PHILOSOPHY OF THE CITY IN THE PRESENT-DAY REALITY

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The article presents a reflection on the evolution in the perception of the "city" as a notion and an indispensible attribute of human civilization. The ontology of the city is viewed through philosophical theories of what a city should or should not be to better meet human needs and aspirations.
Key words: *city, philosophy, urbanization, diversity, plurality, residents.*

It has been recognized since the ancient times that truths, once revealed to man, never remain unchanged. With the growth of human knowledge there appear new areas of activity that enrich and widen human experience. Man's judgments, attitudes and modes are transformed along with the growing volume of his knowing and variations in his surroundings. Well known facts and objects are re-valued or forgotten as new ones come into public use. As a rule cognitive innovations bring about various language changes as new verbal expressions appear to designate the new ideas or rename familiar objects. Just as often with the disappearance or changes in the content of things and concepts, words by which they used to be known, do not disappear but get new semantic application to express novel facts and phenomena. In the process of cognitive development re-valuation of meaning is common not only within vocabulary used everyday. Modifications of meaning are widely observed in the structure of conceptual categories that remain in general and professional use. In spite of cognitive alterations their inner semantic definition often remains clear and understandable.

Semantic development in the cognitive structure of the notion of "city" is one of such cases. Its ontology and existential value as well as its language usage and application seem transparent and clear. As a phenomenon it was necessary and indispensible at every stage and period of human civilization. All through the history of mankind its changing status in man's life experience caused the appearance of new and differentiation of familiar senses in its nomination defining the novelty in its development. With the ever growing scale of urbanization it has now become even more important.

Human civilization has always been connected with some sort of settlements which were different in size, purpose and character. In its long history the concept of "city" has preserved its core etymological meaning of a settlement but its conceptual volume and current usage have changed and diversified. It has been re-interpreted and as a result acquired a lot of new functions, as compared to its original meaning. Changes in the dimension, in the image, the scale of mutation and diversity in its development make it a much wider notion. Modern cities serve not only as areas of settlement or refuge for people to live in and find shelter in case of danger. They have become the hallmark of living standard, with a wide variety of their own identity, style, philosophy, ethics, culture and ideology.

Historically city-dwellers were a small proportion of humanity. But nowadays

following two centuries of unprecedented urbanization roughly half of the world population lives in cities. The tendency to move to the city is steadily gaining momentum. According to the UN statistics cities cover 3% of the planet's land surface but they are home to more than 50% of the Earth population. It is presumed that by 2030 cities may embrace over 70% of people living on the Earth. It seems logical to turn to the history of the process before commenting on the philosophy of city and its attraction, advantages and significance in the present-day reality.

There is a lot of archeological evidence to prove that people have lived in cities or communally organized settlements since the beginning of time. Their original purpose was to serve as a place of refuge usually located on a hill near a river and surrounded by a wall or a fence with a sturdy gate closed for the night. The concept of such a fortified settlement goes back to the beginning of human history. The idea that it is a place, where one could feel safe, is usually traced in the names of most cities of former and modern time. This tradition made the meaning of the name clear and easy to understand. It meant "a place, a locality" and this is what many ancient cities were called. The etymology of the Sumerian city of Ur (c 5000 B.C.), e,g, is "a place, a particular territory". The root " ur/ur" is traced in the semantics and structure of many Near East cities. The name of Jerusalem is a vivid example, where the whole name is understood as a place, a settlement founded in peace and safety, "a place devoted to god Salem'. The concept of "a safe place" or "a guarded place", having definite contours and territory, is common in city names nowadays and is concealed in words meaning "city" in many languages. The root of the term "urbanization", a phenomenon globally spread in our time, is a proof of its original function and social significance. It is present in the etymology of the Russian "gorod", "grad" i.e. "a fenced place", in Ukrainian "misto" – "a place", in the English "town"- "a fenced or fortified place". The word "borough" with the meaning of a dry, not swampy place, is present as a name and as a suffix "borough, - burg – boro - bury" in the names of many cities and areas inside cities all over the world – Hamburg, Canterbury, Edinburgh, Pittsburg,. There are several cities with the name of Boro in the USA, Australia and Ireland. The French word for "city" - "ville" once denoted a rural place where there was a group of buildings housing a small community. Now it is used both in the meaning of "a city" and as a suffix. Since with time such "places" grew in number, their names acquired attributes and definitions, as is seen in the name of Jerusalem, Greenville etc.

