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**THE URBAN EFFECT : A DOCTRINE OF THE INFANT GOD**

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1/2

(WAYS AND PATTERNS OF CULTURAL SYNTHESIS)

THE URBAN EFFECT. A DOCTRINE OF THE INFANT GOD

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The importance of religion is that it shapes the very mechanism of thought. One may think as a Hindu, a Jew, a Christian, a Moslem, etc., all oblivious to the futuristic nature of religion. At the base of such thinking is, invariably, a hypothesis. One can say that in many, if not most, of our endeavours pointing at "absolutes", we proceed by way of a hypothesis and attempt verifications.

I will advance a hypothesis which has a built-in inaptness for verification. This inaptness is the unavoidable blind spot of eschatological projection. This hypothesis postulates that since the original reality might be an Alpha point, time zero of the Big Bang, it could be that the end might be also a point to which reality must converge, the Omega point. Such a terminal point does not exist yet, since the future does not exist either.

To hypothesize the future is as necessary as it is doleful. This duality aptly reflects the human condition: immense ambitions, hopes and no less unlimited dread and suffering. The doing of life, particularly reflective life, is such a constant tearing apart, such ambivalence and turmoil. While eroding from the inanimate (mineral), that amount of media and energy needed to keep in balance dread and exultance, life must go on creating the future.

The hypothesis of the INFANT GOD is an attempt to resolve the dualism: "matter" and "godliness". Because of some of the premises, such a resolution can only be, it must coincide with the conclusion in toto of the process we are engaged in. The process is cosmic since the cosmos is where we act out reality. One could say that total resolution is made necessary by the "Paradigm of Selfsufficiency."

## THE PARADIGM

Accepted as a given that reality is an interdependence of parts, the only possible selfsufficient system is reality in toto.

The conclusion is then to be found where all the parts are accounted for, at the end of the cosmic evolution. If there were, besides the creative reality, a creator, a God, such a creator would be the intrusion that would make even reality in toto a non-selfsufficient event. On the other hand, God and reality, two in one and inseparable, is redundant and ineffective, even perhaps defective.

A Godless reality is wanting, but not defective. It is embryonic. Defective implies a paragon which is not defective. The paragon does not exist notwithstanding so much wishful thinking; pessimistic thinking in the last analysis. Embryonic implies development and transformation (not unfolding by the way).

The amount of growth yet to come is the measure of things which are separating the perfection of the end, God if you please, and the contextual fragmentary worth of the present, the INFANT GOD.

A paradoxical and possibly fatal element in the hypothesis is that such embryonic reality, the INFANT GOD, has no genetic track, no God to work by; it has and is creating it as it goes. It also pays as it goes; the harshness of the food chain, for instance. This lack of genetic guidance and this harshness happens to be the difficulty every species is confronted with. The oak tree genetic make-up is not God given. It has to "create" itself from the crucible of life. At the origin of such a crucible is zero, no genetic structure of any kind. This state of affairs justifies the notion that Omega is a terminal, all inclusive genetic code

the Omega Seed. To put it briefly, as long as time beats away , grace (Godliness) is not in sight. In as much as grace will be, time will be no more (infinite-interiorization, that is duration).

The hypothesis proposes also that such grace is, by necessity, equitable and consequently retroactive. The term used to indicate the retroactivity of grace is resurrection. It also proposes that the nature of grace - resurrection is esthetic (esthetogenesis).

With that much on the fire, an irresistible proposition presents itself. Most, if not all, universal religions are overtly or covertly, tangible manifestations of such a hypothesis, (the INFANT GOD) once a head-to- toes time flip-over is applied. (Cause Prima, Cause Ultima). The time flip-over generates the INFANT GOD at the expense of the Father/Mother God. The INFANT GOD is the whole of past reality, the Being forever engaged via the inception of the future in the struggle of evolving into grace and by it, into a resurrectional state. That state is, among other prodigious things, a belated access to equity.

This essay is the presentation of the INFANT GOD doctrine.

Viewed from the "urban effect window".

#### THE INFANT GOD

Albert Einstein has said that "the origin was a point of light". (Is it a point of light for a relativistic time space?) I would suggest that the end could also be a point of light. The make up of those two lights are opposite, in fact, incompatible. The last generating from the first by a systematic "subversion" of the nature of the first.

