FITTING THE CITY: WELLBEING IN URBAN PLANNING LITERATURE

commerce
physical needs
psychological needs
human needs
green space
participation
human scale
unification of urban space
structured growth
recreation
social needs
emotional needs
WELLBEING IN URBAN PLANNING
structured and regulated growth
freedom
traffic
functionality
aesthetic needs
cognitive development
safety
culture
access
diversity
heritage

Edited by Leena Soudunsaari, Eva Braidwood & Hennu Kjisik
Arkkitehtuurnin tiedekunta B2 (verkkojulkaisu)
FITTING THE CITY: WELLBEING IN URBAN PLANNING LITERATURE
Leena Soudunsaari, Eva Braidwood & Hennu Kjisik (Eds.)
PICTURE ON THE COVER
Words on the picture were chosen by the students to describe the relationship between urban planning and wellbeing

ISSN 2343-0559
The title of this volume of essays captures the aim of the integrated course on urban planning and English for academic and professional purposes offered to second year students of architecture at the University of Oulu during the autumn semester of the 2014–15 academic year. The undergraduate education of architects in Finland, perhaps somewhat uniquely in European higher education, combines courses in architectural history and design with courses on urban planning. This combination reinforces the view of the profession as a multidimensional, socially engaged practice the products of which will at best turn into “an instrument for progressive social change” (Anthony Ward in T. A. Dutton and L. H. Mann, eds., Restructuring Architecture: Critical Discourses and Social Practices, University of Minnesota Press 2009). In order to explain the second part of our title, much of the literature produced by architects and urban planners has been written in English, prompted by students’ feedback about the curriculum. During the past few years we have set out to combine the professional and academic language training built into the degree programme for architects with the course on urban planning. As a result of this customization, which involves reading and learning from the classics as well as the contemporary practitioners of urban planning, students benefit from a comprehensive discussion of the views, concepts and the language of authors such as Howard, Alexander, Cullen, Venturi and Jacobs. Emulating the lessons proposed by the writers of urban theory, practice and development, the majority of whom are architects themselves, enables students to see their professional product in context and to engage in dialogue with their predecessors and observe present day professional practices while presenting and discussing their own interpretation of the set books in the seminars. A distilled version of their reading will then be turned into an essay, written, in most cases, in English, namely a review of one of the books on the list.

These essays present an account of ideas considering urban planning starting with the late 19th century that students deem important from a 21st century perspective. While today we witness rapid changes in social life, the scene of our everyday physical reality is very much framed by the urban setting that evolved from medieval and modern industrial residential places, towns and cities. Consequently, the challenges of creating a liveable scene for the inhabitants of the city may well be very similar to those a century or so ago. This is why every year students read much the same books, which we can certainly call classics on urban planning – albeit with a different focus, a theme which captures the topical trends and research interests of the year in question. The theme this academic year was straightforward: 2014 was designated as the year of wellbeing. In an age concerned with the sustainability of our environment and the planet, what better theme to set for the architects of the future? What more deserving aspect should urban planners abide by? Difficult as it may seem, it must turn out to be all the more beneficial for the residents and developers of future cities – this was the thinking behind setting the theme for this year’s essays.

Owing to its multidisciplinary dimensions and implications, wellbeing has been a particularly appropriate challenge for our future architects. As the essays collected in this volume testify, students have examined thoroughly the meaning of wellbeing, explored the scenes and examples of urban architecture and development advocated by the classics, have deconstructed the ideas of the authors and constructed their own interpretation of what urban living means and should be in our times. In the end, we, teachers of the course present this collection of essays as a token of these future architects’ efforts to make the city fit for its inhabitants and to preserve a healthy environment for the next generation. This we feel is a ‘fitting’ gesture from teachers to deserving students. In addition, we sincerely hope that the volume will offer an interesting read for a wider audience, especially those who are interested in how the architects of the future make sense of past efforts and the ideas and proposals of urban developers, and in so doing address one of the most pressing issues of our age, namely how to achieve equilibrium, a balance between the physical, emotional and intellectual in the urban environment, in other words, wellbeing in the city.

Oulu, June 2015
IS WELLNESS A NEW THING ON THE AGENDA OF THE CLASSICS?

Hennu Kjisik

Everywhere in the Western world today, politicians are trying to tell us that we can no longer afford the welfare state. Apparently populations are ageing and tax revenues dwindling. The former is undoubtedly true. A few years ago the Swedes announced that baby girls born at that moment in their country would have an average life expectancy of 100 years. The latter claim is more difficult to swallow. There is more money around that ever before. The rich are getting even richer and even the poor in the less developed countries are not getting much poorer anymore. But since the magic word “competitiveness” forms an important part of the fundamentalist mantra, the rich are, due to generally lower taxation levels and the use of tax havens, proportionally contributing less than ever during the last century. In this country salaries at the very top of the scale are the only ones that are being raised, the explanation being that our top CEOs would otherwise move out and find jobs elsewhere. I honestly do not think that anyone would want them.

The gradual gnawing on the welfare state started in the UK, its (according to many) rightful home, when Margaret Thatcher became prime minister in 1979. This event gave rise to a new political and monetary ideology, neoliberalism. The seeds of fundamentalist capitalism were sown. It was no longer fashionable to have a social conscience. Greed was no longer a sin, in some particularly dubious circles it was even seen as a virtue. Enterprises were no longer expected to act in a socially responsible manner since their only aim, supposedly, was to create profits for their shareholders. The story was very different a century ago when enterprises such as the British sweet and soap giants bought their workers’ loyalty by providing them with a decent quality of life in new garden cities. Around the same time in Finland the “old money”, the Ahlströms, the Rosenlews, and the patrons of the iron foundries of the Western Uusimaa district, made an admirable effort to follow suit. If this sounds familiar to some, the same thoughts were indeed expressed in this same publication two years ago when the theme of our exercise was “social consciousness”.

Then, two years ago, some pretty obvious conclusions were expected and to some extent indeed also reached. The belief that Ebenezer Howard’s work and ideas would be more strongly connected with social consciousness than those of Robert Venturi is a good example of this. Again this time similar thoughts arise. Surely Howard was also more concerned with the actual physical and mental health (wellness!) of people than Venturi, or Aldo Rossi, not to mention the Krier brothers. But I will add what I wrote then; one should never, without serious questioning, believe the simplest and most obvious interpretation. That is one of the reasons why this task, familiarizing oneself with the urban design classics, is a relevant one to us all.

Talk about wellness abounds today. It is not always a good sign, sometimes it seems that whenever there is an “urban problem” it can be solved by creating space for “wellness”. There are old hospital campuses that cannot effectively continue in the service of actual clinical functions. What is done? Spaces for “wellness” are created – facilities for activities that are somehow related to health and wellbeing. Old people’s neighbourhoods are getting increasingly attractive as another type of wellness hub. In all these projects real estate people are looming somewhere in the background since there are obvious profits to be made. Increasingly shorter stays in hospital have given rise to “patient hotels” – edifices that resemble hospital wards but are run by waitresses rather than nurses. These are easy to combine with all kinds of activities related to physiotherapy and other kinds of rehabilitation and through that to any other physical endeavours that supposedly promote “wellness”.

So this is what is happening now. But what has led to this and what does this have to do with our “classics”? Before, really early that is, the ancient Greeks treated their patients in places known as Asclepieons. They were nice places in green (but urban) surroundings where people immediately started to feel better. There was not much medical science to talk about but a “healing environment” was created using all possible other means. Later, during the Renaissance, hospitals were urban palaces that occupied central sites in cities. They were accommodating and future-proof, and offered an exemplary treatment of hierarchies of space: public, semi-public, semi-private, and private. They were inherently timeless and flexible structures and many of them still hold an important role in the cityscape.
The pavilion period (about 1850 onwards), based on the revolutionary ideas about hygiene as formulated by Florence Nightingale, gave rise to the first real hospital campuses, semi-independent urban entities, usually on fine sites adjacent to the core of cities. They were the forerunners of our “wellness campuses”. This trend continued during the so-called called “heroic era” of hospital design after World War II, when the majority of our still existing hospitals were built.

We now talk about “salutogenic design”. This means, among many other things that the patient/client is in the center while, at the same time and in the same way, the citizens are now in the centre of the cities that they inhabit. It is good news that old hospital buildings now deemed unsuitable for certain clinical functions can often be used for research, teaching, communications, social services, and a multitude of other functions “wellness” related functions. After all, a hospital facility possesses strong symbolic values and it is difficult to simply declare these buildings obsolete and erase them from the map. Hospitals have always been physical expressions of attitudes towards health and sickness, as well as of the prevalent scientific and social trends.

The hospital belongs to the city just as any other manifestation of human endeavour. Being among healthy people in an everyday situation promotes healing. Thus, a stronger connection, both conceptually and physically, between a hospital building and its context is called for. Facilities for health and “wellness” should no longer remain walled-in fortresses where only the sick dare enter, and only then because they have no choice. On the contrary, hospitals should be seen as assets that can improve the urban environment, elements that are as inviting and permeable as any other city block or neighbourhood. The importance of the hospital as an urban landmark should be resurrected, no longer by means of size and exclusion, but through harmonization and inclusion. But even after having said all this, one has to emphasize the fact that “wellness” in the urban context is a lot more than the actual facilities that are there to cure patients and care for the population.

Two South-American colleagues Jaime Lerner and Enrique Penalosa (mentioned also in the 2010-11 issue of this publication) deserve again to be brought up. Their success as local politicians and as mayors, was largely based on the improved “wellness” of the inhabitants in their respective cities (Curitiba in Brazil and Bogotá in Colombia). The dramatically reduced levels of corruption, unemployment, crime and pollution, obviously also contributed strongly towards the improved general health standards of the population. For many of the books included in our list of “classics” I suspect that similar conclusions can be reached when analysing their “wellness” content. It is not necessarily a question just about health in itself, but more about the urban environment working well on all conceivable levels, including all those factors that contribute to human happiness and a good quality of life. But maybe I’m wrong. In order to find out you will have to read the essays that follow.

Oulu, May 2015
FOREWORD
Eva Braidwood 4

IS WELLNESS A NEW THING ON THE AGENDA OF THE CLASSICS?
Hennu Kjisik 5

ESSAYS ON THE CLASSIC BOOKS ON URBAN PLANNING 9

Sitte: CITY PLANNING ACCORDING TO ARTISTIC PRINCIPLES
Mikael Heikkinen & Vilho Vähämäki 10

Howard: GARDEN CITIES OF TO-MORROW
Otto Heinonen & Panu-Petteri Kujala 13

Le Corbusier: THE RADIANT CITY
Pekka Määttä & Marketta Saukkonen 17

Saarinen: THE CITY – ITS GROWTH, ITS DECAY, ITS FUTURE
Hanna Helminen & Sonja Rönkkö 22

Lynch: THE IMAGE OF THE CITY
Hertta Hjelt & Senni Suhonen 27

Cullen: THE CONCISE TOWNSCAPE
Markus Mutanen & Tommi Tammisto 31

Jacobs: DEATH AND LIFE OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES
Sonja Immonen & Juuso Pajukko 35

Doxiadis: ARCHITECTURE IN TRANSITION
Marisa Hintsala & Rosalina Järvinen 40

Rossi: THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY
Greeta Tuomikoski & Niko Liias 44

Gehl: LIFE BETWEEN BUILDINGS
Tino Toivonen & Jere Paalanen 49

Venturi: LEARNING FROM LAS VEGAS
Laura Lammert & Samu Leppänen 53

Alexander et al.: A PATTERN LANGUAGE
Hannu Saunaluoma 58

Rapoport: HUMAN ASPECTS OF URBAN FORM
Pauliina Laurila & Laura Rontu 61

Krier: URBAN SPACE
leida-Marja Kari & Laura Mustonen 65
Lynch: A THEORY OF GOOD CITY FORM 69
Jonna Kallinen & Sonja Teittinen

Koolhaas: DELIRIOUS NEW YORK 73
Heidi Peura & Anna Pietilä

FARMAX: EXCURSIONS ON DENSITY 78
Karoliina Mäenpää & Reetta Lehtiranta

Provoost et al.: NEW TOWNS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY 82
Hanna Jokela & Tuuli Loukola
ESSAYS ON THE CLASSIC BOOKS ON URBAN PLANNING
Camillo Sitte (1843–1903) was an Austrian architect, artist and a city planning theoretician. His most notable publication is a book on urban planning theory titled *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*, first published in 1889. Sitte’s theories have influenced many generations but have also given rise to criticism among advocates of the modernist movement, notably the famous architect Le Corbusier being one of Sitte’s more vocal critics.

In *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*, Sitte observes, analyses and colourfully evaluates medieval plazas (i.e. public squares), the surrounding buildings, streets and monuments from an artistic and practical viewpoint. He deconstructs the reasoning and intentions that informed the development and design of the public spaces, and provides explanations regarding medieval city planning and the placement of monuments.

At the beginning of his career, Sitte’s world was already being taken over by a car-centric way of city planning, with roads, large open areas and parking space in the focus. He felt that even though technological advancement was for the better, we were losing the artistic intuition by which the forerunners of urban planning seemed to be guided. These were designs that could not be explained by mathematics, but that worked marvels in real life; decisions that enhanced the beauty of the works of public art.

Sitte felt that city planning in his time was not an artistic endeavour, but had turned into a mere technical practice. In his book he writes “city planning should not be merely a technical matter, but should in the truest and most elevated sense be an artistic enterprise” (pg.4). He noticed that wide and open slots of cityscape with a single monument placed in the geometric centre was the epitome of technical planning; dull and void of artistic insight. To fight technical slavery of geometrical layout and the mindless pursuit of symmetry, and to bring back the artistic eye into urban planning, he was to create a rational theory.

Surprisingly, Camillo Sitte’s lifetime had its own share of the same issues that we face today. Cars invading streets, mail order catalogues forcing brick-and-mortar businesses to close down along with the ever rising prices of real estate in the city. The difference between Sitte’s description and a news bulletin from today’s paper is almost non-existent.

**Planning according to Sitte**

In his book, Sitte lists in detail existing features of medieval cities. He analyses city plazas, streets, placement of buildings, views and even the placing of public statues. The analysis adopts a common man’s perspective, and it tries to understand the thoughts of citizens and their reaction to these features.

The most important feature of a well-planned city is the city plaza. The plaza should be an enclosed public outdoor room surrounded by buildings forming its walls. The use of these buildings should be of a great value to the city’s operation: city halls, marketplaces, churches, and supporting facilities these institutions need. A plaza’s
geometric centre should be free of monuments since through the centre goes the main path for people to walk across the space. The size of the plaza should be adjusted so that it is in harmony with the importance and grandeur of the surrounding buildings. If it is too small, the buildings will feel awkwardly gigantic, if it is too large, even the most magnificent structures will seem dwarfed by the extent of the square.

The roads that lead to the plaza should also be of comparable scale, since they have the same effect on the plaza itself. The "walls of the room" should be as unified as possible for a minimal chance of a horrifying continuous view outside of the plaza. Sitte proposes, quite ironically, a technical pattern of a turbine blade for the routes connecting to a public square: no path should lead directly to the plaza or off the plaza. This prevents long vistas and keeps the space without a break in enclosure. Turbine blades make it so that with the right facades there is only one observable break in the surroundings from any one given viewpoint.

The best place for a public monument is on the fringes of a plaza in front of a wall, and for a fountain it is off the path taken by most pedestrians. This means that the centre of a plaza should be kept open for other purposes such as gatherings or general gazing at buildings. Additionally, buildings should not be built unconnected, but filling up the precious plaza, but be kept away from the centre and built hugging one another. Not only does this kind of disposition enhance the aesthetic expression of the square but it is also economically sensible due to the decreased need to build all four walls.

These guidelines for planning were not meant to override the requirements of the future drastic development of city plan but to instruct planners towards a more sophisticated result. Sitte suggests improvements in the modern system such as breaking the geometric similarities and symmetry, and that architects should actually leave the drawing table and pay a visit to the city. In City Planning he also publishes concrete examples of better public space for his home city, Vienna, which unfortunately for him never took shape.

Camillo Sitte and well-being
In City Planning, Sitte addresses the main themes of a well-planned city. He explains the core structures of a city, and how they should be designed and organized in order to make them serve their purpose best. The themes of the book discuss the effect of urban spaces, buildings and public art on people, and particularly on people's reaction to them.

City Planning According to Artistic Principles can be considered as a manual of urban planning of its time. Although it was written over 120 years ago, the book also deals with present-day concepts such as environmental experience and environmental effect. These are seen from an artistic point of view, while today these themes are investigated within the field of environmental psychology. What Sitte calls artistically well situated or picturesque could be translated into common language as soothing or reassuring. The artistic principles he proposes cities to be built by are of course based on art, but the results of these suggestions end up in fairly similar solutions as they would if based on modern guides of psychology: his tenet of human scale planning and humane approach is not so surprisingly also the basis of environmental psychology.

City Planning can be read as an early work about environmental psychology. Sitte researches the old plazas and the innate artistic insight that went into their creation and contemplates how these sensitive design decisions make people feel. This is still considered important in urban planning: pedestrianized plazas are a way of rejuvenating a dead city centre due to decentralization, and it helps people to develop an attachment to their surroundings by being able to map and comprehend the space around them, which then creates a feeling of safety ("Ympäristöpsychologian perusteet" Aura, Horelli, Korpela 1997). It is not a long stretch to draw a parallel between Sitte’s thoughts about city planning and how the city around us has a physical and mental effect on our well-being. Our built environment literally gives us gut feelings – very much so in the case of agoraphobia.

Sitte mentions agoraphobia as the latest “modern” ailment that has stricken the city folk. By the mid-19th century cars were already on their way in taking hold of street estate via parking space. To accommodate the growing space requirements, wide open public squares had been built with their width and length overshadowing that of the medieval plazas. This left people of “snug old towns” suffering of anxiety and discomfort when people had to walk across these vast empty places.
In conclusion
In his book, Sitte does not discuss health and well-being per se, but approaches the subject from his personal point of view, as an artist. He does define various guidelines for urban planning, some of which are very specific and detailed, such as the placing and orientation of public statues. His intention, however, is to better city life after all – which is exactly what well-being in urban planning means – by making it more enjoyable to the eye and, ultimately, for the soul. His motifs and suggestions are therefore of a delicate nature and might seem shallow or even vain to some readers today. It almost seems like he longs for the past and refuses to see the future, does it not? But then again, this is what he warned us about in the beginning; that we are reasoning instead of feeling – appreciating modern functionality over delicacy and beauty. Sitte contemplates this way: “the process of enlarging and laying out cities has become an almost purely technical concern. Therefore it seems important to remind ourselves once again that this attitude solves only one aspect of the problem, and that the other, the artistic aspect, is of at least equal importance.”

Has technical slavery established itself as the standard of planning again today? Hopefully not, but despite of slavery of any kind we could take an evaluative look at our ambitions in contemporary urban planning. Sitte’s detailed proposals for fixing public spaces could have been of use in the early 20th century, however, they are now antiquated. Had our forefathers been listening to Sitte, we could actually have public squares with an atmosphere, even here in Oulu. Alas, it is already too late to save plazas like the Oulu market square (Fig. 2.), which is a fine example of a brick paved desert, but our generation has all the tools to prevent poorly planned plazas from being designed again. Sitte’s main ideas and theses can still be used for various applications of today, be them handed over to the right person.

References:
Sitte (1889) City Planning according to Artistic Principles.
Fig. 1. Vilho Vähämäki.
Fig. 2. Google Image Search.
Fig. 3. Sara Angeli.
Ebenezer Howard’s *The Garden Cities of To-morrow* aroused a lot of attention at the time of its publication, 1898, and later on became a classic within urban planning circles. In *Garden Cities of To-morrow* Howard presents his city utopia as an answer to the problems that big industrialized cities were facing in the end of the 19th century. Howard’s ideas of loose and green city became accepted early on in the 20th century city planning while his socialistic idea of small and actively democratic municipal areas has only recently been taken seriously. Howard was not an architect nor a city planner. Nevertheless, as a reporter with a reformist’s passion, he managed to create a city plan focusing primarily on people’s well-being.

**Starting point**

*Garden Cities of To-morrow* begins with laying down the idea of a garden city plan. In the late 19th century urbanization was an explosively increasing phenomenon that brought a lot of good to the people living in cities. But with good things comes always the bad. A great number of people were living in tiny areas with no drainage, fresh water or sanitation. But the biggest complication in urbanization according to Howard was the lack of green sites. He recognized that every man, woman and child should experience nature in their every-day lives. Cities stuffed with industrial areas, pollution and poverty were not the right ways to live or improve the city.

