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The Context for Urban Life

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The Mind of the City - The Context for Urban Life -

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ABSTRACT

The "Mind of the City" looks at the histories and functions of the city, in a diversity of ways, with the purpose of finding alternative solutions to the current perplexities about cities and health.

Cities have histories which reflect the value systems that are dominant in the culture. They are whole "organisms" which should meet the total needs of people through their developmental life cycles and whenever crises appear. In recent years they have become more and more fragmented with business functions superseding those of "normal life".

Models for the future demand new patterns of governance in which heterogeneous populations, not only have a say in their own future, but where the city is capable of responding to the diverse needs. Programs such as the World Health Organization's "Healthy Cities" program and the "Kid's Place" in Seattle are examples of new approaches.

Encouraging diversity, aiming for redundancy and efficacy rather than efficiency by bringing together our skills in a multidisciplinary, ecological and systems oriented way.

Health can not be looked at as purely medical care, but rather as a complex interaction of environmental processes that through policy, and avoidance, affect the lives of its citizens. To achieve health requires a concerted effort on dealing with the totality of urban existence, which more and more is human made, and thus through social and physical environmental factors impinge on individuals, families and communities.

Ultimately, it is how we think of ourselves and our cities, "the mind of the city", is what determines the environment and the lives of its people.

L'image d'une ville et son impact sur la vie urbaine

Le présent article étudie, sous divers aspects, l'histoire et les fonctions des villes dans le but de trouver de nouvelles solutions aux problèmes complexes d'urbanisme et de santé auxquels les villes font face.

L'histoire des villes est le reflet des systèmes de valeur qui prédominent à un certain moment dans notre culture. Les villes sont des "organismes" qui devraient répondre à tous les besoins de la population durant les différents cycles de développement et lorsqu'une crise se produit. Au cours des dernières années, le développement des villes est devenu de moins en moins uniforme à cause de l'importance accrue accordée au monde des affaires au détriment de la qualité de vie de la population.

Pour l'avenir, on doit proposer de nouveaux systèmes de direction qui permettront non seulement à la population d'émettre son opinion mais aussi aux villes de répondre aux multiples besoins des citoyens. Des programmes semblables à "Healthy Cities" et à "Kid's Place" à Seattle conçus par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé sont des exemples parfaits à imiter.

Il faut promouvoir la diversité, l'efficacité au lieu du rendement, malgré le surplus de personnel que cela peut engendrer, en unissant les compétences de la population dans les domaines multidisciplinaires, écologiques et de l'informatique.

La santé ne dépend pas seulement des soins médicaux, mais aussi des interactions entre les processus environnementaux qui, en raison de certaines règles et mesures de prévention, touchent la vie des citoyens. Par conséquent, il faut concentrer tous nos efforts pour s'occuper des multiples problèmes associés à la vie urbaine qui sont de plus en plus créés par l'homme et ainsi, à l'aide de facteurs sociaux, physiques et environnementaux, améliorer la santé et la vie de l'ensemble de la population.

En fait, l'environnement et la vie de la population dépendent de l'image que nous avons de nous et de notre ville.

INTRODUCTION

I am thankful to Ken Wilber[1] in his book, *The Spectrum of Consciousness*, for using a metaphor borrowed from our understanding of the physical world. Specifically, he shows how all studies are an attempt to cope with reality, are but different slices in a spectrum, each correct for its reality, yet none knowing the whole. Each is sure, without experiencing them, that the other is "untrue".

I have believed for a long time and attempted in *The Urban Condition*[2] to show the city as an ecological whole, and health as inseparable from the totality of the person, and the broadest contexts within which they exist. As with pre-quantum physics, reality measured in a dualistic fragmented way can not and does not, in most representations of either health or urbanization, see the whole. It allows itself, at the most, to be preoccupied with a complex sum of the parts, and calls the idea of the whole both "fuzzy" because it is unmeasurable, and "untrue" because it does not meet the test for even the various realities that it believes it knows. As Wilber and many others clearly point out, there are two ways of knowing: analysis of the pieces and parts, and intuitive imbedding oneself with the totality of experience in a "carnal" way.

Views of cities reflect the orientation and perception of the viewer and their surrounding culture which predetermines what is "seen". In each of the books on cities referred to in this paper, we see these phenomena, with one standing out more clearly than the others in its ability to see the fullest possible spectrum of the urbanized world.

Admittedly, I often mistakenly call the city an organism, for organisms are a particular cut into reality, which have boundaries, with thing and measurable pieces that make up its whole. Yet it is partly an apt metaphor, which I shall return to. More recently, borrowing from Bateson's definition,[3] that "the map is not the territory", I see the city first as a symbolic representation of the territory. Thus, for most of us the city is a physical or geographic map, yet one which leaves out what the total territory is. Thus, New York is not a transit map, useful as one is. Nor is it an economic map, one of many different ones in current usage.

What is true of New York is true of every burgeoning urban area in the world, Asia, Africa or Latin America, as well as the existing western cities. The most used map is the economic one, reflecting the concerns of modern business which focuses on profit, losses and most specifically money. The economists rule the roots, using western models of analysis to balance budgets, determine development, encourage communication, and deal with the myriad of issues that exist in their economic reality.

