

A Flâneur and Ethnographer in Their Home City: The Krakow of Bronisław Malinowski and Feliks Gross. Remarks of a Historian of Anthropology

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ABSTRACT:

The paper discusses the beginnings of anthropologists' interest in the city, using the examples of Bronisław Malinowski and his student and collaborator Feliks Gross, who both came from Krakow. Malinowski's entries in his diaries suggest a modernist figure of a flâneur, an urban spectator, as depicted by Walter Benjamin. The figure has very much in common with an ethnographer, and they are both versions of the male adventurous explorer. Gross can be seen as a pioneer of urban anthropology because of his fieldwork in the Jewish district of Krakow, which he started in the late 1930s, but could not complete because of the outbreak of World War II. He later used the experiences and knowledge he acquired from it in his theoretical writings. Malinowski's and Gross's home city, walked in a flâneurian way, had thus been a testing ground for their future ethnographies and theories.

KEYWORDS:

Bronisław Malinowski; Feliks Gross; Urban anthropology; Literary anthropology; Krakow

Classical anthropology used to focus predominantly on rural areas of traditional societies. For anthropologists, urban spaces were places they rather had to leave in order to carry out their legitimate fieldwork. Thus early ethnographies rarely described cities, and one can label them anthropological “non-places”, to use Marc Augé's term (Augé 2008). They did not have much significance for the discipline. Often the only chance to learn about them is to read anthropologists' personal documents and correspondence, as well as their non-academic literary output, written “with the other hand” (Kubica 2013).

Walter Benjamin created the modernist figure of a flâneur, an urban spectator, an investigator of the city, and at the same time a symbol of alienation both of the city and of capitalism (Benjamin 2002). The figure has been interpreted in various ways. One of these interpretations is especially important here, as it refers to anthropology, gendered spaces and Bronisław Malinowski. It was performed by the anthropologist Henrika Donner, who pointed to his

well-known role as someone who had changed the image of an anthropologist from a collector of data sitting on the verandah of a colonial house to a male fieldworker, who became an explorer of an unfamiliar and public terrains. In her opinion, though, there is more to it, and the modern fieldworker can be perceived as a similar figure to an urban flâneur, embodying the masculinist paradigm of modernity: “a proactive stranger-observer free from domestic responsibilities, equally at home in the village on the island as in the city at the street corner”. According to Donner, there are more characteristics shared by the flâneur and the ethnographer: a distinctly academic mindset; involvement in observing, collecting and recounting; a sense of adventure and inquisitiveness; reflections upon the surroundings; voluntary cosmopolitanism of urban middle-class consciousness; and finally they also share “a reflexive mode of thinking about themselves and the world and that encounter and the tropes of traveling and comment are built into their common vocabulary” (Donner 2012, 173). Thus both the flâneur and the ethnographer can be seen as two versions of the powerful image of a male adventurous explorer at the same time engaged and distanced from the world around.

The way anthropologists describe the city can expose this double role, or rather a common trait underlying the two roles. To show this, let me refer to Krakow and two Cracovians – Bronisław Malinowski and Feliks Gross. Both men reflected on their home city: one in his diaries and other personal documents, and the other in his project of early urban anthropology, which was not completed but made him think about his home city in a more ethnographic way.

I hoped to be able to find some interesting insights concerning Krakow in Bronisław Malinowski’s diaries and letters to present him as a flâneur in his home city. I remembered that in his *Dziennik w ścisłym znaczeniu tego wyrazu* (Malinowski 2002),¹ which I edited, he often referred to Krakow (and the geographical index of the volume can prove it). Unfortunately, this was not really the case. It seems that Malinowski treated his home city as a container for his personal memories, or an address of his experiences, but still we can find him there as a flâneur, perhaps less eloquent than we would wish.