Howard proposed a plan of three magnets, which ideas was based on the question that captured his main concern of how urban dwellers can experience the natural environment in their free time. He was preoccupied with the question “where will they go”. Here we will demonstrate how he thought people could have almost a perfect life without any of the issues experienced in a crowded and polluted city. He drew a ‘mind map’
representing a town with one magnet and the country with another and all the good and bad sides listed underneath. The third magnet, which is the magnet of a town-country, was Howard’s combination of all the good aspects from both. In this section all the negative things have been omitted and what is left is the harmony of urban and rural worlds.

The garden city of tomorrow
In Garden Cities of To-morrow Ebenezer Howard displays a detailed image of his utopian alternative to polluted cities. Howard’s Garden city “covers an area of 1000 acres, and might be of circular form, 1240 yards (1133m) from centre to circumference”. This area was meant to inhabit 32 000 persons.

The circular plan is divided into six sectors by six “magnificent boulevards-each 120 feet (about 37m) wide”. Together with five circularly formed avenues, lined with trees as all roads in the city, they form the main road network of the city. All the cultural and municipal buildings such as a theatre and the town hall are located in the very heart of the city around a small round garden. Crystal Palace, shopping centre and winter garden, is the next building towards the outskirt of the circular plan separated from the public buildings by a 45 acre (57 ha) Central Park. Further away from the centre, after Crystal Palace, a housing area is designed continuing all the way down until the furthest avenue circulating the city. This housing area with 5500 lots of an average size of 20 feet x 130 feet (about 242m²), where houses are proposed to face the avenues and boulevards, is very similar to the residential areas of today. The design has not only influenced suburban housing developments in Britain, but its influence is notable even in Finnish urban planning. For instance, we can compare to Howard’s plan the recently finished housing area in North East Kaakkuri, Oulu. Schools and churches are located in the centermost of the five avenues called Grand Avenue, which works as a green belt in the middle of the housing area. 420 feet wide Grand Avenue constitutes 115 acres of additional park. The industrial area is located in the outskirt of the city between the first avenue and the railroad, circulating the city and functioning as the main connection to other cities. Around all this is a surrounding belt of a 5000 acre agricultural strip.
In addition to a detailed description of the Garden City structure, Howard presents detailed calculations of expenses. In big cities housing rents were really high and in his calculations Howard argues how Garden City could also be the answer to cheaper living costs. He also proposes a democratic administrative model for Garden City which would, in his opinion, advance social equality and people’s well-being as a result. Garden City of To-morrow is an utopia that goes far beyond than an ordinary city plan at the time while finding it as an answer to creating better living standards. Even though Howard’s plans and calculations were very accurate, he never meant the form of a garden city to be circular as his drawings but instead he only demonstrated city structure with his simple formed diagrams.

Garden cities today
Howard’s radical city plan was hardly ever used as a complete design, apart from Letchworth and Welwyn, which are entitled as embodiments of the Garden Cities of To-morrow, nevertheless, it has influenced urban planning since the beginning of the modern era. The influence of Howard’s ideas can be seen in single-family house suburbs in the United States of America that have mainly been built in the mid-20th century. Instead of a small scale and social housing area the result consists of broadly spread lots where individuals are isolated from the surrounding world and can access it only by private motoring. When looking closely at this sort of suburbs it can be noticed how nature is playing a central part in the plan, but at the same time the loose structure of housing isolates people in their gardens with minimal contact to other people. As a result, long distances, which people have to cover when getting to places, create a negative effect on the environment and economy.

A great example of a housing area influenced by the human thirst for nature is Kaukovainio suburb in Oulu. “The goal, when planning Kaukovainio, was to create a forest suburb by containing as much natural environment as possible. Those remained parks are playing a remarkable role in separating different functions in the area. The whole suburb was separated from the rest of the city structure by a green belt.” (Ouka.fi) Kaukovainio is a combination of Howard’s garden city and Le Corbusier’s rational city plans aiming to inhabit larger amounts of people. It responds to the needs of the 1960s urbanization, but when looking at standards today it does not meet the requirements of ecological or economical aspects.
Conclusion

"By 2050, nearly 70% of the world population is projected to be living in urban areas." (OECD environmental outlook to 2050) Cities are growing and it should not be considered as a negative thing. Global warming and population growth drive city planning towards more and more dense and developed city structure. Ebenezer Howard pointed out the wellbeing of ordinary people throughout his book. Big gardens, calculations for lowering rents, communal and safe neighborhood, etc. had only one purpose; to improve people’s wellbeing. All over the world growing trends of city gardens and communal activity in cities are evolving. This phenomenon can be illustrated by, for instance, the recently finished green multistory apartment house called Sydney Central Park in Sydney, Australia (www.centralparksydney.com/) and Dodo RY’s communal small scale city farming projects in Helsinki, Tampere and Turku, Finland (www.kaupunkiviljely.fi). Another new trend is communal building projects and we can find a few examples for this in Finland as well. In Jätkäsaari area of Helsinki, the housing cooperative Malta was finished a year ago (www.maltatalo.fi), and according to the reviews the city of Helsinki wants to support such projects in the future (Arkitehtti magazine). Communal development in housing has clearly lowered the building costs and offered better quality for the habitants. It seems that Garden Cities of To-morrow is more current now than ever.

References:
Arkitehtti, 4/2014, page 75, JM.
Ebenezer Howard, Garden Cities of To-morrow.
Since 1933, when it was published, *The Radiant City* by Le Corbusier has continuously provoked discussion among both professionals and the wider public of urban planning and architecture. *The Radiant City* is one of the most significant works in the history of urban architecture. It has been both criticized and praised: almost every architect has his own opinion on Le Corbusier’s visions and ideas.

Le Corbusier was born in Switzerland, but lived in France all his life. There, in France, after publishing many books and practicing his profession, he became the best known architect of the early 20th century around the world. Nowadays, he is commonly cited all the more.

The new plan, La Ville Radieuse (1924), was aimed at cleaning the city. He wanted to minimize traffic and maximize green space and sunlight. Le Corbusier’s ideas were seminal in recognizing the aspect of well-being in his era since he was very concerned about the condition of the human body. This new way of looking at the relationship between humans and the built environment, in other words, his attention to well-being is what we wish to examine here. How did his work affect the urban human being and their health? Is well-being in Le Corbusier’s work treated holistically? Is it possible to define well-being in so few points as he did? Or did Le Corbusier ignore some important aspects?

Being well
The term ‘well-being’ is generally understood to mean a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity. Well-being can be separated into physical well-being, economic well-being, social well-being and emotional well-being. That is what Le Corbusier tried to achieve in his enormous plans of The Radiant City, the name he gave to the ideal urban place he designed.

Furthermore, Le Corbusier had his own strong definitions of well-being, too. Everyone after him also added their own. And very many of them compare their thoughts to Le Corbusier’s. So, we can say that Le Corbusier had some mind-blowing plans, something we need to think about. And something, that every architect has criticized or praised. No one can ignore them. Even when discussing well-being, or especially in that case.

Today, Le Corbusier’s legacy is becoming all the more important with regard to well-being when we work with urban planning. Why? Because by 2050, over 70% of the World’s population will live in cities. It is the same problem as Le Corbusier recognized in his era. It is the same problem as Europe faced in the early 1900s. However, while cities can bring opportunities, they can also pose challenges for better health. How to fit all that population in the cities? How to do it so that people could enjoy being well, could enjoy their lives—this is the most challenging task of urban planning. The starting point of this task is naturally the starting point of the modern urban environment outlined by Le Corbusier. So let us see how he saw well-being in The Radiant City. Which of his ideas have survived the test of time and which ones need to be upgraded to match 21st century urban life?

Space requirements and human scale
The Radiant City is an enormous ideal city plan for modern cities. A plan, that offers a solution to the growing population of industrial cities, like Paris. The Radiant City is Le Corbusier’s precise survey of overpopulated cities that offers an alternative to Garden Cities. The Garden City is an influential movement that was initiated in 1898 by Sir Ebenezer Howard in the United Kingdom.

In *The Radiant City*, Le Corbusier compares everyday life to two weeks’ voyage on the oceans (see Picture 1): “The catering department also has its dining rooms. Does this sound unattractive? Why? Millionaires have been known to eat in hotel dining rooms or in restaurants. Workers have been known to eat out on a Sunday in suburban taverns, or in mountain or seaside diners during their vacations. And though some may have died from time to time, it was never from eating out! On the contrary, they enjoyed it!” (Corbusier 1964: 116) He suggests that if people want to eat in buffet restaurants during those voyages, they should do the same in their everyday
life. But, is there any difference between them? When do not people have their own kitchens in their apartments, they really are forced to eat in restaurants day after day.

Talking about buildings’ design, Le Corbusier determines that apartments are just for sleeping in, not for spending increasing free time in there. He thought that no one person wants to be inside his own apartment. Everybody would want to spend their time in public spaces, training his muscles and fulfilling his own social needs. No one would want to be in groups of four. He also stated that it is unworthy. It is more important to society that everyone does some physical exercise and maintains his body and mind. No one thinks about individual personal needs. Their needs should be fulfilled so that companies get out of them as much as possible. Should Le Corbusier have asked people what they would need?

But, as Emilia Rönkkö points out in her own survey, people spend 90% of their lives inside houses, mainly in their own apartments. In northern areas that percentage could be even more (Rönkkö 2014). Is it comfortable to spend that much time in an apartment of 30 m²? And an apartment for a single person may not even be that big, it is sometimes only 14 m². So, Le Corbusier compares apartments designed for The Radiant City to cabins in ships. But is it possible to spend our whole life in a cabin? Is it comfortable to spend 90% of life in such a small apartment?

Did Le Corbusier have something good for people? Yes he did. In his plans houses were raised on columns and 100% of urban area was free. Free for using it for sports, free for having picnics there. His main idea was to have sports fields nearby residential units. Fields and recreational areas, but not stadiums where twenty people play and twenty thousand watch them playing. His idea was to get people moving, to do their physical exercise, to keep their machine in good form and to upgrade it. As he writes: “Modern city planning will accomplish the miracle of putting the crowds themselves on the playing field.” (Corbusier 1964) This was something extraordinary in the early 1900s. No one thought about the human being in this way.
As Le Corbusier said, people were brought from the countryside to the overpopulated cities to do work. When they were burnt out, they were put out and the new ones were being brought in just like charcoal. What he wanted was to stop the burning of people. He wanted to enable people to adjust to hard work. He wished that people could live their lives, not just to die for work. This was unprecedented in the age of strong mechanization. No one thought of the needs of ordinary people. Everyone was just looking after their financial income and the material outcome of their efforts. Le Corbusier went beyond the common thinking of the purpose of human life. He blew up the whole world. His way of thinking started a new trend: thinking about human needs.

**Human for society or society for human?**

The Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory developed by Abraham Maslow and publicized in 1943 in his book *A Theory of Human Motivation*. The core of the theory is the fact that man has basic needs that must be satisfied first. Only after this will man begin to look for the satisfaction of "higher" needs. However, Maslow himself said later that the satisfaction of needs does not necessarily proceed in a hierarchy, but any type of need may be amplified regardless of the "lower" needs of the state. (Nursing Crip Forum 2014)

Our choices, our preferences and our lifestyle are not identical. There are differences between people and there are differences between cultures. But commonly people need their own time: we need to be with just our own family, we need to feel relaxed and not worry about our children getting lost, or our wallets getting stolen. According to the Hierarchy of needs by Maslow (see Picture 2), safety is the second most important level. When he outlines the components of safety, he identifies various aspects of security, which, among others, contain the security of family. The feeling you have being with the people closest to you, cannot be felt in a huge crowd of unknown people.

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](image)

But, when focusing on exploring the perspective of how the idea of The Radiant City meets human needs, the perception of the human being in the era must be taken into consideration. In the post-World War I period, the prevalent view of the human being was not emphasizing individuality. The current thought of the time was based on the view that modern age people are the products of an individualistic culture, and lead by egocentric philosophy they are not able to understand societal needs over individual needs. Thinking of the community, keeping society, the functioning system of humans in mind above all was the trend that leading artists advocated.

Le Corbusier also believed that a rational and well-designed system can be a functional entity forever. His perception of the human being, similarly to many others, was also mechanical. He thought of houses as machines which need to be planned with machine-like logic. As a result, only the house planned in this way will meet the physical needs of man.
According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, there are some needs to be taken into account in the idea of The Radiant City. One of the main ideas was that everything has to serve the basic needs. Any excess, for example decoration, is unnecessary. Le Corbusier focused in particular on the physiological needs, and we think they became even over-emphasized. Le Corbusier gave notably more weight to societal needs than to human needs. He saw abnormalities as disturbances, and therefore independent needs became ignored.

The aspects of mental well-being, covered by titles Love / Belonging, Esteem and Self-actualization have become noticed only later, when the awareness of human needs has increased, thanks to Maslow. Le Corbusier excluded the possibility of people attending to their needs of creativity, spontaneity and problem solving because of the exact standards of living he set. His belief that problems can be solved at the level of the universal principles by multiplication of functional units did not become realized. He failed to consider that the city is a dynamic, ever-changing and process-like entity which interacts with its environment.

**Individuality and responsibility**

Today we can see some attempts of the same type to develop globally working systems and we have seen many successful examples that modern technology has enabled. The recent trend, however, is site-specific well-being. Some researchers have found caring and taking responsibility for the local environment therapeutic. In addition, empowering citizens by including and relying on their own activity has been found to improve urban health. These points meet the emotional needs, which are placed on the highest levels in Maslow's Hierarchy, and which have received insufficient attention by Le Corbusier.

In the 21st century, we face similar challenges of urban trend. People flock into cities looking for work. How they live, whether they have any life outside work, depends much on what the built environment offers. The fields inviting for recreational activities planned by Le Corbusier are still important. Similarly, his care of housewives' working hours is further discussed nowadays. However, there are more aspects to human needs than just satisfying the physical.

It has become clear that high density in the city does not automatically mean a bad and unhealthy living environment. There are many strong examples of high density cities, for example Barcelona with 2.8 million inhabitants, which are effective and pleasant places to live in (Hennu Kjisik). In creating a good living environment it is important to understand that these emotional needs are more meaningful alongside physiological needs. Nowadays, we pay greater attention to human experience than before. As planners we are thinking of how people experience the facilities and the environment, taking into consideration that they are different and individuals.

The last few years have brought along another new aspect of urban planning; the phenomenon known as participatory town-planning. The aim of participatory town-planning is to develop the sense of belonging and the sense of responsibility for the place. This is the core element of sustainable town-planning which takes into consideration both societal and individual needs. In addition to utilising the residents' ideas and wish, we have to consider nowadays certain other important aspects to ensure long-term planning. Such aspects definitely include ecology and sustainability. When Le Corbusier was thinking that man can rise above nature and solve problems using technology, the factor that influenced him was the advances of modern technology. The health of settlements is determined by their ability to meet the requirements set by their inhabitants and the environment, as Constantinos Doxiadis stated in his book *Ekistics: An Introduction to the Science of Human Settlements* (1968).

**Conclusion**

While Le Corbusier is still influential in certain aspects of town-planning, some of his views must be discarded. In contrast to Le Corbusier's idea that architecture should be the machine that shapes and modifies human thoughts, today we expect of architecture to create opportunities. Le Corbusier had good intentions, but the methods for implementation were unsuccessful. Anyway, in the modern society we still face the challenge of how unhealthy is obtained in the healthy? In addition to good ideas there is an obvious need of political will and people's involvement. (Hennu Kjisik)

Nevertheless, Le Corbusier's idea was to create a clear and consistent urban complex, in which the noble main aims -purity, clarity, unity and hygiene- would be completely true. Identifying these kinds of aims required an
incredible ability to think big and to understand the overall situation of the human being. In addition, Le Corbusier, who did an enormous work in planning the entire social order and a new way of life, also took into consideration smaller components of life and paid attention to every detail in his division of work and leisure activities.

Today, in 2014, we only have to update his enormous plans to the 21st century and add some little details that he oversaw or which have emerged since then. This is the task of urban design in our century. Maybe we all have criticized Le Corbusier, nevertheless we have done many things in his way.

References:
Eliel Saarinen's book *The City – Its Growth, Its Decay, Its Future*, first published in 1943, describes the basic principles of urban design. The analysis works as an introduction to town planning by explaining the main factors behind the design process.

Eliel Saarinen (20.8.1873-1.7.1950) received his degree in architecture in the Polytechnic Institute, Helsinki. During the 1910s he worked in city planning, which has turned out to be a considerably productive era in his career. After working on town-planning in Tallinn and Budapest, he designed his most famous pieces: the Munkkiniemi-Haaga (1915) and Pro Helsingfors (1918) plans. The influence of these plans can be seen in *The City*. Later Saarinen moved to the United States, where after winning a prize in a competition in Chicago, he became a university professor in Michigan. (Arkkitehtuurimuseo.)

The analysis of town-planning he presents in *The City – Its Growth, Its Decay, Its Future* was carried out in the era after the First World War, when industrialization and its consequential urbanization were topics of great concern. Fast and uncontrolled migration had caused disorder and problems in the cities (Fig. 1). Saarinen refers to this phenomena as the decay of the city.

The book is divided into two parts: the past and the future. The past is mainly identified as the mediaeval ages, in which the organic and free-formed city plan worked well because of the very slow change in the built environment. The latter part describes how fast-growing cities need to take these problems into account to be able to create healthy and functioning cities.

![Picture 1. The expansion of the built area in London 1840-1929. (Saarinen 1965: 202-203.)](image)

Although decades have passed, urbanization is increasing to this day. According to a research associated with the well-being of cities produced by LSE Cities (2011), half of the world's population is living in cities now and it is predicted that 70% will be living in urban areas by 2050. Today, the developing countries, particularly in Africa and Asia, need to be acknowledged as the areas where the process is mostly happening now. The great issue within this is the uneven social environment which leads to those problems and inequality that Saarinen criticizes.

"The primary purpose of the city is to provide adequate living and working accommodations for its population (Saarinen 1965: 2)." The most important part of a city is its people. Therefore, as Saarinen claims, a healthy city must be planned based on sociological requirements. Instead of concentrating on monuments and boulevards as a rule, city planning should be about humane conditions, such as suburbs, green areas and simplicity.
Organic decentralization
The explosion of population causes the appearance of slums. According to Saarinen, slums are unhealthy units and they should be decentralized. Saarinen considers slums dangerous because they are likely to spread and pollute the whole group of cells, units of residential area, or even whole countries. Even though the pioneering idea of cells influenced the birth of suburbs, Saarinen's thoughts about slums are quite harsh. Slums do have a tendency to spread but the extent of this is very unlikely to be as radical as he fears.

Still, it is better for residential areas to be planned in an organic manner, but, unlike in mediaeval times, controlling this process is vital. This organic decentralization is a way to generate "cells" that are connected by the means of transportation. Saarinen stresses the importance of reducing the need to spend too much time travelling between home and work these days. Furthermore, the cells, in which the services and working conditions are concentrated on a human scale, are surrounded by a healthy green belt. Hence the key to a good environment is to spread and extend the habitation and to create spatial areas. This converts previously overpopulated areas into lighter, less polluted and less noisy spaces. (Fig. 2.)

"-- the fundamental reason for success or failure in all town-building depends on whether or not town formation is based on the architectural principle of organic order (Saarinen 1965: 22)." Saarinen believes the well-being of a city is all dependent on proper architectural planning. Although, this view is limited, city planning is still probably the most influential individual force. In her study about Saarinen's work, The City received Minna Chudoba (2011: 101-102) summarizes this criticism: the book describes only the process of organic decentralization but does not provide practical examples for this. That is why readers have created their own ambiguous interpretations of the idea of organic decentralization.

Suburb problems in United States
Saarinen moved to the United States in 1922, where the unstable growth of cities was a major problem. Before that he had had already some thoughts about organic decentralization, for example his expert opinion about the development plan of Budapest and in his design for the Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan. In the 1920s, ideology, especially in the United States, posited that technical developments can solve most problems in the city. However, city centers were built too tightly and suburb areas were growing in an uncontrolled way. Saarinen thought that these problems needed to be tackled. The downtown area, which should have been the body of human civilization and urban living, was taken over by noise and pollution. Consequently, mostly middle class residents, moved to more peaceful and green suburbs. (Chudoba 2011.)
Zoning regulations in suburbs made land price in suburban areas rise, but at the same time it lead to the loss of services. Saarinen thought that this kind of planning and regulating was not functional or long-lasting. Suburbs, the epitome of the middle class utopia about a detached house with a garden, were dependent on services and workplaces in downtown. At first this seemed a cost-effective way to live, but in the end it turned out to be unsustainable. A new city type was born, where its central area did not matter and as a result they were left to decay. Cars that before gave freedom, had become a necessity, which then led to traffic jams. (Chudoba 2011.)

