

CITY AND HUMAN BEINGS

What factors determine the creation and proliferation of megalopolis? Do they stimulate the development of our better human qualities? What characterizes those who live there?

Clearly large cities and Patrick Geddes "conurbation", are highly vulnerable in case of thermonuclear holocaust, as the genocide of Hiroshima and Nagasaki so well proved. Why do we keep on building and inhabiting them? Is there, today, any significant evidence that the two major world powers have any intention of living in peace? Are they showing signs of permitting the rest of the world to have peace? Is it, perhaps, that human beings do not wish to survive, as Bergson stated in a letter, in 1918, to the then President of the United States, Mr. Woodrow Wilson? Or could it be that the immense majority have fallen into such passivity and hopelessness, that they have forgotten their right to live, their right to struggle in the name of life and have let those in power do as they will?

It seems that cities appear and history begins when the old ethnic religions, tied to nature's rythm of day and night, seasonal changes and the marvel of a new life symbolized in women had been overthrown by the new patriarchal ones. It is then that people gather^{ed} around the sanctuaries, accepting the preponderant

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role of the priestly class and the secular power of the hunter-warrior. Under their guidance they improved their organization and the production of food surplus.

With the city-sanctuary begins the division of labor, the class structure and the control and accumulation of riches in the hands of a priestly and secular minority. This minority can live and have spare time thanks to the labor of the majority. - Thus the city is the necessary step to the concentration and centralization of power.

The concentration of power, the accumulation of riches and the division of labor made possible the undertaking of huge works, representative of gods and kings, which still endure. The large mass of artists and artisans, workers and peasants, who made the monuments possible, would remain entirely unknown if it were not for a few scenes of what their everyday life was like and our awareness, above all, of the beautiful evidence of their work as individuals or as a part of the human megamachine. Spare time - allowed the study of human beings and the world they lived in. The division of labor made possible the flowering of arts, crafts and technics. But man is vain, more so if he is powerful; then they seek idolatrous immortality. Since that time the labor of the humble is used to immortalize them. Could it have been different?

In the neolithic villages, subjected to the central role of the mother in the social and religious spheres, all is peace - and no one sought nor desired power. This has been proven in many sites, particularly at Catal Küyük (circa 5,600 B.C.) at Anatolia,

Turkey, where there is no evidence of sack, nor signs of violence in the hundreds of skeletons found..... and there was peace for 800 years. Sedentary life had been possible since animals and plants had been domesticated (a labor in which women played a very significant role) circa 9,000 B.C. Humans had thus become free of the precarious collecting of wild grains, roots and fruits and from the hazardous products of the chase. In Catal Küyük the creative spirit of man blossomed further and ceramic appeared. ^{1/}

The centralization and concentration of power, consequent to the city, unleashed wars of despoilment and conquest. The increased constructive possibilities brought forth or augmented the destructive ones; man's creative spirit thus became a Janus with two opposite alternatives: to construct or destroy, peace or war. But the remains of Catal Küyük indicate that neither malignant aggression, nor war are inherent to human nature; that we are living a transitory stage, despite the fact that it has already lasted - some 5000 years. Catal Küyük is a hope for the return of a millennium of peace.

What forces drove men to found cities? One favorable factor was the possibility of a sedentary life thanks to agricultural surplus and the abundant breeding of domestic animals, in convenient geographical surroundings. Erich Kahler (1956) indicates that the city was possible when Man transcended the atemporal limits of a primitive communitarian society. In such societies

^{1/} Fromm, Erich. "The anatomy of human destructiveness" Holt, Rinehart and Winston. New York, Chicago, San Francisco. 1973 p. 155 ff.

the individual lived a prelogical existence: they had no notion of time, the present was eternal; living was a continual state of alert because of the innumerable changes of nature and the unknown. There was no past and the dead were always present: they only changed their condition. There was no difference between the animated and the inanimated since even stones had a life of their own and could wound or hurt. There was no difference between wakefulness and dream-sleep for both were part of reality; there was no private property for everything belonged to the group. Religion as such did not exist, there was only a primitive participation that propitiates but does not question. Only when Man distinguishes past from present can he inquire into his origin; such a question is the essence of religion, after which cities can be built and history begins.

