Dream of a City

Emma Saunders
University of Pennsylvania

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DREAM OF A CITY.

DESIGNED BY EMMA SAUNDERS

What ??? and me!
I'm there too!
It's not all
about you
my dear! What
about the people who prepare
your food, clean your rooms
or just do all the invisible
work. A little stronger for
them there.
Sorry, to be such an ass, but I just came across the text I wanted to share with you... so today we are going to talk about the evolution of the city as an entity. Many myths exist about how the first city appeared and its creation. Always seems like an overarching communal project, though this shared space soon turns out to be oppressive...

I'm sure that the concept we have, such as Tolstoy's "the city human being," was conscious that, beside the usual spiritual force which governed our lives, there existed a causal power which would not grant him the happiness he desired. (c)

In my city, opposite to his inward mood, dominated his life and dominated fulfillment of its decrees. The twin was growing a feeling of animosity in his soul, spoiling his peace and depriving its achievements of value. (d)

This element that Freud later on tries to create, I believe, is already rooted in our place and role in the city: how we live together and how we see this union is essential to how we feel about society. For me, this symbiotic society is the highest point of achievement since they are the align means the cohesive power of society is maximum.

So I'm going to show you some text to start thinking of the city. If I could only find them...
so first lets do a brief history of human's collective life.

At the beginning we had little communities, centered around a market place or a resource with relative independence but little opportunities.

Then the need to protect oneself against the other communities was given the technological means to be fulfilled. Walls were build enclosing more fluid identities. However the central community space still remained.

And there came the city, the megalopolis. A juxtaposition of different individual bubbles (car, work, house), next to each others but never interacting. Everyone trying to push the other out to get more space for themselves. However fantasy and imagination still had a food in this chaotic scramble in this modern jungle.

Everyone tries to differentiate themselves and mark the city.

But this brought hunger for land, and each one of us wanted our own house, our own private space over which we can finally have some authority. And provokes us the pleasure of control to make us forget our frustration. But this idolatry for land brought to an end all community organization and the neighborhood became the final enemy.

Some people call this progress. I just refer to it as evolution... anyways let's look at some traditional myths about the city, its creation and the origin of our unhappiness with it.
Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved southward they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so that they will not understand each other's speech." So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

At first all the arrangements for building the tower of Babel were characterized by fairly good order. Indeed, the order was perhaps to perfect, too much thought was taken for guides, interpreters, accommodations for the workmen and needs of communication as if it were centuries before one to do the work in. In fact, the general opinion at that time was that one simply could not build a city; for a very little insistence on what would have sufficed to make one desirable to lay down the foundation at all, was argued in this way: The essential thing in the whole business is the idea of building a tower that will reach Heaven. In comparison with that idea, everything else is secondary.

The idea, once sized in its magnitude, can never vanish again. So it be that men on the earth there will be that irresistible desire to complete the building. That being so, however one need have no anxiety about the future. On the contrary, human knowledge is increasing, the art of building has made progress and will make further progress, a piece of work which takes us a year may perhaps be done in half the time in another hundred years, and better done, too, more carefully.

So why exert oneself to the extreme limit of one's present power? There would be some sense in doing that only if it were likely that the tower could be completed in one generation, but that is beyond all hope. It is far more likely that the next generation with their perfected knowledge will find the work of their predecessors hard and bear down what has been built as to begin a new. Such thoughtfully paralyzed people's power, and so they made less about the tower than the construction of a city for the workmen. Every nationally wanted the finest quarters for itself, and this gave rise to disputes, which developed into bloody conflicts. These conflicts never came to an end; the leaders they were a new proof that, in the absence of the necessary unity, the building of the tower must be done very slowly, or indeed preferably postponed until universal peace was declared. But the time was spent not only in conflict, the town was embittered in the meantime and thus unfortunately enough ended in fresh lively and fresh conflict.

In this fashion the age of the first generation went on; but none of the succeeding ones showed any differences except that technical skills increased and with it occasion for content. To this must be added that the second or third generation had already recognized the tenseness of building a heaven-reaching tower; but that time everybody was too deeply involved to leave the city. All the Egyptians and others that came to birth in that city are filled with longing for a prophesied day when the city would be destroyed by fire from a gigantic flood...
Fascinating, yes?

One interesting point is this view of the city as a dream, a common project based on infinite possibilities and total freedom of imagination. But this terrifying project which gives an identity, a "name" is persisted or by God or by the human's own defaults. Here we can see two tendencies: in the Bible, God is jealous and fears the humans because he has recognized the strength and power such a human organization holds. Indeed they understand each other and listen to each other's propositions holding therefore a tremendous power and having infinite potential only bounded by the Symbolic Limit of the Sky. In the Bible, God is responsible for our history, our division and our unhappiness. Kafka on the contrary requires responsibilities to humans: we, our laziness, envy, aggressivity, procrastination keep us from fulfilling our dream.

The city here embodies the duality Freud recognized in human: the creation, unifying and constructive instinct he calls Eros and its opponent or partner, dividing, destructuring the death instinct. Indeed the city is both the open door to infinite possibilities, playground of the imagination and organs of communal life and achievement while also being the birthplace of our problems: the laws and the administrative institutions.

With the city as a symbol for civilization we can see our ambivalence towards culture. Kafka illustrates well the tension between our dream that seem so close we could almost touch them and swallow them and our dissatisfaction and recent useless which prevent us from reaching our goal.