Let me cite one passage. This comes from the time, in 1912, when Malinowski had a long stay in Zakopane after his studies at the London School of Economics. He came to Krakow with Żenia Zielińska, his lover: a painter and a married woman (one of the protagonists of my book *Siostry Malinowskiego* [Kubica 2006]): “In Krakow we leave things; we go to the Hotel Royal No. 69 – Then along Grodzka to the Market Square and cafe. There, looking through newspapers; I feel how it would be good to be with her in all situations of life. We return along Grodzka. Poetry of a quiet sleeping town; strangely warm and mild air. We sit down and talk. The electric lamp on the floor. Moments of fatigue and sleep. Then the strong tides of feelings. So until morning. I go to bed to my room. I go to be shaved. – Ż. is a little negatively disposed to me. (...) I go to the hairdresser then via Planty to Mały Rynek, through the gate to Bilewskis, where I buy a brush and a clip, then a tram back. Ż. already almost completely ready (...). We walk the same path; recourse against Jewish batmen on the pavement. Then, via Mały Rynek, Mariacki Square (the watch yard of the Bursa) we go to Michalik’s [cafe], where we look at caricatures and say a lot of tender things. From Michalik’s to Siemek; then passing the Grand [hotel] to the church of St Mark, via Reformacka Street, Szczepański square, Planty, to St Ann Street, yards, then Jagiellońska

1 Malinowski wrote his diaries in Polish between 1906 and 1918. The full and comprehensive Polish edition is much more extensive than the English translation, *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (1989).

Street, Planty; Smoleńsk Street, Felicjanek Street (house of Tichy) along the Vistula River to the Wawel Castle” (Malinowski 2002, 214).

The next time, he came to Krakow with another lover, Karola Zagórska, and later with Otolia Retingerowa. The references to the city were very similar. Here, it is just the scene of his intimate relations, and the landscape of his former life. He shows it to his lovers. It is a kind of a guided tour. He is no longer a citizen of Krakow, but Krakow is still his home town. For instance, he shows “podwórze Bursy” on Mały Rynek, the courtyard of the university dormitory, of which his father had been a provost, and in which his family had an apartment for several years. The building is situated on Mały Rynek Square, next to the church of St Barbara. It used to belong to the Jesuits, and after the delegalisation of the order the premises were given to the Jagiellonian University and a student dormitory was established there. (The building later returned to the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church.)

Other points on the guided tours are not that meaningful: just a nice walk on the medieval Krakow streets and a modern element: the newly built house of Karol Tichy, a Krakow painter. With Karola Zagórska, Malinowski also went to Kazimierz, the Jewish quarter; not, though, to admire synagogues, but mainly to see the monumental church of St Catherine. They also went to the Franciscan church to admire the stained-glass windows designed by Stanisław Wyspiański (Malinowski 2002, 285).

Later, during his fieldwork in New Guinea he dreamt about Krakow several times, and he came back to the time of his childhood when he learnt about his mother’s death: “Every small detail reminds me of Mother – my suits and my linen which she marked. (...) Memories: Krakow, boarding school,² and Warsaw. I think (...) about going back to Poland, meeting Auntie, Mrs. Boronska, Mrs. Witkowska. My time at the gymnasium; I recall Szarlowski and other teachers, but Sz. most vividly of all. Planty [public gardens in Krakow], morning moods, going back home. At times I see Mother still alive, in a soft gray hat and a grey dress, or in a house dress, or in a black dress, with a round black hat” (Malinowski 1989, 297). Thus again, the city was just a landscape of his childhood and later memories that connected him to his mother.

He rarely referred to his home city in his letters to Elsie Masson, his fiancée, which he wrote from the Trobriands. In one of them again he planned his imaginary erotic tour, this time with her: “I went for a walk at sunset as usual. I thought first of my return South ...then my thoughts wandered further back, to my schooldays in Krakow. I tried to remember the exact mental atmosphere of the white washed room with brown benches; the faces and physiognomies of my school fellows – many have grown so dim. And the history of my life then. I had a vision of us two visiting the III Gimnazjum in Krakow and my showing you all the spots of my youth. ...I return now always to my young days – it is the thought of my Mother that draws me back” (Wayne 1995, 166).