Lewis Mumford considers that the city-sanctuary was possible only through the allegiance of priests and hunter-warriors who could consolidate the sanctuary. The priest consecrated the king. ^{2/} Stated in this succinct manner it would sound unconvincing, unless we understand, as he does, the influence the priests had obtained by gathering all the knowledge of their time: thus for instance they had the interest and curiosity to peer night after night at the amazing world of the stars, and by force of observation, they learned to distinguish the constellations; they also peered into the world of dreams and began to visualize their contemporaries. They

^{2/} Mumford, Lewis. "The city in history". A Pelican Book. Penguin Books. Secker and Warburg. Great Britain 1966.

not only thought of the origin, they also became concerned with life and death, finit and infinit, man and woman and they were also in touch with the Unknown. Perhaps some had to anoint a king against their will, as Samuel did to Saul.

The city did not appear all of a sudden; it was a gradual process. We can think, therefore, that artisans and craftsmen contributed to its development, by gathering around the sanctuary; thus we find in the sites of many ancient cities, sections of potters, - stone masons, goldsmiths, metallurgists, weavers etc. As the city grew it stimulated the development of arts and crafts.

It is probable that men of great vision desired the centralization of power to use it in enterprises that would be of - benefit to all: the control of great natural forces such as droughts, floods and the like, so they built dikes and embankments, drains - and irrigation systems; to diminish insecurity they would build walls and organize vigilance; they could construct great temples to their gods. At the same time or later, the wish to control the - lives of the people made itself evident.

Soon armies came to be and with them the urge to conquer and the organized hunt for animals or men, in the name of the tutelary deity; but obviously this all came after a king was appointed. It is quite probable that there were priest-kings and king-priests; but by and large what predominated was a secular dynasty allied to a priestly class.

The walled city drew people in times disaster, but more - were drawn by the pomp and ceremony that developed and the consequent idolatry. These were powerful magnets that stimulate group

narcissism, which manifests itself when considering their city the most beautiful, their gods the most potent and their armies invincible. On the other hand group narcissism enhances the display of creative capacities and imagination; thus the beauty and quality of products grew, the sacred ceremonies became more elaborate and magnificent, court etiquette more strict, and the armies more resplendent and showy. The common citizen, carried away by all this vertigo, submitted meekly to tax exploitation, the demands on his person and that of his sons, and sometimes even his daughters; he accepted also the hovel he lived in with its concomittant lack of sanitation. The resplendent display made for envy and greed; - dynastic changes were frequent aided by dagger or poison and walled cities sooner or later fell to assault, siege and sack; massacre and slavery were the final destinies of many citizens. Where had Catal Küyük gone?

The above mentioned are not the only human factors that stimulated the growth of the cities; they also benefited from being the seat of contemporary learning; there one could learn crafts and skills, and the theoretical knowledge and the techniques of the - time, also there was opportunity for artistic display. Human creativity was fostered and there was room for development. There - was a chance for social mobility through the priestly class, the army or civil administration. The fame of the city increased its commerce and exchange.

All this explains the voluntary migration to the city, - but there is still to be mentioned another human factor that populated the city: the forced migration of slave labor.

The first cities had human dimensions and their walls - were within reach of human call, the horn, bell or gong. The inhabitants knew of all significant events and participated actively in the life of their polis; no one could remain aloof nor indifferent and probably they all knew one another.

From the beginning of the city, the basis for present - day megalopolis were set; what has changed are the human perspective, its connotation and its goals. The city is still the center and the axis; it could not be otherwise. Even though the kingdoms of only one city grew to those with many cities and into empires; the capital city continued centralizing and concentrating riches - and power: "All roads lead to Rome". 3/

At the beginning of the XVI century A.C. the wars of religious reform and predominantly Martin Luther (1483-1546), separate the secular powers from the church. The State becomes paramount and religion occupies, despite its efforts, a secondary role. Secularization continues with findings of Copernicus (1473-1543), Kepler (1571-1630) and Galileo (1564-1642) who threw Man and earth out of the center of our planetary system. "Following Kepler's - clue, Galileo constructed a world in which matter alone mattered, in which qualities became "immaterial" and were turned by inference into superfluous exudations of the mind". 4/

3/ Two capital cities are exceptions to this rule: Washington, D.C. in the U.S. and Canberra in Australia.

