URBANISM AS A MODE OF THEORIZING:

AN INVESTIGATION OF PERSPECTIVES ON URBAN LIFE

by

Maria M. Kerr

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Name: Maria Magdalena Kerr

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Examining Committee:

Chairperson: William D. Richards, Jr., Assistant Professor.

Liora Salter
Associate Professor
Senior Supervisor

Paul Heyer
Assistant Professor

Dr. E. M. Gibson
Associate Professor
Department of Geography
Simon Fraser University
External Examiner

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Author: _____
(signature)

Maria M. Kerr
(name)

July 30, 1982.
(date)

ABSTRACT

The task urban sociologists have set for themselves in the development of urban theory has been the specification of the characteristics and variables of urban life. Urban social life, in turn, has been defined as an effect of the particular territorial organization of social and cultural life in general. As a result, the study of urban space has assumed a central role in the analysis of urbanism as a mode of social existence.

The thesis begins by questioning the assumption that urbanism is necessarily linked to particular forms of spatial organization. Drawing on a critical survey of the literature on urbanism, the thesis suggests that social and cultural life associated with cities finds parallels in non-city settings. It also suggests that few specific structures and uses of space are common to all cities.

Attention is then focussed on urban theory. A communicational analysis of urban theorizing is offered. The purpose of this analysis is to determine and specify the object of "urban theory". Three variants of urban theory are examined. The question is why the authors involved fail to account for the full range of phenomena identified in their analyses as properly "urban".

The critical review of these three variants of urban theory suggests that "urbanism" is a theoretical construct primarily. As such, "urbanism" is a mode of theorizing about society in general and the spatial effects of industrialism in particular. As a construct and as a description of empirical reality, "urbanism" is used as an instrument in the development of a general theory of society and of a strategy for social reform.

The thesis adopts as its starting point the critique of urban theory offered by Manuel Castells. The theoretical contributions of a number of authors associated with the Chicago school, and grouped here as two variants

of urban theory, are examined in the light of Castells' critique. Following this, Castells' own theory is subject to analysis. It is then argued that his contribution to urban theory and his critique of others also provide what is primarily a general theory of society and industrialization. In this manner, Castells' work resembles that which he criticizes, despite its different orientation.

The thesis is based primarily on textual criticism. This has been supplemented by insights gained from fieldwork done by the author in conjunction with a study of the relationship between communication technology, telephone use patterns and urbanization in British Columbia.

Alice didn't dare argue the point, but went on: "...and I thought I'd try and find my way to the top of that hill..."

"When you say 'hill,'" the Queen interrupted, "I could show you hills, in comparison with which you'd call that a valley."

"No, I shouldn't," said Alice, surprised into contradicting her at last; "a hill can't be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense..."

The Red Queen shook her head. "You may call it 'nonsense' if you like," she said, "but I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary!"

Lewis Carroll,
Through the Looking-Glass
and What Alice Found There
(1896)

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Needless to say, all errors and inconsistencies which remain are my own.

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INTRODUCTION

> The city is manifestly a complicated thing. Part of the difficulty we experience in dealing with it can be attributed to this inherent complexity. But our problems can also be attributed to our failure to conceptualize the situation correctly. If our concepts are inadequate or inconsistent, we cannot hope to identify problems and formulate appropriate solutions.
>
> (D. Harvey, 1973:22)

Describing the city, as D. Harvey suggests, is a doubly difficult task. On the one hand, this process involves the recognition that the city is both a form of territorial organization and a system of social practices that characterize urban life. On the other hand, describing the city as a particular form of organization of social life requires the deployment of concepts that can represent adequately the complexity of relations between the urban physical structure and the urban social system. In general, in the sociological literature on the city, the concept of "urbanism" has been called upon to perform the task of describing the social life of the city as a particular form and mode of social existence.

But, as D. Harvey also suggests, and as I also argue in this thesis, the deployment of concepts in the analysis of the urban realm has practical implications for the development of plans and policies that seek to solve the problems in the city. The analysis of the urban structure as a form of territorial organization of human life is, in fact, also an analysis of the organization of the social system that produced the urban form. Moreover, this analysis is also an investigation of the role and functions of the urban spatial form in social life in general.

In this thesis, I propose to investigate the explanatory ranges of the sociological concept of "urbanism" in order to assess its contributions to

our understanding of the relationship between urban space, urban life and social life in general. The understanding of this relation, I argue, is not limited to the practice of conceptualization only; this understanding has practical implications in the applications of urban theory. Urban theory is not merely a way of describing the city but is also a way of intervening into urban processes. Urban theory in its practical applications serves as a scientific rationale and as a scientific plan for intervention into the relation between space and society.

Conceptualizing about urban space, then, implies more than a description of the spatial extension of one form of organization of human life; it also implies a way of prescribing the uses and functions of spatial relations in social life. Therefore, conceptualizing about the relationship between urban space and urban life provides also a political education; it provides a practical understanding of the social context of urban theorizing insofar as this theorizing is instrumental in the development of planning policies that seek to implement social change through the redesign of the uses and functions of social space.

It is in this sense, then, that I argue in this thesis that urban theories are not merely descriptive accounts of social reality in cities but are, in fact, potential strategies for social reform in general through the city. The study of "urbanism" as a mode of social existence in space implies, then, an investigation of the political significance of spatial relations -- the social uses and functions of space -- in social life.

Political scientists have already stressed the significance of the organization of the uses and functions of urban space not only in political terms, but also in terms of the development of "urbanism" as a mode of social life (Magnusson, 1981). Urban sociologists, on the other hand, have insisted

on the primarily social and cultural character of "urbanism" as a mode of social life. One urban sociologist to have changed this trend of social theorizing about urban life has been Manuel Castells. Castells' analysis of "urbanism", as I point out in this thesis, is, in fact, a sociological account of the political processes that organize the urban physical structure and the urban social system.

But, as I argue in the thesis, the kind of sociological account that Castells provides, while rightly insisting on the political character of urban processes, fails to take into account the complexity of the relations that contribute urban life and "urbanism" as a mode of social existence. Castells' "urbanism" reduces the relations between the urban structure and social life to a mechanically conceived notion of the determinations of the urban system by political processes which reflect merely the exigencies of economic processes.

Contrary to this conception of "urbanism" as the political form of the organization of economic process in the city, I argue "urbanism" is best understood as a relational concept. "Urbanism" denotes both a series of relations between the different aspects of social life, such as the economic, social, political, geographical and cultural, and it also denotes a particular process that organizes the relations between these aspects in a particular spatial and physical structure. Thus, I argue that "urbanism" is best understood as a concept that describes the processes of the territorial and spatial integration of the relationship between the various aspects of the social system in general.

In order to develop an interdisciplinary understanding of the complexity of the urban structure and of its relation to the social system, I propose to assess some of the claims made about the conceptual ranges of "urbanism" in the development of urban sociological theory. The sociological literature

reviewed in this thesis has been written primarily by sociologists who saw their task as the clarification and the development of the central concepts of urban theory. The analysis of the concept of "urbanism" proposed in this thesis traces, in fact, the evolution of the shifting explanatory ranges of "urbanism as a way of life in space" in the sociological literature on cities. The thrust of this analysis, however, is very much dominated by Manuel Castells' critical attitude toward what he sees as a lack of a theoretical specificity in urban sociology generally. In this sense, then, Castells' critique has set the agenda for the selection of the urban theories reviewed here.

The thesis starts from an apparent agreement with Castells' claim that "urbanism" as the theoretical object of urban sociology is not productive of general knowledge about the specific social determinations and processes of urban life (Castells, 1976a and 1977). In investigating this charge I undertake an examination of what, if anything, the concept of "urbanism" developed by urban sociological theory does explain about the social life of cities. This examination consists of an inquiry into what "urbanism" means in the different theoretical systems that deploy it as a tool in gaining knowledge about the particularity of urban life.

The investigation of the meanings of "urbanism", however, is not a call for a linguistic analysis of social theorizing. Rather than proposing a linguistic analysis of the referential uses of the term "urbanism", I propose a critical investigation of the different explanatory functions performed by the notion of "urbanism" in the different contexts of social theorizing. In this sense, the method I employ resembles that of literary criticism. In this case, however, the "text" is urban theory.

Specifically, the thesis consists of a critical investigation of a number of sociological theories that claim to have explained the social

specificity of urban life as a mode of social existence, in some sense or other. Therefore, the theories I review here have been chosen for at least four reasons. First, they were chosen because they all consider "urbanism" as a Durkheimian social fact or sociological object of investigation. Secondly, these sociological theories have been chosen because they claim, in some form or other, that "urbanism" as a concept describes a mode of organization of human life in space. In other words, they all claim that the term "urbanism" has a spatial extension. Thirdly, they were chosen because of their apparent concern with the specification of the relationship between the organization of the urban system in particular and the organization of the social system in general. Finally, those theories that have been identified here as representative of traditional urban theorizing have been chosen because of their concerns with the role of communication as a form of social interaction and as a variable in social organization in urban life, and in the spatial integration of social life in general.

This review does not include an assessment of the contributions to urban theory made by the symbolic ecology school, the school that characterized American urban theorizing in the 1950's and 1960's. The symbolic ecology school includes the work of Walter Fiery on the cultural factors influencing land-use patterns in Boston; the analysis of the relationship between social status and residential location undertaken by Duncan and Duncan; and the social area analysis developed by Shevky and Bell, to name but a few of its better known representatives (Boskoff, 1962). This exclusion is explained by the fact that Castells' critique has set the agenda for the selection of urban theories to be reviewed. Castells' analysis of urban theorizing has excluded a large portion of American urban theorizing on the grounds that its concerns were defined in cultural terms rather than the sociological

terms required of a social analysis of urban life. Thus, this exclusion is due to Castells' particular definitions of sociological facts. Yet the contributions of the symbolic ecology school to our understanding of the historical relationship between cultural organization and urban growth must be recognized. Since this thesis is more concerned with establishing the heuristic value of a critical perspective on urban theorizing than it is with giving a full review of urban theory, this recognition remains referential.

One further note must be added: the communicational analysis of urbanism proposed in this thesis differs considerably from the communicational theory offered by Richard Meier in A Communications Theory of Urban Growth (1962). While Meier's concern is to develop a communications theory of urban growth, this thesis is concerned with developing a communicational analysis of urban theory. Moreover, Meier's work in communications is informed by a mechanistic understanding of the processes of human communication and of their effects on social forms. The communicational perspective employed in this thesis is informed by a relational view of communication and social organization.

The thesis identifies three major categories of urban theorizing on the basis of the differences among the explanations of the social system underlining the urban system in the sociological analysis of the city. Following in the traditions of viewing the city as the expression of modes of human existence, I have selected to name these categories as follows: (i) "the city" as a cultural construct; (ii) "the city" as an ecological process; nad (iii) "the city" as a social practice. The investigation of these three forms of theorizing about the 'urban realm,' and of their relation to each other, consists of three parts and a concluding discussion.

Part I discusses the contributions of Robert E. Park and Louis Wirth to urban sociology. Both Park and Wirth consider the city as the physical

stage and the social locus of the unfolding evolution of the cultural order of human existence. "Urbanism" in their perspective is a new form of culture. Since societies can be characterized primarily by the nature of their cultural forms, according to Park and Wirth, "urbanism" as a new cultural form is an index of a new mode of social existence.

Part II examines the critical development of the ecological perspective on urban growth suggested by Park's analysis of urban life. The urban theories of R.D. McKenzie, W.E. Burgess, and Leo F. Schnore suggest a critical attitude towards any attempt to explain "urbanism" in terms of the evolution of forms of culture. For these theorists, discussed respectively in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, "urbanism" is a specific expression of differentiated functions in the ecologically ordered organization of social life.

Specifically, "urbanism" for McKenzie, Burgess and Schnore is the territorial expression of the ecological organization of human existence. "Urbanism" as the theoretical object of ecological inquiry describes, then, a differentiated function in the territorial organization of social life. Moreover, as I point out in the discussion of the explanatory ranges of the ecological concept of urbanism, the social theory that underlines this mode of urban analysis claims that social organization itself ought to be understood as an expression of the interdependences of the functions of human adaptation to natural and social environments. This claim is, in fact, an ecologically conceived theory of the organization of the division of labour.

Part III investigates Castells' proposal for the development of a critical urban theory. This investigation is approached from two perspectives: (i) on the one hand, it examines Castells' assessment of the contributions of the Chicago school as an example of the evolution of the critical tradition in urban theorizing; (ii) on the other hand, it examines Castells'

critical efforts to define the social characteristics of "urbanism" as a particular system of social practices. Castells' critical efforts, I argue, are intimately bound with a formalistic tradition of theorizing about social reality in general. I identify this tradition as structuralist neo-Marxism, and locate its development in the particular interpretations that Louis Althusser, a French philosopher, has given to certain Marxian concepts. Thus the introduction of Castells' urban theory is preceded by a discussion of Althusserian Marxism.

The Conclusion links the various theories of urban life on the basis of their discussions of the relationship between the organization of urban space and the social system. As I note, these discussions introduce communication as a variable of both the urban structure and of the social system. Communication as a form of technology and as a form of social interaction is recognized by these theorists as an instrumental factor in urban development. For some, such as for Park and Wirth, communication appears to be the basis of any form of social existence, including that of "urbanism." For others, such as for Schnore and Castells, communication technology provides the means by which the territorial integration of the diversity of social forms can be achieved.

In conclusion, I argue that an investigation of the role of communication, both as a form of technology and as a form of social interaction, can make a contribution to a broader understanding of the organization of urban life. This investigation can contribute also to the development of an interdisciplinary approach to the definition of the problems in the city. As such, it can contribute to the formulation of urban plans and policies that are more cognizant of the complexity that characterizes the urban system. This cognizance, I argue, is what can be developed by an investigation of the role

of communications as a social practice in the production of urban and social forms.

PART I

'URBANISM' AS THE CULTURAL ECOLOGY OF CITIES: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROBERT E. PARK AND LOUIS WIRTH

From a sociological perspective, it seems obvious that one of the main tasks of urban theory ought to be to provide an explanation of the dynamics of the social organization of urban space. Urban theory ought to explain the various functions and uses of space in social life. Failing this, it is suggested that urban theory should specify at least what the explanatory limits of the term "urban" might be. In other words, urban theory ought to provide a distinction between urban phenomena and other social phenomena in general (see Castells, 1976b).

Historically, the discussion of the social characteristics of the urban sphere has been the domain of urban sociology. Within this tradition the identification of the specificity of urban phenomena vis-à-vis other social phenomena has not been considered problematic. This specificity has been defined as given by physical reality: "urban" denotes whatever occurs in cities. To put it another way, whatever happens within the physical boundaries of cities qualifies, at least in theory, as a distinct object of the sociological investigation of "urbanism" as a distinct form of social life.

Obviously, from a sociological standpoint, the study of urbanism as a distinct feature of social life in general must set out from an investigation of a set of series of social relationships that appear in cities. However, in the history of urban sociology, the willingness to regard the physical entity of the city as identical with the conceptual entity of urbanism as a mode of social life has resulted in a number of theoretical confusions. One of the most prevailing confusions suggests that the apparent contents of urbanism -- the manifest cultural expressions of social relations in cities -- can account for the development of urbanism as a distinct mode of life. This assumption rests on a particular view of the

development of the characteristics of social life in general. Within this view, the social structure is seen as a cultural product; social life is, in fact, a sub-set of the organization of culture. Thus, "urbanism" is both a cultural form and an index of the nature of cultural organization. Since cities appear as the dominant spatial forms of the organization of human life in space in Western society, this perspective concludes that "urbanism" is, in fact, an evolutionary form of Western culture.

The assumption that the evolution of cultural organization is responsible for the spatial and social forms of urban life has been developed into the "culturalist perspective"[1] by the urban studies of the Chicago school of sociology. This perspective on urban phenomena holds that changes in the cultural forms of human life have resulted in the emergence of new social relations and their forms of expressions. One of these new forms of expressions, according to this perspective, is "urbanism as a way of life."[2] Two representatives of this perspective are Robert E. Park (1864-1944) and Louis Wirth (1897-1952). For both these sociologists, "urbanism" as a social phenomenon signaled an historical transformation in the cultural life of human communities.

For these two scientists, investigation of the organization of urban space illustrates primarily the cultural principles that account for the emergence of the specific social forms of life in cities. The writings of Park and Wirth suggest that the spatial organization of social life in cities -- such as land use patterns and the spatial segregation of social, economic and cultural functions -- is to be understood in relation to its significance for the development of the cultural organization of social life in general. To put it in other terms, both Park and Wirth advanced a perspective on urban life that located the primary functions of the organ-

ization of urban space in social life in terms of their actual and potential contributions to what they defined as the cultural order and its evolution. The following two chapters present a discussion of the contributions of Park and Wirth to the study of urban phenomena. Chapter 1 discusses Park's theoretical explorations in the development of a cultural ecology of urban life. Chapter 2 presents Wirth's critical assessment of the ecological perspective on urban life developed by Park.

CHAPTER 1 ROBERT E. PARK: "URBANISM" AS THE SOCIOLOGICAL EXPRESSION OF HUMAN NATURE

Park's essays on the social life of communities would certainly fail the test of a rigorous theoretical framework for the analysis and interpretation of the specific objects and events of social life. Yet, these essays, in their wide-ranging explorations of the social functions of the territorial distribution of cultural forms, make a considerable contribution to what might be termed as a social theory of space. Generally, this aspect of Park's contribution to the study of urban forms has been underplayed in favour of the critical evaluation of his concepts of "urban culture" and "urban society."[1]

Park's interest in the social life of cities was sparked by his days as a newspaper reporter during which he had to make regular contributions to the Sunday papers:

> I found that the Sunday paper was willing to publish anything as long as it was concerned with local community and was interesting. I wrote about all sorts of things and became in this way intimately acquainted with many different aspects of city life. I expect that I have actually covered more ground tramping about cities in different parts of the world, than any other living man. Out of all this I gained, among other things, a conception of the city, the community, and the region, not as a geographical phenomenon merely, but as a kind of social organism. (Park, 1952:viii)

From his reporter days, Park formed the basis of the perspective on social space and on urban forms that he later defined as 'human ecology,' and which has become known as 'social ecology.'[2] Briefly, human ecology refers to the investigation of the social effects of the dynamics of the relationship between the social organization and the physical environment of human beings. In Park's view, human ecology was destined to uncover

the principles upon which the dynamics of this relationship were founded. Once uncovered, these principles were to serve as the foundation of the ecological study of social life in all its forms of expression. The principles of the ecological study of social life, however, in Park's view were to be located primarily in the principles of human nature. In Park's analysis, human nature serves as the ecological foundation of cultural and social forms of organization of human life.

Thus, a persistent theme in Park's writings on communities and urban forms suggests that the city can be seen as the sociological expression of human nature itself (Park, 1950; 1952; 1969). In his celebrated essay that launched American urban sociology, "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behaviour in the Urban Environment" (1916), Park observes that the social characteristics of the city should be understood ultimately as the characteristics of human nature:

> The city is not, in other words, merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction. It is involved in the vital process of the people who compose it; it is a product of nature, and particularly of human nature. (1952:13) [Emphasis added.]

Urbanism as a mode of life, as a product of human nature,and as a sociological expression is also a distinctly new cultural form in Park's perspective. This new cultural form is characterized by the dominance of secondary social relations over primary ones. This new cultural form, then, points to the gradual weakening of traditional kinship ties that characterized small and rural communities. This gradual weakening of family ties produces an increasing sense of isolation and a loss of the spirit of the community. Finally, it is reflected in the increasing levels of social disorganization in urban areas. The emergence of what Park defined as the "moral regions" or the spatial segregation of the population according to

its "tastes and temperament" signals the arrival of a distinctly new culture: urban culture (1952:46-51). This distinctly new cultural form, then, is characterized primarily by a fragmentation of the social psyche and social roles of individuals (1952:46-51).

However, Park's perspective on the increasing "disorganization" of social life in cities is not the lament of the romantic who sees the loss of an idyllic state of social cohesion and integration in the fragmentation of the community. On the contrary, Park's assessment of the social "disorganization" of the urban community is a testimonial to the progressive march of Western civilization. The progress of Western civilization, for Park, is the story of the victory of human spirit; it is the victory of rationality over magic, of man's triumph over nature (Park, 1952:133). The progress of Western civilization, then, is the story of the evolution of the "rational man" and of his environment: the city.

In Park's perspective, social organization is the product of this progressive evolution. Therefore, the social structure is characterized by the various forms assumed by the evolution of "rationality" as the essential feature of Western civilization. The investigation of the forms of rationality, according to Park's argument, will reveal not only the determining characteristics of the organization of social life, but also the degree of their development, or their relation to the evolution of culture in general. Urban culture as an evolutionary stage in the development of culture in general will be characterized by a number of distinct social characteristics. These characteristics, in turn, will be the sociological expressions of the increasing rationality that constitutes the driving force of the progress of civilization.

The development of urban culture, according to Park, is predicated on

a psychological division of labour: it is predicated on the existence of the "urban individual" as a "unit of thought and action" who relies increasingly more on his "wits" (rationality) in order to survive (1952:74). While this form of survival tends to destroy traditional forms of social associations, it also gives rise to a freedom unknown to individuals of a more traditional society. This freedom is the freedom for the expression of individuality. The expression of individual differences, according to Park, benefits society; it fosters social innovation and, therefore, it fosters social progress. In this context, the city becomes the ideal environment for the expression of the diversity of human behaviour: "...in the freedom of the city every individual, no matter how eccentric, finds somewhere an environment in which he can expand and bring what is peculiar in his nature to some sort of expression." (Park, 1952:86)

This view of the conditions of the possibility for the freedom for individual expression and social diversity is, of course, reminiscent of Emile Durkheim's perspective on the relationship between urban forms and social organization in general. For Durkheim (1933), "urbanism" as a social form is only possible in a society characterized by "organic solidarity," or a high degree of differentiation in the specialized functions of social life. "Organic solidarity" denotes the different stages of the development of the division of labour and its forms of social organization. In cities, where the division of labour is comprised of a high degree of specialized functions, individuality as a social category also emerges as a specialized function in social organization (Durkheim, 1933).

In societies characterized by a social solidarity based on traditions and customs ("mechanical solidarity"), individuals were bound to a territory

to a greater degree. The stronghold of tradition acted both as a constraint on emigration and immigration of foreign elements. People were reluctant to break with traditions, since such an act would threaten the fabric of the "collective self" of the community. But once developments in the specialized functions of the division of labour altered the nature of social solidarity, according to Durkheim, individuals no longer felt constrained by tradition, and the road for exploration and innovation was open. The ensuing migration of people brought about the new type of city composed of heterogeneous populations. The diversity of the populations and the density of the interaction between these different groups fostered a new form of social life. For Durkheim, cities represented the locus of social development and of social progress:

> Indeed, great cities are the uncontested homes of progress; it is in them that ideas, fashions, customs, new needs are elaborated and then spread over the rest of the country. When society changes, it is generally after them and in imitation. (1933[1893]296)

Compare Durkheim's vision of the city as a miniature complex of society in general with Park's notion that "the city is the microcosm in which is reflected, often in advance of their actual appearance, changes impending in the macrocosm." (1952:137) For both Durkheim and Park, cities are, in effect, the "social laboratories" (Park, 1952) for the study of the evolution of social forms, their complex organization and the loci for the realization of individual human potential. But while for Durkheim, this study led to the formulation of a sociological theory of individual forms as social rather than psychological phenomena, for Park, the same investigation suggested that human nature was the key to explaining social order and social integration. Park's society is not sui generis, rather, it is an expression of individuality; of individual "temperament"; of human

nature. In Park's view, society is nothing more or less than the dialogue of individuals and the relations in which they enter in order to sustain this dialogue:

> It is due to the intrinsic nature of society and of our social relations that we ordinarily find our social problems embodied in the persons and the behaviour of individuals. It is because social problems so frequently terminate in problems of individual behavior and because social relations are finally and fundamentally personal relations that the attitude and behavior of individuals are the chief sources of our knowledge of society. (1952:81)

The city assumes the role of the laboratory par excellence for the study of human nature. Since human nature is the basis of social relations, Park argues, the city as a "laboratory" is, in fact, a laboratory for the study of society at large.

The basic unit of social life in Park's social theory is the individual. For, as Park states, it is ultimately the individual who enters into social relations. Social relations, therefore, are the aggregate of personal behaviours and relations. Society is composed of these aggregates of personal relations. The range of these personal relations and behaviours, in turn, is indexical of the particular stage of the evolution of human individuality as a cultural form. Social life and social change, according to Park, are the results of the human potential for the expression of cultural diversity.

However, social life, while based on a freedom of expression of individual diversity, requires a certain degree of centralized control. While the diversity of individual expressions fosters social change and and evolution, it also disorganizes and disrupts traditional forms. Diversity threatens the fabric of the social order. Since change is the result of the absence of control over individual forms of expression,

social control becomes problematic. In Park's social theory, then, social conflict is a problem of negotiation between individuals and society. From Park's assumptions about the nature of social organization, it would appear that in a society dominated by a diversity of individual forms of expression there would be a corresponding absence of forms of social control. However, as Park argues, an absence of explicit restrictions of individual forms of expression does not imply the absence of social control in general.

In the often troubled dialogue between individuals and society, there appears a *mediator*: culture. Culture mediates between the individual and society. The history of the forms of this mediation is, in fact, the history of civilization itself. Since civilization is the story of the "triumph of man over nature," it is, in other words, the history of the evolution of human rationality. In an urban environment where humans have differentiated themselves from nature and each other in the highest degree and form, this mediation assumes an increasingly rational form and comes to dominate most forms of individual and social life.

The dominance of this rationality, according to Park, is manifest in the dominance of secondary social relations over primary social relations, or in the increasing loss of influence of "spontaneous interactions" between such primary groups as the family, the church, the school and the immediate small community. The problem of social control assumes a different form in urban society than it did in the more traditional rural communities. Social control in urban society becomes a problem of rational control. In other words, social control in urban society becomes the question of the manipulation of culture. For Park, this is evidenced by the growth of the importance of advertising and publicity in the economy and the political life of modern cities. Through advertising individual 'tastes' can be controlled

by creating and manipulating markets for products. Through publicity, the political education of diverse populations can be coordinated and manipulated into potential voters. Public opinion, the result of the rationality of social surveys, emerges as a new and more abstract form of social and political control in urban life.

According to Park, in order to understand the functions of this form of rational social control, one must study the institutions that educate and inform the population. These institutions are the media such as newspapers, radio and television, and the research institutions that design and conduct surveys and educational campaigns for "the improvement of the conditions of community life" (Park, 1952:45). All these institutions contribute to the creation of the rationality of "public opinion" as a new form of social control:

> As a source of social control public opinion becomes important in societies founded on secondary relationships, of which great cities are a type. In the city every social group tends to create its own milieu and, as these conditions become fixed, the mores tend to accommodate themselves to the conditions thus created. In secondary groups and in the city fashion tends to take the place of custom, and public opinion, rather than the mores, becomes the dominant force in social control.
>
> In any attempt to understand the nature of public opinion and its relation to social control it is important to investigate first of all the agencies and devices which have come into practical use in the effort to control, enlighten, and exploit it. (1952:45)

For Park, the evolution of cities is also the evolution of new forms of social control. The increase in the repertoire of the diversity of social and personal relations implies a greater freedom for individual expression. However, it also resulted in a greater degree of social disorganization and, therefore, in the need for a more centralized form of

social control. Culture as a mediating and controlling force in the dialogue between individuals and society has been called upon to perform a more active but less visible role in the control of the social order. More active because it has to coordinate a more diverse and heterogeneous population into a 'community' of interests, and less visible because its coercion is more abstract. It can only coerce by appealing to the multitudes of tastes and temperaments; thus in order to function properly it must be more general and more abstract.

On a more practical level, this has resulted in the creation of new institutions to deal with the increasing social disorganization of life in the city. These institutions are formed in order to provide rational solutions to the problems of the coordination of individual and social ends. Hence Park's contention that cities create new cultural forms both as individual forms of expression and as institutionalized forms of social control. One of these new forms of culture, according to Park, is sociology itself. Sociology is both an institution of research and an attempt to provide rational solutions for social problems. In Park's view, sociology makes the transition from metaphysics to a scientific program:

> Largely on the basis of experiments which these new agencies [social service agencies such as juvenile courts, parent-teacher associations, community centers, etc.] are making, a new social science is coming into existence. Under the impetus which the social agencies have given to social investigation and social research, sociology is ceasing to be a mere philosophy and is assuming more and more the character of an empirical, if not an exact, science. (1952:61)

Park does not differentiate between the study of social forms and of urban forms since they are in fact the expressions of the same history or the same process of evolution: they represent the different cultural stages and different forms of social evolution. The fact that

Park locates the origins of this process of evolution not in an historical analysis of "social facts" (Durkheim, 1966) but in an undeveloped concept of human nature leaves him with having to explain the nature of social order. In other words, if the evolution of cultural forms and of social life is given in human nature, then why is it that people have to be made to submit to constraints imposed by the wills of others?

Moreover, since the progress of civilization -- of culture itself -- consists of a dialogue between the individual and community, and since changes are the result of individual initiatives which require a freedom for individual expressions, how is it that social order -- a common set of customs, behaviours, laws, traditions and forms of actions -- persists over time and space? To Park, it appeared that the problematic to be solved by sociological inquiry was to find an explanation for the collective characteristics of social life, and for the processes by which these characteristics have developed and survived in history. In other words, what is the nature of the "social bond?"

To investigate the processes which establish collective life as opposed to individual life, Park devised a special approach: he formulated the principles of human ecology or the study of the social nature of human territorial communities. This perspective was also applied to the study of urban phenomena in general.

In his essay "Human Ecology" (1952 [1936]), Park outlines the philosophy, the principles and the categories of human ecology as a particular branch of investigation of the social life of human communities. In his enthusiasm for the explanatory potentials of human ecology in the social realm, Park notes that Darwin himself used a "sociological principle" in order to illustrate what he took to be a biological fact

(Park, 1952:146). To illustrate this, he quotes from Arthur Thomson's Darwinism and Human Life:

> It is interesting to note that it was the application to organic life of a sociological principle -- the principle, namely, of 'competitive cooperation' -- that gave Darwin the first clue to the formulation of his theory of evolution.
>
> 'He projected on organic life,' says Thomson, 'a sociological idea,' and 'thus vindicated the relevancy and utility of a sociological idea within the biological realm.' (Park, 1952:146)

The philosophy underlying Park's conception of human ecology combines two Darwinian notions: (i) the concept of the interdependence of all living organisms, or the notion of "the web of life," and (ii) a particular interpretation of the concept of "the struggle for existence." The concept of the "struggle for existence" as interpreted by Park suggests that this process is the mechanism of the "balance of nature." In other words, according to Park, competition, the essential feature of this "struggle for existence," keeps the ecological distribution of various organisms, similar and different alike, in a state of balance. Thus, according to Park, "...it is by means of this elementary competition that the existing species, the survivors in the struggle find their niches in the physical environment and in the existing correlation or division of labour between different species." (1952:147)

In the social realm, Park's concept of "the struggle for existence" explains a different type of natural balance. The social world, according to Park, is also a type of organism. This organism has a different nature than the sum of the characteristics of the individuals who compose it. As such, its "struggle for existence" is determined more by the cooperative efforts of these individuals than by their competition for individual survival. In Park's view, then, society as an ecological organism is

characterized and maintained by some form of cooperation:

> It is when, and to the extent that, competition declines that the kind of order which we call society may be said to exist. In short, society, from the ecological point of view, and insofar as it is a territorial unit, is just the area within which biotic competition has declined and the struggle for existence has assumed higher and more sublimated forms. (1952:150)

Park's society emerges from the biological realm of competition and is transformed into an organic system that maintains itself. This equilibrium reflects the cooperative interdependence of the sub-systems that compose it. These sub-systems, in turn, are the economic, social and political aspects of the organization of human life. The distinct identity of any such organization, according to Park, is the result of the cooperative interdependence of sub-systems over time.

Changes in this identity, or transformations in the organization of social life, according to Park, are reflective of transformations in the relations of interdependence between the sub-systems that compose the social organism. Transformations in relations of interdependence, however, do not occur randomly; they show law-like tendencies, i.e., they reflect a certain type of order. The principles that make this order intelligible, according to Park, are the ecological notions of "dominance" and "succession."

The notion of "dominance" describes the outcome of "the struggle for existence." It tells the story of how a species came to win and maintain an advantageous position over other species in an ecological territory. "Dominance," according to Park, describes the organization of human societies as well; it tells the story of how different institutions came to dominate and maintain the organization of social life.

The notion of "succession" in the ecological sense designates simply the order of sequences through which an ecological community passes through

its life-span. In this sense, it refers to the organization of the relations of interdependences between members of a species, between different species, and between species and the environment. In the social realm, according to Park, this systemic change in organization can be best seen and studied in the "cultural community." Transformations in cultural organization, in Park's view, illustrate the concept of the interdependence of sequences of development in the most dramatic way:

> The cultural community develops in comparable ways to that of the biotic, but the process is more complicated. Inventions, as well as sudden or catastrophic changes, seem to play a more important part in bringing about serial changes in the cultural than in the biotic community. But the principle involved seems to be substantially the same. In any case, all or most fundamental processes seem to be functionally related and dependent upon competition. (1952:153)

In order to appreciate Park's possible contribution to the analyses of social organization, it is important to recall, at this point, that Park considered the establishment and persistence of social order problematic because he considered individual psychological states both primary to and as prerequisites for the social psychology of social organization. Moreover, he also viewed the goals of individual life to be in an antagonistic relation with the interests and aims of society in general. Therefore it comes as no surprise that in his account of the nature of social order, he provides two sets of explanations, both derived through analogies with the ecological principles of biological organization.

Both these explanations of social and individual life could coexist quite peacefully in a competitive cooperation under the rubric of human ecology. Human ecology could account for the separate existence of individual and social life, for their conflicts, and for their coexistence in cooperation. The biological principles upon which these accounts could

be based served to unite the goals of individuals and of society into a harmonious "natural" law of organization that underlies all forms of life: biological, individual and social. While the organizing principle of human society on the biotic level is competition in its most elementary form, competition among individuals as the organizing principle of society emerges as a form of cooperation. This cooperation is then considered as essential for the equilibrium of the ecological organization of social life. The methods by which this equilibrium is achieved in social life, according to Park, are communication and consensus:

> The fact seems to be, then, that human society, as distinguished from plant and animal society, is organized on two levels, the biotic and the cultural. There is a symbiotic society based on competition and a cultural society based on communication and consensus. As a matter of fact the two societies are merely different aspects of one society, which, in the vicissitudes and changes to which they are subject remain, nevertheless, in some sort of mutual dependence each upon the other. (1952:157) [Emphasis added.]

According to Park, communication and consensus create and foster a community of interests that tie people into an actual community. In Park's perspective, the term "society" is not synonymous with the term "community". The "community" in Park's sociology refers to an ecological object; it designates "the habitat in which alone societies grow up" (1952:183); it is the location and the physical base of social organization. The term "society", on the other hand, refers to a "community of interests", i.e., to a community that is not given physically or biologically, but must be arrived at by some means. The relations of interdependence between organism and sub-systems in this ecological community are organized by communication and consensus about common goals:

> Society, however, always includes something more than competitive cooperation and its resulting economic interdependence. The existence of a society pre-

> supposes a certain amount of solidarity, consensus, and common purpose. The image of society, in the narrower sense of the term, is best reflected in the family, the tribe, the nation. Societies are formed for action and in action. They grow up in the efforts of individuals to act collectively. The structures which societies exhibit are on the whole incidental effects of collective action. Living in society, the individual gets his interests defined in reference to the larger aims of the group of which he is a member. In this sense, and to this extent, society controls the individuals who compose it. (1952:181)

Park's society is an ecological organism because it emerges from a biological base and is continuous with it. The social organism reflects the operations of the principles of the biological order. The survival of this organism -- of social organization -- rests on its effectiveness to control the competitive drives of its individual members. The various levels of organization in social life, according to Park, represent various levels of restrictions over the range of individual actions:

> It is interesting also that these divergent social orders seem to arrange themselves in a kind of hierarchy. In fact they may be said to form a pyramid of which the ecological order constitutes the base and the moral order the apex. Upon each succeeding one of these levels, the ecological, economic, political, and moral, the individual finds himself more completely incorporated into and subordinated to the social order of which he is a part upon the preceding. (1952:157)

The "apex" of this hierarchy -- "the moral order" -- is the milestone of the evolutionary journey of social organization. Its powers to constrain individuals indicate whether its regulative functions have to be administered from the outside, or whether they have been internalized. According to Park, essential to the process of internalization of "the moral order" is communication.

Park, like the American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey, asserts that "society exists in and through communication" (1952:174). Communication is a dynamic process, it changes those who engage in it; it transforms

those who communicate by the act of their communication. If communication is what makes society possible, then, according to Park, all the factors that limit, interfere or enhance communication will be significant to the formation of the social structure. Geography, location, distance, the spatial distribution of populations -- spatial relations -- act as variables of social relations because they are the variables of the process of communication.

Hence, the study of spatial relations, such as the territorial organization of urban space for instance, assumes a crucial role in the study of social life. Cities as particular structures will illustrate specific cases of the organization of social relations. As spatial structures, they influence the processes of communication and, therefore, they affect the nature of social relations and cultural forms within their boundaries.

The organization of space, in Park's view, reflects a particular stage of the development in the evolution of an ecological community, whether biological or social. Moreover, in the case of the evolution of the territorial organization of the "social community," this organization does not merely constrain but also creates conditions for communication and opportunities for social interaction. By creating such opportunities, the organization of space fosters the development of new forms of associations in social life. These changes, in turn, point to changes in the cultural order of the organization of human life.

