

**Rudiyanto Subagio**

# THE ROLE OF PUBLIC SPACE IN BUILDING HUMANITY

## ABSTRACT

Kualitas kemanusiaan dapat dipantau dari relasi sosial antar manusia itu sendiri. Relasi sosial yang sering dilaksanakan secara spontan dalam Ruang Publik. Ruang Publik ditingkat Urban yang memungkinkan relasi sosial tersebut, bisa berbentuk ruang terbuka, taman atau plasa, ataupun Mall (ruang tertutup) yang kini makin semarak berfungsi sebagai tempat pertemuan.

Relasi kemanusiaan, itu beragam, mulai dengan relasi diri sendiri sebagai alamiah, relasi dengan orang lain dan institusi, relasi kosmik dalam kait ruang waktu dan teori praksis dan relasi ditingkat kedalaman, spiritual. Secara kumulatif Relasi Kemanusiaan ini dapat dilihat sebagai ciri ke-utuh-penuh-an kemanusiawian itu sendiri.

Pengamatan Relasi informal antar manusia dalam Ruang Publik dapat dialami sebagai studi penyadaran eksistensi kemanusiaan. Itu mentransformasikan hidup kita. Makin menjadikan kita, manusia.

## Key Words:

*Human Relationship • Anthropological Constant • Public Social Space • Compassionate • Transformation*

## Scope and Theme

The main ideas why this theme has been chosen are *the theological questions I have about human relationship*. Although the human face already indicates that man is directed toward others<sup>1</sup> why there are so many people do not “see” an-other? Or if they saw they did not “see”, like the priest and the Levite on their road between Jericho and Jerusalem, who saw the half dead man but passed him by. Why did the Samaritan not only see but was also moved with compassion?<sup>2</sup> Why is it that the hearts of the two of disciples on their journey to Emmaus were burning as they were talking with a stranger?<sup>3</sup> Why is it that in these public spaces where people meet each other, some can “see” others while others cannot? Why do some people's heart “burn” and “touched” while those of others do not?

All these questions inspire me to look at some *Public Spaces where people meet and build relationship to one another* as models of studying some elements which are capable for stimulating *the compassionate spirit* of the people. I believe that this compassionate element is the fundamental element of human relationship. It is the source of energy which makes every individual person become a social human being. *Compassion then becomes the transformational catalyst of humanity*. It stimulates people to be able to “see” the other and to make their heart “burn” for others. In another word, I will try, through anthropology, to make a theological reflection on humanity-quality, especially the compassionate aspect, which makes human becomes more holistic.

This quality of humanity is not revealed to us naturally, but it is also a human effort. It is also cultural. I believe that this humanity is eschatological, always in the process of becoming more “fully and complete”. Through the public-space, which are potential for developing human relationship, we are able to plan and to act something for the realization of the compassionate human relationship.

## Method of Approaching the Idea of Public Space

PPS: Project for Public Space, a book with many ideas for place making, can be used for approaching the ideas of Public Space. It gives many questions help us to help us understand what is the meaning of Public Space; what is its basic principal function, what is its goal; and what make the public space a successful place.<sup>4</sup>

“In evaluating over 1,000 public spaces around the world, Project for Public Spaces (PPS) has found that successful ones have four key qualities: they are accessible; people are engaged in activities there; the space is comfortable and has a good image; and finally, it is a sociable place where people meet each other when they come to visit.”<sup>5</sup>

For me, this approach can be used as a simple method and make it more simple by inserting the “accessible” as a part of comfortable. So comfortable is included in the notion of accessible. Then I will see the activities and the special focus on the sociable element. I think these three elements are also expressions of the basic human need. Comfort as the need for easiness, cleanliness and health; the activities as the expressions of the dynamic of human life; and the social dimension as the expression of human relationship.

Erving Goffman in his book *Behavior in Public Places* gives us many ideas about what does it mean with “public places” in traditional meaning. It differs from private places where refer only for members. He emphasizes the “freely accessible” aspect. He again gives some ideas about definitions: groups, gatherings, co presence, situation and social occasion.<sup>6</sup> All of these terms will help us to understand more especially about the social act among the people who engage or include in the public space or public place.

I will use the term of Public Space as Goffman's traditional meaning, by emphasizing the “freely accessible” aspect. Public space or public place is space or place where people are able to come freely.

### **Method of approaching the human transformative aspects of the Public Space**

We will see every model of public space at least from these three main frames, human comfort, human activities and social dimension, in reaching the goal that is to find the sources of compassion in a public space. It means that the social element will be the focus of this analysis. In approaching these human values of humanity and human dignity, I will use Schillebeeckx's Salvation-Coordinate or “Human Anthropological Constant” to help to reflect these anthropological issues theologically.

Schillebeeckx said that: “*maybe there are people who have a blueprint for humanity, or doctrine of salvation, but it is not possible to give any criteria for what is livable and true, good and happy humanity. It is not possible to define “universal human nature”.*”<sup>7</sup> *What we have is only a set of anthropological constants, rather than a positive outline or a pre-existing definition of “human nature” in philosophical term.*<sup>8</sup>

I will use these anthropological constants as idea of humanity, or as the idea of human salvation.

### Three Models Of Public Space

For case studies I choose three models of Public Space. They are: Piazza Navona in Rome Italy, Hyde Park in London UK and BIP Shopping Mall, in Bandung Indonesia.<sup>9</sup> Each of them has it's own character. Two of these PS are open spaces, one is a park and the other is piazza. BIP is an indoor shopping center. I hope these three samples will complement one another. All together they will give us more complete ideas or image about what is an ideal Public Space should be.

#### Piazza Navona in Rome, Italia

A Piazza, as a typical Italian open urban space among the crowded buildings,<sup>10</sup> usually has a romantic atmosphere like: the exotic sculptures, the fountains, the poetry of lighting, the life-music, and the beauty of people itself. This Piazza<sup>11</sup> belongs to the people of Rome, managed by the government or Senate of Rome.



Comfort:

The location of Piazza Navona is in the city center. It is *easy to be approached* by public transportation or by walking, especially from the main streets.

