

entire extent of the microcosm of a region or a local space is conveniently delineated by the presence of various partitions, curtains and wall. This enables any participant in the situation to be assured that whatever he or she happens to perceive as a feature of this situation will undoubtedly be noticed and reacted to by others as well. In other words, all people present in a given bounded setting tend to share the single physical and social environment in relation to which they can, and in fact do, organize their thoughts, feelings, behaviour and activities. All these characteristics of a region or a room provide a striking contrast to conditions under which people are forced to operate while using a large-scale, open and ill-structured space.

Indeed, the outdoor spaces often prove to be an environment which is very much different from the one conceptualized as "indoors." They tend to be open not only in this sense, that practically anybody (and any time) may enter them, but also in the sense that their physical scale frequently exceeds the ordinary scale of human activity. These very characteristics have earned the open outdoor settings a number of names. Gibson (1947) has introduced the concept of "aerial space" as a name for the whole of the visual surroundings of an observer, extending from the person in question and stretching to the horizon and surfaces of earth and sky. Thiel (1970) suggested the notion of "secondary space," within which a number of primary or even sub-spaces can be distinguished. Sommer's (1966) "proximate environments" and Yi-Fu Tuan's (1974) "fore-" and "middle-grounds" are contrasted with encompassing them, "macro-environments" and "back-grounds" (patent zones), respectively. In a similar vein, Goodey (1968) writes about "extra-environments," or those areas of the environment which man perceives but of which he has no direct experience.

3. SPATIAL EXTENT OF THE FIELD OF CO-PRESENCE

An important feature of such spaces or environments is that they provide a setting for the co-occurrence of the whole multitude of individuals as well as small focused gatherings. These units of participation use a given setting in various ways, yet they do it concurrently, side by side and at the whole gamut of interpersonal distances which range from being just nearby to being far away from each other (Ciolek, 1977). What is more, by doing so, they constitute a social situation of a very special kind. On the one hand, it appears that in such a situation, "the region of space in which mutual presence can be said to prevail cannot be clearly drawn" (Goffman, 1963: 17) for the lack of barriers to participants' senses.

On the other hand, it is obvious that not everybody physically present within the geographical limits of a beach, street, sports field or recreation park is, indeed, physically present to all other users of a given place. First of all, there are some people who cannot be sensed and, therefore, reacted to by some others, either due

to local configuration of the terrain and its various features or due to the sheer distance between the particular set of observers and the observed. For example, Maertens (1884) comments that the distance of 1330 yards is the upper range for visual perception of the presence of a human being, while Hughes (1974) suggests that 1700 yards is the distance beyond which masses of troops cannot, without the aid of field glasses, be discerned from the terrain across which they are moving. Similarly, the upper limit for hearing human voice, even under the most congenial outdoor conditions, seems to be no more than 2200 yards (Fletcher, 1953). Thus, some of those who are positioned within the boundaries of a large-scale public space, from the viewpoint of a given set of observers, are not participating in the so-called situation simply because they are placed well beyond the effective range of human senses.

Secondly, there is another reason to think that the extent of the social situation is much smaller than the extent of a given physical setting or the extent of the total theoretically possible field within which people could, under some special conditions, perceive their physical co-presence. There are some grounds to believe that even among those who are, in theory, capable of mutual perception with their unaided senses, there is always a set of persons who do not regard themselves as being *sufficiently* present to one another and who, therefore, treat themselves as being absent from the point of view of a given set of observers. This phenomenon of becoming absent or declaring somebody as being absent in a given place has been recognized on a number of occasions. It gave rise to such concepts as Von Uexkull's (1957) notion of "Umwelt," Goffman's (1971) "surround," or McBride's (1971, 1972) nameless zone "in which variation in the separation distance (between two or more individuals--TMC) is largely irrelevant, and attracts no attention" (McBride, 1972: 5). A similar idea underlies work of Ciolek (1978B). In his analysis of patterns of spatial behaviour in public, he concluded that in order to understand how people cope with continuous intense and numerous physical presences of fellow co-users of a given setting, a person limits his attention and advertence to a relatively small portion of his environment. Beyond a certain point, all people within a setting, though easily seen, are treated as being in the so-called "b-space," that is, in the area which is normally non-monitored and disattended by the observer.

Some further evidence for the existence of spaces within the range of man's sensory processing which, nevertheless, are not noticed or reacted to by users of an outdoor public setting comes from analysis of unobtrusive and naturalistic field techniques. Smith et al. (1975) in a field experiment studied the magnitude of people's reactions, as measured in terms of posture shifts and changes in the direction of their gazes, to the observational procedures of an "unobtrusive" observer. It was found that the people's reactivity was a function of the separation distance and not of the recording