The only longer narration concerning Krakow can be found in a letter to Elsie, then his wife, which he wrote during his last visit to his home city when he got rid of his old things. “The moist autumnal air already had this particular smell and feeling which in olden days meant return to Krakow from vacations, long evening walks on the plantations [the Planty Park which rings central Krakow]. (...) We [together with his cousin Mancia Kobylińska]

2 This should be a dormitory, not a boarding school. This is a mistake of the translator, who did not know the context of the diaries well.

drove through the lonely silent streets – again a well-known experience full of so many old memories.” The next morning, “It was sunny and beautiful but rather cold – I felt quite chilly without overcoat. First I looked up the Academy of Science where I found appointments from Nitsch and Rozwadowski, then to the University – I found Krakow much cleaner and more beautiful – but very stinky still. I think it was as much my better health as anything else, but I liked both Vienna and Krakow better than on my previous post-war visits. I wish you could see it in autumn when everybody is in town – I mean people who matter. At the Univ. I saw first Nitsch and a few others. Then we (Mancia and I) went to Władysławowa [former servant] and after a few handkisses (she still kisses my hands) we went up to the strych (Dachboden) and began sorting papers etc. (...) With all this I did not have much time left for amusement or sightseeing. (...) Chwistek – whom we met in the street and ordered to meet him at a cafe in the evening. Then to a restaurant for dinner (food is either really better now in Poland or my appetite improved!) and (...) I went alone to the Grand Hotel Cafe where I met (by arrangement) Rozwadowski, Nitsch, Bystroń (the anthropologist who got the chair in lieu of me) and Chwistek. (...) Then Chwistek and I walked together and had another sitting where we gossiped and reminisced and boasted dreadfully as in olden days – Chwistek obviously does not like now Staś Witkiewicz and talks about him nastily.” The next day: subsequent visits, and the following: “I went with Chwistek to the Gimnasium where I went to school and where he now teaches. It gave quite an impression”. He got rid of furniture (distributing it among family members and the former servant), and his father’s books (donating them to the university). “Then to lunch, then to the Piwkos for the final selling of the piano, to Władysławowa to give her \$100 and say goodbye, for a short walk to St Mary’s church, and to the station. (...) My own sweetheart – I thought of you all the time in Krakow – mixed with memories of our visit and with ghost-like, dream-like memories of the Past” (letter of 9th October 1926; Wayne 1996 II, 79–81).

In his scholarly works, Malinowski referred to his home city only once, in the often cited “Dedication to James Frazer” from 1925: “If I had the power of evoking the past, I should like to lead you back some twenty years to an old Slavonic university town – I mean the town of Krakow, the ancient capital of Poland and the seat of the oldest university in eastern Europe. I could then show you a student leaving the medieval college buildings, obviously in some distress of mind, hugging, however, under his arm, as the only solace of his troubles, three green volumes with the well-known golden imprint, a beautiful conventionalized design of mistletoe – the symbol of *The Golden Bough*”. (Malinowski 1948, 93–94).

And this is all one can find about Krakow in Malinowski’s writings. No deeper reflection about his home city – just the obvious, taken for granted locus of his experiences. At the time, he was sharpening his ethnographic skills on other topics, and at the early stage of his career he never really turned his literary abilities to his own milieu: the city. But the flâneur pose is evident in this material. Strolling through Krakow is an important activity for him; it is certainly not only about dealing with business, but also observing and admiring, judging aesthetically and fulfilling his masculinity by walking with his subsequent (and sometimes overlapping) lady friends.

