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# Needs

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## NEEDS

Ivan Illich

No matter where you travel, the landscape is recognizable; all over the world it is cluttered with cooling towers and parking lots, agribusiness and megacities. But now that development ends -- earth was the wrong planet for this kind of building -- the growth projects rapidly turn into ruins, junk among which we must learn to live. Twenty years ago, the consequences of growth worship already appeared "counterintuitive"; today, *Time* publicizes them with apocalyptic cover stories. And no one knows how to live with these frightening new horsemen, many more than four: a changing climate, genetic depletion, pollution, the breakdown of various immunities, rising sea levels and annual wanderings of fugitives in the range of millions. To simply address these issues, one is caught in the impossible dilemma of fostering either panic or cynicism. But even more difficult than to survive with these "environmental" changes is the horror of living with the habits of needing which four decades of development have established. The needs that the rain dance of development kindled not only justified the despoliation and poisoning of the earth; they also acted on an even deeper level. They transmogrified human nature. They reshaped the mind and senses of *homo sapiens* into those of *homo miserabilis*. "Basic needs" may be the most insidious legacy left behind by development. <sup>1</sup>

The transformation occurred over a couple of centuries. During this time the root certainty was evolution, now called progress, now called development, now called growth. <sup>2</sup> In this secular process, men claimed to discover "resources" in culture and nature -- in what had been their commons -- and turned them into values. <sup>3</sup> The historian of scarcity relates the story. Like whipped cream which

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<sup>1</sup> The only monographic attempt at re-tracing the perception of something corresponding to "need" throughout western History is Patricia SPRINGBORG, *The Problem of Human Needs and the Critique of Civilization*. University of Sydney, Australia, Allen and Unwin, London 1981

<sup>2</sup> Wolfgang STEGMÜLLER. *Evolutionäre Erkenntnistheorie, Realismus und Wissenschaftstheorie*. In: *Evolutionstheorie und menschliches Selbstverständnis: Zur philosophischen Kritik eines Paradigmas moderner Wissenschaft*. Herg. von Robert SPAEMANN, Peter KOSŁOWSKI, Reinhard LÖW. Civitas Resultate Band 6 Acta Humaniora, Weinheim 1984.

"Evolution ist das zentrale Paradigma des gegenwärtigen Bewußtseins...ihr Anspruch geht heute dahin, das naive ebenso wie das philosophische Selbstverständnis des Menschen nicht mehr einfach als Irrtum beiseite zu tun, sonder es sozusagen besser zu verstehen, als es sich selbst versteht, es als Selbstmißverständnis aufzuklären...der Mensch lernt so, sich als Epiphänomen eines Prozesses zu begreifen, der prinzipiell mißverstanden wird, wenn er in anthropomorphen Kategorien vorgestellt wird." p 2 SPAEMANN, Robert; KOSŁOWSKI, Peter, und LÖW, Reinhard, eds. *Evolutionstheorie und menschliches Selbstverständnis: Zur philosophischen Kritik eines Paradigmas moderner Wissenschaft*. CIVITAS Resultate, vol. 6. Weinheim: Acta humaniora, 1984. The explosive growth of the salary mass paid out to experts in development, has been recently documented by Franco Ferrarotti. *The Myth of Inevitable Progress*. J Westport, conn: Greenwood Press. 1985, according to whom the new form of technocracy presents itself as "self-evident and self-justified and therefore not in need of either historical dimension, democratic legitimation" or...proven effectiveness. *Progress, as a structuring paradigm of consciousness during the late sixties and the conning-power of sociopolitical "experts" of all ideological shapes must be seen in their mutual dependence..*

<sup>3</sup> I have illustrated this to my satisfaction in my article "Silence is a Commons". I here give some compact

suddenly hardens into butter, *homo miserabilis* recently appeared, almost overnight, from a mutation of *homo economicus*, the protagonist of scarcity. The post-World War II generation witnessed this change of state in human nature from common to *needy* man. Half of all individuals born on the earth as *homo* are of the new kind.<sup>4</sup>

Archeological estimates place the total number of adult individuals belonging to *homo sapiens* at far less than five billion. They lived between the time the hunting scenes of Lascaux were painted and the year Picasso shocked the world with the horror of Guernica. They made up ten thousand generations and lived in thousands of different lifestyles speaking innumerable distinct tongues. They were snow men and cattle breeders, Romans and Moguls, sailors and nomads. Each mode of living framed the one human condition in a different way: around the hoe, the spindle, wood, bronze or iron tools. But in each instance, to be human meant communitary submission to the rule of necessity in this place, at this time. Each culture translated this rule of necessity into a different idiom. And each view of necessity was expressed in a different way to bury the dead, a different ritual to exorcise fears. This enormous variety of cultures witnesses to the plasticity of desire and longing which tasted differently in each. Fancy drove Tongans on their outriggers across thousands of miles of ocean; it drove Toltecs from Mexico to build temple outposts in Wisconsin, Muslims from Outer Mongolia to visit the Ka'aba and Scots the Holy Land. But in spite of all the forms of anguish and awe, terror and ecstasy, the unknown following death, nothing indicates that the ancestral half of humanity experienced anything of what we take for granted under the designation of need.