In Park's view of "urbanism," modern cities represent a new form in the development of the territorial organization of human communities. These modern cities signal the development of new forms of cultural organization. To quote Park: "...ecology conceives society as fundamentally a territorial as well as cultural organization. So far as this conception

is valid, it assumes that most if not all cultural changes in society will be correlated with changes in its territorial organization, and every change in the territorial and occupational distribution of the population will affect changes in the existing cultures." (1952:231) It is thus not surprising that Park concludes that "...the evolution of society is, therefore, in one of its aspects, the evolution of a territorial organization." (1952:231)

Park's Social Theory and Urban Sociology

Park's program for the sociological study of urban life as a "sociological expression of human nature" (1952:13) suggests that we ought to consider cities primarily as a microcosm of social organization in general. It also suggests that this investigation ought to be undertaken as an inquiry into the evolution of culture. In other words, the study of urban forms in Park's inquiry implies the study of the development of cultural forms and their territorial organization. Such an inquiry, according to Park, leads us to the possibility of formulating a "general theory of social change" (1952:187):

> If it's true that the processes which we can study intensively and at first hand in the city are at all comparable with those larger secular changes which the historian, from his wider horizon, has observed, then it is possible -- using the urban community as a unit of investigation -- not merely to report but to investigate the processes of civilization. (1952:187)

Moreover, as Park continues to argue, "...if movement, migration, and commerce are so immediately associated with social changes as has been suggested, then mobility may be taken as an index of social change." (1952:187). Mobility, then, in Park's program, assumes the role of an index of the 'social facts' of historical change. This index of change can also be

quantified: mobility can be measured in quantitative terms both "horizontally," i.e., spatially as changes in location, and "vertically," i.e., in terms of statistics on occupational mobility of by changes in social status. For Park, the sociological significance of the measurement of mobility lies in its potential to reveal and express the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of forms of social interactions, such as associations, and social contacts over a geographical territory and in a common cultural realm. The best "social laboratory" for such measurements of social interaction, according to Park, is the city itself, since this is "where the movements of population are the greatest and the incidental clashes of personalities and cultures are most intense" (1952:188):

> If cities have always been the centers of civilization and intellectual life, it is partly because they are the inevitable meeting places of strangers and the centers of news. The stir, the bustle, and the vivacity of city life are but the reflections of that intenser social life, of which we have sought to make an abstraction and to measure in terms of mobility. (1952:188)

Yet what exactly is this "intenser social life" referring to? What are we measuring by its 'indexes'? What are the characteristics of this "intenser social life," its reference points, and its primary processes or relations? In other words, how can we describe it, and how can we investigate or analyze its constitutive or constituent processes?

Since, in Park's views, mobility can be taken as an index of change in the cultural organization of social life, it can also serve as an index of change in the "moral order" or of the organization of society. Mobility in Park's sociological terms refers to changes in social position and occupational status. Position and status, however, in Park's schema, do not necessarily have an economic reference, nor an economically determined position in the division of labour. In other words, Park's concept of

social status does not designate economic relations, nor does it refer to social class positions determined by their relations to the means of production. Instead, Park's concept of social status is derived from a theory of the primacy of cultural organization in the determinations of the scope and shape of social life. Hence, status for Park is an expression of a cultural relation: a change in this expression, such as the rate or intensity of mobility, points to a change in cultural organization and, therefore, in social organization in general.

The evolution of human communities from a "biotic" form of organization to a more abstract and, therefore, to a higher type of organization of interaction, is also accompanied by an evolution of the organization of the spatial distribution of these interactions. Hence, changes in social organization, i.e., in the cultural fabric of the "moral order," will tend to show changes in the spatial organization of communities. To put it another way: according to Park, a change in the territorial organization of a social unit under investigation usually indicates a change in the organization of the cultural forms of social interaction. Spatial relations, in Park's view, assume the role of one of the crucial variables for the emergence of new forms of social interaction:

> It is because geography, occupation and all the other factors which determine the distribution of population, determine so irresistibly and fatally the place, the group, and the associates with whom each one of us is bound to live that spatial relations come to have, for the study of society and human nature, the importance which they do. (1952:177)

According to Park, these spatial relations and their role in the organization of cultural forms, i.e., their effects on social interaction, can be studied in the "natural areas" of cities in a comparative way (1952: 196). These "natural areas" are the geographical locations of communities

that exhibit certain patterns of interaction, i.e., they are characterized by common cultural forms. Thus, these "natural areas" are not geographical territories planned and defined by either political or administrative processes.

For Park, "natural areas" serve as the "reference points" for the investigation of cultural forms and social life. The variables or the characteristics of a "natural area" of social life, according to Park, are the following: (1) "the number and racial composition of the population;" (2) the objective "conditions of social life;" and (3) the behaviour of the population which reflects their habits and customs (1952:196-97). These are general categories for the interpretation of social life and social change. However, Park himself was not very clear on how they are related, or what exactly goes in each category: "The place, the people, and the conditions under which they live are here conceived as a complex, the elements of which are more or less completely bound together, albeit in ways which as yet are not clearly defined." (1952:197)

The fact remains that for Park the description of the spatial organization of cultural forms, such as distinct forms of <u>behaviour</u> regulated by distinct customs and traditions, constitutes an explanatory category of social life.

In Park's schema, the territorial organization of communities is a "social fact" in the Durkheimian sense of the term because it is a fact of collective life and because it functions in the establishment of the order of this collective life.[3] However, Park's identification of the <u>functional</u> aspect of the relationship between spatial and social organization does not explain the nature of this function, i.e., it does not explain whether it is 'causal'[4], mutually conditioning, or the result of the hierarchical

levels of organization between nature, and cultural and social life. Instead of an investigation of the specific processes of this relationship between space and society, Park points out that in the relationship between the spatial and social structure of society, there is a cultural mediation which affects both, but in different ways. In other words, in Park's schema, the real social fact in the Durkheimian sense is culture.

Thus it appears that a review of Park's program suggests that the investigation of the characteristics of urban communities -- their spatial and social organization -- is, in reality, an investigation of the role of culture in the spatial distribution and the occupational stratification of society. "Culture" in Park's sociology appears, then, as a Durkheimian "social fact" in the full sense of the term.

Park's explanation suggests that culture is a "social fact" because it exists independently of its individual (i.e., particular) psychological manifestations, and because it is coercive by the imperatives it imposes over individual expressions. Given that according to Durkheim, a "social fact",if it is to be truly social, must be shown to be the effect of other social facts (1966:110), does Park's "culture" still qualify "as a Durkheimian social fact?" In other words, is Park's notion of cultural expression descriptive of an effect of other possible social facts as specified by Durkheim?

One way to answer this question is to investigate Park's theory of the rise of new cultural forms. According to Park, cultural forms evolve with their territorial organization, i.e., they are manifested in space. Thus, it would appear that Park suggests either that (1) spatial organization produces or "causes" new forms of culture, or (2) new cultural forms always produce change in the spatial organization of human life. Park suggested,

in fact, that spatial organization functions as a variable of social interaction. He did not assert that spatial organization actually gives rise to new cultural forms as such. Yet, what we can still safely infer from Park's suggestion is that spatial relations in social life affect indirectly the rise of new cultural forms. This inference is justified by Park's suggestion that spatial relations affect communication -- i.e., social interaction -- and in fact social interaction is the real basis for the emergence of new forms of culture.

Thus it appears that Park's "culture" as a social fact might provide a truly sociological analysis in the Durkheimian sense between social life, culture, and spatial organization. However, this analysis does not take place, because Park never quite specifies the sociological character of social interaction. Consequently, his explanation of the origins of new cultural forms remains non-specific. Instead of an analysis of the processes responsible for cultural evolution, what Park does give us is, in fact, an appeal to the mysteries of human nature.

For Park, as it already has been indicated in the beginning of this chapter, culture is the "sociological expression" of human nature itself. In other words, Park's "culture" designates the social content of human nature. Just what this human nature is remains an ambiguous principle of movement and development in Park's theory of the role of culture in social change.

In this light, Park's concept of culture can no longer be viewed as descriptive of and as generated by other Durkheimian social facts. Park's culture is not an effect but is, in fact, the basis of the "moral order" or of social life. It follows from this that the investigation of culture in Park's program aims to reveal the dominant patterns of relations that

characterize the "moral order." These patterns of relations are seen to originate human nature. In Park's program, then, the study of culture is, in reality, the study of human nature.

Given the preceding evaluation of Park's concept of the relationship between the evolution of cultural forms and their territorial organization, it appears that the analysis of urban life is, in fact, the investigation of one form of cultural organization. Urban space and urban life do not have to be investigated as specific, distinct or unique "social things," nor do they have to be viewed as distinct theoretical concepts but can be subsumed in reality and in theory under the rubric of culture and cultural theory.

Because Park's theory of urban life does not describe or provide a sociological explanation of the various specific social processes that form the spatial distribution and structure of social life in cities, his urban theory lacks specificity in the scope of its investigations and the ranges of its explanations. The possible "object" investigated by Park's urban theory is the concept of the relationship between spatial organization and cultural forms in cities. The relationship between the social organization and the spatial distribution of urban life remains to be viewed as a manifestation of the evolution of cultural forms and not as the product of specific social processes. Park's urban theory seems an occasion for hypothesizing about the historical processes of civilization.

Park's hypothesis about the role of communication in the development of the various forms of cultural organization, both in their spatial distributions, i.e., their "horizontal" structures, and in their social functions, i.e., their "vertical" systems, makes a rich contribution to a sociology of cultural development. The role Park has assigned to

spatial relations in the historical development of cultural forms suggests that Park has also made a substantial contribution to a sociology of space.

If we recall that Park's social organization refers to the organization of the "moral order" primarily, then we might also recall that the organization of this "moral order" (society as opposed to community) rests on the effectiveness of communication in creating and fostering common forms of interaction or in bringing about the forms of the collective life of communities. In Park's sociology, communication and consensus about goals and interests are the preconditions of social life. Anything that affects communication in achieving consensus will affect social organization or the "moral order." Thus physical space and social distance act as variables of communication and of possible forms of consensus. For Park, the spatial distribution and organization of communication are an essential historical characteristic of culture, while the technological forms of communication characterize not only the historical stage of culture but also the synchronic complexity of cultural organization:

> Geographical barriers and physical distances are significant for sociology only when and where they define the conditions under which communication and social life are actually maintained. But human geography has been profoundly modified by human intervention. The telegraph, telephone, newspaper, and radio, by converting the world into one vast whispering-gallery, have dissolved the distances and broken through the isolation which once separated races and people. New devices of communication are steadily multiplying, and incidentally complicating social relations. The history of communication is, in a very real sense, the history of civilization. (1952:174)

To conclude, then, Park's contribution to the analyses of the relationship between space and social organization is a theory of the effects of spatial constraints on processes of communication. In this sense, then,

among other things, Park's contribution has been made to a theory of social space, i.e., to the effects of space on communication. While Robert Park's application of the ecological perspective to the study of the cultural order in the social life of cities suggested a broad scope and range of inquiry into cultural processes, the theoreticization of the specific relationship between cultural forms and the spatial characteristics of cities remained to be undertaken by others who were working within the theoretical traditions of the Chicago school of urban sociology. Louis Wirth was one of the sociologists concerned with systematizing the various notions about the relationship between social organization, cultural forms and their territorial distribution in cities. Chapter 2 presents Wirth's approach to the construction of a theory of urban life. This chapter also assesses Wirth's contribution to a sociological understanding of the role of spatial relations in social life.

CHAPTER 2 LOUIS WIRTH: "URBANISM" AS A THEORY OF MASS CULTURE

Louis Wirth (1897-1952), Robert Park's student and colleague at the University of Chicago, outlined the requirements for a sociological theory of urbanism in his classic essay, "Urbanism as a Way of Life" (1938). To Louis Wirth, the city is not only an object of sociological inquiry but is, in fact, the locus of the evolution of a "distinctive mode of human group life," namely, urbanism (see Wirth, 1964:62).

Urbanism in Wirth's sociology appears as a Durkheimian "social thing;" it is a distinct form of association characteristic of social life. To put it briefly, urbanism, according to Wirth, is a new form of collective life. Moreover, urbanism as a social fact functions in the establishment and development of a new form of social order. Wirth's theory of urbanism rests on the assumption that the effects of urbanization signify a new social order in the history of human collective life. This new order is the social order of mass society. Mass society, in turn, is a characteristic of the historical development of civilization. Hence, urbanism represents a form of development in the evolution of civilization.

However, Wirth did not consider the development of civilization to be identical with the history of culture, as did Park. For Wirth, the development of civilization represents the development of the increasing complexity of the forms of social order. This complexity, in turn, refers to a more centralized and rationalized form of social control over greater physical distances and across larger numbers of different cultures. In Wirth's perspective, cities are the loci of the evolution of civilization. Cultures (cultural forms) are subsumed in civilization. To be more specific, for Wirth, the term "culture" refers to the diversity of forms

of social interaction in human life.

In Wirth's investigations of the relationship between forms of social interaction and the development of civilization, urbanism is identified as a new mode of social life. As such, it can be described also as a new cultural form that characterizes the complexity of civilization. The study of urbanism, then, according to Wirth, is the study of the complexity of civilization and its effects on social organization. Urbanism as a social effect of this complexity is not merely a way of life in cities; rather, urbanism represents a mode of social organization that characterizes civilization itself:

> What we call civilization as distinguished from culture has been cradled in the city; the city is the center from which the influences of modern civilized life radiate to the ends of the earth and the point from which they are controlled; the persistent problems of contemporary society take their most acute form in the city. The problems of modern civilization are typically urban problems. (Wirth, 1940:51)

For Wirth, then, urbanism is a mode of life and not merely a phenomenon which occurs in cities; it is, however, a mode of life whose characteristics and expressions are more pronounced and more prevalent in cities. Hence the sociological study of urbanism finds its most productive and heuristic results for the construction of a general theory of urbanism in the investigation of cities. The investigation of the sociological significance of urbanism involves also the sociological investigation of the spatial distribution of social and cultural life in the city.

For Wirth, as for Park, spatial relations in the city assume the role of a variable in the explanation of the processes of social organization. In other words, in the sociological analysis of urbanism "as a way of life," the physical characteristics of the city are seen by Wirth as crucial variables in the organization of the forms of interactions that characterize

"urbanism as a new mode of collective life" (see Wirth, 1964:62). Thus, according to Wirth, certain physical aspects of social life will characterize and affect the prevalence of certain social forms; e.g., the preponderance of secondary relations -- associations by interests alone rather than by kinship and family ties -- might be observed to occur always in conjunction with such physical characteristics as the cultural and social heterogenity of the population in a large but densely settled geographical area.

It is in this sense then that Wirth attempts to relate the sociological significance of the structural characteristics of cities and their population to the various forms of social life which have been observed in conjunction with the physical characteristics of cities. Thus, in turning to the study of urbanism, Wirth offers a number of provisional hypotheses about the relationship between the physical and social structure of urbanism, i.e., hypotheses about the organization of social space and social forms.

To begin with, Wirth identifies three physical characteristics of cities that have sociological consequences, or which can be seen as important variables in the development of the forms of urbanism as a form of "collective life," i.e., as a sociological fact. These physical characteristics related to specific social forms are the following: "(a) numbers of population, (b) density of settlement, (c) heterogenity of inhabitants," (1964:69). The relationship between each of these physical characteristics of the population and the forms of their social life is discussed by Wirth as follows:

(a) "numbers of population" and forms of collective life: Wirth, as the German sociologist, Georg Simmel (1858-1918), holds the view that numbers in sociological interaction have a geometrical effect on the nature of social interaction.[1] In other words, both

Wirth and Simmel hold that greater numbers of actual and potential interactions result in more diverse, i.e., differentiated and, therefore, more complex forms of social interaction. Thus, according to Wirth, a large population -- such as found in cities -- by the size of its numbers alone, will have a definite effect on the actual and the potential forms of social interaction in the group:

> Ever since Aristotle's Politics, it has been recognized that increasing the number of inhabitants in a settlement beyond a certain limit will affect the relationships between them and the character of the city. Large numbers involve, as has been pointed out, a greater range of individual variation. Furthermore, the greater the number of individuals participating in a process of interaction, the greater is the potential differentiation between them. (1964:70)

From such actual and potential increases in social interaction Wirth derives a number of changes in the organization of social life. First, according to Wirth, increases in the number of actual and potential social interactions tend to weaken previous form of social cohesion, i.e., they tend to weaken family ties. Secondly, and as a consequence of the multiplication of interactions, a differentiation of roles comes to dominate the social forms of the collective life of large populations. In other words, primary relations as the relatively homogeneous bases of social interaction give way to a more diversified or segmented base for the organization of this same interaction. An increase in the segmentation of social roles, according to Wirth, finds its cultural expression in "the sophistication and rationality generally ascribed to city-dwellers" (1964:71). This rationality, according to Wirth, reflects the rise of an increasingly more

instrumental and utilitarian view of social life; social life and associations come to be seen in terms of means to an end.

To regard social interaction and other human beings as mere means to an end, according to Wirth, leads to a psychological sense of isolation. This sense of isolation finds its social expression in "anomie" or what appears to be a decrease in social cohesiveness. For Wirth, as for Durkheim, "anomie" signifies a transformation in group solidarity.

Still considering the size of the population of an area, Wirth continues to infer a number of definite social forms which he links in succession, and which appear to him as emergent from each other in the order of their succession. In Wirth's view, the physical size of the population of an area serves a heuristic clue for the analysis of its social and cultural organization.

According to Wirth, then, the larger the size of the population of an area, the more likely that we can observe in conjunction an increase in social disorganization, a differentiation in forms of social interactions, in social roles and cultural expressions. The forms of this social disorganization are the following: an increase of association by interest rather than by sentiment, increase in role segmentation and therefore in individual differentiation, and a psychological sense of isolation. These changes in the number and forms of social interactions then are accompanied or, rather, followed by an increased level of "anomie" or the sense and the expressions of social isolation. Such actual and potential increases in social disorganization have to be countered by attempts at reorganization, i.e., by the

development of new forms of social control.

Hence, Wirth's claim that the size of the population of different geographical areas will be indicative of different institutional and political forms of control in the organization of their social life.

For example, an increase in role segmentation in the social life of a geographical area is expressed in new forms of the division of labour. In its institutional form, this change in the division of labour can be seen "in the proliferation of specialized tasks which we see in their most developed form in the professions" (Wirth, 1964:72). The organization of this diversity in the division of labour, in Wirth's view, rests on the development of "professional codes." In reality, these codes have been institutionalized in order to rationalize and control the "predatory relationships" characteristic of a division of labour predicated on competition and utilitarian goals and interests.

The political life of geographical areas characterized by a large population will also exhibit a segmentation, i.e., a segmentation of interests as well as a segmentation of the political processes by which it is possible to meet these interests. In reality, according to Wirth, an increase in the size of the population means a decrease in the possibility of individual participation in political life. The political life in areas characterized by a large number of inhabitants is based on and organized on forms of representation rather than direct participation. Political issues can only emerge through different forms of

representation: individual political interests or issues relating to the individual's immediate community life must be delegated to proper representational channels, or else they cannot be addressed at all. According to Wirth:

> In a community composed of a large number of individuals that cannot know one another intimately and cannot be assembled in one spot, it becomes necessary to communicate through indirect media to articulate individual interests by a process of delegation. Typically in the city, interests are made effective through representation. The individual counts for little, but the voice of the representative is heard with a deference roughly proportional to the numbers for whom he speaks. (1964:72-73)

In conclusion, according to Wirth, the size of the population of an area, or the physical characteristic (a) of social life, has a number of direct consequences of a sociological significance for the study of urbanism. Since the size of the population of a territory is one of the conditional characteristics of the development or urbanism, Wirth infers that urbanism, in a sense, is a logical consequence and a sociological expression of actual and potential increases in the size of populations. Of course, numbers alone are not quite sufficient in bringing about, or in expressing, the sociological forms of urbanism; the concentration, or the density of populations is the second conditional characteristic of the forms of expressions of urbanism "as a way of life."

(b) "density" and forms of collective life: According to Wirth, an increase in density or in the concentration of the population in a constant physical location produces differentiation and specialization in social organization and in its spatial distri-

bution. Density acts as a feedback mechanism on the social differentiation produced by sheer physical size, i.e., by the numbers of the populations in constant areas. To put it in Wirth's words: "...density thus reinforces the effect of numbers in diversifying men and their activities and in increasing the complexity of the social structure." (1964:73)

Density, then, has a number of effects on the urban individual, his psychological profile, his way of life and on the social and spatial organization of the city. First, following Simmel again[2], Wirth proposes that density actually increases social distance and produces different forms of orientation towards making social contacts:

> On the subjective side, as Simmel has suggested, the close physical contact of numerous individuals necessarily produces a shift in the media through which we orient ourselves to the urban milieu, especially to our fellow-men. Typically, our physical contacts are close but our social contacts are distant. The urban world puts a premium on visual recognition. We see the uniform which denotes the role of functionaries, and are oblivious to the personal eccentricities hidden behind the uniform. We tend to acquire and develop a sensitivity to a world of artifacts, and become progressively farther removed from the world of nature. (1964:73)

However, the social distance fostered by an increase of physical contacts in the city has a rather positive aspect according to Wirth; social distance fosters a greater sense of toleration for diversity. This increase in tolerance, according to Wirth, serves as the basis for the development of rational culture; it fosters a greater sense of objectivity in psychological and social affairs. Moreover, such tolerance of diversity makes way "toward the secularization of life." (Wirth, 1964:74)

Thus, the positive effects of density consist in fostering new forms of social associations and new methods by which consensus can be achieved in a differentiated and specialized form of social organization. However, following in the Simmelian tradition of the ambiguous value of new social developments, Wirth proposes that while density fosters tolerance and new forms of rationality by which consensus can be achieved in the face of such diversity, it also reinforces feelings of isolation, anomie and a sense of psychological loneliness:

> The close living together and working together of individuals who have no sentimental and emotional ties foster a spirit of competition, aggrandizement, and mutual exploitation. Formal controls are instituted to counteract irresponsibility and potential disorder. Without rigid adherence to predictable routines a large compact society would scarcely be able to maintain itself. The clock and the traffic signal are symbolic of the basis of our social order in the urban world. Frequent close physical contact, coupled with great social distance, accentuates the reserve of unattached individuals toward one another, unless compensated by other opportunities for response, gives rise to loneliness. (1964:74-5)

The effects of density on the spatial distribution of social forms in the city, according to Wirth, results in the segregation and the specialization of (1) economic and social functions such as the physical separation of work and residence; (2) of land use patterns such as the determination of land values according to their proximity to different desired, or undesired, economic, social or cultural functions and areas; and finally (3) the effects of density can be seen in the spatial segregation of cultural forms of associations as in the "mosaic" of ethnic and social worlds that comprise the city. In other words, according

to Wirth, the greater the density of the population of an area, the more likely it is to "resemble a mosaic of social worlds in which the transition from one to another is abrupt." (1964:74)

Wirth concludes that the sociological significance of density is to be located in the study of the segregation of the "mosaic of social worlds." Density, the physical characteristic and condition of certain forms of social life, produces the spatial segmentation of specialized social functions as well.

For Wirth, density as the physical variable of the conditions of social interactions, coupled with what he saw as the Darwinian law of the struggle for existence in the form of increasing competition for diminishing resources for an increased number of population over the same geographical area, constitutes one of the sociological variables of urbanism "as a way of life." In other words, density is held responsible, if not for the division of labour in general in social life, at least for the segregation, or the division of the social functions and the cultural values of urban space. Thus, the size and the density of the population of cities in Wirth's urban sociology form two of the three sufficient bases for the emergence of the distinct forms of social life that characterizes urbanism. However, in Wirth's schema, the third physical characteristics of urban populations, heterogeneity, is perhaps the most outstanding variable of modern urbanism. Thus, according to Wirth:

> The need for adding heterogeneity to numbers of population as a necessary and distinct criterion of urbanism might be questioned, since we should expect the range of differences to increase with numbers. In defense, it may be said that the city shows a kind and degree of heterogeneity of pop-

> ulation which cannot be wholly accounted by the law of large numbers or adequately represented by means of a normal distribution curve. Because the population of the city does not reproduce itself, it must recruit its migrants from other cities, the countryside, and -- in the United States until recently -- from other countries. The city has thus historically been the melting-pot of races, peoples, and cultures, and a most favorable breeding-ground of new biological and cultural hybrids. (1964:68-9)

Thus, for Wirth, heterogeneity is not merely the outcome of the effects of the size and density of the urban population, but is an objectively given social fact which has objective consequences for the social life of cities and, therefore, for urbanism.

(c) Heterogeneity and forms of collective life: For Wirth, the heterogeneity of the population of an area acts as a double variable of social life. On the one hand, heterogeneity reinforces the differentiating and segregating effects of size and density on the various forms of social life; on the other hand, heterogeneity fosters a 'leveling influence' on the actual cultural expressions of the diversity in social life. In other words, heterogeneity, like density, tends to disorganize traditional forms of social interaction, and therefore it breaks down traditional ties and fosters tolerance for the diversity of new forms of social interaction. While fostering tolerance, heterogeneity tends to 'depersonalize' the individual content of the diverse cultural forms by leveling the impact of their differences. This leveling, in turn, makes it easier to reorganize this diversity in order to integrate it into social life through a new form of organization. Hence, according to Wirth, heterogeneity tends to produce changes in the forms by which social order can be maintained.

Urban heterogeneity, according to Wirth, breaks down the traditional ways of social interaction. This has two effects: on the one hand, heterogeneity "tends to break down the rigidity of caste lines," but on the other hand, it tends to "complicate the class structure." (1964:75) Thus the diversity and apparent social mobility fostered by heterogeneity, in reality, introduces new forms and new rules for social status and social stratification. However, heterogeneity does present the urban individual with a chance for personal mobility among various cultural and social groups. This chance for individual mobility, according to Wirth, has a number of significant consequences for both the individual and for the social and political groups he/she associates with in the urban environment.

First, this new sense of social mobility, seemingly unhampered by the constraints of traditional norms and expectations, helps the urban individual to accept and tolerate a wide range of diversity of cultural forms of expressions. This, according to Wirth, "helps to account, too, for the sophistication and cosmopolitanism of the urbanite." (1964:75) Hence the individual comes to acquire a number of interests which cannot be satisfied or met by any single cultural or social group, or by any single institution. In order to meet his/her interests, the "urbanite" must associate with a number of institutions and groups that characterize a heterogenous city. As a consequence, according to Wirth, the individual's loyalties to groups and associations are fragmented: "...no single group has the undivided allegiance of the individual." (1964:75)

Because the individual forms temporary and fragmented associations with diverse groups, he/she never acquires a sense of his/her community, or comes to know, as Wirth has put it, "what is to his 'own best interest'" (1964:76). Hence, the urban individual has little or no control over the issues that concern his/her community and his/her role in effecting the development of the life of the community. His/her decisions and opinions about community life are increasingly based on information gathered from public sources such as the agencies of mass media. According to Wirth, heterogeneity fosters the development of mass communication. Mass communication, in turn, replaces traditional forms of participation in the cultural and political life of the community.

Wirth's investigation of the effects of heterogeneity on the forms of social life in cities concludes that heterogeneity increases the complexity of social life, as do size and density. Wirth's evaluation of the effects of heterogeneity on the emerging forms of individual and social life suggests a lament for the loss of genuine individuality. Moreover, Wirth gives a rather ambiguous account of the functions, effects and the value of mass media in coordinating the diversity of individual, cultural and political interests. In Wirth's essay, it is not entirely clear whether he argues that heterogeneity gives rise to these agencies of mass communication, or whether mass communication is responsible for the social disorganization observed in conjunction with the heterogeneity of the population.

Wirth recognized that the increasing complexity of social

life in cities was not merely a psychological phenomenon but, in fact, it rested on the division of labour in the productive and economic base of the city. However, this differentiation and specialization in the productive base and its coordination through the "pecuniary nexus" serve merely as an analogy for the illustration of the depersonalization of the psychological and cultural forms of expression of heterogenous populations whose needs can only be met by standardized services. In other words, the principles of mass production that operate in the "pecuniary nexus" in the economic base, according to Wirth, translate in the social and cultural realm into the mass production of services such as the standardization of forms by which needs and interests can be met. Moreover, the "leveling" of general services extends to cultural products and services, as well as to urban political processes:

> The services of the public utilities, of the recreational, educational, and cultural institutions, must be adjusted to mass requirements. Similarly, the cultural institutions, such as the schools, the movies, the radio, and the newspapers, by virtue of their mass clientele, must necessarily operate as leveling influences. The political process as it appears in urban life could not be understood unless one examined the mass appeals made through modern propaganda techniques. (1964:77)

For Wirth, then, the sociological significance of the physical characteristics of populations such as size, density, and heterogeneity, rests on their ability to bring about changes in the organization of social life. The sociological consequence of changes in the physical base of populations, according to Wirth, can be seen in the increasing dominance of cities over other forms of spatial organization of social life, and in the increas-

ing dominance of urbanism "as a way of life." Urbanism "as a way of life" appears to Wirth as a distinct form of the organization of social life. Its distinctiveness, however, is not the mere result of changes in the numbers, density and heterogeneity of populations. Urbanism as distinct mode of life is the consequence of the qualitative transformations in social interaction effected by the quantitative changes in the physical conditions of social interaction. Hence, the real unit of analysis in the investigation of the distinct nature of urbanism from other forms of social life consists of the analysis of the nature of social interaction in cities. For Wirth, urbanism represents a new form of organization of social interaction. Moreover, this change refers to changes in the modes of communication. In other words, urbanism signifies the emergence of a new basis for the organization and coordination of social life in general. The next section examines Wirth's hypotheses about the relationship between social evolution, communication and urbanism as a mode of life.

Urbanism and mass communication

Wirth's theory of urbanism provides a rather specific account of the cultural forms associated with the process of industrialization in North America. Urbanism as the cultural expression of the rationality that Wirth associated with the development of civilization is, in reality, the form of rationality associated with the social and economic organization of industrial production. In this sense, then, Wirth's theory of "urbanism as a way of life" is an account of the appearance of the effects of industrial production on social life in cities. Furthermore, this account carries a specific theory of social organization. This theory of social organization, in turn, rests on a communication model.

Unlike Park, Wirth appeared more reluctant to locate the systemic functions and developments of cultural forms, such as urbanism, for instance, in the development of the ecological organization of the community. While Wirth strongly suggested that the conditions for the existence and the actual manifestation of urbanism are certainly rooted in the physical and ecological organization of a community, he nevertheless insisted that urbanism is not merely the consequence of increases in the quantity of the physical factors of community life, but that it represents a qualitative change in the form and content of social interactions within the community. In other words, urbanism designates the nature of actual, as well as potential, social interactions in the community.

Wirth's insistence on the autonomy of urbanism as a distinct mode of social existence can be explained in terms of what he perceived to constitute the exigencies of sociological theory, and in terms of his assumptions about the nature of the determinations of social organization in general. On the one hand, in order to study urbanism as a distinct mode of life, and as a sociological fact, one must, of course, assume that the characteristics of such an entity are distinct, particular, and autonomous from other modes of collective life. One must assume that the characteristics of urbanism as a sociological phenomenon are distinguishable in form and function from other social facts. On the other hand, the autonomy of urbanism as a social fact in Wirth's theory rests on the assumption that the material conditions of life, while important in shaping the conditions of the forms of cultural expressions of social life, in the last analysis, do not determine the content or the effects of cultural expressions in collective life. Thus, in writing about the application of the ecological perspective to the study of social life, Wirth makes the following comments on

the role and the functions of the physical and economic aspects of social life:

> Material conditions of existence are, of course, important factors in the determination of social structure and personal characteristics and behavior. Subsistence, competition, the division of labour, spatial and temporal arrangements, and distributions are important aspects of the material conditions of existence and, in turn, of social life. But they are not the whole of social life. On the contrary, as it has been adequately demonstrated through numerous investigations, types of attitudes, personalities, cultural forms, and social organizations and institutions may have as significant an effect in shaping ecological patterns and processes as the latter have in conditioning social and social-psychological phenomena. (1964:186)

Social life, then, in Wirth's schema, cannot be explained in terms of its physical, biological, or economic characteristics alone. From the foregoing we can assume that for Wirth, the final causes of the organization of social life rest not on the material conditions of existence but, rather, on some principle of causation in the realm of causes and effects in the development of pure social facts. If it is not the material basis of social life that offers the explanation for the principles of the organization of social life and its prevailing order, then what is it that holds social life together and, moreover, how can we explain its apparent order? For Wirth, as for Park, social order rests on the degree and form of consensus on the goals and aims of collective life.

Wirth makes a distinction between the forms of organization that characterize the community and society, as did Park. For Wirth, the term "community" designates an ecological concept. The organization of the community, according to Wirth, rests on "organic relationships," i.e., on the symbiotic relations characteristic of plant and animal communities. These "organic relationships" are based on, and are characterized by, the

dynamics of the spatial proximity of the populations of territorial communities. In terms of human communities, these "organic relationships" include the "common life based upon the mutual correspondence of interests" (1964:166) of a geographical area.

While one of the preconditions of social life is the territorial organization characteristic of community life, the organization of social life rests on the contractual character of consensus above all other considerations. Thus, according to Wirth, "...society...has come to refer more to the willed and contractual relationships between men which, it has been assumed, are less directly affected than their organic relationships by their distribution in space." (1964:166)

For Wirth, the sociological analysis of the various relationships and contractual associations characteristic of human social life rests ultimately in the analysis of the "social group." For Wirth, "social group" designates a category in the analysis of collective life which includes both the "organic" forms of organization characteristic of the community, and the contractual associations characteristic of social life. The concept of the "social group" -- as the Durkheimian concept of society as a sui generis entity -- is capable of accounting for the"organic relationships" of the social life of communities, and for the contractual associations characteristic of society, as well as for the relationship between these two forms of organization in the establishment of social order. Or, to give Wirth's definition of the explanatory powers of the concept of the "social group":

> As here used, the word 'social group' is the generic term, whereas 'community' and 'society' are subordinate terms bearing correlative and reciprocal relations to one another....Every social group exists in a territorial, physical, and ecological, as well as in a social-psychological, bond, the two representing opposite poles toward

> one or the other of which every social group tends more or less. For purposes of getting an answer to some questions it is best to conceive of a social group as a community, for others, as a society. They are not two different kinds of group life but two aspects of all human group life. (1964:167-8)

However, unlike Durkheim's sui generis collective conscience which supplies the contents of individual life cultural and social expressions in collective life, Wirth's "social group" is, in fact, the crystallized representation of the processes of communication of individual human beings. Following Park and John Dewey, Wirth constructs a theory of society and social life based on a communication model. According to Wirth, "...what makes every community a society is apparently the fact that human social life invariably involves some degree of communication." (1964:168)

Society, according to Wirth, is based on some form of moral order. This moral order is the result of consensus. For Wirth, the study of social life rests ultimately on the investigation of the processes that bring about consensus. In other words, the study of social life implies the study of the role of communication in bringing about consensus.

Yet, as Wirth points out, consensus does not necessarily imply agreement on the content of issues and interests. Instead, consensus refers to "the established habit of intercommunication, of discussion, debate, negotiation and compromise, and the toleration of heresies, or even indifference, up to the point of 'clear and present' danger which threatens the life of the society." (1964:34) Consensus is a special characteristic of social life as opposed to community life. Consensus in society does not rest on the identity of interests and goals of those involved in communication but it rests on a mutual agreement to enter into and to participate in communication. This qualification of the nature of consensus plays an important role in Wirth's approach to the analysis of what he calls modern society as well as in his theory of urbanism as one of the major develop-

ments of the organization of modern social life.

Faced with having to explain the heterogeneity of cultural forms and the persistence of the moral order -- given the diversity of interests and cultural forms of expressions fostered by the density and the heterogeneity of populations involved in communicative interactions -- Wirth puts his communication model of social life to its theoretical task. Since Wirth has assumed that because consensus is the principle of social organization and of social order, and because consensus is achieved through participation in communicative interactions, the quantity of the channels of communication can act as some sort of indicators, or measures, of the mode of social organization and the degree of its order. Thus, given a certain quantitative change in the size, density, and the heterogeneity of the population of a geographical community, changes in the quality of communicative interactions that comprise the basis of the social organization of the "social group" will follow necessarily. These changes, in turn, will reflect and point to changing trends in the modes of consensus and, therefore, in the modes of social organization and the nature of social order.

These premises implied in Wirth's theory of social organization allow him to infer that mass communications are the products of demographics on the one hand, and on the other, that they function as the potential models for the reorganization of social order. In Wirth's social theory, mass communication signals the possibility of new modes of social organization:

> In mass communications we have unlocked a new social force of yet incalculable magnitude. In comparison with all previous social means for building or destroying the world this new force looms as a gigantic instrument of infinite possibilities for good or evil. It has the power to build loyalties, to undermine them, and thus by furthering or hindering consensus to affect all other sources of power. By giving people access to alternative views mass communication does of course open the door to the disintegration of all existing social solidarities,

while it creates new ones. (1964:38)

Of these new forms of "social solidarities" created and fostered by mass communication, urbanism appears as the most dominant mode of organization. Thus, in Wirth's schema, urbanism is partly the product of demographics, insofar as demographics provide the physical conditions and channels of communicative interactions, but mostly, and insofar as its sociological significance is concerned, urbanism is representative of a principle of a new form of organization of social life. In other words, "urbanism as a way of life" represents changes in the conditions of communications in social life. These changes, in turn, affect the modes of communications: changes in the modes of communication alter the basis and the character of social organization in general.

Wirth's theory of "urbanism as a way of life" rests on a communicational model of social organization. This model assumes that communication is, in some sense, an independent variable of social life in that it is both prior to and not determined by other social facts such as the division of labour, or the economic organization of social life, for instance. It assumes also that communication technologies are not directly related to the exigencies of the economic and social organization of production, but have been developed merely to facilitate the exchange of information. Moreover, Wirth's model of the relationship between mass communication and urbanism as a way of life suggests that the media of communication are in fact the neutral agents of the development of new modes of consensus and of the social organization of urbanism as a mode of group life.