Michael Young, Malinowski’s biographer, found among his papers a very interesting document, a draft – or rather a synopsis of the introduction – to a textbook he was to write for an American publisher in the early 1930s. The provisional title read: “The A.B.C. of Culture: A Text-Book of Comparative Anthropology and Sociology”. Part of the introduction, called “Culture as Personal Experience”, consisted of facts about his own childhood

that were relevant to his later career as an anthropologist. He wrote about his living in two different worlds then: a Carpathian village with peasants and the city of Krakow: “When I was eight we returned more or less permanently to the town (...). In Krakow we lived in an old stone building, a property of the University. It was a shabby-genteel existence, withal a truly cultured world not without dignity and heroism (see J. Conrad’s recollection). We belonged to the dispossessed, impoverished small Polish nobility, shading into the *inteligencja*. (...) By the time I was eight I had lived in two fully distinct cultural worlds, speaking two languages, eating two different kinds of food, using two sets of table manners, observing two sets of reticences and delicacies, enjoying two sets of amusements. I also learned two sets of religious views, beliefs and practices, and was exposed to two sets of morality and sexual mores (see *Sex and Repression*)” (Young 2004, 15–16, MPLSE Culture 1/139).

It is a pity that Malinowski did not write the book. It would be very interesting to learn how he would have described Krakow. Judging from this draft, he would have focused on the sociological and cultural side of the city, on class differences and various lifestyles. There would also be a chance that his flâneurism could be articulated more and find its way into the written text.

Nonetheless, he took Krakow with him, not only in his memories but also in his habitus. A certain young compatriot, who met him in the late 1930s, later remembered: “he was a real Krakauer, no professorial moods, but Cracovian sentiments, a sense of humour; he was nasty in an intelligent way” (Bator and Łukasiewicz 2000).

This young compatriot, Feliks Gross (1906–2006), was a Cracovian lawyer who came from a renowned assimilated Jewish family. His father was a member of the Austrian Reichsrat in Vienna. Feliks became a socialist activist interested in sociology and anthropology, who was preparing for an academic career. This turned out to be impossible because of the growing wave of anti-Semitism in Europe. Gross became a student and collaborator of his Cracovian compatriot, then a London professor, Bronisław Malinowski, who advised him to conduct a “survey of the ghetto”, the Jewish district in their hometown, and to teach a course on “Social anthropology of the urban societies of East Central Europe” at the London School of Economics to overcome his problems. The research progressed promisingly, but was halted by the outbreak of the Second World War. The lectures were announced in the LSE Calendar for 1939/40, but for the same reason never delivered. Gross managed to escape from Krakow during the German invasion and went to Vilna, where he tried to continue his research working with YIVO (the Institute of Jewish Research). He finally arrived safely in the USA, where he met his mentor and later started his academic career (Kubica 2007).

While preparing his research and lectures, Gross became acquainted with recent developments in social sciences concerning urban studies (most likely following the advice of Malinowski), especially the Chicago school of sociology. The main characteristic of this was a “willingness to allow social research and social practice to inform one another”, as Chicago sociologists “were consistently animated by a high-minded reformist impulse” (Bidwell, 1992, 11–12), incited by the contemporary social and economic problems of rapidly growing American cities. Another feature which is relevant here is the affinity of Chicago sociology to anthropology. Robert E. Park suggested that although the life and culture of the city are more subtle and complicated than those of primitive societies, Little Italy in Chicago or Greenwich Village in New York City may be studied with anthropological methods of insightful observation, because the set of fundamental issues is similar

(Park et al. 1925). Gross also read the classic of community studies, the Lynds' *Middletown*. They modelled their analysis on the anthropological study of primitive societies by William H. R. Rivers. The closeness of these approaches to anthropology was remarkable.

Especially important was the essay *Urbanism as a Way of Life* by the Chicago sociologist Louis Wirth (1938). He proposed a theory about the influences of urban life on social organisation and attitudes, arguing that urban life is characterised by impersonal and instrumental contacts, which tend to free individuals from the strong control of primary groups, especially the extended family. This freedom of individual action, however, is accompanied by the loss of collective security. Another important contribution of Wirth was his book *The Ghetto*, where it is described as an institution, which “represents a prolonged case of social isolation” and is “not so much a physical fact as it is a state of mind” (Wirth 1926, 4). This approach is also traceable in Gross's research.³