It is surrounded by some artistic buildings, church and bars. There are beautiful fountains<sup>12</sup> and Obelisk which can be the focus or the main character of this piazza. So we can say that the specific atmosphere of this piazza is *the beauty atmosphere*. People, the old and the children who come here, have *many choices* of seating or activities of interest. Seating in public area or in semi public area like in the bar or seating in the open air or under shadow of the “canopy” is possible. *Many kinds of activities* for the single,

couple or groups can be found in this piazza. Public cleaning service assures the cleanliness and people also feel safe here because of the presence of police who are in control of the security of the people. Based upon the human scale and the space proportion we can experience and feel that the open space of Piazza Navona is an enclosed space. It is a space or place where we *feel to be protected*. This space gives special feelings of comfort of being in intimate space. These kinds of feeling create the atmosphere of being close one another. It makes people there *to be close one another*.

**Activities:**

There are many things that can be done in this piazza. People come, single, couple and in group. There are always many groups of tourist with their tour guide here.

People can come to *enjoy the art* of architecture or of sculpture. The residents take their relatives to see and enjoy the beauty of the piazza. All kinds of beauties can be seen especially in the evening because of the effect of the beauty of lighting.

*Children and the family* also can *play together* here, especially children can run away freely and safely, without worry about oncoming traffic.



Usually *many artists* open their “gallery” *to show and to sell their artworks*. Some artists offer to pain portraits of clients so other people can see this attraction freely.



Other *performances* are Magic and also the Personal Life Music Show. People will gather around and enjoy the beauty of the live music and show appreciation by applauding and giving some tokens to the musicians.



Some people come for enjoying the *Italian cuisine*, like pizza, spaghetti, gelato, cappuccino or the dark strong espresso coffee.

### Social Act

Especially for the couple or the group who want to *meet and gather* here, ample and comfortable seating are provided in the cappuccino bar, pizzeria or gelateria, which are semipublic spaces<sup>13</sup>

Tables in this European sidewalk cafés tend to bring people together. They are *societal spaces*<sup>14</sup> and sometime make people even closer one another.<sup>15</sup> Erving Goffman called this kind of “bar” as an open place at least among men.<sup>16</sup> It is a place where there is possibility *to engage others* (American middle class society). And this depends at least on the exposed positions, opening positions and mutual openness.

*Sitting* in this Piazza and just *seeing other people*, is also very interesting. To see many other people, of different ethnic backgrounds, colors, languages, behavior, in a mixed of ages, is a “gratuity” life show. It *makes us aware* that we are not alone, not the only one. Awareness of being in Interrelationship with others can transform our awareness of becoming more and more interdependent.<sup>17</sup> Such awareness provides potency for transforming our humanity.<sup>18</sup>

*Building relationship* with others is possible here. We can talk within our own group or even with the stranger. The atmosphere creates a relax situation which makes it easy for us to communicate with one another *I don't know if it is because of my Indonesian culture which makes it easy for me to open to relationship*. The Italian people usually are a warm people and are very easy to speak. And the artistic and romantic atmosphere creates the space which

make the heart speaks rather than only the reason. Feelings of calm, beauty and natural, make the heart more open to one another.<sup>19</sup>

### Compassionate Space

One of the characteristics of an Italian or at least Roman Piazza is the abundance of drinkable waterfountain.<sup>20</sup> Everybody, usually the tourist who are in their journey are able to drink there freely. It is not only about a little space. It is about awareness of the need of many people. As we know, water is a fundamental biological human need, especially for quenching our thirst. *Giving drinkable water freely* is a symbol of participating, involving in giving attention to the life of other people.

### Hyde Park in London Uk<sup>21</sup>

Hyde Park of London is a huge open space of grass field, garden with flowers, water pond, big trees, many kinds of birds and seating facilities.

Hyde Park is a park in the borough of Westminster, London. It covers more than 340 acres (138 hectares) and is bordered on the east by Mayfair and on the west by Kensington Gardens. The park shares a large curved lake with its western neighbor; the portion of the lake in Kensington Gardens is known as the Long Water, whereas the Hyde Park portion is called the Serpentine. The lake is used for boating in the summer and skating in the winter. In the park's northeastern corner, near Marble Arch, is Speakers' Corner, which has long been a centre of free speech for soapbox orators. Also in the park are the Hudson Bird Sanctuary, a bandstand, large fountains, a ranger's lodge, and in the southeastern corner of the park, the statue of Achilles (1822), which recalls the duke of Wellington's victories. Hyde Park was formerly a royal hunting preserve. It was opened to the public in the early 17th century. (*Britannica 2003*)

### Comfort

It is *easy to get* to this place, by public transportation like taxi or bus. It is likewise accessible to pedestrians. It is because of its location in the city center of London and close to Buckingham Palace that makes it a center of tourism. There are *many choices of seating* alone, couple, or in groups under the sun or under the shadow of the trees.

### Some Activities

In this park, it is possible for us to *make a relationship with our own* or with others. The four model of Human Distance Space as Edward Hall<sup>22</sup> described, can be seen and experienced here. The intimate, personal, social and public distances are present in this place. We can seat alone, reading a book or talking with our self in tranquility, speaking with the grass or flowers or the trees. Taking a rest here is a good choice. It helps us to relax bodily and psychologically. Self Reflection is a good activity for our selves. But, we are also able to make any relationship with the animals, like birds and squirrel.<sup>23</sup> Possibility of *making relationship with nature* is a uniqueness of this place.



For me, a person which come from the Rain Forest Country, it is strange that here, the birds are not afraid to the people. They feel free to come closer to the people. Also the squirrels feel safe in the hand of the people. There is very big distance between people and animal in Indonesia.

*Speaking with the other people* in relaxed condition is not strange here. It is possible because of the seating setting and the relax atmosphere, under the tree which make us more flexible in making *human interaction*. People, especially the old man and women, in the morning sun shine, *meet each other* and speak with one another. It looks like that this space belongs to them. They look like they are at home and familiar with the place. Speaking among couple is also comfortable here. The huge space making all these are possible. Family can come here together also with their dog. Laying on the grass to get the summer sun is a special annual ritual of the people here.