Despite all the "scientific" attention given to this mode of "seeing", this is not the city most of us know in our daily life. Sadly, despite that the majority of us are urbanites, the city is more than the sum of its measurable parts. Increasingly, we live and work in a cut of reality that ignores that which we do not wish to see.

How many times do we take the suburbanites to the city ignoring the slums through which the transport system passes, or use the television report of these other worlds as an inquisitive, yet momentary look at a strange culture, which we turn off to return to our own? How pleased we become when China, long strange and foreign, takes on our consumerism and the things we know best --- hotel chains, packaged food and travel tour which twists their reality into what we want to see. Shanghai becomes New York or San Francisco, as has Hong Kong, Singapore and many more foreign cities.

This phenomenon is usually true of the city we each live in, for it is easy to demonstrate how little we know about the whole of our surrounds. Consider the university student who doesn't know the library which is only three blocks away; or the unknown and "superfluous" people who only become real when they impinge upon our lives, such as South African Blacks and other Africans.

My argument is that they are all "real". They are aspects of the whole, of which we are they. In the old Buddhist story, the carp in the pond exist with the plants in the water. It is easy to see that for the carp, both the water and plants, and indeed all else are the carp. They are inseparable and make the whole.

Thus in viewing the city, all is the city including the observers. Books on the city therefore are of several kinds and levels; the piece cutters, the expanders, and those tending toward holism, which is impossible to achieve. No matter what discipline, economist, humanist, city planner, architect, educator, artist or health professional, each is subject to the same question, "What do they really see or know, and can they expand from a well studied piece to know more of the whole"? Each is needed, but is it the whole story?

I came to the word "story", for what is often presented to us is meaningless unless there is a story to be told. Story tellers, at least the good ones are able to bring all the issues together, allowing the hearer to take from it what they can. How often does the same story tell us different things at different readings. As we develop more we see the "same" thing differently.

Stories, then are our way of putting together the "data" and other information we have. Economists, with all their hard data still need to convert their findings into something people will hear. When we tell a story, then we create the context educating the hearer, so that they hear what we wish to communicate in the proper way. The advantage that economists have, is

that our current culture has made the world of business, commerce and money so central to our perceptions of reality that we accept their views and deny what we choose not to see.

As what stories we are told bring more and more contradictions with our other experiences we find ourselves questioning the reality in current currency. We look for other perceptions of reality, and try to integrate them with our own, though it is hard for the best of us to change, constant exposure to contradictions in presented stories may force us to change. Such is the nature of the city today, full of confusions, contradictions, pain, and inability to put the pieces together. It is important therefore to create a new story. I will try to do so, drawing both on my own experience and upon a group of books that may be of some help, in doing so.

HISTORICAL PROCESSES

We have seen that the shape, form and the preoccupation of cities over time, are reflections of the particular or dominant cultures that exist. Throughout the world, cities deeply reflect the values and attitudes of their society. At their origins, what occurred were local phenomena, but increasingly cities show both the signs of the dominant world wide values and beliefs, and their own uniqueness.

In the past, the cities of the world were relatively homogeneous, made up of people holding common views and beliefs, or forced to do so by the dominant culture. Having such a common view, with common values leads to the acceptance of the overriding "performance specifications" for the community, allowing for individual differences in each sub-community, family or individual.

With the changes in the last century the world has, through increased forced or voluntary mobility, lead to a mixing of cultures, though rarely yielding to a true homogeneity or a "melting pot". Rather we increasingly see fragmented, almost tribal groups living together in the same urban spaces, but in different worlds. Though they often try to keep separate, maintaining their own identities, conflict arises between them when questions about the use of resources requires allocations to one group or another. When resources appear to be in short supply, competition gets greater. When various groups can not communicate because of differing values and "language", conflict, confusion and a variety of tensions arise, sometimes leading to terrorism, self destruction via drugs or other forms of "guerrilla warfare".

Understanding a city requires that we know both its history, and that of the variety of groups that make up the total population. It is apparently easy to find "simple" answers. Though the simplicity is beguiling, it

often does little more than deal with the superficial.

Our world, with what appears to be the current dominant values needs few people. People have become superfluous. More often it is the unskilled that are so easily replaceable. However, increasingly even top leaders can "easily" be substituted with a "carbon" copy.

How then, in diverse society can we find some coherence of values? How can we find ways that diverse populations, with differing cultures and differing levels of development, personal and social, live within the same city, working together for the common "good", and still support and encourage diversity? The governance of diversity of cultures, beliefs, and uniqueness raises critical questions for the next quarter century. It is this overarching set of beliefs for the common good, that is the "mind of the city".

Our concern in this paper with "other" cultures, their cities and an image of a "healthy city" is an attempt to find a way to answer these questions.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE CONTEXT

Cities have various forces working on their development. Unique geography, and climate is seen in mountain cities, those along rivers, ports, in cold and wet climates, near deserts, or whatever. Gutkind's classic work *Our World From The Air*[4] pictorially portrays both the effect of the geography and the changing patterns of habitations worldwide. He makes it very clear that, "The gradual transformations of the landscape are a reflection of man's changing attitude towards his environment and of the growing domination over Nature which enables him to adapt his surroundings to new economic and social conditions."