The INFANT GOD doctrine proposes that:

- 1) The original light point is mindless. . .  
The final light point is mindful. . .
- 2) The original light point is all fury. . .  
The final light point is all grace. . .
- 3) The original light point is anticipation. . .  
The final light point is revelation. . .
- 4) The original light point is the inception of time-space,  
mass energy. . .  
The final light point is duration. . .
- 5) The original light point is Godless or infinitely polytheistic. . .  
The final light point is Godliness or oneness. . .
- 6) The original light point is chaos. . .  
The final light point is order. . .
- 7) The original light point is generator of inequity. . .  
The final light point is contextual equity. . .
- 8) The original light point is "simplistic". . .  
The final light point is ultra complex. . .

The characteristic common to both Gods is the infinite miniaturization of the components: mass energy, space-time. The mineral denseness and the demonic complexity all compressed in the two extreme light points separated and connected first by the explosion and then by the implosion of the becoming cosmos.

We lust for the "moment" and we lust for the eternal. In its unquenchable thirst for concreteness and salvation, the mind has generated endless fantasies, this one included, and has packaged religious themes into distinct, but germane religions. From the onset, "revelation" had the appeal "invention" could not muster. So, that which sprang from the inner, pressurized by dread, suffering, awe and life's lusts, was seen and sold as revelation and not as invention. Favoring such choice is the greater commitment, responsibility and participation invention demands. One could suggest a speck of cowardice vitiate all revelational attitudes.

So it is that our reality is saturated by that kind of sensitivity which revelation encourages at the expense of that sensitivity which creation implies. Revelation is image reflection; invention is image making. A world of difference. Creation is somewhat a stage two of invention, the concretion of images.

As to the outlook engendered, there is no way that the two proto flip and post flip can match. A "modus vivendi" has to be found. First step: agree that neither one can retreat into the fortress of certainty. They are both hypothesis. Since both are "far out", the measure of their relative worth would then be their "true" desirability above the feasibility of their injunctions.

Since one puts in front that which the others put in the rear, both tend to linearize time, but with the opposite signs. Given the pre-eminence assigned to organism by both, linear time is basic time (talk to an embryo if you doubt it). What that does to Einstein time, I do not know. I will stay with the simplistic notion that the past is all that there is of reality and the organisms up and down the evolutionary ladder are engaged, with the mineral reality, in creating more of it. I mean, to extract from reality more and more consciousness by actually consuming, etheralizing mineral reality in the process.

This is what proto-flip religion has really to answer to and this is what post-flip religion has a stake in.

For the first, at the end, will be that which was at the beginning, but battered by time-change (inconsistent, ghostly at that). Or perhaps there will be the ecstasy, the nirvana of a static being having refound or having recomposed itself?! For the second, at the end, would be that which through all times has been painstakingly and joyfully pursued (evolution). The ecstasy of a full, omniscient recall (resurrection) of all of itself, living, through all the quasi-infinite steps of its own auto-creation. Its own history coming alive minutiae after minutiae. This would be the transfiguration of all means into bona fide ends. The esthetic nature of equity finally becomes sovereign and unchallengeable.

How strong is the tie of mineral-mind, i.e. the access to transcendence? "No gravity, no mind"; that is how strong the bond is. One way to put it in simple format and with an eye on "concreteness" is: the absence of gravity makes erosion of primeval stone impossible; erosion is the mechanism for sedimentation which is the liberation of different substances from stone. Without sedimentation, there is no soil or sedimentary beds



of lakes or oceans. Without soil, no green life; without green life, no red life. The absence of red life puts neuro systems off limit. No brain, no mind. . .

Thinking and transcendence are of a stony ancestry. No stone, no mentation. How can mind repay in kind? By pulling all of the mineral up into mind!

This is the Equity Imperative in its comprehensive injunction. Remember the Gods creating the world of stone? What about the world of stone creating themselves into the God or Gods? What of self creation? Is any other kind of true creation possible without the regression ad infinitum of the "Cause Prima" ?

The Equity Imperative and its implications might well be the gist of true religion. A long way to go for the universal religions. This is why ecological, energetic and technological questions are religious questions.