4/ Mumford, Lewis. "The Pentagon of power". Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc. N.Y. 2nd. edition 1970. p: 53

René Descartes (1596-1650) goes a step further: "He proved to his own satisfaction that all the manifestations of life could be explained on a purely mechanical basis, and that except in the case of man organism and mechanism were interchangeable terms." 5/ "From Descartes' platform it was easy to take the next step; and that was to outline a set of principles favorable to a political order that would deliberately turn men into machines, whose spontaneous acts could be regulated and brought under control, and whose natural functions and moral choices would all be channeled through a single responsible center — the sovereign ruler or, in the bureaucratic jargon of our day, the Decision Maker". 6/ Many thinkers continue the cult of antilife like Hobbes (1588-1679), Roger Bacon (1561-1626) and submit man to the machine. In this respect, they are the precursors of the anti-utopias of Zamyatin ("We"), Aldous Huxley ("Brave new world"), George Orwell ("1984") and Wells ("The time machine", "Or Moreau's island"), etc.: in all of them we find that freedom has disappeared, human beings are conditioned to obedience and isolated from Nature; also the past is destroyed and there is a return to the ever present. 7/

The State controls human destinies and is itself controlled by the owners of the means of production: first by the landed

5/ Ibid. p. 77

6/ Ibid. p. 98

7/ Hillegas, Mark R. "The future as nightmare" Oxford University Press. N.Y. 1967 p. 35 ff.

hereditary nobility and by the new nobility won by the sword, whose wealth is the land. Later, governments are influenced and formed by the powerful merchant and banking families in Venice, Florence, Milan and other city-states of renaissance Italy. By the middle of the XIX century the State is formed and controlled by great empresarios of private industry, commerce and banking and the world equivalent to the Senate are in reality the private clubs of men of private enterprise so that it is comprehensible that their interests determine the decisions of government.

Centralizations and concentration of power are still determinant in the development of cities, for those in power decide the means of transportation that will favor or marginate a city. Shipping was influential, but railroads were a more decisive factor in the growth of cities.

Without state support railroads never would have prospered. It received enormous subsidies, financial aid in infrastructures - and could even rely on the protection and assistance of the armed forces. One has only to see the railroad map of any country to realize which were the important areas for private enterprise, which cities were favored and which neglected. It is evident that the favored cities expanded and concentrated more riches and power. In the Republic of Mexico, par example, all rails center at Mexico City. 8/

How did the railroad affect cities and citizens?

8/ In recent years two roads were built that do not center at Mexico City.

One must not forget that the first locomotives ran by steam and used either coal or fire-wood; it made considerable noise and the smoke it belched blacked and covered with soot every thing along its path. This soot was harmful to the respiratory and the digestive tracts and to the skin.

Neither the affluent nor members of government desired for such contraption to pass near their residences, so railroad stations were preferably located at the marginated urban aereas and factories and warehouses were built close to the tracks. Since stations had to protect their patrons against the weather they were (and some still stand) huge hulks with very high ceilings (because of the smoke) where the echo increased the noise.

Factories and foundries contributed their share in making cities ugly, but they were never beautiful anyway in the sections where the poor lived. Factories and foundries were first built as cheaply as possible and they were dirty, noisy and dark, with no concern for the wellfare of the workers. With some early exceptions, it wasn't till after 1945 when generalized efforts are made to build factories well oriented as to sunshine and air, with green aereas and in general with concern for the well-being of all who work there, thanks to unionized labor and the awakening of public opinion.