Gutkind's further suggests that the stages in the changing attitude to the environment, are self defense, regulated somewhat rational or intuitive interference, and a determined conquest of nature. These always occur preceded by, and accompanied by mental and spiritual impulses. New values are sensed, then adopted and eventually accomplished. What results is a human-made environment, reflecting the inner transformation of the mind.

Martyn Webb[5] has suggested that in the western world cities reflect, in large part Greek, Judaic and Christian religious belief systems. One could combine this concept with Gutkind's, to say that cities are always reflections of the beliefs, values, and rules explicit and implicit that govern the behaviour of the dominant people in the community.

Greek city states were total societies ruled by a variety of belief systems. Each was unique unto itself. Each governed by a common "mind". The organization of the community met the totality of the needs of the

people, as perceived by the dominant value system. Though there were temples, there were also treasuries, trade centers, living quarters, play areas and much more.[6]

Early Judaic beliefs denied all cities, save Jerusalem. To them cities were the place of harlots. The regard for the holy city, is primarily its holiness, the site of the temple.[7] Post-Jesus Christianity, with its changes under the leadership of Paul,[8] gave up the semitic non-urban tradition of the Jews, taking on beliefs of the Greeks, to find favor with Rome. Ultimately to fulfill this policy direction, Constantine concretized a close relationship of church and state. With the emerging trade world centered around cities, the Church, through the Pope in Rome served as the social infrastructure for the emerging commercial empires of the major cities, such as Venice and Genoa.

The Moslem world, also reflecting their religious beliefs shows the importance, at least in the Middle East, of Mohammed being driven out of the city. Those who were wanderers on the desert had caravans, and those that urbanized developed full communities around the mosque. The fullness of the communities reflect the importance of daily life in the Moslem belief system, for almost all communities seemed to encourage not only business, but the aesthetic, human qualities of human life.[9]

One is struck elsewhere by the temple as the center of life. In Thailand there are communities where the Buddhist priest and temple served to organize the totality of the community, including, most recently the water supply, storage of rice and function as the central meeting hall.

In Sri Lanka, the Saravodaya movement has developed, over the years, a resurgence of community, by using Buddhist practice as the organizing concept for community self help.[10] In over 6500 communities a comprehensive development program guided by dharma practices has created integrated and connected communities that meet the multiplicity of human needs. Meditating regularly during each day assist in finding a common set of goals for the people.

Elsewhere there are similar attempts. Communes and intentional communities based upon religious or political-philosophical values have at times been successful in the same way.

THE PROBLEM

It is interesting that the power of the church, cathedral, mosque or temple created around it concerns with health, social services, education and the poor. These interests created the massive human and social programs which exist in greater or lesser forms in every

culture. Some, such as the Mormons integrate these into the business of the church.

Though these were begun as extensions of the church, the industrial business and trade interests found that these functions should be taken over by the state. For many countries it became central to the overall goals of the state. In others the political philosophy negated the church, but nevertheless further developed these areas of concern.

To have them run as extensions of business, was both costly, and an apparent misdirection of energies, needed for their prime focus. To be a function of the state was a convenient way to redirect the costs and energies to others. We, in the western countries are increasingly in the midst of taking these functions away from the state. By not turning to the business community to assume it, suggests a further denial of social responsibility. By asking the people who are the least capable of assuming it, to be responsible for these functions.

The community thus becomes fragmented in function. A hierarchy develops in which, that which is important to those in power, becomes the most important priority in development. "Development is the only game in town", is the finding of Lisa Peattie, Martin Rein et al in a New England community.[11] This type of priority setting often distorts and misdevelops both the physical and geographic community. More important it interferes with social and community interactions, as well. Politics, and all the activities of human behaviour assume a new form.

One of the outcomes of the development strategy is the attempt to improve the physical infrastructure, primarily, by assisting economic developmental ends. Though this is needed by the world, to develop it within the "development" model in the Third World and in our own, it appears as further exploitation and domination by the economically powerful. To ignore the need for the "soft infrastructure" of values, beliefs and a common "mind", is to ignore the basic needs of the community.

BACK TO BASICS

In order to see what is needed, it is important for us to return to the earlier origins of the city. One can easily speculate that the earliest gathering of people was an attempt to find security, and a protection against a hostile world. It meant creating ways of being, that controlled the impact of the environment upon their lives. It included protection first against nature, the climate, the predators and ultimately hostile people.[12]

How this process occurred suggests the importance of the contextual issues of the natural environment. Where these issues were originally environmental,

they now are economically and militarily directed. The dangers, real or supposed causes priorities to be set, which led in the past to fortress cities that could be defended.

The change that took place, when humans in their search for security began to control their environment, meant an important change in their behaviour. One can easily speculate that in those earliest of times humans were inseparable from their environment, much in the way the foetus is in relationship to the mother in the womb. This inseparableness meant that the communication that existed between person and environment was on every level imaginable. Though assumable there was a form of talk, the subtle messages of the senses were equally important.

In modern psychological language, it was the right brain, the feeling, emotional, intuitive functions that predominated. Living in a state of being where analytic functions were minimal, and what we call modern scientific understanding did not exist, what we call knowing was vastly different from what we know. The mysteries and awe that exists in such states led to the need for an understanding of the relationship of the human to the larger environment.