Moreover, Malinowski was sympathetic to the Mass Observation movement,⁴ and contributed to a volume that summarised the first year of the project. He openly stated there that it was his deepest concern that anthropology should have to come to the point of studying one's own societies with the same methods and the same mental attitude that was the case with exotic tribes (Malinowski 1938b). Jeremy MacClancy points out that Malinowski, unlike other British anthropologists, “gave a qualified welcome to the new organization. (...) For by informing citizens about the nature of their own society, it held the promise of countering the increasing threat of totalitarianism, which seemed to thrive on ignorance” (MacClancy 1995, 504; see also MacClancy 2013). This was the political value of the anthropology at home of which Malinowski had spoken repeatedly. Thus the engaged character of urban studies had been an important element from the very beginning, also in the case of anthropology. Malinowski compared the sociological seminar Gross carried out among workers in Krakow to the format of Mass Observation.⁵

Let me recall Feliks Gross's research, which was one of the first cases of anthropological fieldwork carried out in Europe in the Malinowskian tradition and in the format of urban studies. I was able to learn about the Cracovian project by consulting the correspondence between Malinowski and Gross, as well as other archive material (see Kubica 2014).

As for the theoretical framework of his research, Gross wanted to “do the whole thing functionally” and to “present culture as a whole that ‘hums’ – to use a drivers' phrase”. It was a very apt metaphor: culture as a humming engine. Its different parts were united and worked together. Culture was regarded as a comprehensive and integral unit. Gross wrote that “all this medieval system, such an enclave, functions as if in an engine with elements of modern culture, which again live their own life, their idea”.⁶ Other problems Gross wanted to

3 Though I was able to find the following critical remarks on the copy of the book from Gross's private library: “The historical part – Europe is interesting. On American ghetto – on Chicago ghetto – utterly trivial, non-interesting. Chicago material – Wirth's work – extremely dull. No understanding of issue of drama – no distinction between relevant and irrelevant facts, no skill in proper selection of facts. Extremely poor – at least up to [page] 187. On American ghetto reads like minutes of a joint stock company. Still the story of Am. Jews must be interesting best chapter XIV. [The sociological significance of the ghetto]. F.G.” (copy of the 1956 edition of *The Ghetto* held at the Library of the Institute of American and Polonia Studies, Jagiellonian University).

4 See the site: <http://www.massobs.org.uk/index.htm>.

5 A letter from Malinowski to Gross, 4. December 1937, Malinowski Papers (further MP), Sterling Memorial.

6 Gross to Malinowski, 14. June 1939, MP SML.

explore were: “the function of a ghetto for Jews, the petrification of religion, pervasion and reception of new currents, and their unification together with an antique religious culture into one whole, ‘a clash of cultures.’”⁷ He also pointed out two other issues: the ghetto as a closed milieu, and its pragmatic relation to the outside world. Gross called his research a “functional survey of the ghetto”, which might suggest that it was to be theoretically informed by Malinowski’s functionalism and methodologically by Chicago sociology, as the term “survey” suggests.

How did Gross describe the Krakow ghetto? In his letters he wrote to his mentor with the agitation of a discoverer: “I have already been to the field – wonderful types. One of the chapters [of the future book] will be entitled ‘Types of Szeroka street’, There I will give a cross-section of professional types of the ghetto. e.g. the ‘sofer’, who is a scribe of scrolls, the bible. He writes the bible by hand, because only a bible written by hand is scrolls and has liturgical value. If he is wrong once in writing, he cannot continue, he has to start from the beginning. This is an occupation which has remained unchanged for hundreds of years, and passes from father to son. There are more such ‘benedictine’, unknown occupations.”⁸ In another letter Gross wrote: “You, Professor, splendidly felt there would be treasures for us there. I have already managed to get some friends in the field. (...) Next to the sofer-benedictine, cheerful anyway, who is stuck in a petrified culture, I encountered the whole schools, as if ‘religious parties’. These are adherents of individual Rabbis-sages, coming together in ‘stiebles’ [shtiebel] (something between a synagogue and a club, a fraternity) and are involved in heated discussions.”⁹