### Social Act

In *Speaker's Corner* people can speak openly in public. It is a special place where people can *experience or express their democracy democratic? behavior*. Here the mutual attentions among the people and the speech, and also among the people them selves can be created and acted securely. Although

such space has a potential for conflict because of differences, it is also a challenge to improve the attitude of openness for one to another. It teaches the people to learn how *to appreciate the differences*. If it is organized well, it will help to avoid racism and in a long term it helps people to reach justice and peace.



In these kinds of public gathering, people are *able to experience the intimate communal space*, intimate in a group. Sociologically, it is a space and time, where people who are at first “out group” now become “in group”.

### **BIP Shopping mall in Bandung Indonesia**

Bandung Indah Plaza (BIP) which means “the Beautiful Plaza of Bandung”, is a big shopping center in Bandung City Center.<sup>24</sup> It is the first Mall or Supermarket in Bandung which is still crowded with people till to day.

#### **Comfort**

It is located in the city center so it is easy to get there by public transportation. It is also accessible by private vehicle although it is not easy to find parking area. Many people come to this Mall, also people from Jakarta. Pedestrians can also easily get to the mall. Traffic jam is almost an everyday occurrence around this mall. Often, it seems as though the street becomes a huge pedestrian lane. People and cars are mixed each other. But I will say that accessibility to this place is still easy.

BIP is private property but for public business. There are shopping center, market place, restaurants and bars, theaters, and children's playground. The Bookshop and market place are always crowded by the people.

Because of this Mall, so the Alun alun<sup>25</sup> (= city square) which used to be the main city center's meeting point, has now become empty. And because this Alun alun, which used to be the public space, now become Semi Private Space because it has been changed as the mosque's court yard, so the BIP

has become more and more for “real public”<sup>26</sup> people. Everybody may come. The poor and the rich, the multiethnic, children, youth and the old, man and woman are coming together there. Many people come for shopping or going to the market, but many others just to see, to explore their visual need of art, new fashion, or science and story in the bookshop. Restaurant and bookstore become places where people gather. Some people just to go for window shopping (cuci mata = eye washing).

Why people come here? They come because of its convenience and in some sense comfortable. Some activities can be done in one place. They don't need to go elsewhere. And when they are tired, they can go to the restaurant. The Husband and the children can go to the bookstore and the wife may go to the marketplace. They meet at the Mac Donald or Kentucky Fried Chicken. It is an efficient place. One place with multi functions. They like to come to BIP, because it is not sunny like in Alun Alun. It is fully air-conditioned. For Indonesian people it is still comfortable although it is too crowded now.

It is not comfortable for the people who would like to seat and relax. Only the restaurants and the cinema hall provide seating arrangements. So for some people who do not have money to go to the restaurant or bar, usually they go to the Cinema's Hall just to sit and watch people passing by.

Cleaning service is well provided so the people feel comfortable. Toilets are always clean but can only be used for a fee.

### **Activities**

The main purpose of this building complex is business. Market and shopping is the main function. People come for their daily need especially for meals. That is the main activity. The secondary function is also for the secondary human need. It is for woman dress and for male and children. It is interesting that now there are many kinds of fashion that are both “expensive” and “cheap”. So the poor and the rich could do shopping. Cheap or expensive materials which have the same color and style could be a “universal” or “common” mode. Book shop is always crowded. People come to read, not always to buy. So sometimes it functions as a temporary library. Other activities which absorb people who come are entertainments, both for children and adults. Playing some games and going to the movie theater are good reasons to come to the place. There are always many people who come just for “taking a walk” and “window shopping”. For such people, the BIP is like a big space for pedestrians. Other activities are

Promotion. It is a part of business which are always have priority in the main space close to the entrance hall. In this Shopping Center one has to pay for every facility. But for those who have no money to spare and would just like to go walking and sightseeing, the BIP is also the place to be.<sup>27</sup>

### **Social Acts**

Some years ago, some of our seminarians took some “people from the village” to come and see BI, and try to experience going by the escalator or lift. So for the villager, was an opportune time to experience modern city living. Going to BIP for them is an experience of transformation, from village to city. It was an experience of being a “temporary migrant”. They told their friends and families about the “high tech” experience that made them know and learn about something new happening in the city. It made them involve in urban life, although it was only a temporary incident. It made them in some sense proud of being increased human being.

Many youths gather together just to look at other people. They don't disturb the others. They meet their friends here and talking one another. It is a light Social gathering among them selves. If they experience that living among people are safe for them, it will create their behavior not to be afraid with the stranger. And this attitude will be a good potency for building social interaction.

It looks like that there is no possibility for social activities at the BIP except for business. But *the experience of seeing* all of these facilities in the full AC public-building can be seen as a gift especially for the poor. Many middle class people just take a walk there to *release their burden and their suffering*. Rather than be bored at home, they come here. At least, their visual hunger and thirst are fulfilled.

In some strategic areas, there are usually *boxes for collecting money for the poor* or sometime by the permission of the security, some students collect money from the passengers for the victim like tsunami etc.

In some senses, a place like the BIP functions like an oases for the people who need.

### **The Constant Features Of The Public Space Which Can Help People In Increasing Their Humanity Comfort**

These three public spaces give special attention for comforting people, biologically and psychologically. Accessibility of a place, ample security and

healthy environment are common human needs that need to be fulfilled. People can be oriented to deeper need like art appreciation, enjoy the beauty and feel secure in making relationship with others especially the stranger. *So comfort is not only experience on a superficial level but it is experienced in the depth of the heart.* So it is not about function anymore. It is spiritual. It is religious. *So comfort will be transformed into peace and freedom.*

### **Social Act**

If we look the three public spaces above, we could see that they provide a space for social acts to be done. Public space is a place of gathering. It is a potential of encountering. It is possible that in the public space a real human relationship can be made.

If we want to increase our humanity, then this potency can be changed into action which will improve the quality of humanity.

Piazza Navona with appreciation, Hydepark with democracy and openness and BIP with its solidarity with the “poor” are all potency to be developed as a constant human value. It is also possible to try to main social character from one place to be a part of social aspect in another place. BIP and Hydepark may promote the drinkable water tap. Hyde park and Piazza Navona can try to absorb the people's attention to the victim of Tsunami. Or BIP and Piazza Navona may invite people creatively to be more open one another.

These are many ideas which can be translated into actions with creative forms.

### **Transformation: Sharpening our human-senses**

*Sensibility* for listening, seeing, tasting, touching are improved well here, in this piazza. So their human's senses *can be sharpened*. It is not only an individual-business but more than that, it is a social appreciation. Art creates and enhances the social life. Art appreciation in one sense is also expression of the appreciation of the “memories”. They bring into the surface of daily life these memories of their old artists: musician, architect, sculptor and culinary artists. They keep their history alive, for themselves and for other people. Art then is not only a mere performance but a witness to the creativity of the human spirit for the world to see and enjoy.

In the area of Art, the personal space, social space and public space seems to be transformed or experienced as an intimate space.<sup>28</sup> A space

though it is public, gives possibility for people who use it, to experience the intimate atmosphere.

By giving attention intensively to the poor or people who are suffering, people *moved to be compassionate* to other people. It makes people to be more social human being. It is a transformation *from being independent to interdependent*.

In these public spaces, people are able to get an experience of something holistic, both plurality and unity, diversity and equality.

It is a transformation of semi public Space where “Everybody” may come, but not everybody are able to come, to the “real” public space, where people may come and are able to come. It is a place of being together, of gathering, encountering, relating, and being united.

Transformation then is not only about, human comfort, social act as the core of human activities, but it is an integration of all of these.

*Comfort as compassion to the others, social act as a bridge to enter into the others, so that the others become ours. The stranger becomes our intimate friend.*

It is a transformation, when what happens in this public space, happens in our daily life, in our own public space, at home. So we will experience the public space as our own home. People are familiar with one another. *People become a community.*

### **Schillebeeckx's Anthropological Constant Of Human Salvation As Point Of View In Seeing The Humanity Dimensions In Public Space<sup>29</sup>**

Wherever there is an atmosphere of intimate relationship with one another, there will usually be a space for compassion. The parable of “*A Good Samaritan*” tells us about how the public area like “The way from Jericho to Jerusalem” has the capability and potentiality to be an intimate-place. It becomes intimate, because the Samaritan comes close to the man victimized by robbers. So the personal distance is important, not only the physical distance but mainly is about the heart's distance. But when Jesus told this parable to the people, suggests that “*The way from Jericho to Jerusalem*” should be able to be found in every our public space.

Speaking systematically and in theological reflection, about the basic human need, which I mean as the basic fundamental need of being in fullness of humanity, I will use the ideas of *Schillebeeckx* about the *Anthropological Human Constant*.<sup>30</sup>

The fullness of humanity is an abstract idea which always can be put

into question. Schillebeeckx reminds us that our Christian faith speaks about the eschatological reality that our life is always in process of becoming more and more. As I had written in Introduction, Schillebeeckx said that *it is not able to speak about what is livable and true, good and happy humanity, or true humanity*. There is no “universal” human nature, which exists independently of time and space.<sup>31</sup>

“What we have at our disposal is no more than a set of anthropological constants, rather than a positivistic outline,... These may present us with human values, but we must make a creative contribution to their specific norms in the changing process of history. In other words, in very general terms these anthropological constants point to *permanent* human impulses and orientations,... I see them as a kind of system of co-ordinates, the focal point of which is personal identity within social culture.”<sup>32</sup>

The Anthropological Constants (AC), which Schillebeeckx explains above, is The System of Co-Ordinate of man and his salvation. These seven AC are: 1. Relationship to human corporeality, nature and the ecological environment. 2. Being a man involves fellow men. 3. The connection with social and institutional structures. 4. The conditioning of people and culture by time and space. 5. Mutual Relationship of Theory and Practice. 6. The Religious and 'Para-Religious' consciousness of man 7 The synthesis of these six dimensions.<sup>33</sup>

Connecting with the three case studies I have mentioned above, not all of these six -AC will be used. Every case study has its own specific AC which connects with its experiences or its own characteristic. But when we see all together (also with the conclusion) we will find that the Image of what we mean with Human Salvation. Again, I will say that maybe it's still not in the fullness of meaning, because our faith of our humanity is eschatological, which include the “already” and “not yet” aspects.

### **Relationship to human corporeality, nature and the ecological environment.**

This first AC especially can be found, can be experienced as real or can be understood in the case study of Hyde Park. Schillebeeckx wrote that:

This first AC already open up a whole sphere of human values, the

norm needed from a relationship between our own corporeality and the natural environment of man worthy of our true humanity norm, however, which we ourselves must establish in the contexts of the particular circumstances in which we now live. This already opens up the perspective of the relationship of mankind to nature, which are not exclusively provided by the human value of the domination of nature, but also provided by the equally human values of aesthetic and enjoyable converse with the nature.<sup>34</sup>

Having relationship with nature will make human more aware that they are only a part of nature. Interdependency between them is important. It is an Interdependency of living together. Without nature, we don't have fresh air in the sky, we don't have healthy water, or food to eat. Without nature we will have no life. So, keeping the forest alive in the city; taking care of flowers and pool with the fishes and all kind of birds make people more and more human. Being gentle with animals makes people realize more their gently humanity.

Open Spaces like Hyde Park is important to make city habitable which is essential for the survival of the humanity of the human being itself.

Our relationship with nature and our own corporeality come up against boundaries which we have to respect if we are to live a truly human life and, in an extreme instance, if we are even to survive. Although we may not be able to establish precisely where the limits, but we are sure about such inescapable limits do exist.<sup>35</sup>

A Public Space like Hyde Park is convenient for self reflection, so that an individual person can be aware about his or her limits and aware about the need of others. It is also possible for such activity to be done in other public spaces, *if we arrange a special space for silent and reflection.*

Especially in summer time, people enjoy very much the sunbathing in this Park. It is a real reminder that our life is similar with the season itself. We experience that in our life sometime there is summer, sometime autumn and sometime spring and winter. Nature teaches us to be more natural human being. That human being is limited. That living is both continuity and change. All experiences connecting with the nature, the living environment make people aware of their dignity, their existence as part of creation. It help people aware that their life is in process of becoming, it is an *eschatological experience.*

I think that in every country, nature is an important thing which must

be kept as our human environment. A City without natural open-space is a poor and unhealthy city.

Public Space whatever their form, is a place where people can be oriented to the awareness of their appropriate human environment. That it is not a purely natural world, but a meta-cosmos, which offers human a better environment. Public space is a service towards livable humanity. It is condition for the humanizing of man.<sup>36</sup>

Public Space like Hyde Park, Piazza Navona and BIP transform people in experiencing the change of quality “from natural space to human place”<sup>37</sup>

### **Being a man involves fellow men.**

This second AC exposes the element of being together, contact with the other, because “human personal identity at the same time includes relationships with other people”<sup>38</sup>

“The human face in particular already indicate that man is directed toward others, is destined for others and not for himself, the face is an image of ourselves for others.”<sup>39</sup>

This second AC, can be used for all the case study I make. Everywhere we go, we always meet other people, especially in Public Space. Public space is place where people can meet others face-to-face. It is not only for meeting but also provides a space for interrelating with other people. Facing each other, face to face, eye to eye, is important as starting process of social relationship or communication. Hall said that it is good if people are not afraid to speak to the stranger.<sup>40</sup> To create this kind of social sphere is not easy, especially if it concerns to anonymous people. There is always potential for conflict. In Indonesia, the way to see each other, eye to eye, can be interpreted as a challenge to fight. So the face is important. The face can “speak” the most eloquent body language. But if we are able to make relationship or to adapt ourselves to others, so we will experience our potential of being a social human being. It is also an experience of transformation from our personal individualistic to communal human being.

My friend in Bandung and also here in Chicago, said that they enjoy “seeing the people”. To see the people make them happy because they learn from other people about the richness and the plurality of humankind. *“It makes us aware that every person is unique, and it is a happy moment when we are able to*

*see, and to accept the uniqueness of everybody*”. That's what they said.<sup>41</sup>

In Hyde Park, especially in Speech Corner, the potential for becoming a group is strong. To become a public person is another experience of transformation which can be found here. Doing political, social relationship is not always easy. To express democratic behavior is challenging. But, if the problem can be solved, it will transform us, personally or communally. It creates a chance to be more human.

Piazza Navona, connected with this second AC, has another specific character. Here, people are more relaxed to connect with others. If a painter paints the face of somebody, there is connection of the one with another. But when people start to come to see this process of painting then the public communal space is created. If people start to appreciate the talent of the painter, then another relationship comes into being I saw it happened when a girl played Ave Maria with her violin, people came close to listen and applauded her and even gave her some “Euro”. A magician who expertly performed elicited a spontaneous communal appreciation. It is as though strangers are transformed into a community by appreciating together human art and talent.

In this Piazza, the family gathering looks like an ordinary event. Children and their parents play together. The place becomes a playground for them. So the inner social family system is developed here.

Many people come for meals, in the semi public space of the Piazza. They are not only enjoying the meals but also watching people and talking each other. Hall's chart shows that the personal distance close-phase and far-phase could be found here.<sup>42</sup> I say that it could happen, because I'm not sure if the close phase and far phase are the same for the American (Hall) and for the European, especially the Italian people, although, not all the people in bar or pizzeria are Italian.

Again, here people can experience the plurality and the differences of people, ethnicities, and cultures. Experience of universality is an experience of transformation. That we are in some sense are both the same and different. This unity aspect has a potentiality for stirring human compassion.

BIP is a shopping center where people usually come for shopping. It is for commercial purposes that this mall is built. But it has in fact become a meeting place for different people. I think “taking a walk” is the main purpose why people come here. Getting refreshed by sight seeing, window shopping, and sometime meeting others, are the general motivations of people to come in such place like BIP. It looks like that it is possible to do

social occasion. But the strong potency of adaptation of the local people is also a strong potential for gathering. That's why there are many business promotions, and many people come and see. People in fact are easily drawn to any attractive event in the mall. For Indonesian people, affection is important. So, it is easy to stimulate the feeling of compassion. In the main hall usually there is a charity box, for the poor or for the victim of calamities like the recent "tsunami". Bandung is a city of five million people and any place can easily get crowded. In BIP people are everywhere, in restaurants, in bookshops, in main hall, in cinemas, in entertainment areas. Almost every place is potential to be "seen" visually.

The charity corners or public service corners like "Free medicine"; "drug-victim recovery" and "job opportunity" are places in where people easily gather. A neutral Compassionate Action is not something strange to be promoted.

It is possible here to explore the idea of *Roman drinkable fountain and Javanese Kendi* so people who are thirsty can drink water freely. This idea functions not merely as a service but also as a reminding people to do the same for others. This idea can be compared with "the washing feet", in John.13,14<sup>43</sup>

Thus it is not only a ministry but again it is an evangelical act. It is, in the language of *John Paul Lederach*, an act of *improving human capacity* to find the value of relationship; the value of the mutual relationship. It develops the human capacity to "see" who we are and who we will be. It increases our capacity to see our selves and to see our selves through the eye of other. It enhances our capacity to see the man of God. *It increases the quality of human relationship.*<sup>44</sup>

### **The Connection with Social and Institutional Structures.**

I think it is important to make some rules or constitutive forms, which are good for the human being especially in increasing the social dimension in public life, as social norms. It is possible for the Urban Design Department in every city, to make some criteria for designing public space or public places which connect or emphasize the social human relationship aspect, like "compassion" or "love each other", even in business areas like shopping mall. I think it is what Schillebeeckx called as the social consensus.<sup>45</sup>

This constant, too, show us a sphere of values, above all the value of institutional and structural elements for a truly human life....;

personal identity also need social consensus, need to be supported by structures and institutions which make possible human freedom and the realization of values.<sup>46</sup>

This aspect must be very important. Especially for my paper, it will be in the final goal that I will propose some criteria for guarantee the social dimension in designing public space in urban area. For me, keeping “the universal-human-values, which are automatically Christian values,” alive and continue in institutional structures, is not only important but guarantees our own human survival, our own salvation.

### **The religious and parareligious consciousness of man.**

I will directly go to the sixth AC which is a fundamental one. *This utopian element is very important especially for places where there are many poor and marginalized people in a wide senses.* They are those who are poor in terms of material wealth, poor in relationship with oneself and others, poor in relationship with nature, poor in the appreciation of human arts, poor in compassion and being authentically human. Only the “poor” who need the “future”. “Future” which is translated as utopia or dreams which will be “fulfilled” sometime and somewhere, is experienced as *distance* for such people. Schreiter use the term “*distant-future*”. But having future even in distance, is always *a form of faith*.<sup>47</sup>

By seeing and experiencing the world progress, the current signs of the times, the difference and equality of people; they are able to be more stimulated and to be challenged to make progress in their own humanity. But more than that, it is not only a challenge to secular human progress but because it challenges our faith, it is also a challenge to people's religiosity.

People in public space are no longer just focused on the functional, material or utilitarian aspects of life. They are now aware that there is another dimension of life which is more important and must be cared for. There is a spiritual dimension in every human relationship. The unity, the compassion, the attention and the orientation for others, are important for transforming their humanity, to become more and more God's image. In this dimension, “relationship” will become a “call” or a “vocation” for Peace Building. That is what Schreiter<sup>48</sup> said as the other aspect of spirituality.

I will say that this area of spirituality is no more an area of bodily comfort. It is now that we have been entering another dimension of humanity: the spiritual or the religious part of our humanity. This is an area

of *compassion*, area of the *burning heart*, area of *interior-vision* It is area of *transformation*, area where human become more *divine-human*.

### Urban-design Criteria For Public Space And Compassionate Project

As the conclusion I will propose two items: The first is some *Criteria in Social Dimension* which can be used for the Criteria of Urban Public Space Design of whatever [their] form.<sup>49</sup> These criteria will be based upon the social dimension of person, which Christians call “compassion”. Its purpose or goal is the human salvation, which according to Schillebeeckx, is always undefinable.<sup>50</sup> The second is about real *Compassionate Project* which is a part of criteria which can be realized as a real project. (the ideas of these project can be seen under criteria of compassionate project.

1. The first criteria, is Human Comfort. People are always looking for comfort. Nobody wants suffering. This comfort can be an experience of aesthetics, health, intimacy, and comfort. Public Space has to give attention to the beauty and the harmony which are able to make people feel balanced. Places must be healthy. Cleaning service and a healthy environment must be well provided. Spaces for intimate human encounter must be provided. A Public space must make people feel secure. Hospitality of and for the people and welcoming space must be arranged well. Proportional human-scale usually make people feel being accepted. *Accessibility* can be assured if the place is designed in such a manner that it is well integrated with the public transportation.
2. Safety in Public Space where many strangers are together is very important. The security must be controlled by the owner or by them who are responsible. Giving Alternative in seating arrangement which are comfort for group of people as well as for anybody who will be alone, maybe one alternative which make people feel safe. Security stations must be near seating areas. Enough Lighting in every place is important, especially if the public place will be used in the evening.
3. Relationship should be created in every public place. This goal of creating spaces for people to relate with each other can be attained by carefully designed seating arrangements that are conducive for interaction. Unifying people emotionally by stimulating the sense of solidarity is also important, especially when we will focus in compassion. I think it is better to use the secular spiritual performance by promoting the love song or by performing live music. It is good if in majority Public Space, people are able to experience their equality as

human being and also the richness of being different from one another. Unity in plurality can be experienced as an important aspect of the relationship.

4. Compassion as specific goal of public service for the poor must become an important criteria for the public space that is open to everyone. For the marginalized like the drug user, alcoholic, the people with HIV, the prostitute; there are always public information, for those who need help. For the unemployed there should be information about possibilities of getting job or skill training. I think that charitable projects, even if they are just temporary has the capacity to stir compassion in the hearts of people. It could be fund raising for the victims of tsunami or giving scholarships for the poor students who need it. Preparing drinkable water in some strategic locations is always an act of witnessing of giving attention to the needs of people.
5. Every Public Space should transform people who come there. This transformation can be realized by giving the people information and inspiration. It could be recent information of the real situation of the world, or about the suffering of the people and also of the progress of the world. It is about human concern and hope. Also by giving the inspiration which will stimulate their utopias, so the people will be always connected with the hope, the possibilities, the dreams and the future. They will be aware that there are always alternatives, that there are always choices.

It is also an act of transforming people, by giving them a chance to enter into discussion, especially for those who are interested seeking solutions to human problems. The spirit of democracy can be built among the people, through dialogue with one another. Transformation assumes challenges which need to be shared with the people whatever their status. It is a challenge for becoming more human, for fulfilling their humanity, or in Schillebeeckx's language, it is a challenge to reach or to actualize their Human-Constant.

By giving again and again all of these aspects of transformation, we will enhance a continuous awareness among the people. And once they become more aware, they will be able to experience their reality as human being.

6. To communicate all these ideas, values and utopias, we need to be always in contact with the real sign of the time. It is a time of Media Culture, so using the media communication as effectively as possible is important. With this Media Technology, time and space is no more a

hindrance. Every where and every time we can be informed, to be inspired, and to be aware, we have always a chance for getting it. Video panels need to be located in places where people usually gather together. An effective communication is important. Audio visuals which touch the people can be used for evangelizing and proclaiming “the good news” among the nations.

Again, I will emphasize the possibility of using this media to make people aware and to build in them the attitude of being a “compassionate human society”. A good film, such as “a good Samaritan” can be used in this “media” in all Public Space. So they will be aware that even in our failure and our suffering there is still any hope of the real salvation.<sup>51</sup>

7. I know that all these utopias are impossible to be done without a *compassionate professional management*. So the team must be prepared well in terms of spirituality, management and leadership skills. Giving the enlightenment and guidance to all these people, who are responsible for all of these, must be planned carefully. The human effort must be used, especially in *connecting with the political situation*,<sup>52</sup> especially for the Indonesian people who are very sensitive with the issue of “Christianization”. And if the teams have faith, *God's companionship must be involved*. Schreiter in his presentation<sup>53</sup> emphasized the truth and openness for peace and justice. So if it is about the truth I think we need to have courage to be truthful. There is no fear if there is faith. Schillebeeckx said that our human salvation comes from God and through the earth. Salvation is from God, experienced through man and the world.<sup>54</sup>

### Hope, Faith And Compassion

*It is like children shouting to each other as they sit in the market place: We played the pipes for you and you wouldn't dance; we sang dirges, and you wouldn't be mourners. (Mt.11,16b-17)*

*But blessed are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! In truth I tell you, many prophets and upright people longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it. (Mt. 13, 16-17)*

Many people like the priest and the Levite on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, who see but do not see, who hear but do not hear. I think it's all happened because they do not open their heart to the revelation of God.

We should help them to see and to hear. We should create a tool to touch and to open their heart to the stranger.

I hope that the criteria I propose can be used as a tool to stimulate Human Compassion, so the people will be able to see, to hear, and to encounter with their own salvation. So the people will be able to reach their own dignity, as human- the image of God.

My faith says that our pure and good attention will become a blessing from the sky and task of the earth. It will be collaboration between God and Human.

**Rudiyanto Subagio**

*Catholic Theological Union, Chicago*

### **End Notes:**

1. Schilleebeckx, Christ, The Experience of Jesus as Lord, translated by John Bowden, Crossroad Book, 1980. p.737
2. Luk. 10,25-37
3. Luk. 24,13-35
4. See [www.pps.org/building/info/idea\\_book/public\\_zone](http://www.pps.org/building/info/idea_book/public_zone) (March 2005)
5. [www.ppp.org](http://www.ppp.org) and some question which help us to understand every situation of the public space such as:

### **Questions to consider on Access & Linkages:**

Can you see the space from a distance? Is its interior visible from the outside?

Is there a good connection between the space and the adjacent buildings, or is it surrounded by blank walls? Do occupants of adjacent buildings use the space?

Can people easily walk to the place? For example, do they have to dart between moving cars to get to the place?

Do sidewalks lead to and from the adjacent areas?

Does the space function for people with special needs?

Do the roads and paths through the space take people where they actually want to go?

Can people use a variety of transportation options - bus train, car, bicycle, etc. to reach the place?

Are transit stops conveniently located next to destinations such as libraries, post offices, park entrances, etc.?

**Questions to consider on Comfort & Image:**

- Does the place make a good first impression?
- Are there more women than men?
- Are there enough places to sit? Are seats conveniently located? Do people have a choice of places to sit, either in the sun or shade?
- Are spaces clean and free of litter? Who is responsible for maintenance? What do they do? When?
- Does the area feel safe? Is there a security presence? If so, what do these people do? When are they on duty?
- Are people taking pictures? Are there many photo opportunities available?
- Do vehicles dominate pedestrian use of the space, or prevent them from easily getting to the space?

**Questions to consider on Uses & Activities:**

- Are people using the space or is it empty?
- Is it used by people of different ages?
- Are people in groups?
- How many different types of activities are occurring - people walking, eating, playing baseball, chess, relaxing, reading?
- Which parts of the space are used and which are not?
- Are there choices of things to do?
- Is there a management presence, or can you identify anyone in charge of the space?

**Questions to consider on Sociability:**

- Is this a place where you would choose to meet your friends? Are others meeting friends here or running into them?
- Are people in groups? Are they talking with one another?
- Do people seem to know each other by face or by name?
- Do people bring their friends and relatives to see the place or do they point to one of its features with pride?
- Are people smiling? Do people make eye contact with each other?
- Do people use the place regularly and by choice?
- Does a mix of ages and ethnic groups that generally reflect the community at large?
- Do people tend to pick up litter when they see it?

6. Goffman, Erving, *Behavior in Public Places*, The Free Press, 1969, p. 9-24
7. Schillebeeckx, *Ibid.*, p.731
8. *Ibid.* p.733
9. I had experienced being in these three public space.
10. We can find such courtyard like piazza in Belgia, Germany, especially in part

- of the old town or old city. Usually it is closed to the state main office.
11. Piazza: square or marketplace in an Italian town or city. The word is cognate with the French and English “place” and Spanish “plaza,” all ultimately derived from the Greek *plateia*, “broad street.” (*Britannica 2003*)
  12. It is Bernini's allegorical Piazza Navona fountain, the statue of the Nile River, whose source was then unknown. The fountain was, in fact, unveiled in 1651, a year before the church of S. Agnes was begun, two years before Borromini was called in, and 15 years before the facade was completed. The church is owned and maintained by the Doria-Pamphili family. (*Britannica 2003*)
  13. It was semi private space with the “panorama” to the public space
  14. Hall, Edward T., *The Hidden Dimension*, Anchor Books, 1990. p.78 plate 14
  15. *Ibid.* p.146. about French use open space.
  16. Goffmann, Erving, *Behavior in Public Places*, Free Press New York, 1969, p.134.
  17. Cf. Roger Schwarz, divides human relationship into three level. The first level is dependence. The second is interdependence and the highest level is the interdependence. He is an organizational psychologist which helps many groups, organizations and communities by “facilitative skill” for creating the fundamental change. In his book: *Ground Rules for Effective Groups* he improves the ideas of Ground Rules for Effective Groups. This ground rules based upon 4 core values: *valid information, free and informed choice, internal commitment and compassion*. By internal commitment people will be responsible for their conclusion and their will which is connected with their role. By compassion people will understand the differences views, then concern to the need of others as their own need. By compassion we will enter into the area of human's core value truly, empathically.  
I think this *interdependence* is a kind of sources or seeds of *compassion*. Speaking about compassion is not about planning. It is about spontaneous human acts. So the Public space is a Place which is potential for these actions.
  18. If we compare with the idea of Karl Rahner of the Anonymus Christian, so I will give a special term for this act of just seeing people, as “*anonymous social act*”
  19. Hall. *Ibid.*, about French Use of Open Space: Reasonably clean air, sidewalks up to seventy feet wide, automobiles that will not dwarf human as they pass on the boulevards make it possible to have outdoor cafes and open areas where people congregate and enjoy each other. (p.146)
  20. Cf. with the Indonesian culture, especially in Jawa and Sumatra about “kendi”. It is about behavior to put “kendi” ( a terracotta pottery with water inside to drink.) in front of the house, close to the gate. So every bodies who are thirsty in their way to the market, esp. for people come from villages, are able to drink and fulfill their thirsty and to get more energy to continue their journey.
  21. Hyde park is a park in the borough of Westminster, London. It covers more than 340 acres (138 hectares) and is bordered on the east by Mayfair and on the west by Kensington Gardens. The park shares a large curved lake with its

western neighbor; the portion of the lake in Kensington Gardens is known as the Long Water, whereas the Hyde Park portion is called the Serpentine. The lake is used for boating in the summer and skating in the winter. In the park's northeastern corner, near Marble Arch, is Speakers' Corner, which has long been a centre of free speech for soapbox orators. Also in the park are the Hudson Bird Sanctuary, a bandstand, large fountains, a ranger's lodge, and in the southeastern corner of the park, the statue of Achilles (1822), which recalls the duke of Wellington's victories. Hyde Park was formerly a royal hunting preserve. It was opened to the public in the early 17th century. (*Britannica 2003*)

22. Hall, Edward T., *ibid* p. 126, chart showing interplay of the distant and immediate receptors in proxemic perception.
23. Once I gave the birds some breads, and hundreds of them flew to me, hang on my neck, on my shoulder, and on my head. It was amazing experience to be so close with the nature. They didn't afraid of me. This feeling made me happy. Nature became my friend.
24. A shopping centre is a collection of independent retail stores, services, and a parking area conceived, constructed, and maintained by a management firm as a unit. Shopping centers may also contain restaurants, banks, theatres, professional offices, service stations, and other establishments. (*Britannica 2003*)
25. *Alun alun* is a city square. Usually in a big city there is always a city square. It is a huge open space where people can come together. It is surrounded by State Office, Mosque, shopping center and it used to be a jail for the prisoner. It was typically Javanese Palace Square, where the king meets the people.
26. If I write here the word "real public" just to make sure that this place is for everybody. It is not an exclusive place for only a group of people.  
Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Space*, Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings the Free Press, 1963., *Obligation Regarding Main Involvement*
27. In many social situations, a particular main involvement will be seen as an intrinsic part of the social occasion in which the situation occurs, and will be defined as preferential if not obligatory. (p.50) The main involvement sustained by an individual within a social situation can express his apparent purpose in being present; an obligation to have an appropriate main involvement is an obligation to have a particular purpose. (p.51) Cf. also being present in a public place without an orientation to apparent goals outside the situation is sometimes called *lolling*, when position is fixed, and *loitering*, when some movement is entailed. (p.56) *Lolling and loitering are often, but not always, prohibited.*
28. Hall, *ibid*. esp. for the US people, each zone has a near and far phase. (see also the chart showing interplay of the distant and immediate receptors in proxemic perception p. 126)
29. This term is Schillebeeckx's term in his book *Christ*, answering the question

- what is humanity. (p.731)
30. Schillebeeckx, *ibid.* p.733: “in very general terms these anthropological constants point to permanent human impulses and orientations, values and spheres of value, but at the same time do not provide us with directly specific norms or ethical imperatives in accordance with which true and livable humanity would have to be called into existence here and now.”
  31. *Ibid.*, p.731 : That cannot be either so-called “universal human nature” which, like plant or animal, is governed from within and is by nature oriented towards a pre-destined goal, nor can it be any of the modern versions of this: i.e. so-called natural law. Further more, no reflection on oneself can arrive at a crystallization of a kind of general substratum of rationality among all men, independently of time and space.
  32. *Ibid.* p.733-734
  33. *Ibid.* p. 734-743
  34. *Ibid.* p. 734-735
  35. Schillebeeckx , *The Schillebeeckx Reader*, edited by Robert J. Schreiter, Crossroad 1984., cf. Christ p.734
  36. Schillebeeckx, Christ. P.735
  37. Cf. Tuan, Yi-Fu, *Space and Place*, University of Minnesota Press, 1977.
  38. *Ibid.* p.736
  39. *Ibid.* p.737
  40. Hall, Edward T., *Proxemics*, in *The Anthropology of Space and Place*, edited by Setha M.Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga, Blackwell, 2003 p. 51-55
  41. It is include our experience during discussion in Theological Anthropology class, the end of May 2005.
  42. Hall, Robert T., *The Hidden Dimension*, p.126
  43. *The New Jerusalem Bible*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1990: “If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you”. (John.13,14-15)
  44. On the opening session of *World Mission Institute 2005*, Dr. John Paul Lederach presented “The Moral Imagination; the Art and Soul of Building Peace”
  45. Schillebeeckx, Christ, p.738
  46. *Ibid.* p.738
  47. Schillebeeckx, *Schillebeeckx Reader*, p.36 : “.....even if only in distant future.” No matter what form such a totalitarian view may take,.....- it is always a form of faith, in the sense of a “utopia” which can not be scientifically demonstrated, or at least can never be completely rationalized.
  48. Dr. Robert Schreiter in *World Mission Institute 2005*, in Chicago presented “Reconciliation and Peace Making the Challenges Ahead”. He emphasized Spirituality especially connected with reconciliation. One aspect of this reconciliation is community which has it focus on “relationship”.  
Robert Schreiter is a professor for theology of Vatican II, teaching in Europe

- and USA, a good facilitator for inter religious and inter culture dialog.
49. Cf. Hall, Edward T., *ibid.* p.103-107 about fixed-feature space
  50. In *Christ*. p.790 Schillebeeckx described the eschatological aspect of human salvation. Human experience of salvation is an integral part of salvation from God (K. Rahner), a minimal presupposition (H. Kuitert), a disclosure of a future horizon, which is to be comprehensible at all (J. Moltmann). It is an experience of fragments of human healing and liberation.
  51. Schillebeeckx, *Christ*, p.822
  52. *Ibid.* p.773, about the religion with the specific effect in politics and p.804 about the political and mystical activity
  53. Schreier, Robert in his presentation in World Mission Institute 2005, Chicago.
  54. Schillebeeckx, *ibid.* P.762