longer value judges, aesthetic dictators or élite visionaries, but mid-wives, who bring forth forms which are conceived, and already latent, in the pattern of values and relationships of their parent communities.

### *What Next?*

The questions which I would like to open up for discussion are these:

1. Do personal experiences of city life indicate the degree of self-fulfilment and richness that many of today's artists express? Is there perhaps an indication that some evolutionary change in social behaviour has occurred, almost as a step function in the last 100 years, which now makes cities vital for spiritual survival?
2. Do the sub-cultures of gangs, alcoholics, drug addicts, petty criminals and sexual deviationists find the city a therapeutic medium or does a city help to generate them?
3. About one half of the city population is likely to remain, for many years yet, incapable of using the communications and services the city offers because of physical immobility. These are the elderly, the young children under eleven, the mothers of such children and the physically and mentally disabled. Some of these, unless catered for by special services, become so isolated as to become socially and psychologically ill and frequently physical illness is highly correlated. What form of planning will allow this vast segment of the community to lead more human lives?
4. Participatory design and advocacy planning have become catch phrases; the reality behind them is a mockery or a political joke of the most cruel kind. Is making design decisions part and parcel of human nature? At each level of design there are corresponding levels in a social hierarchy whose interests are served or denied. Is it possible to devise a political framework within which groups at every level are given the maximum freedom over design and control of their environment and with it the necessary economic resources to achieve it? The giving away of this degree of political power would involve a serious diminution of bureaucratic power and can be expected to be resisted from all levels, from the national down to the municipal borough.
5. What political response should we expect, from those defending freedom, to the challenge of increasing urbanization?
6. Can developing countries skip an evolutionary stage, and achieve high technological status without the process of massive urbanization? Already new industries are creating de-centralized, almost rural, patterns (e.g., the electronics industries based on MIT

graduate brainpower spread through the New England countryside along Route 128).

7. Are territorial and behavioural studies on animals a guide to predicting the effects of density, crowding, conflict?

## **The City: Agora and Underground, Camouflage and Masks**

by Adrian Edwards, C.S.Sp.

Professor Markus seems to be concerned with the city as symbol and as organization. What does the city now mean, and how does it and might it function? These two questions are very closely related; even a purely technical system will, if it functions, have various significant impacts on the aesthetic and ethical levels. And if a symbolic system really involves efficacious symbols these will at some point cur into the world of allocations and preferences. If his questions 3 and 4 were to be answered as he would seem to wish, we would be at the same time well on the way to answering 1 and 2. The really efficient city where rights and duties were clearly mapped would be therapeutic and liberating. I think again he doesn't see this therapeutic role of the city as something static—rather as being more like a group psycho-therapy where recovery and discovery are both part of the programme.

I think though that we must start distinguishing; there is man's activity carried out under the sign of the city, and that carried out as man the tool-maker, if you like man the world changer. The city expressed in the agora, a community of citizens functioning as a juridical and political unit, is essentially a Mediterranean institution; of course, there were cities elsewhere, among the Arabs, in India or China, and for that matter in pre-colonial black Africa. But these lacked the characteristic patterns of the city-state, centring round the concept of a body of citizens with specific rights and duties constituting the polis. Despite the claim of Massignon, the Arab cities had no real system of guilds; the Hindu cities had activity which may be called political within the various quarters, but there were no overall civic democracies, or oligarchies, nor did the Chinese city have any greater degree of civic personality. However, China did have to offer a highly developed pattern of integrated thought and action, which was highly relevant to urban living. China did attempt, as I shall argue later on, to integrate the man-made, particularly