As has been stated, the poor have always lived in squalor, in the insalubrious sections of a city, with little or no concern shown them (and all too frequently still, none is shown). It was unimportant if their homes lacked privacy, silence, water, sun and air; there were no "Hanging Gardens" for them, nor

beautiful parks with ponds and murmuring fountains. With the -
advent of the industrial era, to their former calamities were ad-
ded the noisy uproar of factories and railroads and the smoke and
soot that made their dirtiness filthy and their poverty worse.
Always their rebellions in search of social justice have been -
drowned in blood; through the State, the powerful had first the
support of the armed forces and later, armies and police. If this
was not enough, we have pointed out how Luther and other intelec-
tuals established the normative ideologies that tend to submit
the individual completely to the State and how they try to make
us believe this is as immutable and inevitable as if it were an
act of God.

The invention of the diesel and electric engine improved
the condition of those who live nearby; but misery still squats
by the railroad tracks, even in old, rusty and shabby railroad
cars.

The railroad has been and still is useful and capable
of an even greater service to society; but it has had few innova-
tions since the invention of the automobile. Of course there are
the electric trains, the continuous track and the monorail; but
there are still luxury, first, second and third class cars and
even cattle cars, as many as there are categories of citizens in
the country concerned. It seems utopic to many, even today, to
think that we are all equal in our human essence although dif-
ferent and our possible goals variable. Elitistic ideas prevail
and class differences (even in the Soviet Union) that keep up -
and stimulate class struggle.

The XX century is, up to the present, the age of the automobile and the airplane, despite nuclear energy and trips to the moon.

When he built his first Ford with an internal combustion engine, its inventor stated: "Every citizen will own a Ford and we shall put an end to pedestrians". The phrase has proven all too true for autotransportation is the greatest threat to pedestrians and even in Russia, chofers believe they are entitled to the right-of-way. (We say even in Russia, because they do not have a thick traffic, for few are privileged with an auto). Very quickly the rich yearned to become the joyous conductors of the new machine until Henry Ford initiated the policy of raising his workers salary so that they could buy their own modest T model.

Transportation based on the internal combustion of gasoline required government support for the needed infrastructure and billions of dollars have been spent in every country (trillions and trillions if we take a world perspective) in highways, super-highways, bridges, ferries, traffic signals and indicators, special police and a vast exclusive bureaucratic organization that, of course, are not paid for by the automobile industry that produces millions of units of all types of autotransports.

The uglyfying process of the great cities initiated by the railroad was incommensurably increased by the auto, with the passive resignation of many and the unconscious persuasion of the majority through constant publicity and the ideology of a worldwide political demagoguery that first stimulated the wish for a car and now the necessity of having one. Publicity for instance

never indicates the nuisance-value to people in the vicinity of - superhighways and highspeed intracity roads; it never mentions for instance, the problem of crossing to the other side: it is so simple to cross to the other side unless there is a high-speed-road in the middle, then it becomes highly complicated.

Automobiles have stopped being a luxury item and have become a necessary object because the automotive industry is completely antithetical to means of urban mass transportation, to such an extent that engineers and technicians have almost stopped - thinking of inventing and organizing an urban mass transportation system that would be efficient, comfortable, ample and sufficient. Such an excellent mass transport system would ~~severely~~ ^{severely} damage (and perhaps even destroy) the present organization of the auto industry and it would hurt, by the way, the vested interests of the oil companys. Probably automobiles would still be manufactured, but no longer by the millions.

Cities not only lost their specific characteristics and became ugly but the auto also made possible their disproportionate growth. Formerly it was a mark of distinction to own a house near the center of the city on the great avenues and bulevards, aside from having a country house in the outskirts. But automobile traf^fic made life disagreeable near the center and a centrifugal migration began seeking less noisy and contaminated aereas; this centrifugal migration of the affluent to the periphery of the cities made it mandatory to communicate them to their^{operational} zones. 9/

9/Meyer, J.R., Kain, J.F. & Wohl, M. "The urban transportation problem" Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Mass. 1965 p. 2.

The middle class soon imitated them and with time the city enveloped outlying villages and suburbs. The center of town became the site of offices, commercial stores, banks and small shops - particularly clothiers and consequently its traffic is intense. The center of Paris became a huge garage, the Champs Elisees - drowned by the toxic exhaust gases. Mexico city changed from the city with the most transparent air, to one of the most contaminated cities of the world. Los Angeles, California lost its orchards and truck-gardens and became an immense slab of asphalt and concrete. In all great cities today, their streets have become particularly dangerous for children and unleashed dogs: they are unable to avoid machines running at 60, 80 or more kilometers per hour.