What became religion was guided over by priests or shamans who mediated between humans and the awesome unknown. To even understand the awesome ecstatic states brought on by starvation, social isolation and drowning required guides. As time passed we were left with remnants of these actions, which we know of today as fasting, meditation and baptism.[13] What took place in the natural environment soon needed a physical place, and the temple, church, mosque or other holy gathering spot was created.

It was through the varied religions that were created in different geographic and climatic environments, that not only guided individual and social behaviour, but created the environments that people lived within.

For a long time these communities were, in relationship to the surrounding nature, small dots in the landscape. Thus what was dealt with in the communities unsuccessfully could depend upon the natural world to make up the lack, or to correct the errors. The community existed within a natural environment which was both hostile and protected against, and one which was healing and restorative.

We can speculate that the healing nature of the natural environment, when coupled with the awesome quality of the unknown, forced the religious preoccupations with human development and of health and healing. Urie Bronfenbrenner in his work on human development and ecology shows how currently the environment in all its manifestations directly impinges upon every step in our developmental growth.[14]

To understand the religious origins and nature of cities one must understand not only the overt practices

but the deeper spiritual ones as well. As one enters into this world it is clear what the covert and implied beliefs and values are. Out of the earliest of religious development comes our "understanding" of the non-scientific unknown. For, it is clear that with all our knowledge, there is much that we do not know. These stay within the realms of the spiritual. Who we are as humans, what our relationship is to the universe around, and the very meaning of existence stay unanswered.

The vast delving into the unknown through science and philosophy has resulted in the major advances of the last centuries. They are indeed immense achievements which have prolonged life, reduced pain, and allowed for the technological developments we now see in our communities. They are the formal fabric of the community. They make up the environment of the human-made community, leaving nature to fend for itself. Thus in our day by day behaviour we focus upon the effects of the products of our knowledge, ignoring what we do not know which nevertheless is so vitally important that it impinges upon us silently in a myriad of ways.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

As the commercial and business functions began to dominate in the 18th century, most obviously in the west, the religious origins of the city became of secondary importance, leaving however a deep and lasting imprint on the landscape and processes by which the society operates. Slowly through science the unanswered questions were delved into. Psychology and the other social sciences, as well as biology began to deal with human behaviour.

Great inroads of understanding have occurred. Yet these sciences, along with the technological ones, are reflections of the dominant culture. They too reflect the economic nature of our societies, and ignore the still unknown areas with the many unanswered questions about life itself. They still remain within the realm of the spiritual, since religions, as we saw with early Christianity, tend to modify and change themselves to reflect the values of the dominant culture, now economically oriented. Certainly Protestant and certainly Calvinist religions became adapted to the needs of the business and economic community.

It is no accident that as cities throughout the world westernize, and thus commercialize, their new cathedrals become the loftily towers of the business world and their political companions. The cities become the handmaiden of the automobile, and the vast increase of "things" for sale.

That these achievements are attractive to all people of the globe is easy to see. They demand the

advances of our technological achievements. In their yearning for the consumerism created by our technology they tend to give up things that they have "known" until recently. With this emphasis on things, there is still the unanswered needs of our forebears, which go unrecognized.

We turn then to a need for excitement, passive participatory amusement, and the need to love via other's experience. Disneyland, skydiving, experiential weekends, climbing of peaks and drugs return us to the more primitive connection with the unknown. The current search for spirituality, and the turn towards religion in many groups, are attempts to get away from the almost 100% human created environment to find answers in the scientific unknown. Even some scientific research has this quality. All these get reflected in the cities we are currently living with.

My argument here is not for spirituality or religion *per se*, but for what they can potentially offer, in direction, to those of us who are urbanized souls. What I am suggesting quite strongly is that the cities of the west, and those influenced by us have given up something tremendously important.

ARE THERE SOLUTIONS?

The city, in its earlier meanings had many function that were integrated into a whole belief system and cosmology. That we live in a fragmented world where we are concerned only with simplistic pieces, complex in form, but disconnected from all else in our universe, means we pay a price. An old Sufi concern was with "reciprocal maintenance", which recognizes that we must care for all that cares for us, people, and environment. To do so demands concern on the broadest levels of human life. It means asking not just the scientific questions, but the ethical, philosophical and spiritual ones which can make us whole again.

Health, healing, holy, whole,[15] words with a common base suggest the need for something very important, in our urbanized world. Fortunately there are some concerned with these broader issues, either upon a local or a wider scale. They exist in the experiments and programs that go unreported, but are part of the search for solutions.

It is for this reason we must turn, not only to psychological and social studies of cities in our own culture, but to the many aspects of life which can lead to a better urban experience.

For the west during the past decades there has been an endless fascination with other cultures, religions and belief systems. In fact, following the experience with mind opening drugs in the 60's there has been a search for insights from "gurus" from these other cultures. Some have been mind boggling, and

have lead to new insight about the operation of the mind.

The current concerns with the "right" brain, and the tremendously important new field of neuro-psycho-immunology has gotten a big boost from these insights. Neuro-psycho-immunology is the study of the relationship of the external environment, particular states of consciousness and experience upon the chemicals of the body, leading to changes in our immune system, our getting sick and our ability to get and stay well.