In his memoirs Gross added some more ethnographic texture. He described his visits to an ancient inn called Pod Krzyżykiem (i.e. “under the small cross”): “Here came Jews and gentiles, craftsmen, small traders, students (...) who loved those old places. All the time talk on politics – international politics – went on with passion. This was a place, where a poor Handele a street buyer and vendor of old clothing felt at home and enjoyed the same respect as any doctor. I had great sympathy for those *Handeles*. So many made fun of them, while they went from yard to yard crying *Handele, Handele, Handele* in Jewish, ‘Trading, Trading, Trading’ and we all knew that it means buying, selling old clothing. (...) On one of the ancient streets (...) was an hassidic *Shool* [shul] or synagogue, in an old town house. A part of it was just a large room with a table. Around the table sat Jews of various professions – tailors, craftsmen, *handeles* – discussing and interpreting the scriptures and Talmud, and sometimes, in a commentary “Arist” was mentioned, no one else but Aristotle. An old rabbi, or an elder was at the head of the table leading those unusual scholarly discussions and interpretations of texts.

Here the *Handele*, pushed around and laughed at, had his dignity and respect for he was a learned man, as the other, his leisure work and sense of life altogether were here in the *Shool* [shul], in those evening meetings. Though his fare – potatoes, herring and similar was far less than plentiful, he gained here the sense of his life. Further down the same streets, tailors were working in their modest workshops. They went to synagogue, twice or three times daily – and had to live close to it. They would not take a better paid job in a distance from their *Shool* [shul]” (Gross 1992, 22).

7 Gross to Malinowski, 29. September 1938, MP SML.

8 Ibidem.

9 Letters from Gross to Malinowski of 29. September 1938 and 14. June 1939, MP SML.

It is worth noting that Gross's *Cicerone* to Kazimierz was Karol Estreicher, an art historian, the author of an important guide to Krakow (Estreicher 1931), and the son of Stanisław Estreicher, a professor of law, politician, and Gross's mentor, who helped Malinowski greatly in publication of his first, Polish book, *Wierzenia pierwotne i formy ustroju społecznego* [Primitive Beliefs and the Forms of Social Organization]. Gross wrote about his visits to Kazimierz with his friend: "this was our world, Karol's and mine, our perception of history, romance and adventure (...) I had – like Karol – a love for this old city, and decided to write a cultural-anthropological study of the old Jewish Section" (Gross 1992). In this passage one can see two flâneurs, male explorers of the exotic urban landscape, who would later change into an ethnographer who would write a scholarly monograph of the ghetto, and an art historian who used his academic knowledge and interest in the urban locus to write a serious tourist guide.

Gross returned to the topic of his home city twenty years later in his book *World Politics and Tension Areas* (published in 1966), using the case of Krakow to illustrate one of his models of "Interethnic Relations and Tensions". One chapter of the book was called: "A multiple Ethnic Pattern. Ethnic and Religious Relations in Krakow". Gross pointed out that ethnic relations in the city at the end of 19th and the beginning of the 20th century were of special importance, because there were several diametrically different patterns, not complementary, but often contradictory: "They corresponded to various levels and degrees of acculturation; to different political and ideological orientations; and, in many cases, to different social and economic relations" (Gross 1966, 133).

Gross described the city of Krakow as inhabited mainly by Roman Catholics and Jews and by a small number of Protestants. The Jewish population formed a complex subculture of many degrees of acculturation. He also pointed to the fact that ethnic and religious divisions were "complicated by the class structure, and by a variety of political orientations that contributed to their diversity" (Gross 1966, 19). He identified two extremes: Orthodox Jewish groups (own specific culture, strong self-segregation, and neutrality toward outsiders), and Polish-Catholic nationalists (self-segregation, hostility toward other groups). Between them there were many Polish Catholics and Jews who were integrated, and other Polish and Jewish groups which favoured cultural autonomy (Gross 1966, 133).