However the main idea is that whether God's or our own fault, we are left together in the city not by choice anymore but by habit.

Furthermore the institutions and cohesive elements that were created as temporary and flexible tools to maintain unity are kept without the previous unity and comprehension. But the workers in the tower still continue to show up every day and receive their salaries once the language has been diverted. The only mean of communication kept is money which is based on common agreements and tradition and therefore allows basic exchanges and primary interactions. Now work resumes itself to the accumulation of money.

The money which previously was only a mean becomes an end. This leads to the glorification of the authority since it now generates the money, and the means to produce it. Its power which before was only for practical reason becomes legitimized because it is the source of the unique communicating system of money.

Now competition strives and more rules are needed to contain it. The same spiral towards ever-increasing repression is started and no solution our seems possible.
Did someone say something??
No. That's what I thought.
So now, instead of a free dream all
work the workers' got for motivation to money
work became toll, forced and without en-
joyment or meaning (except that of money).
The city slowly became the negation of
identity, of imagination of hope of pleau-
re at the workplace and of genuine community life. People feel appre-
ased in society and long for the relief of this tension by the destruction
of the city that Kafka wrote at the end.

Hey!
What do you
know about religions.
What if I accept and
appreciate the boundaries
they provide? Society also
contains us and we live
with those limitations...
What if I need the help?
Who are you to
judge?!

Charge
(battle
battle
WIN)

End WUcht
Listen to me on.
Please.
In your song of humanity
you never told me to speak to
me; the woman, the poor, the different
the queer, the unique, the individi.
You forget us behind a picture of a typical
human being, hiding behind generalities.
You forgot that I want to be happy and
fighting is hard, you forgot that I
have my own individual preferences;
and that your theories aren't worth
praise.
You ignore me, your con-
ception of what life and liberty
should be, you have beautiful the-
ories but you always seem to
forget me. You're scared of me.
Go back to your mice and cats,
Your safe, judging position doesn't have to ask you to fight, no just to speak. Why do you always have the authority figure? Why can't you trust me? Why don't you listen?...

Why are you silent? Are you ignoring me now?

... And really, I'm not mad at you at all, I appreciate your efforts.
No, I am mad at myself and at my hopeless. But I just can't see a way out...

It is nice to have all those solutions, theories in a pretty little book but how am I supposed to feel better in this society which ignores me? And what can I change when I have everything that crushes me. All the daily duties rushing on me and keeping me so busy. And you make fun of my religion but what if I need hope...? Because your consciousness is painful and is it worth it...

Sigh

Maybe it is my time to listen and disappointment. Except maybe I can act and change...
Silence

Silence

Silence

Silence

Silence

Silence

Silence

Silence

Silence

... etc...

... ere...

... etc...

... etc...
My cat, Yoda, and my little dog, Max, are great for the walks. Every weekend, when the weather is sunny and dry, we all go for a long walk together, enjoying the fresh air and the exercise. It's a great way to bond with them and also get a bit of exercise for myself.
my bricks for a perfect or at least better city would be:

land marks
specialties
uniqueness that would make us inhabitant proud of our city. They would choose to live instead of surrendering to Habitat those land marks give an identity, a character, a taste instead of blend and mild uniformity.

We would live the city as a sharing place, live in the city, outside on the street, on the benches to be able to see the other instead of safely ignoring him or her, hiding in our cars, houses, workplaces...

The city would be somewhere where you wouldn't be afraid to walk outside. Somewhere you trusted your neighbors, where you wouldn't need guns, dogs or Burton allied guards. Somewhere where you would feel comfortable strolling around, colorful, inviting pleasure and play, putting you in a good mood, smacking an involuntary smile on your face.

The city would be impregnated by your presence. Somewhere where you can have an impact. You can mark the city...
A city you make home.
a city where you have no limits; only possibilities.

a city with community space: to interact and discover. With others.

You would have a voice in the city. You would have a role in the city.

You can dream in your city. Open space to the imagination. Share some empty spaces to be filled with your wishes and aspirations.

Let grow the weeds of imagination.
What about you? What would you like for a city?

Hmm. I think I've heard so far.

Hopeful? Enthusiastic?

Peace and love.

( me, a hippy? nooo...!)

Ouch, which it?

It? Can't you feel it? Can't you hear it? Our connections are and with the world; links that assure

us that we can never

can't you feel its pulsation when you are proud of

your accomplishments as a group, when you are in front

er of a great drawing, you'd like water, when you hear

a children laugh...? When you smile in the street, when

you care but also more personally when in a hot bath

the burning water penetrates your pores, making your nerves

shiver and release the tension at last in one breath, the deep

expiration, when you lean on the couple but firm, steady shin

of your lover or friend... In a general burst of laugh, in a

uncontrollable cheerfulness... Some call it erotic, and find it in the

deepest sensual meaning of self, some find it through religion and

community spirit, moral values and certainly provided, some find it

in the sense of a global community, under the flag of humanity

and universal rights... However approached, it is about consciousness

and respect. Receptivity. Understanding or at least listening. I feel

it is the capability to see all the offers even those that aren't

proposed and then make a choice. Desire for the other. Appraise for

desire. If you can, if you try, they will too...
Hi there. So how was your trip?

hmm. nice. I slept. I had a dream.

Dinner us readyy!

Can't really remember anymore. Though.
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