The formation of con-urban zones of high purchasing - potential has driven retail selling to disperse to these zones, this in turn has dispersed labor sources and has enhanced the need for available roads for merchandise distribution.

The working of ideologys and publicity is so thorough that, with few exceptions, the population of the world longs for an automobile; they scrimp in food, home, clothing and healthy - enjoyment in order to buy one, and now, they will have to sacrifice much more to keep it going. And the billions of dollars of - infrastructure are paid by the people, not by private enterprise nor the automobile manufacturers; in fact Capital pays, in the world, about 25% of income through taxes, aside from receiving - favorable tariff protections, subsidies and tax exemptions. One must add that the automobile industry, particularly the americans,

have not bothered to make safer vehicles, more lasting, more economical in up-keep, with less complicated engines nor less contaminating. Emma Rothschild points out that year by year, american automobiles waste fuel and give less mileage per gallon of gasoline. In 1969 it gave an average of 13.7 miles per gallon. 10/ By contrast, the european average is about 27 to 40 miles per gallon. (10 to 15 per litre).

Autotransportation causes and has caused enormous diseconomies or social costs ("It follows that the social value of a good — the value remaining after subtracting from its market price the estimated value of the damage inflicted on others by producing and/or using the good may not only be well below its market price, it may even be negative". 11/; in damages to national environments, to the conservation of national resources (significantly non-renewable ones) and above all in the supply of energetics, plus the colossal cost in human lives 12/ and damages to private property.

10/ Rothschild, Emma. "Running out of gas". New York Review of Books. Vol. XX Num. 17 Nov. 1, 1973. p. 34

11/ Mishan, Ezra J. "The costs of economic growth" Praeger Publishers. N.Y., Washington. Third Printing. 1971 p. 54

12/ "Excelsior" a Mexico-City daily published the 22nd. December 1974, page 4A the following item: "Dr. Ricardo Campos delegate from the Dept. of Public Health to the National Council for the Prevention of Accidents pointed out... in only one year there were a little more than 7000 deaths in the whole country (Mexico) (due to automobile accidents) and 100,000 were wounded ... The number of partial invalids is very high". I have no access to world figures, but in the U.S. they are very high.

One should keep in mind that the cost in gasoline to mobilize one exclusive automobile passenger is much greater than the transportation of each individual passenger by bus, tram (streetcar) trolebus or Metro in use today, so it is desirable and possible that the present world crisis of energetics may stimulate the invention and development of other transport systems despite huge vested interests. 13/

Commercial aviation is another means of transportation that when not owned outright by the State are aided and subsidized by the interested governments. The large airports which are all government property have made their own contribution in deforming the megalopolis, to the concentration of political and economical power and in favoring the dominant social ideology. The fact that all airlines are affiliated to an international organization (IATA) places the smaller companies at the mercy of powerful nations: a case in point is that the only films projected on board large commercial aircraft on international flights are american films, regardless of the nationality of the craft. Government support to airlines is slowly bringing to an end passenger maritime travel, specially transoceanic travel; it is not clear how this will be beneficial and it will be a great pity. Be this as it may, what is very apparent is the noise of airplane motors over a city, excessive for the poor who live in close vicinity to large airports. But this can not be compared to what will happen if governments decide to buy the new supersonic

13/ Rothschild, Emma. Op. cit. The authoress adds: "In the U.S. of the 82% of people who drive to work, 2/3 of them do so alone".