The second and larger part of humanity was born in the epoch that I can remember, after Guernica, 1936. Most who are now adults are addicted to electric power, synthetic clothing, junk food and travel.<sup>5</sup> To trust osteo-paleologists who rummage through cemeteries to study bones, the second half of humanity contains a large proportion who are malnourished and physically impaired. And most of these five billion unquestioningly accept their human condition as one of dependence on goods and services, a dependence which they call need. In just one generation, *needy* man -- *homo miserabilis* -- has become the standard.

The historical movement of the West, under the flag of evolution/progress/growth/development discovered and then prescribed *needs*. In this process, we can observe a transition from man the bungling toiler to man the needy addict. In this essay, I trace the history of this addiction as it is

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illustrations to make the article readable.

<sup>4</sup> The tie between the want and the commodity can be experienced. In this case I speak of a *perceived need* that has been established through the creation of this tie. The tie between the subject and the commodity can be the result of an observer: I then speak of an *imputed need*, and treat the "want" as an imputed lack in the subject. If the imputation of a needs made according to rules that are accepted by a profession (economists, biologists, social workers, psychologists) I speak of *real needs*, because I find that this is the term most frequently used in the literature.

<sup>5</sup> missing reference to YURICK title approx. "The economy of junk" who was the first to call to my attention the relationship between the industrial creation of junk and the addiction-patterns in the social character.

reflected by the term "needs"<sup>6</sup> in the context of the official discourse on development since President Harry Truman.

In an important sense, development is a rebellion, an obstinate refusal to accept necessity. It implies a simultaneous deconstruction of necessities and a reconstruction of desires into needs. In the development discourse, needs are neither desires nor necessities.<sup>7</sup> Necessities call for submission, needs for satisfaction.<sup>8</sup> Needs attempt to deny the necessity to accept the unavoidable remoteness between wish and fact, nor do they refer to the hope that desire come true. People have always lived faced by the necessity of dying if they lacked their daily bread. And all peoples have felt the desire for glory, on earth or in heaven.<sup>9</sup>

Further, needs must be distinguished from wants. Since Hobbes and Locke, these latter have been attributed to man and woman, creating *homo economicus*, living under the aegis of scarcity. And the existence of wants seemed to be proved by demand. Mimetic desire brought forth the power of the market's Hidden Hand, pitting each against the other in the pursuit of scarce goods.

In one sense, needs are latter-day wants -- in the development discourse -- as choices are offered, legitimated and prescribed by professionals. They are then recast to fit into the mental construct of systems thinking.<sup>10</sup> When this occurs, *homo economicus* is rapidly recognized as an obsolete myth -- the planet can no longer afford this wasteful luxury -- and replaced by *homo systematicus*.<sup>11</sup> The needs

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<sup>6</sup> The Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary vol. 2 (1976) gives four dozen of these:.....

<sup>7</sup> In the German language *Bedürfnis* separates from necessity much earlier. In the 19th century *die Bedürfnis* was equivalent to lack, while *das Bedürfnis*, as a neutral noun, meant misery, the object lacking or the drive to defecate.

Vide: GRIMM, J&W. Deutsches Wörterbuch vol 1 1954. Indicates mainly the feminine noun, such as KANT: "Die Bedürfnis der Natur" and Goethe "wo man in einem Privathause unterkommen und das nächste Bedürfnis fand" as well as a third meaning "seine nothdurft verrichte, u.d.sin behof don. TRUEBNERs Deutsches Wörterbuch I 253 (1935) Es war früher, zumal in der jetzt abgekommenen Bedeutung "Mangel." LESSING: "Seine Gattin schmachtet in der äußersten Bedürfnis"

<sup>8</sup> William LEIS. The Limits to Satisfaction.....

<sup>9</sup> See for a first information F.E.PETERS, Greek Philosophical Terms. A Historical Lexicon. NY, NY University Press 1967 under *epithymia* (desire); *hormê* (impulse); *örexia* (appetite). Desire (or, more precisely, the ability to desire) is a non-reducible constitutive element of the soul. Only with the introduction of the concept of reaction and, later, the idea of feedback into the explanation of behavior, irreducible desire began to cede to a new homeostatic model based on biological and physiological conceptualization. Slowly the opposition between that which is necessary and that which is desired gives place to the idea that human wants express the need for that which is necessary.

<sup>10</sup> The shift from the (imagined) experience of needs and the corresponding claim to moral entitlement towards the self-perception as a "subsystem" having specified requirements is, probably, at present (educational-) class-specific. It is characteristic for people who have been stupefied by schooling. However we already can observe how the computer is becoming the dominant metaphor for the interpretation of self, nature and society in comics, TV-comedy and slang. This observation militates somewhat against my argument that needs might survive the development-discourse.

<sup>11</sup> "Systems can have no needs - therefore they cannot be compared to persons" - by this statement I have been introduced, twenty years ago, to the critique of A.I. I was told a story to illustrate this position: "you may think that you converse with a computer. However you are mad, if you believe a computer; if you throw a glass of

of this latter creation metamorphose from economic wants into system requirements, these last determined by an exclusivist professional hegemony, brooking no deviation whatsoever.<sup>12</sup> The fact that many people today already recognize their systemic requirements principally argues the power of professional prestige and pedagogy, and the final loss of personal autonomy. The process began with the losses of commons and now appears complete as people are turned into abstract elements of a mathematical stasis. The latest conceptualization of these abstract elements was recently reached through the reinterpretation of common man, now seen as a fragile and provisionally functioning immune system always on the brink of breakdown. The literature itself of this development accurately mirrors the esoteric character of this conceptualization. The condition of postmodern man and his universe has become so complex that only the most highly specialized experts can function as the priesthood capable of understanding and defining "needs" today.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the human phenomenon is no longer defined by what we are, what we face, what we can take, what we dream; nor by the myth that we can produce ourselves out of scarcity, but by the measure of what we lack and, therefore, need. And this measure, determined by systems analysis thinking, implies a radically new perception of nature and law, and prescribes a politics more concerned with the provision of professionally-defined requirements (needs) for survival rather than with personal claims to freedom which would foster autonomous coping.

It is difficult to speak convincingly of the historicity of needs.<sup>14</sup> We live in a generation which cannot deny the existence of human needs, least of all the needs of others, strangers. In the popular mind, human nature is perceived in terms of common needs, no longer in terms of a dignity shared by all in spite of distinctions in status. In this context, a triple heart bypass is not seen as a foolish and wanton desire, nor as a demand which only the rich can claim, but as a need which translates into a right which, today, calls for an entitlement. For people generally, needs acquire their absolute legitimacy, paradoxically, when one is certain they must be attributed to strangers -- especially in those circumstances under which it is obvious to common sense that, for the majority of the needy, such

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water into a computer that yells Lam thirsty". I doubt that this story could be told to me in 1988 by an eminent thinker!

<sup>12</sup> J. David BOLTER. Turing's man: Western Culture in the Computer Age. Chapel Hill, NC. Univ. of NC Pr. 1984, in a sometimes bantering way makes this point. Much more seriously in the Manuscript of Morris BERMAN. Coming to our Senses: Body and Spirit in the Hidden History of the West To be published 1989. (Copy in file 110 Willard).

<sup>13</sup> Discussions about true and false needs, or about basic needs, or about social versus individual needs are irrelevant to this issue. Such discussions suppose the concretion of desires into needs prescinding from the commodity-intensity of the society in which they appear. I want to avoid them. Further: by 1985 they ceased to be on the obligatory agenda of any conversation about needs.

<sup>14</sup> A historical study of needs presupposes a periodization of that history. I propose the following: (1) The sociogenesis of the needs-centered discourse can be documented for the middle of the 20th century. (2) A "history of commodity-oriented needs" can be constructed for that period which in my book Gender I have identified as the period of "broken gender". (3) The period between the end of the 12th century and the (regionally different) onset of proto-industrial production ought to be viewed as the pre-history of modern needs. (4) what Karl POLANYI does in his study of the market in Aristotle I would gladly accept as part of the early history of scarcity, but accept only as research on the archaeology of needs.

needs cannot be met.<sup>15</sup> Ironically, when human nature is socially defined by a bundle of needs basic to all, then a kind of scientific proof appears that for most members of the human family what is basic is definitively beyond reach. To see how we reached this impasse -- which now gives way to a systems analysis model -- it is instructive to trace the stages through which the notion of needs was related to economic and social development in the last few decades.

The idea of development entered western political discourse through the Inaugural Address of Harry Truman in 1949. Truman sounded altogether credible when he advocated the need to intervene in foreign nations with "industrial progress" in order "to raise the standard of living" in the "underdeveloped areas". He did not mention revolution. His aim was to "lighten the burden of the poor", and this could be accomplished by producing "more food, more clothing, more materials for housing and more mechanical power." He and his advisors saw "greater production as the key to prosperity and peace." He spoke in terms of legitimate aspirations, not about needs.<sup>16</sup>

When Truman spoke, poverty -- in terms of a market economy -- was still the common lot of the

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<sup>15</sup> NB early in the morning of Sept 11th: this part of my argument is not descriptive but interpretative. It is not finished, and I am not including it in this edition. It is my intention to build it up at a later point through three successive commentaries: (1) One, to Jean Paul SARTRE's distinction about "'my" body, which I perceive as an appropriation of the "others" body, and finally, my nauseating perception of my "own body in the eyes of the other". (2) I intend to approach the SARTRE text with a critical view on René GIRARD's concept of mimetic desire. Using then the Duden/Illich reflections on that kind of "embodiment" which is characteristic for the later 20th century, I can gain a new depth of insight into economic concepts as means to give the semblance of rationality to a mode of domination, in which human nature is defined by the need of strangers, who thereby can be fantasized as dependent on my power. (in this latter reflection I intend to interpret Michael IGNATIEFF with arguments that I recently learned to formulate from Marianne GORNEMEYER: Die Macht der Bedürfnisse: Reflexionen über ein Phantom. Rowholts Enzyklopädie 1988)

<sup>16</sup> TRUMAN, Harry S. *Inaugural Address, Jan 20, 1949*.

"Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace"..." achieve the decent and satisfying life that is the right of all people" [NB. Truman is usually seen as the public figure that introduced the term "developing nations" into the political discourse. It is therefore interesting to notice that the first volume of the New OED Supplement published in 1972 gives as one of the fifteen new shades of the term "development" developing country, nation: "a poor or primitive country which is developing higher economic, industrial and social conditions," and that the first evidence for such use is given as 1964! Two other handbooks on new American language confirm the unwillingness of the lexicographers to recognize the new use of "development" taken pompously and naively for granted by economists and political scientists: Neither Hans Sperber and Travis Trittschuh *American Political Terms: An Historical Dictionary*. J Detroit, Wayne State University Press 1962 nor William Saffire. *The New Language of Politics: An Anecdotal Dictionary of Catchwords, Slogans and Political Usage*. NY: Random House 1968 have entries under either "development" or "underdevelopment". H.L. Mencken. *The American Language*. in the 4th Edition London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1963 p 354 note 9 recognizes the term: " On October 6, 1961 in an editorial entitled "A Slum is a Slum" the NY Times protested against the euphemistic language favoured by the Human Relations Unit of the New York City school system. Among the favorite euphemisms of the 1960ies one must not underprivileged and culturally deprived for slum dwellers, and senior citizens for the old. In international affairs one may no longer speak of backward nations; they are developing areas. Gunnar Myrdal dedicates the first Appendix of *Asian Drama: an Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*. NY: Twentieth Century Fund, 1968, vol. III, p 1839-42 to "Diplomacy by Terminology". He gathers a florilegium of escapist euphemisms tending to de-emphasize the actual differences between rich and poor areas after World War II. He notes that the use of the term "underdeveloped country" implies a non-committal valuation that these are countries, that they should remain countries and independent, and that they should develop]

overwhelming majority in the world. Surprisingly, a few nations appeared to have overcome this fate, thereby stimulating the desire in others to do the same. Truman's common sense led him to believe that a universal law of progress was applicable, not only to isolated individuals or groups, but also to humanity at large through national economies. Thus he used the term "underdeveloped" for collective social entities, and spoke of the need to create "an economic base" capable of meeting "the expectations which the modern world has aroused" in people all over the planet.<sup>17</sup>

Twelve years later, Americans heard that "[...] people in huts and in villages of half the globe struggle to break the bonds of mass misery [...] we pledge to help them to help themselves [...] we pledge this, not because we seek their votes, but because it is the right thing." Thus spoke John F. Kennedy in his Inaugural Address in 1961.<sup>18</sup> The statement symbolized an emerging consensus in the U.S. that most people are needy, these needs give them rights, these rights translate into entitlements for care, and therefore impose duties on the rich and powerful.

According to Kennedy, these needs are not just economic in nature. The "poor" nations "[...] have recognized the need for an intensive program for self-help", a need "[...] for social progress which is an indispensable condition for growth, not a substitute for economic development [...] without social development the great majority of the people remain in poverty, while the privileged few reap the benefits of rising abundance."<sup>19</sup>

One year after Castro's rise to power, Kennedy promised more than mere economic or technical help; he solemnly pledged political intervention -- "help in a peaceful revolution of hope". Further, he went on to adopt fully the reigning conventional rhetoric of political economy. He had to agree with Khrushchev who told him in Vienna, "The continuing revolutionary process in various countries is the status quo, and anyone who tries to halt that process not only is altering the status quo but is an aggressor."<sup>20</sup> So Kennedy then stressed "the shocking and urgent conditions" and the need for an "alliance for social progress". For Truman, it was the modern world "which arouses new aspirations", and he focused on the need "to lighten the burden of their poverty". Kennedy believed that half the world "lives in the bonds of misery" with a sense of injustice "which breeds political and social unrest". In the perspective

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<sup>17</sup> TRUMAN, Harry. *Message to Congress June 24th 1949 (on Point Four)*. "...assist the peoples of economically underdeveloped areas to raise the standards of living....the grinding poverty and the lack of economic opportunity for many millions...without an economic base, they will be unable to meet the expectations which the modern world has aroused in their peoples. If they are frustrated and disappointed, they may turn to false doctrines which hold that the way to progress lies through tyranny...."

"The aid that is needed falls roughly into two categories. The first is the technical, scientific and managerial knowledge necessary to economic development....assistance in planning for long range economic development....and capital.

J. Bentham, *Principles of the Civil Code* part first, chapter 5 in *The Theory of Legislation*, edit. C.K. Ogden, NY: Harcourt Brace, 1931. p 101 . "Desires extend with means. The horizon elevates itself as we advance; and each new want, attended on the one hand by pain, on the other by pleasure, becomes a new principle of action"

<sup>18</sup> KENNEDY, John F. *Inaugural Address: January 20, 1961*

<sup>19</sup> KENNEDY, John F. *Special Message to Congress Requesting Appropriations for the Inter-American Fund for Social Progress and for Reconstruction in Chile*. March 14, 1961.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in : Richard Nixon, *1999; Victory without War*. p 48

of the 1960s White House, poverty ceased to be fate; it had become an operational concept -- the result of unjust social and economic conditions, the lack of modern education, the prevalence of inadequate and backward technology. Poverty was now viewed as a plague, something amenable to therapy, a problem to be solved.

In 1962, the United Nations recognized poverty as a definable threshold somehow related to what is human. The Secretary General referred to "those people who live below an acceptable minimum standard". And this standard soon revealed its complex nature -- it acted just like an iatrogenic disease - - spreading mayhem throughout the world, the sad results of policies conceived as therapies for this conceptualization of underdevelopment. Then, in 1972, the President of the World Bank declared, "Progress that is measured by a single measuring rod, the GNP, has contributed significantly to exasperate the inequalities of income distribution." For this reason, McNamara declared that the central objective of development policies should be "the attack on absolute poverty" which had spread as a result of economic growth, and which was "[...] so extreme that it degrades the lives of individuals below minimal norms of human decency".<sup>21</sup> Soon these "norms of human decency" would be spelled out in dollars and cents by a team of social scientists who formed a kind of brain trust within McNamara's office.