Technology made many aspects of life easier, but it also brought new problems, for example cars have filled the cities and polluted the air. Urban design needed a new direction, because the old ways were not functioning any more. Designers needed to create a new city type and a new ideology for urban design and planning. When still living in Finland, Saarinen tried to invent this new city plan type in the Munkkiniemi-Haaga (Fig. 3 and 4) and in the Pro Helsingfors plans. In these plans he took different social classes and their living environments into consideration. For him a healthy and pleasant place to live and work was the starting point of designing a modern and functional city area.

**The Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan**

The main idea behind the plan was to build a new district outside Helsinki downtown area to tackle the problems of population growth and traffic. The inspiration came from the English garden city ideology, which tried to provide a solution to the late 19th century cramped and unhealthy cities. In the Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan one third of its area is gardens and parks and a green belt, which ensured healthy and spacious surroundings. The aim was to build a united area where living and everyday services were functionally combined. The starting points of the plan's design was the contrast between the green belt areas with public buildings and residential areas. (Opetushallitus.)

In this century residents' well-being seem to have become a major concern in the urban design process. One such trend, for example, is the recognition that having green belt areas in cities have beneficial effects. A green belt calms the mind and cleanses the air. Connecting the living and the natural environment to everyday services creates a healthy place, which is pleasant and spacious. In Finland the problem about cities' growth is much less disturbing than in central Europe or in the United States, so the difficulties in urban design are also different.

In the 1800s in Finland, suburban areas were considered as a place where thieves and bums lived, not a place for the middle class like in the United States. At the beginning of the 1900s the importance of home and living conditions became highlighted, which is seen in the plan for Munkkiniemi-Haaga suburb. The plan was ordered by a private company, Stenius, which was the reason why it needed to be more appealing to the common people. Three dimensional design-like perspective drawings and models of the area- showed the plan in a new way (fig. 3 and 4). In the plan the residential areas were partly divided based on different social classes from poor to wealthy, so it had apartment buildings, row houses and mansions. However, Saarinen's idea was that row housing could be a suitable form of housing for most of the residents. He designed a flexible basic type of row house for the area. Making little changes in the floor plan, it would be suited to the needs of different social classes, but especially for the middle class.

The Munkkiniemi-Haaga area was divided into four parts, which all had different functions. The design includes public and residential areas, parks and on the edge of the area he planned a site for industrial use. Saarinen's criteria for planning residential areas were functionality, residents' needs, economy and healthy environment where the residents had enough light, air and green areas. In addition, the area's aesthetics and pleasantness were important factors in designing the district. The Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan has courtyards, streets which turn into squares with monumental buildings, curved streets with details and long views. Unique and peaceful but still uniform street facades were meant to make the city homogeneous. (Chudoba 2011.)

A residential area, which is suitable for everybody regardless of wealth or culture, can improve equality in the city. Wealthy residents are not totally separated from the poor or the middle class, yet they do not mix. The ideas of the city's basic body and the living areas are the same in Saarinen's book *The City* and in his plan of the Munkkiniemi-Haaga suburb, where residential areas are separated from the polluting industrial sites. They are still located in a walking distance from each other, which ensures that residents can get to work from their homes without using a car. The problem in a big city is to bring work and services near homes. However, this problem
can be reduced: this would ensure less traffic and more time which is not spent on traveling from home to work. Planning the traffic as well as possible can ease the problem.

In the Munkkiniemi-Haaga and the Pro Helsingfors plans the railways had an important role in connecting different districts to each other. Eliel Saarinen's design for the Helsinki main Railway Station may have triggered his interest in railways, which offered an easy answer to the problem of the growth of traffic and private driving in the whole city area. He was interested in the bigger picture, not only certain districts. Even though the Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan was made to order, it was, like the Pro Helsingfors plan, never realized. Still, its ideology and spirit is noticeable in present day town planning. (Chudoba 2011.)

Saarinen's plans were far-reaching and they act as guidelines for planning healthy urban cities in Finland, especially in Helsinki (Yle 2006). Planning and designing a district, even though it would never be realized, is an important part of developing the city. Saarinen writes in his book, *The City* (1965) about the lack of vision and dreams in urban design. The vision is the first step towards creating something new. The Munkkiniemi-Haaga and the Pro Helsingfors plans had realizable visions, but they were still too big and time-consuming plans to put into practice. His visions of ensuring well-being by the means of urban planning can be seen in present day cities in Finland.

**Conclusions**

As mentioned in the very beginning, Saarinen's proposed principle of urban planning is decentralization that spreads out the density of population and creates a healthier way of living. Most large cities and metropolises of today are concentrated intensely, which makes this principle still important to improve city life.

Saarinen's idea about housing and working nearby creates a communal experience within a suburban cell. He is definitely right since a healthy, close community improves the quality of environment and sociological atmosphere. This functional concentration is presented in the Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan as mentioned earlier. Apart from Saarinen's thoughts, in addition to housing and working, possibilities to enjoy one's free time in a good...
living environment should be highlighted. In practice, this would mean restaurants, cafés, outdoor running tracks and common social gathering places. All this brings the city to life.

In the end, there is still one question to pose: how much influence does an architect have on any of this? Saarinen stresses the importance of an architectural plan but he realistically underlines the role of financing and focusing on long-term development. In the case of organic decentralization this becomes the issue. In *The City* organic decentralization is illustrated as a fifty year long process (Fig. 5.), which would require persistent devotion. Therefore, to be able to create and maintain well-being in cities, research and cooperation between all the influencing parties is highly necessary.

References:
*The Image of the City*, a book written by Kevin Lynch in 1960 (published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the President and Fellows of Harvard College) is “about the look of cities, and whether this look is of any importance, and whether it can be changed,” as the author claims in the preface.

Lynch was not an architect but an urban designer and an author, which is reflected in his work, particularly in the analytic way he approaches the subject. The author does not evaluate architecture as a set of individual objects but he categorizes each architectural element regardless their aesthetical appearance, and sees them as constructions in space to be perceived in the long span of time. Therefore the book is primarily a study.

The book attempts to comprehend the state of the cities in the 1960s. The decades following the Second World War saw the rapid and unorganized growth of the cities in the United States. The lack of sufficient urban planning led to incoherent city structures. Lynch points this out in his study but does not propose direct improvements.

**Method of the study**

In his work Lynch attempts to provide urban planners with tools to control urbanization. As an overall category for assessing and evaluating urban space, he introduces the term *imageability*. He describes imageability as a “quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking strong images in any given observer” (page 9). This concept is the heart of the study – it illuminates the elements of which imageability is constructed.

The author’s personal opinions are not presented in the text but on the contrary; he studies the people experiencing the city. The study itself is an empiric analysis based on two sources of information in selected cities: Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles. The first phase of the analysis was a systematic observation made by a trained professional in his team. This meant mapping of the area and analyzing the predefined elements and their quality in the potential image structure.

The second phase of the study consisted of interviewing the local inhabitants - thirty in Boston and fifteen in both Jersey City and Los Angeles - about their usual routes around the city. They were asked how they navigate in the city and which features of the city are memorable and helpful in finding their way around. Based on these varying and recognizable elements, people form a personal ‘mental map’ of the city.

Based on his hypothesis and the results of the field study Lynch provides guidelines for evaluating and redesigning the city form and its imageability. Consequently he introduces a method of defining city structure with the following five elements: paths, nodes, edges, districts and landmarks (Picture 1).

![Picture 1](PATH-EDGE-DISTRICT-NODE-LANDMARK.png)

*Picture 1. The five elements by Kevin Lynch (The Image of the City, 1960: 47-48.)*

Paths create the body of the city structure and connect different elements. People observe the city while moving through paths. Paths are mobile and dynamic, they are constantly changing and provide interaction between all elements.
Nodes are strategic points in city image that can be entered. Different types of paths connect these nodal points, which can be large junctions, or on a smaller scale they act as specified and personal rendezvous points. It is a place where one can perceive current location in order to potentially continue along another path.

Edges are boundaries and connections between two spaces. When analyzing edges, continuity is a vital feature. They are not merely barriers between spaces, as for example a river, but also seams that link different defined and characteristic areas, namely districts. These are not defined by edges, but rather the edges appear where the content of the area changes. Districts are dominant and vast elements in a city structure which the observer can enter – they are recognizable since each has their own identity.

Landmarks are external point references and local foci, which do not need to be entered but can be observed form a distance. The scale of the element and its distance from the observer varies extensively. They are for example dominant and visible attractions like the sun, large buildings and natural formations or minor urban details to which the person observing gives a personal meaning. Landmarks can function as clues of identity when identifying districts.

According to Lynch, city form is based on the quality and interrelation of the elements. Every element is unique and different according to the person viewing and experiencing them. Different patterning of these components creates legible city structures. City form is the final pattern which evolves constantly in time and space.

**Analysing the Boston image**

Using Lynch’s results of the problematic and poorly imageable areas in the city of Boston of 1960, we carried out a map-based research of today’s Boston. We compared Lynch’s diagram (Figure 8, page 24) to contemporary aerial photographs and maps. As our main source of information we used bostonography.com, an internet data base created by two cartographers, Andy Woodruff and Tim Wallace. They have provided a large scale of interactive maps and diagrams of Boston. They constantly collect fresh survey data by giving the local people a channel for participating in their studies in social media. Using this data of participant’s mental images of the city they compose a collective mental map. In our attempt to replicate Lynch’s analysis, we focused on their ongoing research on Boston’s districts (Picture 2).

![Boston's districts today](https://example.com/image.png)

*Picture 2. Boston's districts today. The figure is based on a survey by Andy Woodruff and Tim Wallace.*
When comparing the 1960s Boston to its current state we discovered that on the east end of the Beacon Hill area Cambridge Street's inner curve forms an area disjoined from the rest of the district. The scale of the city structure suddenly changes from the quiet and intimate upper-class residential area to public high-rise buildings. This area comprises few landmark buildings such as the State House, but on the east side of Bowdoin Street it lacks references to the rest of the area which makes it disoriented and confusing. The south end of the area is clearly defined by the Public Garden and Boston Common green areas. On the north-west corner of the district lies a massive nodal point. Lynch mentions this crossing of Cambridge Street and Storrow Drive as a problematic and unimageable point in the city (Picture 4). The expansion of the infrastructure has led to more complex junctions hard to connect to the mental map navigation. The intersection is far from human scale and is legible only when moving by vehicle.

Modern guideline for a city’s well-being
Lynch’s influence in urban planning today is undeniable. His studies and methods are still valid to this day and are used as a basis in studies and educational projects. As an example, Kaisa Mäkiniemi has done her master’s thesis based purely on Lynch’s idea of evaluating a city.

The advice Lynch gives to urban planners is to “provide the viewer with a symbolic diagram of how the world fits together: a map or a set of written instructions.” This was an extremely pioneering thought at the time. His focus on individual city-dwellers’ well-being is especially remarkable. As long as the inhabitant “can fit reality to the diagram, he has a clue to the relatedness of things. You can even install a machine for giving directions as has recently been done in New York. While such devices are extremely useful for providing condensed data on interconnections, they are also precarious, since orientation fails if the device is lost, and the device itself must
constantly be referred and fitted to reality.” Current urban practice has proved Lynch right. Lynch’s speculations of navigation becoming dependent on devices is a current theme. Although the imageability of a cityscape is no longer essential in navigating, it is still considered as a foundation in designing and sensing a city’s well-being.

The heart of Kevin Lynch’s study is the importance of inhabitants’ experiences of the city. For Lynch it was important to understand how people live in their city, how they experience and perceive its time and space, and how it is imagined by them. “A well designed environment image will improve the sense of security for people and set up a harmonious relationship between the outer world and themselves” – this is how Lynch defines the essentials of city well-being. Clarity and legibility of cityscape should be considered from many perspectives while planning. Structured and regulated growth of the city can be based on the analysis of the areas’ heritage, its imageability and its potential to be improved. Reduced to small scale, this means the imageability and its impact on well-being as a sum of the perceptions and mental images of individuals.

As the author himself highlights, “a highly imageable city would seem well formed, distinct, remarkable, it would invite the eye and the ear to greater attention and participation. The sensuous grasp upon such surroundings would not merely be simplified, but also extended and deepened. Such a city would be one that could be apprehended over time as a pattern of high continuity with many distinctive parts clearly interconnected. The perceptive and familiar observer could absorb new sensuous impacts without disruption of his basic image, and each new impact would touch upon many previous elements. He would be well oriented, and he could move easily. He would be highly aware of his environment” (The Image of the City, 1960:10)

References:
Picture 1, The Image of the City, pages 47-48.
Pictures 3 and 4, The Image of the City, pages 18-19.
Townscape is the product of the art of connecting buildings, streets and spaces, which forms the urban environment. It was Gordon Cullen who first introduced this concept. He explained these ideas in his book The Concise Townscape, which was first published in 1961. The book has had a major influence on architects and planners but it has also aroused interest in people outside the professional sphere. It has had a positive impact on the history of art and architecture because Cullen was the first who thought that grouping buildings should be based on aesthetic principles. Another important aspect of town-planning described in the book is how we create towns and cities which really work architecturally. Gordon Cullen’s award-winning drawings are one more reason why the book is worth of reading. Cullen’s aim was to create a human-orientated cityscape by emphasizing the value of the environment. The book is a great piece of work for everyone with some visual sense.

The Concise Townscape was written after World War II. That time functionalism and modernism were dominant movements in architecture. Gordon Cullen presents alternative solutions for creating better cities to live in. Our theme, well-being, is a crucial factor in this book primarily because of Cullen’s ideas on how to plan spaces while considering all levels of human needs.

**Well-being**

If we wish to define well-being, we can first consider its dimensions: it contains three aspects; physical, emotional and mental well-being. Cities and spaces should be designed for humans and must contain human scale buildings and streets. This is what makes the city a safer place to live. Nature and the natural environment are important for us; it means the built environment has to be planned with respect for nature. This means that city-dwellers should be able to find spots where they can enjoy what nature has to offer even in their city environment. Economics should be stable and people’s basic needs should be secured. These points are included in these three main aspects of well-being. We think that every urban designer should consider carefully these things before designing.
In *The Concise Townscape* Gordon Cullen emphasizes the historical layers and details in city structure. In his examples he focuses on small-scale alternative solutions. He also creates visions how to maintain a layer of old buildings and use them as a basis to serve contemporary needs. Cullen’s attachment to the English environment can be clearly noticed in the book. He says that the environment should always be the starting point in planning and existing natural features should be used effectively. Overall, the imitation of nature and real vegetation is one of Cullen’s main topics.

The book conveys his human-orientated approach to urban design. He discusses the importance of the sense of space. Cities should convert emotional and exciting spaces which creates a unique experience for vagabonds who travel through the city. The functions of the space should be noticeable. Thus, for example, a governmental square should be noticeably different from a small market plaza. Cullen elaborates what comprises a space and what should be noticed when designing a space. He also explains how to divide and limit the built environment. For example, he presents different solutions for how to limit spaces to achieve the desired atmosphere.

Gordon Cullen explains many different topics in *The Concise Townscape* which he thinks are essential in urban design. Maybe the most vital ones are place, content, focal point, closure and here and there. He classifies place so that it is easy to describe in one sentence. A street for instance exists for movement and should be designed for all road users and buildings are for social and business purposes. By content, he means the quality of different kinds of environment. All this should be considered because different locations and different environmental settings require unique solutions in designing urban space. Focal point is the idea that a city is the center of social interaction. It is the place where people are gathered, for example, to do business or to meet each other. Closure is the division of street, passages and other aspects of the linear town system divided into visually digestible and coherent segments, which retain the sense of progression. Enclosure is differentiated from closure and it provides more of a complete private world. It is self-sufficient, static and inward looking. Here and there are two spatial notions which create most of the urban drama. Gordon Cullen explains: “The practical result of so articulating the town into identifiable parts is that no sooner do we create a here than we have to admit a there” (1971: 182). This is how the procession of man-made enclosure will then divide the environment into here and there.
Serial Visions
One basic term Gordon Cullen uses to describe the way he examined the surroundings is Serial Vision. He represents the imaginary and existing surroundings by cartoon-like drawings to typify a townscape. This technique helps the readers of the book to understand Cullen’s ideology and understand how the city is constructed. It creates and forms picture by picture the whole image of the city. Drawing serial visions seems a great way to get to know your surroundings and helps to understand how to build an interesting space.

The concept of Serial vision calls for special attention while studying the book. The practicality of the ideology can be seen easily when it is examined more closely. This is why we created our own serial vision to understand better Cullen’s thoughts. For example, when you open the door, you can see the street and the garden scenery, which open up beautifully. After you have passed through the garden, you continue by a curved road. When the road finally straightens you notice the cityscape, which is built to the hillside, and behind all that you can see the Art Nouveau church tower. Step into the jungle of buildings and surprisingly you end up in a square. In the middle of the square, a lonely tree is standing, a reminder of old times. From the corner of the square starts a new curved alley. It is defined both sides by an approximately three meter high concrete wall. At the end of the alley a statue appears. It is placed on a little mound decorated by freshly mowed lawn. You climb to the top and it takes you just above the roof line. Now you can see the entire town and the red tiled roofs of the buildings (see picture 4). This kind of thinking imagining the effect of the built environment on the user is essential for urban planning if we wish to bring closer the elements of nature to city-dwellers.
Critique
The critique of the book is focused on modernist ways of forming cities. Cullen does not like wide never ending roads which continue to infinity. He likes compact city construction and conveying the feeling of returning to the Middle Ages. A city should be built step by step to fit in the environment and meet human needs. Gordon Cullen was the pioneer of solving the problems of the suburb driven by his human-orientated approach to urban planning. Although *The Concise Townscape* is an inspiring opus and is not focused on certain problems, it has a positive approach to urban design and it presents solutions by examples. In successful planning spaces are overlapping and building styles are varying. Cullen’s advice has influenced the most recent development in urban planning, for instance, the writers of “the application of urban design principles to navigation of defamation spaces” (O’Neil et al. 2004) admit that they implemented his ideas.

Conclusion
If we follow Cullen's advice, our cities will be more functional and human-orientated. He emphasizes that everyone has the right to a healthy environment. Well-being is clearly dominant in these ideas of Cullen’s. It is vital part of the whole townscape ideology and it can be discovered in most parts of the book. *The Concise Townscape* projects the feeling that everyone can affect to their own surroundings at least with their own gardens and balconies.

References:

“This book is an attack on current city planning and rebuilding”, declares Jane Jacobs in the first sentence of her greatly renowned book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) (referred to as *Death and Life* hereinafter). Jacobs, journalist and an urban theorist, argues that orthodox methods of modernist urban planning, such as influential ideas by Ebenezer Howard, Le Corbusier and Clarence Stein, are irrelevant to how cities work. Jacobs explores the ways cities actually work, describing what she sees as real factors affecting cities and the interurban populace. Contradicting the urban planning mainstream of the time, the book introduces new ideas of social vibrancy in urban America.

According to Jacobs, the particular problem areas include policies applied in urban planning in the 1950s, which arose from the deductive reasoning used by modernist planners. Among these policies Jacobs considers urban renewal to be the most violent, and the separation of uses (i.e. residential, commercial and industrial) as the most prevalent. She argues that these policies destroy communities and the atmosphere of innovative economy by creating isolated and unnatural urban spaces. To counter these harmful protocols she endorses mixed primary uses to extend the usage of streets to all times of day, short blocks to allow high pedestrian permeability, city density and buildings of various ages, and in different states of repair. This essay examines the ideology of Jacobs expressed in *Death and Life* and explores its relation to the theme of well-being in urban planning.

**Background of Death and Life of Great American Cities**

During the time Jacobs wrote *Death and Life*, America was in the middle of urban change (Fitzpatrick 2000). During this postwar period big cities were in a state of crisis. Like most parts of the western world, the United States experienced a time of prosperity which was distributed unequally. In the 1950s the popularity of automobiles exploded and wealthier citizens started their migration to the suburbs (see Picture 1). City centres were facing a disaster.