Given the above, it is not surprising that Wirth's theory of urbanism fails to account for specific economic or social functions that communications technologies and the mass media might conceivably perform in the

processes of urbanization. It fails to account for these functions because it does not consider them as either the sociological factors of the historical development or the urban structure itself, nor as the functional variables of the social forms of the urban system. In other words, according to Wirth, the sociological significance of urbanism must be explained primarily in terms of its relationship with social life in general, i.e., in terms of its functions in establishing social order, or consensus, and not in terms of the 'material conditions' of social life.

Moreover, since Wirth's social theory implies a communicational model of social organization, it shouldn't be surprising that the sociological significance of urbanism is seen by him in the rise of mass media and mass communication. From Wirth's theory, it appears that mass communication can hardly be considered as an effect of the social organization of the production of social life. Rather, mass communication, in his perspective, must be seen as the actual and potential condition of this social organization of mass society itself. These assumptions about the nature of mass communications, and its role in establishing new forms of social life and new modes of social organization, have attracted a number of criticisms.[3] Most of these criticism have called into question the underlying premise of Wirth's social theory, namely that culture -- either as a system of communicative interactions or as a system of values -- is capable of generating new forms of social life and new modes of organization in social life. Of these criticisms, perhaps Manuel Castells' has been the sharpest (1976a; 1977). According to Castells, Wirth's attempt to analyze the sociological significance of the social forms of urban life, such as "urbanism as a way of life," only in terms of their cultural appearances, amounts to a mythical account of "the processes of acculturation to modern society, i.e., to American

society." (Castells, 1976a:38)

Wirth's theory of "urbanism as a way of life" is, in fact, a theory of social organization. As such, it does not provide a theory of the specificity of urban forms, i.e., of their specific historical development, or of their specific functions in the social system. Wirth's theory does not give us a distinct theoretical knowledge about distinct social phenomena that might characterize social life *in* cities. The last section of this chapter reviews Wirth's proposals for an urban theory and assesses their contribution to the sociological perspectives on the nature and organization of urban life.

Wirth's Urban Theory

Wirth's proposal for a general theory of urbanism is based on the assumption that urbanism is a distinct mode of social life, i.e., that it is a sociological fact of collective life. In order to identify the characteristics and the effects of this mode of life on social organization and social order in general, Wirth turned to an investigation of the social and cultural processes that occurred in cities. In other words, Wirth assumed that by systematizing the various social, cultural and political forms he found in the city, he could perhaps encapsulate the essential features of urbanism as a sociological fact of social life.

The systematic analysis of the series of phenomena he observed in cities rests on a number of inferences he has made from a number of simultaneous occurrences of certain physical characteristics of the population of North American cities and certain behaviours that also occurred in these cities. In other words, Wirth's urban theory is based on a series of conjectures about the relationship between the physical characteristics of the population

of cities and their social life.

To begin with, Wirth has assumed that the size, density and heterogeneity of urban populations are givens and not themselves the result of distinct processes of collective life. In other words, the physical characteristics of the city, its "ecological organization," is viewed by Wirth as an independent variable of urbanism as a social fact.[4] From this assumption it is easy to infer that the physical characteristics of the population of an area might give rise to new forms of social and cultural life, i.e., forms whose novelty is entirely dependent on the presence or absence of these physical variables.

Given Wirth's hypothesis we can assume, for example, that small and homogenous populations will show a preponderance of primary relations -- associations by sentiment rather than interest -- and individual participation in political decision-making in their social organization. Given this hypothesis, we can also assume that density and heterogeneity will always be accompanied by a differentiation of cultural forms and values, by secondary relations, by isolation and marginality, and by anomie and non-participation in political life.

However, a number of empirical research studies have failed to show a conclusive correlation between urbanism as a way of life and the size and density of populations.[5] Instead, these studies pointed out that these physical characteristics were the results of the processes of industrialization, i.e., of the necessity to concentrate populations around industry; of the distribution of goods and services; and of the increasing interdependence of economic functions in modern industry. The "independent variables" of Wirth's urbanism are, in reality, the effects of the division of labour in social life. The physical characteristics of urban forms,

such as the density of the population, for instance, are the specific effects of the historical development of the division of labour in production.

Moreover, Wirth's concept of urbanism , descriptive of cultural diversity, heterogeneity, anomie and depersonalization is, in fact, a reference to the specific social results of the historical processes of industrialization in cities. Thus Wirth's hypothesis that cities generate new forms of social life does not seem to account for the social processes that characterize urbanism as a distinct sociological fact. His theory fails to account for the specificity of urbanism because it fails to account for the historical and social processes that have produced the distinct appearance of "urbanism as a way of life."

While it undoubtedly appears that the city is the generator of new forms of social life, in fact, the city is only the locus of social change. Moreover, the fact that the city is the locus of social change is, in itself, an historical fact. As it has been pointed out by G. Sjoberg (1965a), while in industrial societies the city has been historically the center of communication -- and therefore one of the major conditions of social change -- the role of "urbanism" in shaping the nature and the course of social change requires "clearer theoretical and empirical documentation" than has been provided by the Wirthian inspired urban theory and urban research.

Thus Wirth's hypothesis confuses the content, or the appearance of cultural forms in the city, with the social history of the development and the functions of culture itself in social organization. In other words, Wirth's theory of "urbanism as a way of life" confuses the contents of the cultural forms observed in cities, with the general principles of social organization. Moreover, it confuses the forms of rationality associated

with the effectiveness of industrial production with the evolution of the inherent form of rationality of Western civilization itself.

While Wirth's theory of urbanism suggested a more systematic approach to the investigation of urban phenomena than was proposed by Park, his strategies for the development of a general theory of urbanism rested on a number of unexamined assumptions and conjectures about demographics and social life. As a result, Wirth's theory of urbanism appears to contribute more to an ideological discourse on culture in general than to a theory of the specific features of urbanism as a mode or form of social organization.

CONCLUSION

The investigations of urban social life proposed by Robert E. Park and Louis Wirth are concerned primarily with the problematic of the relationship between cultural forms and modes of social order. The city itself appears in their writings as the locus of the evolution of the relationship between culture and its sociological expressions.

In both Park's and Wirth's urban sociology, culture appears as the most essential social fact of the collective life of human societies. For both these sociologists culture constitutes the actual organizing principle of social order.

However, the concept of culture in both Park's and Wirth's theories of social organization does not appear as a truly "sociological fact" in the Durkheimian sense of the term. Both Park and Wirth seem reluctant to define the relationship between culture and social life from a sociological premise, i.e., to place it in the realm of social facts. Instead, the conceptual domain of culture in their social theories shifts from an ambiguous claim that human nature is both the actual and the theoretical

key to the understanding of culture and social organization (Park), to the claim that culture is the product of quantitative (i.e., physical) changes in the demographic characteristics of populations in constant areas (Wirth). In other words, culture is both an essential characteristic of human nature, and an effect of the ecological organization of societies, i.e., of the organization of the relations of humans to each other and to their environments.

"Urbanism" within this perspective appears, on the one hand, as a sociological expression of human nature (Park) and, on the other, it appears as a new mode of social organization (Wirth). The most general conclusions of the sociological inquiry into urban phenomena undertaken by Park and Wirth can be summed up as follows:

Cities represent a special aspect of social life; urbanism is a way of life that characterizes the social organization of humans. Urbanism, as a mode of group life, has evolved historically from what was seen to be a simpler form of social organization characteristic of rural communities. In this sense, then, urbanism is also indicative of a more complex form of social organization.

For Park, the territorial organization of urban life illustrated historical developments in social organization. According to Park, "...the evolution of society is...in one of its aspects, the evolution of a territorial organization" (1952:231). Moreover, the territorial organization of social life, in Park's schema, influences the conditions for social interactions by affecting the process of communication in social life. Since society, according to Park, "exists in and through communication" (1952:174), the variables that affect communication will also affect the processes by which social life is organized and ordered.

Territorial organization, then, is not only illustrative of the history of social organization, but it acts as one of the conditioning variables of the patterns of communication. Patterns of communication, in turn, appear as the cultural forms of social life. Thus, Park considers the territorial organization of social life such as the urban structure, for instance,as generative of new cultural forms.

Wirth attempted to take a more systematic approach to the investigation of the relationship between the physical aspects of social life and the organization of its cultural order than did Park. Wirth considered urbanism as a specific explanatory category for the history and the complexity of the dynamic of this relationship. For Wirth, urbanism as a mode of life in society appeared partly as a consequence of changes in the physical structure of the population in a territorial organization.

Thus, according to Wirth, one of the major sociological consequences of quantitative changes in the size, density and heterogeneity of populations is the emergence of urbanism as a dominant mode of group life. By linking the emergence of urbanism to demographics, Wirth claimed that urbanism as a sociological phenomenon can be thus quantified. Moreover, he assumed that the qualitative significance of urbanism to social organization in general can be predicted on the basis of demographics alone. It is in this sense, then, that Wirth concludes that the concentration of populations in aggregate masses in cities signals the arrival of a new form of social organization: mass society.

In conclusion, for both Park and Wirth, the characteristics of urbanism served as the vehicles for theorizing about social organization and its changing modes . Both sociologists held firmly that the order of social life depends on a set of shared cultural values or, at least, on an agree-

ment and willingness to tolerate and integrate a certain degree of differences in goals implied by competing value systems. In other words, the basis of social organization and the degree of its order, for both Park and Wirth, consisted of the "moral order" of social life, or of consensus.

The influx of people into the cities of industrial America appeared to Park and Wirth as a potential threat to the previously established modes of maintaining consensus and, therefore, as a threat to the prevailing order of social organization. As a result, the concerns of their urban theory have been developed in response to what seemed to them as the impending problems of the potential "social disorganization" of traditional life. For Park, and even more so for Wirth, the growing masses of cities, their heterogeneity and the increasing density of urban life, all carried a sociological significance that reached beyond the limits of city life. These changes in the physical structure of social life in cities signified both the disorganization of traditional social life and its reorganization by the emergence of a new form of culture: urbanism.

The influx of large numbers of people into cities, their concentration into "masses" -- these specific effects of the historical processes of industrialization -- seemed to Park and Wirth as an effect of the evolution of the cultural organization of social life. For these sociologists, urbanism as a mode of life appeared as a phase in the evolution of forms of culture, or in modes of social organization.

However, their concept of culture is not exactly a social category in the Durkheimian sense of the term. Park and Wirth have discussed the sociological functions of culture in terms of ecological analogies. By relating the specific cultural contents of social life in the cities of industrial America to ecological processes in general, Park and Wirth have transformed

both the concept of culture in general and the concept of urbanism in particular into an ahistorical and sociologically non-specific category of analysis. As a result, their urban theories fail to provide a specific theoretical understanding of the organization of urban social and spatial forms. Moreover, they also fail to contribute to an understanding of the conceptual boundaries of the term urban. In short, they do not provide an understanding of what objects and events ought to be considered as distinctly urban.

What the urban theories of Park and Wirth do provide is a special account of the cultural expressions of the effects of industrialization on social life and its spatial distribution in cities in North America. Manuel Castells (1977), one of the more insistent critics of the Chicago school or urban sociology, claims that the Chicago school of sociology as conceived by Park and Wirth fails to recognize that culture is specified not by the logic of ecological processes as such, but by specific historical and social processes (1976a; 1976b; 1977). According to Castells, the theories of urban culture developed by what he sees as "the culturalist perspective" are in fact ideological accounts of acculturation to industrial society. In other words, according to Castells, "urbanism as a way of life" describes the culture of the social organization of industrial production:

> ...the fact remains that 'urban culture' as it is presented, is neither a concept nor a theory. It is, strictly speaking, a myth, since it recounts, ideologically, the history of the human species. Consequently, the writings on 'urban society' which are based directly on this myth, provide the key-words of an ideology of modernity, assimilated, in an ethnocentric way, to the social forms of liberal capitalism. (1977:83)

However, within the traditions of the Chicago school of urban theorizing, an attempt was made to develop a more systematic approach to the

relationship between culture, social organization and urban life. This approach was developed from Park's proposals to apply the methods of plant and animal ecology to the investigation of the dynamics of the relationship between social and territorial organization. The second part of this thesis examines the results of this attempt. The following three chapters discuss the contributions of urban theorists who based their analysis of the relationship between social organization and urban forms on the ecological perspective inspired by Park. These theorists are Roderick D. McKenzie, Ernest W. Burgess, and Leo F. Schnore. Chapter 6 presents a particular application of the ecological analysis of the relationship between the urban structure and the social structure proposed in a study conducted by Michel Boisvert (1978). Part II concludes with a general discussion of the contributions of the ecological perspective to the social study of urban phenomena.

PART II

"URBANISM" AS THE ECOLOGY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The culturalist perspective on urban life advocated by Park and Wirth, discussed in Part I, suggested that cities are the birth places of new forms of culture. Urbanism as a new cultural form, in their analysis, provides the basis for a new mode of social organization: that of mass society. The culturalist perspective, however, is representative of only one form of explanation of social life in general, and of social life in cities in particular within the theoretical traditions of the Chicago school of urban sociology.

Against the tendency to see spatial organization and the development of urban social systems as the expressions of (a) the principle of the evolution of the inherent rationality of Western civilization, and (b) of the evolution of different modes of consensus as the principle of social order, the Chicago school generated a more material framework for the explanation of the territorial organization of social life. This framework centered on the explanation of the dynamics of the relationship between humans and their biological, geographical, economic and cultural organization. More specifically, this approach represented a serious attempt at the specification of the processes by which the spatial distribution of social life was organized. The major concerns of this inquiry centered around the investigation and the description of the functions such as the causes and effects of the organization of the spatial distribution of social activities. This particular perspective sought to provide a descriptive explanation for the material causes and effects of both patterns of social organization, and of its patterns of distribution in space.

Within this orientation to the study of social life in space, the city ceased to appear as an independent variable in the development of new social forms; instead, the city assumed the role of a dependent variable of the

dynamics of social organization. As a result, in these explanations, urbanism as a social phenomenon no longer signifies the arrival of a new mode of social order, but is itself an effect of the dynamics of social organization. In this perspective, then, urbanism is explained as a "sociological fact" that is caused by, and is functional in, the ecological processes of social organization in space.

Moreover, unlike the culturalist perspective, the materialist approach does not consider social organization as a given fact. On the contrary, since social organization forms one level of organization -- in the dynamics of the relationship between humans and their environment, its organization cannot be presupposed, but must be explained in terms of its functions in the organization of this relationship. According to one of the most ardent advocates of this perspective, Leo Schnore (1965a), organization -- whether social, cultural, economic, or spatial -- is the explanandum in human ecology. In other words, while the culturalist perspective assumed that social organization is given by its apparent content, the materialist approach stresses that the organization of social life must be explained.

Lastly, the materialist perspective on the relationship between social life and its spatial organization does not regard culture as an independent system of values, set of psychological dispositions or forms of individual behaviour. Instead, it considers culture in terms of a process; in terms of the methods and forms by which humans interact with and adapt to their environments. For the materialist perspective, culture is a function in the dynamics of the relationship between humans and their environments.

In the Chicago school of urban sociology, it was Roderick McKenzie, a contemporary of Park's, who laid the foundations for the ecological analysis of urban phenomena. McKenzie's contribution to urban theory is

discussed in Chapter 3. While McKenzie's ecological analysis contributed to the understanding of the dynamics of the relation between the social forms and the natural environment of humans, it was Ernest Burgess, the third pioneer of American urban sociology, who attempted to apply this analysis specifically to urban growth. Chapter 4 presents Burgess' classic hypothesis on the radial expansion of cities. Chapter 5 discusses Leo Schnore's integration of the ecological analysis into a tradition of urban theorizing. A critical discussion of the application of the ecological perspectives of the Chicago school in the analysis of urban phenomena is undertaken in the Conclusions. This discussion attempts to locate the ecological perspective in a sociological tradition developed by Emile Durkheim's social morphology.

CHAPTER 3 R.D. McKENZIE: THE ECOLOGICAL DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL LIFE

One of the dominant perspectives in human ecology insisting on a continuity in the dynamics of the relations that organize biological and social systems has been developed from the works of Roderick D. McKenzie (1885-1940).

McKenzie's project was to develop a coherent schema that could account for the ecological principles of the relationship between the cultural, the economic and the natural, or geographical, processes of social organization. In order to do this, McKenzie transformed Park's rather vague and all inclusive concept of human ecology into a heuristic mode of analysis of social life. McKenzie recognized the potential of Park's proposal for the ecological investigation of human communities as a fruitful analysif of the specific ecological processes that operate in the social realm. In McKenzie's view there was a need for such an approach, since traditional geography has failed to give an understanding of the functions of the environment in social life (1968:19). According to him, geography was concerned only with the characteristics of "places" in human life, rather than considering the environment of social life as a "location," i.e., as a "position of relation" (1968:19). In McKenzie's view, human ecology was to fill the void left by geography by investigating the processes that transform a "place" into a "location" and a "location" into a "position" of relation in an ecological system.

According to McKenzie, to understand the nature of "place" as the geographical, social and cultural environment, one had to understand the dynamics of its constitution and the processes of its transformations. With this in mind, he has designed a number of concepts by which ecological

principles of transformation could be operationalized. These concepts were: (1) ecological distribution, or "the spatial distribution of human beings and human activities resulting from the interplay of forces which effect a more or less conscious or, at any rate, dynamic and vital, relationship among units comprising the aggregation" under study (1968:20); (2) the ecological unit, or a particular ecological distribution "which has a unitary character sufficient to differentiate it from surrounding distributions" (1968:21); (3) mobility and fluidity, or the rate of change in an ecological organization of units; (4) distance, or the measure of fluidity in change and, finally, (5) ecological processes such as concentration, specialization, centralization, recentralization, invasion and succession in an ecological "constellation" (1968:21-32).

The first four concepts referred to what one might loosely define as the structure of the ecological organization of an aggregate under investigation. In other words, these concepts are the taxonomical elements for the description of the structures that make up an "ecological unit." The concept of the"ecological process," on the other hand, is meant to cover the analysis of the interaction, or the dynamic of these structures and their constitution. The concept of the "ecological process" deals with the analysis of the transformations of the ecological structure of such "units" as the geographical, the cultural, the economic and the political by the redistribution, centralization, specialization, decentralization of the elements of their structure.

McKenzie sought the kind of precision in locating the specificity of the social uses and functions of the territorial organization of human life that appeared to be lacking in the cultural perspective discussed previously. This attempt at precision was not merely an idle theoretical exercise; it

was substantiated by large-scale research studies in which these operationalized ecological concepts were put to the test. However, a number of critiques of human ecology suggest that McKenzie's contribution to the theoretical understanding of the specific relationship between social processes and their spatial organization was much more modest than his contribution to the inventory of research data (see Reissman, 1964; Sjoberg, 1965a and Castells, 1977).

It has been argued that one of the theoretical weaknesses of the ecological perspective advanced by McKenzie is a tendency to collapse a number of different sets of relations and distinct levels of organization(i.e., different sets of relations) into a single principle of ecological processes in general. For instance, Castells (1977) argues that this form of reductionism results from an unexamined reliance on the notion of "the struggle for existence," a notion abducted from biological explanations of organic life forms.

According to the critiques of human ecology (Reissman, 1964; Sjoberg, 1965a and Castells, 1977), the notion of "the struggle for existence" functions as the genetic principle ofsocial history, of culture and of economics and politics. In this sense, then, it functions as a self-evident and a priori category of analysis of organic and social life. According to the critiques of this perspective, the social philosophy implicit in human ecology assumes that "the struggle for existence" is a sufficient condition and cause of the complexity of the organization of human social and cultural life (see Reissman, 1964; and Castells, 1977). Moreover, this assumption needs no verification, it is an a priori principle. In other words, the notion of "the struggle for existence" describes the final causes of all forms of organic life in all its manifestations. But is this really the

case in McKenzie's ecological perspective on forms of social organization?

It is undoubtedly true that Mckenzie, the founder of this perspective in human ecology, has resorted to an extensive borrowing of biological terms in his description of the"units" of the ecological organization of social life. It is also true that he has used these terms repeatedly as analogies in his analysis of social processes, but he has employed them as metaphors and not as statements of fact. Any argument claiming that he regarded biological terms as descriptive of the essential nature of social facts -- social relations -- is not necessarily warranted: such a conclusion is more a matter of inference brought to his theory than a matter of necessary implication following from his theoretical position.

The merits of McKenzie's theoretical contribution to urban theory, or to the investigation of social organization for that matter, must be seen in the elaboration of his position on the dynamic nature of the different levels of organization of human communities. His alleged "biologism" -- his use of the principle of "the struggle for existence" -- must be put to the test in the theoretical context in which it functions as a form of explanation.

Ecological Processes of Human Communities

In his essay, "The Ecology of Institutions" (1964[1936]), McKenzie states quite clearly how he intends to apply the study of natural history, ecology, to the study of human communities. Traditional ecological approaches -- those involving animal and plant communities -- distinguish between two distinct levels of organization, i.e., two different sets of relations, in an ecological complex: (1) the relationship between the "organism" and the "environment," and (2) the relationship between

"organisms" of the same and of different species. According to McKenzie, these distinctions apply to the organization of human communities as well.

However, in the case of human communities, the relation of "organism-to-organism" appears to pose a more complex set of problems, both in definition and in analysis. The relation of human social "organisms" is intricately more complex and the least like the organization of relations characteristic of plant and animal communities. In human societies, according to McKenzie, such relations as "competition, division of labour, commensalism, parasitism, etc." appear as consciously controlled, determined, and regulated relations that transcend the constraints of what one might consider as the 'natural' environmental factors of human social life:

> The forms in which these fundamental relations [relations of organism to organism] express themselves in human society, unlike their natural prototypes in plant and animal communities, are largely determined by the culture and collective controls of the human group concerned. It is for this reason that the diversities and uniformities in the patterns and types of symbiotic relations among different human groups are more pronounced that in the communities of lower organisms. A Chinese village differs markedly from an American village although the physical environment of the two may be strikingly alike. On the other hand, the American village in Alaska tends to duplicate in spatial form and economic structure its sister villages in Florida and Southern California. Stated in general terms, plant and animal communal types are related to conditions imposed by the physical environment, whereas human communal types are more closely associated with the characteristics of the cultural setting. (McKenzie, 1968: 103-4)

The "culture" of which McKenzie speaks, however, is not to be understood as a system of values, i.e., different sets of behaviour patterns and/or symbolic representations. Culture, in McKenzie's perspective, is not a reference for the mere mental characteristics of human communities. Quite on the contrary, McKenzie's "culture" designates material culture;

in this sense, it describes a process of organization of social life. Moreover, McKenzie's use of the term "culture" closely follows its early function in the English language as a term denoting the "tending of something, basically crops or animals."[1] Thus, material culture refers to a process rather than a social product such as a system of values, attitudes and sets of behaviour patterns.

The units comprising the processes of the material culture of human communities, according to McKenzie, have evolved in complexity from the individual in simpler societies, to institutions in more complex societies, i.e., societies characterized by a more complex material culture. Thus, human ecology, or the application of an ecological perspective to the study of social organization, must consider these units, i.e., social institutions and their relation to material culture, as its object of investigation.

The relationship between developments in the material culture and the evolution of social institutions, according to McKenzie, has both a spatial expression, i.e., it is always organized in space, and it has a temporal sequence which is determined by the complexity of the material culture[2] rather than the historical time of the individuals who are its members:

> The growth of material culture has at once necessitated and facilitated the rise of social institutions. The machines, mechanical energy, and other technological achievements of civilization have required spatially established centers for their accumulation and use. Thus, the institution has acquired a physical structure and a definite locus in space. It likewise has a continuum in time which is not identical with that of its operative personnel. It is less mobile than the individual and less stable than the community, and it has come to constitute the fundamental unit in the ecological organization of modern society. (McKenzie, 1968:105) [Emphasis added.]

The social institution, as a form of material culture, assumes the role of the fundamental unit for the study and the analysis of the dynamic of

human communities. In other words, social institutions, according to McKenzie, are the ecological units of social organization.

Competition as an Ecological Process

In the analysis of the dynamics of the spatial expression of the organization of institutions and social life, i.e., the processes by which "institutions acquire a physical structure and locus in space" (1968:105), McKenzie employs a number of crucial concepts borrowed from a biological context. Of these, perhaps the most important concept that assumes a crucial role in the analysis and explanation of the spatial distribution of the organization of social life is the concept of competition as "the struggle for survival."

In discussing the spatial arrangements of cities in North America, McKenzie observes that this arrangement has shown a consistent tendency towards a distribution analogous to Burgess' "concentric zone" model of urban growth.[3] It appears that McKenzie's interpretation of this model is based on a strong suggestion that this tendency is, in fact, natural; it reflects the logic of the ecological processes of competition, or the struggle for the survival of certain institutions:

> While this pattern [concentric zones] is perhaps more ideal than real, it roughly describes the typical form of institutional arrangement in our large American cities. Moreover, it has come about through the operation of natural forces rather than through conscious design. Institutional competition involves, among other things, struggle for the more favorable site locations. Out of this competition institutions become geographically arranged according to function and rent-paying capacity. (McKenzie, 1968:108-9)

Such an unexamined assumption or, rather, a transposition of what appears to be a biological concept into the explanation of the social realm,

undoubtedly substantiates Castells' objections to the reductionist tendencies of the human ecology school in its analyses of the relationship between space and society. It appears that McKenzie is opting for a vulgar materialist explanation of the dynamics of the spatial expression of social organization. In brief, McKenzie reduces material culture to a biological principle of general competition. Moreover, it also appears that he has failed to verify this principle; he does not attempt to prove that the struggle for existence is a fact in the spatial distribution of institutions, but assumes that this distribution is predicated on this principle.

However, this is not quite the case in McKenzie's development of the concept of competition as "the struggle for survival." McKenzie does attempt to indicate -- even if not too clearly -- what the principle of "the struggle for survival" implies in the spatial distribution and social organization of institutions. His perspective on competition for a location is not a theory of the 'individual's struggle,' or the theory of "the survival of the fittest." McKenzie points out, rather emphatically, that the concept of institutional location describes, in reality, a system or a network of relations among institutions; hence, a location site implies a position in this system.

To develop this argument, McKenzie alludes to the findings of industrial surveys. These surveys have found that the survival rate for certain single institutions, such as industries, factories, commercial or service institutions, etc., is directly related to the patterns of their dispersion in space (McKenzie, 1968:109). To McKenzie, these findings prove that there is in fact a "growing interdependence among institutional units" which is a crucial factor in their survival or potential for competition (1968:110). Therefore, the question of competition as a concept denoting

"the struggle for survival" emerges as more specific in the examination of the spatial distribution of social institutions; once the "unit" ("individual") of survival is defined as a network of institutions, i.e., the individual plus its environment, the concept of competition as "the struggle for survival" acquires a new explanatory range:

> To comprehend fully the forces involved in institutional location we must take cognizance of the vital linkages which exist among the diversified units. In other words, we must take the ecological approach. The spatial patterning of institutions within a community or throughout a nation is not merely the function of the communication system; it is also related to the ties of association which evolve among the institutions themselves. (1968:109)

Summary

Obviously, McKenzie's ecological perspective treats the dynamics of the relationship between space and society on two distinct levels specified by plant and animal ecology: (1) on the one hand, it regards the relation of "organism-to-organism" as crucial; and (2) on the other hand, it takes into account the relationship between the"organism and the environment." In the first case, the relation between "organisms" in human communities, according to McKenzie, is predicated on and constrained by the development of the material culture of human beings, i.e., by the complexity of the organization of the modes by which they produce and reproduce their social organization. In the second case, the relationship between "organism and environment," in the case of human beings, refers to more than their connections to their physical environment; it also designates a complex of relations in which certain units of analysis, such as institutions, for instance, are transformed from units in one system into the environment of other units. In this sense, the ecological perspective advocated by

McKenzie suggests a method of analysis of the complexity of social life and the organization of its physical distribution in space. This method stresses the relational conditioning characteristics of social organization. Put simply, McKenzie's perspective claims that social organization is a dependent variable of certain biological processes.

McKenzie's emphasis on the interdependence of social institutions in what he defined as "modern society" suggests that the notion of competition as "the struggle for survival" performed a similar function as did Durkheim's concept of the role of specialized functions in maintaining social solidarity (see Durkheim, 1933). McKenzie's notion of competition as "the struggle for survival," employed in the description of the organization of the spatial distribution of social institutions, functions more as a descriptive metaphor of certain processes than as a final determining principle of social organization itself.

While descriptive metaphors are hardly the sufficient ingredients of a theory in the full sense of the term, McKenzie's analogies had the merit of drawing attention to the complexity of the processes involved in urbanization. In fact, as Reissman suggests (1964), the ecological perspective advocated by McKenzie and others in the Chicago school of urban sociology marked the rise of a distinct mode of urban theorizing from other forms of social theorizing:

> Human ecologists, by the productivity of their research and by the caliber of their theoretical essays, have contributed much to our understanding of the city. In spite of its errors, ecology still is the closest we have come to a systematic theory of the city. So potent and so pervasive was the ecological point of view that it is fair to say that urban sociology in America really began with the ecologists, who combined theory with empirical research. (Reissman, 1964:93)

Reissman's suggestion, however, contributes to the argument that urban

theory is always an historically specific account of social formations (see Castells, 1977). The fact that American urban sociology is characterized by the ecological perspective can be explained more readily in terms of the historical context of American social theorizing. In other words, human ecology is not merely the result of the peculiarities of American social discourse. Rather, it reflects an historical form of theoretical resolution in the course of social inquiry in general. American urbanization up to the first half of the twentieth century did not occur over previous historical urban forms, as it did in Europe, for instance. Urban growth in North America spread in space unfettered by the obsolescence of previous urban forms. This unhampered expansion in space, the influx of people into cities, migrants and immigrants alike, offered the perfect laboratory for the study of the processes of urban growth. To sociologists whose enthusiasn for scientific objectivity was coupled with a lack of understanding of the historical nature of social life, this process of urban growth appeared to contain the universal principle of all forms of urban expansion.

To Ernest Burgess (1886-1966), the next theorist to be discussed, the processes of American urban growth seemed to reveal certain ecological patterns that could possibly serve as the universal patterns of all urban growth. The next chapter presents Burgess' hypothesis of patterns of urban growth.

CHAPTER 4 ERNEST W. BURGESS: THE ECOLOGY OF URBAN GROWTH

The third most influential urban theorist to have emerged from the first publication of The City (1967[1925]), the book that marked the birth of American urban sociology, was Ernest W. Burgess. Burgess' ecological description of the relationship between the five "natural" zones of Chicago since its inception in the 1920's has served as the target of many critical debates on the nature of urban growth. The applicability of Burgess' model of urban growth by radial expansion in a cross-cultural setting has been questioned often (see Schnore, 1965b), as has been its alleged claim to represent a "natural," i.e., ecological, process of growth inherent in all forms of urbanization.

Burgess' model of urban growth as the progressive succession of a number of concentric zones is based on some of the ecological principles discussed in the previous chapter. According to Burgess (1968[1929]), the expansion of the urban system shows the processes of differentiation characteristic of all biolgoical organization. In other words, urban expansion reflects the specialization of functions and their increasing interdependence. In Burgess' view, a greater distinction in the appearance of the physical areas of the urban structure, i.e., a larger number of distinct zones, necessarily implies a greater relation of interdependence between the social functions performed by these physical areas in the social life of the urban system. In other words, Burgess is suggesting that distinctions in the characteristics of the physical structure of community life reflect an increased complexity in the organization of social life. It is in this sense, then, that Burgess has proposed to link the investigation of urban expansion with the investigation of social organization:

> How far is the growth of the city, in its physical and technical aspects, matched by a natural but adequate re-adjustment in the social organization? What, for a city, is a normal rate of expansion, a rate of expansion with which controlled changes in the social organization might successfully keep pace? (1967:53)

In attempting to find answers to these questions about the relationship between the expansion of the physical structure of the city and its social organization, Burgess has arrived at the formulation of the "concentric zone" model of urban growth.

The "Concentric Zone" Model of Urban Growth

Burgess' contribution to urban theory and to a sociological understanding of the relationship between space and society has been made by his now famous "concentric zone" model of urban growth.

Setting out from the premise of human ecology that differentiation, i.e., specialization in functions, in ecological complexes are reflective of an increase in interdependence between the parts of the complex, Burgess assumed that the different areas, or zones, of cities are functionally related in that the emergence of one is usually followed by a series or succession of the others:

> A human community, like a biological organism, grows by the process of subdivision. As a city grows, its structure becomes more complex and its areas more specialized. Increasing differentiation, however, involves more rather than less cooperation and interdependence. The specialized areas of the city, as the central retail business district, the industrial community, the residential neighbourhood, and suburban towns and villages are all organic parts of the city, because of rather than in spite of their differentiated functions. (1968:113)

In the light of his assumption about the organic interdependence of the functions of different urban areas, Burgess' proposal to investigate

urban growth purports to be a scientific analysis of the relations between the patterns of physical expansion and the patterns of social mobility in human territorial communities. Given his further assumptions about the scientific basis of ecological investigations in general, Burgess concluded that the ecological investigation of land-use patterns in the city will show universal patterns of the physical expansion of social life, or of social organization in space. Moreover, Burgess also assumed that these universal patterns of relations between physical and social expansion -- i.e., between the physical expansion of the urban structure and changes in social mobility -- can be quantified, measured and predicted by statistical means:

> ...studies of urban areas, insofar as they have to do with the location and movement of individuals, groups, and institutions in space and time, open up a new field of social science research, namely that of human ecology. Ecological studies seek to define the processes determining social organization which result from the distribution and movement of individuals over a given area, uncomplicated so far as it is possible to determine by the effects of communication and culture. Once these processes are defined, it is then possible to apply statistical procedures to the measurement of these processes and to establish quantitative indices of the type and degree of social organization of the different local communities of the city. (1968:137-8)

However, prior to the operationalization of the ecological hypothesis of the functional relation between the physical mobility and distribution of the population of cities and their forms of social organization, Burgess delimited some of the crucial "factors and forces" that influence the formation of the urban structure. Of these he has isolated three as decisive in the shaping of the urban structure: (1) the "radial character of city growth," (2) variations in the geographical characteristics of the city, and (3) the street plan of cities, "including the structure of the local transportation system" (1968:113). These three "factors and forces" form the

physical base of the processes of social life in cities; they are the determining ecological variables of the physical distribution of social organization in cities. However, for Burgess, one of these variables seems to carry more determinations of the spatial distribution of social life than do the others. This determining variable of the urban social system is the radial expansion of distinct urban areas.

Burgess, based on his investigation of the urban structure of Chicago in the 1920's, has identified five major urban areas arranged in concentric zones that radiate outward from the city center. The description and classification of these five zones constitute the basis of Burgess' "concentric zone" model of urban growth.

In the literature on the development of urban theory, it has been customary to reproduce the contents of Burgess' description of the five zones. For some, such as Schnore (1965b), for example, the reproduction of Burgess' model serves as a point for the critical comparison between their research designs, based on Burgess' hypothesis of radial expansion, and residential mobility, and between the results of their research that do not seem to substantiate this hypothesis. Following in the traditions of the critical assessment of Burgess' "concentric zone" model of urban growth, this thesis presents a detailed synopsis of the sociological contents of his five zones:

Zone I: "The Central Business District"

Physical and Social Characteristics:

1. The center of commercial, social and civic life;
2. The center of the retail district;
3. Surrounding this district is the "less well-known Wholesale District composed of warehouses

and storage buildings.

Zone II: "The Zone in Transition"

Physical Characteristics:

1. This zone is characterized by physical deterioration "caused by the encroaching business and industry from Zone I" on the residential area. The belt of this Zone divides the factory district on its inner side, and the "retrogressing neighbourhoods," "immigrant colonies," "rooming houses," "homeless-men areas," "resorts of gambling, bootlegging, sexual vice, and of breeding places of crime" on the other side.

Social Characteristics:

2. In sociological terms, the social form corresponding to this Zone is an example of social disorganization par excellence: "In this area of physical deterioration and social disorganization our studies show the greatest concentration of cases of poverty, bad housing, juvenile delinquency, family disintegration, physical and mental disease."

Zone III: "The Zone of Independent Workingmen's Homes"

Physical Characteristics:

1. This is the zone of "second immigrant settlements." It is a residential zone, "...its residents are those who desire to live near but not too close to their work."

Social Characteristics:

2. The social structure of this zone is composed of what one might characterize either as the lower middle-class, as "the upper working class," depending on one's view, or theory, of social mobility. Burgess' description of life in the third Zone is as follows: "While the father works in the factory, the son and daughter typically have jobs in the Loop, an area of Chicago, attend dance halls and motion pictures in the bright-light areas, and plan upon marriage to set up homes in Zone IV."

Zone IV: "The Zone of Better Residences"

Physical Characteristics:

1. This zone consists of a mixture of apartments, single homes, residential hotels and small businesses. In other words, according to Burgess, this is the residential zone of "the great middle-class of native-born Americans."

Social Characteristics:

2. The population of this zone, then, is the American middle class, it is a heterogenous population and does not exhibit the signs of social disorganization that characterized Zone II. According to Burgess, "...in this zone men are outnumbered by women, independence in voting is frequent, newspapers and books have

wide circulation, and women are elected to the state legislature."

Zone V: "The Commuters' Zone"

Physical Characteristics:

1. This zone consists of small cities, hamlets, towns and they are what Burgess calls "dormitory suburbs," since its residents commute to the Central District for work.

Social Characteristics:

2. According to Burgess, this zone is characterized by a family life dominated by women, since the men commute and only use this zone as a dormitory. To quote Burgess: "Thus the mother and wife become the center of family life. If the Central Business District is predominantly a homeless-men's region, the rooming house district, the habitat of the emancipated family, the area of first-immigrant settlement, the natural soil of the patriarchal family transplanted from Europe, the Zone of Better Residences with its apartment houses and residential hotels, the favorable environment for the equalitarian family, then the Commuters' Zone is without question the domain of the matricentric family." (1968:114-7)

Rather than describing the manifest tendencies of the universal form of urban growth, the contents of Burgess' five zones are merely descriptive

of the physical structure of a specific city in history. These contents are also descriptive of the five social areas of Chicago in the 1920's. As an historical description and as a cross-sectional representation of the social areas of Chicago in the 1920's, Burgess' model offered an important source to those wishing to do research in Chicago, or to those wishing to do comparative studies on urban growth. However, as a sociological analysis of the processes of urban growth in general, Burgess' model offers a much more modest contribution.