Concordes. When this anglo french plane first made its appearance, many scientists all over the world sounded the alarm; they clearly pointed out that the harm produced by the breaking of the sound barrier was incalculable; the boom could fracture concrete of homes and buildings and there was no foreseeable way of measuring the ecological damage effected along the lines of flight. All this to save a few hours of flight; as it is, with some intercontinental flights humans already evince symptoms because of alteration of their biological clocks. What will these symptoms be when hours of flight are further reduced? Perhaps time-saving may help some business men, but not necessarily ordinary passengers. This saving of time is still more senseless if one measures the hours lost in being at the service of the plane (which is not at our service): one or one and one half hours before flight time; the long trip from home or hotel to the air terminals, from there to the distant international airports; the waiting and delays of unknown duration at the airports with a discourtesy of silence as to the real causes of delay; the fact that one never really knows the time when the flight will start or the time of arrival; the waiting for luggage etc., etc. If one adds to this the sadistic glee of some of the personnel, male or female, at the idea of searching your person and your belongings - one has the complete catastrophe. Regular maritime travel has been very different.

So far we have implied some of the characteristics of the inhabitants of the megalopolis: we see, by and large, a passive, dependent human being, submissive to the needs of private enterprise through the agencies of government; in fact these multinational and

national enterprises greatly conform our way of thinking and of living. The mass communication media awaken new "needs" that have not improved the quality of life; they surround us with things and more things (or gadgets) and they whet our appetite to acquire, to consume, changing us from Homo Sapiens into Homo Consumens.

What are other general characteristics of human beings who live in megalopolis and what other forces mold them?

To begin with megalopolitans are no longer individuals if we understand as individual those who have their own identity, unique, different from everybody else; those who seek the ever-greater development of all their potentials and above all, individuals are they who are whole, complete, indivisible and sensitive to others. Individuals are those who are conscious of their aloneness.

Day by day we see the number of persons with a merchantile character structure augment. They live themselves as a merchandise that must please and are afraid of being found unacceptable, of not finding a place in the personality "market". It is of great importance to them to appear in a way that others will find desirable. They lack personal convictions and adopt that of the majority. They never think of investigating, studying or meditating to know something about themselves; they also do not question life and death, finit and infinit, man and woman. They believe ritual and idolatry represent a frame of devotion but are never marvelled by the "miracle" of creation; they see Nature threatened by Man with little disquiet and this of brief duration. Another of their worries, aside from pleasing, is to have what others have,

or that which publicity marks as desirable; they bear with life - without love for life nor for what is alive; they are drawn by deafening and deadening incessant external excitation and lack the drive of an inner stimuli. 14/

The denizen of the megalopolis has become insensitive and selfish; he is not concerned about his fellow-creatures nor even his neighbors, least of all about the tragedy of human beings in other countries: famine, war, disease. They perceive everything as alien to them, as somethings governments will or should resolve. This is due to three fundamentals motifs; although they are not the only ones:

They are submissive and dependent on those who hold power and they never question this fact, even within the framework of law and social justice. It is true that to protest may cost their lives as it has already cost many. Today one can protest only in very few countries without violent repression.

The present system of news communication is thoroughly - alienating; this holds true for printed matter, for photographic material and newsreels. Terrible scenes are followed or preceded by publicity based on implicit or explicit sexual themes, jokes of doubtful taste, banal scenes of everyday living, sports and some other data of national or international interest. Such profusion and confusion, such variegated succession enfeebles human sensitivity and critical judgment; and it could not be otherwise for there

14/ Fromm, Erich. "The marketing orientation" in "Man for himself". Rinehart and Co. Inc. N.Y. Toronto 1947 p.p. 67-82

is no time in which to maintain the dramatic image and dwell on it, before a new and altogether different experience assaults our senses. There is a constant flood of sensorial excitation that desensitizes.

The third factor is the enormous prevalence of photography today, which in essence is an image captured from behind a lense. It is all one and the same to photograph a bullet in flight or the effect of the explosion of a granade on a human body, both are technically feasible and both are seen as photographic curiosities, alien to us. A living experience is vastly different from one obtained through a photo or a film. Perhaps this could be a partial explanation for the abuse in films of destructive aggression and explicit sadism; filmed harshness increases with the influx of daily violence and vice-versa. 15/

Till the end of last century it was still important to be an individual despite the mechanistic concept of man; but since then we witness an accelerated process of specialization which is fragmenting human beings. This process today is quite formidable, so much that it is considered as indispensable for the development of science, professions and technology. It is true that no one person can grasp the vastness of information existing in any individual field of knowledge, but the present situation is such that we live in a veritable Tower of Babel where specialists in one same broad field do not understand superspecialists of minute aereas of that