While the middle class moved away from the cities, the remaining population was disproportionately impoverished and ethnic minorities concentrated in city centres. (Wendt 2009) In addition, several federal policies were established to encourage soldiers, who were deployed during and short after World War II, to build their own
homes. These mortgages were restricted to new, single family detached houses that were to be built on the outskirts of cities and to young families wishing to buy these. This accelerated the downward spiral of American cities in the 1950s. While land values of the suburbs were booming, city centres started to decay fast. Former city dwellers turned to doing their shopping in enclosed malls in the suburbs, making small business owners suffer. Public transportation continued to deteriorate with the increase of car ownership and lack of funding since the Great Depression. (Wendt 2009) All these factors influenced Jacobs to write her book.

What provided the strongest incentive for *Death and Life* was probably the Federal Housing Act of 1949. All across the U.S the “Federal Bulldozer” tore down entire blocks in areas deemed “blighted” by planners. These areas were then rebuilt with high-rises. Housing people in high-rises was considered as an enormous leap forward, both economically and aesthetically. After all, people were living in spacious, airy and ventilated apartments instead of gloomy and dark tenement houses. High rises were located in clusters, along patches of grass where children were meant to play like their suburban counterparts. Politicians and planners believed that in comparison to the slums they were replacing, new projects were a blessing to the inhabitants. (Wendt 2009)

Against this backdrop Jacobs builds up her attack. She charges towards “orthodox” ideas in modernist city planning, from Howard to Le Corbusier. According to Matthew Wendt (2009), Jacobs “blames the modernist planning for monotonous projects that exacerbated the problems of their inhabitants”. Projects built using modernist theses are dull, uniform and lack any vitality or buoyancy of city life. Jacobs criticizes promenades citizens never use and expressways that dissect the cities. Jacobs greatly condemns the urban renewal taking place in her time for destroying lively neighbourhoods and their social fabric by placing the residents all over the metropolitan area, weakening the small businesses and ruining their proprietors without providing adequate compensation. She argues that planners are using cities as a laboratory for modernist ideals, a game of trial and error.

In modernist theory housing is seen as a machine for living. Every aspect of daily life is optimized for maximal efficiency. Cities were sectioned into different areas, for different uses. The modernist ideology was seen as a solution for slumming in the U.S. Jacobs opposes the “doctrine of salvation by bricks”, which states that improved housing conditions automatically lead to improved social conditions within the district. Subsequent empirical studies comparing delinquency records in new housing projects have shown that there is no direct relationship between good housing and good behaviour. The main issue in question concerning city neighbourhoods, according to Jacobs, is what city neighbourhoods do and how they do it that may be socially and economically useful for the city as a whole. Jacobs argues that separation is in fact destroying cities, and should be replaced with diversity in all aspects of city life.

**Four fundamentals of Death and Life of Great American Cities**

Diversity is a key theme in *Death and Life*. Jacobs evolves general conditions for city diversity stemming from her observations of everyday city life in Greenwich Village of New York (see Picture 2) and in other major American cities. Although these conditions can never be exclusively achieved by city planners and designers, they have to be seriously considered in planning for a diverse and vital city life. She states that great cities do not generate diversity merely by existing. She outlines four conditions she regards vital for flourishing city vibrancy generated by diversity.

A central condition, according to Jacobs, for diversity to stem from any given district is to have a variety of functions within that district. Not only should there be a mix of housing and commercial buildings, but variation within them as well. An area should aim to serve a mix of people from different social and economic stages of life. The heterogenic environment invites people to use the area for different purposes, varying from living to shopping and passing-by. This “mixture of primary uses” encourages people to visit districts in different hours, thus improving social atmosphere and the security of streets. As an example she uses the Wall Street district, which suffers from extreme unbalance of usage in different times of a day. During working hours a huge amount of people visit the district for business. On evenings and weekends these office districts are deserted, dull and void of activity in Lower Manhattan. Jacobs endorses mixing primary uses such as offices, manufacturing plants, residences and leisure facilities in a way that people use them and passers-by are around throughout the day.
As a second condition, Jacobs questions long blocks which restrict movement by narrowing the choice of routes. Long blocks limit the experience of the city to certain areas, as one cannot spontaneously turn the corner and find alternative streets that lead to the desired destination. A variety of possible routes enables cross-use among the users of a city district. In this sense a dense network of streets and short blocks function correspondingly to the mixture of primary uses in generating a lively neighborhood and city fabric.

In order to encourage diversity in function and population, Jacobs notes as her third condition, cities should aim to upkeep an array of buildings of different ages and in variable condition. Even run down old buildings are valuable, since they offer retail to many ordinary enterprises which are of great importance to the public life of streets but not able to pay higher rents in new constructions (see Picture 3). On the other hand, bigger businesses need these old buildings in their vicinity because otherwise they would be part of a uniform environment that is not lively, interesting or commercially viable. To make cities diverse and flourishing, they need a mixture of high- and low-yield enterprises.

All conditions are insignificant in establishing diversity if there is no sufficient concentration of people in the city. Jacobs strongly opposes orthodox planning and housing dogma when she argues that high dwelling density is an important factor for a neighbourhood’s vitality. According to her, “overcrowded slums” of the planning literature (e.g. Brooklyn Heights in New York, North End in Boston) are thriving areas with a high density of dwellings. The real slums of America can be found in areas of low-density of dwellings.

Well-being is an idiosyncratic symbol
The book was conceived after Jacobs witnessed massive brutal blows directed at her living environment, the city. The environment influences immensely one’s sense of well-being, as it is the stage where every dweller plays their own part. The city as an environment is a tight fabric of social, economic, political and religious relations, a great concentration of strangers living together. Every one of these strangers perceive the city in a different way, which makes designing it very hard. If a city; collection of chaotic functions which are unpredictable in their nature, is confined into a planned social cast, well-being will be in danger. As Jacobs puts it, “There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.” In this light it is very clear that Jacobs attacked the authorities threatening her well-being, as well as that of countless other city-dwellers.

Jacobs explains on multiple occasions that diversity is good for the city, as it produces a vibrant city life. But how is it contributing to well-being? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2014) defines well-being as follows: the state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous. By this definition it is clear that well-being is influenced by numerous factors
in city planning, which in part promote or repress diversity. If city planning were to promote universal well-being, the planner should take physical, mental and social factors into account. Well-being is a highly subjective experience, and it should be treated as such. This way it is clear that a city cannot be planned thoroughly, because some may perceive well-being differently than others. Planners can, however, create favourable conditions for well-being in general through diversity, giving a chance for every inhabitant to feel happy, healthy and prosperous.

As stated above, a city consists of strangers. Jacobs argues that orthodox city planners misjudged the importance of spontaneous contacts on the sidewalks of the cities. She considers this contact as trivial in a given case, but of great importance in total. They create a feeling of public identity, sort of feeling of belonging, as well as a web of mutual respect and trust among residents. These contacts also provide a resource in time of personal or neighbourhood need or emergency. A flourishing city allows random contacts to happen along sidewalks, thus “enabling metropolitan life without obligation.” (Wendt 2009) In contrast, unoriginal and uniform townplans will lead to dwellers turning to be exactly what they should not become; anonymous strangers who do not take responsibility for anything happening on the streets. This kind of environment makes people isolated, resulting in poor city life and weakening the sense of comfort and safety in a neighbourhood. Well-being as a concept is directly involved and deeply affected by the social atmosphere of the city.

The case of Alppila
The modernist ideals were the solution of the day for cities facing the continuous demand to expand in the mid-20th century, and the Nordic countries, and indeed Finland, embraced these ideals. An essential outcome of rebuilding the country after the war, modernist neighbourhoods mushroomed to accommodate the growing population. Professors, who were deeply modernist, did not agree with Jacob’s book, but kept teaching the modernist ideals and planning. The tide has turned since then, but still some echoes from the past maintain their influence in our current building business. A prime example of the failure to develop better districts is Alppila, (see Picture 4), a new neighbourhood three kilometres north of the city centre of Oulu, Finland. Alppila was built on an old industrial area, which was demolished to give way to new apartment blocks. The neighbourhood consists of white apartment buildings, uniform in appearance. Amidst the white masses lie green spots of lawn and large areas of parking space. Alppila fails to incorporate the majority of Jacobs’ suggestions for a diverse and lively city, instead it succeeds to imitate many things Jacobs criticises.
Naturally, building and designing an entirely new neighbourhood on an empty slot is challenging, thus it is nearly impossible to fulfil Jacobs’ suggestions completely. Large areas of construction built at one time, as Jacobs presents, “[…] change little physically over the years as a rule… [Residents] regret that the neighborhood has changed. Yet the fact is, physically it has changed remarkably little. People’s feelings about it, rather, have changed. The neighborhood shows a strange inability to update itself, enliven itself, repair itself, or to be sought after, out of choice, by a new generation. It is dead. Actually it was dead from birth, but nobody noticed this much until the corpse began to smell” (1961:198).

The buildings will all be new and the demand for growth does not leave room for subtle development of an area from wasteland site to a lively neighbourhood. This does not mean that other suggestions should be disregarded. Alppila is not only new and monotonous in appearance, but it lacks diversity as a whole. The neighbourhood serves one purpose only: residential. The experience of urban life is limited to arriving in a car and going to the apartment, as there are no city-like activities in the area. There are no businesses, restaurants, bars, cafes or sport facilities; therefore the area does not attract other people besides the residents. There is one grocery store serving the whole area. Alppila is built along a popular bicycle path and a road, but people only go past it, not through it, because there is nothing there to attract anyone to even pass through. Aside from the location and good pedestrian connections to the city centre, Alppila leaves a lot to be desired as an urban space.

Conclusion
Matthew Wendt, urban planner who graduated from the University of Delaware in 2008, describes the influence of Jacobs’s book in his paper as follows: “Death and Life provides powerful advice, particularly for planning practitioners. Jacobs encourages planners to work on the basis of their own observations to understand the complexity of cities instead of imposing unquestioned planning theories.”

Jacobs offers an untraditional option to city planning, which differs considerably from the modernist ideals and dogmas. She encourages urbanites to discover the city, to examine it thoroughly, to understand it. As a member of the public, a non-planner, she naturally takes the point of view of an ordinary dweller; she makes observations that seem almost obvious but still overlooked by professionals. Jacobs’s approach to the subject is pragmatic, down-to-earth, and even non-intellectual. She wishes that the residents take part in the planning, be the designers of their own living environment and make their needs heard. Maybe this is why the book was shunned by educated modernist planners of the time.

Although not cherished by planning experts at the time of its publication, Death and Life set change into motion. The fruits of this book can be seen today in numerous urban planning projects all around the world, as its tenets have been adopted by the New Urbanism movement. The movement endorses walkability, connectivity, mixed-use and diversity, mixed housing as well as increased density in their manifesto. To mention only a couple of the most prominent recent projects include mixed-use walkable neighbourhood called Gowanus in New York (Kearney 2013) and the university campus area redesign-project in Sundsvall, Sweden (Filmanowicz 2006). These works are proof of timeless ideas which are conspicuous in Death and Life of Great American Cities.

References:
Constantinos A. Doxiadis wrote his *Architecture in transition* in the 1960s when Western society was influenced by modernization and exponential urbanization. Doxiadis discusses changes in urban planning, architecture and the role of the architect. He mentions several problems that arose due to the structural change of society. He states that the architect’s role does not meet the requirements of the age and architects should expand their roles. A modern architect is a co-ordinator who collaborates with other architects, residents and experts of other disciplines. Still, most architects keep planning houses for the elite, while architecture belongs to everyone. The growth of the population brings a new challenge for architects: how to provide enough housing. This in turn means that cities grow and expand continuously, which ultimately demands a comprehensive planning of the whole city.

Doxiadis sees many challenges in modernization, but he thinks that the rapid changes in society and architecture should be accepted and the new innovations should be exploited. The standardization of industry is one key to providing democratically simple but functional housing for as many as possible. Doxiadis worries about the disappearance of the human scale in modern cities. The urban sprawl causes greater distances, which breaks the architectural unity. The monuments become buried in the shadows of higher and higher buildings which makes cities challenging to picture. One of the most essential challenges is the rapid growth of road traffic. Urban planning, in Doxiadis’s view, lags behind.

Today well-being is one of the leading topics of social scientists including urban planners and architects. It can be defined as the condition of an individual and a group, and is based on human beings’ experience of happiness. Doxiadis highlighted well-being as a starting point in urban planning, and therefore his thoughts are still contemporary and worth studying. Especially car dependency represents the same problems today as described in *Architecture in transition*.

This article focuses on the changes in society due to car dependency, which is an essential theme of *Architecture in transition*. Car dependency has been slowly reduced since the 60’s but significant progress has not taken place as yet. Urban planning can impact on the well-being of people by unifying the city structure and reducing car dependency.

**Car dependency and how it affects the human scale**

Doxiadis discusses in *Architecture in transition* the rapid growth of the motor traffic and its influence on the structure of the cities. Many of his views are still topical, for traffic planning is one of the greatest issues in urban design nowadays. Traffic is a permanent phenomenon in our society, hence it has to be taken as one of the starting points in urban planning.

![Volume of car dependent commutation in 1990 and 2005. People drive to work by car even more often than before. Car dependency promotes the urban sprawl.](http://lib.tkk.fi/Reports/2010/isbn9789526035352.pdf)
Car traffic has changed our relationship to architecture and urban space. The streets, for example, are not designated especially for pedestrians as before, and often they appear only to be routes while moving from one place to another. Similarly, our attitude and approach to our surroundings have changed as we often observe them from a vehicle. On the other hand, driving slowly through city centers is a problem for drivers, too. It is essential to plan the urban centers so that they satisfy both pedestrians and motorists.

Today a more compact city is an essential theme in urban planning. As a result of car traffic, we have lost public space. In the 60s already as much as two thirds of the central part of Los Angeles was taken over by cars. Our relationship to architecture has changed: wider streets, greater distances, faster speeds make it more difficult to see the city structure from the natural human perspective. Additionally, people tend to live further from the city centre, which means that they seldom come there to spend time. In consequence, socialisation between residents decreases and the character of the urban environment becomes indefinite. For example, a growing number of elderly people in Finland suffer from the urban sprawl. There is a risk that the services nearby, within an easy reach, are vanishing while distances become greater. All in all, the old should be taken into consideration in urban planning better.

There are several factors causing car dependency: unsuccessful land use on the one hand and people’s choices on the other. The urban sprawl is inevitably followed by wasteful land use, which leads to increasing expanse. Urban sprawl raises the amount of traffic and traffic jams. Studies have found that not even large investment in transport routes can prevent traffic congestion (Autoriippuvainen yhdyskunta ja sen vaihtoehdot, Vesa Kanninen et al., 2010). Sometimes the use of one’s own car is a necessity, and essentially car dependency indicates the lack of alternative choices.

Alternatives to car use
According to Doxiadis, the solution to the problem of car dependency could be found in organizing the city into sectors. In the latest research the sector model has also been a starting point in urban planning. For example, Vesa Kanninen et al. in “Autoriippuvainen yhdyskunta ja sen vaihtoehdot” (2010) handles sectors as a basis for a reconciliation of land use and traffic organization. The aim is to stop the urban sprawl linked to car dependency and start to unify the city structure instead. The solution is not only densifying a city but unification is a key to improve the quality of living conditions, too.

Unification can provide possibilities for residents to make better decisions socially or ecologically, for example the opportunity to cycle to work. It requires interactive planning with mutual confidence and respect. The wish and preferences of the residents should be taken into account already from the beginning of the process. Participative planning creates a close attachment between the residents and the place. If a place is important for its inhabitant, it is also worth maintaining, and that is what provides it character. This is a means to improve the well-being of the residents.

Reducing car dependency demands social development and sustainable means in community planning. Unification has to rest on extensive and diverse research. It is especially important to study how a human being experiences a place. This kind of research is almost non-existent, since so-called self-evident truths such as everyday routines are underinvestigated. We have to get a realistic picture of different factors including location of workplaces and services. Mere zoning is not enough, but a deeper understanding of functions and routines of people is needed. At the moment, the zoning must follow the placement of dynamic forces of services, work places and market areas and consequently cannot influence the unification.

Kuopio city is a forerunner in urban planning in Finland. It has successfully used the sector model as a basis in its “finger model” (sormimalli) since 1993. Specifically, the city centre and the surrounding pedestrian and public transport zones have been improved. Furthermore, an energy-efficient and less traffic-producing community structure has been supported in Kuopio. The pedestrian- and cycling-friendly centre is the trademark of the city.
The “Sormimali” model is an example of successful urban unification. (http://ary.fi/aineisto/Leo_Kosonen_100810.pdf)

Human scale

“The street is the river of life of the city, the place where we come together, the pathway to the center.”

–William H. Whyte, American urban planner

After all, architecture can be a way to support the psychological wellness of human beings. People naturally feel comfortable in spaces of a human scale. We should base urban planning on research which studies where people feel healthy and safe, and which points out what residential areas are not popular. When we think about well-being, it is essential for a human being to be in touch with others. For example, the Puu-Käpylä residential area in Helsinki is very popular due to its human scale and the community. Thus it is important to leave some area free of traffic to be used only by people and thus to create public spaces. Car traffic has to be differentiated and areas preserved for pedestrians.

By now, the general trend in urban planning has already turned the way Doxiadis wanted: the urban space has been taken back from cars. One example for this development is Kivisydän in Oulu, which serves the purpose of reducing the amount of cars in the centre. The purpose of the huge project is to build plenty of parking space under the city centre of Oulu. The construction began in June 2012 and will be completed by the end of 2015. Walking oriented city centres are increasingly favored also in other cities in Finland. On the other hand, urban sprawl continues and cities are expanding consistently with new suburbs. Ideapark in Oulu and Matkus in Kuopio are good examples of big shopping centers which are built far away from the city centres. The phenomena extends distances and thus promotes car dependency.

Conclusion

Traffic planning remains a key part of urban planning, and far too little research has been done on the subject. As early as in the 1960s Doxiadis highlighted the importance of transport planning in successful urban planning. Doxiadis’ ideas were ahead of his time. Vesa Kanninen et al. discusses similar themes in his report “Autoriippuvainen yhdyskunta ja sen vaihtoehdot”. The fact that functional traffic in the center of the city is still a problem even in the 2010s, tells us that the problem has been underestimated. While urban planning has concentrated on serving the car traffic for a long time, more recently alternative ways to travel have been developed.
Reducing dependence on the car significantly affects the unification of the urban structure as well as the preservation of the human scale. A large part of the problems of city structure is exactly the result of car dependency, which leads to the degradation of the urban structure, and further to the vanishing of the human scale.

In the long run, the best solution would be unification, which would allow alternative ways of transport and restore the urban space for pedestrians. In recent years, pedestrianized zones have become increasingly popular, which is a sign of unification in progress. Unification is an extensive process that requires the knowledge of a number of different experts, as well as the commitment of politicians. The needs and wellness of city residents and users of the premises has to be the starting point for urban planning.

The unification of the city structure is such an extensive, demanding and complex project that it will succeed only by the cooperation and commitment of different actors. Mutual trust and respect is the basis of the effective cooperation. We need to take responsibility not only for our well-being, but also for the wellness of future generations.

The functionality and possibilities of urban structure have much deeper and larger effects on human well-being than it is generally thought. Urban planning can directly impact on healthy lifestyles, for example by offering cycling opportunities. Human well-being is based on the deepest needs and values, such as the need to move and need to be in touch with other people. That is why we need more research into the psychological dimension of urban life as well as studies of how human beings experience space. We must return to our roots, and consider the experiences of the individual as the main factor in urban planning.

![Image](http://www.amusingplanet.com/2013_07_01_archive.html)

**Picture 3.** Barcelona is a good example of a successful urban design. The city is compact, it is primarily of human scale, and it allows for social contacts. (http://www.amusingplanet.com/2013_07_01_archive.html)

References:
Project for public space (http://www.pps.org).

Rossi tuo kaupunksuunnittelulliset näkemyksensä esiin teoksessaan The Architecture of the City (L’architettura della Città, 1966). Hän pyrkii kirjassaan ymmärtämään kaupungin muodostumisen sisäistä logiikkaa ja selittämään, mikä on modernistinen kaupungin tarkastelutapa ja sen puutteellisuus.

Rossi näkee kaupungin yhtenä arkkitehtonisena kokonaisuutena, joka on kaikkien nykyajalla edeltäneiden aikakausien ja tyyulisuuden summa. Hän korostaa historian merkitystä kaupungin kehittymisessä, ja pitää jokaista kaupunkia omanlaiseena modernisoinnaan. Hän pyrkii pitämään funktiota ja muotoa suuremman kaupungin yhtenäisyyteen, ja korostaa sitä, että yleensä kaupungin merkittävimmät rakennukset ovat sellaisia, jotka ovat ajan myötä muuttaneet käyttötarkoituksia ja mukautuneet sen hetkiön tarpeisiin muun kaupungin mukana.