The Equity Imperative is opportunistic. It says, "Do not tell me how you will achieve equity". The one clear thing is that equity is bound to resurrection, the state in which all and everything is accounted for.

That is, how 15-20 or more eons of time-history-transformation instant after instant is accounted for. Not such a big deal in some light because the past is in Being and not even a single puny speck of it can possibly be obliterated. The big question is, how is time going to be consumed (digested) into duration by the co-active copresence of all the past? On the other hand, can we conceive of an equitable reality where some stuff makes it (becomes mind) and some identical stuff does not? All of this stuff makes it or none of it really does. But it does not suffice that any and all elemental particles of reality become enlightened (light) because, in their journey from the darkness of Alpha into the light of

Omega, organisms, minds, souls have been generated by way of their interaction, and all of them cry for equity and for the prodigy of grace, therefore, the imperative of resurrection.

Perhaps to speak of hypothesis does not conform with the scientific parlance. What about conjecture?

Some of the conjectures:

- 1) The categories of ethic and esthetic as they are generated by the human mind might be capable of developing into universal categories. (Cosmos Definers)
- 2) Given such potential, ethic and esthetic could become the critical normative tracks upon which reality attempts to construct itself.
- 3) The ethic imperative is the search for equity. It might override the search for "truth" in as much as it might want to supersede the imminent truth, the trueness of reality, by generating in such confining truth the hunger for the absolute (the desirable, by the way and seek the means (the track) upon which the quest has better chances for success.
- 4) The esthetic imperative is the drive that can produce the paradox of the absolute within the discreet. In addition, the esthetic, the work of art, is not just the premonition of what is not yet, but it is also the incentive, the yeast, making the absolute a less remote and less frightening goal.
- 5) To reach for the ethic is to embark on the total metamorphosis of reality. To put it coarsely: whenever any part of the immanent reality is able to overreach its condition and become more, all of reality must eventually be brought up to such a level (equity).

Step by step, their action will make the mind stuff of the universe.

6) To reach for the esthetic is to produce that metamorphosis of reality that, at its own conclusion is the fully implemented esthetogenesis of such reality.

7) The esthetic reality is then equitable because any and all esthetic objectifications are ends in themselves besides being means and conveyors of the more that will come.

8) Active throughout the process (temporal spacial) generating the esthetic reality is the techne that appropriately worked out the transformation that step by step forces mineral into mind.  
(see #5)

9) Technology is the systematic, ever-protracted demonic (the God within) stress that is instrumentalizing its own offspring in their quest for the absolute: the technology of creating the divine.

10) Without technological progression there is no way by which the ethical and esthetic imperative becomes effective. Without the technological progression, reality is forced into one of the cul-de-sacs proposed by the universal religions. In such a deceptive milieu, technology itself becomes the handy man for breakdown. This is tantamount to a genetrophic phenomenon, life, consigning itself to entropy.

11) In the solar system, the major triumph of techne has been the generation of organisms. Organisms might well be the most effective purveyors of Godliness.

12) The rules governing organisms are put to task by the paradigm of complexity-miniaturization-duration. The C.M.D.<sup>1</sup> paradigm cannot be unseated from the vehicle, the organism, of matter becoming mind.

13) Organisms surviving and perpetuating themselves by floods of incoming information communicated within and without themselves and the responses they solicit find limitation in the direction of complexity because of the relative laggard speed involved in the transportation-transmission techniques. This could mean that the carbon-based events, the flesh, might surrender to the silicon based intellection utilizing in their entrails the speed of light.

14) The prospect of flesh abdicating to silicon or other exoticism is anguishing enough. But if that is the necessary bridge to the Omega condition, we will sooner or later acquiesce to it. For now and for the foreseeable future, our silicon simpletons are not much of a menace. When their complexity-miniaturization reaches the same ball park dimension as organisms, then we will have to face the dilemma of having "children" made of sand and electric impulses.

15) Omega entails the extinction of distance and time in a grain of matter which is pure light. In such unimaginable context, history will display itself ad infinitum in variations and in a time-space purely durational. The resurrectional state is a state of absolute co-existence of all that has been the generation of Omega, that is, of the total evolutionary journey, punctuated by all events that went into its making.