Ancient settlements started from little places. But as time went on possibilities and challenges of city life proved to be attractive in many ways. People moved to cities in search of a better or a more fulfilling life. Many of ancient cities grew into big communities. Some were quite large. Ancient Ur, e, g, is thought to have been the largest and may have had a population of 65 000 people at its peak. This tendency to expand territorially and grow in the number of residents has continued to the present time. Cities with a multimillion population are a trend of urbanization process all around the present world.

With time the purpose of "city" gradually shifted from giving protection to organizing political and cultural entity and developing an integrated community with a strong awareness of social belonging. The concept of "city" was used to denote new functions and authorities. In the Near East and Ancient Greece cities turned into separate

states with their administrative, religious, legal and commercial institutes. Each of them, like the ancient Greek city-state or polis, also had outer walls for protection within which there stood an "acropolis" with a citadel and a temple. There was also an "agora" a large, open public space which included a marketplace, and government offices. A city was divided into areas and possessed the "acru" – a walled urban center and "khora" - the surrounding rural territory. In Egypt all settlements were organized into provinces - "nomes"- existing under the rule of a pharaoh within a kingdom. Each proper polis, city or nome denoted both physical, geographical aspects and the body of its residents.

The diffrence in the formation and structure of ancient states and cities was caused by many reasons, greatly depending on economic and political requirements. No less important was the influence of physical geography. The rough and hilly landscape made old Greek city-states, e.g., rather independent of each other as communication was difficult. In ancient Rome the attitude to human settlements shifted from referring to their physical territory or geographical position to their legal and administrative structure. In Rome there were two words to denote the idea of a settlement. The Latin word "urbs" was used in its etymological sense – "space, place" and referred to the walled locality of a settlement. The residents of "urbs" were called "civitas", which denoted their "condition or right of a citizen", i.e. belonging to the community, to the state or to the commonwealth. Eventually "civitas" came to correspond with "urbs" meaning "city" in a more physical sense. It is actually from "civitas" that the present-day term "city", comprising both these senses, came from.

Official criteria for what constitutes a city have always been rather opaque. A city is still, as in ancient time, described as a place, an area where a large number of people are engaged in fairly closely organized activity and occupations. But nowadays the dimension of a city and its social and cultural parameters are different. It is not only a much more extensive human settlement with a sophisticated system of administration to manage the governance and regulate transport, educational and cultural institutions, communication, sanitation, housing and social order. The modern city has developed a new identity within which people's relations, links and bonds are realized in a specific way. Life in the city makes different people look for and find ways and means to develop shared understanding of their common public interest and political articulation.

On the one hand there is, in fact, a great likeness among cities. They provide essentially the same experience. Some are sleepy, some are violent, and some are distinguished only by their special symbolism, architecture or productive activity. In spite of all kind of great and small distinctions that make them unique there is certain overall structural likeness and spiritual affinity that differentiates a city from any other human settlement. But on the other hand, cities are different, each having its own philosophy of organizing and supporting the balance and peace necessary for a successful and prosperous urban development. There is a great diversity in structure, size and planning that makes cities unlike each other. Often it is hard to clarify the difference between a city and a town or even define the areas within a city. Widespread urbanization of our time makes the distinction among rural and urban areas gradually disappear. Though there are still no clear criteria to mark where the city, the outskirts or the rural farmland are divided.