The confusion and, at times, opposition between economic and social development -- observable in McNamara's thinking -- between mere growth and "true" or human development, became a part of public rhetoric, of what I have termed "the development discourse". Through efforts of the experts to understand and establish the distinction, the term "needs" first acquired its vexing power, still current today.<sup>22</sup> Using this term, a humanistic political theory of development sought anchorage within some

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<sup>21</sup> McNAMARA, Robert S. *Address to the Board of Governors of the World Bank Group*. Nairobi, Kenya: September 24 1973

"...data suggest that the decade of rapid growth has been accompanied by greater maldistribution of income in many developing countries, and that the problem is most severe in the countryside (p10)...adopt...a socially oriented measure of economic performance"

"Program...must be designed to attack the absolute poverty which exists to a totally unacceptable degree in almost all of our developing g member counties: a poverty so extreme that it degrades the lives of individuals below the minimal norms of human decency. The absolute poor are not merely a tiny minority of unfortunates, - a miscellaneous collection of the losers in life - a regrettable but insignificant exception to the rule. On the contrary, they constitute roughly 49% of the nearly two billion individuals living in the developing nations." p 27

<sup>22</sup> John GALTUNG, "The Basic Needs Approach", chapter 3 in Katrin Lederer et al. eds. *Human Needs: A contribution to the current debate*. Königstein: Athaeneum, 1980 pp 55-126. Recently the following have focused on the philosophical reasons for the re-emergence of "needs" in the development discourse: Garrett THOMSON. *Needs* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1987 (Series International Library of Philosophy) argues that "need is more forceful than desire, because the concept is tied to the notion of serious harm" p 101 and " harm is not indefinitely plastic" and Alfred SCHOPF edit. *Bedürfnis, Wunsch, Begehren: Probleme einer philosophischen Sozialanthropologie* Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1987. SPRINGBORG, Patricia. *The Problem of Human Needs and the Critique of Civilization*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1981.

The only attempt to make a continuous history of the analogues of "need" in western thought from the Greeks to the present.



"ontological [...] concept of human nature".<sup>23</sup> In attempting to be empirically relevant today, this search worked its way through a new (a historical) notion of poverty.

Until a few decades ago, "poverty" had been a synonym for "the human condition". It was understood as a pervasive feature in the social landscape of every culture. Primarily and above all, it referred to the precarious conditions within which most people survived most of the time. Poverty was a general concept for a specific cultural interpretation of the necessity to live within very narrow limits, defined differently for each place and time. Each culture worked out its unique and ecologically sustainable style of coping with this necessity (as we can recognize today). This is what "need" formerly signified: the life-long ability to face the ultimately unavoidable. "We all need to die ... however, not yet".<sup>24</sup> Until recently, then, poverty never directly meant a lack.

The necessity to accept fate, kismet, providence, the will of God lost much of its legitimacy during the early 20th century. Progress reveals its face when it is understood, basically, as a revolt against necessity. Already in the epoch of steam, the engineer became the symbol of the liberator, a messiah who would lead humanity beyond the reign of necessity. By the end of the 19th century, society became the subject of manipulative engineering. The idea was so infectious that in the 20th century a pope personally devoted to St. Francis of Assisi -- the spouse of Lady Poverty -- instructed his faithful on the duty to achieve more.

Individual nations must raise the level of the quantity and the quality of production to give the life of all their citizens truly human dignity, and give assistance to the common development of the human race [...] the complete development of the individual must be joined with that of the human race and must be accomplished by mutual effort.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> C.B.MACPHERSON. "Needs and Wants: An Ontological or Historical Problem?" In Ross Fitzgerald, edit. *Human needs and politics*. Rushcutters Bay (NSW, Australia): Pergamon Press 1977.

The classification of needs versus wants will not do. It is both insular and ideological. It is insular in that neither the French nor German languages use different words for needs and wants: In French, both are "besoin"; In German "Bedürfnisse." The needs/wants distinction is seen to be ideological when one notices that, of the various modern traditions of political theory, (the author examines especially Rousseau, the German Idealists and Marx) only the liberal tradition comes close to making that distinction.

<sup>24</sup> The noun "need", through the centuries did have a substantial character. To "have need to" meant to be under the inescapable necessity of doing something, to engage in a transitive or intransitive activity - it did in no way translate into a demand, claim to something. In the time of Harvey and Bacon the "to" begins to be dropped: "It had need be a point of pollicie" is given as an example by the NewOED. In sentences of this new form, the dictionary explains, "need" tends to lose its distinct substantive character. It becomes merely a modifying element attached to the verb. The same function, almost comparable to that of an auxiliary verb has been observed in the use of the German "Bedürfnis" by J.B. Müller ?? (in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* vol 1....) In German, the term "Bedürfnis" comes to be current in the eighteenth century when the motivation of human actions is under discussion. The first formal attempt to create a theory of needs is L. Brentano. *"Versuch einer Theorie der Bedürfnisse"* in: *Konkrete Grundbedingungen der Volkswirtschaft. Gesammelte Aufsätze* 1907.

<sup>25</sup> Pope PAUL VI. Encyclical Letter *Progressio populorum* .

(#43) " The complete development of the individual must be joined with that of the human race and must be accomplished by mutual effort" p 19

The relation of needs to the development discourse cannot possibly be understood without grasping how recently poverty was first "operationalized", and then a poverty line could be defined as the frontier in a war on poverty itself. For Truman, poverty still represented a kind of common floor from which some rise -- through fortune, industry or crime. By 1970, the attempts to analyze "poverty" bestowed on it the characteristics of an economic threshold. And this changed its nature for moderns: it became a measure of a lack in "needed" income. By defining the poor as those who lack income -- which alone can satisfy their "needs" -- that which income buys was surreptitiously reconceptualized as a commodity. Poverty, in New York City as well as in Ethiopia, became an abstract universal measure of underconsumption.<sup>26</sup> Those who survive in spite of indexed underconsumption were then perceived as victims of a double bind: they cannot fill their income lack through engaging in subsistence activities, and they are condemned to an existence viewed as inhuman and indecent.

Economists began to explore the significance of this inelastic threshold. They recognized that it was not possible to speak of (economic) wants below an income level where demands have become substantially incommensurable. People who live below the absolute poverty line have no power to behave according to economic rationality; they cannot afford to trade food against shelter or clothing or tools. The new category of economic cripples, thus defined, may in fact survive, but they do not fully participate in the characteristics of *homo economicus*. They exist -- all over the world -- but they are marginal, not just to the economy but to humanity itself, since the latter, from the time of Mandeville, has been defined in terms of the ability to make choices under the assumption of scarcity.

Under a different guise, "people" also entered the development discourse earlier.

While at the beginning of the 1950s the problem of developing countries was viewed essentially as a problem of productive wealth, by the end of that decade it became widely acknowledged that the crucial factor was not production, but rather the capacity to produce, which is inherent in people.<sup>27</sup>

At that time, then, it became legitimate to speak about people as one of the ingredients of economic growth.

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"Individual nations must raise the level of the quantity and the quality of production to give the life of all their citizens truly human dignity, and give assistance to the common development of the human race."

<sup>26</sup> The *poverty line* seems to have been coined by the chocolate-producing, Quaker philanthropist and friend of Lloyd George, B.S. Rowntree in 1901." The recipients of charity are the poor, i.e. those who from causes primary or secondary are below the poverty line. "The same expression was also used, during the same year by Winston Churchill. Only in the fifties it was adopted for the construction of an indicator by the US Department of Labor. The synonym "poverty level" has been adopted more recently. According to the NOED it appears in the NY Times of Feb 2 1976 p 13 "It is said that 24.3 million Americans, - more than 10% of the population - were classified as poor in 1974, p from 23 million in 1971. The poverty level is defined....(by the Dept. of Labor)". In 1978 the London Times speaks about "one million in West Germany living below the poverty level".

<sup>27</sup> UNITED NATIONS: Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *The United Nations Development Decade: proposals for action*. NY 1962.

It was no longer necessary to speak [separately] of economic and of social development, since development -- as distinct from growth -- should automatically include both.

Insufficiently qualified or capitalized people were increasingly mentioned as a burden or brake on development. This third evolutionary step, which integrates the people factor into the economic growth calculus, has a history of its own.

In the mid-fifties, influential economists had begun to argue that certain components of medical and educational services should not be understood as personal consumption, because they were necessary prerequisites of economic development.<sup>28</sup> The great difference in the results of similar development policies at the same level of monetary income could not be explained without paying attention to the investments made in human beings.<sup>29</sup> The quality and distribution of training, physical well-being, social discipline and participation levels came to be called "the residual factor".<sup>30</sup> Independent of the amount of capital and labor available, economic development seemed to hinge on these social qualifications of people for jobs.

During the seventies, two empirical observations qualified the concept of human capital developed in the sixties.<sup>31</sup> On one hand, the assumption that the value of education or medical services is reflected in manpower qualification lost much of its credibility. On the other, the labor theory of value lost its

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<sup>28</sup> W. Arthur LEWIS is usually considered to be the first economist who recognized the transformation of the value of labour in the development process. In his very influential article: "Economic Development with Unlimited Supply of Labor." *The Manchester Schools*, May 1954 Lewis argues that Labor in dual economies is available to the urban, industrial sector at a constant wage determined by minimum levels of existence in traditional family farming: because of "disguised" unemployment in agriculture, there is a practically unlimited supply of labor available for industrialization....however, when the surplus labor will be exhausted, then only a rising wage rate will draw labor out of agriculture. He suggested that, at this point the quality of labor would become decisive. See: Ronald FINDLAY "On W. Arthur Lewis' contributions to economics." *Journal of Economics* 1(1982):62-76. The major neoclassical challenge to the interpretation of dual economies given by Lewis came from Dale W. JORGENSON. "Testing Alternative Theories of the Development of Dual Economies." In A. Abelman and E. Thorbecke *Theory and Design of Economic Development*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966.

<sup>29</sup> Besides the investment in the capitalization of the work force, another set of prerequisite for economic growth was seen in the socio-political atmosphere within which the work-place is embedded. Dudley SEERS formulated this in the "The Meaning of Development". *International Development Review* 11??,4(1969): 2-6.

Dignity, liberty and satisfaction at the workplace count for people just as much as material affluence.

<sup>30</sup> Edward DENISON coined this expression. He kept to it: see "Measuring the Contributions of Education (and the Residual) to Economic Growth." In Study Group in the Economics of Education. *The Residual Factor and Economic Growth* Paris: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1964.

<sup>31</sup> The concept is defined in its full brutality by Sherwin ROSEN "Human Capital: a Survey of empirical Research." In R. Ehrenburg. *Handbook of Labor Economics*, v I. Greenwich, Conn: Jai Press, 1972 : "Human Capital" refers to the production capacity of human beings as income producing agents in the economy...it is the stock of skills and productive knowledge embodied in people. The yield or return on human capital investment increase skills and efficiency within and without the market economy. It gives rise to the necessity of discussing property rights on human capital. These are largely restricted to the person in whom this capital is embodied. It is therefore best analyzed as a rental-market transaction.

meaning, even in the weak terms in which it had entered mainstream economics. It became obvious that, irrespective of available manpower qualifications, the modernized sector could not be made sufficiently labor-intensive to provide enough jobs to justify the economically necessary redistribution of incomes in the form of earnings.<sup>32</sup> No conceivable employment-oriented development strategy could create the work which would employ the lowest third or quarter of the population. As a result, planners during the 1980s transposed the development melody to a fourth key: under various designations, they undertook the economic colonization of the informal sector.

New stress was put on incentives for activities that would keep people busy in the black market, in the barter economy, or self-supporting in "the traditional sector". Above all, shadow work became quantitatively more important, not just in fact but also in policy. By shadow work I mean that performance of unpaid activities that, in a market-intensive society, are necessary to transform purchased commodities into consumable goods. Finally, self-help activities, which in the sixties smacked of second best, became a favorite growth sector of planners and organizers during the eighties. This is the context within which the resuscitation of the discourse on needs must be interpreted.

Development can be visualized as a process by which people are lifted out of their traditional cultural commons. In this transition, cultural bonds are dissolved, even though culture can tinge development in superficial ways -- one need only observe rural people recently transplanted to the megacities of the Third World. Development can be imagined as a draft that blows people off their feet, out of their familiar space, and places them on an artificial platform, a new structure of living. In order to survive on this exposed and raised foundation, people are compelled to achieve new minimum levels of consumption, for example, in formal education, public health measures, frequency in the use of transportation, rental housing. The overall process is usually couched in the language of engineering: the creation of infrastructures, the building and coordination of systems, various growth stages, social escalators. Even rural development is discussed in this urban language.

Under the heavy weight of the new structures, the cultural bedrock of poverty cannot remain intact; it cracks. People are forced to live on a fragile crust, below which something unprecedented and inhuman lurks. In traditional poverty, people could rely on finding a cultural hammock. And there was always the ground level to depend on, as a squatter or beggar. This side of the grave, no one could sink below ground. Hell was a real pit, but it was for those who had not shared with the poor in this life, to be suffered after death.<sup>33</sup> This no longer holds. Modernized drop-outs are neither beggars nor bums. They

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<sup>32</sup> UNITED NATIONS: Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *The United Nations Development Decade: proposals for action*. NY: 1962. "the volume of employment thus far provided by industrialization has been insufficient to prevent growing unemployment and under-employment in the developing countries" p 5

<sup>33</sup> LOTTIN, D.O. *La nature du devoir de l'aumône chez les prédécesseurs de Saint Thomas d'Aquin*. Ephemérides Lovanienses 15(1938) 613-624.

Petrus Lombardus: iustitia est in subveniendo pauperibus (Lib. IV. sent., 13, dist 33, c.1. ed. 1916 p 697.

Alexander Halensis : Summae theologicae pars tertia, Venetiis, 1575, q 36, m.5,1,f.148 (ra) Substractio beneficii, in quantum non communicantur boan pauperi tempore necessitatis, est contra hoc praeceptum: non

are victimized by the needs attributed to them by some "poverty pimp".<sup>34</sup> They have fallen through the poverty line, and each passing year diminishes their chances of ever rising again above the line.

Welfare is not a cultural hammock. It is an unprecedented mediation of scarce resources through agents who not only define what need is, and certify where it exists, but also closely supervise its remedy -- with or without the needy's approval. Insurance is not reliance on community support in case of disaster. Rather, it is one of the ultimate forms of political control in a society in which protection against future risks is valued higher than access to present satisfaction or joy. Needs, discussed as criteria for development strategies, clearly have nothing to do with either traditional necessities or desires, as I suggested above. Nevertheless, during the second and third "development decades", poverty came to be defined in terms of unmet operationalized needs.

And all this occurred in spite of the fact that for the mainstream economist, "need" is a non-word. "Economic theory does not acknowledge that there are such things as needs."<sup>35</sup> Further, economics can say much that is useful about desires, preferences and demands. But "need" presumably is a moral, psychological or physical imperative which brooks no compromise or adjustment -- or [economic] analysis.<sup>36</sup>

Most economists, up to today, declare themselves incompetent to include needs in their analysis,<sup>37</sup> and

furtum facies; in quantum vero ex defectu pauper perit est contra illud: non accides.