## THE URBAN EFFECT

The urban effect is the strategy adopted by the C.M.D. paradigm; that is to say, for the sake of concreteness, the urban effect is that vivifying sequences of events made possible by the C.M.D. paradigm that forces mineral matter to become mind. It is a universal effect and it has its sharpest expression in the urban context. But before the habitat of man became part of the real, the urban effect dwelt (and dwells) in every one of those occasions we call organisms and biosocial aggregations of organisms. The urban effect is the vivification of the cosmos wherever the cosmos is contaminated by a sufficient "density" of C.M.D. In those terms, the urban effect is authoring the slow growth of a prodigious infant, the INFANT GOD exorcising from matter the light of the spirit.

The INFANT GOD doctrine is an hypothesis constructed upon a time which is the uninterrupted creational process constantly adding things upon things. All those things are stores into Being. Being is all of the past and things, regardless of their smallness, are all forever. The vivification of all those things, the total recall of them is the eschatological task of the INFANT GOD. The absurdity of an irretrievable past struck me first with the death of my father. It was then reconfirmed most vividly with the death of my wife, Colly.

One partial reason for dismissing the disappearance of the past is that for each point of the universe there is a "relentless investiture" of past events upon it. In radiation terms, that which hits the "observer" is old stuff, as old as ten or more eons for distant galaxies. That is how persistent are the images of past events. Reality is the past (not just a radiant selection of it). For a far enough observer, the solar system is in its birth throes and humanity is not even an imaginable

hypothesis. The past is in Being, Omega Seed is the ultimate and conclusive offspring of it and it will trigger the collapse of time, all of it. The consequent resurrection status of the whole of the past, that is, duration, is a timeless condition of grace.

The thesis is simple: the cosmos is involved in an attempt to generate its own seed. Cosmogogenesis is the creation by reality of its own genetic matrix. The super egg is not "dropped" by a pre-existing cosmic superbird. It is instead the receptacle of all that the cosmos has been while creating itself in the future, until the consumption of all futures. The cosmic seed will then be all that there is and what there is, is all that has ever became.

Justice is retroactive or it is pseudo-justice. Justice can be retroactive only if cosmogenesis becomes esthetogenesis, the "thing" itself (not a synopsis or a description of it), the penetration of grace and beauty to a degree which co-involves the entire cosmic reality. Unless that which has gone by, and all of reality will have eventually gone by, can be retrieved, represented in all its details, the immense sufferance of evolution (the food chain perceived physically and metaphysically) will remain unredeemed. One cannot undo the past. Even if the last instant of the process would be able to explain the components of it (the single occasions stretching in past times and space) there would be no justice: therefore, no grace. To do justice will require the perception and the enjoyment of justice by all occasions of which summation is the (hypothetical) last instant (THE OMEGA SEED). Short of that, the intrinsically violent nature of things (food chain and us in it included) will prevail in endless waves and universal guilt will remain a rampaging monster, a devourer of grace.

Is Omega Seed the grim substitute for the utopias of happiness? The greatest, maximal lust for life is in the nature of the Omega Seed. For it, the fleeting moment never ends. The make-up of reality is the totality of all the fleeting moments. Those fleeting moments, present after present, each taken as a timeless slice of reality, moment after moment, are the cosmos. The lust of the Omega Seed is the living of all fleeting moments of the cosmos in the durational infinity of "the last moment", "the resurrection of all fleeting moments then aware of each other. The occasion for all occasions to coexist in and rejoice in one another.

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<sup>1</sup> From bacteria to God, three basic parameters are present:

COMPLEXITY. Many events and processes cluster wherever a living process is going on. The make-up of the process is immensely complex and ever intensifying.

MINIATURIZATION. The nature of the complexity demands the rigorous utilization of all resources--mass-energy and space-time, for example. Therefore, whenever complexity is at work, miniaturization is mandated and a part of the process.

DURATION. Process implies extension in time. Temporal extension is warped by living stuff into acts of duration. A possible resolution of such "living time" is the metamorphosis of time into pure duration, i.e. the eventual "living outside of time".

Paolo Soleri, ARCOSANTI An Urban Laboratory?, Avant Books, San Diego, California, 1983, p. 15.