Historically the city has always been a place where strangers meet. It was in the city that newcomers were welcomed to suggest and discuss new ideas in public places. It was

a common ground for everyone to participate. This tendency has never changed since ancient time. Despite the walls, the towers, the gates and present-day administrative regulations and restrictions all kind of people constitute a city population now as it has traditionally been. As of old people come to or leave the city depending on circumstances of their life experience. It continues to be a lived from day to day territory where human agency is the driving forces shaping the present and the future. The city is involved in a continuous dynamic process of reconstruction and reorganization through which it is permanently in the state of unceasing change. Its development is greatly motivated by the novelty and difference of unfamiliar cultural and behavioral models of newcomers. All through history the city has existed in the difference and diversity of languages, ideas and attitudes. As a result the city's identity has never been homogeneous or stable. Its residents have always consisted of local people and newcomers, foreigners or compatriots from other parts of the country. The first had all the rights of the legal status of citizenship and were used to live within their regulations. The latter were not only strange or unusual in their appearance, manners and attitudes. They were also not familiar enough with the social codes and requirements. Living on the same territory, they were obliged to stick to the conformity of the existing social order. At the same time, belonging to various modes and standards of life style, they retained much of their own particular cultural, ethical and moral distinctions. Their actions and behavior were spontaneously influenced by their inherited habits or traditional value a moral principles. The strangeness of their effect made them conspicuously unlike the expected responses. Depending on the conditions and situations it was likely to lead either to relationships based on trust and respect or, on the contrary, start disagreement or even conflict. To avoid the threat of unrest and ensure social order and harmony the city offered and allowed a special model or logic of existence. In Greek polises there were open public spaces where otherness was tolerated and people could be different and were supposed to recognize the right to be different. This practice, widespread in ancient cities, promoted and contributed to the creation of collaborative dynamics that minimized the risks of confrontation and enmity.

This arrangement of city life was conductive to the free flow of thought in public arguments and discussions It made the most vivid feature of the city life both in antiquity and later on, allowing co-existence and common evolution of diverse opinions and judgments. Since the earliest time he city has lived in the plurality of identities. Free exchange of thoughts, languages and stories expressed, supported or opposed in the street talk was practiced and heard in public places. Unbiased and spontaneous verbal exchange gave rise to a lot of ideas, responding to and depending on human interest and needs in particular situations. In Ancient Greece streets discussions on current burning questions were a common occurrence. The practice of discussing problems embedded in the social environment at hand proved to be a real marketplace of ideas and finally resulted in the appearance of a new way of thinking and looking for truth. Its birthplace is attributed to the Greek city of Athens, where Socrates used to go around the streets and out in agora and the marketplace. He would hang around and engage both his followers and strangers in challenging conversations. This common practice, later on called philosophy, was institutionalized in Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum.

Philosophy is an urban phenomenon, the same as the city is a phenomenon of philosophic reflection. . Cities are one of the most complex of all human creations. They

are a grand ongoing experiment of communal life, containing, revealing and motivating all the changes, challenges, possibilities and aspirations of human existence. There is a fundamental existential bond between the city and philosophy. It is the city where thought is allowed to flow freely in autonomous plurality. The cultural, ethnical and language diversity has facilitated and promoted philosophical refection on particular problems immutable and urgent in the social environment. All through known history people have continued living in cities and seem to be more and more attracted to city life. The meaning of the word "city" is clear and unmistakable. Nevertheless since ancient time philosophers have reflected and argued in the attempt to interpret the significance and content of the city as a concept of human existence. Discussions are still going on without reaching consensus.