At the same time the rising power, or what we like to call the "Third World", is forcing into our western consciousness, what seems to us, new values, ways to perceive, sense, react and know about what exists. The increasing cosmopolitanization of our cities brings strange faces and points of view to daily occurrences, and shocks to the western mind and perceptual apparatus. Too often these experiences are frightening.

These other world views require looking into by westerners, not as anthropological studies but as the elements of the human environment that are going to change our ways of being.

ARABIC-ISLAMIC CITIES

First I'd like to turn to the Muslim world. I do so, remembering a friend's quote, "There are only two growing religions in the world, those of the consumer and the Muslims!" When one looks at Muslim urbanization one finds a deep concern with wholeness.

Though their modern cities have become westernized, with a strong flavor of consumerism, the concerns with education and mutual welfare remain. That the Koran forbids usury, and the charging of interest suggest that there may not be the necessity for profit to be the guiding light to action.

Hakim[16] in his book on Arabic-Islamic cities underscores many of the points previously made. The basic guidelines and principles of building and urban development in the Moslem world date back to "1 AH or 622 AD when the Prophet Mohammed settled in Median." He shows how the principles paralleled the development of Islamic law. Interestingly they arose out of the disputes between neighbors and gradually set precedent for more comprehensive law. Through years of interpretation and reinterpretation the body of existing law and practice developed.

Not being an Islamic or Muslim scholar, I leave to others to comment upon the religious aspects of these developments. Hakim focuses upon Tunis where the Maliki school of law held sway. In his illustration he shows how the broad religiously inspired laws served as performance specification for the masons and others involved in building of the city and the creation

of urban life as it was known and passed down to the present.

Macro decisions by the rulers, based on religious beliefs, created the "planned" effect of the city. The citizen's micro decisions in aggregate, ultimately effected the lives of the people themselves. It is important, Hakim states, not to ignore the micro interpretations of the "planner-rulers", or else we can not understand either the theory and practice of architecture and implied urban planning.

Some of the principles that he elucidates include: not doing harm to others; interdependence or what I previously noted as reciprocal maintenance or a systems-ecological approach; physical, visual and communications privacy; the rights of earlier usage; the extended use of air space; the respect of other's property and its' value; preemption or the right to buy neighboring property if put on the market; the seven cubit width and height of a street which is the size of two loaded camels; the non-obstruction of any public thoroughfare; the sharing of water, and thus public drinking fountains; and unpleasant noises and smells including market places could not be near mosques.

These were supplemented by values of cleanliness, public awareness and responsibilities, beauty without arrogance, trust and respect among neighbors, and the announcement of defects when selling property. Of all these, to do no harm was the most quoted rule.

He goes on to show numerous examples of using these principles in actual urban situations, supplementing these with legal interpretations. What emerges from all these examples is a reverence for the multi-leveled complex society and the meeting of its multiplicity of needs. When one also looks at the air-views in his book and in Gutkind[17] one is struck by the awesome beauty of the relationships that create a work of art. We thus have a physical urban representation of a society that does not put business and economics as its central goal.

We should not, and Hakim does not, ignore inequalities since he shows how sweet water goes to those populations of higher status, and the poorer quality to other less preferred groups. All in all, Hakim's work is relevant not only to the Arabic-Islamic planners and urban developers, but to others interested in the values, multiple needs, and complex relationships involved in all planning.

I am reminded of Amos Gitai's study of the Jews put in the ghetto of Venice, turning to the Torah and Talmud of their non-urban religion for guidance as to how to live. Out of this arose rules and regulations which today are the familiar housing codes of the city planners.[18]

ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Krupat, as an environmental psychologist, in *People In Cities*[19] begins his book by stating that, "The city is the ultimate creation of the human mind." He concerns himself with the urban experience, how people cope and adapt and who thrives and who doesn't.

Krupat points to the multiple and contrasting realities of the city. Thus in contrast to Hakim, Krupat suggests that cities are made up of a wide variety of people with differing values, perceptions and beliefs. He focuses primarily thereafter on the environmental-psychological issues.

Yet for me these differences are often in conflict, both overtly and as implicit disagreements which never get expressed and thus cause great difficulty both on the governing levels and in the citizens. I am forced therefore, to see the modern city as a place where the governance of heterogeneous groups becomes a central problem. By what means, do differing cultures work together? Or must we live with a tribal situation where each is on their own, and there is no over-riding city but rather a collection of villages.

To return to Krupat is to return to a clear and scientific analysis of the urban scene. He looks at the various levels of the city, from the real physical to the particular meaning each object has within it. He shows how we each, at different levels of meaning have different maps of the city. Many are very subjective and thus hold little meaning to others. As Bateson stated,[20] "the map is not the territory". How then, Krupat asks do we integrate the varied maps into a comprehensive understanding?

Krupat sees the environment as encouraging certain possibilities, rather than precisely predetermining behaviour. He sees the boundary between person and context as a dynamic, non-separable phenomena that one could call "social learning".[21] Thus "good" and "bad" are relative terms. What is required is a fit between differing people and their environmental needs.