Gross wrote that this had changed during periods of intensified hostilities like the one following World War I, when the extremists, especially right-wing student organisations, were active in the city and influenced the inhabitants. On the other side were Polish groups and parties which opposed anti-Semitic actions, but they were not very effective.

The author gives a historical overview of the Jewish minority in the ancient Polish Kingdom and during Austrian rule. Furthermore, it is especially important and interesting to note that he shows the geographical aspect of this, which he calls – as a title of one of the sub-chapters says – "Ecology of an ethnic pattern: the Orthodox; self-segregation". The Orthodox Jews lived in Kazimierz, they spoke Yiddish, but also knew Polish, German and Hebrew. They "represented a distinct culture rooted in ancient and strong values as well as stable institutions. There was little if any tendency toward change and acculturation with other ethnic groups. The Orthodox had their own class structure. At the top was prosperous merchant, at the bottom, the pious beggar. (...) Life was not easy, and few were wealthy. The tailor or the cobbler who worked on the Jewish street earned far less than his Christian counterpart who worked in the well-established shops of the midtown. However the Orthodox worker, like the Orthodox merchant, had no desire to move out of the Jewish section.

He did not advocate integration with other groups nor any change in his customs and religion” (Gross 1966, 137). Orthodox craftsmen did not want to move because they had to be close to their synagogue and shul. For them wealth was not important; what mattered were piety and learning. “This was a socially introverted group,” Gross wrote, “little concerned with the doings of the outside world. For them the Christian town consisted of out groups; some friendly, some hostile. They had no desire to establish closer ties with those of a different religion” (Gross 1966, 137). Their energies were socially “introverted” and they created a self-segregated community.

Gross also describes what he calls *The transitional area: the “secular”*. The territory between Kazimierz and the centre of Krakow developed in the second half of the 19th century. It was inhabited by the Jewish middle class: merchants and small entrepreneurs. A section of the secular Jewish population also lived here. It was a similar case in another district, Podgórze. Gross noted that secular Jews varied in their political and ethnic orientation, listing the left-wing Bund, Democratic Party (and Jewish Independents), as well as the Zionist movement. The Bund advocated the development and preservation of the Jewish culture and language, developing a programme of cultural pluralism and autonomy. The Jewish intelligentsia before World War I was in favour of the Democratic Party and saw Poles as neighbours and friends. This attitude was reciprocated by the Polish intelligentsia, though there were also anti-Semitic sentiments.

To write the chapter Feliks Gross used various sources of knowledge: historical works, his own and his father’s experiences as political activists, and also information he had collected during his fieldwork and earlier while strolling through Kazimierz with Karol Estreicher.

Gross also theorised about the city in his article entitled “Remarks about Dress, Customs and Symbols”, which was published in 1969 in the Polish émigré journal *Tematy*. Here, one can find some remarks about cities in the context of religion, especially rituals. Gross’s main thesis is that “totalitarian movements have found fertile ground in Catholic countries and countries of ‘marginal’ Protestantism, rather Lutheran, than Calvinist, coloured with nationalism, as in Germany, and at the same time in countries with militaristic traditions and centralized institutions” (Gross 2002, 295–296).

Gross argues that Catholicism is a religion of ritual and liturgy, which play a significant role in it. Ceremonies group thousands of people in one place, like a square or great cathedrals. Protestant churches are generally modest, and radical Protestant congregations rather small. There are no complicated rituals or processions. “The very architecture of cities reflects not only the social structure of inhabitants and their economic activity, but also their cultural needs, system of values, aesthetics, custom, religious character. The architecture of the cities which were predominantly Catholic created great cathedrals built for mass celebrations, huge squares – for religious, as well as folk, political demonstrations.” (Gross 2002, 298) Here he gives the example of St Peter’s Square in Rome. But he could also invoke Krakow’s Market Square, one of the largest squares in Europe.