Rossi pitää kaupungin kehittymistä siinä elävien ihmisten tapana muokata elinympäristöä heille sopivaksi. Kaupunki on siis muokkaa itse itsään muun kaupungin mukana.

Modernismi näkee ihmiset yhtenä massana, ikään kuin koneina, joilla on yhtenäiset tarpeet ja mieltymykset, kun taas Rossi pyrkii korostamaan kaupunkilaitoksen psykologista roolia ja näkemään ihmisten henkilöönä, jotka kokevat kaupungin olleen toimivan kaupungin kehittymisen kautta. Kaupunkia ei voi rakentaa kerralla, vaan se muokkautuu omanlaiseeksi ajan kuluessa.

Rossi näkee kaupungin yhteisyyden seuraavan rakenteena, jonka muoto on erilainen eri ajanjaksoina. Kaupungista on kuitenkin löytettävissä pysyviä muotoja, jotka säilyvät tunnistettavina ajan kuluessa, ja tulevat pysyväksi osaksi kaupunkia muun kaupungin muuttaessa sen ympäristöllä. Näistä osista Rossi käyttää termiä "urban artefact". Urban artefact voi olla esimerkiksi jokin merkittävä kirkko, auki tai kaupungin asemakaava. Se on merkittävä osa kaupungin rakennetta ja siitä tulee ihmisten mielessä erottamaton osa kaupunkia.

Urban artefact ei ole kuitenkaan vain kaupungin muotoa määrittelevä käsite, vaan se myös muokkaa kaupungin historiaa ja henkeä, ja näin ollen lisää kaupungin yksilöllisyyttä. Siitä tulee ajan saattossa ikään kuin jonkin kaupungille tärkeän merkityksen symboli tai materialisoituma, josta tulee kaupungin yhteisölle pelkkää muotoa merkityksellisempi elementti.

Rossi korostaa monumenttien merkitystä kaupungin kehittymisessä. Monumentti on aina ns. urban artefact ja määrittää osa kaupunkia, joka kiihdyttää kaupungistumista ja kaupungin kehittymistä. Se erottuu kaupungin elintärkeistä toimintoista, kuten sairaaloista ja asunnoista siinä, että se luo fyysisen paikan (locus), joka ilmentää kaupungin historiaa, henkeä ja taidetta.


Hyvä esimerkki ns. urban artefactista on kirjassa esitetty Palazzo Della Ragione Paduassa, Italiassa (Kuva 1). Se on keskiaikainen raatihuone, josta on aikojen saatossa tullut erottamaton osa kaupunkia. Sitä pidetään yleisesti merkittävänä taideelementena ja kaupungin hengen ilmentymänä, mutta sen alin kerros toimii myös kauppapaikkana. Sitä voidaan siis pitää sekä merkittävänä monumenttina, että elävänä osana kaupunkia. (Padova Terme Euganee Convention & Visitor Bureau, 2014)

Arlesin amfiteatteri on myös hyvä esimerkki hyvin vanhasta urban artifactista, joka on muuttanut käyttötarkoituksistaan tarpeen mukaan. Se rakennettiin antiikin aikana amfiteatteriksi, mutta keskiajalla, kun kaupungin turvallisuus oli keskeinen ongelma, otettiin amfiteatteri käyttöön linnoituksena, jonka sisällä pieni keskiaikainen kaupunki sijaitsi. Myöhemmin rakennukset amfiteatterin sisällä purettiin, ja sitä alettiin jälleen käyttää areenana. Nykypäivänä amfiteatteri on keskeinen osa Arlesin kaupunkia, ja koko kaupunki on kasvanut sen ympärille. Vaikka kaupunki rakennuksen sisästä onkin päätin purettu, on esimerkiksi muutama umpeen muurattu hovikaari ja keskiaikainen torni rakennuksen länsipuolella säästetty, joten rakennuksen historialliset vaiheet näkyvät myös sen nykyisessä ulkoasussa (Kuva 2). (University Of Georgia, 2014)
Rossi kuvailee arkkitehtuuria sanoin "construction of the city overtime". Se siis muodostuu yhteisön potentiaalin mukaan, eikä välttämättä kehity laikana esimerkiksi mahdollisina kriisiaikoina, jolloin kaikki energia suuntautuu muualle. Aldo Rossin mukaan kaupungin rakentuminen on yhteys menneen ja tulevan välillä, ja sen arkkitehtuuri on enemmän kollektiivinen kokonaisuus kuin eri aikakausien yhdistelmä. Ympäröivä yhteisö on se joka vaikuttaa eniten kaupungin ilmeeseen, ja rakentumista voidaankin kuvailta siinä olevan ympäristön aikaansaamana luomuksena. Suoraviivainen ja funkctionalinen kaupunkikaava ei siis Rossin mukaan ole välttämättä oikeanlaista ympäristön rakentumista, vaikka se palvelisikin käyttäjien arkisia tarpeita paremmin.

Kokonaista kaupunkia ei Rossin mukaan voi tiivistää vain yhteen ideaan tai periaatteeseen, vaan se on yhdistelmä erilaisia elementtejä, jotka muodostavat yhdessä unikko kokonaisuuden. Sen sijaan että kaupunkia tutkittaisiin kokoelmana erilaisia osia, hän tarkastelee kaupunkia kokonaisuudessaan, jolla on erilaisia tasoja. Hän korostaa myös sitä, että kaupungin tutkimisessa kaikki näkökulmat liittyvät jollain tavalla toisiinsa. Kaupunki ilmentää kaupungin historiaa, arkkitehtuuri on erottamatonta maantieteellisistä muodoista ja kaupunki on näiden kaikkien elementtien fyysinen ilmentymä, "locus".

Rossin mielestä kaupungin historian tutkiminen on hyödyllisin kaupungin tutkimuksen muoto, sillä kaupungin nykymuoto on ikään kuin kasvanut menneen kaupungin päälle ja nykyisyyys taas määrittelee raamit sille, mihin suuntaan kaupunki kehitty tulevaisuudessa. Kaupunkisuunnittelma on vain lyhyt hetki kaupungin historiassa, ja se tulee aina vähintään osittain korvautumaan uudella suunnitelmalla olosuhteiden muuttuessa.


Aldo Rossin omaa kaupunkisuunnittelun näkemyksen voidaan ottaa esimerkiksi Japanin Fukuokassa sijaitseva Il Palazzo -hotellirakennus (Kuva 3), joka toteutettiin yhteistyössä Morris Adjmi Architects -toimiston kanssa. Se


Pohdintaa
Rossi ei tarjoa kirjassaan yksiselitteisiä malleja miten kaupunkeja tulisi suunnitella, vaan ennemminkin näkökulmia kaupunkisuunnittelullisiin ongelmiin. Hän yrittää saada lukija ymmärtämään kaupungin muodostumisen logiikkaan ja saamaan lukijan pohtimaan ongelmia uudelta kantilta. Kirja ei tarjoa suoraa mallia, jonka mukaan kaupunki tulisi suunnitella, vaan korostaa jokaisen kaupungin yksilöllisyyttä ja kaupungin asukkaiden vaikutusta kaupungin muotoutumiseen.

Kirjan esittelemät teoriat tuntuvat järkeenkäyviltä, mutta sopivat paremmin käytettäviksi esimerkiksi Italian vanhoissa kaupungeissa. Rossiin teorioita voisi olla hankalaa soveltaa esimerkiksi Suomessa, missä kaupungit ovat vielä nuoria, eikä niihin ole ehtinyt syntyä vielä kovin paljoa historiallista kerrostumista. Tämän vuoksi monista Suomen kaupungeista voilta olla myös vaikea tunnistaa säilyttämisen arvoiset "urban artefacts". Hän ei myöskään pahemmin ota kantaa kaupungin tekniseen toimivuuteen, vaan keskitty lähinnä esteettisiin seikkoihin. Hän lähestyykin hyvinvointiin liittyviä ongelmia lähinnä estetiikan näkökulmasta ja näkee hyvinvoinnin lähtevän ennenmin kauniista ja ihmisille merkityksellisestä ympäristöstä, kuin tekniisesti täydellisesti toimivasta
"terveellisestä ympäristöstä". Kaupunki, jossa on hyvä olla, on hänen mukaansa kaupunki, joka ilmentää omaa ainutlaatuista henkeään ja on ikään kuin entisten ja nykyisten asukkaidensa muodostaman yhteisön symboli. Kaupungin suunnittelun ei siis ole mitään tiettyjä sääntöjä, joita noudattamalla lopputuloksena olisi hyvä kaupunki, vaan jokaiseen kaupunkiin pätevät omat periaatteensa.


Lähteet:
Jan Gehl’s book, *Life Between Buildings: Using public space*, which was published in the early 1970s, became a seminal text for urban planners. Jan Gehl is a Danish architect. He was born in 1936 in Denmark and started to study architecture in 1960. Six years after graduating he started his career as a lecturer and professor not only in his former school but also in several countries in Europe and America. In his travels during his early career he observed the urban space and found some common behavior patterns between different cultures. His first book, *Life between buildings*, is based on these notes. He is also a founder of an urban research and design consultancy – Gehl Architects.

Jan Gehl’s opus consists of four main chapters: *Life between buildings*, *Prerequisites for planning*, *To assemble or disperse* and *Spaces for walking, places for staying*. In the first chapter *Life between buildings*, Gehl discusses how the activities designed for urban residents should be offered and located in public spaces. *Prerequisites for planning* explains the ways how we experience and sense space. The third chapter, *To assemble or disperse*, is mostly about adapting the spaces to human scale. The last chapter, *Spaces for walking, places for staying*, explores man’s behavior in different spaces during different activities.

In his book, Jan Gehl presents many different ways to improve urban planning while keeping designing for people in the focus. The book demonstrates that Gehl’s strong belief that public areas with many optional activities lead to more lively places with more people. He provides a classification of activities that urban dwellers tend to engage in. Optional activities include sports or spending time in playgrounds, coffee houses, pubs, restaurants, etc., activities that are voluntary. In comparison, places that offer few or no activities will not become lively at all. People tend to spend their time in lively spaces and that leads to meeting other people and thus to social contacts, like a little chit-chat with passers-by while taking a cup of coffee or sitting on a bench in a park. The third form of activities that Gehl presents in his book are the so-called necessary activities. The activities that we must do are the necessary activities, such as fetching the post or taking the garbage out. Necessary activities are slightly less practiced in places with no optional activities within. Apparently, these places are not appealing. Gehl also explains how cities have to be built by considering individuals’ needs in the first place. The right scale of spaces for people is very important; too big spaces for few people would make them feel lonely and uncomfortable. Too small spaces would, on the other hand, start being overcrowded and avoided.

![Diagram](Picture 1. Pedestrians’ amount in diagram of activities versus the quality of space. (Gehl 1987: 62)]
What is well-being?
Well-being is the overall welfare of a man in general. The concept can be divided into three main categories: physical, mental and social well-being. To achieve the state of well-being, inclusive welfare, means satisfying all of these needs. On the other hand, well-being can be defined by asking and answering questions such as; what is good for people, what makes us feel happy and what makes life worth living? Let’s go back to the times of cavemen when to hide and find shelter was crucial for survival. Shelter was of utmost importance when it came to sleeping safely through the night or if you needed protection against the weather and to warm yourself, or even eating peacefully. The shelter offered many things. First of all it had to have an excellent location to provide safety and some useful benefits. Humans needed the advantage that location offered; for any place to be used as shelter, it also had to offer the vantage point for observing the surroundings and looking out for enemies and threatening forces or even game to hunt. While analyzing human behavior in public spaces, Gehl takes into consideration many points that are the results of these ancient times.

If the values of well-being were different centuries ago, nowadays our values might also differ somewhat, although they must be somehow related to the past. What we usually appreciate most in our lives nowadays are health and family. By observing through the lenses of the three-dimensions of well-being; health refers to both mental and physical condition. Humans have always been preoccupied with finding ways of staying healthy, curing diseases and building shelters to protect their life and health. Family, friends or somebody to love comprises the social aspect of well-being. The meaning of family and friends has changed quite a lot. It is no more a group which makes hunting easier and more effective, but a society to rely on and mix with. Yet, being part of a social group can be a way for achieving bigger goals, for example, in work or sports, which might be reminiscent of the ancient hunting-in-groups-method or defined as a modern-day “hunting”. The power of a group cannot be ignored.

Public space and well-being
Many of the aspects of well-being connecting us to prehistoric man feature in Gehl’s assessment and analysis of human behavior in public spaces. Even though he does not wish to examine ancient man, these are the very basic needs that apply to the modern human being as well: feeling safe, having the possibility of being in contact with others and socializing, and in addition, a slight hunger for comfort can all be associated with the beginnings of human civilization. On the need for feeling safe, for example, Gehl explains that no one likes to be right in the middle of an open area, because it might feel a bit uncomfortable or unsafe: people will just walk through an area to find cover, a place or spot which in comparison gives the feeling of safety and security. If we take a closer look on sitting, in the last, the fourth, chapter, Places for walking places for staying he writes: “Places for sitting along facades and spatial boundaries are preferred to sitting areas in the middle of the space, and as in standing people tend to seek support from the details of the physical environment. Sitting in places in niches, at the end of benches, or at other well-defined spots and sitting places where one’s back is protected are preferred to less precisely defined places.” (p. 157) People will just walk through an area to find cover for their backs, which in comparison gives the feeling of safety and a preferable chance to sit down for a while.

Building cities
One of the main ideas and the basics in planning in Gehl’s common ideology is that we must design cities for people. So, how are cities meant to be built? Gehl promotes a straightforward approach to improving urban form. In doing so, he formulates ideas derived from systematically documenting the performance of urban spaces and analyzing what factors influence their use. For Gehl, the urban landscape must be considered how it affects us through the five human senses, and how space is experienced at the speed of walking rather than at the speed of a car. Seppo Aura in his thesis (1989) investigated the same idea. He discusses how the same spaces are experienced differently when seen while driving a car or walking on foot. Aura also reveals a problem between designing spaces, which are perceived in the same way, when designing spaces for cars and for pedestrians. These aspects cannot be ignored and are important when we are talking about the congeniality of public space, because, we, urban planners want people to stop and look around if there is something to see. For this, we have to forget high speed. Gehl does not base his ideas on any unknown information. In fact, most of the things in the book are very much common knowledge but as planners we need to be reminded of these every now and then. For example, the fact that he presents the idea of a wall between person A and B, which will inhibit their interaction, is very logical but sometimes quite hard to achieve.
Human aspects of urban planning

To consider urban planning through these three aspects, psychological, physical and social, is very important. First, the psychological aspects are those that affect our psyche. Such effects may arise, for example, from the aesthetics of the surroundings. The physical aspects must be considered when creating place for outdoors activities, doing exercise in a park environment, walking along riverbanks which are lit safely, cycling paths and such features. According to Gehl, taking social aspects into account means removing obstacles between humans and promoting commerce. This is how planners can promotes welfare and well-being while perceiving all the human needs holistically in an urban environment.

The planning of the urban environment does not only rely on traditional assumptions of human needs, but it utilizes new scientific approaches. One of such disciplines is environmental psychology, which is especially useful when considering well-being. Environmental psychology is the psychology of application that examines man and his physical environment and community relationship. It is used for land use planning and other planning as a reference when we want to create pleasant, people-oriented environment. In the past, the "environment" was limited to the material environment. As a result of environmental psychology, planning also involves today considerations based on community interactions. Environmental psychology can be studied, for example, in the context of architecture. In Marketta Kyttä’s thesis (2004) *The extent of children’s independent mobility and the number of actualized affordances as criteria for child-friendly environments* she writes: “The environment has to provide something that the individual can perceive as offering the potential for activity. The perception emerges only when the different characteristics of the individual, such as his or her physical dimensions and abilities, social needs and personal intentions, are matched with the environmental features. It is viable to see affordances in terms of varying stages or levels rather than as either/or phenomena. The first level comprises the potential affordances of the environment, which are specified relative to some individual and in principle available to be perceived. The set of potential affordances of the environment is infinite. In contrast, actualized affordances are that subset of the former that the individual perceives, utilizes or shapes. Actualized affordances are revealed through actions of the individual, or through self-report” (p. 181). This outlines Gehl’s ideas pretty well, because, in
his book, Gehl also promotes offering different optional activities for individual to choose from and many or even every place has the ability to be developed into well-functioning public space. Other younger generation’s designers have also taken advices from Gehl like Julian Jenkins. He handles Gehl’s ideas in his Design Management Review (2008) about improving the infrastructure of a city. So there is no doubt about the impact of Gehl’s ideas on younger designers worldwide.

**Conclusion**

With regard to well-being within Gehl’s ideas, he highlights the significance of the quality of public spaces and designing for people. By designing well and focusing on the quality, we can create spaces which will have good affect in people. Aesthetically high quality places will impact an individual emotionally and even physically. The person will linger on in the area longer and might end up making some social contact. This is the way how well-being becomes flesh in reality in urban planning and designing public spaces. This kind of multidimensionality of well-being is driving force of analyses presented in the book. By surveying peoples’ behavior it is easier to answer the question: What is well-being? Providing a good balance of opportunities to practice human activities and fulfill our needs, urban living can be made suitable for a well-being.

References:

Learning from Las Vegas – The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form is a collective study written by Robert Venturi, his wife, Denise Scott Brown and their assistant, Steven Izenour. It was first published in 1972 and republished with revisions in 1977. Venturi is an American architect who was born in 1925 and became one of the major architectural figures of the twentieth century; with his theoretical writings he instigated the discussion on how we experience the built environment. The book has two parts: the first analyzes Las Vegas as built space, which became the basis for a new theory in for analyzing existing environments, while the second part expands the theme of architectural symbolism by presenting the ideas of “Duck” and “Decorated Shed”, a typology of modern buildings in Las Vegas, which can be used to describe all buildings.

The main intention of the study was to discover and establish a way of interpreting and envisioning the car-oriented, decentralized city. The researchers were looking for new ways to experience and see the city in its changed form, away from historical ideals of what a city should be like. This way of moving from modern to postmodern thinking was the aim of the book, which, however, was shocking at the time. Despite seeming to ignore the inhabitants of the city, there are many ideas that relate to the well-being of all. The theories and ideas presented were less to do with the physical dimensions of well-being but can rather be associated with psychological well-being.

Modernism is out – improving the new city

One of the most discernible concepts of the study was presenting ideas of stark contrast and criticism to the ideas of modernism and finding symbolism, or the lack of it, in the built environment. At the time the book was written modernism was coming to an end and there was a need for something new, especially on how to deal with decentralization, which followed from increased automobilization. Postmodernism sought to learn from the old and improve on it while adapting to changed conditions. The classic image of the city as a rather compact entity was increasingly questioned through the context of these new concepts.

Las Vegas acts as a starting point in researching the form of the modernist city with examples from the Strip being presented to highlight certain aspects. By studying the Strip and embracing its methods, the writers thought that the symbolism of modern architecture could be enriched. Although it is not directly mentioned, symbolism plays quite an important, albeit silent part in people’s everyday lives. We unconsciously accept all the signs surrounding us for we have the need to follow and understand where we are. Knowing where we are and feeling safe in that place is important in fulfilling basic instinctual needs. Historically that is why people settled in certain places instead of being nomads without roots. Signs point us in the right direction and place us on a map, however, the symbolism of buildings, be it ornaments or actual words, add much meaning to understanding the place.

In order to make an enjoyable setting to live in, one must consider how the infrastructure is seen and experienced by the user. As a strong proponent of symbolic meaning, Venturi is convinced that people need to have a good sense of their surroundings, and symbolism used in buildings (structure, façade, decorative elements, etc.) is how one is able to experience this. More contemporarily, this relates to environmental psychology, which is a form of urban study from the late 1970s. It investigates how the environment affects its inhabitants and thus it provides a means of seeing how it works in practice. It is utilized in zoning as well as a tool for other planning when there is a desire to create pleasant and humane surroundings.