The object of discontent in the philosophical discourse continues to be mainly principles and ways of ameliorating conditions of city life and organizing social relations and civil order on a more logically balanced level. Back in the 16th century Thomas More explained the city as utopia where people lived a simple, healthy life and worked six hours a day. A century later philosophical reflections on the problem made Francis Bacon stress family values as the basis of the city and a bond uniting human community. He also predicted the rise and importance of technology and science as the fundamental idea and the motive power of a successful city. Tommaso Campanella in his essay "The City of the Sun" proclaimed complete equality of sexes in a free and prosperous city. Ch. Fourier's philosophical ideas of social order and harmony were based on human attitudes of concern and cooperation. In his vision a successful society is a city adapted to human needs. Such a city should .consist of self-sufficient independent phalanxes – communities, free of government intervention. In the philosophy of American founder-fathers the society they wanted to build was to be "a city upon a hill". In J.Winthrop's words it must and will be the symbol and the embodiment of sacred Christian virtues and values for the entire world to see, admire and follow. Early in the 1920-s Le Corbusier suggested a different image of the city, corresponding to the new spirit of the epoch. In a 3 million people city of his vision the residents live and work in identical sixty-storey tall buildings. He compared the city to a machine, in which all the houses were machines for living. At about the same time J.Dewey treated the problem of the city in a more pragmatic sense. In his understanding the city is not a place. It is an ongoing process of problem solving and the city itself is a public faced with and participating in the solution of urban problems.

Since then the idea of a successful, wealthy and prosperous city with a harmoniously organized social order has been embodied in many philosophical projects. The focus of philosophical reflection gradually shifted to problems of comfort and convenience of living in a city. Since cities continued to provide attractive amenities and abundant economic opportunities, they grew in population and expanded in territory. People moved to cities in the hope to get access to various opportunities to improve their living standards and social position. This process made cities face problems of overpopulation, water shortages and air pollution. Social, existential and cultural parameters of the city required a new philosophical approach. One of the first such projects, called "Garden City", was offered in England by E.Howard. In his book The Garden City of to-morrow, published in 1902, the vision of a garden city comprised planned and self-contained communities surrounded by garden-belts such as forests, water features and carefully balanced areas of

residences, industry and agriculture. Some seventy years later in mid-1970-s this idea was further developed by R. Register. He coined the term "eco-city", a city built in balance with nature. With wide streets and spacious lawns the design of the eco-city was an attempt to devise a place opposite in character to overcrowded, high-density areas of modern cities. It is designed as a human settlement modeled on the self-sustaining resilient structure and functioning on the pattern of natural systems. In both garden- and eco-city projects healthy peaceful residents are envisioned as having enough physical space to grow their greens and sufficient mental space to improve them at some intellectual occupation.

With the development and spread of techne civilization the ideas of the city as a place for free exchange of ideas and thoughts is no longer as relevant as it used to be. It is no longer the street, the square or the public place where people used to meet and play out their lives. With its innovative ways of communication in the technologically open worldwide space the idea of the city has become a network of communication open for exchange of thoughts and things. The philosophical idea of the new image of the city, built to human scale, is visualized in the concept of "the smart city". Its main idea is to make the city more human-oriented, user-friendly and livable. Equipped with modern technology the smart city will operate efficiently and autonomously. It will liberate man of hard and tedious work and let him achieve his aims in an easier and quicker way. A smart city is seen as an urban area where technology is integrated into its infrastructure and amenities. There are various technological devices clever enough to meet any human need, leaving a lot of free time. for the man to use in his own way.

During the last decade or so there was another shift of discussions as to what a modern city is or should be. In the globalised life of the present world the city is faced with a quickening tempo of commercial exchange and the growing volume of industrial production. With all the new tendencies considered, the philosophical vision of the contemporary city reality is expressed in the concept of"a fast city". It is coordinated with the idea of sustainability of the city in view of problems connected with climate warming, nature pollution, dependence on fossil fuels, atomic power and overcrowding. The emphasis in the idea of a "fast city" is laid on the factors affecting or promoting economic, commercial and special growth. Fast cities are seen as booming economically and rapidly growing cities. They provide attractive opportunities for start-up businesses offering most efficient transit services which leads to much innovation and consequently to economic and spacial growth.