It is true that Burgess did qualify his presentation of the five zones of concentric radial expansion by claiming that, of course, other variables play an important part in determining the urban structure. These variables are geographical location, the topography of the urban area, the street plans of the city and transportation routes (1968:113). However, he did claim that the processes of radial expansion were the most characteristic processes of urban growth. Thus, by observing an historical occurrence, i.e., that North American cities in the 1920's were growing by radial expansion and by a certain regular pattern of succession in social areas, Burgess, by an inferential leap, has assumed that radial expansion is the universal characteristic of urban growth in general.

It is in this sense, then, that Burgess' description of the processes of urban growth by radial expansion and by the succession of the five zones shows a specific historical development in North America more evidently than it shows an evident ecological process of urban growth. Thus, rather than a contribution to the analyses of historical urban sociology, Burgess' "concentric zone" model remains an important chapter in the history of urban sociology.

Burgess' "concentric zone" model of urban growth has been criticized

for the broadness of its generalizations (see Quinn, 1950; and Schnore, 1965b). However, reducing the broadness of his generalizations to specifics would not extend or improve the range of its explanatory powers. The generalizations contained in Burgess' model are not the result of too much abstraction; on the contrary, these generalizations are based on a number of specific unexamined assumptions about the history of economic and social processes and their relations to urban growth. As it has been pointed out by Quinn (1950)[1], Burgess' "concentric zone" model for urban growth,if it were to function as a universal model, requires that all urban formations should show a number of consistent demographic, social, economic and cultural characteristics.

According to Quinn (1950), one of the more influential critics of the Burgess hypothesis, Burgess' zones depend entirely on the existence of differentiation and specialization in productive and economic activities in the urban system. Thus, "the identification of the central zone as a retail district and the characterization of the inner part of the 'Zone in Transition' as a factory district indicate that those areas depend directly on the presence of business and industry" (Quinn, 1950:121). The existence of such specialization in the social contents of the zones, however, is not merely an effect of the process of differentiation in ecological terms but is the result of the historical processes of industrialization.

Quinn (1950) suggested a number of amendments to the "concentric zone" hypothesis that would increase the scope of its applicability. One of these was the suggestion that faced with an urban structure that does not conform to the zonal patterns outlined by Burgess, we need not abandon the hypothesis altogether. According to Quinn (1950:132), a physical irregularity in the urban structure under observation does not necessarily

imply that a concentric pattern of the physical distribution of social and economic activities does not, in fact, exist. However, once again, this amendment is also a question of the historical processes of the social organization of industrial production, and not of some principle of ecological distribution as such.

Quinn's assessment of the Burgess hypothesis did not go far enough in exposing some of the major underlying assumptions of this model. Namely, it failed to uncover the assumption that the ecological dynamics of expansion are seen by Burgess as the determining factors of the social content of urban areas. For instance, in Burgess' view, the residential distribution of social classes is seen as the outcome of ecological processes, and not as the effect of the social organization of production. In this sense, then, Burgess' hypothesis rests on an ahistorical concept of the distribution of social life in space.

These ahistorical assumptions underlying Burgess' ecological hypothesis have been questioned by Leo F. Schnore (1965b). Leo F. Schnore is one of the leading theorists of the school of 'neo-ecology' (see Reissman, 1964). This school of inquiry into the social organization of the urban structure reintroduced the ecological perspective suggested by the explorations of Park, McKenzie and Burgess on a more systematic, i.e., more formalized scale. The next chapter discusses Schnore's critical assessment of Burgess' hypothesis about the residential land-use patterns of social classes.

CHAPTER 5 LEO F. SCHNORE: THE URBAN STRUCTURE AS AN ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION

As Reissman points out (1964:119), Schnore's ecological perspective is based on the argument that the proper object of sociological analysis is the organization of social forms. The study of this organization, according to Schnore (1965a) is, in fact, the study of the forms of interaction between humans and their environment. The study of urbanization in neo-ecology, then, is the study of one of the forms of organization of this interaction. Urbanism, in this view, is the product of one specific form of organization of the interaction between humans and their environment.

Schnore's assessment of the ecological tradition in North America (1965a; 1965b) concludes that the construction of a general theory of urbanization involves a number of methodological issues that must be addressed. The search for general patterns of urban growth, according to Schnore (1965b), must include a comparative or cross-cultural investigation of the spatial structures of cities. Moreover, this investigation must show that differences in urban structures, such as the residential distribution of social classes, for example, are not the functions of culture.

In a more concrete sense, Schnore proposes a cross-cultural comparative analysis of Latin American urban structures in order to ascertain whether the organization of the residential distribution of social classes shows a certain universal tendency. By this investigation Schnore hoped to assess whether patterns of residential distribution can be considered as descriptive of general forms of organization of urban life. Even if no general patterns of organization of urban life can be derived from such studies, according to Schnore, our understanding of the more salient variables of urbanization might increase.

Schnore's Cross-Cultural Test of the Burgess Hypothesis

To achieve a more concrete understanding of the theoretical and methodological issues involved in the construction of a general theory of urbanization Schnore investigated a number of empirical studies of the spatial patterns of South American cities (1965b). The theoretical basis for this investigation was supplied by Burgess' hypothesis of the "concentric zone" distribution of residential patterns.

According to the Burgess hypothesis, lower social status groups tend to reside nearer to the city center, while higher status groups disperse along the expanding radial zones of the concentric city. The seven studies of the residential distribution of social classes in Latin America reviewed by Schnore (1965b) all showed an inverted form of the Burgess hypothesis. In other words, the upper classes in Latin American cities showed a tendency to reside in the city center, while the poorest groups were relegated to the periphery during the course of these studies. Assuming that culture is a constant factor -- an assumption that is built into the Burgess hypothesis -- these studies would more likely indicate that perhaps cultural differences can account for the differentiations of spatial structures in North and South America. Once again, the suggestion that culture creates new social forms appeared to override the possibility of cross-cultural generalizations about the processes of urbanization.

Schnore, however, wanted to avoid any generalizations that invoked culture as an independent variable of any of the forms of the organization of social life. Therefore, additional research on the spatial organization of urban life was required. By investigating some fifty additional studies and statistical references on urbanization in Latin America, Schnore hoped to achieve two objectives: (1) "...indicate the extent to which these

materials confirm or deny the patterns observed in the seven studies," (i.e., whether culture is, in fact, an independent variable,) and (2) "...to indicate some additional problems or issues" involved in the investigation of urban spatial structures (1965b:336).

These "additional problems" are the theoretical and methodological issues involved in the investigation of the relevant variables of urbanization. The results of Schnore's two-fold investigation are as follows:

(1) Schnore has found that the additional studies on Latin American urbanization confirmed the findings of the seven studies initially consulted. The residential distribution of Latin American cities showed what has been referred to as a "traditional" or "colonial" pattern, i.e., a tendency for the upper classes to reside in the city center. While these early studies argued that such a pattern can be seen as a cultural variable in urbanization, Schnore suggested that this traditional Latin American pattern shares more in common with the historical patterns of the pre-industrial city than it does with Latin American culture as such.

According to Schnore, the spatial patterns of Latin American cities were in fact characteristic of most pre-industrial cities. In the preindustrial city, the city center was indeed the center of political, economic and administrative life. The city center dominated every aspect of preindustrial social life. The central location of the market place required that those active in commerce should be as near the center as possible. The upper classes, those engaged in commerce and its administration, therefore, made up the residential core of the preindustrial city center. In Latin America during the time period of the seven studies, industrialization was practically non-existent.

This historical fact, then, according to Schnore, accounts for the difference between the spatial distribution of social classes in South American cities from the North American concentric pattern outlined by Burgess' hypothesis.

(2) The second objective of Schnore's investigation of differences between the residential distribution of Latin American cities and those of North America concerns the issues of the possibility of generalizing about urbanization on the basis of differences or similarities between the spatial structures of cities. In other words, it concerns the issues of a theory of urbanization derived from the characteristic of the urban spatial structure.

In addressing this possibility, Schnore started with the same question as Burgess; they both wanted to find out whether transformations in the urban structure follow "law-like" regularities. Burgess concerned himself solely with North American urban spatial structures. As a result, he assumed that a number of factors in the development of concentric zones were constant, such as the industrial and economic base of the urban system, the cultural heterogeneity of the population. Schnore, on the other hand, went beyond the 'constants' of the Burgess hypothesis. In order to specify some of the more relevant characteristics of urbanization he proposed to investigate the patterns of transformations in the urban structure cross-culturally. In other words, Schnore wanted to isolate possible universal variables of urbanization.

For Burgess, these variables were competition for land in the center and the ability to compete for it. These variables also explained the expansion of zones and the distribution of residential

patterns along these zones. Schnore, in turn, found that a possible key to predicting the evolution of residential patterns in the urban structure rests on the investigation of the technological factors affecting industrialization in different urban formations.

However, it is important to stress that Schnore was not advocating an historical analysis of urbanization. Schnore, in his assessment of the applicability of the Burgess hypothesis to Latin American urban formations, did not imply that the differences in the urban spatial structures are the products or effects of some "law-like" historical processes. What Schnore did advocate, however, was a functional analysis of the variables of urbanization in general. In other words, by considering technology as a relevant variable of the distribution of residential patterns, Schnore proposed that technology functioned in such a way as to effect spatial relations in the city. Therefore, the question of changes in the urban spatial structure in Schnore's analysis is not a question of history as much as it is a question of changes in functions. In other words, for Schnore, the transformation of the urban structure is measured by changes in its functions.

According to Schnore, then, different uses of technological developments in industry, transportation and communication will effect different patterns of residential distribution of the urban population. The reason for this is quite simple: communication and transportation technologies, for instance, alter spatial relations considerably and, therefore, they also alter the functional position of areas and sites. Hence, according to Schnore, even if we cannot ascertain for sure whether zonal differentiations in the urban structure follow a "natural sequence" of evolution, we can, at least, predict certain

changes in the patterns of the residential distribution of the urban population by social classes. For example, according to Schnore, if we were to ask under what conditions would the "colonial pattern" of the residential distribution of social classes observed in Latin American cities shift to the North American patterns observed by Burgess, we would have to investigate the functional relations between the following variables:

(a) developments in the uses and functions of transportation and communication technologies in Latin American urban systems (Communication technologies and transportation facilities allow for functional links between the center and the periphery, as well as other areas; a central location, therefore, is no longer necessary;)

(b) changes in the size of the physical structure of the center as well as in the size and density of its population (Changes in the physical structure indicate changes in functions, and changes in the size and density of the population indicate changes in social and economic activity.)

Given such changes, according to Schnore, Latin American cities will show the same residential distribution of social classes as North American cities do. In other words, the upper classes in Latin America will move to the periphery from the center, once technological changes in communication and transportation will allow them to maintain control of the center (Schnore, 1965b:370-4). Since a break-down in the "traditional Latin American pattern" has already been noted in the seven studies reviewed by Schnore, the shifting of the patterns of residential distribution confirm the role of technology as a variable

in the patterns of urbanization observed by Burgess.

In the light of his observations of the Latin American patterns of the spatial distribution of social life, Schnore concludes that the Latin American pattern is not the function of cultural differences -- as was perceived -- but is characteristic of the spatial structures of pre-industrial cities in general. Moreover, Schnore's conclusions also imply that Burgess' hypothesis has both a wider scope and a narrower range of application than previously thought. According to Schnore, the Burgess hypothesis is not merely descriptive of North American patterns of urbanization but is inclusive of cross-cultural patterns of urban structures. The Burgess hypothesis is limited to the description of specific forms of organization of the functions of differentiated spatial structures, and therefore it cannot be considered as a universal model of urban expansion. Yet, according to Schnore, these findings do not count as evidence against the hypothesis either; instead, they point to the fact that the Burgess hypothesis is a specific explanatory instance in a "general theory of residential land uses in urban areas" (1965b:374).

The results of these studies, according to Schnore, present a number of methodological and theoretical implications for the investigation of the residential distribution of social classes in cities and the relation of this distribution to the processes of urbanization in general. Of these implications, the most apparent ones concern the specification of the relevant variables of this distribution. The next section of this chapter reviews Schnore's ecological analysis of the variables of the residential distribution of social classes in cities. These variables are seen by Schnore to reflect the variables of the spatial organization of human communities in general.

The Urban Structure as an "Ecological Complex"[1]

For Schnore, space is a physical representation of the organization of differentiated functions in social life. The physical structure of a community, then, is a representation of the structure of social organization of that community. Moreover, the different spatial structures of the community have different functions in the organization of the social life of that community. For example, in The Urban Scene (1965a), Schnore has observed that the spatial separation of residence and place of work reflects not just a different pattern of the distribution of social life in space, but a different "functional differentiation" -- a different pattern of functional interdependence -- in the organization of social life itself. Thus, according to Schnore:

> The increasing spatial differentiation of the modern community, of which the separation of home and work is one aspect, might also be considered as reflecting an increasing functional differentiation. Such an interpretation assumes, of course, that space presents at least one measurable dimension of community structure. (1965a:339-40)

For Schnore, then, the measurement of the spatial distribution of community life, i.e., the spatial distribution of social classes in cities, indicates the form of organization of differentiated functions in social life, i.e., the organization of the functions of the division of labour. Following from this, Schnore argues that the degree of differentiation in the spatial distribution of the division of labour will reflect the degree of interdependence of its functions in social life.

On the one hand, Schnore's hypothesis of the greater interdependence of the functions of space in social life is merely a restatement of Durkheim's concept of the relationship between specialization in the division of labour and a greater interdependence in the organization of

social life. On the other hand, Schnore's hypothesis follows in the traditions of theorizing about the community structure outlined by the "materialists" of human ecology. For instance, Hawley (1950) defined community structure as an organization of "the essential functions and their interrelations by which a local population maintains itself" (p.206). More correctly, in this perspective, community structure should be best understood as an ecological organization or as an ecological complex. Following Hawley's definition, "ecological organization" refers to "the organization of functional relationships" (1950:179). Thus, the ecological complex is essentially a functional entity; it is characterized primarily by the organization of the functions that comprise its structure. According to Hawley (1950), an ecological organization can be studied and measured by the investigation of the spatial structure of communities or by the spatial distribution of activities (1950:179).

Schnore's ecological analysis of the spatial structure of cities, while indebted to Durkheim's social morphology, follows in the traditions of human ecology specified by Park, McKenzie, Burgess and Hawley. More specifically, Schnore's ecological analysis of the urban structure in general and of the spatial distribution of social classes in the city in particular suggests a theoretical continuity with Hawley's specification of the scope of human ecology:

> Human ecology studies the structure of organized activity without respect to the motivations or attitudes of the acting agents. Its aim is to develop a description of the morphology or form of collective life under varying external conditions. (1950:179)

For Schnore (1965a, 1965b), the morphological description of the patterns of the spatial distribution of community life, such as the patterns of the residential distribution of social classes in cities,

involves first of all the isolation and the specification of the functions of the independent variables of the organization of such distributions. Schnore identifies four independent variables that organize the residential distribution of social classes.

The four independent variables of the residential distribution of social classes are: (1) environment, (2) technology, (3) population, and (4) organization. These four variables of residential land-use patterns are also seen by Schnore as the constituent elements of an "ecological complex" or an organization of interdependent functions. These four variables will be discussed briefly below:

(1) Environment: This variable of land-use patterns describes the topography of an urban area. Some differences in urban structures can be attributed to the different constraints of physical location on urban expansion and on architectural patterns. Schnore quotes a number of studies on Latin America that point out the nature of different physical constraints on urban spatial structures and on urban expansion (1965b:379-80). For example, Schnore quotes Hayner's study of Mexico City which observed that a partial drain of Lake Texcoco in 1903 was not followed by an anticipated expansion of residential building on the drained land because the soil was highly alkaline (Schnore, 1965b:380). Another example quoted by Schnore related environmental factors to land values. According to Caplow's study of Guatemala City in 1949, the economics of land value speculation in the city center has been greatly reduced by the fact that given the high frequency of earthquakes, no building could exceed the height of one story (in Schnore, 1965b:380).

(2) Technology: Technology is a crucial independent variable of the residential distribution of social classes, and of the urban structure. Schnore distinguishes between three major elements of technology: (a) transportation and communications as the "means of overcoming the friction of space" (1965b:380); (b) technological innovation in industry that alters the spatial nature of industrial production; and (c) the organization of specialized productive, economic and social activities in space through transportation and communication systems or the functional interdependence of the territorial division of labour. According to Schnore, the investigation of transportation systems and of commuting behaviour will serve as a fair indicator of the organization of interdependence in the division of labour in an area under analysis (1965b: 384).

(3) Population: In Schnore's analysis of land-use patterns and their distribution, this variable appears to be crucial to the patterns of residential distributions. The functions of this variable are especially apparent during time of urban growth. According to Schnore, "...growth, in fact, is one of the key determinants of change in physical pattern; the latter cannot fail to respond to increments in population size" (1965b:381). Schnore distinguishes among three different aspects of the composition of the population, aspects that might very well, on their own, influence the distribution of residential patterns, for instance. These three aspects are the size, the rate of growth, and the ethnic and racial composition of the population.

(4) Organization: Organization, the fourth independent variable of

land-use patterns is a crucial concept in the ecological analysis of urbanization: it describes relations of functional interdependence in a system. Thus, as Schnore points out, the segregation of functions in space observed by Burgess in North American cities presupposes a number of organizational features: (a) a large community size, (b) "ease of movement," i.e., ease of exchanges between spatial units, and (c) specialization on the division of labour (see Schnore, 1965b:382-3).

According to Schnore, to investigate the effects of organization on the urban structure, we must study the economic base of the city, and the "ecological organization" of community life. In other words, the study of organization as an independent variable involves the study of the organization of social life in space. The economic base of a city, whether industrial or commercial, will obviously influence land-use patterns directly. The "ecological organization" of community life designates the organization of social interactions -- Durkheim's "dynamic density" -- i.e., the number of "isolated and self-contained sybsystems" in a territorial unit (Schnore, 1965B;385). According to Schnore, "subsystems" are characterized largely by their relative functional independence from each other and from the 'city center', as well as by their relatively undifferentiated internal social structure. To quote Schnore:

> A whole series of such subsystems -- or sub-communities -- may be present, each very much like the next, and each relatively isolated from all its counterparts. The traditional barrios of Latin American cities serve as an example of these "transplanted villages" in the urban environment. For convenience, we may contrast such cities composed of many

> communities with the contemporary metropolitan areas of the United States -- communities composed of many cities. (1965b:385)

For Schnore, these four variables of the patterns of the residential distribution of social classes are also the relevant variables of the "ecological complex" or a system of interdependent functions. The four variables, environment, technology, population and their organization, then, are not only the variable of the spatial distribution of residential patterns but also the concomitant variables of the ecological organization of social life in space.

Schnore's Theory of Urbanization

The urban spatial structure in Schnore's perspective, appears primarily as an "ecological organization," i.e., as a system of functions in space. Urbanization, therefore, is to be understood primarily as a process of ecological organization. As a concept, urbanization describes the territorial functions of the division of labour in social life. Urbanization in social life, then, appears as a form of organization of the interdependences of specialized and spatially segregated functions that characterize social organization. Thus, it would appear that for Schnore, the study of the urban spatial structure is, in fact, identical with the study of the social structure. But is this the case?

When Schnore proposes to investigate the urban spatial structure as an organizational form, is he, in fact, proposing an investigation of the structure of social organization in general? If this were the case, his urban sociology would certainly appear as a way of theorizing about social organization in general and not as a theory of the social forms and functions of urban space as such. Perhaps a better question to ask would be

the following: Is Schnore really suggesting an ecological theory of social organization based on such ecological principles as "differentiation," "expansion," "centralization" and "interdependence," or is he suggesting an ecological analysis of the effects of the division of labour -- a division whose social origins or history are not in question at moment -- on social space in general? In other words, is Schnore giving us an ecological history of social organization, or an ecological analysis of the functional variables of the distribution of social differentiations in space?

Schnore's answer to these questions suggest a bit of both. His theory of urbanization is both an ecological theory of social organization and an ecological analysis of urban forms in social life. Schnore's contributions to a sociological theory of urbanism is difficult to assess if we insist on a Durkheimian definition of the strictly social origins and functions of social facts, or if we are apt to consider the division of labour as reflective of contradictory power relations in the social structure. For Schnore, the division of labour is not the expression of the contradictory power relations that characterize the social structure; on the contrary, specialized functions in the division of labour reflect the interdependent organization of social life and of the social structure.

Schnore's social theory is ecological to the extent that it suggests that social organization is based on the organization of functional interdependences. Schnore's sociological concerns are limited to the investigation of the functions of the territorial division of labour in social organization. He is not particularly concerned with the social history of this division of labour, or its current values in social and political life for that matter. As a result, his analysis of urbanism is essentially a functional analysis of the variables that organize social space.

Schnore's approach to urbanism proposes an investigation of the functional variables that distribute the specialized functions of the division of labour in space. Thus, once again, division of labour is seen by Schnore primarily in its functional manifestations and not in relation to social history. More specifically, Schnore's ecological analysis of the functional effects of the division of labour on the structures of urban formations suggests a functional analysis of the spatial distribution of industrial production and of its social relations. In other words, Schnore's urbanism is a theory of the spatial organization of industrial production.

Since Schnore is not concerned with the social history of cities, or the social evolution of the division of labour, how does he account for transformations in the urban spatial structure and in the urban system? A functional analysis based on organic analogies, such as Schnore's ecological analysis, for instance, will explain developments, transformations in terms of functional changes, i.e., in terms of changes in functions and in their organization. Yet, this does not seem to explain what elicits changes in functions in the first place. For Schnore, changes in the functions of the division of labour and in their organization-- including their spatial distribution -- are effected by technological innovation. Technology is the crucial independent variable of changes in the urban spatial structure and in the urban system.

Technology in Schnore's ecological perspective on social life is held responsible for affecting changes in the division of labour, and in the organization of the social structure. Technological change also accounts for the development of new patterns in urbanization, including the rise of the metropolitan system. In fact, Schnore's theory of urbanization is a functional analysis of the effects of technology on the spatial distribution

of the division of labour. For Schnore there appear to be two forms of technological innovations that effect changes in the spatial structures of cities: technological innovations that affect production directly and innovations that affect the coordination of productive, economic and social activities in space or their spatial distribution.

Historically, the first kind of innovation affected the internal structure of industrial production, i.e., it increased productivity, but at the same time, it also increased the number of specialized functions in the division of labour. Schnore considered changes in industrial production as responsible for the further division of labour, and for the changing urban structure, i.e., for the increasing decentralization of large urban centers that occurred after the 1920's in North America. Thus, according to Schnore:

> The years following World War I, although marked by a few fluctuations, ushered in a period of expansion. Enormous strides were made in industrial productivity, and as national production increased, significant advances occurred in real wages. The techniques of mass production and increased mechanization reduced the manpower required in industry. Since a similar trend was continuing in agriculture as an effect of the introduction of power machinery, the surplus population from both agriculture and industry gradually shifted into occupations providing for the distribution of goods and services. (1965a:85)

However, increased productivity and a shift to the "tertiary" sector does not account for the rise of new urban forms. According to Schnore, these changes themselves were actually helped by changes in the urban structure, i.e., by the increasing decentralization of activities facilitated by technological inventions and by the development of more efficient transportation routes and systems. First, innovations in the application of new power sources, such as the introduction of electrical power, lessened the dependence of industrial production on certain fixed locations. This

relative freedom from location sites resulted in a tendency to move industrial plants further away from central locations where land values were increasing. This accounts partly for the decentralization of the concentric urban structura observed by Burgess.

Secondly, the decentralization of the traditional urban system in North America following the 1920's was a result of technological changes in communications and in transportation means. By altering spatial relations, the new means of communications have altered the organization of the urban structure. Improved transportation facilities and means of communication made possible the centralized control of activities over greater geographical distances and, at the same time, they also made possible the dispersion of some activities on better economies of scale than was possible before.

However, as Schnore points out, this dispersion of industrial and economic activities has also resulted in the greater centralization of other activities, such as the administration and the management of industries and commerce. For example, according to Schnore:

> Many administrative functions may also be increasingly free to leave the center and locate at the periphery of the metropolitan community. For example, the central offices of large insurance companies, whose chief contacts are with agents scattered throughout the nation, may represent a type of administration that can be as efficiently managed inthe ring as in the center. The control and direction of other industries, however, which require frequent contacts with lawyers, brokers, news media, out-of-town buyers, may continue to require central location. (1965a:90)

The changes in the location of activities in the urban structure and in the organization of their functions reflect a new form of organization of the territorial division of labour: "metropolitanism". The structure of this new form of spatial distribution of functions in the division of labour -- the <u>metropolisis</u> is characterized by an increased territorial

division of labour. At the same time, such an increase in the number of specialized functions in the organization of system, reflects a greater interdependence of functions, i.e., a greater complexity in the division of labour.

For Schnore, then, there are a number of differences between "urbanism" and "metropolitanism." The urban structure described by Burgess' concentric zone model is characteristic of urbanization at a certain stage of the organization of industrial activity: concentration of labour-power. Technological innovations in industry and in the application of power sources reduced the need for such concentrations of labour-power in industry. These innovations facilitated a shift in occupations to the tertiary sector, i.e., to the distribution of goods and services. These changes in productive and economic activities, together with improved means of transportation and modes of communications, according to Schnore, have facilitated the dispersion of populations from the center outward. Moreover, these changes seem to have accounted for the growth of the perihery in excess of the urban center itself. The process of decentralization of the urban center and the apparent growth of the periphery at an increased rate from that of the urban center, according to Schnore, have often been seen in the literature on urbanism as the indicators of the rise of the metropolitan community.

However, as Schnore points out, "metropolitanism" is not merely a process of decentralization of activities, nor is it a question of excessive growth at the periphery of the urban system (1965a:107-9). Following an ecological analysis, i.e., an analysis that investigates the functional relations that comprise an organization, Schnore points out that in order to investigate the processes of "metropolitanism" we must investigate the complexity of the unity of the system of interdependence that characterizes

the metropolitan organization of the territorial division of labour. This complexity, according to Schnore, can be measured by an investigation of the movements and exchanges in the urban system. It is the nature and ease of movements, and exchanges of goods and information, that characterize the metropolitan system, rather than the magnitudes of its physical size, the density of its population, or the mere rate of its physical expansion.

The urban structure and the metropolitan structure, then, reflect the organization of the interdependence of specialized functions in the division of labour. The structure of the division of labour, including its territorial organization, is best indicated by the nature and the rate of movements and exchanges within a physical area. In Schnore's view, the differences between the "urban" structure and the "metropolitan" structure are to be found in differences between the nature of movements and exchanges within their physical boundaries. According to Schnore:

> Physical movement in the metropolitan area is much less simple with respect to direction and over-all orientation. In contrast with the simple in-and-out movement between center and periphery of the smaller city, the metropolitan area appears to have a very high proportion of lateral movements, in complicated crosscurrents and eddies. (1965a:108)

Schnore's analysis of "metropolitanism" investigated the rise of the metropolitan system in the 1950's and 1960's, at a specific stage in industrial and economic development and their specific territorial organization. Schnore's approach to the investigation or urban phenomena in general suggests that "urbanism" is a way of organizing the various specialized functions of the division of labour in space.

The relationship between the specialized functions of the division of labour and their organization in space is specified even more by Michel Boisvert's economic study of the urban systems of Canada's regions (1978).

This study is discussed in the following chapter. Boisvert's study is presented here only insofar as it is significant for the discussion of the scope and range of urban theorizing in general.

CHAPTER 6 MICHEL BOISVERT: "URBANISM" AS A FUNCTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

Schnore's functional analysis of the relationship between industrialization and forms of urbanization has provided a number of fruitful methods for the investigation of the transformations of the urban structure, such as the analysis of interaction flows, for instance.

An example of this kind of analysis of the transformations of the urban structure has been proposed by Michel Boisvert (1978), a Canadian economist. Although not directly influenced by Schnore's human ecology, Boisvert's study investigates the relationship between the industrial activity, the economic structure and the urban systems of Canada's regions from what might be defined as an ecological perspective. In other words, Boisvert's study investigates urban formations as the functional effects of the relationship between industrial activity and the economic organization of this activity.

Michel Boisvert's study, The Correspondence Between the Urban System and the Economic Base of Canada's Regions (1978), is an investigation of the various industrial, technological and urban factors that might impede the concentration of economic activity associated with metropolitan growth. Boisvert's approach to the investigation of the metropolitan system is "ecological" in the sense that it establishes a functional (i.e., an interdependent) relationship between the economic system of a region, its industrial base, and the diversity of the urban systems that make up the distribution and the organization of these economic and industrial activities in space.

According to Boisvert, the economic system of a region "is made up of those production activities whose market extends beyond the normal limits

of a city or regions's hinterland and therefore corresponds to the exporting sector of the local economy" (1978:11). The notion of the "urban system", in Boisvert's study as in most ecological approaches, includes both a "structural" definition, i.e., the spatial distribution of activities, and a "functional" definition, i.e., the functional interdependence (organization) of activities distributed in space, or spatial dynamics (see Boisvert, 1978: 11).

Thus, the economic system (production for export), industrial activities (the activities required for producing exports), and the urban system (the spatial dynamics of economic and industrial activities), according to Boisvert, are the variables of the metropolitan system or of the concentration of economic activities vis-a-vis the emergence of the metropolis. For Boisvert, then, the metropolitan system is a form of organization of economic activity in space: it designates a certain level of concentration of tertiary activities, as well as their diffusion in space.

By defining the urban system as an organization of industrial activities in space -- i.e., as the organization of the spatial integration of industry into the economic structure (the market) -- Boisvert can link levels of urbanization (different urban systems) to different forms of industrial production. These different productive activities, in turn, reflect the different levels of the economic integration of the urban system in the "market".

These functional correlations between the economic system and the urban structure allow Boisvert to measure and to predict the concentration of economic activities characteristic of metropolitanization. The investigation of the relationship among these three variables covers the investigation of the spatial dynamics of the economic system characteristic of the metropolis. In

other words, Boisvert's "ecological analysis" of the interdependence of these variables includes the study of the spatial distribution of economic and industrial activities as a functional aspect of the emergence of the metropolis.

"Spatial dynamics" in Boisvert's framework indicate the functional interdependence of industrial and economic activities in a region. This interdependence "is measured by the intensity and the direction of interaction flows such as exchange of goods and information. The intensity may be assessed by comparing the volume of intra-regional flows in various regions or by comparing this volume with that of exchanges with other regions." (1978:69)

The spatial dynamics of a region will reflect what Schnore (1965a) has defined as the organization of the territorial division of labour in the economic system. Moreover, the measurement of the interactions (exchanges) that characterize the interdependence of industrial and economic functions will also provide for the measurement of urbanization or of the functions of the urban structure in limiting or in enhancing the concentration of economic activity characteristic of the metropolitan system.

Boisvert proposes to go beyond Schnore's suggestions of measuring urbanism and metropolitanism only by the functional interdependence of industrial activities in space. Boisvert does not see the urban structure as a mere reflection of the organization of industrial activities in space. The spatial dynamics he proposes to measure are, in fact, the dynamics of the integration of industrial activities in the economic system of a region that extends beyond the spatial boundaries of the urban structure. For Boisvert, then, the urban structure reflects the level of industrial integration in the economic system. Thus, in Boisvert's framework, the crucial variable of urbanization is the nature of the relationship between

the industrial activity of a settlement and the economic structure of the region in which this settlement is located.

Hence, any theoretical explanations of the relationship between industry and the territorial division of labour, and any concrete proposals for urban development, must take into account the dependency of the urban system (i.e., level of urbanization) on the relationship between the industrial base of a settlement and its integration in the economic system of the region. Moreover, it also follows that the measurement of spatial dynamics in Boisvert's framework is a measurement of the relationship between the industrial base of a community and the economic system of the region. Boisvert's "ecological" approach to urbanism, then, is an analysis of economic relations; it is an ecological perspective on the dependence of industrial activity on economic relations, and their effects on the urban system.

The economic structure of a region, according to Boisvert, is characterized by either one or a combination of the following activities: (1) "exploitation of natural resource," (2) "local transformation of these resources," and (3) "utilization of the transformation products in the fabrication of various items" (1978:11). Each of these activities represents a stage in economic development. These activities are regulated by the economic system, i.e.,their level of development is dependent on world market conditions. According to Boisvert, each economic region constrains the development of its urban system , i.e., each stage in economic development -- resource, transformation, and fabrication -- is usually matched by corresponding levels of urbanization. In other words, urban expansion is associated with different stages of industrialization. This does not mean that a city will naturally grow by an addition of industrial activities. The development of industrial activities associated with urban

expansion -- i.e., the economic growth of a region -- according to Boisvert, does not follow a natural sequence, but shifts with world market conditions. Briefly, then, there are the three different urban systems associated with the three stages of the economic development, or with the integration of industrial activities in the economic system:

(1) Exploitation of resources: The regions associated with resource extraction have a very low rate of urbanization. Because of the dependence of this type of activity on geographical location, its production units are spread over large geographical areas. The economic base of this region, then, is highly specialized. As a consequence, according to Boisvert, the spatial dynamics (interaction flows) of such an area -- its urban systems -- will reflect a low-rate in intra-community interactions (in exchanges of goods and information). The direction of these exchanges will usually follow from the local community to the regional center, or to the metropolis. Thus, according to Boisvert:

> From the standpoint of spatial dynamics, the primary characteristic of a resource region will be the strong degree of independence of the urban components, in other words, very little interaction. Therefore, the transportation network is characterized by multiple exit points. Indeed, given the little local transformation of raw materials, shipment to other regions will be much more important than intra-regional flows. (1978:30)

(2) Transformation activities and urbanization: The urban system of transformation regions is characterized by a number of "intermediate-sized" urban centers. There is increased opportunity for employment because of more diversified industrial activities and because of the growth of service industries. However, it is important to note that transformation activities are usually

added to primary activities, i.e., to resource extraction, in areas where there is already some level of urbanization or a number of small urban centers . In other words, transformation activities do not make cities, but cities grow where transformation activities are added to the economic development of a region. The spatial dynamics of this region, according to Boisvert, will show greater intra-regional exchanges, however "because of the importance of vertical integration for the control of production and the necessity of locating the headquarters of large corporations close to financial intermediaries and consulting firms, decisions will still be made primarily outside the region." (1978: 32-3).

(3) Fabrication activities and urbanization: According to Boisvert, fabrication activities are added to primary and transformational activities. In other words, fabrication activities are added to those urban systems that already have transformational activities. The urban centers of fabrication regions are more diverse than those observed in transformation regions. The addition of fabrication activities to the economic base of region, according to Boisvert, has two major consequences for the urban structure of the region: "...a sharp rise in the rate of urbanization and a very large increase in the size of the urban metropolis" (1978: 33-4). The spatial dynamics of fabrication regions will reflect both intra- and inter-regional exchanges. It will also reflect an increase in the frequency of the exchanges of goods and information in these regions. The direction of interaction flows in the urban systems of fabrication regions will show a different pattern from

those in resource or transformation regions. The direction of exchanges in fabrication regions will resemble the patterns of "lateral" movements identified by L. Schnore (1965a:108) in the metropolitan system, rather than the hierarchical pattern of in-and-out movements from the urban center to the periphery, a movement associated with the urban structure of heavy industry. According to Boisvert, the urban structure of a fabrication region is characterized by multiple centers.

Boisvert's observations of the different patterns of spatial dynamics characterizing different urban systems have been further evidenced by an investigation of the direction and the volume of telephone call patterns between a number of sectors of economic, industrial, administrative and social variables of the structures of fourteen communities in British Columbia (Salter, 1979)[1]. Salter et al have investigated how telephone calling patterns reflect social and economic conditions in different regions in British Columbia. In fact, the telephone in this study served not only as an index of these conditions, but as a possible variable of economic growth and levels of urbanization. In other words, the study also investigated the impact of communication technology on the urban structure and on patterns of urbanization.

A common assumption in the literature on urbanization and on the spatial organization of industrial and economic activity holds that developments in communication technology have freed the location of cities from their dependence on the sites of industrial activity. This is expressed by Barnaud: "Communication networks become the agents for new industrial patterns. Each new plant is located in a network of distribution that is governed not by the buyers but by the commercial policy of the company"

(as quoted in Salter, 1979, Vol.2:48). Yet, as the study points out, this theoretical freedom from the constraints of industrial activity in a location does not guarantee the development of urban forms along the points of the "communication network"; nor does it guarantee that new urban forms will emerge where there was no urbanization previously. The study found, as did Boisvert, that urbanization follows in areas where there is already some level of urbanization.

Moreover, in spite of the theoretical freedom for location policy guaranteed by communication technology, in areas of industrial activity based on resource extraction, such as most of British Columbia, industrial activity is very much tied to a geographical location. What determines the level of urbanization in such a case is the relationship of the resource industry to world market conditions. Communication technology, in this instance, ties resource activity as a periphery to the center or the metropolis, where economic decisions about resource production are made and administered. Thus, the study found the same pattern of spatial dynamics in the resource regions of British Columbia as described by Boisvert's analysis of the relationship between the economic system, industrial activity and the urban structure.

The study has also addressed other possibly important variables of the development of specified urban forms that Schnore and Boisvert have not included in their investigations. One of these factors concerned the cultural and social content of communication technologies such as the content of cable and satellite services to Northern British Columbia. Northern British Columbia, then, is a resource region, characterized by remote and geographically isolated settlements, and by low rates of urbanization. Yet, because resource extraction forms a major part of the

economic system of British Columbia, these settlements have been "hooked-up" to the metropolitan system without going through the different stages of urbanization described by Boisvert. The result of this interaction with the metropolitan system via communication technology has had mixed consequences for the social and cultural life of these communities.

As Salter et al (1979) observed, the new communication technologies in North British Columbia have had a profound impact on the diverse cultural forms of local populations. The content, or programming, of these new communication technologies has often been considered as a means to homogenize consumer demands over great geographical distances, and across the range of demands and expectations set by the diversity of cultural forms. For example, the introduction of radio and television programs via cable and satellites to remote and isolated settlements has been seen as a method of extending markets and fostering new forms of "consumerism." "Consumerism", according to this view, tends to homogenize the diversity of the social and cultural forms of expression in the previously independent and economically self-contained local settlements. In other words, while this "consumerism" represents one aspect in the attempt to integrate the local economic structure into the metropolitan economic system, it disorganizes both the previous economic system of the community and its social and cultural organization.

In other words, the "consumerism" spread by the contents of the new communication technologies, according to this view, introduces new expectations and values that are not associated primarily with the forms of the local economic system and its social organization. These new expectations and values, in turn, have a disorganizing effect on the local system.

If the urban system can be characterized by the diffusion of a number

of specific social and cultural forms; if there is such a thing as "urbanism as a way of life," then "consumerism" as an urban value -- beamed at these diverse settlements that cannot meet the expectations fostered by this consumerism because of a lack of urban facilities and services -- will definitely act as a functional variable of urbanization. This "consumerism" is a variable of urbanization in the sense in which it might break down the obstacles to urban expansion associated with a certain form of economic organization. According to Salter et al (1979), the content of the new communication technologies functions in the urbanization of regions previously outside the limits of the urban and the metropolitan system:

> Inasmuch as urbanism is related to the spread of cultural forms and the distribution of goods without reference to the demands of regional or specialized markets (including programming), it now has encompassed much of what could be called "remote" or rural regions. It is possible to talk of the "urbanization of the north," the layering of a mass based culture over the local, non-urban cultures that exist there. The introduction of television in the north has had profound,unsettling effects. (Salter, 1979, Vol.2:42)

The investigation of the spatial organization of economic and industrial functions and activities cannot exclude the social and cultural dimensions of this distribution if it is to give a full account of urbanization and the characteristics of the urban structure. This does not imply a return to the culturalist perspective on urbanization and social organization outlined by L. Wirth: it does imply, however, a serious investigation of the role of culture in urbanization and in the territorial organization of the urban system. As long as culture is regarded as a material element, i.e., as a social and economic function, in the processes that shape and organize the territorial division of labour, it is, in fact, a variable of urban growth.

CONCLUSION

In contrast to the historicist thrust of culturalist explanations of social change and urbanization, a number of ecologists such as McKenzie, Burgess, Hawley, Quinn and Schnore, to name but a few, developed a more material analysis of urban phenomena and its relation to social organization. The materialism of their analyses springs from their insistence on the complexity and the dynamics of the various forms of interactions between humans and their environments. Specifically, the materialist perspective in human ecology regarded the city as a product of certain ecological processes of adaptation, as well as a functional variable in social organization in general.

Put briefly, according to the materialists of human ecology, the urban system should be viewed and studied as a form of natural, social, economic and cultural organization.

In studying urban structures and urban processes, including "urbanism as a way of life," according to the materialists of human ecology, we are attempting to establish a functional relation between the sociological effects of ecological organization and urban growth. For example, in studying the urban system as an ecological complex, we are engaged in the analysis if its functional constituents, and their organization. The constituent processes of this ecological complex, in turn, have been defined by ecologists in general as expansion, succession, aggregation, concentration, centralization, decentralization, etc.

R.D. McKenzie (1968) has suggested that one of the crucial determining variables of the organization of urban systems is technology. According to McKenzie, changes in communication technologies and improvements in transportation have altered radically the organization of the spatial distribu-

tion of social life. Moreover, these changes have also altered the structures of urban systems irreversibly. For McKenzie, these changes in technology have resulted in the emergence of a new type of urban system: "the metropolitan community" (1968:305). Moreover, according to McKenzie, this new type of organization in the urban system represents a "new functional entity" in the organization of the interaction between humans and their various environments (1968:305). To put it another way, the urban system is not merely a product of technological changes, but is itself a functional variable in the social organization effected by these changes in technology.

McKenzie's view of "the metropolitan community" as a new type of urban system and his assessment of its functions in ecological and social organization were shared by most human ecologists who subscribed to what has been referred to here as the "materialist perspective" on social organization. In the materialist perspective in human ecology, the emergence of the "metropolitan community" as a social form has been seen to be functionally related to changes in what Emile Durkheim has defined as the "dynamic density" of social life. Following Durkheim, the social forms of the metropolis are seen by human ecologists as the social effects produced by changes in the density of social interactions and in their organization. More specifically, in the ecological perspective informed by Durkheim's sociological analysis of the social structure, the city is seen both as a result of specialized functions brought on by "dynamic density" and as a "new functional entity", or as a "social fact" in the organization of specialized functions, or the organization of the division of labour.[1]

However, the materialist perspective on urbanization and urban growth extended the range of its investigation and the scope of its explanation of social phenomena beyond the limits set by Durkheim's insistence on a strict-

ly sociological explanation of social structures. For human ecologists, cities are not merely social systems; they are also specific types of territorial organization of human life. As such, they represent distinct relations in the spatial distribution of social life. For social ecologists, the organization of social life always has a spatial referent. This was summed up rather succinctly by R. D, McKenzie who observed that "...human institutions and human nature itself become accommodated to certain spatial relationships of human beings. As these spatial relationships change, the physical base of social relations is altered, thereby producing social and political problems." (1968:4)

Thus, to put it simply, differentiation in the patterns of the social use of space in human ecology reflects differentiation in the organization of social life. A change in the spatial distribution of social activity, according to social ecologists, is usually followed by a change in the organization of social life. A corollary assumption holds that the spatial differentiation of activities in a territorial unit usually has a "disorganizaing" effect on previously established social relations in the same unit.

By considering spatial arrangements as functional variables in social organization and "disorganization," human ecologists have gone beyond Durkheim's sociological analysis of the transformation of the social structure. Moreover, for a number of social ecologists such as Park, Burgess and McKenzie, the explanation of differentiation in territorial and social organization rests on the assumption that all organic life and all the forms of organization of the relations between organisms and their environments rest on some form of <u>competition</u>, or on the "struggle for existence." Spatial differentiation in this view then appears as an effect or as a form of adaptation to competition in one or a number of the levels of organization

that characterize the interactions of humans with each other and with their environments. Thus for the human ecologist who accepts the notion of competition as axiomatic of all organic life forms, the study of the spatial distribution of social activity is, in fact, the investigation and the analysis of the processes and effects of competition in social organization:

> A great deal has been written about the biological, economic, and social aspects of competition and selection, but little attention has been given to the distributive and spatial aspects of these processes. The plant ecologist is aware of the effect of the struggle for space, food, and light upon the nature of a plant formation, but the sociologist has failed to recognize the same processes of competition and accommodation are at work determining the size and ecological organization of the human community. (McKenzie, 1968:4)

Given that the ecological perspective on social life is based on an assumption that competition is the elan vite of all organic systems -- of which the social system is only one -- and given that it also assumes that competition is the functional determinant of the structures of all organic systems, it follows that in turning to the investigation of urban systems as ecological complexes, human ecologists will search for the effects of competition and their particular consequences in the spatial distribution of social life.

The early explorations in human ecology have explained the differentiation of the physical structure of the city together with what were seen as correlative differentiations of social life into "social areas" in terms of the mechanisms of competition and adaptation. For a number of ecologists, such as Burgess and Quinn, for instance, the most apparent effects of the mechanisms of competition in social organization were manifest and dominant in the economic level of social life. Moreover, for such ecologists as Burgess, for instance, economic competition assumed the

role of an independent variable of the spatial distribution of social organization in the urban system.

In the materialist perspective in human ecology, the spatial differentiations of the urban structure and their concomitant effects on the differentiation of social life in the city were explained, originally, in terms of the mechanism of the distribution of economic activities in space. Burgess, McKenzie, Hawley and Quinn did not always agree on the specific functions of competition in social organization. Nevertheless, they all considered economic competition as a primary variable of land-use patterns in the city and of the territorial organization of the urban system.

Moreover, Burgess (1924; 1929) has argued that the functions and effects of competition in the ecological organization of the urban system can be measured effectively by the observation of the expansion of the territorial organization of the city, and by the observation of the rate of succession of "social areas" within this physical expansion, or by the observation of "social expansion," i.e., social mobility.

In fact, Burgess thought that the investigation of land-use patterns in the city, i.e., the investigation of their industrial, commercial, residential and other patterns of use, should achieve two goals ideally. On the one hand, it should illustrate the ecological processes of organization and adaptation in the social sphere and in its physical organization. On the other hand, an investigation of land-use patterns, land values and social mobility in the city should contribute to the development of a theory of the functional relationship between the organization of space, i.e., physical structures, and the organization of social life, i.e., of the social structure. In other words, Burgess hoped to develop a theory that could account for the <u>functional</u> relationship between the patterns of

the physical distribution of social activities and the structure of social organization.

The fact that the ecological perspective recalls Durkheim's "social morphology" -- his study of the formation of the social structure -- is not accidental, but is consciously recognized for its influence and similarity by those who advocate the sociological heuristic of human ecology. When Robert Park proposed to develop an ecological approach to the study of human communities, he himself has stressed the essential similarity between the ecological approach to social life and Durkheim's "social morphology." For Park, the theoretical object of human ecology "constitutes what Durkheim and his school call the morphological aspect of society" (1952:166).

Durkheim and Human Ecology

Durkheim identifies two distinct forms of organization that characterize social life in general: (1) "mechanical", and (2) "organic" solidarity.[2] Mechanical solidarity is characteristic of societies in which there is little or no differentiation in the social structure. Moreover, in these societies the division of labour does not appear to consist of specialized functions; most members of the society engage in the same productive activities. Social order in these societies is based on the similarity and likeness of individuals. The organization of "mechanical" solidarity, then, rests on similarity and is based on little, or no, differentiation in the social structure.

Human ecologists such as Park (1952), Wirth (1964), McKenzie (1968), and Hawley (1950) have described Durkheim's "mechanical solidarity" in terms of the concept of "commensalism" -- a concept borrowed from the descriptive language of plant and animal ecology. "Commensalism " in human

ecology refers to a form of organization that is based on relations of similarity. Thus, while Durkheim was only concerned with the nature of the organization of relations in soical life, the "mechanical" social solidarity of human ecologists, or "commensalism" appears as a generic term describing all relations of similarity in systems or complexes of different types and levels of organization. One of the classic formulations of the concept of "commensalism" in human ecology has been given by A. Hawley:

> Organisms relate themselves to one another on the basis of their likeness as well as their differences. Hence a second and equally important relation in the web of life is that which arises between similar creatures -- members of a given species or rather individuals that make similar demands on the environment. This is the relation of commensalism which, literally interpreted, means eating from the same table. (1950: 39).

"Organic" solidarity, as a form of organization of social life, according to Durkheim, rests on the complex organization of highly differentiated structures and functions in social life. "Organic" societies are characterized by highly specialized functions in the division of labour. This type of differentiation in the social structure and in the functions within the division of labour, according to Durkheim, requires a complex form of coordination to ensure the order of collective life. The organization of the collective life of a society characterized by a highly differentiated structure is, therefore, based on the coordination or the organization of relations of differences.

For human ecologists, Durkheim's concept of "organic" solidarity translates into the concept of symbiosis, or to quote Hawley's definition:

> Upon analysis of the web of life, we find that one of its most conspicuous and important components is the symbiotic relationship. The term symbiosis denotes a mutual dependence between unlike organisms. Because they make dissimilar demands on the environment, members of different species may supplement the efforts of one

> another. The food-enemy relationship is of this order. The eater and the eaten are engaged in a vital cooperation, each contributing to and facilitating the circulation of life-giving matter. (Hawley, 1950:36-7)

Once the different forms of organization have been identified, Durkheim, in his "social morphology," has turned to an investigation of the dynamics of transformations from "mechanical" or "organic" solidarity or, in other words, to the dynamics of differentiation. Durkheim's concern with the dynamics of differentiation in social organization is, of course, shared by human ecologists who consider the dynamics of ecological processes as the variables of social organization and, therefore, of social change.

However, as Schnore has indicated (1965a:6), Durkheim's concern was primarily sociological; he sought an explanation for the differentiation of the social structure within the realm of "social facts," or sociological variables. Thus, given his classic dictum which asserts that "the determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it..." (1966:110), it is not surprising that Durkheim turned to the investigation of some feature of the social life of the "collective" in order to account for the transformation of the social structure and the organization of its order. According to Schnore (1965a:6-9), it is in this sense, then, that Durkheim's "dynamic density" came to function as a "social fact," and as an account of the sociological processes of differentiation in the organization of social life.

Durkheim's "dynamic density" refers to the density of social interactions, i.e., social contacts, and not necessarily to the numbers of the population or their concentration in a geographical area. According to Durkheim, while the concentration of people in an area -- physical density -- certainly acts as a potential variable of differentiation, the actual sociological variable of differentiation is the dynamic density of an area.

In other words, the sociological variable responsible for transformations in the social structure is the density of social interactions, or the density of social contacts.

Yet, as Schnore (1965a) has pointed out, an increase in the rate of social interaction, if we are to remain loyal to a sociological analysis, must also be accounted for by some sociological explanation. Since Durkheim's concerns were primarily sociological, he searched for sociological variables for the increase in the rate of social interactions. One of these sociological variables was technological change in communication and transportation. Changes in communications technologies and transportation lessen or increase social distances in the same geographical area. The changes in social distance, in turn, bring about changes in the density of social contacts.

However, according to Schnore's exegesis of Durkheim's social morphology (Schnore, 1965a), identifying the variables of "dynamic density" did not amount to an explanation of the differentiation of the functions within the division of labour, a differentiation that is a crucial characteristic of "organic" societies. Thus, according to Schnore: "...why should a simple increase in the rate of interaction produce greater division of labour? If social units (whether individuals or collectives) are brought into more frequent contact, why should they be obliged to specialize and divide their labour?" (1965a:8)

According to Schnore, to explain specialization in the division of labour as an apparent result of the increase in "dynamic density," Durkheim has invoked the concept of <u>competition</u>. For Durkheim, in Schnore's view, the division of labour and its transformations represented a sociological solution to an ecological problem; the division of labour and its form of

organization represented "a mode of resolving competition" for scarce resources in social life:

> Durkheim's argument was based on Darwin's observation that, in a situation of scarcity, increased contact between like units sharing a common territory leads to increased competition. Being alike, they make similar demands on the environment. Inspired by the Malthusian account of population pressure on limited resources, Darwin had led to the resultant "struggle for existence" as the essential condition underlying the differentiation of species. In the human realm, Durkheim reasoned in turn, individuals or aggregates offering the same array of goods or services are potential, if not active competitors. (1965a:8-9)

Competition as an adaptive relation occupies a central position in the various perspectives on social life within the school of human ecology. In fact, the theoretical position of "competition" is more central to explanations of social life in human ecology than it is to Durkheim's concept of the dynamics of "social morphology." In Durkheim's sociology, competition is viewed primarily in sociological terms; it is explained by the forms of the division of labour. Moreover, the division of labour, its specialized functions and forms of expression appears as the resolution of competition in social life rather than as the mere social expression of a biological principle in operation in the social realm:

> The division of labour is, then, a result of the struggle for existence, but it is a mellowed denouement. Thanks to it, opponents are not obliged to fight to a finish, but can exist beside the other. Also, in proportion to its development, it furnishes the means of maintenance and survival to a greater number of individuals who, in more homogenous societies, would be condemned to extinction. (Durkheim, as quoted in Schnore , 1965a:9)

In other words, Durkheim's concept of competition suggests a break between its operation in the biological realm and its operation; it suggests a different type of organization in adaptation. Competition, in human

ecology, on the other hand, is usually viewed as a continuous relation of adaptation that spans from the "commensalism" characteristic of plant and animal communities to the essentially symbiotic relations that organize modern human societies. In discussing competition as a universal principle of the organization of organic life, A. Hawley defines competition as "the name given to the kind of interaction in which each individual affects the behavior of every other by its effect on the common supply of sustenance materials..." (1950:39). Moreover, Hawley goes on to describe its general pervasiveness in all forms of ecological organizations:

> Competition is almost as general as are the phenomena of reproduction and aggregation. These processes, in fact, are the mainsprings of competition; they tend to bring about a situation in which the assembled organisms make demands for food and living space in excess of the available supply. The ensuing interaction may be exceedingly subtle, as in the competition of plants for light and nutrients, or frankly overt, as in the rivalry among chickens for food thrown into their pen. It may be indirect and unconscious, as the grazing of cattle in a fenced pastureland, or direct and conscious, as between businessmen seeking to outdo one another with their advertising. (Hawley, 1950:39)

Obviously, human ecology as conceived by Hawley and later by Schnore shares a common perspective on the structural analysis of social life with Durkheim's morphological sociology. However, the scope of human ecology extends beyond the strictly sociological limits set by Durkheim on the explanatory variables of the social structure and social life. Human ecology, unlike Durkheim's sociology, extends its search for the variables of social organization to the different relations that characterize the range of relations of an ecological system or "complex," i.e., the range of the relations of interaction between humans and their environments. The social system in human ecology appears as a <u>sub-system</u> and as a dependent variable of the dynamics of ecological organization. In assessing Durkheim's

contributions[3] to the ecological perspective on social organization, Schnore concludes that Durkheim's insistence on the social origins of social facts might have led him to ignore the crucial role of the physical environment in affecting dynamically the organization of social life in general:

> A more serious weakness in Durkheim's theory is the inadequate attention accorded to the physical environment. He apparently was reluctant to give such factors as climate and topography any major role in his analysis. In part, this probably is due to the restrictive character of his own rules, adherence to which obliged him to seek the explanation of social facts in other social facts. He tended to dismiss the physical environment as a relevant variable and to regard 'social environment' as the ultimate source of differentiation. But this procedure has its own blind alleys; for one thing, the analyst does not get 'outside the system' in search of relevant variables. (Schnore, 1965a:14)

As a corrective to Durkheim's rigid insistence on searching for the determinant variables of social life in the "social environment," Schnore claims that human ecology -- essentially based on Durkheim's morphological taxanomy -- overcomes the "blind alleys" of relevant variables imposed by Durkheim's restrictive analysis. According to Schnore, then, human ecology gets "outside the system" because it locates the "relevant variables" of social organization in the dynamics of the whole system of relations characteristic of the range of interactions between humans and their various environments. In this sense, then, human ecology regards social organization as an integral part, or as the dependent variable, of the dynamics of ecological processes of organization in general.

In conclusion, it has been suggested that the functional analysis of the urban structure represents a real beginning in the theoretical understanding of the relationship between space and society (see Reissman, 1964, and Castells, 1977). It has also been suggested by Manuel Castells, one of the more formidable critics of the Chicago school, that the theory of social

space proposed by the materialists of the human ecology school remains much too general. It is general because it cannot account for the social specificity (i.e., the social content) of urban space and urban life. In Castells' view, human ecology failed to explain how social organization comes to be drafted unto space.

The more salient contributions of human ecology to our understanding of urban phenomena have been methodological, perhaps. Human ecology introduced an analysis of social life that stressed the complex and dynamic nature of social organization. The functional analysis of human ecology, however insistent on the complexity of social organization, failed nevertheless to uncover the historical variables of this complexity. In this sense, the ecological perspective, while rightly insisting on a dynamic analysis of the organization of social life in space, failed to specify the historical determinations of this dynamic.

Part III introduces a contribution to our understanding of urban phenomena that stressed both the functional and socio-historical aspects of the dynamics of the spatial organization of social life. This contribution is made by Manuel Castells, a representative of a new mode of theorizing about urban forms.

PART III

"URBANISM" AS A THEORETICAL PRACTICE

In The Urban Question (1977), Manuel Castells sets himself the following project: "...the fundamental aim of this book is to develop new tools of research while criticizing the traditional categories with which the social sciences, technocracy and mass media have usually conceived urban problems." (p.vii). The research program proposed by Castells is the investigation of the specific social processes that structure urban space and form the urban system. These social processes, according to Castells, are the historical practices that comprise social life and its organization. Urban space, then, is seen as the product of these social and historical practices. Thus, to understand the urban system -- its social and its spatial structure -- one must understand the nature of the social practices that have produced it.

The development of these new research tools for the investigation of urban social practices requires a critical assessment of the traditional sociological and anthropological approaches to urban theory. A major portion of Castells' assessment is reserved for a critique of what he sees as the myths of urbanism developed by American urban sociology. More specifically, his critique is aimed at the particular categories of analyses of the relationship between space and society proposed by the various ecological perspectives that come under the rubric of the Chicago school of urban sociology.

Castells suggests that in spite of the insistence of the human ecology school on its theoretical distinctiveness from other analyses of urban phenomena, such as economics, geography and political science, human ecology cannot be considered as a distinct and specific theoretical explanation of the social processes that structure urban space. According to Castells, human ecology in general, and the "ecological complex" perspective in part-

icular, lack specificity in their theoretical approaches to the dynamics of social space. In other words, Castells claims that human ecology has no understanding of the truly sociological variables that structure the spatial expressions of social organization. Moreover, according to Castells, the theoretical premises of the various perspectives within human ecology do not originate from an analysis of the social nature of social organization.

Generally, according to Castells, one tendency in human ecology is to reduce the historical processes of the organization of social life to biological principles of organization between organisms and their environments. This, according to Castells, amounts to a form of "crude biologism," and not to a theoretical understanding of the principles of social organization. The other dominant perspective in human ecology, as seen by Castells, defines social institutions in terms of developments in the complexity of culture. On the one hand, culture is interpreted as a principle of ecological adaptation to the environment, and therefore its origins are not seen as social; on the other hand, culture in human ecology appears as the story of the evolution of human mastery over nature. On all these counts, according to Castells, the ecological perspective on the dynamics of the relationships between social organization and the history of the urban structure is basically ideological.

The way out of this ideological impasse, according to Castells, is the recognition of the specific historical social processes that "fashion nature," and that produce culture, for social life:

> Beyond any academic eclecticism, one must go further than the ideological opposition between the determination of space by nature and its shaping by culture, to unite these two terms in a problematic that recognizes the specificity of the humanly social, wihtout seeing it as a deliberate creation which cannot be explained by laws. To the common ideological

> front of culturalism and historicism, we must oppose a theoretical front that integrates the ecological, materialist-based problematic in a sociological analysis whose central theme is the contradictory action of social agents (social classes,) but whose foundation is the structural web that creates the problematic of any society -- that is to say, the way in which a social formation fashions nature, and the mode of distribution and administration, and therefore of contradiction, that stems from it. (Castells, 1977:122)

This rather lengthy quote -- composed of merely two sentences -- suggests that Castells' objections to the categories of analysis of social space developed by the ecological perspective are directed against what this perspective has omitted.

Castells suggests, rather abstractly, that it is not enough to think of the space in which humans lives as the result of some "natural" evolution of forms of cultural organization. Moreover, for Castells, the term "culture" itself is non-specific. In reality, according to Castells, culture is an effect of the processes that compose the "structural web" of society (see Castells, 1977, Chapter 5). The "structural web", according to Castells, is the class structure of a social formation (1977:242-5). Since Castells considers social classes as the social expressions of the structural contradictions in modes of production -- i.e., in the modes of appropriation and distribution of products -- the "structural web" of social life, including its spatial distribution, is determined and shaped by the state of the "class struggle." In fact, Castells argues that social space, such as the urban structure, for instance, can only be understood in terms of the social processes of production. "Nature," "culture," and the psychology of individual perceptions, have little if any determinations in the organization of the social structure of social space (1977:121-6).

The question of the role of culture in shaping the organization of social space could be settled, or at least clarified, by a common agreement

on the definition of the concept of culture. However, the question of the role of what might be seen as natural factors in the organization of social life remains to be ambiguous if we insist with Castells that the "laws"[1] of social processes enjoy an autonomy and, therefore, cannot be reduced to ecological principles of determinations.

This makes more sense, perhaps, if we consider that autonomy refers not to a fact given in reality, but to a theoretical realm of analysis, i.e., to the irreducibility of sociological explanations to biological principles. In other words, Castells has every right to insist on the autonomous realm of sociological theories and explanations, but the claim of the real autonomy of social facts ought to be demonstrated empirically.

To put this in somewhat more concrete terms: to regard space, social or urban, as the mere product of social facts, such as the state of the class struggle, for instance, is a reductionist fallacy of a different order from the "biologism" of human ecology. To dismiss the very real limitations of the physical environment on the productive activities of social life -- as Castells tends to do -- amounts to an idealist fallacy. In order to make a strong case for the analytic categories of the study of the social nature of the space of human activities, Castells argues that "from the social point of view there is no space," only social practices that construct and organize this space (1977:442). Thus, he continues to argue, "...a 'mountain' space does not define a way of life: the discomforts of the physical milieu are mediatized, worked, transformed by social conditions. In fact there is nothing to choose between the 'natural' and the 'cultural' in social determination, for the two terms are indisolubly unified in the single material reality of the social point of view: historical practice." (1977:442)

This assertion gives a strong suggestion that "historical practice" -- the historical modes by which humans produce their social organization-- is, in fact, autonomous from the resources available in natural space for production and the organization of reproduction. In other words, Castells suggests that the theoretical autonomy of historical practices gives them real autonomy in the natural universe. Thus, according to Castells, the "mountain space" is merely an occasion for historical practice, and not itself a constraint on the possible range of historical practices of social production in that particular ecological organization.

This flattening of the hierarchy between the natural order (the mountain space as a bio-ecological base of social life) and culture (as the ways in which social production and reproduction takes place within the constraints imposed by the characteristics of this space) amounts to a misreading of material reality. The material reality is the fact that without the "natural" there simply would not be any "cultural" to speak of. That the relationship between these two forms of organization are mutually conditioning is an indisputable fact, but the assumption that the organization of this conditioning is of the same order, and that their effects are of equal measure, is not only a disputable fact but is, in fact, an error in facts. Such a misrecognition of different orders of constraints is reminiscent of another of the great traditions of social theorizing: idealism.

However, if we are willing to grant that Castells' objection to human ecology as a theory of the organization of social space is merely to the fact that ecology does not recognize the theoretical autonomy of social facts in explaining the dynamics of social space, his critique appears less formidable and more understandable. Thus, Castells' objection can be seen as a critique of the failure of human ecology to explain the social content

of social space, and the social processes that project social life on space.

Castells' objection to the various approaches to spatial organization in human ecology,then,is not to the assumptions that the organization of urban space is a form of projection of social life on space, but that it misunderstands the dynamics of social organization and of its projection in space. According to Castells, it is quite legitimate, theoretically, to extend the scope of urban studies to the investigation of the principles of the organization of the social structure. However, what is not legitimate in this process is the inversion of the relationship between the history of social organization and the history of spatial forms in order to account for urbanization and for the urban structure. In other words, it is not a legitimate theoretical practice to treat the historical characteristics of the development of social organization as identical with, and as produced by, the evolution of culture, on the one hand, and as the mere reflection of the "laws" of ecological functions, on the other.

Castells' objections to the social theorizing of human ecology, then, is aimed at what he sees as its lack of specificity. In other words, for Castells, the social theory advocated by human ecology does not base its explanations and analyses of social organization on truly social facts. Instead, the social theory developed by human ecology is based on a number of unexamined assumptions about the origins and roles of economic processes in social organization, as well as about the organic interdependence between the biological, economic and social processes in social organization. In other words, according to Castells, the human ecology school goes outside the theoretical domain of sociology in order to explain the nature of the social content of urban space.

In view of the above objections, the contributions of the Chicago

school to urban sociology and therefore to the development of a distinct urban theory have been a contribution to what Castells considers as "ideological knowledge" (1976b:60). More specifically, the Chicago school of urban sociology contributed to the "ideology of culture" because it considered the processes of the contradictions of social life in terms of differences in values systems, attitudes and psychological dispositions. The Chicago school of urban sociology also contributed to an "ideology of the environment" because it strongly suggested that there are certain "laws" of development and organization in social life that originate in "nature" and therefore cannot be explained by reference to social processes. Thus, according to Castells, human ecology contributed to "ideological knowledge" because it has denied the specificity of the social character of social life and its spatial distribution.

Against the tendency to abduct concepts from other field of inquiry in order to explain the social nature of the spatial organization of human life, Castells proposes what he considers as a truly and purely sociological approach to "the structural web" of social life -- to social organization -- and to its distribution in space. According to Castells, since the physical environment of social life is always a social and historical product, in order to investigate the spatial dynamics of social organization, we must specify the history of the specific social relations that have produced -- or have been distributed in -- specific spatial forms.

More specifically, according to Castells, the study of the urban spatial structure must be undertaken within the general study of the history of the productive forces and social relations of a society. Thus, the study of "urbanism as a way of life" must take into account the general organization of advanced capitalist production, since it is this particular

organization that is responsible for the structure of the modern city, and for the rise of the metropolis. The specificity of urban life and of the urban spatial structure must be analyzed in terms of the specific functions they perform within the system of production that characterizes advanced capitalism.

Chapter 7 presents Castells' approach to the analysis of the urban structure. This presentation, however, requires an introduction to the epistemological tradition from which Castells' urban theory has emerged. This epistemological tradition has been established by Louis Althusser's application of certain Marxian notions about the relationship between theoretical knowledge and our knowledge of social reality (see Althusser, 1979[1965]; 1970 [1968]).

Louis Althusser's interpretation of Marx's work has originated a new tradition of social and political theorizing within Marxist theory in general. This new tradition has been usually referred to as "structuralist Marxism." Its popularity in the 1970's in French academic circles has extended from mere philosophical debates, such as the epistemological foundations of Marxism, to such diverse areas of investigation as the study of urban space and of urban politics.

Manuel Castells' work on urban theory is located in this tradition of "structuralist Marxist" analyses of social life. Moreover, Castells' specification of a proper social theory of urban processes is also located within the "structuralist Marxist" tradition of theory construction. Castells' theory of urban phenomena as the products and the "effects" of the various relations between social practices in social organization, represents a particular application of Althusser's theory of the "practices of social production." Hence, a discussion of Althusser's theory of practice

introduces the epistemological grounds on which Castells' theory of urban processes claims to have superseded those that have been developed by more traditional analysis in urban sociology in general.

Althusser's theory of practice, a theory that provides the epistemological basis for his delimitation of science and ideology, has been devised in order to account for the scientific principles of Marxism itself. In other words, these theoretical elaborations represent Althusser's efforts to provide the epistemological foundations for Marxist philosophy. In order to achieve this task, Althusser developed a very elaborate and complex notion of the different levels of theory construction. At the top of this hierarchy of theoretical levels, or "theoretical practices," that produce knowledge, is Theory itself. Theory, or the "theory of theoretical practices," accounts for the production of scientific knowledge, for knowledge about reality in general, and for its own development in this theoretical hierarchy in particular.

For Althusser, Theory with a capital 'T' is a very special and specific conceptual tool in the search for scientific, i.e., real, knowledge. As a result of this interpretation of Marx's texts, Althusser comes to regard Theory as identical with the "materialist dialectic," or with the real Marxist philosophy[2] of the mature Marx.[3] In other words, since the "materialist dialectic" is premised on the concept of activity as praxis, Theory for Althusser is the theory of "theoretical practices" of the materialist conception of history. But to quote Althusser:

> I shall call Theory (with a capital T) general theory, that is, the Theory of practice in general, itself elaborated on the basis of the Theory of existing theoretical practices (of the sciences), which transforms into knowledges (scientific truths) the ideological products of existing 'empirical' practices (the concrete activity of men). This Theory is the

> materialist dialectic which is none other than dialectical materialism. (1979[1965]:168)

It appears, then, that the central theoretical concepts that characterize this Theory of the "theory of theoretical practices" (Althusser's Marxist philosophy) are "dialectical materialism", "practice", "knowledge", and the "concrete activity of men". Since these concepts are important to Castells' "theoretical practice" as well, a brief discussion of their particular theoretical roles is in order. This discussion, however, must be preceded by a presentation of the materialist conception of history. The presentation of "the original theme" is necessary but not sufficient for the understanding of the Althusserian variation on Marx's definitions of the materialist conception of history.

The next chapter, Chapter 7, introduces a neo-Marxist perspective on urban phenomena and on urban theory construction. This chapter consists of four parts. Part One introduces some of the more salient features of the materialist conception of history as discussed by Marx. Part Two is a discussion of Louis Althusser's interpretation of these concepts. Part Three presents Castells' application of these concepts to the construction of an urban theory. Finally, Part Four gives an overview of Castells' contribution to the "debate on the theory of space" (Castells, 1977).

CHAPTER 7 MANUEL CASTELLS: URBAN THEORY AS A PRACTICE IN THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

7.1 Background: Marxian Concepts

> The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living human individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature....The writing of history must always set out from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history through the action of men. (Marx and Engels, 1976[1846]:42)

The above passage from The German Ideology (1846) contains the foundations of Marx and Engles' definition of the materialist conception of history. This passage forms the basis of the theory of the history of real, definite human beings and the material conditions of their lives.[1] The materialist conception of history set out to explain how social beings produce their history, the social relations into which they enter in order to produce, or how they lived and in what kind of society.

The explanation of social life and its historical changes in this theoretical system does not attempt to deduce the existence and the characteristics of social forms from a priori theoretical "facts", but rather, it attempts to employ these theoretical "facts" -- produced by real facts -- as methodological tools in the concrete analysis of any society at any historical time. Thus, the theory of history that Marx and Engles have advanced in their materialist conception of history is also a methodology for social theory in general. Further, in its self-reflexive state, i.e., in its 'awareness' of its own development as a theory of social life in social history, it is also a sociology of knowledge.

The major premise of this methodology and sociology of knowledge is the notion that "facts", whether theoretical, social or historical, have

been produced by specific relationships. Hence, their ontological and epistemological status is determined and constrained by these specific relationships, or by the material conditions of their production. These material conditions, in turn, are not necessarily given a priori, except for certain conditions in nature insofar as they "furnish the means of life" or "the means of physical subsistence": "The universality of man appears in practice in the universality which makes the whole of nature his inorganic body; 1) as direct means of life, and 2) as the matter, object, and instrument of his life activity" (Marx, 1967 1844 :293.)

In other words, even nature does not exist in an abstract state for human beings; it is part of history in the sense in which it is continually transformed by human beings in the process of interaction and, similarly, in which human beings are also continually transformed by this process of interaction. According to this view, then, there is nothing in human history that is not the product of humanity in some sense, except of course for nature as "the inorganic body of man," or the "original" physical conditions and means of social life. Thus, according to the materialist conception of history, the material conditions that determine and constrain the production of social and theoretical facts are the products of some sort of human activity, or practice.

At the heart of the materialist conception of history is the concept of activity; humans produce their life, social, historical and theoretical through their activities, or their labour. According to Marx and Engles, then, "...as individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both what they produce and with how they produce." (1976 [1846] :42.) History, therefore, is not an accident, but the consequence and the expression of the purposive actions of human

beings. Hence, history and social life are characterized by a "law-like" process, i.e., by patterns of activity that comprise the specific mode of production of human beings.

Therefore, any true account of social life, according to Marx, must start with the analysis of the "facts" of the specific mode of production of a society. The ideas about such a society, then, can be understood as part and parcel of the material world, as the material conditions translated into thought. This method of analysis moves from the concrete to the abstract, but not exactly in the manner specified by the traditional inductive methods of empirical analyses, i.e., it does not draw general theoretical conclusions from a series of particular social instances. Instead, it proceeds in a circular fashion for, in the final analysis, it attempts to demonstrate that even the real and concrete social "facts" are themselves the products of specific relationships that are not accessible to the "empirical naked eye" but must be specified through a systematic theoretical analysis of the processes of their production.

The objective of such an analysis, then, is to reveal the central relationships that make up social "facts" and theoretical categories in which they are explained and examined, by tracing the history of their constitution; namely to expose the internal tensions and contradictions in the relationships that produced them. Clearly, then, for Marx, <u>contradiction</u> is not a static and abstract philosophical category; rather, contradiction is the dynamic of social history, of human development, of the relationships that characterize the modes by which human beings produce and reproduce their social existence.

It has been suggested that Marxist theory is inevitably linked with <u>praxis</u> (a theory of action), in that it does not seek to provide <u>the</u>

explanation of reality; on the contrary, it seeks to reveal the relations that determine and constrain explanations, among other human activities. These relations, according to Marxist theory, are characterized by contradictions, and are located not in a theoretical system primarily, but originate in practical social life. Consequently, it has also been suggested that Marxist theory does not provide a philosophy in the proper sense of the term but, on the contrary, it suggests the "abolishment" of philosophy itself (see Althusser, 1979.) What Marxist theory aims to provide, then, is a systematic explanation of the historical character of knowledge by tracing its origins, its appearance, functions and transformations through the different socio-economic activities of human beings: "All social life is practical. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice" (Marx, 1976 1846 :122.)

Thus, what the materialist conception of history provides is a historical sociology of knowledge; it describes and claims to analyze the social and historical conditions that make knowledge possible. Moreover, it holds that these conditions are not arbitrary, haphazard, or inspired and guided by some divine purpose but, rather, that they show certain patterns of development or "law-like" characteristics in their relations and in their development. Conversely, the methodology of such a theoretical system does not claim any metaphysical prescriptions for the scientific status of theory in the real world; instead it proposes that the ultimate scientific test is a practical question, i.e., it is a question of praxis.

On the one hand, this test implies a practice of theoretical self-reflexivity, or an account of the development of its theoretical coherence. On the other hand, it implies an actual practice in the sense in which it

concerns itself with actual relations in the world. The materialist conception of history seems to suggest that theoretical concerns and problems are in fact the expressions of actual events in the actual and 'non-theoretical' world. In this actual world, theory -- as our knowledge of this actual world -- is merely a sub-system of relations. Hence its problems and solutions are determined, constrained and governed by the exigencies of the activities that produce and reproduce them. Hence also the suggestion that the scientific test of a theory is a practical matter that must be settled in the actual world in order to clear the logical confusions of its conceptual system.

An example of the methods and presuppositions of the materialist conception of history is Marx's critique of Proudhon's economic theory. In The Poverty of Philosophy (1847), Marx undertook not only a particular critique of Proudhon's "philosophy of poverty"[2], but also the general critique of the whole of the theoretical foundations of what he called "bourgeois political economy." This critique consisted of a demonstration of the essentially idealist premises of the theoretical system of bourgeois political economy. The idealism in these presuppositions, or the idealist "problematic" of bourgeois political economy was to consider its own theoretical categories as given "universals", constrained and ruled by logical relations primarily, and not as the particular abstractions of real and, therefore, historical social relations. In other words, the theoretical system of political economy always expresses the history of changing social (productive) relations -- whether this is recognized or not -- and only in its "bourgeois" form does it appear as a "history according to the sequence of ideas," or as a theoretical system whose categories appear as the expressions of mere logical relations.

Because "bourgeois" political economy does not account for the history of the social relations of production of which it speaks in its theoretical categories of production, it remains within the limits of idealism. Proudhon, according to Marx, set out to solve the problematic of the history of the categories of production by showing their sequence in theory. For Proudhon, the presentation of the logical sequence of economic categories seemed sufficient for the demonstration of their chronological evolution.[3] Hence Proudhon's attempt at uncovering the history of political economy fails, because the history he is attempting to describe is the history of "pure reason" as it unfolds and is manifested in the "understanding" in the form of related economic categories. Proudhon's history of political economy, according to Marx, "has not even gone far enough along the cross-road which an ideologist takes to reach the main road of history..." (1975 [1847]:115). In other words, Proudhon's history of political economy as the logical sequence of economic principles fails even within the logical confines of idealism; it cannot account for the particular manifestations of the "universal" or "absolute reason" in the logical sequence of economic principles.

Thus, according to Marx, the problematic of why particular principles manifested themselves in a particular historical (chronological) sequence ceases to remain a puzzle in the logic of the Absolute Reason once we turn to the analysis of actual, particular men in actual social (and therefore productive) relations with each other. The following quote illustrates Marx's objections to Proudhon's theory of the history of political economy as the logical sequence of principles. The quote is preceded by an apparent acquiescence from Marx to Proudhon's suggestion that history is "the historical sequence in which ideas, categories and principles have manifested

themselves." (1975[1847]:115)

> Each principle has had its own century in which to manifest itself. The principle of authority, for example, had the eleventh century, just as the principle of individualism had the eighteenth century. In logical sequence, it was the century that belonged to the principle, and not the principle that belonged to the century. In other words, it was the principle that made the history, and not the history that made the principle. When consequently, in order to save principles as much as to save history, we ask ourselves why a particular principle was manifested in the eleventh or in the eighteenth century rather than in any other, we are necessarily forced to examine minutely what men were like in the eleventh century, what they were like in the eighteenth, what were their respective needs, their productive forces, their mode of production, the raw materials of their production -- in short, what were the relations between man and man which resulted from all these conditions of existence. (1975[1847]:115).

For Marx, the tools of the examination of these "particular" conditions of existence -- the manifestations of the Proudhonian logical sequence of principles -- are, in fact, the methods by which the materialist conception of history establishes the particular relations of the general conditions of social life. The general conditions of social life are the conditions of production, or the social relations of production. But these conditions are not "universal" because they are not given a priori and outside the logic of the processes of social life; the social relations of production are also produced through specific historical relations.

Hence, the principles that manifest themselves in different centuries as the logical sequence of history are, in fact, the explanations, ideas and the knowledge of the conditions of social life in those centuries. Thus, it follows that the explanations of social life, of the conditions of production (the categories of political economy), are neither absolute nor independent of the production processes they describe and claim to analyze.

Our knowledge of social life, of the processes of production, and of

history is very much a practical and material question; it is both based on reality, as well as it forms a part of that reality. Thus, in this perspective, our conceptual systems are constructs that describe the social world that exists. Moreover, the relations among the concepts and categories within these conceptual systems are seen as descriptive of the relations that make up "reality", or the actual world of which we have knowledge.

Hence, in this perspective, the ontological status of "principles" is seen as socially and historically determined. These "principles", then, are part and parcel of the social relations of production of social life, they are also produced by the historical developments of these relations or, to use an Althusserian term, they are a "practice" within the system of practices that comprise a social formation. But what has been considered as Marx's own definition of the social and historical origins and character of our knowledge of "man" and of social life is to be found in the now famous and often quoted passage in The Poverty of Philosophy:

> The same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas and categories, in conformity with their social relations.
> ...Thus these ideas, these categories, are as little eternal as the relations they express. They are historical and transitory products.
> ...There is a continual movement of growth in productive forces, of destruction in social relations, of formation in ideas; the only immutable thing is the abstraction of movement-mors immortalis.[4]
> (1975[1847]:109-110)

In summary, it appears that from the premises of the materialist conception of history we can deduce Marx's theory of knowledge as an epistemological approach in fundamental opposition to any notion that advocates an ahistorical perspective on the origins and character of our categories of our knowledge of human social affairs. On the one hand, according to

Marx, knowledge is always the result of social activity and therefore a product of history. Hence, the contents of "abstractions", or principles and categories, are always representative of practical problems and solutions in the social activity of those who produce these "abstractions." Thus, on the other hand, principles, categories, our theoretical systems, because of their material origins and their practical ends, also constitute one form of productive activity by which humans produce and reproduce their social formations. In other words, theoretical knowledge is one form of production in the mode of production of a society.

From the preceding, it is possible to infer that "knowledge" or "theory" is a practical activity, a form of praxis in a system of practices that characterize a social formation. To put it briefly, our knowledge of social life, while presenting us with "ideas" about this life, is itself a relation that constitutes and therefore characterizes our social life. It is this particular relation that Althusser is interested in specifying when he turns to a symptomatic reading of Marx's works. Through this specification of this relation as a form of practice, Althusser hoped to demonstrate that the materialist conception of history, or "dialectical materialism" is a truly scientific account of all productive activities, including those that produce knowledge or theories. Althusser wanted to know how the materialist conception of history, or "dialectical materialism", could account for its own premises and its own development in such a manner as to remain consistent with the propositions entailed in its premises. These premises, then, assert that "principles", "ideas", "facts" and other forms of knowledge are always produced by specific social relations and, therefore, they do not exist independently of and prior to the material conditions that produced them, and of which they themselves form a condition.

It could be argued that Althusser's request for a "scientific proof" of Marxist philosophy is, in fact, a non-question within Marxist theory itself because its theoretical presupposition rests on an idealist obsession with establishing objective truths that are prior and independent of the relations of the "real" world which they claim to describe. But Althusser's intentions in establishing the scientific theory of "dialectical materialism" cannot be explained away in terms of the various theoretical differences between idealism and materialism alone.

Althusser's quest is not for an empirical verification of the reality of the assertions of "dialectical materialism", quite the contrary, he assumes that they are empirical, i.e., that they are about real relations in the world. This assumption allows him to proceed to demonstrate why the Marxist "philosophy" that he has derived from his reading of Marx is both real and scientific. The demonstration consists of a tearing away of the "materialist dialectic" from Marxian theory by laundering it of the Hegelian residues of its origins, in order to raise it to its proper scientific status in the high Temple of Theory. From these lofty heights the "materialist dialectic" is then capable of granting the seal of scientific approval to Marxian theory itself and even to certain passages written by Marx himself. In other words, Althusser's rescue mission is sustained by a desire to proclaim Marxist philosophy as the only real philosophy, or the science of the production of theoretical knowledge. This proclamation is achieved by reclaiming the "materialist dialectic" from the speculative deformities it has suffered during its captivity in the "terrains" of the sociology of knowledge, and of "empiricism" and its variants, such as "pragmatism", "voluntarism", and "historicisn" (see Althusser, 1979:12-4).

The key to understanding Althusser's tour de force -- his purge of

Marxian theory -- is the theory of practice. The theory of practice, for Althusser, assumes the role of the demonstration of the scientific character of "Theory", also known as the theory of theoretical practices; the theoretical product of the "concrete activity of men"; in brief, "dialectical materialism." The following section gives an outline of Althusser's concept of practice. The purpose of this outline is illustrative; it is an attempt to locate the origins and the characteristics of a concept that comes to play an important role in Castells' urban theory. The development of the concept of practice into a category for the analysis of urban life shows the development and the application of an explanatory category of the structuralist Marxist tradition of theorizing.

7.2 Background: The Althusserian Influence

> ...What are we to understand by theory, if it is to be essential to practice? (Althusser, 1979:166)

Marx's historical materialism has often been introduced as a theory of praxis, that is to say, a theory of the special relation of "unity" between theory and action: practice.[5] The historical development of Marx's original theory of praxis has undergone many transformations through the numerous debates on the nature and the roles of this relation of unity in the actual historical processes of social transformations. Early discussions of Marx's works have suggested that the theory of praxis implies a theory of the unity of theory and practice in which theory appears only as a direct reflection of socio-economic conditions and activity.[6] Thus, it was believed that theory, because it is merely a reflection of socio-economic conditions, acts as a legitimation process for the institutionalization of socio-economic activity. In other words, theory is a form of ideological

activity. Moreover, because theory has no autonomous existence, it can have no claim to the production of autonomous effects on the determination of the course of the historical development of social formations.

However, instead of resolving the question of the unity between theory and practice, this assumption gave rise to more questions than it could answer. The range of these questions can only be appreciated as truly problematic if one takes into account the political demands that have been made on the Marxian theory of _praxis_ for well over a century. To put it another way, these questions originate not so much from a quiet philosophical discussion of theory construction, but more so from the assumption that not only is Marxism a revolutionary science of society, but that Marxism is, in fact, the science of the revolutionary practice of history or the class struggle.

Thus, questions about the unity of theory and practice in the Marxist tradition have been, on the whole, questions about the _active_ role of Marxist theory in the definition of the needs and strategies of the class struggle in social history. The theoretical problems of the unity of theory and practice, then, reflected the practical problems of the transformation of the "scientifically revolutionary" Marxist theory of society into a practical guide for intervening in the course of social history by "revolutionary practice."

Louis Althusser continues the Marxist tradition of the critical assessment of the relation of unity between theory and practice. While it can be argued that Althusser's intent for entering the debate is partisan, in that it is seeking an active form of intervention into social history by demonstrating "the importance of Marxist theory in the revolutionary class struggle" (1979:10), nevertheless, his _explicit task_ consists of the

specification of the scientific character of Marxist theory. Althusser sees his task primarily as a 'philosophical' project; he seeks to demonstrate the scientific principles upon which Marxian theory is premised.

In order to accomplish this task, Althusser must come to grips with the nature of the questions that have been asked of the theory of praxis. These questions, while seeking practical and pragmatic ends, have a philosophical origin. As A. Callinicos has pointed out in his assessment of "Althusser's Marxism" (1976), these questions originate from a philosophical approach to the relation between "consciousness and reality." The discussion of the relation between consciousness and reality, according to Callinicos, has given rise to two related problems within the Marxist tradition of theorizing. One of these concerned the practical aspects of the relation of consciousness and reality as the practical problems of the relations between theory and practice; the other problem was largely epistemological. The second problem of the relation between consciousness and reality was concerned with establishing the methods by which we can know that our theory of reality is, in fact, a 'true' account of that reality, and therefore a scientific one:

> This question [of the relation between consciousness and reality] embraced two problems. The first was that of the relation between theory and practice. More concretely, how could Marxists move from a scientific critique of capitalism to the practice that would win the proletariat to support its overthrow? What were the theoretical conditions inherent in Marxism that would enable it to overcome the ideological hold the bourgeoisie enjoys over the working class through its control over the production and dissemination of ideas? The second was the epistemological problem of the relation between a sicence and the reality it seeks to explain and the justification of a particular theory's claim to provide a knowledge of reality. (Callinicos, 1976:17)

Althusser has approached both the practical and the epistemological

implications of the relationship between consciousness and reality by concentrating on what he considers to be common to both; their "structure", or the "practices" that constitute them. The notion of practice for Althusser assumes a central function in the formation of social reality and in the theoretical formulations that come to describe and analyze this reality.

Moreover, according to Althusser, the concept of practice can account for both the "ideological control of the bourgeoisie over the production of ideas" in general, and in particular, it can account for the inherent scientific principles of Marxism which come to break this "ideological hold" of the bourgeoisie over the working classes by demystifying the practices that produce ideology. What are these practices, then, or rather what does the concept of practice mean in "Althusser's Marxism"? According to Althusser, practice must be understood as a "process of transformation":

> By practice in general I shall mean any process of transformation of a determinate given raw material into a determinate product, a transformation effected by a determinate human labour, using determinate means (of 'production'.) In any practice thus conceived, the determinant moment (or element) is neither the raw material nor the product, but the practice in the narrow sense: the moment of the labour of transformation itself, which sets to work, in a specific structure, men, means and technical method of utilizing the means. This general definition of practice covers the possibility of particularity: there are different practices which are really distinct, even though they belong organically to the same complex of reality. (1979:167)

Althusser's description of practice suggests that the most determinate characteristic of practices is that they can exist independently of their functions, or the products of their activities. Practices are distinct primarily because they are autonomous from the "objects" (raw materials) that serve as the occasion for their transforming activities, and from the effects of this transforming activity.

It appears that we can infer quite safely that Althusser's "practices" are truly self-motivated; they are driven by some internal principle of movement (essence) of transformation which appears to be both prior and independent from what gets to be transformed into what. Just what this principle might be is never explained. To take more liberty with inference, it seems that we can infer from Althusser's desire to demonstrate the scientificity of Marxist theory and practice, that in the "last instance", to use one of Althusser's favourite phrases, this principle guarantees the autonomy of Marxist theory from historical and ideological deformities.

The autonomy of practices from history, consciousness, or even accidents, can be described, perhaps, by referring to their non-contingency on the "objects" they transform and produce. These "objects", qua objects are, in fact, objects because of the transforming activities performed by practices on "raw materials." To be more precise, Althusser's definition of practices suggests that objects are never given to human consciousness or to human understanding and knowledge; instead, determinate objects are always produced by determinate and distinct practices that produce knowledge about these "objects".

Social Practice

In a more concrete sense, Althusser suggests that the social world is, in fact, the result or the "effect" of the complex relation of unity of the practices that comprise social practice in general. What is this social practice? Social practice is a process of transformation of raw materials, but it is also more than that; it is a practice of production, the production of social formations. To study this process scientifically, then, according to Althusser, one must determine the theoretical practice that

will produce knowledge of the practices of the production of social formations or of social practice. Thus, in a sense, theoretical practice appears already as an autonomous realm. As such, it is distinct form the other practices that comprise and structure the complex unity of social practice or, in other words, from the processes of the production of social reality.

The social world, then, according to Althusser, is structured by the complex unity of social practices. The complex unity of these social practices, in turn, is characterized or structured always "in such a way that in the last resort the determinant dominant practice in it is the practice of transformation of a given nature (raw material) into useful products by the activity of living men working through the methodically organized employment of determinate means of production within the framework of determinate relations of production." (1979:167) Thus, for Althusser, the complex unity of social practices and the determinate structured unity of the social world these practices have produced is always maintained by a dominant practice; the practice of the production of "useful products."

For Althusser, the determinant practice that produces social formations is ultimately the practice of economic production. This conclusion is derived from his specification of the determinate practice as the productive "activity of living men" according to the "determinate means of production" and "determinate relations of production." In fact, Althusser's definition of social production appears, so far, as an unnecessarily complex stylistic variation on a rather condensed and simple interpretation of the materialist conception of history. This simple version reduces the complexity of the social organization, social relations and of the social theories of human beings to their absolute determinations by the mode in which these same

human beings produce their economic livelihood. In this sense, however, economic production is not exactly "determinate" or dominant in "the last resort" but quite on the contrary, it is determinant and dominant in the first instance and always without which no other "instances", such as social relations, political and ideological instances, could be possible.[7]

Althusser's definition of the dominance of the economic does not exclude the analysis of the effects of other forms of practice on a social formation. What it does seem to restrict, however, is the actual probability that these other practices might produce an "effect" capable of challenging the apparent tyranny of the economic. According to Althusser, "social practice" or the practice of production has a number of levels that appear, in reality, as distinct practices. They appear distinct because they possess a relative autonomy in relation to the dominance of the economic; however, this relative autonomy is always determinate, because it is defined, maintained and transformed by the exigencies of the dominance of the economic. In fact, this notion of the relative autonomy appears to be a sophisticated theoretical classificatory device rather than a category of analysis of the actual relations involved between the "economic" and other forms of "practices" that make up the mode of production and reproduction of social formations (see E. Laclau, 1977:72-9).

However, there seems to be a practice within Althusser's schema of "social practice" that enjoys a rather privileged status of relative autonomy from all the others. This practice is none other than the political practice of "Marxist parties" who are engaged in the scientific production of new social relations"

> As well as production social practice includes other essential levels: political practice -- which in Marxist parties is no longer spontaneous but organ-

> ized on the basis of the scientific theory of historical materialism and which transforms its raw materials, social relations, into a determinate product (new social relations); ideological practice (ideology, whether religious, political, moral, legal or artistic, also transforms its object: men's 'consciousness'); and finally, theoretical practice. (1979:167)

The preceding quote might produce a startling effect on those who would like to take his theory of practice rather seriously. If we are to think through the socio-logical implications of the suggestion that the "political practice" of "Marxist parties" is "organized on the basis of the scientific theory of historical materialism," and that these "Marxist parties" are producing "new social relations", we can be persuaded rather quickly that Althusser's concept of scientific practice and scientific Marxism has about as much claim to scientific validity as one of Grimm's fairy tales.

It appears that in spite of Althusser's original insistence on the dominance of the "economic" in the course of social formations and transformations, he, in the "last instance", concludes that the only real (read: correct) practices that transform social life, or history, are "Marxist parties" that have purged themselves of spontaneity by an appropriate dose of scientific Marxism. The "living men" who work and therefore transform "raw materials" into "useful products" through the "determinate relations of production", then, must give up their claim to making history, and they must take a back seat from those "Marxist party members" who are engaged in the production of social history by the means of scientific Marxism. Althusser's scientific Marxism as the practical solution to the problems of the unity of theory and practice is thus revealed to be the practical political problem of the legitimation of "Marxist parties" as the only true

bearers of revolutionary practice. However, if Althusser's concept of practice is merely a question of the production of sophisticated apologies for the political practices of "Marxist parties", there would be absolutely no reason for expanding energy in trying to assess his contribution to Marxist theory.

Scientific Marxism

Althusser's concept of the scientific nature of "historical materialism" rests on the theory of theoretical practice as the arbiter of science and ideology. Thus, his theory of "theoretical practice" also addresses the second problem of the "philosophical discussions of the relationship between reality and consciousness" (Callinicos, 1976); namely, the epistemological foundations of "historical materialism" as a scientific theory of social reality.

For Althusser, theory is "any practice of a scientific character," while the concepts and categories of a theory -- its "theoretical system" -- constitute the "conditions and means" of the practice of a theory (1979: 168). Thus, to note, Althusser asserts that the proper "conditions" and "means" of the production of knowledge are first and foremost theoretical, i.e., they occur within theory (thought). The theory which provides us with knowledge about general theoretical practices -- the processes of the production of knowledge -- is, according to Althusser, the general theory of theoretical practice: "dialectical materialism."

Althusser's theory of theoretical practices shows a rationalist approach to dialectical materialism in particular and to theory construction in general. To begin with, according to Althusser, the theory of theoretical practices is derived from an assumed relation of structural

identity between theory and practice.[8] However, when Althusser speaks of practice in this context, he is referring primarily to a process of production-transformation in general, and only secondarily to a process of the production and transformation of theory in particular. It is with this in mind that Althusser is able to relate the structural identity of theoretical production in general with its particular appearance in the "theoretical expressions" of the production processes of particular, i.e., specific, theoretical practices such as the sciences.

It is important to keep stressing that Althusser does not suggest here that the theory of theoretical practices (dialectical materialism) can be derived from a careful observation of specific and individual scientific practices on the basis of which we come to construct a general theory of practice. Quite on the contrary, the general theory, "dialectical materialism", or Theory, "exists" prior to our scientific theoretical practices. The relation of unity between theory in general (Theory) and its practices in particular (specific sciences) is always established in the "last instance" only when and insofar as a particular theoretical practice reflects or is itself a "theoretical expression" of theory in general, or of the practice of production in general:

> So theory is important to practice in a double sense: for 'theory' is important to its own practice, directly. But the relation of a 'theory' to its practice, insofar as it is at issue, on condition that it is reflected and expressed, is also relevant to the general Theory (the dialectic) in which is theoretically expressed the essence of theoretical practice in general, through it the essence of practice in general, and through it the essence of transformations, of the 'development' of things in general. (Althusser, 1979: 169).

In other words, the relation of unity between theory and practice rests on the structural identity of a particular theory with "dialectical materialism" (Theory) as the theory of production processes in general.

From this it seems to follow -- at least for Althusser -- that any theory not expressing the 'essence' (principles) of "dialectical materialism" is not scientific by definition. It cannot be scientific because it fails to produce knowledge, i.e., its practice does not transform its own theoretical assumptions ("theoretical system") into a knowledge of its own practice (the recognition of Theory at work) as a truly scientific practice would, in fact, do. In short, what is at issue in Althusser's version of the unity between theory and practice is the relation of theory to its own practice of the materialist dialectic as well as the criterion by which the product of this practice (knowledge) can be assessed and evaluated.

In a sense, Althusser is suggesting that theoretical knowledge is always a knowledge of theory. Real knowledge, according to Althusser, is the product of thought or, to be more precise, of the transforming activity of theoretical practice that works on our concept, ideas and categories we bring to the observation of the world we would like to have knowledge of. Hence, the knowledge we have is never a knowledge of the actual world in the sense in which the structure of its "objects" would be "identical" with the structure of objects to be found in the world. Rather, our knowledge is only a knowledge about the world through the "thought-objects" we have constructed by theoretical activity. Moreover, this knowledge is scientific or concrete only insofar as it "reflects" (expresses) the dialectics of its constitution; the processes of its production.

From the preceding it appears that the "real" object of theory is not located in the actual world, for concrete knowledge is never a "re-presentation" of the essences of things that have been grasped immediately either through the senses or by intuition. Instead, the real "object" of theory is always a "thought-object", i.e., idea, "preconception", concept, etc. This

"object" is termed by Althusser as the "raw material" on which theoretical practice sets to work, and which it comes to transform into some form of concrete knowledge by its practice.

The discontinuity between objects in reality and the actual objects of theoretical knowledge is developed by Althusser from Gaston Bachelard's concept of the epistemological break between the perceptual experience of the world and the scientific knowledge we can have about this world. According to Bachelard, the "objectivity" of the world is not given to perception but must be established by science:

> In my opinion, epistemology must accept the following postulate: The object cannot be designated as an immediate 'objective'; in other words, a progress toward the object is not initially an objective one. One must therefore accept that there is a real break (rupture) between perceptual knowledge and scientific knowledge. (in Therborn, 1976:58)

Althusser fully accepts Bachelard's notion of the epistemological break between our perception of the world of things and our scientific knowledge about this very same world. However, by accepting this position, Althusser finds himself in the middle of another "rupture": he must reconcile the "epistemological rupture" between Bachelard's position on theoretical knowledge and the Marxian inspired concept of the unity of theory and practice as a continuous relation between theory and reality. To resolve the apparent irreconcilability of these two positions on the nature of theoretical knowledge, Althusser has developed a theory of knowledge that claims to have retained the best of two possible worlds: (1) it maintains the notion of the epistemological break as the basic distinction between science and ideology, i.e., it functions as the criterion of scientific knowledge, and (2) it (Althusser's theory of knowledge) introduces "material reality" into theory by linking the processes of theory formations with

the Marxist conception of the production of social forms. This ingenious solution results not only in a mere reconciliation between French rationalism and Marx's historical materialism, but has the fortunate outcome of serving as the proof of the scientific nature of the theory of production. Thus, Althusser's solution results in the discovery of the "scientific principles" of Marxist "philosophy" itself. Moreover, Althusser's solution appears to him also as the only scientific theory of science and ideology. But how does Althusser arrive at this happy coincidence of scientific Marxism (the theory of production) and French rationalism?

Althusser's scientific Marxism, then, is the outcome of his theory of the production of knowledge as a process of theoretical transformation. What get to be transformed by theory (theoretical practice) are the "raw materials" of theory (perceptual knowledge, pre-scientific notions, ideas, etc.) into objective and, therefore, scientific "knowledges" of theoretical relations that purged from any traces of "subjectivity" or hidden ideological purposes can give us accurate knowledge about the world.

Scientific Practice at Work

The process by which theoretical practices transform "raw materials" into concrete knowledges is identified by Althusser as a series of abstractions, or as "generalities" of different logical types. Scientific practice, then, consists of the transformation of one set of abstract generalities brought to the analysis of situations and events into the concrete knowledge of concrete situations and events. But how is this practice capable of transforming vague and imprecise general abstractions into particular and precise "knowledges" about concrete relations both in theory and in reality? In fact, Althusser never really answers this question;[9] instead,

he provides us with a description of the steps and the elements involved in this act of transformation.

Obviously, any theory that advocates a criterion of "scientificity" based on some form of immediate (unmediated) correspondence, or essential identity between objects in the world and objects in thought (theoretical concepts) is not acceptable to Althusser. According to Althusser, there is no such convenient relation of complicity between real objects and the objects of thought.[10] Scientific work is not about the correct adjustment of our perceptual knowledge to the discovery of the essence of objects in reality. Such an assumption about the complicity between thought objects and real objects rests on the assumption that knowledge is inherent in "real objects", and therefore all that is required from theoretical practice is the correct abstraction of this inherent knowledge by a thinking subject. These assumptions, according to Althusser, are merely the problems of "the empiricist ideology" of "bourgeois philosophy", and therefore they do not appear either as assumptions or as problematics within the theory of theoretical practices, or as "dialectical materialism" (see Althusser, 1979: 190-1).

Instead, according to Althusser, within the theory of theoretical practices our first assumption is that knowledge is neither in the object nor in the consciousness of the subject who becomes aware of this object. Rather, knowledge is the product of theoretical practice; i.e., the product of the transformations of our preconceptions, precepts, ideological filters and other vague abstractions we might bring to the world of objects when we propose to investigate it.

According to Althusser, the vague and general abstractions we bring to particular situations constitute one of the series of "generalities" of

theoretical practice, namely "Generality I". Theoretical practice consists of a transformation of "Generality I" into "Generality III", or into "concrete knowledge" by "Generality II". "Generality II" is, in fact, the determinant moment of the scientificity of theoretical practice; it is the "moment" of the production of concrete knowledge from "raw materials;" it is the moment of the scientific transformation of theoretical practice itself. As such, "Generality II" enjoys a rather privileged status in Althusser's theory of the production of knowledge.

"Generality II" as the "determinant moment" of theoretical practice is neither the result of a direct development of "Generality I" nor is it identical with "Generality III"; in other words, "Generality II" does not represent a difference in degree between "Generality I" and "Generality II" but, in fact, it is a difference in kind. To be more precise, "Generality II" acts as a selective mechanism; it is the practice which determines the range and the nature of problems to be selected from the theoretical presuppositions of a science, or of a "pre-scientific formation." It is in this sense in which Althusser's "Generality II" appears to us to be an "epistemological rupture" between perceptual knowledge of the world and scientific knowledge about this world.

Moreover, in Althusser's schema, the epistemological discontinuity between the two types of "generalities" provides the necessary if not sufficient conditions of scientific knowledge. This provision is built into Althusser's insistence that concrete knowledge is always a knowledge of thought objects and that the processes of scientific abstractions must always occur within thought.

Althusser's insistence on the proper locus of scientific abstractions has two rather important consequences for theoretical knowledge in general

and for Marxist theory in particular. First, Althusser's notion of the "epistemological rupture" results in the elimination of the subject from the process of knowledge and theory construction. Thus, it asserts that concrete knowledge is always intersubjective. Moreover, it directs attention to the fact that theory construction (production of concrete knowledge) must always take place within thought, hence the privileged status of theoretical activity over the historical accounts of social practices.[11]

Secondly, Althusser's theory of the proper limits of scientific knowledge also performs a number of important functions in the formation of his theory of the scientific principles of Marxism. Of these, perhaps the most important is the establishment of the scientificity ofthe Marxist theory of production itself. Althusser's "proof" transposes -- or to be more precise, transubstantiates -- the central concept of the materialist conception of history, "production", into the realm of epistemological principles where it comes to demonstrate the ontological conditions, the methodological operations and the final justifications of human knowledge itself. Knowledge, in Althusser's perspective, is produced just like other social products in history are produced, but the actual production of knowledge, its practice, is constrained not by certain social relations in history, but only by its own conditions "within thought", i.e., by its "raw materials" such as its abstract generalities and concrete theoretical transformations.

The theory that gives us concrete knowledge of the theoretical conditions and means of theoretical practice, according to Althusser, is the general theory of production: "dialectical materialism". And since, according to Althusser, Marx himself has based his theory of production on the principles of "dialectical materialism", his theory of production is

scientific because it shows (demonstrates) the materialist dialectic at work. In a sense, this is a very circular argument; it asserts that Marxism is scientific because it is based on the scientific principles of the practices of the production of knowledge, i.e., on "Marxist principles", which,in turn, are scientific because they 'reflect' "the essence of the 'development' of things in general." (Althusser, 1979:169)

Yet Althusser's circularity in arguing is not wholly the product of his own theoretical practice occurring "within his thoughts". His theory of theoretical practice as the production of concrete knowledge is not inconsistent with a rather literal "reading" of the premises of the materialist conception of history. On the contrary, the theory of the production of knowledge is inferred by Althusser from a rather rigorous and perhaps a much too literal analysis of the theory of the production of social formations.

Althusser's theory of "theoretical practice" as a theory of the production of "theoretical formations" is a particular concept of the material relation of unity between theory and practice. As such, it may be seen as a theoretical development from the materialist conception of history in order to demonstrate the validity of its premises by the only possible, i.e., acceptable, methods suggested by a Marxist "philosophy". In other words, Althusser, as a philosopher who takes his task seriously, has set out to "prove" the propositions of the materialist conception of history on grounds that are consistent with what might be seen as a Marxist epistemology. The fact that Althusser, in the course of his demonstration, actually comes to discover the principles of this Marxist epistemology, has the added convenience of "proving" the consistency of his theory of the production of knowledge with Marx's theory of the "production" of soical formations, or

the materialist conception of history. Hence, Althusser's theory of the production of knowledge can appear both as (1) a direct and consistent development of the materialist conception of history into a Marxist "philosophy", and (2) as an attempt to guarantee the scientific, i.e., positivist grounds of the theory of the materialist conception of history (the "materialist dialectic"), in spite of the fact that nobody seems to be asking for just such a "proof".

(1) By asserting that scientific knowledge (concrete knowledge) is the product of the transforming activity of theoretical practice, Althusser also asserts that theory has a "material" existence. To put it another way, "Theory" (dialectical materialism) is neither given a priori in a concrete form nor is its epistemological status dependent on the consciousness of "subjects" performing theoretical activity. Rather, theoretical knowledge, "Theory", is constructed and known through intersubjectivity. This is consistent with the premises of the materialist conception of history, i.e., with the assertion that "the same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas and categories, in conformity with their social relations" (Marx, 1975 [1847]:109). In other words, theoretical constructs are the "products" of objective conditions of theoretical activity, and are not the manifestations of subjective processes, even if at first they might appear to be so.

Moreover, Althusser's insistence on the epistemological discontinuity between "pre-scientific" and scientific knowledge in the processes of the production of knowledge, introduces his theory of ideology as a specific form of "theoretical practice". Althusser's

insistence that ideology is a "real structure" in a theoretical formation, rather than as a property of the consciousness of "subjects", makes ideology into a fact of social organization. To put it simply, according to Althusser, ideology is not a matter of false consciousness of reality but, rather, it is a question of the specific and objective conditions of the theoretical production processes of knowledge:

> In truth, ideology has very little to do with 'consciousness', even supposing this term to have an ambiguous meaning. It is profoundly unconscious, even when it presents itself in a reflected form (as in pre-Marxist 'philosophy'). Ideology is indeed a system of representations, but in the majority of cases these representations have nothing to do with 'consciousness': they are usually images and occasionally concepts, but it is above all as structures that they impose on the vast majority of men, not via their 'consciousness'. They are perceived-accepted-suffered cultural objects and they act functionally on men via a process that escapes them. Men 'live' their ideologies as the Cartesian 'saw' or did not see -- if he was looking at it -- the moon two hundred paces away; not at all as a form of consciousness, but as an object of their 'world' -- as their 'world' itself. (1979:233)

Althusser's theory of ideology appears to be consistent with Marx's concept of ideology which suggest that ideologies are gounded in material relations. Moreover, as Althusser suggests, not only is ideology not a product of 'consciousness', but 'consciousness' itself is, in some sense, a social product (cf. Marx, 1976). However, Althusser's development of the theory of ideology amounts to more than a faithful following of a tradition charted by Marx. Althusser's theory of ideology also serves as the demarcation line between scientific Marxism and other theories of social life.

(2) Scientific practice, or the theoretical practice that alone produces knowledge of the "concrete", according to Althusser, can never

be reduced to its "raw materials" -- i.e., to the "preconceptions" brought to a situation, or to "Generality I" -- nor is it identical with its "product", the concrete "knowledge" of "Generality III". To be more specific, scientific knowledge is not reducible to its origins, nor is it identical with its particular uses in specific social formations (societies). Instead, "theoretical practice" designates a "moment" in the transformation of a theory. In other words, it describes a moment in theory; a transformation that occurs wholly "within thought". This transformation as a productive activity has its own autonomous effect, and therefore according to Althusser, it can never be reduced to other levels of practice within social production.

Ideology, on the other hand, exhibits no signs of being able to produce autonomous "effects". Ideology, according to Althusser, is caught by theoretical closure; its theoretical activity consists of matching theoretical "preconceptions" ("Generality I") with "objects" in the world. In other words, ideology is a theoretical closure, because instead of transforming theoretical presuppositions, it forces a relation of complicity between "preconceptions" about the world with the objects and relations that make up that world. An ideological practice, according to Althusser, "denies the reality of theoretical practice" (1979:192).

But why is Althusser so obsessed with the autonomous effects and the ontological reality of "theoretical practice"? The answer is almost too simple: Althusser's definition of the autonomy of "theoretical practice" provides him with a "proof" for the scientific character of the Marxist principles upon which he has based his theory of the production of knowledge. As Callinicos has pointed out (1976:

53-77), the theory of theoretical practices (production of knowledge) is, in fact, Althusser's method for searching for the scientific validity of Marxist "philosophy" without having to resort to the methods of verification proposed by empiricism. Althusser's "proof" proposes to establish the scientificity of Marxism on the basis of Marxist principles that reject, a priori, any need for external verification.

These Marxist principles, then, form Althusser's Marxist "philosophy", or his theory of theoretical practices, his general theory of production. For Althusser, the scientific validity of the theory of theoretical practices is given by definition; it is scientific because it produces knowledge about theoretical practices; it produces its own theory. Althusser's circle is now fully completed, yet as Callinicos points out, this circle has been drawn on the very presupposition it was meant to force out:

> ...the role the theory of theoretical practice plays in Althusser's system involves a relapse into the bourgeois epistemology he has so vigorously criticised. For Althusser can now resolve the problem of scientificity; theoretical practice can cognitively appropriate its real object despite the fact that it takes place completely in thought because thought and the real are homologous -- they possess an identical structure, that of practice. (Callinicos, 1976:76)

To conclude, then, Althusser's theory of theoretical practice involves a transposition of Marx's theory of production of social formations into the realms of theory construction. This transposition is predicated on an assumed identity of the structures of social practice and theoretical practice. Althusser's theory rests on an assumed relation of complicity between the structure of the practice that produces social reality and the structure of the practice that produces our knowledge of this reality.

In consequence, Althusser's question which opened this discussion has

been answered; the problematic of the relationship between theory and practice has been resolved. Not only do theory and practice possess an identical structure, but theory can proceed on its autonomous course without any reference to the social reality in which it operates. Moreover, this same theory -- insofar as it "reflects" the materialist dialectic, i.e., the "essence of the transformation of things in general" -- is, in fact, Althusser's guide for practical intervention into social reality. Hence, Althusser's theory of the production of knowledge, his "Theory", appears not only as the theory of theories in general but, more specifically, it appears as the scientific practice of Marxist politics.[12]

Althusser's distinction between scientific practice and ideological practice within the realm of the processes of the production of knowledge has influenced a number of social theorists within the last twenty years. Manuel Castells has been one of these theorists; his approach to the "problematics" of urban sociology and the methods by which a theory of urban phenomena can be built show a practical application of Althusser's distinction between the realm of science and ideology. Remembering that Althusser's concept of science is predicated on the specification of the real object of theory as its general abstractions brought to situations seen as "problematic", and that scientific "theoretical practice" consists of the transformation of these general abstractions into concrete knowledge via thought, we are now in a position to turn to Castells' particular application of Althusser's general theory of the production of knowledge.

The next section introduces the grounds on which Castells establishes the ideological nature of urban sociology in general, and the methods by which "theoretical practice" might produce an urban theory that will give concrete and "scientific" knowledge of urban processes.

7.3 Manuel Castells: Urban Theory as a Theoretical Practice

Manuel Castells' approach to urban sociology is based on the Althusserian distinction between science and ideology. However, Castells' application of Althusser's concept of the proper realm of science and the role of ideological knowledge in social life is both less positivist and more inclusive in its understanding of the social demands made on the production of knowledge. To be more precise, Castells' approach to theoretical knowledge is characterized by a more flexible boundary between the proper domains of science and ideology than has been suggested by Althusser.

Castells' concept of the "theoretical object" of science, unlike Althusser's, recognizes more readily the social character of theoretical activity in social and political theorizing. Moreover, Castells' notion of the ideological characteristics of social theorizing allows for a more practical understanding of how this activity functions in a concrete social setting.

Castells' interpretation of the Althusserian distinction between science and ideology presents also the development of his urban theory as a particular domain of theoretical activity. Turning to Castells' notion of science we find that it is similar to Althusser's notion: a science is characterized primarily by the nature of its "theoretical object", or by the product of theoretical activity, namely "Generality III." However, Castells suggests that this "theoretical object", i.e., "Generality III", might exist simply as a "response to a social demand for knowledge of some aspect of concrete reality" (1976b:60). In other words, the "theoretical object" of a legitimate science is not restricted to the theoretical understanding of the constitution of its concepts, but can exist as a specific application to the investigation of social reality. For Castells, theory

is scientific not only in relation to its own "practice", as Althusser has suggested, but also by its application to an actual "object" in reality. Castells gives the following definition of the requirements for the scientific status of theoretical activity:

> The scientific object of a discipline is constituted by the set of concepts developed to account for the various real objects the science is claimed to analyze. It is thus possible to conceive of the application of a science to a particular domain of reality: in such a case one would talk of specialized theoretical activity. However, a science either general or particular which has neither a specific theoretical object nor a specific real object does not exist as a science. This does not mean that it may not have an institutional existence, insofar as it is socially recognized as capable of producing knowledge. (1976b:60)

Thus, a specialized theoretical investigation of a "particular domain of reality" based on the Althusserian principles of science suggests that such an activity could constitute a form of scientific practice in the production of knowledge. For Castells, then, the criteria for the scientific legitimacy of various theoretical activities are: (a) theoretical specificity, i.e., a distinct "theoretical object," and if not (a), at least (b) a specific "real" (actual) object, i.e., a distinct domain of reality. Any theoretical activity that does not meet the requirements specified by either (a) or (b) cannot be considered productive of scientific knowledge. However, as Castells argues, a theoretical activity without a distinct "theoretical object" can still claim epistemological status on the grounds that "it is socially recognized as capable of producing knowledge" (1976b: 60). However, according to Castells, such theoretical activity produces "ideological" knowledge. Since ideological knowledge misrepresents reality, it has no distinct and specific "theoretical objects" that constitute its explanations.

Yet, according to Castells, such theoretical activity can exist as a

distinct and specific field of inquiry provided that it has an "institutional existence" (1976b:60). For Castells, urban sociology is just such an ideology. In other words, for Castells, the theoretical practices of urban sociology, its theorizing about the social life of cities, acquired scientific status only by "institutional consecration":

> Sometimes ideological activity receives the institutional consecration 'science', in order to legitimate it. In such a case the little theoretical knowledge it produces is produced in spite of the straightjacket of ideology. Urban sociology is an ideology. We shall attempt to demonstrate and define this ideology and describe the social function it fulfills. (1976b:60)

But why is urban sociology an ideology rather than a "specialized theoretical activity", i.e., an application of theoretical activity to an actual object in reality? Castells' conclusions about the ideological nature of urban sociology have been reached through two related processes. On the one hand, his conclusions are based on the assumption that theory construction is an activity that produces knowledge rather than merely discovers it. On the other hand, Castells' conclusions about the ideological nature of urban sociology have been reached through a critical review of the various approaches to the "real objects" of urban theory, namely to urban space and to its theoretical object, namely to the specification of the relationship between space and society.

Through his review, Castells finds that traditional urban sociology does not possess either a distinct "theoretical object", i.e., a social theory of the relationship between space and society, nor does it investigate a distinct "object" in reality, i.e., it does not study specifically urban structures and formations. Hence, according to Castells, traditional urban theory cannot be considered as properly scientific. Moreover, traditional urban sociology cannot be considered as a "specialized theoretical activity"

either. Traditional urban sociology, according to Castells, has treated urban space as a given object and, therefore, it has failed to specify how urban spatial forms are distinct from other social and spatial forms in social reality.

To put it another way, the analyses of space in non-Marxist urban sociology have remained on the level of Althusser's "Generality I" and, therefore, they have failed to provide concrete knowledge of the specifically social nature or urban space and of the specific social process that structured it. According to Castells, what is lacking in traditional urban sociolgoy (i.e., non-Marxist urban sociology) is the theoretical understanding of the specific processes that produce a specific social space, such as urban space, for instance. The theories of urban forms -- spatial and social -- that have emerged from urban sociology so far are "ideological" because they have failed to show the specificity of the theoretical and social status of the term "urban" vis-à-vis other social processes in space in general (Castells, 1976a, 1976b).

Castells has identified at least three major perspectives on urban space and on the relationship between space and social life (1976a and 1977). These perspectives are the following: (1) a tendency to correlate urbanization with the processes of industrialization in general, (2) a tendency to view "urbanism as a way of life" or as a cultural system in general and, finally, (3) an analysis of urban phenomena from an ecological perspective, i.e., a tendency to view the city as a complex organism and as a functioning entity in the interaction of humans and their environments. According to Castells, these perspectives do not always appear as distinct schools of thought but they do represent distinct historical tendencies in the development of urban theory.

The notion of the "urban" as a category of description of a distinct form of social life appeared formally in social theory in the nineteenth century. The sociological accounts of the growth of cities in the nineteenth century centered on establishing a causal relation between industrialization and urbanization. The emergence of "urbanism as a way of life" was explained in terms of the accelerated processes of industrialization that swept Western Europe in the nineteenth century. Such theorists as Toennies, Simmel, Marx and Durkheim viewed the processes of urbanization as identical with the social history of industrialization. While they disagreed on the primacy of the factors that contributed to the development of industrialization, their differences in linking this process to the processes of urbanization were mostly in degree rather than in kind. In a sense, much of the sociological literature of the nineteenth century on urban development presents a richer social history of industrialization than a social analysis of the nature and functions of urban forms in early industrial capitalism.

The second and third perspectives reviewed by Castells have emerged from the works of the Chicago school of urban sociology in the first half of the twentieth century. These essays and studies on social life in cities constitute the foundations for the development of a distinct urban theory, according to Castells. That some of the early theorizing of the Chicago school of urban sociology contained all the ingredients of grand theorizing is hardly surprising; rather, it reflects an attempt at a theoretical grasp of the historical development of North American urbanization. North American urbanization and its relationship to industrialization in general showed rather different features from those in Western Europe. It was unavoidable that this should not characterize American urban theory: the rapid growth

of cities in North America must have appeared to those who observed this process as the urbanization of North American society itself. It is in this sense that the urban theories of the Chicago school show a tendency to treat urban problems as problems of the rise of urban society.

Following Castells, the investigation of urban life in the works of the Chicago school can be divided into two major areas: the investigation of urban phenomena (1) as the products of cultural developments, and (2) as the dependent variables of the interaction between human organisms and their environment. The "culturalist perspective" on urban growth, according to Castells, is indebted to the sociology of Toennies and Simmel (1977:75). The second perspective within the Chicago school has been developed from ecological analyses of urban growth. This perspective shows similarities to Durkheim's sociological investigation of the division of labour and its impact on the dynamic density of social life. Not surprisingly, for Castells, this approach represents a real effort to develop a distinct and specific urban theory.

However, in Castells' opinion, this effort at specificity was not successful (1976a, 1976b, and 1977). The ecological approach did not specify the social nature of the content of social space. The reason for this failure, according to Castells, is due to the fact that the ecological perspective predicated its theoretical investigations of urban life on a concept of social organization based on a biological notion of organization and development in general. The ecological perspective, then, developed a theory of social organization that explained social phenomena, including urbanism, in terms of biological metaphors and ecological principles.

According to Castells, the theoretical investigations of the relationship between space and society in the works of the Chicago school have

failed to provide an analysis and a real understanding of the specific social processes that structure urban space. The generalities brought to the investigation of urban spatial and social structures have remained general because they failed to go beyond the "empiricist"[13] assumption that the determining characteristics of urban space are given objectively and prior to theoretical analysis. As a result, the investigations of the Chicago school have failed to examine the particular social processes that structure urban space and urban life. It is in this sense, then, that Castells concludes that traditional (i.e., non-Marxist) urban sociology is, to some extent, merely a general sociology of space without a specific theory of social organization. Moreover, it is this lack of a specific (i.e., social) theory of social organization that contributes to the ideological character of traditional urban sociology.

In contrast, Castells proposes to investigate urban space and social organization by investigating the dialectics of their constitution in theory and in reality. The urban theory proposed by Castells as an alternative to the "empiricism" and the "ideological knowledge" of the Chicago school of urban sociology sets out to specify the "theoretical object" of theory -- i.e., what are urban social processes -- and its object in "reality", i.e., the nature of urban space. The next section presents Castells' specification of the theoretical status of social space -- the "real object" of urban theory -- in urban sociology.

7.4 Manuel Castells: Urban Space as a Theoretical Construct

What are the methodological implications of Castells' insistence on the epistemological distinction between scientific and ideological theories of urban life? More specifically, how are we to study social life in

cities? What are the real "objects" of inquiry into urban life? Does the acceptance of "the epistemological break" imply that in order to investigate an actual city we must first turn to the transformation of our notions of urbanism by mere theoretical means?

Yes and no, would be Castells' answer. While the rigorous theoretical investigation of concepts and notions is a necessary tool in the scientific investigation of social phenomena, it is possible to single out a material "element" in the city in order to analyze the specificity of its form and function in social organization. This material "element" -- already investigated by traditional urban sociology -- is the structure of social space.

The investigation of space in social life, according to Castells, might provide a fruitful entry into the hall of science, provided that the relationship between space and social organization is always specified by theoretical activity. In other words, Castells argues that space in social life is not an independent variable, or a given object of "empiricism" but is, instead, a concept that denotes a number of distinct social processes that structure social life. In other words, according to Castells, the investigation of the relationship between space and society must account for the social functions and effects of space in social life and in social organization. In Castells' perspective on theory, space can serve as a "real object" of investigation provided that its relation to social life is always specified:

> Let us begin, then, with space. This is something material enough, an indispensable element in all human activity. And yet this obviousness deprives it of any specificity and prevents it from being used directly as a category in the analysis of social relations. In fact, space, like time, is a physical quantity that tells us nothing, in itself, about the social relations expressed or as to its role in the determination of the mediation of social practice. A 'sociology of space' can only be an analysis of social practices given in a certain space, and

> therefore in an historical conjuncture. Just as in speaking of the nineteenth century (itself, one might remark, a questionnable expression), one is not referring to a chronological segmentation, but to a certain state of social formations, so in speaking of France, the Auvergne, the quarter Menilmontant, the Matto Grosso, or the Watts district, one is referring to a certain social situation, to a certain conjuncture. (1977:442)

To put it in plain English: Castells claims that space as a meaningful form is never given a priori. Moreover, any discussion of the meaning of space in social life, according to Castells, must take into account the particular social processes that select and determine the significance of space. The reason for this qualification is simple: the meaning of space in social life is, in fact, a social practice. In Castells' view, then, space symbolizes the social practices that have produced its actual forms and functions, and it symbolizes the social practices that have selected its significance in social life. In other words, space functions as a memory system of the social practices that have produced its form, function and significance in social history. Hence, according to Castells, it is meaningless to talk about symbolic space apart from the specific social practices that produce the significance of space in social life. Moreover, as Castells argues, the investigation of symbolic space is, in fact, an investigation of specific social processes (1977:215-221).

The investigation of the processes that produce the actual and the symbolic forms of space amounts to the specification of the patterns, or the "laws" that organize the structure of social life. In fact, Castells argues in The Urban Question (1977) that the "laws" that govern the patterns of social activities are also the grammatical rules of the language or symbolism of space. In other words, the relationship between the symbolism of space and the social practices that produce its structure and significance is represented by Castells as similar to the relationship between language

as a system of rules and language as speech or as the practice of these rules: "...if an analogy is to be made, we must set out from a distinction between the natural language (langue) and speech (parole), not forgetting that the first has meaning and is transformed only in relation to the historically given requirements of the second." (1977:217). In short, Castells suggests that the symbolism of space, like language, is intelligible only in relationto the history of its constitution and of its function. The symbolism of space, then, is a question of the specificity of its functions in social organization.

In Castells' perspective, the uncovering of what is signified by the symbolism of space is always a specific theoretical undertaking. This undertaking must recover the particular "laws" that rule the patterns of social practices that produce the form and significance of space in social life. For Castells, then, the meaning of a particular space, such as neighbourhood, for instance, cannot be "read" directly from an account of its social content. The content of space, in turn, must also be understood as a particular "historical conjuncture", or as a specific product of historical and social practices. In this sense, the content of social space is, in fact, "indexical" of the processes that have produced it. Thus, Castells argues that the content of social space is not the actual signified of the symbolism of social space. The actual signified of the symbolism of space, according to Castells is, in fact, the system of practices that structure the form and significance of social space.

This approach to the "reading of space" is, of course, the application of the Althusserian theory of knowledge to spatial forms. Castells, who claims to have read Marx in the manner proposed by Althusser (1977:ix), has applied an Althusserian reading to the symbolism of spatial forms in

social life. Moreover, Castells' theory of the functions of this symbolism of space in social life also applies the Althusserian distinction between science and ideology.[14] According to Castells, then, the meaning of spatial forms in social life and our knowledge of their social significance are always produced by specific social practices.

By also rejecting the notion that space, or more specifically, urban space, acquires form, function and significance because society has a "natural" propensity to project itself into and on space, Castells presents an alternative perspective on the "sociology of space." Castells' "sociology of space" is, in fact, a sociological theory of the social practices that produce and organize the spatial forms of the built environment of humans. For Castells, a "sociology of space" represents merely another way of expressing the basic premise that apart from the practices that comprise certain social formations -- their mode of production --- there are no socially significant functions and uses of space.

A sociology of space, then, is a sociology that specifies the social practices that organize and characterize spatial relations, including the spatial relations of the city. Urban space within this sociology must be seen as the specific product of certain social practices that could be identified as specifically "urban", i.e., as characteristic of those social practices that organize the spatial relations of cities. Hence, in Castells' view, it is not the "space" that is urban, rather, the term "urban" refers to the social practices that produce the urban structure. Castells' investigation of the uses, functions and effects of urban space in social organization, then, is an investigation of the social practices that organize urban life.

For Castells, the discussion of the nature and the significance of the

urban structure -- of urban space -- must begin with the theoretical specification of the social conditions that produce the structure of the social and territorial organization of the city. More specifically, this discussion must seek out the specific social practices that comprise what could be seen as the "urban" aspect of the mode of production.

CONCLUSION -- Urban Space: The Castellian Monad

> Just as by dint of abstraction we have transformed everything into a logical category, so one has only to make abstraction of every characteristic distinctive of different movements to attain movement in its abstract condition -- purely formal movement, the purely logical formula of movement. If one finds in logical categories the substance of all things, one imagines one has found in the logical formula of movement the absolute method, which not only explains all things, but also implies the movement of things. (Marx, 1975 1847 :106)

Urban space as the "empirical" object of urban sociology, according to Castells, is the articulation of the complexity and of the specificity of the relations that make up the social reality of the urban structure. Thus, for Castells, the territorial organization of the city reflects the spatial distribution-- or organization -- of certain social practices. The concept of "urbanism" in Castells' sociology, then, designates not merely "a way of life", but a specific practice that organizes the spatial relations of a specific mode of production. It appears that for Castells, "urbanism" is the spatial referent of the mode of production.

Castells' urban theory then proposes to specify the social practices that structure urban space. This specification must include a number of analyses if it is to be productive of knowledge about the social world. In other words, Castells, like Althusser, insists on specifying the relation of a theory of social practices to the theoretical system of the theory of

"social practice" in general. Put plainly, this implies that the investigation of the processes that structure urban space and urban life must include the analysis of the following: (a) the practices that comprise the mode of production of a social formation, and (b) the theoretical relations among the elements that comprise the analysis of the mode of production. After these specifications have been made, a non-ideological analysis of the social characteristics of urbanism becomes possible.

In Castells' perspective, then, the analysis of the functions and effects of the urban structure in the social system must be preceded by two analyses: (1) by the analysis of the practices that comprise the social system, and (2) by the analysis of the concepts that comprise the system of inquiry into social life. It is in this sense then that Castells argues in The Urban Question (1977) that urban space can never be considered as a given category of social life and social analysis but must be treated instead as an index of the various social processes that have structured it. Moreover, it is in this sense also that the significance of urban space must be discussed in terms of its relations to the practices that organize social life: "...the social signification of the different forms and types of space, the significative segmentation of space, the spatial units [under discussion or analysis] do not have meaning outside the segmentation of the social structure in scientific terms, therefore in terms of the mode of production and of social formations." (1977:443)

Put simply, the analysis of urban space must proceed by the analysis of its functions within the mode of production and within social life. Since the mode of production, according to Castells, is the specific complex of the various constituent elements of the social systems, such as the economic, the political and the ideological, for instance (1976c; 1977; 1978), it is

in relation to these "elements" that the functions and the significance of urban space must be located. Moreover, since each mode of production is usually characterized by a dominant "element" or system, it is primarily vis-à-vis this dominant element that the functions of urban space must be specified. In the capitalist mode of production, according to Castells, this dominant element is the economic[1] system (1976c; 1977). It follows that the spatial organization of urban life can only be understood in terms of the organization of the economic system in the capitalist mode of production. Thus, according to Castells:

> What does a segmentation of space mean, under the dominance of the capitalist mode of production, in terms of economic segmentation? It means an organization of space specific for each of the elements of the process of immediate production, on the one hand (labour power and reproduction of labour power; means of production; reproduction of means of production) and, on the other hand, an organization of space specific to the administration of the labour process; lastly the space of the circulation of capital. (1977:443)

Since the capitalist mode of production is characterized by the dominance of the economic, the spatial forms of industrialized cities, according to Castells, are the effects of the exigencies of the organization of the economic system. Space in the capitalist mode of production is, in fact, capitalist space.

The Expressions of a Social Practice

What happened to the "laboratory" of the traditional investigations of the urban structure and of urbanism; what happened to the city? For Castells, the concept of the city of traditional urban theorizing is an ideological construct because it has not been arrived at by the specification of the social practices that have actually produced its structure.

Moreover, this kind of theorizing, according to Castells, has failed also in specifying the functions of the urban system in relation to the social system in general.

Castells, on the other hand, undertakes an analysis of the urban system in its relation to the mode of production that characterizes the social system in general. The conclusions of this analysis (1977; 1978), although tentative, suggest taht "urbanism" is primarily descriptive of the processes of collective consumption in capitalism. In other words, Castells has identified the social practice that could be seen, perhaps, as characteristically "urban" (1976c; 1977). This practice, then, is collective consumption.

Castells' definition of collective consumption is based on a particular conception of the nature of capitalism as a system of production. According to Castells, the structure of the capitalist mode of production is characterized by the following essential components: (1) an increasing concentration and centralization of capital, (2) a tendency of the profit rate to fall, (3) an increasing socialization of productive forces, and (4) increasing State interventions in the economic sphere or in commodity production (1977:459-65; 1978:15-33). More specifically, Castells' definition of collective consumption rests on what he sees as an increasing State intervention into the economic system of the capitalist mode of production. According to Castells, the concentration of capital (monopoly capitalism) and the falling rate of profit -- the structural characteristics of monopoly capitalism -- in the long run, threaten the structural stability of the capitalist mode of production. In order to counteract this tendency, State intervention in economic production is necessary. State intervention into areas of commodity production that prove to be non-profitable for

capital investment because they would reinforce the tendency of the profit rate to fall are housing, transit, social services, and cultural consumption, such as cultural, recreational and sports facilities.

This intervention into economic production ensures not only the structural stability of the economic system but it also protects the interests of the "capitalist class". In other words, State intervention into organization of the processes of collective consumption ensures the structural stability of power relations in capitalism. Thus, according to Castells, collective consumption is both a product and a social process (practice). On the one hand, collective consumption refers to commodities whose production is not profitable for private capital; on the other hand, it refers to the social and political organization of the "mass consumption" of these commodities:

> ...collective consumption is, therefore, consumption of commodities whose production is not assured by capital, not because of some intrinsic quality, but because of the specific and general interests of capital: thus the same product (housing, for example) will be treated both by the market and by the state, and will therefore be alternately a product of individual or collective consumption, according to the criteria, which will change according to the historical situation. [sic] thus I would distinguish my approach from that of an empiricism that consists in identifying a different social given (collective consumption) and a material product (housing as use value). On the other hand, these 'collective consumer goods' seem to be those that are necessary to the reproduction of labour power and/or to the reproduction of social relations, without which they would not be products, despite their lack of interest for the production of profit. (1977:460-1)

According to Castells, the urban system (the city) functions as a unit of collective consumption in capitalism. In other words, cities are the products of the processes that comprise collective consumption in monopoly capitalism. Urban space, the urban structure, and the social life of

cities reflect the specific historical social practices that organize and regulate collective consumption in the capitalist system. The study of the relationship between space and society in the urban system of advanced capitalism, according to Castells is, in fact, the investigation of the role of State intervention into the economic sphere, or into the processes of collective consumption.

Castells' proposal for the investigation of urban phenomena suggests, then, that the spatial organization of cities is the product or effect of the various processes that comprise the social and economic system of the capitalist mode of production. This "effect" -- the organization of "spatial units" -- is systemic and therefore amenable to scientific analysis. According to Castells, this systemic process is the "real object" of urban sociology.

The urban system as an effect and as a process in Castells' urban sociology refers to the organization of the relations between the various structural elements of the capitalist mode of production. More specifically, according to Castells, the concept of the "urban system" refers to the particular way in which these elements of the economic system [of the capitalist mode of production] are articulated within a unit of collective consumption." (1976c:153)

However, Castell does not imply that the city is merely a unit of consumption. What he does imply is that in advanced capitalism, the specificity of urban formations as spatial or social units can only be understood in terms of these processes of collective consumption. The urban system, according to Castells, contains other "effects" or elements that characterize cities in capitalism. However, the definition and allocation of the functions of these elements must be derived from their role vis-a-vis the

economic system in the mode of production. In Castells' theoretical system, the economic dominates every social instance. Castells' urban system is the spatial reflection of the organization of elements that form and maintain the dominance of the economic system in the capitalist mode of production.

The urban system, then, is comprised of a number of "elements" that are functionally related to the systems of the capitalist mode of production. The "elements" of the urban system are the following:

(1) Production: This element is the expression of the spatial organization of the production of goods, services and information. Offices, firms, production plants, etc., are the spatial referents of the processes of production in the urban system.

(2) Consumption: Consumption in the urban system refers to the spatial organization of individual and collective consumption such as housing, education, health care, leisure, and transportation.

(3) Exchange: Exchange in the urban system refers to the spatial organization of the processes of exchange between 'Production' and 'Consumption'. The 'expressions' of these processes in the urban system are commerce, mass transit and commuting.

(4) Management: This element of the urban structure describes the spatial organization of the administration of the relations between 'Production', 'Consumption', and 'Exchange'. The spatial forms of this process are urban planning agencies and municipal institutions

and services (see Castells, 1976b:79; 1977: Chapter 9).

The Functions of Spatial Relations in the Urban System

By looking at urban space, according to Castells, we investigate the historically specific relations of the elements of a mode of production. The urban structure reflects the processes of production and their social organization. "Urban space" as social space expresses the processes that structured it. This expression, however, is not a direct representation of the social structure; instead, it is reflective of the "laws" that structure social organization and its organization in space.

For Castells, the specificity of urban systems (actual cities) and the theoretical concepts of urban theory (urban sociology as a science) are located in the specification of the practices of the social production of space. These practices, in turn, are always historically specific, i.e., they are determined by a dominant system of production and its social organization. Changes in this system, social organization, or in the urban structure, according to Castells, are the results of "laws" of transformation. In other words, historical changes in social life, including the evolution of urban forms, are structural transformations; they are neither arbitrary, nor the outcome of the voluntaristic actions of social subjects in history.[2]

The study of the urban structure as a particular form of organization of social life in space is the study of the structure of the practices that comprise the capitalist mode of production primarily. More specifically, urban theory consists of the investigation of the role of the urban system in this mode of production. The history and characteristics of urban forms, according to Castells, can be addressed properly only by a recognition that

what is specific to cities in advanced capitalism rests on the organization of the relations between productive forces, economic practices and the political structure of the organization of these relations, or the class structure.

The organization of the relations of the practices that comprise the structure of the capitalist mode of production, in Castells' view, must be located primarily in the sphere of politics. For Castells, politics "designates the system of power relations" (1977:260) of the capitalist mode of production. In other words, politics organize class relations and class relations are the fundamental social relations of the capitalist mode of production. The sphere of politics, then, explains the social organization of the capitalist mode of production and it provides the axis of the social analysis of the urban system as a particular form of organization of social life in space.

Thus, for Castells, the study of the urban system as the "expression" of the practices of the social structure of capitalism, is the study of the structure of class relations. In this sense, the urban structure -- urban space -- reflects the political practices of capitalism. The specific practices that organize and transform urban space, then, are those that organize social classes. The investigation of the processes of the urban system, then, is identical with the investigation of the power relations between classes: the class struggle.

The class struggle, then, is the primary axis of Castells' analysis of the uses and function of urban spatial relations. Yet Castells' concept of the class struggle is not developed beyond describing power relations in the social structure. Moreover, Castells' view of this "struggle" suggests a mechanical theory of historical change; it assumes that change always

comes from "below", while those in power will do anything within their power to maintain the structure that allows them to hold this power. In other words, history -- or change -- is always initiated and made by those who do not have any power. Moreover, "power" in Castells' vocabulary designates ultimately an economic relation: the social organization of economic production.

Applied to the urban realm this implies that the urban system is organized largely around the exigencies of the processes that ensure the reproduction of the power structure of the capitalist mode of production. In other words, the processes of urban life reflect the processes that reproduce the economic structure of capitalism. Any serious efforts that attempt to transform the urban structure, then, must address the relationship between the urban system and the social organization of economic production. In other words, social movements in the city, if they are to effect change in the urban structure, must effect change in the social structure first.

One of the most effective political processes that ensure the reproduction of the class structure in the urban realm, according to Castells, is best exemplified by the political and economic role of urban planning in monopoly capitalism. Castells' definition of urban planning is based on a theory of the necessity of State intervention into the economic processes of monopoly capitalism. More precisely, it is based on a notion that capital accumulation in monopoly capitalism is ensured by State intervention into the economic processes of collective consumption, or the processes of the reproduction of labour power. In Castells' view, urban planning is the political process of this State intervention that protects the economic and, therefore political, interests of the dominant classes:

> By urban planning, I mean more precisely the intervention of the political in the specific articulation of the different instances of a social formation within a collective state of reproduction of labour power, with the intention of assuring its extended reproduction, or regulating the non-antagonistic contradictions that have arisen and of repressing the antagonistic contradictions, thus assuring the interests of the dominant social class in the whole of the social formation and the organization of the urban system, in such a way as to ensure the structural reproduction of the dominant mode of production. (1977:432)

The opportunity for transforming the urban structure, then, will come from resistance and opposition to this "intervention". This resistance and opposition, however, must incorporate a concern for resistance or opposition to the reproduction of the social structure as a whole. Thus, according to Castells, urban social movements, such as movements for better housing, environment, services, etc., are effective in bringing about change insofar as they address the power relations of the entire social structure. Castells' definition of urban social movements, then, refers to a "system of practices" of political resistance to the reproduction of the organization of economic structures:

> By urban social movement, I mean a system of practices resulting from the articulation of the particular conjuncture, both by the insertion of the support-agents in the urban structure and in the social structure, and such that its developments tends objectively towards a substantial modification of the power relations in the class struggle, that is to say, in the last resort, in the state power. (1977:423)

Thus Castells' "urban structure" as an <u>actual</u> entity exists merely in the realm of theory since -- as he himself has pointed out -- "the urban structure is only a concept, it paves the way for an analysis of a concrete situation, but is not capable of accounting for it." (1977:423), In other words, talking about the nature of urban space -- its elements, its content -- is merely an occasion for theorizing about the power structure of social

life. In short, urban space serves the occasion for theorizing about a certain kind of political practice.

It appears, then, that the Castellian "monad" -- space -- is a theoretical construct that has been called upon to reflect and elaborate a Marxist theory of the capitalist mode of production.[3] The urban realm, the actual city, has been subsumed in the theoretical demands of this structuralist theory of production of social forms. The actual city has been divested of any claims to empirical and theoretical distinction. The city, to quote Alison Hayford (1980), "...has become the victim of urban theory."

Castells' contribution to the analysis of urban life has been indeed substantial and impressive through the numerous research studies he conducted in France and Latin America on the relationship between urban social movements, urban planning and the economic aspects of urbanization (see 1977). His notion of urban space as an effect of a social practice that is specified by its relation with other social practices in general represents a considerable advance over accounts of urban development based on analogies with the evolution of culture or organic processes of growth. However, as Alison Hayford (1980), has also pointed out: "...the problem is in using the concepts. Without a clear subject, there is nothing too definite to which the concepts can be applied" (1980:28). In other words, Castells' definition of the urban system depends on a mechanical perspective on the structure of social reality. Its elements, like the Althusserian concept of social history as a "process without a subject", move in a mechanical closure around a formalized notion of the "mode of production".

The Political Importance of the Urban Structure in Social History

In Castells' analysis of "urbanism as a social practice", urban space appears to take on a strategical role in political practice. Political practice, in turn, is understood by Castells as the practical attempt to transform the power relations of the social structure. The characteristics of these power relations, the class struggle, in Castells' view, are not to be confused with the contents of the consciousness of the people who make up these classes, however. These characteristics must be understood not by the accounts of the political experiences of "subjects" but by their rigorous specification in theory. In other words, the accounts of the experiences of social subjects is not to be considered as a category of political analysis. Nor is this account a sufficient basis for engaging in political action; real political practice, according to Castells' view, must be based on a theoretical analysis and assessment of the power relations of the social structure.

It is in this sense that Castells' monad, urban space, assumes the role of a political issue. In Castells' political strategy, controversies about the different uses of urban space in the "capitalist city" are, in fact, political issues that serve as the occasion for winning friends and allies for the working classes in their struggle against capitalism. Since such issues of "urban space" as housing, transit, recreational facilities, and clean air affect everyone, they are, in fact, the issues of collective consumption in advanced capitalism. Hence, according to Castells, the issues of collective consumption serve as the common ground for mobilizing classes; these issues reach across class lines, and therefore serve as a common front for resistance. Specifically, in talking about the "French experience" of urban social movements in the late 1960's and early 1970's,

Castells concludes that the "urban sphere" represents not only a new common terrain for resisting advanced capitalism, but that it reflects the changed historical and social conditions for the political strategy of this resistance. As such, it demands a new political practice from the "revolutionary": "In our historical conditions, the revolutionary's essential task consists above all in winning the masses. The battle for the masses replaces the battle of the Winter palace" (1978"60).

Yet what is missing from Castells' assessment of the strategic role of the urban sphere in the class struggle is the experience of human social subjects whose processes of collective consumption are regulated and dominated by the "intervening practices" of the agencies of the State such as "urban planning", and the experience of those who resist this domination by "inserting" themselves as "support agents" into a system of practices that attempt to transform the balance of the power relations of capitalism. In other words, what is missing from Castells' political planning is an account of the conscious, historical, and social men and women who live, produce and "struggle" within the every day realm of the "urban structure". It comes as no surprise, then, that one of the major problems faced by Castells' theory of urban politics as a possible point of entry into the "class struggle" -- and as a strategy for winning the masses -- is an epistemological gap between theory and practice:

> ...the theoretical work does not take place in a social void; it must be articulated, in the state of knowledge/ignorance, with the practices observed; it must take into account the conjuncture and constitute a veritable tactic of investigation. Thus the more invested, the more constituted by the dominant ideology, a domain of the social is, the more one must both distance oneself as far as the production of conceptual tools for its analysis are concerned and establish links between the theoretical conceptualization and ideological apprehension of these practices. In other words, it is a schizophrenic process that is being established, an incommunicability between the experience of the masses and scientific work. (1977:441)

Given Castells' excess of theoretical self-consciousness over the proper boundaries of scientific theory and over ideological accounts of social reality, it is hardly surprising that the experience of the "masses" cannot be understood: theory and actual social beings do not speak the same language. Castells' efforts at "translating" scientific Marxism into a political experience does not compensate for his omission of the real experiences of social beings. As a result, Castells' theory of the "urban system" as a system of the political practices of monopoly capitalism does not include the political understanding of the social experiences of those who live and work in cities.

For "in the last instance" it is still people who make decisions about planning and policies. Granted that their decisions are ultimately mere "conjunctures" and granted that their consciousness of political issues is the result of the contradictory convergence of the various instances of the mode of production, it is also the case that their decisions, on the whole, are based not on the theoretical understanding of the relationship between these "instances", but on what they think might work. In other words, their decisions are related to their beliefs in the practical outcome of planning, or "planning" for strategies against planning, as the case might be.

The study of urban politics, then, ought to include an investigation of the understanding of the political dimensions of urbanization and urbanism by social beings. The theoretical explorations of such a study ought to specify the relationship between planning practices, municipal politics, and "urbanism" as a mode of everyday life. This kind of inquiry implies the investigation of those "practices" that have been relegated to the realm of the "ideological" by the Althusserian inspired epistemology (cf. Castells,

1977:246-75). The accounts of everyday life in this epistemology of the social world do not qualify for theoretical status and, therefore, they are not seen as capable of producing knowledge. This by no means implies that these accounts do not have actual and specific effects in the social world. What needs to be specified, then, is the relationship between everyday life in cities and the processes of the reproduction of the social structure beyond its economic determinations.

In conclusion, then, while Castells' urban theory could be viewed as an excess in formalism, his view of urban politics transcends the serenity of theory building. Castells' view of urban politics is a proposal for social action. However, this proposal for action denies its connection to the same history it attempts to transform. This proposed transformation attempts to determine, in some absolute sense, the course of this history. This determination is, perhaps, less the outcome of conscious political designs than the implication of Castells' definition of the historical transformation of the social structure. The "subjects" of these historical transformations, in Castells' perspective, are not people but concepts. Living social beings are delivered from the accidents and uncertainties of history into the secure realm of the logical structures of the theory of the mode of production. History, then, is produced not by the activity of real, social beings, but by the exigencies of the logical functions of the "scientific" theory of the mode of production.

A scientific understanding of the social practices that comprise the social structure, and of those practices that produce the urban structure, ought not exclude the investigation of the role of belief structures and accounts of everyday life in the reproduction of a social formation. In brief, an investigation of the transformations of the social structure

ought to include an investigation of the social world "logic" of the relationship between ideology, everyday life and the reproduction of social structures. In closing, perhaps, E.P. Thompson's (1978) observations about Althusser's approach to the relationship between political theory and the reality of social history might be enlisted here as an analogous criticism of Castells' view of the strategical role of urban politics in social change:

> The project itself is midbegotten; it is an exercise of closure, and it stems from a kind of intellectual agoraphobia, an axiety before the uncertain and the unknown, a yearning for security within the cabin of the Absolute. As such, it reproduces old theological modes of thought, and its constructions are always elaborated from ideological materials. More than this, such total systems have, very generally, been at enmity with reason and censorious of freedom. They seek, not only to dominate all theory -- or to expell all other theories as heresies -- but also to reproduce themselves within social reality. Since theory is a closure, history must be brought to conform. They seek to lasso process in their categories, bring it down, break its will, and subject it to their command. Within the last instance we find the anagram of Stalin. (1978:111)

CONCLUSIONS

"Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin," thought Alice, "but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in all my life!"

Lewis Carroll,
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,
(1865)

The Problematic

This thesis has investigated a number of possible solutions to the problematic posed by Manuel Castells' question: "Is there an urban sociology?" (Castells, 1976a:33). Obviously the issue is not whether urban sociology exists as a form of discourse on social reality. Rather than a rhetorical gesture, this question was meant to direct attention to the epistemological status of urban theorizing. This question, then, is about the legitimacy of the scientific status of urban sociology; it asks whether urban sociology constitutes a distinct conceptual representation of a specific aspect of social reality. In other words, this is a positivist doubt; it asks whether urban sociology possesses a conceptual object whose properties correspond to the properties of an empirical entity in the social world, and whose properties could be identified as distinctly "urban"?

The search for a sociological theory of the specificity of life in cities is founded on the following question: what are the specific conditioning variables of urban life? Are these variables identical with those of social organization in general, or merely the functions of certain processes of social life in particular? Traditionally, the study of the "urban sphere" implied the study of the forms of community life in space. In other words, the investigation of urban life involved the investigation of the territorial organization of social life. The Durkheimian "social fact" of this inquiry -- the Castellian theoretical and actual object of urban sociology -- has been identified by this tradition as "urbanism".

"Urbanism as a way of life" (Wirth, 1938) has been singled out as the characteristic property of the social life of cities.

Therefore, this thesis has reviewed a number of perspectives that claimed to have identified, described, and explained the constituent elements and processes of "urbanism" as the property of the social life of cities. The purpose of this review, following Castells, has been to identify and locate the objects of urban theorizing, i.e., to identify what urban theorists study when they investigate social life in cities. The results of this investigation suggest that "urbanism" refers to conceptualizations about the social effects of the territorial distribution of human life. In brief, "urbanism" appears to denote the social effects of spatial relations in human life.

The broad definition of "urbanism" as a mode of social life developed in the traditional literature cannot claim the sort of conceptual specificity that Castells requires of a scientific (i.e., "true") account of the actual world of urban life. This definition fails to provide an account of the social specificity of urban spatial and social forms because it does not explain the functions of spatial relations in social life from a social point of view. Instead, according to Castells, the traditional literature treats these functions as the effects of the evolution of cultural forms, and as the functions of ecological processes of adaptation.