Showing that symbolically meaningful environments are important is one of the aims of the book. With an array of symbols coming our way from every direction, we are able to interpret our location. When these symbols are easy to understand and have layered meanings behind them, they create enjoyable settings where one is at ease and is aware of where they are. That is how one can experience the cityscape with peace of mind and comfort or confusion and distress.
Sustainable thinking

“Learning from the existing landscape is a way of being revolutionary for an architect. - - not to tear down and begin again but to question how we look at things.” (Venturi 1977: 3) In other words, it is better to fix existing conditions than starting from scratch or holding on to historical ideals. This radical understanding can relate to any discipline in the present. It also promotes empiricism. The modernist urban planning theories had insisted on building everything afresh and hardly considered the option of improving existing conditions. By following Venturi’s theory of observing the surroundings for what it is lacking, and as a result improving upon it, this is how we can nurture the feeling of belonging.

The idea of enhancing buildings rather than tearing them down introduced the predominant contemporary way of thinking about sustainable living. In our modern day society we must really think about what we are building and why since our resources are rapidly becoming scarce and preserving the landscape and materials is important when considering the future. Instead of always creating new, there are many ways to improve already functional buildings to fit current needs and avoid compromising our resources. While this may seem obvious to us, it truly was a revolutionary notion when it was first established by Venturi.

Fulfilling needs through form and symbolism

In *Learning from Las Vegas*, Venturi et al. maintain that all buildings are of two basic types: either a Duck or a Decorated Shed. The latter usually describes a building that is at its core practical and boringly neutral architecture which has been adorned with symbols that reveal the function of the building. Ducks, on the other hand, aim to be the symbol itself, its form showing the use.

The term Decorated Shed was conceived from the constructions on the Las Vegas roadside which were simple and forgettable but had colorful and illuminated commercial signage that described what the building was for. A typical Shed has a rationally considered layout as well as a mundane form, which is enlivened by different ornamentations and decorations on the outside. This type of building has been used in historical architecture, for instance palaces from the renaissance, where a rather dull and boxlike structure is hidden by nuanced flourishes on the facades. In this sort of Decorated Shed architecture, the addition of decoration, for example a name or logo, is what defines the building, not the architecture itself. The symbolism is precise and suitable in these buildings and its purpose is functionality and giving the onlooker a truthful representation of what the building entails.

Based on the duck and duck egg selling store Big Duck on Long Island, New York, the name Duck is used to describe a building that shows its function by the form itself. Ducks are in a way commercial signs and are only large forms in space where the line between building and sculpture is fickle. According to Venturi, the modernist fashion was to design buildings as ducks. He strongly criticized these forms in space if they had no deeper symbolism or meaning. These Ducks were so void of symbolism that the architecture had become dry, fleeting, empty and boring.

Although Venturi criticized Ducks as being vacant and appreciated the more casual, people-oriented architecture, pretentious architecture does have its own advantages. For a human being, it is important to have awareness of one’s own location and orientation, and major landmarks are significant in terms of self-positioning. Effortlessly recognizable, exceptional, monumental buildings function as reference points, especially in growing modern cities. Moving in a strange city, the environment observing stroller inadvertently memorizes the most impressive or the strangest buildings along the route. On the way back these points will help to stay on course and create a certain sense of security when a familiar place appears every now and then.

In the case of Decorated Sheds, familiar elements give the viewer a feeling of safety and provide pleasant and cozy feelings. Recognizable shapes and decorations create positive images and you feel connected to your surroundings. This can be experienced when architecture is not too absurd or over the top, sometimes even appearing as aversive to the beholder. Keeping to a human scale is what gives architecture meaning and that is important according to Venturi. Buildings made for the human sized user feel right whereas shapes that are too massive or pompous might seem threatening at times.
Predominantly the result of the field research, the terms Duck and Decorated Shed were used as tools for classifying building types, which helped in the comparison of different buildings. The main juxtaposition found in the book were Paul Rudolf’s Crawford Manor and Venturi and Scott Brown’s own Guild House (Pictures 1 and 2 below) which were both built around the same time with the same function as housing for the elderly. Crawford Manor represented a Duck with its expressive, flowing and imposing modernistic form while Guild House was named a Decorated Shed having linear shapes and historically influenced ornamentation. As a continuation of this classification system came the division of architecture as either heroic and original (H&O) or ugly and ordinary (U&O). The architectonic form of Crawford Manor was new, unique and abstract, in other words H&O, whereas Guild House showed familiar features, banality and availed historical aspects, thus being U&O. Venturi’s understanding was that the form in H&O architecture was too abstract and symbolically unclear and displayed expression as lacking and inappropriate. However, U&O architecture, as modest as it appeared, was symbolically explicit, serving its purpose and contextually fitting and was considered rich and multilayered.

Symbolism and functionality today
The popularity of H&O architecture is evident while going through the 2014 Guggenheim Helsinki Design Competition entries. Even though the competition programme clearly states that the objectives include paying attention to the historic seascape and connecting to the highly historic center, harbour and cityscape in a precise and pleasing manner, these qualities have been ignored in some propositions and the focus has been more on the project’s other defining qualities of originality and impressiveness as well as the potential to become the defining monument of Helsinki. There is a specific image that comes to mind from a Guggenheim museum which would certainly encourage bold and even wild expression. Therefore, it is no wonder that among the competition entries it is possible to find floating shuttles or organic mishmash as seen in Picture 3, which manage to impress purely for their absurdity. Of course there is nothing wrong in designing buildings that look unusual and astonishing. On the contrary, in architecture the freedom of breaking boundaries is allowed and encouraged as long as it in some way it is linked to the surrounding city space and its historical and geographical context. When heroic architecture is realized to its full potential it can be quite remarkable, memorable and even raise emotions. Often architecture is at its best when it inspires and creates new ways of experiencing space and these attributes are what are easily missing from ugly and ordinary buildings favored by Venturi. Their quest for practicality produce simplified and monotonous series of space.

Pictures 1 and 2. On the left is Crawford Manor which represents H&O architecture. On the right is Guild House which in turn represents U&O architecture.

55
Reflection

Venturi has strong polarizing ideas that more or less sought to be controversial both now and in the 1970s, when the book was written. Often while reading his and his fellow researchers’ point of view, we wondered if they were truly unbiased in their study or if they just accept things for what they were. Are these writings rebelling for the sake of rebellion? Or were they truly trying to make a difference. Frequently, the text is provocative but seems to be only loosely based on facts, more on speculation and subjective observation. Many ideas are relevant even today, but categorizing all buildings into two types is rather harsh. Also, implying that one is better than the other is extremely absolute in a world filled with a range of ideas. Thus integrating buildings into a suitable environment might be a more progressive notion and not judging them for what they symbolize or lack in symbolism.

As stated earlier, the themes of the book relate more to the psychological well-being of humans than physical welfare. Ducks and Decorated Sheds in conjunction with Heroic and Original and Ugly and Ordinary architecture are the building types that are defined and they either have pleasing symbolism or crave symbolic meaning. Without symbolism Venturi claims that a person scarcely enjoys a building or the surroundings. Symbolism also points you in the right direction and makes you feel safe when wandering around. Another core reasoning of the book is that it is unnecessary to change existing environments entirely but instead find the things that are working poorly and improve upon them. People are granted with a sense of attachment to that surrounding, although often change is met with adversity even if it might be hardly noticeable.

Cities are continuously changing and architects must constantly be able to adapt to new regulations and developing circumstances. Looking at the city through the lens of postmodernism, Venturi promoted the idea of integrating new technology with pre-existing conditions all the while striving to make a better living environment. An architect does have the power, obligation, and most often the vision of how to create an environment suitable for many. Whether the desired outcome is achieved through Venturi’s instructions or something completely different depends immensely on the conditions and the users, therefore it seems impossible to try and provide any universal blueprint of the perfect urban environment or the building design.
References:
Research Project and Thesis by Martino Stierli - Las Vegas in the Rearview Mirror - The City in Theory, Photography, and Film
A Pattern Language was published in 1977 by Oxford University Press in New York as the second in a series of books which describe a humane attitude towards architecture, building and planning. The book provides a language for building and planning by describing detailed patterns for regions, towns and neighborhoods, houses, gardens and rooms even going right down to the scale of built-in furniture and doorknobs so that the patterns can be understood as elements that are a collective memory of things which work in our surroundings. Combined with the knowledge and discipline provided by the first volume The Timeless Way Of Building, it offers urban planners and architects a wide spectrum of conceptual design tools and examples, called patterns, which can be used in the planning process. The book enjoyed a huge popular success at the time it was published and it still is one of the best-selling books on architecture to date.

There are 253 different patterns in the book that are arranged into groups which vary in theme and size. The smallest groups consist of four patterns whilst the bigger ones can contain up to ten patterns. The actual scale of the design concepts or real-world phenomena described by the patterns is related to their numeric order, thus pattern number one being the largest and number 253 the smallest. Each pattern first describes a problem and then goes on to provide a simplified solution supported by diagrams, drawings, photographs and charts.

Picture 1. Pattern number 138 describes how humans are dependent on natural sunlight as it regulates our bodies’ endocrine system. This fact is then embedded in the solution the pattern offers and is articulated in the book as follows: “Give those parts of the house where people sleep, an eastern orientation, so that they wake up with the sun and light.” (A Pattern Language, 1977: 659)

Another very notable feature of the book is its hypertextuality. All patterns are linked to a series of other patterns which are then required to be combined with each other in order for the final design product to become a success. The language formed by the linking of the patterns is extremely practical and the patterns themselves are universal in nature. Each one is described in such a way that it can be applied to the solution of the problem according to the user’s own preferences and local conditions. The concept of a generative language as a tool for the planning process bears allegories to computer programming. The book was used as a starting point of one of the pioneering projects to create internet web pages by using HTML (HyperText Markup Language).

Ecological sustainability
Taking into consideration that A Pattern Language was written during an eight-year period and was published in the late seventies – a decade before The Brundtland Report coined the term sustainability – it is worthy of noticing that there are emerging themes that can be interpreted as “proto-sustainability”. The book does recognize the innate human need for a connection with nature without actually naming it or giving a proper scientific explanation for it. This atavistic notion that we as a species are an inseparable part of this planet and its ecosystems can be sensed throughout the book in numerous descriptions of the patterns.
Although the term ecology is used in various contexts, most of the times the viewpoint of the writer still remains as someone's who is looking out of the window at a tree perhaps admiring its beauty and magnificence instead of fully understanding the complex interconnectedness of life. While terms associated with sustainability such as traffic, pollution, urban sprawl and overpopulation are frequently used, the importance of green areas and unspoilt nature is seen more from an utilitarian or psychological point of view rather than as a holistic world view.

**Social and cultural sustainability**
A certain humane approach to planning and architecture is consistent throughout the whole book. Several patterns in the first part of the book named "Towns" deal with subjects that are closely related to or directly imply social and cultural sustainability. For example, pattern number 8 called "Mosaic of Subcultures" describes in great detail the importance of supporting social cohesion and different lifestyles that make up the vibrant and thriving atmosphere of communities in densely populated urban environments. The next pattern then goes on to explain how to use zoning to avoid concentration and segregation of work places: by mixing housing with other functions the creation of unattractive, "dead" neighborhoods is warded off. The book goes on depicting that the interests of different age groups of the population should be taken into consideration when planning new environments. Notably, the theme of gender equality has been given its own pattern as well as non-governmental organizations.

**The theme of well-being from the individual's point of view**
Mens sana in corpore sano. A Pattern Language, in all its life-nurturing, loving and caring attitude towards planning and architecture, is surely amongst the most perfect epitomizations of the aforementioned Latin phrase. From preferring walking over cars to encouraging cycling and sports and on to creating thriving green neighborhoods that are human in scale, the book is filled with friendly suggestions and recommendations, big and small, to the planner, architect and the scholar, outlining how to design environments that are as meaningful as they would be functional and yet rational for humans in general, regardless of their cultural background.
Picture 3. Pattern number 134 is called “Zen View”. It utilizes a buddhist concept of appreciating the beauty of life in the moment and its power to transcend the mundane into a more spiritual experience of the world. “If there is a beautiful view, don’t spoil it by building huge windows that gape incessantly at it. Instead, put the windows which look onto the view at places of transition – along paths, in hallways, in entry ways, on stairs, between rooms.” (A Pattern Language, 1977: 643)

The second part of the book called “Buildings” is dedicated to designing buildings to become as homely and as comfortable as possible leaning more towards the tradition of the vernacular than the modern. It relies more on the innate ability to recognize and create beautiful, functional, meaningful places in contrast to Le Corbusier’s perhaps more mathematical approach to achieving the same thing: good architecture. But what is architecture? What is it for? In the words of Professor Juhani Pallasmaa: “The timeless task of architecture is to create embodied existential metaphors that concretize and structure man’s being in the world” In a sense the patterns can be seen as such elements and, if used correctly, may very well contribute to the well-being of citizens both on an individual level as well as on a collective level.

Conclusion
The book, or books of the same author are highly recommendable not only for architects and town planners but more importantly for the ordinary people because they give a way to work with their neighbors to improve a town or neighborhood, design a house for themselves or work with colleagues to design an office, workshop or public building such as a school. Or in the author’s own words: “At the core... is the idea that people should design for themselves their own houses, streets and communities. This idea... comes simply from the observation that most of the wonderful places of the world were not made by architects but by the people.”

References:
C. Alexander et al. A Pattern Language.
Human Aspects of Urban Form by Amos Rapoport (published first as part of his Cities and Towns - Planning series in 1945 and then later independently in 1977) is a book about urban planning from the aspect of social psychology. The book does not concentrate much on the architectural features of a city but rather on the human aspect and provides examples for the influence of human behavior on the urban environment.

The book introduces different approaches and angles of urban planning and explains which of them work in different areas and cultures. The author does not provide much critique on any subject: his socio-cultural approach is perhaps the most important aspect of the book, which also indicates clearly the value of well-being in an urban area.

Social-needs or aesthetics?
The book was first published after the Second World War when the structure of the city was completely renewed and new communities with new needs were born. As a result of immigration, several different ethnic groups lived side by side in a city. Consequently, groups of various different ethnic origin created their own communities without external “design”. The author addresses this phenomenon: one of the main aspects of the book is how people choose their living environment, an environment which does not, according to the writer, concentrate on the aesthetic features of an area but the social needs of people.

Even though the writer tries to generalize that the thriving of people does not depend on the aesthetic features of an area, in reality if people get to choose independently, they naturally want to live in a beautiful environment. Human beings do not enjoy themselves under ascetic circumstances although that criteria comes after all the other things. Aesthetics and comfort are important but not as important as social needs.
Choosing the living environment

People aspire to change their environment to fit to their needs. When we move to a new environment, it depends on the culture where we settle because we perceive our environment through our own schemes. The things that define the schemes are the norms of our own culture and our own experiences of previous matters. Different cultures perceive different objects and react to them depending on their view, so people perceive things that matter to them more than others. This leads to people’s aspiration to satisfy their social needs preferably on the basis of their own cultural norms and habits (Picture 2).

Nowadays this scheme-oriented approach shows well in immingational matters. For example: “which kinds of areas do immigrants move to in a new city and why?” and “how do they experience the new environment?”—these are the questions that can lead urban planning to better cope with the problem of the arrival of new ethnic communities.

Mari Vaattovaara has done interesting research into the effect of immigration on the original population in Helsinki (“White flight”? Why do people move out of immigrant-dense neighbourhoods? 2013). She claims that new social structures have aroused regional development and dynamics in certain areas. Earlier it was typical for a district to be internationally and economically even, but now there are two kinds of structural differentiations. Firstly there are clear regional differences in the population’s health, well-being, educational- and income-level, and secondly ethnical differentiation. Rapid immigration has sped up differentiation development even more.
Nexhat Beqiri has also studied the subject which involved interviewing immigrants (Asuinympäristö ja kotoutuminen: Tutkimus asumisen keskittymisen vaikutuksista maahanmuuttajien kotoutumiseen, 2011). Half of the interviewees with refugee background felt that strong concentration in apartment-buildings, on block- and suburb-levels restrains acculturing to the new society and increases negative prejudice towards immigrants. On the other hand, there are a lot of areas with concentrated immigration and immigrants want to move in those places, mainly because they want to live close to each other. This also leads to prejudices and the district could be marked as a problem-area from which the former population only wishes to flee. Even if the objective of Finnish cities is to avoid residential areas with concentrated immigration, it is not always possible.

**Grouping gone too far**

Another huge problem of immigration is that smaller socio-cultural groups inside a bigger area can keep diverging from each other, and as a result, cultural mixing does not happen. One example for this is Rosengård in Malmö, where a big percentage of the population are immigrants. There differentiation has gone too far and a lot of violence has led to a recommendation for the original population to avoid the area. The crime rate is high and people live in depressing blocks (Picture 3). There is a lot of gang-violence and crime. This kind of strong grouping leads to the question that even if we are happy inside our small community, should we differ completely from other communities? It could for example lead to racism towards other groups in schools or work and decrease well-being in general. In addition, because of globalism people need to be able to work with all kinds of people and respect them.

![Concrete block of flats in Rosengård, Malmö.](http://image.fi/image-lehti/maailmojen-sota)

**Conclusion**

The issues presented in Rapoport’s book are still very topical, because different cultures keep mixing increasingly. When people get a chance to lead their life by paying attention to their own ethnic background, they are happy. However, it is not just the environment that affects well-being but also the individual’s own choices. For example, do we choose education instead of crime? Or do we stick to our own culture instead of merging with the new. We cannot generalize that in a group everyone would act and think the same way, because primarily the individual’s own choices and aspirations guide their own action as well.

The architect has to respond to the challenge of exploring the cultural features of an area and must plan taking these into consideration. The baseline should not be his own view but the social needs of people. The architect has a great responsibility in finding out basic information about the people for whom he is going to plan an area and must consider all aspects when doing so.
Rapoport wanted to highlight the responsibility of the planner on creating a thriving urban space. In his opinion the people of the district should be listened to and urban space should be planned from this basis considering their desires. The question is how far do we have to go in satisfying human needs? The needs and wishes of people can be in contradiction to each other and this brings even more challenges to the planner. Whose wishes are the most important ones? Is the designer allowed to do any solutions of his own? These are the principles we must take into consideration when creating new, multi-cultural, urban areas that strive to support the well-being of city-dwellers.

References:
"The town planning legacy of the past thirty years - of questionable value - will be a headache for many future generations, and it requires a certain optimism on my part to believe that the human instinct for survival will be up to coping with the problem in time to carry out the necessary corrective measures." - Rob Krier, 1975:89

The developments triggered by the Industrial Revolution and The Second World War changed the composition of our cities permanently. Population growth expanded in the cities pounded by bombs that the city walls could not hold back anymore. Coziness was not a priority anymore, whereas the high quantity, low costs or rapid tempo of construction became primacy. Huge industrial buildings were built to satisfy the needs of industry while large residential areas were planted outside of the city center for the flagrant need of accommodation — both designed for one and one purpose only. The traditional understanding of urban space became forgotten. In his book *Stadtraum in theorie und praxis* (1975) Rob Krier criticizes this kind of development and specifies for the reader the traditional understanding of urban space and therefore outlines what kind of space should the squares and the streets form in a city. *Stadtraum in theorie und praxis* was translated into English under the title *Urban Space* in 1979.

Rob Krier was born in Grevenmacher, Luxembourg in 1938. He studied architecture at the Technical University of Munich, and after graduation and during writing *Urban Space* he was working mostly in Stuttgart, Germany. He saw at close quarters how the city of Stuttgart, almost completely destroyed in the Second World War, had developed into a city where priority had been given to traffic and other trappings of technology rather than people’s need for a tolerable urban environment.

The same kind of development could be seen all around the world. Industrial buildings had become common and turned into a model for modern architecture. For an industrial building the laws of architecture and harmonious urban environment were indifferent, so modern architecture was to absorb this purely functional and constructional orientation. As a result the urban environment scattered into isolated blobs. Modern architecture was to infatuate and outshine the lessons of the history of architecture — architecture was driven by fashion. But fashion fades and new ambitions and ideals become prevailing, therefore fashion-driven architecture becomes disposable. This kind of unsustainable city was also built repetitively: new technologies enabled the possibility of prefabricated buildings, which lead to uniformity. While cities grew and expanded into the surroundings, they were cut up into functionalist parts of a machine. Living, recruiting and working, all became isolated from each other, all supporting the new conqueror of urban space: the car.

Picture 1. The High Line, New York City. This 2.33 kilometers long bridge that penetrates the city is a former rail traffic lane that was rescued from demolition and got a new life as a recreation area. (<http://walkinganddrinkingbeer.blogspot.fi/2011/08/walking-and-drinking-beer-on-new-yorks.html>)
In his book Krier presents his own proposal considering battered Stuttgart and how it should have been built. In his schemes he presents many of the topics that in other chapters of the book he refers to as architectural guidelines. He attempts to win back space for the pedestrian without ousting the car in the process, and to plan new buildings in terms of respecting the existing building fabric and the ideas of the architects responsible for the original conception and contradiction of the space. He pinches off the throne traffic but wants to set it a space that allows its future development.