15/ Kahler, Erich. "The tower and the abyss . An inquiry into the transformation of the individual". George Braziller, Inc. N.Y. 1957 p.p. 93 ff.

field. The non-initiated cannot understand the specific language of these highly specialized areas. To this one must add that, quite often, what is published is rather absurd: "A Ph. D. thesis of 439 pages submitted in 1944 to the faculty of the Graduate School of - Cornell University has the following title: 'Posture and Other - Physiological Responses of the Worker in Relation to the Height of Working Surface used in Household Ironing'. It contains 138 statistical graphs, figures, measurements, 'kymographic records'". Kahler quite reasonably states that such an investigation could be useful for an industrial firm in the business, but they would only need a cursory survey. Kahler adds: "To go to such lengths, however is a caricature of real science". 16/

If specialization took place only within the schedule - and place of work, it would still be a dubious blessing; but when it completely absorbs the life of a person and becomes its only - area of interest, we witness then what has become of the "indivisible" individual: he is a being apart, encapsulated, alien to life, in no qualitative way any different from a laborer who during 8 - hours a day tightens the right nut of the front left wheel. It - would be useful to question, for instance, in the field of medicine if a person must study 5 1/2 years of medicine, 2 years of internship, 3 or 4 of residence to wind up as a membraneologist or a - mitochondriologist?

No longer is an individual known as such, he is presented according to his function, his speciality. Within the narrow confines of a speciality prestige is gained by the one who publishes

16/ Ibid. p. 20 f.

the most; this reaches the point where co-authors are imposed etc., in order to fulfill the "labor cuota" required. Tenorships in many universities and research centers are dependent on covering the annual cuota of publications. Now, since it is easier to write about a minute aerea than to do so from a broader scope, the present politics of publications stimulates to even greater superspecialization and with this the increased fragmentation and alienation of human beings. This aspect of the human being is called functionalism which means that one sees humans according to their function and not by who they are nor what they are like; it also means that a person identifies her or his-self with their function and not with the totality of their being.

Quantification, another alienating force, is the result today of the mechanistic thinking we saw appear at the beginning of the XVI century, by which everything must be reduced to ciphers and statistics that can be programmed for computers. It is of little consequence that love (for oneself, for ones neighbor, for what is alive and for life), happiness and freedom for are not capable of quantification. 17/ How does one quantify the will for freedom of the peoples of former Indochina that has resisted almost 34 years of war? But, if data are not cipher-able they are discarded as Galileo did. It is a great misfortune that many only consider valid what can be measured, quantified and computarized, for these data facilitate the de-individualized and dehumanized control of

17/ By the way, love, happiness and freedom for are of the highest achievements of the human spirit.

human beings; and allows, when necessary, the systematized computerized genocide as in South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

The megalopolis is one negative extreme of what city development could become; it does not favor the individual as such, nor the citizen, it also does not favor the active participation of all in the quest of possibilities for a better quality of life. This paper has shown, from the beginning, the tendency of minority groups to centralize power and riches to control and exploit the citizen-masses. This phenomenon can be observed in the international and in the intranational scenes: as time passes fewer individuals and fewer nations concentrate riches and power. Despite historical examples, in the international arena those in power continue seeking military solutions instead of just social, economical and political ones; and within the confines of many nations ever increasing repressions is the frequent answer to social unrest, disquiet and violence.

Before a majority that has submitted and is dominated by the demagoguery of the prevalent system, an impressive minority arises to confront it. This minority has more or less transcended the system and become free from it. This minority struggles for the freedom to disagree and to criticize; it seeks freedom of expression and the right to choose its place of residence; it promotes respect for human dignity and for the rules of due process; it insists on social justice and combats the abuse of power; it desires peace and peaceful coexistence for all the inhabitants of our world, plus the rational use of the resources of our planet at the service of all life and of all the living.

Our hope rests on this minority that disagrees in the -
name of life and in our growing awareness of those forces that try
to manipulate us.

DR. JORGE SILVA GARCIA
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