

In the situation
started during the
19th-century



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In this essay I'm going to analyze same aspect of economic globalization that in the last century have influenced important aspect of socialization and relation in western cities. I will base my analysis on George Simmel's philosophy following the main points of his book *The Metropolis and Mental life* in which he analyzes the relation between metropolitan human experiences and monetary economy. When money becomes medium of everything, urban society turns in a state of collective indifference that makes acquire to the man a " blasè attitude. I'm going to examine in depth this question enhancing the issue with Umberto Galmberti's and Marc Augè's analysis and I will underling how actual is the situation. Indeed, in our ages social connections are less strong and we frequently do not even know by sight those who have been our neighbours for years. We live our life in our houses often ignoring people who leave in same building or street.

It's common that

ANALYSIS

Cambridge Dictionary definition of " culture" is " the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time". So, we can say that culture is the way how people live their lives and this way is inevitably influenced by places in which people live. Nowadays cities have fundamental role in human reality sure enough large part of Mondial population used to live in cities. Cities become larger, more densely populated, they become a micro world with specific equilibrizes. This topic became central during the last centuries and many anthropologists, sociologists, and social science academics started to analyze and examine in

depth modern society aspects and globalization consequences so that cities become the key aspect of these studies.

1 Simmel's study has as its focus in the interaction and integration between society and individual. In his *The Metropolis and mental life*, he analyzes the situation started during the 19th-century when industrial works division made the single person more specialized and so indispensable but at the same time, the individual became deeply dependent on all the others. This contradiction generated many of today's social and psychological "problems". According to Simmel the psychological basis of the metropolitan man depends in the intensification of nervous stimulation. This condition is basically the opposite of life in small town and rural village where the life has a methodical, slow rhythm and it is based on spiritual life-image. If in suburbs a man bases his existence on feeling and sentimental reality, in metropolis man "react with his head" instead of his heart" (Simmel 176). Continuing his analysis, Simmel highlights how money economy and dominance of intellect are intrinsically connected. Money "asks for the exchange value, it reduces all quality and individuality to the question: How much? All intimate emotional relation between persons is founded in their individuality, whereas in rational relations man is reckoned with like a number, like an element which is in itself indifferent". individuality, whereas in rational relations man is reckoned with like a number, like an element which is in itself indifferent".

He analyzes the relation between metropolitan experiences and monetary economy. Metropolitan individuals live human relations and daily life with a calculative perspective typical in economic contexts. Money becomes

medium of everything, the key to interpreting the world. Blasè attitude is the emblematic product of this situation that leads to collective indifference. This apathy is also a defense form from an excess of stimuli characteristic of life and it's necessary in order to defense psyche.

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#Simmel examines also the psychological aspect of urban life. According to him the psychological basis of the metropolitan man are depend also in the intensification of nervous stimulation. This condition is basically the opposite of life in small town and rural village where the life has a methodical, slow rhythm and based on a spiritual life-image. If in suburbs man bases his existence on feeling and sentimental reality, in metropolis man " react with his head" instead of his heart" (Simmel 176). Continuing his analysis, Simmel highlights how money economy and dominance of intellect are intrinsically connected. Money " asks for the exchange value, it reduces all quality and individuality to the question: How much? All intimate emotional relation between persons is founded in their individuality, whereas in rational relations man is reckoned with like a number, like an element which is in itself indifferent".

the relation between social differentiation and individual freedom increase. More a social group is close and undifferentiated, less individualized are the single members. More people are in the group, more opportunities for the single person to develop his own personality, autonomy, and uniqueness. Therefore, the metropolis is the place with more freedom of movement and

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affirmation of the individual. To obstacle that situation there is the constant dependence of the single to the world of institutions that dominate him. To conclude, the metropolis is both the place of freedom and complete self-affirmation, both the world of intellect and of the inability of reacting and of perceiving differences.

Simmel introduce the "Blasè attitude" that is typical and emblematic product of this situation that leads metropolis men into collective indifference. It is the results from the contrasting stimulation of the nerves that are reactive "for such a long time that they finally cease to react at all" (178, Simmel). Indeed, blasè man can feel object but not their essence, deep values or meaning. No one object deserves preference over any other because money "becomes the common denominator of all values". The money economy and the intellect dominie have in common objective mentality and approach. In this perspective, even time have to follow law of supply and demand. Furthermore, big cities are often mass production centers and their economy is based on the financial market and on the law of supply and demand. This huge and complex construct could work only if based on a rigid timetable. Time itself starts to works under the market law and not anymore following natural rhythms. Wasting time is not permitted, punctuality and calculability are necessary and intrinsic in metropolitan existence. these traits must also favor the exclusion of those irrational, instinctive sovereign impulses" (179).

From decades geologists and demographers are disclosing that around 2030 four quirts of humanity will leave in thirty cities around the world. What does it mean? It means that cities will lose them characterizes, they will become

(are becoming) just human agglomeration without sharing almost nothing but the money procure. Not money produced by local crafts, but often by multinationals or organizations for which territory borders are obstacles not possibility of identity and characterization. Furthermore, even if I'm not going in the deep of the issue, it's important to remember that this global era permits to merchandises and money to moves around the world easier than men and women who need passports, authorizations and international agreements. About that issue Stefan Zweig wrote " Formerly man had only a body and a soul. Now he needs a passport as well for without it he will not be treated like a human being" (The World of Yesterday). From that time the process of disindividualisation of single person has been progressing. What influenced this process? For sure also the space, or, even better non-space. The concept of " non-space" was been coined by the celebrated anthropologist Marc Augè in his book Non-lieux. Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité (1962) and become fundamental for the interpretation of our western reality. A non-space is a space without identity, there is not identification in any social group, no relations, identity or history. sottolineare il fatto che nei non luoghi la persona è un consumatore e quindi tutto si riallaccia alla logica del mercato: è un filo logico necessario, se no sta pappardella non ci azzecca 'na minchia I think that not all the city and not all the place of a specific city could be defined " anthropologic spaces". But exists same city realities in which the sense of community described by Augè exist. Realities in which $\neg\neg$ (A. Cosetta) the market is not the only possible system. A place where we can satisfy our needs in others way, and to give giving is maybe the more fascinating and paradoxical way. Marketing tries to use presents in many commercial ways with offers, gifts, gratuities

exploitations, but it's clear the difference between this kind of presents and a real unselfish one. +++ According with Cosetta the difference between present and exchange of market is the freedom. We are free to donate, as we are free to receive and to reciprocate. Free but in some way obligated, not by a commercial contract but by moral duty, by trust we have in others, in our need of being in relations. Present have to be considerate in the Latin meaning of the term: monus, that is the linguistic root of community and communication.