With the growth of knowledge and technology philosophers and architects suggest new theories and projects of cities designed to correspond to the human changing needs. Many cities around the world were actually built according to them. But envisioned as logically designed theoretical patterns they have proved to be utopian existential failures. In the 19th century, e.g., Fourier's phalanxes were transplanted to the US but none of some 50 phalanxes could survive for more than 2 years. This obvious failure is, probably, due to the fact that most of the logically motivated designs stressed a certain idea – garden, ecology, and techne, a certain type of activity, machine effectiveness or speed growth – as a driving force to make the city prosperous and fit for living. But it is not enough to make a place to become a city. A coherent vision of a city cannot rest only on material or technical conveniences and features to guarantee its viability and practicality. The essence

of the city does not consist exclusively of buildings, streets, technology or parks. All of them, however important they might be, are merely a city's skeleton. They are indispensible and desirable characteristics of a prosperous city. But the sustainability of the city, its success and identity are created by the people who live there [Zharkykh V. ,2015]. Utopian visions of cities, no matter what models they are pictured from, presuppose a certain standard in architecture, occupation and the same mode of life for all its residents. Built to such a design and oriented to fulfill a specific purpose the city loses its main attraction. In a city, structured on a rigid logical pattern, there is no space for human personality, in its individuality, creativity and potential. A city-dweller is at best visualized as a smoothly moving pixel, travelling to work and back home and living his life on a colorful 3D graphic display.

In their long history cities have acquired a lot of new features, distinctions and functions, which determine their status and authority. But by nature they have always been a plurality of a sort represemted, sustained and developed by the variety and creativity of the people living in them. If cities lose this fundamental feature and become a unity based on some single, even vitally important idea, they essentially stop being cities or polises in Aristotle's terminology. Cities are dense, messy, often unpredictable and deceptive. They are always on the move, changing and transforming. With strangers whose otherness is welcome to bring novelty and new approaches they get a new vitality likely to destroy the passivity and routine of everyday life. These are the basic features that have made cities grow and prosper. Their combined influence motivated the development of their residents' actual and potential abilities. Plurality and diversity constitute the philosophical foundation of the city as an ontological framework of human agency.

Nowadays in context of the present highly urbanized and technologically equipped mode of living the relationship of philosophy and the city is more important than ever. The city and philosophy tell the same story. Their on-going narrative represents in fact two sides of one process. Philosophy projects a certain understanding of the reasons, modes and perspectives of the city as a physical space and of its residents as a community. The city is the practice of determining the way in which its residents are able or unable to effectively implement philosophical ideas and to live out their social agency. Ideas, W.James wrote [James W. ,1898], neither arise, nor operate in a void. It is not their logic that makes them livable. They respond to and depend on human beings in particular situations. In its long history the phenomenon of "city" has proved its ontological significance and existential value by showing its necessity and public good as a safe place both for refuge in case of danger and an opportunity for fruitful cooperation in the activity of one's own choice. This latter idea of a cooperative integrated community turned out to be most attractive because it promised coexistence based on mutual responsibility and freedom of individual choice. Ideas prevail when they are imbedded in the social environment and mobilize the city residents to put them into practice. It is the people who make the best or the worst of any idea for "What is the city but the people?, reads the famous question in W.Shakespeare"s Coriolanus. This truth has always been evident all through the long history of urban development and it is just as clear and relevant today.

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ФІЛОСОФІЯ МІСТА В РЕАЛЬНОСТІ СЬОГОДЕННЯ
В статті представлені роздуми щодо еволюції в сприйнятті «міста» як поняття та невід'ємного атрибуту людської цивілізації. Онтологія міста розглядається в контексті філософських теорій стосовно того яким має чи не має бути місто , щоб краще відповідати людським потребам і прагненням.
Ключові слова*: місто, філософія, урбанізація, розмаїття, плюралізм, жителі.*