People for Krupat are part of networks of relationships, involved in a system of systems, making demands and having responses in a never ending process. He sees the city as full of contradictions, where both the positive and negative coexist. One might add that many views of the city, such as the garden city movement and the utopians are relatively static, with a hope that if a particular goal is attained then all will be well.[22] In contrast I, and I believe Krupat, would be more interested in the processes by which change occurs rather than the end itself. Governance of differences again must be stated as my priority for understanding cities.

For those concerned with either the changing of cities, or aiding those who live in them, Krupat's broad ranging analysis and review of various viewpoints of

others is of critical importance. His multi-leveled view serves us well as we move away from homogeneous urban centers to heterogeneous conurbations and megalopolises. Their complexity forces us to look at a variety of ways to intervene.

NETWORKS FOR MUTUAL AID

Pilisuk and Parks in the *The Healing Web*,[23] focus upon the social connections of individuals. They demonstrate, through a careful review of all the literature, how networks of support both heal and create illness in those who are disconnected and isolated.

Concern with caring, friendship and mutual aid begin to remind us of the values expressed in Islamic, Buddhist and other religious life before they became changed by the demands of the more economically oriented society.

Do caring people, who practice "reciprocal maintenance" require the institutions that are provided in our society? Though they are now being taken away by a changed political consciousness, we must ask who needs such services, and why?

The answer, from one point of view is a decided "No!" This view is expressed by Mormons, Hutterites and other societies that believe that they must care for their own, and do not require outside or governmental institutions. However, when this smaller community concern does not exist, the larger society must provide it. That is unless we are crassly disinterested. Pilisuk and Parks argue powerfully for such institutions.

If we do not focus upon the needed soft infrastructure of our complex society, we will neither meet the needs of those who are too often considered superfluous to our society, but also the needs of the current dominant groups. It is my strong feeling that we all are suffering from this lack, where heretofore those "haves" could point easily to the "havenots" and say, "It's their problem!"

How then must we find this path? Some believe the answer lies in top down planning. Others see the answer in self help. Pilisuk and Parks show how indeed many of the networks of support arise in this manner. All in all they have done an outstanding, and needed job covering these issues.

That Hakim,[24] in his book on the creation of habitation in Egypt focuses primarily on almost self help housing which is integrated with the earth and surrounding landscape suggests that these concerns can be translated to our own settings.

CREATING NEW MODELS FOR THE FUTURE

In our own western setting, the work of Christopher Alexander[25] has taken a special and important path. By working directly with people, and studying their behaviours as well as by analysis of each piece that makes up a house or building he creates a systematic way to understand construction in a variety of culture. His work can not be ignored, since he is creating a scientific model, with mystical and spiritual overtones, for an architectural sense of complex wholeness, a theme we have returned to several times.

A recent issue of a new magazine, called *Zone*[26] attempts to focus upon the breadth of urban life. It is especially their concerns with culture that is important to underscore. It is only important to point to their multifaceted and varied views of the city, to show the extent of our need for constant exploration. Not just buildings, people and institutions but the creations of humans, is also the city.

In many ways we are asking an old question, What do we mean by "The City of God". This was a question of St. Augustine, and in many other forms, using different words the concern of philosophers and others. Does it exist within our minds? Is it the religion of Sunday mornings and holiday gatherings?

Or, does "The City of God" really exist, in all aspects of human individual and social development? Is it not in the environments that we create, and in the minds of the creators of our programs, businesses, and cities?

Is it not the time to begin to ask the deeper question, beyond the technical? It is easy to ask how do you treat an illness, or correct a traffic problem, or determine the height of a building? We can all too easily, "Say no to drugs!" To save our future, we must ask more.

Many people are focusing upon the needs of the city. They invariably focus upon economics and development, the cost effective, and the input - output variables of balanced budgets. They talk of the hard and formal infrastructure; the roads, communication, transportation, water, sewage and other such systems. They rarely question whether the way we govern and make decisions meets the needs of people.

They do not ask whether the superfluous people, not needed by our technological developments, are as important to the whole as those who do. They rarely question whether there are values which exist in societies, other than our own that are important for us to learn and use. They rarely involve the governed in the vital issues of decision making. They forget education, diminish health and medical care. They forget the deeper spiritual and religious values which may give more meaning to our existence. They ignore the need for a healthy city!

HEALTHY CITIES

Health, healing, holy, whole are the guides toward that healthy city, "The City of God". Most of those concerned, are not asking about the mind of diverse, cosmopolitan and growing cities in the Third World, despite the current urgencies.

The cities differ, since the urgencies are creating problems of major importance. Just the fact that cities are reaching the size of twenty million people is enough to pose the question. That they are heterogeneous, in varied troubles including safety and economic viability should be enough.

Thus we must now ask, "What is a healthy city?"

Cities in my view, have some similarity to an organism. A biological organism has a set of major functions, all related to normal growth and development. Based upon the genetic "history" each new organism grows with the limits of possibility. This growth and change is modified, or directed by the environmental experience over time, responding to nutrition, culture, social situation, climate and physical environment.

Obviously, there is much more to a person, or a city than these factors. Indeed the infinite possibilities that exist offer a myriad of different outcomes, with no two persons or places alike. To classify differences we run into the serious problem of loss of uniqueness and difference. Even demographic and statistical analysis leaves aside those things that make any individual organism special, in either good or bad ways. Difference is central to organisms, though they can roughly be classified with similar ones, for particular purposes.