What does specify the epistemological status of "urbanism" as a way of knowing about life in cities, according to Castells, is the identification and analysis of the specific social activities that produce and fashion urban space (see Castells, 1976b; 1977). "Urbanism" denotes, then, the specificity of the social practices that produce and organize life in cities in particular. Moreover, urban space itself must be seen as the

specific product of organized social activity; it has no claim to existential or theoretical status apart fom this activity. The key to the actual and the theoretical specificity of "urbanism", then, is in the investigation of the organization of the social practices that produce the structures and processes of urban life (Castells, 1977).

The accounts of "urbanism" as mode of life reviewed in this thesis have been selected because of their central concerns with establishing and specifying the relationship between the social life of cities and the organization of the territorial distribution of social life in general. While the concern for the theoretical specification of this relationship represents the similarity of approaches to urban life it also marks the differences in the explanations of the organization of both social life in general and of urban life in particular.

The 'Solutions' to the Problematic

The three perspectives on the organization of urban life have been identified as different schools of urban sociology because of the particular differences they have shown in their explanations of the social system underlying urban life. These particular differences suggested the following three groupings: (i) theories that have approached social organization and urban life in terms of culture and its evolution (Park and Wirth); (ii) theories that have attempted to establish and specify the ecological conditions of social organization and urban growth (McKenzie, Burgess, and Schnore); and (iii) the application of Marxian concepts of social organization to the urban sphere (Castells). Briefly, then, these 'solutions' to Castells' problematic offer the following notions about the relationship between society, space and the city:

(i) The cultural conditions of "urbanism" -

The urban sociology developed by Robert Park and Louis Wirth is a theory of social organization based on consensus. The city is the locus and the representative form of the evolution of cultural forms, or of forms of consensus. "Urbanism", in this perspective, is one such cultural form. It characterizes the development, i.e., the evolution, of social life, i.e. the modes of achieving consensus. "Urbanism" as a mode of consensus evolved from simpler forms of social organization. Different cultural forms, then, are representative of different modes of social order. Hence Wirth's conclusion that "urbanism" is, in fact, a new mode of social organization: mass society.

The term "culture" in the urban sociology of Park and Wirth appears to describe such general processes as the effects of ecological organization in social life, the sociological expression of human nature (Park), and the basis for social organization in general (Wirth). In fact, in the sociology of Park and Wirth, the term "culture" refers to forms of communicative interactions.

Communicative interactions, in turn, denote those forms of human interactions that bring about consensus, or an agreement about what Jurgen Habermas has recently defined as "the presupposed basis of validity claims that can be mutually recognized" (1979:3) [Emphasis added.] Both Park and Wirth, following John Dewey (1957[1922]) held that "society exists in and through communication" (Park, 1952:174). Hence it appears to follow that the mode of social order will be characterized primarily by the characteristics of these communicative interactions, or by these

forms of achieving consensus. "Urbanism", then, in the sociology of Park and Wirth, refers to the mode of communication through which consensus can be achieved.

The variables of "urbanism as a way of life", then, are the variables of communicative interactions, in some sense. The territorial distribution of social life, while representative of a particular stage of development in the evolution of social organization is, in fact, a conditioning variable of this organization. In other words, the territorial distribution of social life is one of the conditions of the possibility of the mode of organization of this life. Spatial relations, then, are the variables of communicative interactions, and communicative interactions are the conditioning variables of the mode of collective life. Hence Wirth's claim that cities, their size, the density and heterogeneity of their populations, give rise to new forms of social interactions and associations.

"Urbanism as a way of life" in the perspective developed by Park and Wirth is the effect of the forms of communicative interactions that bring about consensus. Thus, "urbanism" is also the basis of a new mode of social organization: that of mass society.

(ii) The ecological conditions of "urbanism" -

The social theories underlying the urban perspectives of McKenzie, Burgess, and Schnore claim that social organization is not an effect of the goals of human history, nor is its form dependent or identical with values and attitudes about consensus. Rather than a cultural system, social organization must be understood as an ecological system comprised of, and characterized by,

different functions. In other words, the social order is the mode, or type of organization of different functions into a functioning (whole) system. "Urbanism" is one such 'difference' in the system; it is a differentiated function in the organization of social life. The city -- the urban structure -- is, then, a dependent variable of the organization of the integration of differentiated functions in social life.

The territorial distribution of social life, its forms and processes, is representative of the complexity of the interdependences of differentiation in social life. The urban structure and the urban system, in fact, indicate a highly interdependent organization of adaptive processes that are ecological in origin. These ecological processes of adaptation to the environment -- i.e. competition for limited resources -- are characterized by differentiation and specialization in the division of labour in the ecological order of social life.

Specialization in the division of labour will characterize not only the complexity of the social structure -- i.e., the functional structural interdependence of the division of labour -- but also its organization in space. In other words, specialization in the division of labour will be represented, usually, by the territorial differentiation and segregation of social functions. The urban system, according to this perspective, can show at least in theory a systemic form of development; therefore, urban growth can be predicted on the basis of changes in specializations in the division of labour. "Urbanism" describes, then, in some sense, the development of the complexity of the division of labour.

In the ecological perspective informed by Durkheimian sociology (Schnore, 1965a), the variables of differentiation and specialization in the division of labour have been ascribed to the effects of the dynamic density of populations. Dynamic density describes the density of social contacts and interactions in a geographical area (cf. Durkheim, 1933). Dynamic density, then, is a form of communicative interaction in that it effects a qualitative change in the organization of the system; it makes a "difference."[1] The variables of dynamic density -- of communicative interactions -- in turn include the territorial distribution of the population and the forms of communication transportation technologies that alter geographical distances in social life. Changes in communication and transportation technology, then, affect the social distances in a geographical area; therefore, they also effect changes in the actual and potential density of communicative interactions and social contacts.

The study of "urbanism" in the ecological perspective, then, is the morphological analysis of the interdependence between the social and territorial organization of the functions of the division of labour. This would suggest that this perspective is searching for a sociological theory of "urbanism." However, its urban theory is a functional analysis of the ecologically defined concept of the division of labour. In other words, the division of labour is not identified as a purely social process, i.e., as the product of social activity; rather, the division of labour is understood to be a pre-condition of social activity itself in that it is a bio-ecological process in origin. It is bio-ecologic-

al because it is a form of organization of adaptation of human life in the processes of "the struggle for existence" of all forms of organic life.

While the cultural approach to the study of "urbanism as a way of life" underplayed the importance of the interdependence between the division of labour and its functions in social organization, the morphological approach ignores the possibility that culture as a system of values might perform a functional role in the organization of the social order and of urban life.

(iii) "Urbanism" as a social practice in production -

The third urban perspective to have been discussed in this thesis has been Manuel Castells' particular application of Marxian concepts to the analysis of "urbanism as a way of life." Castells' deployment of the materialist conception of history in the investigation of the processes of urban life is a theory of the social conditions and practices of the production of urban space. The "urban structure" in this perspective has been identified as a particular territorial expression (reflection) of the organization of the social practices that characterize the mode of production of a social formation. In this view, the existential status of the city is explained in terms of its determinations by the organization of the processes of production in social life. "Urbanism", then, denotes the social practices that organize production in the city.

Social organization, in this perspective, is explained also as a function of the exigencies of production. Social organization in Castells' perspective is the organization of the social

relations of production. More specifically, in societies characterized primarily by the production of commodities for exchange -- i.e., by the dominance of economic relations in production -- the structure of social organization is comprised of contradictory class relations. To put it another way: the social structure is defined by the contradictory relations of two classes: (a) a class comprised of producers of commodities who do not own the means of production or the means of distribution of these commodities, and (b) a class comprised of the owners of the means of production who also control the distribution, or exchange of commodities. Social organization, then, is the organization of contradictory relations that originate from contradictory social positions to the means of production. In short, social organization, in this instance, designates positions and relations in the social organization of the division of labour.

"Urbanism as a way of life", then, can be understood fully only in terms of its genetic and structural connection to the organization of the economic and social relations of production in general. In other words, "urbanism as a way of life" has existence in the social world insofar as it is an "effect" or expression of the social practices that organize production in the city. The study of "urbanism", therefore, implies the investigation of the economic and social functions of the urban system in the mode of production that characterizes a social formation. Hence, according to Castells, in monopoly capitalism, i.e., in the social and economic system characteristic of the production of commodities for exchange value, the functions of

the urban system can be understood best in terms of the organization of the processes of collective consumption. Collective consumption in Castells' perspective describes a product, i.e., a commodity, and a social process, i.e., the social and the economic organization of the production of this commodity. On the one hand, according to Castells, collective consumption denotes commodities whose production is not profitable for private capital but whose production ensures the smooth functioning of capital; hence their production must be assured by increasing State intervention into economic production. On the other hand, collective consumption refers to the social and political organization of the "mass" consumption of these commodities. This reference also includes the increased role of the State in this organization.

The "urban structure", i.e., urban space, according to this perspective, then, is both the effect and the expression of the organization of the social practices of production in the city. The investigation of the relationship between urban space and urban social life, then, must be seen as the study of those social and political practices that organize class relations in the city. "Urbanism as a way of life" is neither a new cultural form nor the ecological function of "the struggle for existence" but is the specific expression of the class struggle in the urban realm. The city in late capitalism, according to Castells, is both a functional system and a social expression of the organization of the territorial distribution of this mode of production.

The discussion of the possible roles of what have been defined here as communicative interactions in the transformation

of either the urban or the social structure are conspicuously absent in Castells' social theory of urban life. Castells' "social facts" are not social contacts but social practices that organize production. His social theory is a theory of social action (praxis) and not a theory of forms of social interaction. Communicative interactions in Castells' sociology are not the variables of new forms of social life; rather, they are seen as the effects of the social practices of production.

Change in the urban system, then, is the effect of the exigencies of the organization of production. What brings about change in the urban system is what transforms the social structure, the reorganization of the social and economic relations of production. According to Castells, then, social organization does not change in and because of communication; it changes because the relations of production are reorganized. This reorganization, in turn, changes the forms of communication as well.

In Castells' perspective on the urban sphere, spatial relations are nothing more or less than the expressions -- or products -- of the territorial organization of the social relations of production. "Urbanism", then, is a way of organizing production in space; in the capitalist mode of production, "urbanism" refers to the spatial integration of the economic relations of production. Since economic relations characterize production in capitalism, "urbanism" according to Castells is the social effect of the economic organization of labour power in advanced capitalism. Castells' conclusions, as those of the ecological perspective, suggest that "urbanism" is, in fact,

the product of the division of labour in social life. However, while for the ecological perspective, "urbanism" is the sociological expression of the bio-ecological functions of the division of labour in all organic systems, for Castells, this "expression" is, in fact, a product of the economic relations of industrial production.

A Recommendation for a Solution: *Communication as a Social Practice*

In searching for a 'solution' to the problematic posed by Castells' question, it has been suggested in this thesis that the OBJECT of urban theorizing, i.e., the distinct conceptual entity of urban theory, is "urbanism" as a mode of social existence, i.e., as a "social fact". Thus it has been suggested that the concept of "urbanism" describes certain specific social functions and effects of the territorial organization of social life in industrial societies.

The disagreements among the various perspectives reviewed here are not about the originating question of the social inquiry into urban phenomena. Rather, these differences are disagreements over the possible range of generalizations and interpretations of the dynamics of the relationship between the organization of social forms and the organization of their territorial distribution.

The three perspectives that have been identified on the basis of their approach to social organization in general have all suggested, in some sense, that spatial relations effect, and/or express, the processes of social organization in general. In other words, "urbanism", in these theories, is a function as well as a variable in social organization.

The cultural and the ecological perspectives on "urbanism", identified

here as traditional approaches, advanced a theory of social organization based on the claim that communication is, in some sense, the condition of the possibility of social life and of social order. Specifically, the cultural perspective describes "urbanism" as a distinct and evolutionary form of organization of communicative interaction. The dominance of this form in industrial society, according to this perspective, points to an evolutionary transformation of the structure of the order of social life. In other words, according to this perspective, "urbanism" -- the organization of communicative interactions in this specific form -- is a universal characteristic of the evolution of social life.

In the ecological perspective, on the other hand, the communicative interactions of a territorial "community" -- the dynamic density of the population of an area -- function as the variables of the organization of the order of the social community in the same geographical area. In other words communicative interactions are not the basis for the cultural order of social life; rather they function as variables in the organization of the division of labour both in the geographical and the social community.

Thus the cultural and the ecological approaches to "urbanism" and its relationship to social organization in general stress the role of communication technology in the determinations and the transformations of the urban system and the social system. Spatial relations, the territorial distribution of social life, in these theories, have been considered to be the functional variables of the processes of communications and, therefore, indirectly, of social organization. Spatial relations express social distances; social distances, in turn, affect the conditions and the forms of communicative interactions. In this sense, then, spatial relations are the conditioning variables of social organization.

The first two perspectives attribute a number of positive functions to spatial relations in the organization of social life. These perspectives suggest that social change can be brought about by merely altering the spatial relations of social life. The suggestion that the rational planning of the urban structure can result in a more rational organization of the social forms that constitute the urban system is certainly a strong undercurrent of these perspectives. Following up on this suggestion one could argue that urban planning might serve as a strategy for the development of a more rational form of organization of social life in general.

However, the third perspective reviewed does not share in the rational optimism about the social effects of the restructuring of spatial forms. For Castells, the representative of this perspective, no such relationship can exist between communications, spatial relations and social change. The reason for this is simple; according to Castells, communications and spatial relations, rather than the determining characteristics of the social order, are themselves the determined effects of this order.

The variables of social organization, according to Castells, then, are not the forms of communicative interactions but the social practices of production. Communicative interactions, in turn, are the effects, or "products", of these social practices of production. The variables of communications, then, are primarily social in character rather than spatial. This social variable, in turn, is always specific; it is specified by the practices that characterize the mode of production of a social formation. In the case of the analysis of Western industrial societies, the social variable of communicative interactions is characterized by the dominance of economic relations in production, or by the dominance of economic practices. Thus, according to this view, communicative interactions are the social

effects of the economic relations of prodcution.

The planning of spatial forms, such as urban space, for example, is not an adequate strategy for social change then. On the contrary, in this view, such planning merely reinforces the status quo; it is a means of ensuring the smooth functioning of economic practices. Change in the urban structure, according to Castells, can only be effected through radical change in the social structure. Changing spatial relations, then,does not constitute an adequate strategy for social change; such efforts at intervention possess only a tactical value in the struggle for social change.

In this review of the different perspectives in urban theorizing, it has been stressed that communications as social action, and communication technology as a function in the division of labour, play a central role not only in the processes of urbanization in Western industrialized societies, but also in the processes of the organization of their social order. It has been pointed out that communication in urban theorizing has been understood as a social phenomenon that is, on the one hand, the condition and the basis of social order and, on the other hand, merely an effect of this order.

From a communicational perspective, then, in the first case, "urbanism" appears to describe a new form of organization of communicative interactions in general; it describes the spatial integration of cultural forms. In the second case, the referent of "urbanism" was located in the social processes of the spatial integration of economic relations. In either case, the social, cultural and economic functions of communications, and their relations to urbanization, or to the spatial integration of the various elements of social organization, remain yet to be specified in theory. What needs to be addressed, then, is the specific function of communications in productive activities, and in the social, economic and cultural organiza-

tion of these productive activities.

In more concrete terms, a potential avenue for the investigation of the functions of communication and of communication technologies in the spatial integration of social life has been already indicated by the B.C. Tel study (Salter et al, 1979). The B.C. Tel study suggested that "urbanism" as a cultural form,i.e., as a system of values, can be viewed as a social and economic pattern of urbanization. The introduction of new communications technologies into the remote communities of the resource regions of British Columbia has had a profound impact on the integration of the social and cultural life of these communities. The new communications technologies allows for -- or as some would argue, are intended for -- the dissemination of cultural values, such as "urbanism" as a mode of existence to be desired, into remote regions where the expectations they foster cannot be met by local resources. In other words, the dissemination of cultural values is seen in terms of the consumer needs they are able to generate.

In this sense, then, the dissemination of the cultural forms of the industrial city acts as a method of integration of the demand for consumer goods. "Urbanism" as a cultural form extends the market beyond the physical limits of the city; it homogenizes needs and demands over greater territories and across social and cultural differences. The cultural expressions of "urbanism" -- the modes of existence suggested as desirable -- are determined not in response to local needs and resources, but in terms of the economic considerations of values. Thus "urbanism" as a cultural form is, in fact, a material, i.e., productive force in the spatial integration of social practices.

Communication, both technology and program producing practices, appears then as a distinct form of social practice in the spatial integration of

economic relations. What needs to be specified, then, is the relationship between "urbanism" as a mode of social existence and communications as a social practice that integrates the various social, economic, and cultural forms of "expressions" into a single coherent "statement" or "proposition" about social organization. In other words, a comprehensive urban theory, as a theory of the spatial distribution of social life, ought to include an investigation of the role of communication in all these different forms of integration of social life.

In answer to Castells' question, then, yes, there is an urban sociology. This sociology, however, is a sociology of the spatial integration of economic, industrial and cultural activities in general. The "urban structure" happens to be one particular form of the spatial organization of this integration. Moreover, the object of this mode of theorizing consists of the specification of the series of relationships between social, economic and cultural practices. In brief, then, these practices describe social action; they describe the actions of the integration of the different aspects of social existence.

Ultimately, however, the investigation of the urban sphere, whether from a cultural, ecological, Marxist or communicational perspective, has a practical purpose. The problematic of urban sociology is not merely epistemological; in the last analysis, the problematic of urban sociology is in the social world, it is in the city. Hence, the scientific test of urban theorizing must be conducted not merely in theoretical analysis, but in the social world where its mandate ought to be to seek solutions to the problems and the implications of the processes of social organization in space. This "test" is also in the kind of practical solutions urban theorizing helps to develop in response to the problems and implications of the

increasing exploitation of the environment in the processes of the spatial integration of economic relations.

NOTES

PART I

INTRODUCTION

1. The term "culturalist perspective" is borrowed here from M. Castells (1977) and is used to refer to any perspective that investigates the nature of urban life and of social organization in terms of changes in the forms and contents of cultural expressions.

2. This phrase originates from the title of Louis Wirth's classic essay on the sociological significance of urban life. This essay is "Urbanism As A Way Of Life" (1964[1938]).

CHAPTER 1

1. For a general criticism of Park's perspective on the relationship between urbanization, social organization, and culture, see M. Castells (1976a, 1976b, and 1977), D. Harvey (1973), and G. Sjoberg (1965a).

2. The term ecology is derived from the Greek word oikos, meaning house, or place to live in. Ernst Haeckel, the biologist, was the first to use the term 'ecology' in his description of plant and animal life in 1868.

3. Durkheim's classic definition of a 'social fact' has been given as follows: "A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or again, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations" (1966:13)

4. The concept of causality is used in this context in the manner in which it has been specified and defined by Durkheim in The Rules of Sociological Method (1966). First, according to Durkheim, the analysis of social facts and their relations to each other requires the systematic observation of the conjunction of certain characteristics of social phenomena and their order of occurrence. Systematic observation, or the perceptions of social things as they first appear, provides the basis for establishing their intersubjectivity, or their objective status. Thus, according to Durkheim, "[when] the sociologist undertakes the investigation of some order of social facts, he must endeavor to consider them from an aspect that is independent of their individual manifestations" (1966:45). After the objective status of social facts has been established, according to Durkheim, we are in a position to investigate the objective nature of the relations between them.

Thus, the second specification of the definition of the causes of social facts is that we search for their 'causes' in the realm of the thus established objective world of social facts: "The determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of individual consciousness" (1966:110). Moreover, the third specification of the nature of causality in the social world, in Durkheim's view, extends to the definition of the functions of social facts in establishing the social world: "The function of a social fact cannot be but social, i.e., it consists of the production of socially useful effects" (1966:110).

CHAPTER 2

1. For a discussion of the sociological effects of numbers in social interaction, see G. Simmel, "On the Significance of Numbers in Social Life" in The Sociology of Simmel (New York: The Free Press, 1969).

2. The sociological effects of the density of interactions in the city are succinctly discussed by Simmel in his classic essay on the city: "The Metropolis and Mental Life" in The Sociology of Simmel (New York: The Free Press, 1969).

3. Of these criticisms, the most illuminating ones have been offered by G. Sjoberg (1965a) and M. Castells (1977: Chapter 5).

4. For an analysis of the independent and dependent variables of urbanization in the sociological theories of the Chicago school, see G. Sjoberg (1965a) and M. Castells (1976a).

5. See Duncan and Reiss (1956), Willmott and Young (1960) and L. Salter et al (1979).

CONCLUSIONS

1. The concept of ideology is, of course, a rather controversial issue in social science, sociology and in Marxist analyses of social life, and in social theory in general. In recognition of this debate, "ideological account", in this context -- i.e., in the context of Castells' criticism -- is used according to Castells' specification of the term ideology. Briefly, for Castells, the ideological character of a social theory derives from its attempts to universalize -- i.e., to render ahistoric -- the historically and socially specific processes and forms that constitute the events and objects of its theoretical investigations. In other words, according to Castells, an ideological theory, while it might perform an historically specific function in the actual social realm, in the theoretical realm it fails to recognize the historic and social specificity of its contents. Thus, in referring to the urban theory of the Chicago school as 'ideological', Castells implies that it does not specify the historical and social specific-

ity of the objects and events that constitute the objects of its theoretical investigations, i.e., the historical and social specificity of the relations between the objects of their hypotheses.

PART II

CHAPTER 3

1. Raymond Williams has pointed out the primary meaning of the term culture as 'husbandry, or the tending of animals and crops' in Keywords (1976). Thus, according to Williams:

> Culture in all its early uses was a noun of process: the tending of something, basically crops or animals. The subsidiary coulter-ploughshare, had travelled by a different linguistic route, from culter, L-ploughshare, culter, oE, to the variant English spellings culter, colter, coulter, and as late as eC17 culture (Webster, Duchess of Malfi, III, ii: 'hot burning cultures'). This provided a further basis for the important next stage of meaning, by metaphor. From eC16 the tending of natural growth was extended to a process of human development and this, alongside the original meaning in husbandry, was the main sense until lC18 and eC19 (Williams, 1976:77).

2. The temporal sequence of social institutions, according to McKenzie, is a variable of technological developments. These developments affect different institutions in different ways and at different rates: in some cases they accelerate the growth of certain institutions, in others they render certain institutions obsolete, and in some instances they bring about new institutional forms. For instance, developments in communication technology, according to McKenzie, had radical effects in the organization of the institutional structure of social life: "By enlarging the territorial range of institutional activity, these new agencies of local communication disrupted the established equilibrium, invoked new forms of institutional competition and division of labour, and set the stage for a new spatial pattern of local relations" (1968:107).

3. The "concentric zone" model of urban growth developed by E. Burgess will be discussed in Chapter 4. Briefly, Burgess' model holds that cities exhibit a universal tendency of growth from the center outward by radial expansion.

CHAPTER 4

1. In reviewing Burgess' "concentric zone" model of urban growth, Quinn (1950) raised the question of its applicability as a model of all urban growth. Quinn has observed that Burgess' hypothesis of urban expansion by five successive zones is based on at least

four major assumptions about the constancy of the characteristics of urban systems and of social organization. According to Quinn, these assumptions "limit the scope of application of the hypothesis" (1950:120). In Quinn's evaluation, Burgess; model assumes the following universal characteristics about urban systems: (i) the five zone structure is the result of the process of expansion and differentiation, and not of planning; (ii) cities have a a commercial-industrial economic base; (iii) the populations of cities are heterogenous, and (iv) cities are characterized by private ownership of urban land, and a high degree of economic specialization and institutional differentiation (1950:120-2).

CHAPTER 5

1. The term "ecological complex" originates from the work of Otis D. Duncan. Duncan, one of the more ardent advocates of neo-ecology, has developed Hawley's concept of the commynity structure as an organization of functionally interdependent relationships. For a further discussion see Schnore, 1965a.

CHAPTER 6

1. I was a researcher and interviewer in this study.

CONCLUSIONS

1. In his analysis of 'the scope of human ecology', Schnore elaborates on the similarity between Park's ecological approach to the formation of the social structure and Durkheim's sociological concept of the division of labour and its role in the formation of the social structure. (See Schnore, 1965b:18).

2. See Emile Durkheim. The Division of Labour in Society. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1947.

3. Schnore points out that Durkheim was not a human ecologist. The terms "human ecology" appeared in the sociological literature after Durkheim's death in 1917. In fact, as Schnore has pointed out, "human ecology" first appeared in 1921, four years after Durkheim's death, in the Introduction to the Science of Society, edited by Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess (See Schnore, 1965b:23).

PART III

INTRODUCTION

1. I am hesitant to even point in passing at any debate on the nature of 'law' in the social sciences vs. the natural sciences. Castells' use of the term seems to me to indicate that he is in fact looking for the 'laws' of social processes that are lawed in the same manner as processes in physics, for instance. That is to say, he is looking for the same kind and degree of predictability of events in the social world, as physics claims to have over the 'natural' world.

However, in order to separate my position, from the start, from what I take to be Castells' use of the term, I am indebted to E.P. Thompson (1978), whose definition of the difference between the two senses in which the term 'law' is used, cleared -- if not the confusion about the possibility of 'laws' in the social sciences -- the confusion about the different uses of the term itself. E.P. Thompson distinguishes between the use of the term 'law' as denoting a fact, and its use as a metaphor for something else. In the latter case, the term 'law' is used as a metaphor to indicate what he calls "the logic of process". In this sense, one makes predictions about a phenomenon because its processes seem to follow expected patterns that are 'law-like', and not because the phenomenon itself is the consequence of a 'law', as is in the case of the laws of physics. Or to put it in E.P. Thompson's terms:

> In the course of historical analysis one may identify recurrent patterns of behaviour and sequences of events which may only be described (in a retrospective rather than predictive sense) as being causally related. Since such events ensue in a manner independent of conscious human volition, it is easy to make this process intelligible by saying it is subject to certain 'laws'. But 'laws', once again, may be intended as metaphor or fact. There is a difference between saying that a process works itself out in a known and expected way -- that it conforms to laws -- and saying that it arises as a consequence of law, is lawed. (1978:33)

Needless to say, in using the term 'laws' of social process, I mean the "logic of process."

2. The term "philosophy" in Althusser's concept of Marxism plays a rather ambiguous role; on the one hand, it is used as a term denoting 'ideological philosophies', i.e., all those theories in opposition to Marxism, and on the other hand, Althusser uses this term to describe the radically different perspective on the nature of theory and philosophy itself offered by Marx's "dialectical materialism". (See Althusser, 1979[1965]:162).

3. Althusser insists on an epistemological break between the writings of the young Marx and his theory of capitalist production developed in his later works. For Althusser, the writings of the older Marx

constitute the proper foundations of scientific Marxism, hence also the epistemological foundations of Marxist philosophy itself. (See Althusser, 1979[1965]).

CHAPTER 7

1. The term "material" in this context does not refer to the mere economic conditions of human beings. Rather, in its references, it is inclusive of a complex of relations between the natural, social and economic aspects of the modes by which human beings produce their livelihood and by which they reproduce their social organizations. In this sense, the economic is not primary, but only one of the determining conditions of production.

2. Marx's The Poverty of Philosophy (1847) has been written as a polemic in reply to Proudhon's Système de Contradictions Economique ou Philosophie de la Misère, or in English, The Philosophy of Poverty (see Engel's Preface to Marx, 1976[1847]).

3. Proudhon's belief in the logical history of economic ideas as given by the sequence of economic principles is best expressed in his own words:

> We are not giving an history according to the order in time, but according to the sequence of ideas. Economic phases of categories are in their manifestation sometimes contemporary, sometimes inverted....Economic theories have nonetheless their logical sequence and their serial relation in the understanding: it is this order that we flatter ourselves to have discovered sic (in Marx, 1976[1847]:104).

4. "Mors immortalis" is a Latin phrase from a poem by Lucretius. According to the Editorial Notes, "Marx quotes these words from the following passage of Lucretius' poem "On the Nature of Things" (Book III, line 869): 'mortalem vitam mors immortalis ademit' ('immortal death hath taken away mortal life')" sic (Marx, 1976 [1857]:228).

5. See Henri Lefebvre. The Sociology of Marx. New York: Vintage Books, 1968.

6. This argument reflects a "vulgar materialist" position within Marxist theory, i.e., it is predicated on the assumption that human history -- social, cultural, political and economic -- is determined solely by economic factors. In other words, "vulgar materialism" reduces the explanations of all social, historical, cultural and political relations to mere economic relations. Originally, the term "vulgar materialism" applied to a philosophical position within German intellectual history. Marx, however, did not subscribe to this position. On the contrary, Marx's criticism of Feuerbach's "contemplative materialism" also gives his objections to other forms of 'vulgar', or reductionist and mechanical material-

ism: "The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself" (Marx, 1976:121).

7. The whole debate on the relative or absolute dominance of the 'economic' depends, of course, on the definition and the determination of the characteristics of the 'economic' in the first instance. In other words, as E. Laclau has pointed out, it is never quite clear whether Althusser's 'economic' refers to what might be termed as "market relations", i.e., the economic relations of production such as commodity production, or whether Althusser's 'economic' refers to production in general as one of the universal "conditions of every possible society", i.e., to the mode of production (1977:75). According to Laclau such a distinction between the two references of the 'economic' designates two concepts which are not synonymous, but are of a different logical order from each other. Moreover, in assigning the role of the 'determining instance' to the 'economic', it is essential to specify which of the meanings of the 'economic' is being called upon:

> But it must be one or the other. If by economy we mean the production of material existence, it is not determinant in the last instance but in the first, whatever the mode of production. If, on the contrary, we understand 'economy' in the second sense (production of commodities) it has never been determinant except when identified with the basic productive relations of the society. This distinction between the determinant in the last instance and the dominant role seems to be no more than a series of metaphors which attempt to resolve through symbols of little theoretical content, an artificial problem created by the metaphysics of instances. The whole problem arises, we believe, from the predominantly descriptive character in which concepts such as the 'economic' have been introduced into the theoretical discourse. (1977:76-7)

8. According to Althusser, the concept of the relation of 'unity' or the identity of the structure of practice and theory is not to be confused with the Hegelian notion of the identity of 'thought' and 'reality' in the self-positing Idea. In the Hegelian dialectic, as presented by Althusser, 'thought' is always the 'determinant' instance of this identity; the 'reality of theoretical practice" (the production of knowledge) is always dissolved by this dominance or rather, by the self-positing Idea which does not require 'objective material activity' for its coming into existence (being) or its 'becoming' (provide knowledge) for that matter. Or to quote Althusser:

> Hegel denies this reality of theoretical practice, this concrete dialectic of theoretical practice, that is, the qualitative discontinuity that intervenes or appears between the different generalities (I, II, III) even in the continuity of the production

> process of knowledge or, rather, he does not think of it, and if he should happen to think of it, he makes it the phenomenon of another reality, the reality he regards as essential, but which is really ideological through and through: the movement of the Idea. (1979 [1965]:189).

9. This question, according to Althusser, is not a proper question within "dialectical materialism". Such a question is ideological because it seeks a guarantee for scientific grounds outside theoretical practice (the only form of production of scientific knowledge). Moreover, it seeks this guarantee in the 'empiricist' assumption about the 'essential' (essences) identity between objects in the world and their theoretical comprehension in the 'perception' and 'consciousness' of 'subjects' in the world.

10. See Callinicos' analysis of Althusser's critique of the relation of complicity between the 'subject who knows' and the objects of the 'subject's knowledge' (1976b:32-4; 57-8), and Althusser's own discussion of "empiricism" (1979[1965]:228-9).

11. E.P. Thompson in The Poverty of Theory (1978) goes to a considerable length to illustrate the similarities between Althusser's positivist concept of knowledge and Karl Popper's critique of the positivist pretensions of historical knowledge. In fact, according to E.P. Thompson, Althusser's approach to the 'scientific theory of history' could serve as Popper's 'proof' for the metaphysics of "historicism":

> Both Popper (a) and Althusser (b) affirm the unknowability of history as process inscribed with its own causation, since (a) any notion of structures and structural mediations entails improper "holistic" attributions, and "historicist" notions of causation and of process are unverifiable by experimental tests; or since (b) the notion that knowledge is "already really present in the real object it has to know" is an illusion of "abstractionist" empiricism, mistaking as empirical discoveries its own ideological attributions. What does it matter that Althusser should then leap to the conclusion that knowledge does and should manufacture out of its own theoretical stuff an historical 'knowledge' which is (in Popper's use of the term) an arrant 'historicism'? A real empiricist will be happy with this, for in his eyes Althusser has only confirmed, by his idealist agility, the unverifiable and ideological character of all such pretensions to historical knowledge. Althusser offers a prime example to the seminar discussion: an epilogue to The Poverty of Historicism. (1978:34)

12. According to E.P. Thompson, Althusser's theory of 'theoretical practice' as the basis for scientific Marxism, or the scientific

practice of Marxist politics, rests on an effort to remove the threat of the uncertainty of 'real history' from theory construction in general and from the practice of politics in particular. For further discussion, see E.P. Thompson (1978), pp.108-112.

13. The term "empiricism" is used here in a specific and limited sense. It is quoted in the spirit in which Althusser has specified its limits as a method of knowing. For Althusser "empiricism" is the method of knowledge by which a 'subject' comes to apprehend the essential and given characteristics of an ;object' in the world. Thus, according to Althusser's definition of "empiricism", knowledge is delimited by "the abstraction by the subject of the essence of the object" (B. Brewster in Althusser, 1979[1965]:251). Against this notion of knowledge Althusser suggests that knowledge is always a knowledge of 'ideas' and not of the 'essences' of objects in the world. Thus, the real 'objects' of knowledge are then the 'theoretical facts', the different levels of generalities on which 'theoretical practice' sets out to work, and which this same 'practice' transforms into scientific knowledge. In short, the Althusserian alternative to "empiricism" opposes any notion of the possibility of 'scientific' (true?) knowledge through 'experience', through the 'senses', or even through the 'facts' of inductive reasoning and experimentation. (For a further discussion, see Althusser, 1979[1965]:182-93).

14. It is worth taking note that Castells has claimed to have changed his position on the 'dominance of the Althusserian theory over historical reality' in a recent collection of essays (see City, Class and Power, 1978). Castells claims to have adopted a more 'historical' and, therefore, a more critical perspective. In writing about the development of critical (Marxist) urban theory in France, he notes that its beginnings were marked by an uncritical appropriation of formal theories and methods, such as Althusserian theory and state monopoly capitalism theory. In a bout of extremely lucid self-criticism -- which unfortunately is not followed through sebsequently in 'theoretical practice' -- he expresses the following poignant observations:

> What was involved [in the development of an urban theory] was the redefinition of the urban question, empirical studies, a theoretical renewal and an invention of new methods -- all at the same time. Perhaps the focus should have been the historical transformation of the urban, rather than the conceptual deployment of Marxist theory, i.e., Marxism should have been reconsidered through an analysis of history, rather than through the codification of recent history according to Marxist schemata. (1978: 12).

I assume that by "Marxist schemata", Castells still means the Althusserian reading of Marx.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Castells never discusses the actual and specific content of the "economic", instead, he describes rather general and broad categories of social processes under this rubric. Moreover, it appears that in Castells' schema, all social processes of production and reproduction fall under the domination of the "economic":

> By the economic system, I mean the social processes by which the worker, acting on the object of his labour (raw material) with the help of the means of production, obtains a certain product. This product is the basis of the social organization -- that is to say, quite simply, of its mode of distribution and administration, and of the conditions of its reproduction. In fact, the product is not a different element, but only a moment of the labour process. It may always be broken down, in effect, into (re)production of the means of production and (re)production of labour power. (1977:129)

Thus, it seems that Castells does not make a distinction between "the economy" and "production", a distinction that is essential to some Marxists, such as E. Laclau, for instance. For a further discussion, see E. Laclau (1977:69-79), and E.P. Thompson (1978).

2. Once again, by adopting this position, Castells is insisting on the development of a scientific (positive) theory of structural transformation, rather than accepting an explanation of the logic of the behaviour of social "subjects" as a theory of historical change. Thus, he differentiates between 'practices' that transform structure, i.e., "historical practices", and the 'bearers' or 'support-agents' of these structural practices, the "transforming historical practices". In the case of 'urban history', this is 'articulated' by the following distinction:

> Moreover, one must delimit more clearly the difference between the study of the urban struggles (as historical practice) and the discovery of the urban social movements (as transforming historical practice). I studied the first in order to discover the elements capable of developing the social movements, that is to say, systems of practices capable of transforming the structurally dominant logic." (1977:453)

Thus, it appears that the subject of Castells' theory of history is an abstract practice that appears embodied in social movements. Further, it also appears that in spite of the dominance of the "economic" in social systems, real change comes not in this instance but in abstraction again, in the 'structure' of "the dominant logic."

3. I am making a rather tenuous connection here between Castells' concept of urban space and the Leibnizian monad. As I understand,

each Leibnizian monad represents and symbolizes the whole universe, i.e., all the relations that comprise the universe. This representation is such that by investigating a single monad, we are able to deduce the characteristics of the whole universe. For a discussion of Leibniz's monadology, see R. Latta's introduction to The Monadology (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).

CONCLUSION

1. The notion of 'difference' as a factor of potential change in organization is, in fact, a reference to Gregory Bateson's definition of information from a cybernetic perspective on communications: "...information may be succinctly defined as any difference which makes a difference in some later event" (1972:381). The tenuous connection between my assessment of the effects of the dynamic density in the ecology perspective and my understanding of Bateson's definition of information as the variable of potential change and corrective action within a cybernetic system is in their common conception of orgnaization. "Organization" in cybernetics and communications is primarily propositional, i.e., it is based on relations between messages; it is a function of information (cf. Bateson, 1972:401). The ecological perspective, in my view, suggests a model of social organization that describes a cybernetic-communicational system; i.e., each function acts as a message that reorganizes the relationship between the other functions that comprise the system in order to maintain the functioning of the system as a whole. Conversely, the differentiation and specialization of "new" functions is always constrained by the number of probable alternatives that do not alter the character of the organization of the system.

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