**Cities for people**

In Rob Krier’s opinion a city should be people’s space. Even though cars are filled with people, when cars fill our cities we lose pedestrian area and the city becomes life-threatening to man; no-one feels safe along tight streets wrapped in choking pollution with cars rushing. Crosswalks and streetlights are only a start towards a human-friendly city. In a city center where traffic flows are limited, people take over the streets not only to walk from place to place but to stroll around and mix. Street space for human is created in the same way as for traffic: the lanes are designed according to its own dimensions, pavements are chosen for a designated mode of transport and the public space is aligned, continuous and clear (Fig. 3). Instead of systematicity and stability one should pay attention to comfortability, attractivity and variability. But why?

By the 21st century it has become clear what a city is like when it is taken over by cars. So when there is no room left for this kind of expansion anymore, the discussion about a new direction was unleashed. The fumes poison our lungs, accidents break our bones and even the person in the car feels unsafe when their blood circulation starts speeding up. We have got to get on our feet. Fresh air and using our muscles support our physical health; but to achieve overall wellness, this alone is not enough. Why not place our businesses on the street level, apartments in the middle floors and offices on top; let’s mix up functions and even out social groups and the flows of motion. When we step out onto the promenade and interact with each other in ground floor shops, we meet other people, socialize and enjoy the beautiful views that at best are vivid. The inner city will expand but traffic jams decrease and distances remain achievable on foot.

Then what happens to cars? Why should we discard the great achievements of our new technology? Well, we should not. But is our brilliant technology already capable of acting as a servant a master? We need technology, and only with its help will we be able to create the kind of urban space that serves today’s masses and pace of life. But just as Krier advocated that a building being subordinate to its surroundings, shouldn’t new inventions be subordinate to the already existing — us. Along with developing healthier ways of transportation we should give machines the position where we can easily benefit from them but where they will not take over people’s space — the space that we feel comfortable in (Fig 2).

![Picture 2 & 3. A beautiful shoreline has been lost to a huge motorway, FDR Drive, in eastern Manhattan. However in the western shoreline of the island the Hudson River Park was built thoroughly for recreation.](http://bikenewyorkcity.com/wordpress/hudson-river-park-manhattan-waterside-destination/)
In the gloomy and quiet city of Oulu, Finland, people have become accustomed to building the city for its gloomy and quiet residents. Instead of improving public transport in Oulu area, the commuter streams arriving as far as tens of kilometers from Oulu are channeled underground in the fringes of the town off the narrow alleys that are built for horse wagon joyrides. They are constructing Kivisydän (free translation: The Heart of Stone), a car park for 900 cars. The parking space is supposed to enable supplemental building or transformation of the town center’s traffic lanes and inner courts to parks or pedestrian streets. However, before fall 2015, when the parking hall is set to be completed, this moving construction site has caused for two years the shutting down of roads, pedestrian streets and parks alike as well as destabilizing the city dwellers’ feeling of safety and the cornerstones of elderly buildings owing to continuous blasting. When 900 cars are welcomed into our city, the ones left outside of the stone heart will surely find their place in the town’s heart.

At the same time another project in the heart of Oulu is stealing room from pedestrian for commercial use. The crossing of Isokatu and a pedestrian street Rotuaari, where the movement is continuous and the lanes are narrow, is one of the worst bottlenecks in this city, which is also known for its biking culture. In this junction the new shopping center Valkea is being built together with a passageway that links it to the adjacent shopping block. They call this stretch of road a summer street where a roofed and heated street space is supposed to create a year-round and round-the-clock living room and meeting place for city dwellers. However, is one supposed to bike in a living room? Most of the year Oulu truly is a cold city where it is undoubtedly unpleasant to take a stroll when the weather is bad. A continuous, pleasant street space will surely increase people’s aim to step out and walk along the city’s pavements during the colder months. It would be surprising if the homeless people of Oulu fail to find their place in the dark corners of the town’s living room. We just can’t help but wonder what would have happened if these two ideas had been combined; if they were to build an underground tramway tunnel instead and some roofed and heated stops alongside.

Cities for future
Rapid industrialization and advanced technology have produced disposable architecture. The masses have generated an explosive demand for low-cost building. There has not been enough time for sustainable design, which means that a mediocre townscape has become common. Urban space has been assumed not to last the fluid situation of the world’s needs, so buildings have been designed to be pulled down in time. This outlook on architecture is untenable and a great waste of resources. Unsustainability has been wrapped in the gift wrap of the march of technology. One will not be able to feel social cohesion through culture when the persistence of a building is at risk. When home is about to disappear in the wheel of time, it impairs one’s feeling of security and has an abrasive impact on their psyche. To site only one example, we can take a look at the modular functionalist suburbs of the 60s, when the built environment was rapidly increased without thinking about functionality in the long run. Nowadays many of the concrete suburbs have lost their sparkle and in fact turned into slums or ghost towns.

The constantly changing fashion trends affect people’s understanding of their needs. Whims of fashion have been around for centuries but formerly the periods lasted longer. Today we construct histrionic buildings that are fighting for attention in a city. Architecture that goes hand in hand with contemporary trends in art polarizes public opinion of the general view of the town. Monumental buildings may not stand the test of time because of their bad material choices and them becoming oppressive and imminent in people’s minds.

Fortunately, some have opened their eyes to this phenomenon of consumerism in construction. Sustainable architecture cries out for careful planning, time-lasting materials and far-reaching ideas. It saves resources and the town’s budget in the long run. Diverse ways of exploiting existing buildings have been found when the layout of a building is stable and independent of fashion or when a building has been designated as preserved for its value of cultural heritage. In his book Krier advocates multiforality of urban space. To sustain diversity in the city, buildings with their own personality should be preserved as part of the urban environment. Even large-scaled renovations and extensions have increased their popularity and have become favourable over dismantling. There are good examples of regeneration of old buildings in Oulu, such as the cultural house Valve and the department store Stockmann. In both cases the new design has been based on the existing structure and extensions have been designed dependent on the original buildings. After all, a building dependent on another is not necessarily an enrichment of the urban environment unless it is connected with strong emotional links to its context.
A prime example for a big scale project of sustainable architecture is the High Line in New York City (Fig. 1). The lane’s function was originally a rail traffic route from 1934 to the 1980s, when it was cleared from traffic, and this deteriorated space was colonized by nature. In the turn of the millennium people took notice of its poor condition and the first thought was to pull down the whole structure built over their heads. Some architects, however, thought the railway was an important part of New York’s townscape, which led them to consider recovering the place. In the past 15 years the space has been transformed into a recreation area that functions as a park open for everyone. The lesson and overall benefit is clear: being close to nature increases the experience of well-being in urban space.

Who to blame?

“We feel quite properly ashamed of the mediocrity of our built environment, and seem to foot the bill for demolition and subsequent rebuilding.” - Rob Krier, 1975:82

A town can support the inhabitants' well-being when it takes into account the needs of a human being. When the building’s scale is pleasant at the same time as it tells a story of its life, it can enrich the experience of urban space. Because urban space consists of rooms and corridors just like the interior, the experience in either of them should be intimate but receptive. A city should act as a refreshing space and a place of social meeting place. This all may come true when urban space is planned to respond to these demands and not to sail ahead blindly in technology’s disguise. Diversity, human scale, technology and ecological aspects must be taken into account in planning. None of them works for the urban space without planning.

In the appendix to the book Rob Krier raises the question of architect’s moral responsibility. Planners should be responsible for their actions in architecture. They must share their knowledge with the customer who’s dazzled of the beautiful surface and large revenues and demands self-satisfying results at minimum budget and maximum speed with a ranting mouth. But why? At the end of the day, the architect plans the environments in which people act and interact. Architecture is not designed for machines or for pretty decoration in one’s CV, it is designed for humans. It is made for basic human needs; it offers protection from the weather and gives a feeling of safety; it creates the space where we live our lives.

In addition, if a building serves our needs and wellness, it should do so both now and in the future. Fashion must not guide architects’ choices, which they or the future generations will be ashamed of, regret and finally demolish in a city driven by its new trends. And when we preserve the products of fashion that can already be seen in our townscape, we can learn to see our own mistakes in design in time. If they were to be demolished, the future generations would not experience the different layers of urban space and the challenges that history has to offer. In addition to these challenges history offers certain knowledge that is irreplaceable.

Modern architecture cannot be denounced as poor or failed if the designers are ready to learn and create new. We must learn to recognize human needs in advance and combine sustainable architecture with the growing city and society. The history books will be able to offer the solutions to our future challenges, too, the minute we are ready to open our books.

References:


68
This essay will introduce one of the urban design classics, *A Theory of Good City Form*, from the perspective of well-being in urban planning. The book was published in 1981 by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is still highly valued as the principles the book presents are used in our time. The author of the book, Kevin Lynch (1918-1984), was an urban designer and a writer in the United States of America. The fact that Lynch was not an architect can be observed in the book as he concentrates on urban spaces and the human perspective rather than the visual appearance of buildings.

The author’s previously published book, *Image of the City* (1961), is much like a predecessor to this book although it is better known than his later work. *A Theory of Good City Form* assembles the ideas which came to him in the earlier production and gathers them into one folder by combining them into a greater whole. It also reveals the ideas of postmodernism about rules, namely it claims that they should not be followed firmly but rather used for illustrative purposes only (Lynch 1981, page 111).

His central purpose in writing the book was to create a general theory that not only evaluates cities but also considers the values of local culture. According to Aristotle, we have to define virtues or the content of the good life so that we could understand and achieve well-being. Similarly, Lynch begins by defining the properties of good settlements and then traces qualifications for them to be realized. “I propose that these five dimensions and two meta-criteria are the inclusive measures of settlement quality. Groups and persons will value different aspects of them and assign different priorities to them. But, having measured them, a particular group in a real situation would be able to judge the relative goodness of their place, and would have the clues necessary to improve or maintain that goodness.” (Lynch 1981: 119). The same ideas are still used in different new tools of measure, for instance in *Building for Life* (UK Design Council, Building for Life 12). Lynch also refers to Vitruvius’ ideas of designing a healthy settlement (Lynch 1981, page 124). Vitruvius: “Firmitas, utilitas, venustas”, solid, useful and beautiful are the three Vitruvian virtues for building.
Lynch introduces in his theory five performance criteria (vitality, sense, fit, access and control) and two meta-criteria (efficiency and justice) to be used in the evaluation of cities. He claims that these five basic dimensions must not be dependent on each other, however, the two meta-criteria are involved in each of them (Lynch 1981, page 118).

Three criteria of well-being and four supportive criteria

Our theme, well-being, constitutes a rather significant part of this book, even if the author does not deliberately aim to study it. *A Theory of Good City Form* presents five criteria and two meta-criteria to be applied in the evaluation of a good city. The main purpose of these criteria is to make a better city and to find what needs to be improved to achieve that; so they are indeed closely connected to well-being. Three of these criteria are directly related to well-being; vitality, sense and access. The remaining four criteria are connected to and work together with these to improve and sustain well-being in the city. This essay will look into these criteria through the three commonly used dimensions of well-being; physical, psychological and social.

The first criterion, *vitality*, concentrates on physical well-being. It prescribes that city form should support the most vital functions, biological needs and the species possibility to survive. City form should provide requisite sustenance, be consonant and safe. Safety in this case means the absence of environmental poisons, diseases and hazards. Consonance reveals the degree of fit between the environment and the human requirements such as internal temperature. This performance dimension measures how well the environment meets our physical needs and helps to sustain well-being. Simply put, this means that the place where the city is founded should be safe for living. This is the basis of wellness in city. Lynch also considers the new risks, such as pollution and environmental issues.

The second criterion, *sense*, is about psychological well-being. Sense tells us how well the environment, our sensory and mental capabilities, and our cultural constructs match. The city should be identifiable, structured, congruent, transparent, unfolding and significant. These aspects make city a mentally pleasing place. We want to know our location in relation to other places and we want to feel that we are part of something that we can understand. If city form is overly confusing it is psychologically stressful. Sense is the visual appearance of the city form that defines how pleasant and desirable it is for people to live.

The criterion which is presented fourth in the book is about social well-being. *Access* tells us in which degree the ability to reach other persons, activities, resources, services, information, or places, is maintained, or in other words, how well the social meeting places are provided. According to the theory, access should be diverse, equitable and locally manageable. People are social creatures and we need some communication with others. With proper access we can fulfil our natural need for that and also create social contacts with other people.

The rest of the criteria; *fit*, *control*, *efficiency* and *justice*, mostly sustain or improve well-being without being necessarily directly involved. Fit reveals to us how well the city form meets the needs of different times and people, as in how stable, manipulable and resilient the city is. Basically, it is about how adaptable the city is and how well it responds to possible changes. Possible misfit is the reason for discomfort. Control tells us the degree which the use and access to spaces and activities, and their creation, repair, modification, and management are controlled by those who use, work, or reside in them. Control should be congruent, certain, responsible and intermittently loose. Control holds the whole system together and supervises it.

The remaining two criteria, *efficiency* and *justice* work towards sustainability and morally acceptable choices, which ultimately support our good feeling of urban development and as a result well-being. Efficiency tells us the cost, in terms of other valued things, of creating and maintaining the settlement. Comparing what is lost and what is gained for that price. Sustainability or deprivation, this comparison would incur that only one of them can be wanted and valued at a time. In different times people can experience diverse values as appealing in well-being.

Justice is the way in which environmental benefits and costs are distributed among the persons, according to some particular principles. Justice is mostly about equality, which from the perspective of well-being means that all people should have equal chance to wellness.
A case study
As an example of applying these criteria let us consider London from the perspective of wellbeing and Lynch’s theory.

When we observe London from the aspect of vitality, it becomes clear that vital functions are served but environmental poisons and lack of clear air can be a risk in a city of this size. Through the perspective of sense we can observe that London is one of the most identifiable cities in the world, while using the criteria of access we can state that it is also easily reachable. London also has a variety of services available.

From the perspective of control, it can be more difficult to assess London because it is a fast growing city and if it cannot react fast enough to make the changes that are needed will become a great problem. So should the growth be controlled somehow? Who is in charge of such a control? In London there is also a justice issue; there are lots of social and criminal problems such as homelessness and theft and mugging, but these lead to deeper problems arising from the absence of equality.

Flaws

Compared to the previous theories, *A Theory of Good City Form* investigates urban planning in a much wider perspective. In previous theories, the city has been compared to a cosmos, a living organism and even a machine. However, all of these miss something in their basic tenets which causes the theory to be incomplete. Lynch recognises this when he says “the theory is not the comprehensive view that the cosmic or organic theories were, and that the economic and behavioural analyses are not.” (Lynch, 1981: 319). He explains the challenges of creating a city of urban form: “Unfortunately, it is much easier to say what a city is not: not a crystal, not an organism, not a complex machine, not even an intricate network of communications—like a computer or a nervous system” (Lynch, 1981: 114). Lynch finds some older theories lacking when they try to refer to a human settlement in terms that cannot be applied to them and tries to describe a settlement with the concept of ecology instead. “Ecological systems are made up of unthinking organisms, not conscious of their fatal involvement in the system and its consequences, unable to modify it in any fundamental way. — The inner experiences of the organisms—their purposes and images—are irrelevant; only their outwards behaviour matters.” (Lynch 1981: 115) Lynch proposes that a human settlement is nothing like a machine (Le Corbusier, 1935) or a living organism, but it is more like “an evolving and learning ecology” because of its “conscious inhabitants capable of modifying themselves”, so those metaphors cannot be applied.

The author is aware of his theory’s flaws and presents some self-critical comments. Lynch realizes his theory’s flaws as “the lack of complementary theory on how cities come to be and how they function”, “assumptions”, “utilitarian theory but also a legitimate intellectual inquiry” and a “lack of a vivid, positive affirmation about the good city”, “not neutral about values”, “normative statement is by nature biased and personal” and he admits that one of the problems is his “personal preference for human survival and development” (Lynch 1981: 319-321). He also notices the problem in applying these aspects and categories to poorer areas, and fresh hazard-like problems induced by the relatively recent changes in overall lifestyle (Lynch, 1981: 124), such as in the Finland for instance is experiencing, a new massive wave of flight of people from
country to city. All in all, Lynch’s Theory is a highly thought-out assembly so it is rather difficult to criticize it or find something that he did not mention.

The world has changed since the book was published and, for example, the effect of the Internet and mobile phones could not be envisaged when Lynch created his theory. But no theory can predict all the changes that the future will bring.

For the future
The World Health Organisation defines healthy urban planning in the following manner: "Healthy urban planning involves planning practices that promote health and wellbeing and has much in common with the principles of sustainable development. It means focusing on humans and how they use their environment in planning rather than simply concentrating on buildings and economics."

In our time, the way people often expect to achieve well-being, is medication, for any and all of their troubles. The way of healing the symptoms with the means of medicine may be the easiest way to better one's life. What if we could prevent some of these problems with urban planning? It has been proven that the habitat has a profound effect on human welfare. If we can provide a healthy living environment, we remove the second disease-causing factors, which then would leave us only with genes as causes of diseases—but that is something we cannot affect.

Lynch’s personal utopia reshapes the world drastically. In his ideal world equality is the key word. Everybody has everything they need. This sounds desirable from the perspective of wellness but this kind of attitude change is going to take some time. We have to lose something to gain something else: it is a matter of what is considered more important to have and be saved for the future.

A manual for urban planning
"The good city is one in which the continuity of this ecology is maintained while progressive change is permitted. … So that settlement is good which enhances the continuity of its people, increases a sense of connection in time and space, and permits or spurs individual growth: development, within continuity, via openness and connection." (Lynch, 1981: 116) In conclusion, we can say that with proper urban planning we can make the world a better and healthier place. First, however, we have to know what needs to be improved, and at this point The Theory of Good City Form offers an invaluable tool.

In his book Lynch concentrates mostly on the connections between human behaviour and the structure of the city, instead of focusing only on set forms or buildings. As a result of this wide perspective, The Theory of Good City Form is a good general theory not only useful in evaluating and developing cities but also maintaining them. From the perspective of well-being in urban planning, this book offers a number of excellent ways to maintain and promote human welfare by the means of urban planning and therefore it could be viewed as a very useful manual for all urban planners.

References:
Kevin Lynch, A Theory of Good City Form, 1981, the MIT Press.
In his book *Delirious New York*, published in 1978, Rem Koolhaas presents the history of Manhattan and the beginning of Manhattanism. According to the subtitle, it is a “retroactive manifesto” and declaration of love for Manhattan – “a world totally fabricated by man”. Since this book the concept of the Manhattanism became well-known in urban city culture where nature changed into “hyper-nature”.

Rem Koolhaas, born in 1944, is a Dutch architect, architectural theorist and urbanist. Koolhaas is one of the most influential people in our time and his international offices OMA/AMO both craft architecture and create utopias. In his book, *Delirious New York*, he describes the construction of New York in the beginning of the 20th century when mass construction invades the whole Manhattan city area. The book was written in the postindustrial age at a time when the main idea was to create more multifunctional cities and move away from suburbs.

The author is inspired by what he calls the “culture of congestion”, which might have been a modern concept in 1978 that people admired. However, today it is an aspect in urban life that city planning aims to avoid. Since we have been pushing the boundaries of using natural recourses, city planners in the 20th century must consider more the wellbeing of city dwellers. Wellbeing means creating and building places for people according to their needs.

Well-being in the metropolis

Koolhaas’s main interest lies in explaining the inconsistency of planning in Manhattan – the “culture of congestion”. Disordered construction in the 1930s New York can be compared to the contemporary new towns in the Middle East and Asia, where only money and power are crucial in infrastructure. When building Manhattan, tall skyscrapers rose one after the other symbolizing metropolitan growth and the center of the world. Now the most thrilling towers and contemporary new towns are in the Middle East. For instance the 830 meters high Burj Khalifa, the tallest man-made structure in the world (Burj Khalifa 2014) or the Dynamic Tower, under construction, where each floor will be able to rotate independently (Dynamic Tower 2014) are both located in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.
In the book, *Delirious New York*, Koolhaas reminds the reader that the metropolis needs and deserves its own architecture and should be seen as special and different from other cities in urbanism (Koolhaas 1978: 293). This verifies the thought that Koolhaas admires Manhattan, and as a result the city has influenced his own detached and grand architecture. The streets of Manhattan are straight and endless—which in our opinion is not ideal—still, the Manhattan Grid is remarkable and historical. It was designed by Simeon deWitt, Gouverneur Morris and John Rutherford in 1811, and admittedly it enabled uncontrollable growth (Koolhaas 1978: 18). Each block includes its own life and services. In a successful metropolis density produces industry and life, where 'Manhattanism' in fact is embodied in disordered mass construction and living inside the built fantasy. Manhattan is vivid both in social and business life, and this is why it has been regarded as the economic and cultural center of the United States or the financial capital of the world. Koolhaas claims that there is neither consistency nor cohesion in urban planning in Manhattan. In his words, architecture in the city is shameless and molests congestion. Manhattan is filled with "architectural mutations, utopian fragments and irrational phenomena" (Koolhaas 1978: 9), which all in all is the problem of the metropolis.