He then writes that an individual together with thousands of the faithful participate on these squares in religious ceremonies, and are deeply moved. He points out that in their history societies have learned to distinguish between the religious sphere and the professional or political, but “this pattern of religious behaviour can be deftly flipped in the field of mass political movements, ideological movements. This “flipped” symbolic mechanism is then

used for the consolidation of power and to spread militant political ideology” (Gross 2002, 299). He juxtaposed the huge continental European squares with Trafalgar Square in London and Times Square in New York, which are rather small, and concludes that Great Britain and the United States “are countries of reduced symbolic formality, whereas, for example Catholic countries were and are countries of symbolic intensification” (Gross 2002, 299).

It may well be that Gross formulated these remarks after comparing his home city with New York, to which he emigrated during World War II, though his Italian experiences are more visible here. We can almost see him reflecting on the role of space in religious and other public rituals while sitting in a cafe on some piazza over a redolent espresso: observing the urban landscape around and recalling his own home city and the Main Square there he liked to walk across so much.

Gross referred to Krakow again in his last book *Citizenship and Ethnicity: the Growth and Development of a Democratic Multiethnic Institution* (Gross 1999). He showed that it was European cities that were the cradles of the idea of citizenship, and gave a few historical Cracovian examples. He gave a reminder that in Poland municipal law was often adopted from Magdeburg, but the principle that the “city air makes one free” was often challenged by nobles or burghers themselves. Gross pointed out that “By the seventeenth century the general spirit of toleration of Protestants and dissidents had also declined. At this time it was the crown, King Sobieski of Poland, who ordered the City Council of Krakow to respect the laws and the old traditions and respect the same full rights of citizens who were Proestants and dissidents” (Gross 1999, 18–19).

Gross argued that it was a broad territorial solidarity that continued in the spirit of ancient Roman traditions. “A medieval city was not a consanguineal community of related clans and fratres. To the contrary, with the foundation of new cities, and many were founded or rebuilt in Eastern Europe, in Poland, after Mongol and Tatar invasions, many of the new cities were inhabited by immigrants who spoke foreign languages and were at times even of different religions. They gave the oath of allegiance to the city; now the city was their patria, fatherland. Their citizenship was not tied to their ethnicity; although foreign born, they were members of the urban community. The ethnic bond and identity did not disappear of course. A German immigrant in Krakow continued to speak German at home, read in his native tongue, enjoy German dishes, but in the city he shared the common bond of solidarity. He might have been a Lutheran or Roman Catholic and a German, but at the same time he was a civis Cracoviensis, a citizen of Krakow, thus, he had three identities or even more” (Gross 1999, 58).

Gross stressed that “urban solidarity was rooted in neighbourhood”, and involved duties to defend the city, mutual aid in times of emergency, and participation in the local political government. Again the examples of his home city are used to illustrate his thesis, while his education in law and interest in history also helped.

To sum up Gross’s theorising about his home city, I would like to stress several issues. Firstly, still in the 1930s Gross pointed out the existence of manifold identities, something which must have been quite innovative then, because the normative assumption of singular attachment dominated in the social sciences until the 1960s. His study of the Jewish quarter in Krakow and his university course on urban anthropology would also have been quite original in Europe, as this subject was practically non-existent at the time. Later his analysis of various patterns of inter-ethnic relations and pointing to their geographical

dimension was also quite original. His thesis that cities' architecture reflects their religious character (big squares in Catholic countries) and may facilitate ideological manipulation is very interesting. It is worth stressing that, in trying to describe the genealogy of the concept of citizenship, Gross relates it to the idea of neighbourhood and place as sources of identity, which was rather inclusive and pluralistic.

Yet apart from his theoretical contribution, one can also find in Gross's engagement with his home city the gesture of a flâneur, like his mentor. This can also be seen as "a specifically male way of dwelling in the modern, increasingly urbanized world, that we have to refer as fieldwork" (Donner 2012, 173). Traversing the Market Square, sitting in a cafe and looking through the newspapers, dropping into a church to marvel the stained-glass windows of a genius of Young Poland, and even enjoying the warm and mild air of the city, can be seen as revealing the attitude of observing, reflecting, and possessing, which are so characteristic of a flâneur and an ethnographer, and of which the home city had been a testing ground.

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