Inputs of "nutrition", food, money or ideas, or outputs of sewage, new ideas or products, are part of any organisms life. To perform these functions requires a structure, facilitated by the ability to process all the needed inputs and outputs to achieve the normal requirements of life. This, in concrete terms, includes the skeleton structures, communication, transport and interpretation functions of the organism.

How all the parts work together is partially known. Much more is still only in the realms of speculation. We even wonder what the boundary of an individual is, for to some the body is not limited to the skin. Indeed, an individual can be considered only a piece of a larger organism, a group or family. Cities, formally defined by political or geographic boundaries are part of an area. Is San Francisco the city, or is it but a part of Bay City? Is New York a collection of cities, or one large whole?

Is the internal communication and interaction within an individual purely a physiological or chemical phenomena, or is it mechanical? Do the old Chinese Taoists know something we do not, when they talk of meridians and biomagnetic energy of bodies? All this is to say that cities are complex, they change over time,

they grow, have "diseases" develop (including cancers), they die and are reborn.

If cities do have the characteristics of an organism, there are some activities which are not biological or where the metaphor brakes down. Accept this fact for a moment, which will be returned to later. A healthy city, therefore must have those needs met which allow it to change in a way that is neither destructive to it as an organism, nor to surrounding countryside, nor to individuals within it.

A healthy city, to meet some of the criteria implied, is one that is multi-dimensional, multi-age, multi-cultural and multidirected. It must have an infrastructure that is both "hard" and "soft" that allows it to cope, live and work. This means roads, communication on all levels, buildings and places for the multiple functions of life, and a set of "soft" processes that permit it to interact within and outside its boundaries.

"Soft" infrastructure is that set of rules of behaviour, manifest in culture, laws, constitutions, regulations and procedures that make up both the formal and informal sides of life. When cities are morally integrated, they have the ability to differ, yet accept common ground rules. They have, if you will, not a multiplicity of separate and conflicting games, but at the least a common game-board upon which to work out the differences.

Healthy cities can be self renewing. That means they can change as the environment changes. It means they do not go down a single track and get stuck when that avenue of opportunity closes. The options remain open. The ability to cope is there, because there is a repertoire of resources open to them, as needed.

Similarly, when any piece of the whole is in difficulty, the whole or other parts respond, assisting the diseased part to become functional again. Thus cities which are faced with poverty and areas of "superfluous people" have, in this view, an obligation to assist and bring up that part of the community to that of the rest. Often cities tend to ignore these problems, and ultimately find that the dis-ease of the part impinges upon the whole.

Clearly values and beliefs are central to a city's health. It is here that we can return to the earlier arguments. The values implied in the religiously created cities, have been impinged upon by many "new" values, and the melange of values have not as yet been synthesized and integrated into guiding principles for our current cities. Indeed, it is hard to know what the meaning of community is, and whether the word itself means the same thing to all that use it. Something must be done.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

To develop a "Healthy City" program requires several steps:

- conceptualizing the issues of health, shifting from a linear disease oriented model to an open, learning, inquiring systems which is complex and holistic;
- the creation of a "game-board" upon which all the diverse players can play and work out the differing views, and power relationships;
- agreements as to values and criteria against which plans can evolve to meet separate yet interconnected and related needs;
- community leaders that can facilitate the process, by using techniques of a "coach" to assist in community, individual and social learning;
- development of particular studies and general policy actions for particular projects using both community and profession inputs;
- social entrepreneurship, or the creation of activities to lead to ends desired by particular projects;[27]
- qualitative and quantitative measures of "success" that can be used by community and professionals; and
- the need for early measurable and observable success to maintain momentum.

Clearly throughout all the activity, from earliest conceptualization on, the need to see the problem both as a whole and in its parts is critical. To have an optimal participation means felt as well as actual involvement up to the level of interest and competence.

Competence is a difficult issue, since each individual and group believes honestly that they "know" the issues well. Like the proverbial elephant, each does know one piece, without knowing the whole. Yet each believes that they do. Each is right, and yet wrong. Each has a differing expertise, and thus what is needed is bringing these varied views together for a common mutually compatible set of goals, with each using the skills they truly know best.

How to bring together macro decisions with micro ones is hard in our heterogeneous and complex world. What we are therefore laying out, is a complex problem of governance, which must be attained if the process is to continue. The nature of our heterogeneous cities require this working out, despite the needs for "efficiency", budget saving, or even a sense of urgency

or perceived crisis. To move ahead before a community is ready, it is worth noting here that we do not reject conflict. What we see as useless is conflict which achieves disruption, with the possibilities of resolutions being found. There will always be differences, disagreements, and anger. What is necessary is to maintain a field upon which even partial resolution can occur. Community mediation techniques are extremely useful.[28]

SOME FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The place we know of as a city has changed radically, from even the not too distant past. They have become home for symptoms of broader issues and problems, which appear almost insoluble.

We do see cities that have found partial solutions. One such is Toronto, which in its metropolitan and city government has met many of the criteria for a healthy city, and upon which some of the ideas in this paper has developed. Jane Jacobs has shown how the multi-dimensionality of people and business has permitted the emergence of a complex cosmopolitan urban center in Toronto.[29]

In the Kid's Place program[30] in Seattle, voluntary participation of a diverse population of people, including children have lead not only to a more child focused city, but one where solutions to other issues have a model for development.