The contradiction of the metropolis is how to inhabit light, nature and masses of people and how to support economical life in the same city. Koolhaas proposes that the metropolis reaches to a mythical point where "the world is completely fabricated by man, so that it absolutely coincides with his desires". And then the people become addicted to it (Koolhaas 1978: 293). However, in Western Europe, from 1950 to 1970, towns were built only to control urban growth. It ended up with cities unsuccessful both economically and socially (New Town Institute 2014). Now the wave of new urban towns will engulf the fast-growing economies in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

**Fast growing cities**

A New Town is always a reflection of one moment in time and the ambitions of that moment mostly caused by corruption and money. Massive floating population causes huge problems, which arise as shortage of land and water resources, deterioration of the environment and vulnerability of the ecological system. Issues of the metropolis arise when the construction of buildings does not follow human aspects and it is contrived by superior force, for instance the government. There are dozens of tragic cases where new towns have been made only by government decision and failed spectacularly by no-one moving into them. Many countries in the Emirates and in Asia use these New Towns as a tool to manipulate and control the urbanization process. An example of economic city, Shenzhen, China, where in thirty years a small village grew into a metropolis of fifteen million inhabitants only as a result of a governmental decree. Violence and corruption are common means of controlling people and public spaces, which leads to degradation, overcrowding and insecurity. Moreover, citizens do not feel as the owners of these public spaces, which undermines the possibility of well-being (New Town Institute 2014.)

After the oil crisis in the West in 1973 Middle Eastern countries awakened to the thought of using oil for their own purposes, which triggered the fast development in cities in the Persian Gulf. Efficiency and financial productivity are the only functions of fast growing new metropolises in the Arab countries, and considerations of wellness are disregarded. For instance, Saudi Arabia has ended up with management consultants and engineers as planners of economic cities. People and living are ignored in this urban development: this leads to masses of overbuilding and new, empty spaces. In the name of efficiency planners choose instead of an architect the engineer, whose design is purely functional. In the Middle East mass construction displays their urgent need to show their capacity to the world and thus architecture is used in a very commercial way. In the contemporary architecture of Arab countries, what is at display is the architect's best effort and skills and amount of work, and where wellbeing is replaced with industry. (Todd Reisz 2014 & OMA 2014)

**Technology and well-being**

In the late 19th century, after the industrial revolution, many Europeans moved to the "New World" where there was a need for laborers in new manufacturing. New technology was admired by men and this admiration ushered in the new age and culture—modernism. New innovations, for instance electricity and other new building constructions, were thought to create a better city and modern surroundings, which increased the inhabitants' well-being. Electricity made it possible to build a city that never sleeps: streets, buildings and other areas were open 24/7. When the elevator was invented, the culture of congestion took a new direction. Congestion was seen not only in the street any more, it was found inside the buildings, too. All in all, horizontal movement became also
vertical. The elevator and the innovation of steel-concrete-construction made it possible to build higher buildings than ever before. The main thought was that the higher the building was, the nearer it came to sunlight, air and nature. This aspiration was captured by the famous American novelist, F. Scott Fitzgerald, who said “My favorite form is the sphere” (Koolhaas 1978: 162). These innovations were truly believed to create well-being. The elevator also changed the value of apartments: apartments on higher floor’s became more expensive than apartments in the lower floors (History of America 2014).

By the means of technology architecture tries to provide a maximal experience of buildings. One example provided in the book is Radio City Music Hall, where architect Roxy, by his real name Samuel Lionel Rothafel of Stillwater, was inspired by Fantastic Technology. He realized that he could use air-conditioning system for creating a maximal experience of his theater building. Roxy considered adding hallucinogenic gases to the atmosphere of the theater, “so that synthetic ecstasy can reinforce the fabricated sunset (his inspiration for the theater). A small dose of laughing gas would put visitors in a euphoric mood”. Technology could make everything better and healthier – “A visit to Radio City Music Hall is as good as a month in the Country” (Koolhaas 1978: 210-211).

In Manhattanism, however, there is contradiction between technology and nature, as Koolhaas himself points out, because “it [Manhattanism] has severed all connections with nature” (Koolhaas 1978: 74). Technology allowed to build an environment for people who wanted fabricated pleasure. In the real world, nature became more and more distanced from people’s life and only a fabricated world was left. For instance, Coney Island was a place where people came to enjoy outdoor activities. In the end, nature was gone and only the man-made surroundings were to be found in its place.

Despite the development in technology, considerations for laborers’ safety in the worksite was nonexistent in the beginning of the skyscrapers’ era (History of America 2014). Since then, there has been some improvement in this respect in the Western countries but ethical problems about workers’ safety are still around, for instance, the length of working days and their salary, depending on the country or employer. Many laborers come to the massive building and construction sites from developing countries, which is cheaper for the builder. Unfortunately, architects often tend to overlook this ethical problem, for instance, the famous contemporary architect Zaha Hadid said: "It's not my duty as an architect to look at it (laborers’ safety)" when she was asked to comment on safety at the Al Wakrah Stadium construction site in Qatar (2022). Many laborers have died in dangerous projects where nobody takes response (Dezeen Magazine 2014).
Today, thinking of technology has taken a new turn. The main idea is that technology makes our lives better and easier as long as it does not cost too much. Economic issues have become the most dominant part of building disregarding well-being. The industrial society has become the society of technology which aspires for easy-living at low costs. Fabricated pleasure has become fabricated necessity.

One exceptional project is Norman Foster’s Carbon-Neutral City in Abu Dhabi (appointment 2007). The City will be one part of the city area on the way to airport. Foster has designed a city that is car-free and uses only renewable resource. The longest way to a public transport stop is 200 meters, which reflects careful thoughts of well-being. These kinds of projects show our viewpoint of technology and architectural moral nowadays: it does not only make life easier but it also makes our surroundings more ecological and natural (Foster + Partners 2014.) Such economic and ecological aspects draw attention to the question: is this fabricated well-being for everybody or just for the rich and powerful people to the detriment of poor?

![Picture 4. China’s president Xi says “No more weird buildings” and points at Koolhaas’s design, the CCTV building. (Archdaily 2014).](image)

**Conclusion**

Part of Manhattan’s success was inventing a new culture in response to the industrial revolution. Manhattanism creates the first metropolis and culture of fabricated pleasure where skyscrapers increased the citizens’ wellbeing. On the other hand, one major intention was to show to the world how marvelously a metropolis works. So, Manhattan’s architecture is also the embodiment of power and money. Today the same aspects can be seen in the Middle East and in Asia. Koolhaas emphasizes that the book was written to show how Manhattan has created its own metropolitan urbanism. The ideas of Manhattanism survive in the Middle East. However, are these development just a tedious copy of Manhattanism, where over-building is too grand for human scale? In October 2014 the President of the People’s Republic of China, Xi Jinping, commented in an interview on how Beijing has become Western foreigners’ test field in architecture. He says that art should “inspire minds, warm hearts, cultivate taste and clean up undesirable work styles” and state-owned buildings such as CCTV, designed by Rem Koolhaas should especially be avoided (Archdaily 2014). This kind of opinion is clearly a reaction to bizarre architectural innovations. All in all, Manhattanism has created a remarkable architectural phenomenon that still shows in new urban planning. However, when followed blindly, it can work against the desirable aesthetic impressions a city can offer towards the well-being of its inhabitants.
References:
FARMAX Excursion on density was written in 1999 by the architect firm MVRDV (founded by Winy Maas, Jacob van Rijs and Nathalie de Vries), which is known for its books. MVRDV have big ideas that could change the way we see our cities. Some of them are just utopic ideas and some could really been implemented. MVRDV also take part in architectural competitions and plan new buildings all over the world.

This book focuses on the issue of density: how to increase the population of our cities without losing the surrounding nature and the sense of wellbeing. High density in cities is not seen as a problem and it is presented more like an opportunity for enhancing wellbeing in urban areas. Although the issue is discussed from several angles, the book does not really offer a strong opinion on how to make buildings look beautiful in our eyes.

The main perspective of the book is about making urban life denser. Instead of making the suburban areas of cities larger, it is suggested that would be much wiser to concentrate on increasing the density of city centers. In future this scenario might even be the only option if the population of cities continue growing. Instead of building horizontally, a phenomena known as doughnut cities, the book suggests ways to build vertically, thus resulting in what is known as muffin cities, and in addition to develop unused spaces in the city center such as parks and squares to make them more unique and diverse.

Mixed cities
MVRDV considers that one way to increase the density is making our living environment more mixed. Not just mixing social classes but also functions of buildings. It is better to make “multitasking houses” than a house for one purpose only. For example: why can’t we make an office building with housing and some sports facilities in it? Why not make a skiing slope in the middle of a building or a park on the 3rd floor?

We could decrease density with more interesting spaces without making the place feel uncomfortable to live in. This could also save our environment for suburbanization, which is taking a big part of our nature: with bigger density we could save our forests surrounding the cities and really enjoy them. Unbuilt environment in rural areas is considered valuable and it can be preserved by building vertically and increasing density.

Mixing our environment and so making it more interesting could provide wellbeing in the city. FARMAX presents these ideas through more rational planning and utilizing space to the maximum. Open-minded visions like combining motorways and sound pollution-free housing are just a couple of examples of the ideas presented in the book.

Even though MVRDV proposes radical and open-minded solutions, it also wants to preserve already existing valuable buildings. Nevertheless the book suggests that not even one building should be protected so that you can’t “touch” it. FARMAX: Excursion on density (1999) says that by mixing and remodeling the old we can make our cities more layered and exciting. It also provides examples for the use of older buildings.

The book also suggests that any built environment which is not deemed useful can be demolished, but buildings which have historical value can be bravely put to other uses while still keeping the building intact. This way cities can preserve their aesthetic wellbeing.

Importance of light
In FARMAX: Excursion on density (1999) also provides ideas about lighting. According to law in the Netherlands every apartment should have at least three hours sunlight every day. FARMAX gives several suggestions in the section on Lighting how to ensure that but every building in this perspective is a copy of another. It might be logical and it might provide enough sunlight for every household, but do people feel happy to live in such a town?
Is it also enough? It’s true that sunlight energizes us every day. In high density we have to have enough energy to socialize with our neighbors. Is it then enough? Is there a possibility to make interesting environment with more sunlight to every apartment without losing the maximum density?

Picture 1 & Picture 2. The pictures show two possible ways to build a city with maximum density and still having three hours of light in a day for every apartment. (FARMAX: Excursion on density 1999: 211)

Lighting gets more important when you move to the north. In wintertime there is hardly any sunlight for three months while in the summer it does not really get dark. There lighting has more important status than anywhere in world.

Lights help us to feel secure in the dark and they help to overcome winter depression. A real-world adaptive urban lighting demo, LightStories, presented in Oulu 2012, showed how much lighting can affect our feeling of the city space. The Demo was made in the winter months and it was interactive: in a website anyone could make their own “Light story” for street lights that existed in the city center of Oulu. After the demo, the organizers interviewed the participants to collect their opinions.

Picture 3. A Photo of the lighting that was used in LightStories. (Experiencing Participatory and Communicative Urban Lighting through, p. 2)
LightStories told us that street lights and commercial lightning are not the only lights that we notice in the dark. Participants also emphasized the illumination of buildings and trees and seasonal lightning. Urban lightning was seen as creating a safe and pleasant environment: in most cases it is perceived as part of “aesthetics” or “a good atmosphere”. (Experiencing Participatory and Communicative Urban Lighting through LightStories)

This study really shows effect lighting has on our feelings related to the environment: Lighting isn’t just a way to make our environment feel more secure but also an aesthetic element which could affect us more than we know.

Density without planning

FARMAX: Excursion on density (1999) presents Kowloon Walled city as a bad example of lighting in high density. The city was a densely populated area in Hong Kong, China. It was originally a military fortress built in 1668 and it was ordered to be demolished by the authorities of Hong Kong in 1994.

The walled city had over 33 000 people inhabiting an area of 2.6 hectares. It was originally used as an area for refugees, but in the 1950s Kowloon Walled city started to attract more criminals and poor people. By that time the city had become a society which did not have any authorities and had its own rules and communities. The city grew out of control because no one was organizing building in the area. This meant that the infrastructure was incomplete.

Picture 4. A street view from Kowloon Walled City. (FARMAX: Excursion on density, 1999: 166)
The city had one to two meter wide alleys, which were the main passageways to move around the city. The alleys were not lighted, and due to the city’s structure, the city had little to no light. Only rooms that were on the top or on higher points of the city may have provided enough sunlight for their owner. Kowioon Walled city had its own rhythm and was concerned about neither time nor daylight cycles. The rooms were used constantly for different purposes at different hours. In addition, the fact that the city had no light, it also enabled criminal activity even more.

Kowioon Walled City is a good example when considering densely populated infrastructure. It shows that communities can work in very densely populated spaces, but when considering the wellbeing of its inhabitants, the planning of density and population growth becomes very important. Urban areas are going to be denser anyway.

**Image of tomorrow**

*FARMAX: Excursion on density* (1999) shows us how unavoidable the growing of density is. Density will grow if the population in the world keeps getting bigger. So, it’s important that we prepare our cities for this, otherwise we have to accept that the urban environment might get more unsecured and unhealthy.

*FARMAX: Excursion on density* (1999) offers a way to solve these problems: but is that the only or the best way? Aesthetics and individuality are criteria we use to evaluate our environment. Will growing density then change our identities? How do we see ourselves as individuals?

We think that designing is the key for ensuring wellbeing tomorrow. Designers shouldn’t be scared of increasing density but must see it as an opportunity. There are unsolved questions with increasing density, but if we can solve them, it might give us a better environment. It’s our choice if we want to criticize it or not but what we decide today will affect our tomorrow.

References:

*FARMAX: Excursion on density* by MVRDV, 1999

New Towns for the 21st century, the planned vs. the unplanned city, was published by Michelle Provoost in 2010. The book is a collection of presentations given at a conference held by the International New Towns Institute (INTI) in Amsterdam in 2009. Michelle Provoost has collected these presentations in one publication, and has written an introduction, which explains the message of the book. Each presentation examines a different kind of planned and unplanned cities and how they have evolved.

The book introduces different kinds of cities with unique background and development. Architects and other professionals have done some research about new cities. Their research results have shown that local economy, population growth and urban planning are the most significant causes of a practical city. Our focus is on well-being and how it might affect the buildings in new cities. Our definition of well-being as suggested by this book is functionality and vitality of urban structure. When the city is functional, its residents are happy and healthy. According to the World Health Organization, a healthy city is one that is continually creating and improving physical and social environment and expanding community resources. The aim of the healthy city is to provide an environment that supports healthy living. It aspires to a good quality of life and gives base for sanitation and hygiene needs.

The planned city – make it or brake it
The planned city means new city that has been built from scratch. It has one master plan and master planner. Everything is planned and the opportunity for growing has not been concerned. The planner has not thought about the future. Deni Ruggeri has done research about an Italian city Zingonia, which was planned and built based on modernist utopia (New Towns for the 21st century, 2010: 94). The idea of Renzo Zingone was to create a self-sufficient and privately-sponsored new city prototype. Shortly after Zingonia was constructed, the developer started to struggle to maintain profit and many of his public service plans were left on paper. The city was so dependent on the industrial sector that when the economic crisis hit in the mid-1970s, the residents disappeared. In the end, the key failure of Zingonia was also the lack of stewardship (Picture 1).

Picture 1. Zingonia, Italy. Lonely building in the middle of abandoned city. (http://images2.corriereobjects.it/gallery/Cronache/2010/12_Dicembre/zingonia/1/img_1/zin_03_672-458_resize.jpg)
This case raises certain questions: how can one person predict the future life of the city? How will the city change in 50 years; who will live there? How do economic changes affect the life and mere existence of the city? Is the infrastructure sustainable or does the natural environment suffer? We think that a group of different professionals and inhabitants together could plan a city that is functional in every aspect. A good city plan is updateable and it survives the challenges of the uncertain and ever-evolving future. A city should not be monotonous providing only one function. With equal amounts of housing, working and amenities the city would be vital and vivid. To calculate these three dimensions Joost van den Hoek introduces in the book the mixed use index (mxi). The conclusion is simple: when all three are equal, a city can survive.

The master plan can go wrong but if possibilities to expand and grow are provided, a well-planned city can be workable. Peter Gotsch presents a good example of a planned city in the case of Alpha Ville-Tambore in Sao-Paulo (New Towns for the 21st century, 2010: 60). The main idea of the city form is to ensure happiness and prescribe a low amount of building codes. Each resident is given the same sized plot and freedom to design their own house. Smaller residential areas are separated from the city center. It is assumed that especially closeness of nature in the city brings comfort (Picture 2). Thinking about the idea of the Alpha Ville-Tambore, the fact that everyone can design their own house seems to be a decisive factor in well-being, since a unique and easy-to-get around neighbourhood is desirable and crucial for everyday happiness.

The unplanned city – cause of population growth
The unplanned city is a consequence of population growth and deprivation. The city has been self-organized and the big picture has not been thought through. The lack of coordination leads to unbalanced structure. Shenzhen in China, is the fastest growing city in the world, according to Pu Hao, Richard Sliuzas and Stan Geertman (New Towns for the 21st century, 2010: 186). High land prices in unplanned developments are likely to appear. When the center of a city is too expensive to live in, colonization expands uncontrollably. The city was planned for 4.3 million people but in ten years the population had grown to 10 million. The built-up area was supposed to be controlled within 480 km², while in 10 years this had increased to 729km². Low-income people will face much heavier housing stress. We think that if housing districts are cramped and built carelessly, the level of hygiene suffers (Picture 3). When inhabitants do not have any private space, well-being cannot evolve. The Radiant City
by Le Corbusier presents the ideal plan with an abundance of green space and sunlight. This utopist city would not only provide residents with a better lifestyle, but would contribute to creating a better society.

Unplanned cities have some potential but they need to be regenerated. According to Rainer Hehl and Jörg Stollmann, who have studied Kotebe Hana Mariam, over one third of the urban population lives in unplanned and self-built neighbourhoods (New Towns for the 21st century, 2010: 234). Kotebe Hana Mariam, the slum of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, has been built by inhabitants without infrastructure provision. A workshop organized by the inhabitants was meant to improve the basic infrastructure. Research has shown that the inhabitants were lacking knowledge of building but the urban structure itself was rich. So the design solutions will support and enhance the existing do-it-yourself practices. While the residents of Kotebe Hana Mariam were given better housing conditions, the city form was modified to be more functional. This project seems to suggest that slums should not be judged and demolished. Instead of building a totally new city, the existing one should be ameliorated.

**Best of both methods**

Our thoughts about urban planning have been expanded by reading this book. A grid plan is not always the easiest and the most practical solution. Architects cannot survive alone planning a new city because in the end the residents are the ones who define the character of the city. Why shouldn’t they be part of the planning process? A city is never finished, it changes and lives continuously. Therefore the masterplan must also be able to change. The book presents two types of city form: planned and unplanned, however, it does not offer one significant conclusion regarding which way is a better method. Thus, our conclusion is that maybe a combination of both planning and self-organized city structure could lead to an ideal city, a city that would support well-being in all its physical, mental and social aspects.
We think that the best established public housing system discussed in this book is Vrijburcht in Amsterdam. Jing Zhou and Hein de Haan (New Towns for the 21st century, 2010: 258) introduces this neighbourhood, which has been planned and built with the residents. From the start of the planning process the future-residents have also been building the sense of community. The goal of this housing project was to offer opportunities to families from the city center to find attractive, urban housing of reasonable sizes and prices, and to create special shared services that make living and working conditions more attractive and stimulate social and cultural interaction (Picture 4). You can clearly see the vitality and activity of this community: everyone is enjoying where they live and it seems to be a happy place to be.

References: