We are, in truth, at the opening of one of those phases of human as of simpler evolution, when individuals casually crowded, loosely grouped, begin to enter upon a new phase of existence—more social, more orderly, and in general more beautiful.

Patrick Geddes, "Town Planning and City Design"

2

Patrick Geddes's Theory of the City

Victorian Britain was the first modern society to experience on a grand scale the process of industrialization and the establishment of modern capitalism. Progress and change occurred rapidly but continuously and were readily observable in the fabric of its towns and cities. Railway tracks and telegraph wires drew new lines of transport and communication over the land. Railway stations, stock markets, bank buildings, and department stores came to dominate city centers, rivaling the spires of the churches. Existing cities grew into the countryside, where they threatened the realm of the upper classes, the country house. Extended areas of cherished land became coal fields or disappeared beneath the endless rows of working-class houses that formed new industrial cities. As the landscape changed its appearance, the life of the people changed too. The upper classes benefited from newly created wealth, which they spent sometimes on urban amenities, sometimes on their country estates. Change was more dramatic at the other end of the social hierarchy, for those working in the new factories and

living in the row houses. Working-class Britons had to come to terms with unemployment, illness, and bad housing. For them, life in an industrialized society was not necessarily a better life; they were often compelled to give up a poor but somewhat secure life in the countryside for a poorer and insecure town life. Furthermore, because the emerging working class was seen as a potential threat to the rich whose wealth they produced, they became the object of ongoing scrutiny.

Another result of the transformation of Victorian society was the centralization of the state. Administrative and political power guaranteed a stable frame of laws and regulations within which the individual entrepreneur could compete either at home or abroad. The state also attempted to guarantee the economic basis of production by improving the health, living, and labor conditions of the working classes. Yet in the predominantly liberal climate of Victorian Britain any interference with the natural course of economics was deeply unpopular, and state initiatives were accordingly confined to easing the worst results of laissez-faire practices. Additional endeavors were left to churches or philanthropic individuals and organizations, which often concentrated on individual problems like alcohol consumption, or on the improvement of housing through model settlements like Cadbury's Bournville (from 1879) or Lever's Port Sunlight (from 1888). The problems of society were often traced back to the moral and ethical conduct of its individual members rather than to economic, political, and social structures. The underlying issues at stake were the relations between different social classes on the one hand and the individual and the larger society on the other. As the problems of an industrialized capitalist society were new, many of those concerned with the condition of society began to look back into human history for guidance, seeking to reintroduce imaginary models of a happier past into the completely new social, economic, and political environment of Victorian Britain.

Victorian Britain and Historical Models

The Middle Ages took on such a model character for the Victorians, admired as a period of a great society predominantly structured by Christian thought, with the medieval city as its nearly perfect expression. The life of the city's inhabitants was organized around guilds: unions of citizens of the

same profession, which guaranteed economic and social security and advantages to their members. Among these, the mason's guild was of particular interest to many nineteenth-century reformers, especially those involved with art and architecture. The mason's guild was responsible, supported by the rest of the city's inhabitants, for the erection of the cathedral, the edifice that dominated the medieval cityscape both architecturally and symbolically. The cathedral became a symbol of the possible heights to which a society could rise, in which the mutual endeavor of all people, despite their different social positions, was guided toward one unifying aim. A range of nineteenth-century undertakings, including the antiquarian Gothic revival in its early decades, John Ruskin's Guild of St. George, William Morris's Red House designed by Philip Webb in 1859, Morris's guildlike company Morris & Co., or the arts and crafts movement in general, were all influenced by aesthetic and economic principles derived from the Middle Ages, though the primary points of reference differed according to individual social, political, and artistic interests.

But the Middle Ages were only one possible model society, especially popular toward the end of the nineteenth century. This popularity was preceded and paralleled by a strong interest in antiquity, especially classical Greece of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., which first acquired the status of a model society in the second half of the eighteenth century. The questions Enlightenment philosophers asked about human self-knowledge and man's position in nature, along with political upheavals like the American and French revolutions, seriously shook traditional institutions and the morals and ethical values of the older societies. Thus began a process of societal change that lasted through the whole of the nineteenth century. Classical Greece offered an alternative social model characterized by stable conditions and a coherent body of values. As a model society it could be exploited both by those who argued for change and by those who wanted to preserve the status quo.[1] The latter were represented by the enlightened absolutist rulers who embellished towns and country estates with classicist buildings meant both to impress and to teach their people humanist values. On the other hand the artists, architects, and writers who took the grand tour through Greece and Italy often dreamed of democracy, even if they were financed by the absolutist rulers who made use of their newfound knowledge at home.

In Victorian Britain the classical world occupied a major position in politics, philosophy, and education. The inclusion of classical subjects in higher education fostered a traditional knowledge of Greek civilization among the educated classes. For those who were no longer taught Greek or Latin, new translations of classical authors were deployed in an attempt to maintain the validity of these favored texts of the political elite. The interest in antiquity was a contemporary one rather than historical, for as historian Frank M. Turner explains, "writing about Greece was in part a way for the Victorians to write about themselves."[2] The historicist, evolutionary interpretation of national history as stages in a process of growth allowed for the juxtaposition of Victorian Britain with classical Greece, since both cultures were seen as being on the same level of their development and therefore facing comparable political, moral, and aesthetic problems.

Within this larger frame, the middle of the nineteenth century was marked by a particular revival of interest in Plato. According to Turner, the nineteenth-century revival of Plato was much stronger than its Renaissance counterpart.[3] At a time when the influence of Christian churches was on the wane, Plato offered an alternative intellectual paradigm similarly concerned with such issues as transcendence and the eternity of the soul. Furthermore, Plato's widely read dialogue the *Republic* addresses a question—the relation between the state or society and the individual citizen—that was of utmost importance to the Victorians.

Plato's *Republic* is presented as a dialogue between the philosopher Socrates and some of his pupils on the moral question "What is justice?" The question is not a purely academic one, for Socrates wants to find out whether it pays to live a just life. Socrates suggests it is appropriate to begin this examination at the level of a Greek *polis* or city and then focus in on the individual, since if justice can be found in this larger unit it will be easier to identify the equivalent in the smaller one.[4] However, justice is a matter of both the community and the individual in which the latter is the decisive element, for as Plato writes, "We are bound to admit that the elements and traits that belong to a state must also exist in the individuals that compose it. There is nowhere else for them to come from."[5] A good city should therefore possess the four virtues of wisdom, courage, self-restraint, and justice. If the first three can be found within the city, the fourth, justice, will be immediately evident as well.

Accordingly, the perfectly good city is characterized by a division of the inhabitants into three classes. The majority of people belong to the economic class, serving the ruling class which is divided into auxiliaries (the military) and guardians proper. Courage, defined as the ability to adhere to what is correct and lawful under any circumstances, is the virtue associated with the auxiliaries. The guardians are the old and wise men administering in the interests of the *polis*. Their virtue is wisdom, in this case knowledge about the well-being of the city as a whole and its relations to other cities. The virtue of self-restraint is embodied in the rulership of the good part of a city (the guardians proper) over the other parts.[6] Justice—the principle that each man should pursue only one profession, that which suits him most naturally—is the virtue that concerns all inhabitants of the *polis* equally. Each class should likewise be confined to its functions and none should try to perform the functions of another; if the relations between the classes are determined by this restriction, the city will be a just one.[7] Each individual, like the city itself, is composed of three parts—desire or appetite, reason, and spirit—and the relation between these determines whether the individual is just.[8] The connection between city and individual is thus a matter of scale: both the just city and the just individual are ruled by the same principle of the relation between the four constitutive parts, and insights into justice at one level are reciprocally transferable to the other.

The Notation of Life

One of Geddes's most sophisticated "thinking machines" is the Notation of Life, occasionally also called Chart of Life, a graphic summary of his ideas about human life (figure 2.1). The diagram puts forward a theory of human interaction with the environment, drawing on subjects ranging from contemporary psychology and politics to sociology, arts, and beyond. The Notation of Life is not merely descriptive or analytic but a call for action, as it contains Geddes's methodology for the improvement of the human condition.

Plato's quest for the just life led to the insight that *polis* and citizens are connected in an interdependent relationship, from which alone the good life can emerge. Geddes assumes a comparable relationship between the two principal forms of human life, the individual and the social or cooperative. "Like flower and butterfly," he writes, "city and citizen are bound in an

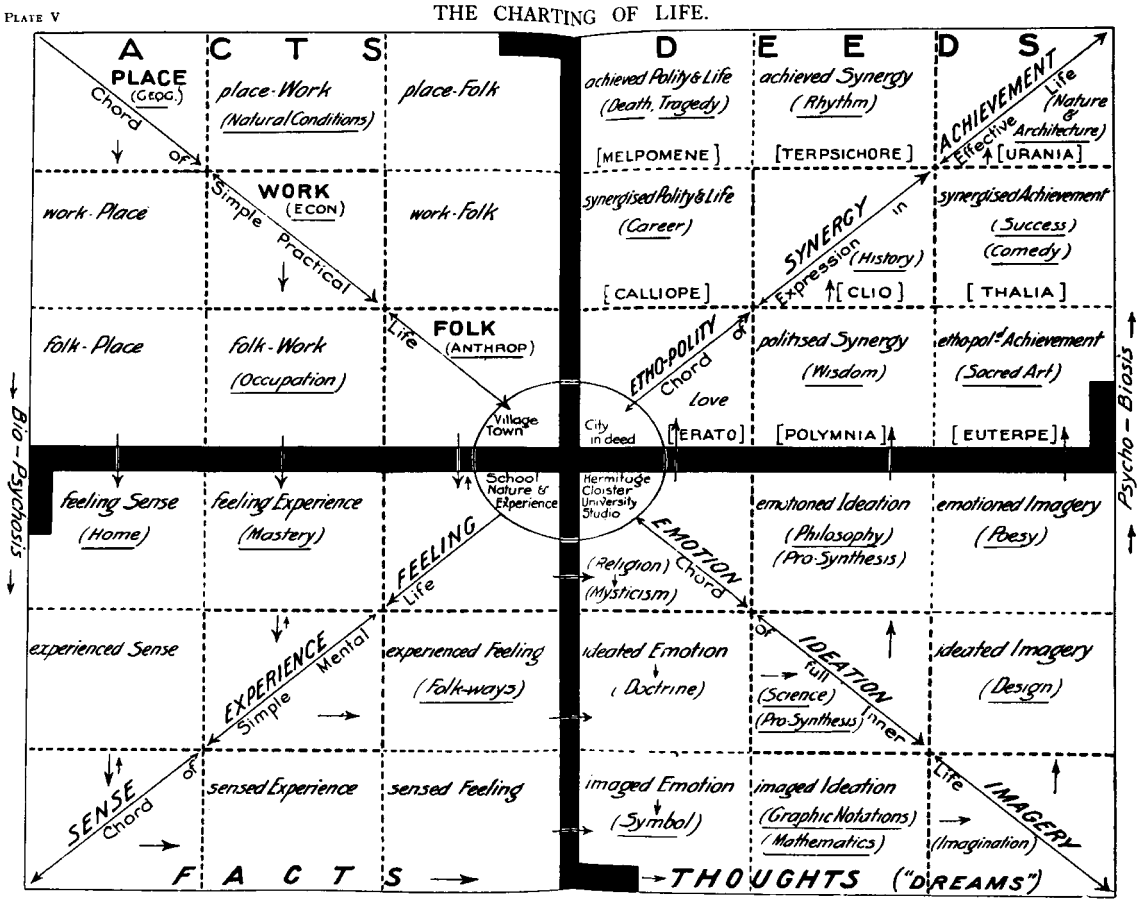

FIGURE 2.1

The Notation of Life, as published in 1927.

abiding partnership of mutual aid."[9] It is around this mutually beneficial relationship that the Notation of Life develops. The central four terms of the diagram, "Town," "School," "Cloister," and "City in deed," represent what one may call the Town-City formula, which comprises the four steps of transforming a mere town into a city. Along the outer frame of the diagram the terms "Acts," "Facts," "Thoughts (Dreams)," and "Deeds" constitute accordingly the Act-Deed formula, which likewise comprises four steps by which individual human lives are raised to higher levels of conscious existence.[10] Geddes intertwines indissolubly the two formulas in the diagram. Only

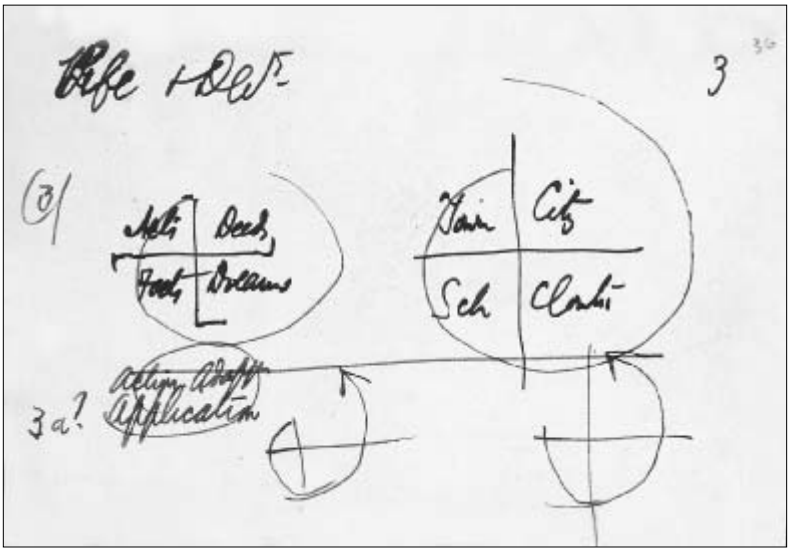

FIGURE 2.2
A sketch by Geddes of the Act-Deed and Town-City formulas, not dated.

when taken together as the two parts of a whole do the formulas function properly, guaranteeing the constant evolution of human life—individual and social—toward ever higher forms, an evolution he compares to the upward coiling of a spiral (figure 2.2).

The Notation of Life diagram was published only once during Geddes's lifetime, when Amelia Defries, his first biographer, included it along with a supplementary text by Geddes in her 1927 *The Interpreter Geddes: The Man and His Gospel.*[11] However, several of Geddes's essays and lecture syllabi appear to date the diagram's development to approximately 1904–1905. In those years Geddes read two papers on civics as applied sociology to the newly established Sociological Society in London that make frequent reference to the Town-City formula.[12] According to Defries, Geddes first presented the full diagram to the public in 1914 during a lecture at the Royal Society of Arts in London.[13]

From Town to City

According to Geddes any human settlement, whether village, town, or city, can be comprehended by applying the triad place-work-folk. A town occupies a certain location, its place, where the inhabitants are involved in all

PLACE-FOLK ("NATIVES")	WORK-FOLK ("PRODUCERS")	**FOLK**
PLACE-WORK	**WORK**	FOLK-WORK
PLACE	WORK-PLACE	FOLK-PLACE

TABLE 2.1
The triad place-work-folk.

sorts of activities, their work. With their life structured by work and influenced by the conditions of place, the residents would form a folk with a common superstructure of shared beliefs, traditions, and customs. To arrive at a full picture of a town, the interrelations between the main categories, as set out in table 2.1, have to be included in the analysis.[14]

The six subcategories are more than auxiliary means to fill the table. Every aspect of a town and town life can be accounted for with the help of the main and the subcategories. But it is the latter in particular that allow for a dynamic analysis of towns, as for example when Geddes identifies the same group of people as being "Natives" or "Producers," thereby referring to their changing roles within a society. Similarly, place can be looked at from various angles:

> For Place, it is plain, is no mere topographic site. Work, conditioned as it primarily is by natural advantages, is thus really first of all *place-work*. Arises the field or garden, the port, the mine, the workshop, in fact the *work-place*, as we may simply generalise it; while, further, beside this arise the dwellings, the *folk-place*.[15]

The nine categories applied to any town provide a picture of the objective life, the "everyday world of action." A town analyzed as such Geddes names "Town proper."[16]

To this point Geddes's analysis concerns only the daily life composed of objective elements. They are supplemented with, or reflected in, the subjective life made up by the corresponding "thought-world."[17] Each element of the Town has its corresponding element in the thought world, as set out in table 2.2.[18] Geddes introduces "School" as a generic term for the subjective elements of life, comparable to its use in the field of art history.[19]

FOLK	WORK	PLACE
TOWN		
(a) Individuals	(a) Occupations	(a) Work-Places
(b) Institutions	(b) War	(b) War-Places
SCHOOL		
(b) History ("Constitutional")	(b) Statistics and History ("Military")	(b) Geography
(a) Biography	(a) Economics	(a) Topography

TABLE 2.2
The Town proper reflected in the thought world of Schools.

Within the division into the three categories of folk, work, and place, the institutions of the Town proper, for example, are reflected in Schools of history. Likewise, the lives of individual inhabitants become reflected in "Schools of biographies," and occupations of the inhabitants give rise to Schools of economics.

Hence a Town consists of the Town proper—the world of action—and the Schools—the world of thought. A Town proper never exists on its own, for with it a corresponding thought world comes into being. Daily town life and its activities exist as a dialectical process between the two worlds of action and though. A School emerges, it influences the objective elements of which it is the reflection, and thus a new School emerges as the reflection of the changed objective elements. Although the Town proper gives rise to the Schools, Geddes does not wish to express a purely materialistic point of view. The driving force in the dialectic is the subjective life, which influences and changes the objective life:

> Once and again we have noted how from the everyday life of action—the Town proper of our terminology—there arises the corresponding subjective world—the *Schools* of thought, which may express itself sooner or later in schools of education. The types of people, their kinds and styles of work, their whole environment, all become represented in the mind of the community, and these react upon the individuals, their activities, their place itself.[20]

TOWN		CITY
	FOLK	POLITY
	WORK	CULTURE
PLACE		ART
SURVEY		IMAGERY
	KNOWLEDGE	IDEAS
	MORALS, LAW	SOCIAL, ECONOMIC IDEALS, ETHICS
SCHOOL		CLOISTER

TABLE 2.3
The fourfold analysis of the City completed.

A town or village at this level functions adequately but does not rise to a higher level of societal evolution. The simple process of reflection is not enough to effect the development of a Town into a City. To achieve that something more is necessary.

Throughout the life of a Town, Geddes assumes a continuous production of Schools, some of which would develop into leading centers of thought and engage in "a Synthesis of a new kind." Geddes locates these particular Schools in places he called "Cloisters of contemplation, meditation, imagination."[21] Cloisters are characterized by a deeper insight, speculative and unrestrained thought that goes beyond merely mirroring the objective life of a Town. The activities of the Cloister are again classified in three categories: "ideals," "ideas," and "imagery." The category of ideals, or ethics, is based on the understanding of what is good, while that of ideas, or "synthetics," is based on what is true, and imagery or aesthetics on the beautiful. Accordingly, three different results emerge from the cloister: ideals or ethics lead to "polity," ideas lead to "culture," and imagery leads to "art."[22] The products of the Cloister point toward a City, yet they do not make a City. The "City proper," the fourth step of the Town-City formula, requires the transfer of the ideas emerging from the cloister into practice.

> Finally and supremely arises the City proper—its individuality dependent upon the measure and form in which ideals are expressed and harmonised in social life and polity, ideas synthesised in culture, and

> beauty carried outwards from the study or chamber of the recluse into the world of art.[23]

The City completed, or the "great" or "true city" as Geddes calls it elsewhere,[24] consists of all four components of his analysis—Town, School, Cloister, and City—as shown in table 2.3.[25]

A cross, the four fields inscribed with the words Town, School, Cloister, and City, is sometimes used by Geddes as a simplified graphic version of the Town-City formula. He also transfers this simplified version into the center of the Notation of Life. In the inner top left corner of the Notation of Life are written "town" and "village," the Town proper of Geddes's analysis. In the quadrant below, at the level of Schools, are the words "school," "nature," and "experience." The latter two refer to Geddes's principle that all living beings should be observed in their natural environment, an insight he gained while studying biology under Huxley in London, and which he reiterated with the Town-City formula as a principle also applicable to human beings. The next quadrant to the right contains the words "cloister," "hermitage," "university," and "studio," which are possibilities for human intervention in the development from Town to City. The last quadrant, finally, is inscribed "City in deed," which indicates the transformation of reality according to the ideas and ideals developed in the Cloister.

Strengthening the idealistic orientation of the Town-City formula, Geddes concludes that a City vanishes if its Cloister ceases to exist, or decays. This can happen in two ways. Each Cloister unavoidably declines into a School because of its very success in leading the transformation from Town to City.[26] Decay might also occur while a Cloister still functions, for it can "take place within itself, since imagination and ideal may be evil, and theory false."[27] In either case, Geddes takes the process of decline for granted:

> It must however be kept clearly in view that the city of each day and generation subsides or decays more or less completely into the mere town anew, as the cloister into the schools. The towns and cities of the world are thus classifiable in terms of their past development and present condition.[28]

This final statement emphasizes how strongly Geddes conceives the Town-City formula as a law of the evolution of cities. Contemporary evolutionary biology accepted the degeneration of a species as part of the laws of evolution, even if it meant the end of any further evolution for that species. In a comparable manner Geddes includes the decay of cities in the Town-City formula; the disappearance of a City is a stage in the law of city development rather than a moral statement. Like natural laws, too, which, once understood, allow humans to exploit them for their own good, Geddes's law of the development of cities opens cities up to human intervention.

From Act to Deed

The Town-City formula describes the transformation of a Town into a City but does not explain how the process is instigated. Furthermore, the role and position of a town's inhabitants are left undefined. The Act-Deed formula, the half of the Notation of Life noted along the diagram's outer frame, provides this information. This formula sets out another course of four steps, those of "acts," "facts," "dreams," and "deeds," which deal with the "mental side" of social life, as Geddes once called it.[29] Each of the four levels consists again of three categories which, Geddes claims, allow the classification of human social behavior.

The first step is that of Acts, classified according to the triad place-work-folk and its interrelations. This triad explains the behavior of the inhabitants in the ordinary Town. The Town inhabitants' objective world (the site of Acts) is complemented by a closely related subjective world. Geddes's interest here is to elaborate with the help of psychological terminology how this mental life of Facts, the second step in the formula, comes into being as a reflection of Acts:

> It is with our senses we come to know our environment, perceiving and observing it. Our feelings are obviously developed from our folk, in earliest infancy by our mothers' love and care. And our experiences are primarily from our activities, of which our work is increasingly the predominant one.[30]

The third step, from Facts to the level of Thoughts or Dreams, is a step from the simple to "deeper psychology":[31]

ACTS	**DEEDS**
PLACE	ACHIEVEMENT
WORK	SYNERGY
FOLK	ETHNO-POLITY
FEELING	EMOTION
EXPERIENCE	IDEATION
SENSE	IMAGERY
FACTS	**THOUGHTS (DREAMS)**

TABLE 2.4
Geddes's psychological analysis of social life.

> Our primary (*i.e.*, objectively acquired) feelings become transformed and individualised to us as Emotions, our experience becomes clarified from ordinary intelligence to rational Ideas, and our sense impressions not only fade or revive in memory, but rearrange as personal Images.[32]

On the level of Dreams, the inhabitants of a Town develop ideas and plans concerning their future. From here the inhabitants proceed to the final level of Deeds, where their ideas, when realized, find expression in a "new type of community . . . the essential bond being 'not according to the flesh, but to the spirit.' This new type of group thus needs a type-name; and as fundamentally of ethic bond, yet social purpose, let us call this an Etho-Polity."[33]

Table 2.4 presents the complete Act-Deed formula with all the main categories on each level, but isolated from the Notation of Life.[34] A simpler graphical expression of this formula is that of a swastika with the words Acts, Facts, Dreams, and Deeds in four adjacent fields.[35] While the Act-Deed formula attempts to explain the social behavior of a group of human beings, the Town-City formula focuses on the environmental results of this behavior at various levels. Geddes merges these two formulas in the Notation of Life, where the Act-Deed formula forms the frame while the Town-City formula occupies the center, thus indicating that the creation of a City is the goal toward which all human action should be directed. The formulas are indissolubly connected, as one makes sense only with the other. "The City Beautiful must be the result of its own life and labour," Geddes writes; "it is the expression of the soul and mood of its people."[36]

From Individual to Communal Psychology

What the Act-Deed formula describes with regard to the collective holds true for individual inhabitants of a Town as well: each has the potential to raise his own life from the level of mere existence to a higher state of being and acting. Geddes elaborated this fundamental idea underlying the Act-Deed formula in a short essay of 1905 with the title "The World Without and the World Within: Sunday Talks with My Children." Here he divides the world into an everyday "out-world" and an "in-world" or "thinking-world." Both worlds together form the habitat of each human being. A garden used as a playground can represent the out-world, made up of facts. The corresponding in-world is composed of the memories of these facts. To think of the garden mainly as a playground is to confine life to these two worlds, but to plan the future of the garden is to step from the in-world of memories into the deeper in-world of plans and designs, which, subsequently transferred to the out-world, leads to acts. Facts, memories, plans, and acts are the four steps of this early version of the Act-Deed formula, Geddes's analysis of the dynamic process of individuals living in, reacting to, and acting upon the environment.

Combining the Act-Deed formula with the Town-City formula amounts to an attempt to derive the behavior of a collective from the psychology of individuals. When Geddes presented both formulas to students at the University of London, he advised them to consult either his essay "The World Without and the World Within" or contemporary psychology manuals for the foundation of his ideas, citing especially the American psychologist William James and his British colleague G. F. Stout.[37] The psychological roots of the Notation of Life, and the close relations it assumes between individual and collective actions and lives, prefigure important aspects of Geddes's work as a city designer.

While the four steps of the Town-City formula once conceived were never altered, Geddes renamed the four steps of the Act-Deed formula, with the early version presented in the 1905 essay later revised in the Notation of Life (see table 2.5). Although the Act-Deed formula describes a circle of life, not all types of life encompass the whole circle. In "The World Without and the World Within" Geddes refers to people who live in the out-world only, or to the "poor Rich" who own a rich out-world but a poor

LEVEL	TOWN-CITY	ACT-DEED (1905)	ACT-DEED (NOTATION OF LIFE)
1 OUT-WORLD	Town	Facts	Acts
2 IN-WORLD	School	Memories	Facts
3 IN-WORLD	Cloister	Plans	Dreams
4 OUT-WORLD	City	Acts	Deeds

TABLE 2.5
Comparison of the Town-City and Act-Deed formulas.

in-world.[38] To these types of life, which are active but confined to the out-world, the term "acts" applies far better than Geddes's initial term "facts." "Acts" indicates a type of life which, although above "reflex activities,"[39] does not enter the in-world of facts (the term that ultimately replaced the word "memory" in Geddes's model).

Memory, Geddes explains in his talks with his children, means to recall in the evening, when going to bed, the garden one has played in during the day. What happens "is another sort of looking. . . . The garden has come in with you; it is in your In-world now."[40] Memory is also the defining characteristic of the Schools in the everyday Town, for "the school is essentially one of memory, the impress of the town-life."[41] Stout's *Manual of Psychology* defines memory as the ideal reproduction of an object or event. The reproduction should happen without recalling inferences connected to the original event or object, and without any interest defined by the moment of the reproduction.[42] Furthermore, as William James emphasizes, memory is necessarily connected with past time. James's interest is less the very obvious fact that memory *refers* to the past than that memory "must be dated in my past. . . . I must think that I directly experienced its occurrence."[43]

Geddes's substitution in the Notation of Life of the word "facts" for "memory" pays tribute to James's individualization of memory. Each human being remembers his or other people's acts as facts in his own past. Geddes reveals himself as a true idealist, because for him there are no facts outside the individual mind. Facts only exist in each individual's in-world, which is, according to Geddes, in "a very true and thorough sense . . . more familiar, more real than the other; for all we know, or can ever know of the Out-world, or of each other, is in our minds."[44] Similarly, the life of a Town, when reflected in the Schools, is individualized as local culture. Schools are

"the record and reflex of the life of the hive, the Town: of all its general and particular environment and function, its family type and development." The Town life that Schools reflect is subsequently "expressed in local knowledge, in craft tradition, in kinship and its associated kindness, in habits and customs, and their development up to morals and law."[45]

From the level of facts, the first level of the in-world of individualized memory, human beings can proceed to a further level where plans are conceived to guide future action. In the final version of the Act-Deed formula as incorporated in the Notation of Life, the term "dreams" replaces "plans." For individuals, dreams are the equivalent level to the Cloister in the Town-City formula. The Cloister, as Geddes stresses, initiates "collective action" by the inhabitants of a Town, which is, however, based on the individual endeavors, that is the dreams, of the former.[46]

At this point, the assumed analogy between an individual's psychology and that of the collective inhabitants of a Town constitutes a problem. The assumption that individuals derive their dreams from individualized facts (memories) does not necessarily guarantee collective action by the Town inhabitants on their way toward becoming a City. A brief examination of contemporary psychology helps explain why Geddes could make this assumption.

With regard to memory and the human mind, turn-of-the-century psychology distinguished between sense perceptions, images, and ideas or ideational processes. Sense perception was caused by an object and found expression in an immediate (bodily) reaction to the object.[47] An image was a sketchy mental copy of something already perceived.[48] Images were closely related to ideas or ideational processes, the former being necessary parts of the latter.[49] Stout describes ideational processes as "trains of ideas" that arrange images into new sequences and combinations. He distinguishes two phases of these ideational processes: the reproductive phase or "association of ideas," followed by the productive phase, the "ideal construction" or combination of ideas. According to Stout, ideational processes are mental activities directed toward some practical or theoretical end.[50] It is this that allows human beings to plan into the future, since the "ideational consciousness can cross a bridge before coming to it."[51] Stout explains that the ideational consciousness can anticipate the endpoint of its intended activity and then move forward, backward, and sideways in order to overcome ob-

stacles until the goal is realized. This model describes exactly the difference between the types of consciousness in the two levels of the in-world that Geddes defines in his essay "The World Without and the World Within." Simply to remember the garden means to remain on the level of perceptual consciousness, but to plan the garden's future is a forward-acting mental activity characteristic of the ideational consciousness.

Stout also attempts to explain why individual thoughts would result in collective action. He defines the problems as follows:

> The ideal combinations which arise in the individual mind can only become permanent parts of the ideal structure representing the real world if they are entertained by other minds also, and so become current in the society to which the individual belongs.[52]

To make individual ideas the dominant ones for all members of a society requires communication, for which Stout identifies language as an appropriate means. Without communication, Stout asserts, the very fact that man has the ability to indulge in ideational thought simply makes no sense.

> Such thinking is essentially a social function. Other animals co-operate in work and play, but only men co-operate in thinking. Where many men are united in striving to realise a common end, each single mind is, so to speak, part of a great collective mind. The ideas occurring to each are communicated to all.[53]

Despite Stout's firm assertion, to attribute a social function to the communication of ideational thought processes and their results leaves the problem of the relation between the individual and a social collective essentially unsolved, for even if men cooperate in thinking, this does not explain why they should act in unison accordingly. Language also suffers the disadvantage that it only allows for intragenerational exchange of ideational thought. Accordingly, Stout claims the whole material environment of humankind as a supplementary means of communication used to transfer ideational thought between generations of human beings, an idea—as will be shown in chapter 5—that very likely influenced Geddes's appreciation of historic architecture and cities. Stout notes that "tools, weapons, utensils,

buildings, gardens and cultivated fields, are all products of human intelligence. They are material arrangements embodying in outward and visible form trains of ideas which have passed through human minds."[54] This statement accurately describes the step of arrival at the level of a City from the level of Dreams, as Geddes expresses graphically in the Notation of Life.

Why did Geddes employ such a complex, psychologically based model to explain the creation of the city? As early as 1886, in his essay "On the Conditions of Progress of the Capitalist and the Labourer," he rejected a Marxist notion of class in favor of an idea of cooperation influenced by the thought of Peter Kropotkin.[55] But with his rejection of the idea of class, Geddes robbed himself of the opportunity to explain the shaping of a City—understood as a synonym for a human society—as rooted in the diverging and competing interests of various classes, an idea which, for example, strongly informs Max Weber's famous essay "The City" of 1921.[56] Rather than following a line of inquiry similar to Weber's, Geddes focused on the individual's interaction with the environment, arguing that the consonance between an individual's action and that of a larger social group would cut across social classes, even going beyond them.

Yet Geddes was never able to overcome the inherent weakness of this approach to cities, which requires that the parallel movement of individual and collective action be a necessary and not just an incidental one. Not surprisingly, even Geddes introduced a division of the city's inhabitants into smaller social groups, which act as intermediaries between the individual and the whole citizenry. These groups do not compete with each other, but cooperate in order to realize a City according to Geddes's model of human interaction with the environment. Geddes divides the body of citizens into four social types and relates these types to the four steps or levels making up a City. Thus, the type "people" corresponds to the stage of Town, "chiefs" to that of Schools, "intellectuals" to the Cloister, and "emotionals" to the City; these groups are discussed in more detail below in chapter 4.

A second peculiarity of Geddes's thought stems from his view of the underlying springs of human action. In his model, the basic division of all forms of human life is that between an out-world and an in-world. Each of these exists in two versions. The two sequences that constitute the Notation of Life begin in the out-world, run into the in-world, then proceed to a second level in the in-world before emerging in the out-world again. Char-

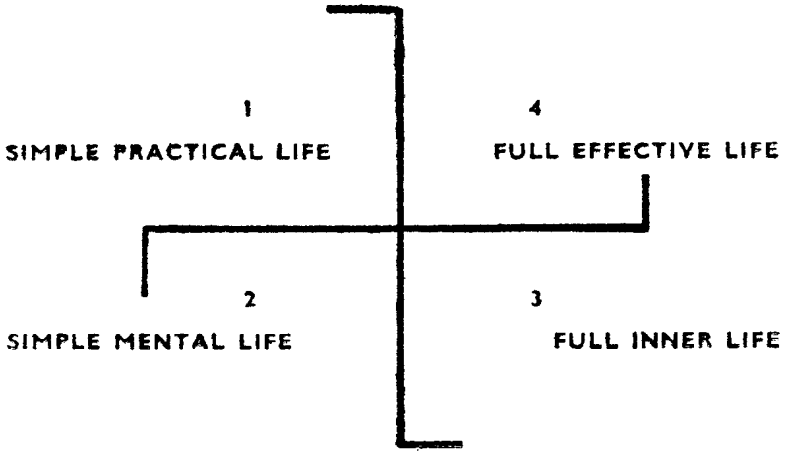

FIGURE 2.3
The Notation of Life as the union of vita activa and vita contemplativa, as published in 1949.

acteristic of these stages is that life becomes more conscious about its possibilities and future in the course of them. The first level of the out-world is that of simple, unreflective activities; the second is that of conscious deeds. A similar division rules the in-world, which consists on the first level of simple sense perceptions, on the second level of ideational activities directed toward the future. Thus, cutting across the division into in-world and out-world is another division into passive and active ways of life. The lower half of the diagram symbolizes the in-world of both an individual and a town; the upper half represents their out-worlds. The left half is the passive way of life; the right half the active (figure 2.3). Accordingly, human life is a process of oscillation: "To be at home in the Out-world and in the In-world, and to be active as well as passive in each by turns; that is what we have seen you can aim at in your education."[57]

Ultimately, this model of life derives from Geddes's research into the metabolism of single-cell organisms. He believed that he could explain their life as a process consisting of a more active (catabolistic) and a more passive (anabolistic) stage, a point to which chapter 7 returns in greater detail. Yet the application of this active-passive dichotomy to human life, and to social life especially, creates a difficulty. The phases in simple organisms follow each other rather mechanically; they are instigated and controlled by external factors like nutrition, temperature, and light. The link between the

active and passive sides of human and social life, on the contrary, Geddes locates in the consciousness of the in-world. There human beings, individually and as a group, can leave the passive in favor of the active in-world, thus connecting the two phases of life. But why they should make this step—the decisive precondition to achieving the levels of Deeds and the City—Geddes is reluctant to explain.

> How our simple life-feelings evolve to emotion, become complexed and fixed as sentiment; how they crystallise as ideal, and kindle as passion, is the central mystery of life in its evolution: it is the secret of mystic and saint, of lover and poet also. Yet it is much to see that such evolution does take place.[58]

To understand human life as a mystical glorification of a mechanical process taken from simple organic life is not an alternative explanation but no explanation at all. Together with social classes, Geddes also dismisses notions of human activity as driven by individual and class-determined needs of all kinds—material needs such as shelter and food, and immaterial needs such as the desire for prestige derived from wealth and power—all of which might result in adaptation of the environment in order to satisfy these needs. To leave the step from the passive to the active in-world not only unexplained but mystified undermines the value of the Notation of Life as a coherent theory. Yet this was no problem for Geddes. Even if the central aspect of human life is beyond human understanding, it is not beyond experience, and can therefore be exploited for future development.[59] For Geddes, the diagram provides a theoretical structure coherent and logical enough to base on it his activities in town planning and architecture.

Geddes's Theory of the City: A Platonic Reading

Geddes, like Plato, connects the *polis* or City with the individual. Plato argues from the individual to the *polis*, although he presents the argument the other way round. A *polis* is for Plato a living individual on a larger scale. Similarly Geddes: "Like the living being it is, a city reacts upon its environment."[60] He also argues from the human being to the city: "For if each human individuality be unique, how much more must that of every city?"[61] While

Plato ascribes an immortal soul to each individual, Geddes ascribes a soul to the city and its community, which in turn is composed of the souls of its inhabitants. Both Plato's and Geddes's souls are likewise subject to a process of rebirth. Plato's concept of rebirth is not a simple repetition of the past; rebirth means to him the return of the soul in different historic manifestations with a knowledge of transhistoric eternal ideas or forms.[62] Geddes writes in an analysis of Chelsea's past:

> Our record of local history and achievement is . . . a perpetual renewal of certain recognisable elements. . . . It is of the very essence of our growing sociological re-interpretation of the past to see its essential life as continuous into the present, and even beyond, and so to maintain the perennation of culture, the immortality of the social soul.[63]

Plato's republic is administered by the guardians or philosophers, living their lives only for the city. Plato insists that they apply their knowledge of the "divine order" (the forms) to "the habits of men both in their private and public lives."[64] This is an obligation, as Plato stresses in the simile of the cave: the enlightened philosophers must return to the men living in the cave; they are not allowed to remain in the upper world where they have seen the divine. The guardians' task is to serve the community by bringing to it knowledge of the divine.[65] The Cloister and the intellectuals of Geddes's City occupy a position comparable to the philosophers' place and function in the *Republic*. Without transferring the ideas of a City from the Cloister to the Town, the City would never come into existence. The philosophers of Geddes's City are a select group within a community; considering universities as Cloisters, Geddes describes their function as the "inspiring intercourse 'of picked adolescents and picked senescents.'" The results of Geddes's Cloister are again Platonic, for the ideals lead to eupolity, a synonym of the "good"; ideas realize the "true" in culture; and imagery expresses the "beautiful" in art.[66]

The connection between *polis* and individual is valid for both the good and the bad *polis* or city. Plato's imperfect societies of timarchy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny are each accompanied by a type individual whose character corresponds to the characteristics of the society. For Plato it is beyond doubt that every society, even if organized on the principles laid

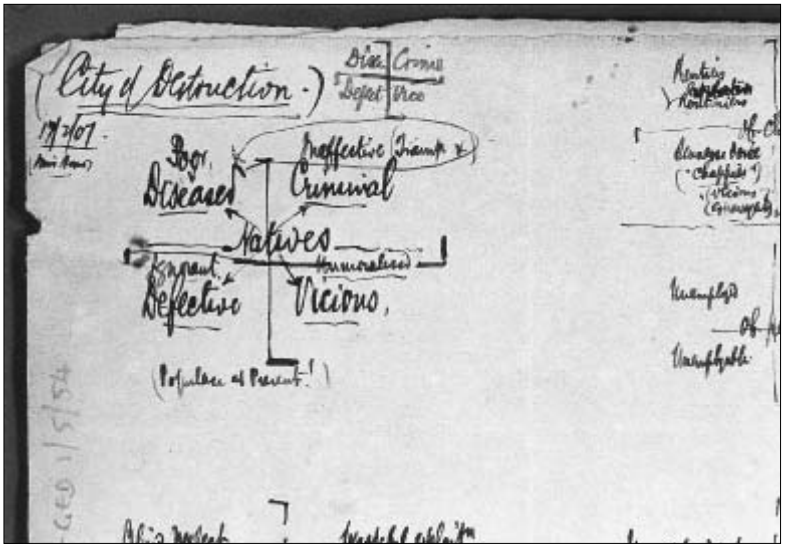

FIGURE 2.4
Notes by Geddes, 1907, on the City of Destruction.

out in the *Republic*, will one day decline; the decay originates among the auxiliaries and philosophers.[67] Similarly Geddes takes the decline of a City for granted, and he also locates the initial cause within the leading part of the City, in his case the Cloister. Accordingly, to the upward evolutionary movement of the Town-City and Act-Deed formulas he conceives a downward-directed equivalent leading to the "City of Destruction," a name Geddes may have borrowed from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) (figure 2.4). The four downward stages of this city he defines as "disease," "defect," "vice," "crime," and its inhabitants are characterized as "poor, diseased," "ignorant, defective," "vicious," and "ineffective, criminal," respectively.[68]

As outlined earlier, Geddes identified two causes for the unavoidable decay of a Cloister and subsequently a City. The first cause—the regression of a successful Cloister to a School due to mummification—would present the Town-City formula, and the Notation of Life, as a value-free law for the development of Cities and societies. The second cause—the decay of a Cloister due to a wrong or evil idea—points toward a morally rather than scientifically inspired analysis of a City's decay. The formula of the City of Destruction underlines this moral basis by linking poverty and disease unavoidably with criminality and ineffective life. Fur-

thermore, both negative results are only understandable via the bypass through the mind—the in-world—of the degenerate individual, the criminal for example. In Geddes's model, criminality is not so much a direct response to economic and social conditions as it is the result of vicious thoughts. If the in-world is more real than the out-world, then criminality is primarily a question of individual character, and society is relieved, at least to a certain extent, from any responsibility for this kind of social behavior. Geddes's attempt to explain contemporary social realities by resorting to individual psychology, putting aside notions of class or economics, leads only to moralizing judgments.

More generally, Geddes like Plato is interested in defining an all-embracing concept of the good life. Plato's concerns are "What is the best life?" and "What is the best order or organization of human society?"[69] Everything has to serve the aim of creating a good *polis:* the position of the individual citizen within the social hierarchy, the pursuit of a citizen's profession within the division of labor of the *polis*, and the education of children, which requires, among other things, a beautiful and healthy environment.[70] Similarly, art is subdued to the larger aim as its function is restricted to guiding children and adults alike to morally right judgments with regard to the *polis*. All these criteria touch upon fields close to the activities Geddes was engaged in: for example, education, art, and architecture as teaching tools, and the improvement of the (built) environment.

Plato's pursuit of the good life centers on philosophical categories like justice, whereas Geddes's concept of the "good life," for which he coined the term civics, is derived from an analysis of life itself. Consequently, civics claims responsibility for all aspects of human life, as Ebe Minerva White, a lecturer in civics with the London County Council and a follower of Geddes, explained:

> The word "Civics," in its derivation, linked with *citizen* and *civilisation*, designates a subject which is yet in the making. . . . "Civics" deals with all that appertains to the life and surroundings of any citizen, and includes far more than the spheres of legislation and administration.[71]

Civics is Geddes's contribution to the contemporary late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century debate about citizenship.[72] Where this debate had

been mainly focused on theoretical notions of democracy and voting rights, Geddes put his own distinctive stamp on it. His civics calls for an immediate engagement of citizens in the affairs of their society, leading to an improved environment, for example in the form of garden cities.[73] Beyond this, because civics derives from Geddes's analysis of life, it contributes to the improvement and evolution of life. Civics is Geddes's solution of what he considered to be the most pressing question of his time:

> The central search of our age . . . is for a theory of Life in its Evolution, and this in all its aspects and products; and such a theory must deal, not only with the organic life therefore, but also with the psychic life; similarly with ethical life no less than with social. . . . Furthermore, it must correlate the individual life with the social, and this in no mere abstract, ethical way, but as the citizen with his city.[74]

The need Geddes defines here is nothing else than civics as encrypted in the Notation of Life. Human "life in its evolution" can take only one form, that of a City, the most distinctive, concrete, materialistic creation of human beings. Significantly, Geddes chose for his one major book on cities the title *Cities in Evolution*, which has an ambiguous meaning. It can be read to mean cities in *their* evolution, thus referring to the evolution of cities as such, but it can equally mean cities in *human* evolution, thus referring to the function cities have in the larger evolutionary process of life. Whenever Geddes writes about civics, he writes about towns and cities. In his two essays "Civics: As Applied Sociology" and "Civics: As Concrete and Applied Sociology," he presents the application of sociology—a metascience of life—to cities as a result of necessity rather than choice.[75] Similarly, a 1910 lecture series published as *Civics: The Conditions of Town Planning and City Design* mainly deals, according to the syllabus, with how cities were built at different times and why.[76]

Civics, the analysis of the evolution of human life as a spiral running perpetually through the four stages from Act to Deed, from Town to City, provides Geddes with a philosophical approach to cities. Civics focuses on cities, their function in evolution, and their internal structures and institutions, but leaves the question of practical application unconsidered. For such practical application, whether to new or to existing cities, Geddes em-

ploys the terms "city design" and "city development."[77] Both the *polis* and Plato's *Republic* provide him with a working conception:

> Yet now the modern town-planner, for whom Greek citizenship is not a mere learned reminiscence or a moral wonder, but a working conception once more, is in these days actually designing, for the bettering cities of the opening future.[78]

This working conception functions in two ways. First, the *polis* is an example of the good life in a City, and can therefore be considered an application of civics. The good life is achieved because the ideas about it are rooted in "natural origins" on the levels of Act and Town, and refined through artistic and intellectual reflection "into philosophic form[s]" on the level of Dreams and Cloisters. The visible expression of the good life in a City is therefore to be expected, because the creation of the *polis*—City on the final level of the Town-City formula—is the "corresponding evolution" of both "clarified thought and perfected art."[79]

Geddes's interests differ from the contemporary view of Greek citizenship as primarily an abstract politico-philosophical concept. Instead, and this is the second aspect of the *polis* as a working conception, Geddes focuses on the physical structure and urban fabric of the *polis*. Of particular interest are the "natural origins" that gave rise to Greek ethics first of all, and the Cloisters where thoughts are clarified into ideas for a City. When Geddes insists that "Hellas may be more fully recovered, modern life more truly Hellenized,"[80] he does not suggest an aesthetic appreciation of Greek culture, town planning, and architecture, for example in neoclassical buildings. He proposes rather a new, contemporary version of the *polis* as the embodiment of an ideal form, and in particular a return to the "natural origins" and a provision of the "organs for that fuller life" for which the term City stands.[81]

City design is the necessary precondition to activities in town planning. But whereas town planning is primarily concerned with the material aspects of a town, city design also takes care of the psychological side of a City as community.[82] Geddes writes:

> Acropolis and Temple, Forum and Cathedral, thus fully reappear, and these not only in their rationale and significance in the past, but in their renewal in the future. To ask—what examples of all these in London today? In Paris, etc.? is obviously to establish a scale of criticism and valuation of cities far beyond the current economic and statistical ones. Furthermore, we may even proceed to apply the same methods towards the ideal cities and their renewal in modern thought.[83]

City design works on three levels. First, it deals with geographical considerations, the natural origins of the *polis* of old, or, at a more general level, with the place. Second are historical considerations, both the attempt to stimulate City building by showing that there were always Cities in history (among which the *polis* was the earliest successful example) and the recognition that Cities are real, historic places whose existing historic structures require attention. Finally, there is the issue of Cities as communities, which is the focus of the spiritual aspect of city design as it attempts to unify citizens into a community, or a folk, by emphasizing the soul of a City.

The evolution of Towns into Cities requires the implementation of Cloisters and structures embodying ideas for a City into the urban fabric, comparable to the Acropolis in Athens or the cathedral in the medieval *Stadt*. Geddes's religious references in his historic examples and the choice of the term Cloister are not accidental but deliberate, as Sybella Branford (née Gurney), the wife of Geddes's friend Victor Branford, explains: "Up to the time of the Renaissance religion was not only in its essence but in its outward form the unifying reality which made a group of individuals into a city . . . and as the tradition dwindled so did the city perish."[84] This spiritual aspect of city design marks the most significant difference between Geddes's approach to cities and contemporary town planning. The term "spiritual" refers to the essence or soul of the city. In Platonic theory the soul not only gives life to matter but is also the carrier of knowledge about ideas and forms.[85] The soul of a City has comparable functions, and the Cloister is its visible expression: as an institution, a Cloister produces ideas for a City. As a built structure, the Cloister symbolizes the ideas it brought to the City, similar to religious buildings whose "outward form," according to Sybella Branford, once symbolized the "unifying reality" of religion. Yet the idea of

the City as a symbol of life at the center of a secular religion also recalls once again ancient Greek culture with its religious veneration of the *polis*.

No other historical city proved to be as important for Geddes as the Greek *polis*, to which he refers time and again, both directly and indirectly. Hence his working conception of the *polis* can be used as a methodological tool to analyze his ideas about cities and city design. This working conception allows us to identify aspects of Geddes's life work as belonging to his City idea, when such a connection is not otherwise immediately obvious. The historic pageants he organized, or his Olympus project—a garden for the Greek Muses and a temple for the Greek gods—become necessary elements of city design rather than mere expressions of an otherwise eccentric mind. To paraphrase historian Turner's remark quoted above, it is important to bear in mind that Geddes's references to *polis* and *Republic* are essentially references to his own idea of the City.