Other cities are attempting solution. Morris[31] has been working with St. Paul to find new ways of developing the city along lines we have outlined.[32]

The most important development has been the WHO attempt to work with nineteen or more cities in Europe. Here, based upon WHO's concern with "Health for All By The Year 2000", it focuses upon primary health care and the need for health promotion, via a multi-sectorial approach, it has developed the "Healthy Cities" program.[33][34] For the first time people concerned with the implementation of health programs are working closely with people in other sectors of concern in the city to develop both the structure, processes, and means to make the city healthier.

The challenge in the years ahead is to find more and more ways to deal with the issues of our habit. I have not attempted a major review of the literature, nor to cover all the issues involved. I have focused upon history, the development of the values, and the means by which processed can be developed to govern the changing urban world.

This is not a problem of the western world alone, for the rest of the world is rapidly facing urban crises. We have much to learn, both from our own science and humanities, but also from the varied work scientific and otherwise from the emerging world within the West and

Third World. The issues of health are but one of the symptomatic and underlying issues that force us to look broadly at what faces us. We can start anywhere, if we do not forget that the old paradigms may no longer work. The search for the new, is both in innovation, and remembering that there have been other ways, upon which we can draw.

The mind of the city, what it is and is becoming may determine whether the crises can be coped with. To truly understand, is the first step toward action. To be locked into views, no matter how currently fashionable, may condemn us to a prolonged urban, social and world wide crisis.

The story of the city is changing. We must contribute to this process by making sure of that.

ENDNOTES

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- [2] Leonard J. Duhl, editor. *The Urban Condition*, Basic Books, New York, 1963.
- [3] Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, Random House, New York, 1972; and Gregory Bateson, *Mind and Nature*, Bantam, New York, 1979.
- [4] E.A. Gutkind, *Our World From the Air* Chatto and Windus, London, 1952.
- [5] Martyn Webb is a geographer-planner from Western Australia who has spend several periods at the University of California, whose conceptions of planning are similar to my own. Professor Webb has been concerned with comparing the constitutions of the United States and Australia. His current thinking exists in preliminary working papers which as yet have not been published.
- [6] See especially the work of Constantine Doxiades on Ekistics, especially as he reviews the history of Greece and connects their beliefs and values to the architecture and planning of the early city states. The journal *Ekistics*, is a good source of information.
- [7] Here again I'm thankful to Martyn Webb's personal insight into this issue.
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- [10] Joanna Macy, *Dharma and Development*, Kumarin Press, West Hartford, 1985.
- [11] See Lisa Peattie, Martin Rein, Stephen Cornell, Development Planning as the Only Game in Town, *Journal of Planning Education Research*, pp 17-25, Volume 5 Number 1, Autumn 1985.
- [12] L. Duhl, "The Inner and Outer Sky", *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Summer pp 46-61, Volume 26 Number 3, 1986.
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- [18] Amos Gitai, *Communities in Transition: Five Jewish Communities and Their Architecture*, unpublished thesis, University of California, 1986.
- [19] Edward Krupat, *People in Cities*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985.
- [20] Bateson, op cite.
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- [22] See Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1965; and Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations and Its Prospects*, Harcourt Brace World, New York, 1961.
- [23] Marc Pilisuk and Susan Parks, *The Healing Web*, University Press of New England, Hanover, 1986.
- [24] Hakim, op cite.
- [25] Christopher Alexander, et al., *Pattern Language*, Oxford Press, New York, 1977.

- [26] *Zone*, Johns Hopkins Press, Number 1 and 2, 1986.
- [27] See L. Duhl, *In the Time of Parenthesis*, in progress; and Donald Schon, *The Reflective Practitioner*, Basic Books, New York, 1983.
- [28] See the Community Board program in San Francisco, in the work of Ray Shanholtz and others.
- [29] Jane Jacobs, *The Wealth of Cities*, Vintage, New York, 1983.
- [30] Robert Aldrich, *Children and Youth in Cities: The Story of Seattle's Kids Place*, in Rick Carlson and Brooke Newman, *Issues and Trends in Health*. Mosby, St. Lewis, 1987. The work of Robert Aldrich and Kid's Place, has emerged out of voluntary actions in the city of Seattle. Material can be obtained from him at the Children's Hospital in Seattle.
- [31] David Morris, *The New City States: Institute for Local Self Reliance*, Washington D. C., 1982.
- [32] Ian Grand, "Excitation and The City", in *The Urban Condition: A Twenty Five Year Update*, Leonard J. Duhl editor, in publication.
- [33] See L. Duhl, "The Healthy City", *Health Promotion* Volume 1 Number 1, Oxford Press, 1986.
- [34] See all the issues of *Health Promotion: An International Journal*, Oxford Press. Various WHO documents on Healthy Cities and health promotion are published regularly. Others are available from WHO-Europe, in Copenhagen. Also, Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, WHO and Canadian Public Health Association, 17-21 November 1986, Ottawa, Canada *Health Promotion: An International Journal*, Volume 1 Number 4, pp i-v., 1986.