MS Toulouse 737 f 120ra-120rb; Paris Nat. lat. 16406 f 65ra-65rb.

rres pauperum sunt in necessitate sua...elemosina in relatione ad dominos est opus misericordiae, relatione ad dispensatores est opus iustitiae....Ex parte etiam eorum quibus datur, intelligendum est quod pauperes quibus dandum est possunt considerari quadrupliciter. Uno modo prout sunt indigentes; alio modo prout in sua necessitate sunt patroni ipsorum temporalium: pauperes enim en se sunt indigentes, sed in Christo patroni; unde Glossa super Job 31 dicitur: ut ipsi nos recipiant in eterna tabernacula ostenditur potius munera nos offere patronis quam dona dare egenis; possunt etiam considerari prout sunt eiusdem nature cum aliis hominibus; vel etiam secundum quod ad ymaginem Dei facti sunt.....si detur eis quia sunt eiusdem nature nobiscum, tunc hoc est opus pietatis naturalis. Sed si detur eis respiciendo quia facti sunt ad ymaginem Dei, tunc hoc est opus misericordiae,.... Anonymus *J de superfluo Vat. lat. 782 f. 17v-19v*. l'auteur..rejongt une des idées fondamentales de Guillaume d'Auxerre et la solution d'Albert le Grand au livre III de son Comentaire sur les Sentences: item, retinere superfluum est non communicare alteri quod necessarium est sibi; hoc est contra hoc quod est omnia esse communia; ergo repugnat iuri naturali.

<sup>34</sup> The expression "poverty pimp" and "povertician" were coined during Edward Koch's campaign for NY City Hall in 1978.

<sup>35</sup> LUTZ Mark A. ; LUX, Kenneth. *Humanistic Economics: the new Challenge*. NY, NY: The Bootstrap Press, 1988.

<sup>36</sup> William R. Allen. *Midnight Economist: Broadcast Essays III*. Los Angeles: International Institute for Economic Research, 1982. p. 23. As quoted by Lutz FN above. One of the earliest and most persuasive statements about the descent of man from the kingdom of preference into the bondage of needs is made by David Braybrooke. "Let needs diminish that preferences may prosper." In: Resher, edit. *Studies in Moral Philosophy*, Oxford: Blackwell 1968. "Just what is happening to the concept of needs as technological change rushes over us is something that I can only guess at. The subject of preferences and their evaluation, once considerations of needs, consistency and morals have been allowed for, is a philosophical wilderness."

<sup>37</sup> They want to avoid what G.E. MOORE in *Principia Ethica* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1903 called the "naturalistic fallacy" based on Hume's "Is"/"Ought" distinction: an illicit transition from statements

prefer to leave the needs discussion to philosophers or politicians.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, a growing number of economists, critical of conventional development theory and practice, found in "basic needs" the foundation for what came to be called "the new economic order".<sup>39</sup> They thought to find in needs the term for non-negotiable, mutually incommensurable requirements of human nature. These had to be provided for by the economy before economic preferences, choices and wants could be effectively formulated.<sup>40</sup>

But before the concept of needs could be incorporated in an economic argument, it had to be defined and classified.<sup>41</sup> For this undertaking, Abraham Maslow's theory of a needs hierarchy suddenly became very influential. Indeed, physical, safety, affection, esteem and, ultimately, self-realization needs underlay most current discussion as the key categories. Unlike wants which, since Hobbes, are

of empirically verifiable facts to evaluative statements, or vice versa.

<sup>38</sup> The subtle and dis-symmetric power-relationship implicit in the needs-concept was well formulated by Beauvoir, Simone de. *The second sex*. New York: Bantam Books, 1952." In the relation of master to slave the master does not make a point of the need that he has for the other; he has in his grasp the power of satisfying the need through his own action. Whereas the slave, in his dependent condition, his hopes and his fears, is quite conscious of the need he has for the master. Even if the need were, at the bottom, equally urgent for both, it always works in favor of the oppressor and against the oppressed.

<sup>39</sup> "the Basic Needs Approach (BNA) is not *the* approach to social science in general or development studies in particular, but one approach...but it is an indispensable ingredient of development studies. To justify this position we ..use two arguments: the futility of other approaches as the single or dominant approach, because they fail to make development human...to distinguish between a sense of better or worse, if not of good and bad. The... negative argument is based on the futility of other approaches, which, pragmatically often lead to antihuman practice, because there is no built-in guarantee that such development really aims at improving the conditions of human beings. " John GALTUNG. " The Basic Needs Approach" pp. 55-57.

<sup>40</sup> ARNDT, H.W. *Economic Development: The History of an Idea*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977? ".both Dudley Seers in 1969 and Mahbub ul Haq in 1971 had used the phrase 'basic needs' , though only in passing, when referring to the minimum bundle of goods and services that a minimum income must cover...In 1975 the phrase became a slogan and a program...it was the brainchild of Louis Emerij and others at the ILO, who in 1975 convened a World Employment Conference. Basic needs became the central theme of the conference document, published in 1976 under the title *Employment, Growth and Basic needs* For the literature see *Analysis of distributional issues in Development Planning World Bank Workshop* Bellagio, April 1977. Also Paul Streeten, *Development Perspectives* London: Mcmillan 1981, especially part 4.

<sup>41</sup> This sudden resuscitation of needs can be seen in the context of several decades of reaction against the value-neutral approach of orthodox social science, first initiated by C.W.Mills and Gunnar Myrdal in political economics, and taken up by Abraham Maslow, and Erich Fromm the point of view of psychological anthropology. Common to these attempts was the hope to establish values that have objective validity. All four authors mentioned give central importance to the position taken by the young Marx, who objected to Rousseau's "regression to the unnatural simplicity of the poor and undemanding man" whom he considered unnatural in his lack of needs. Instead, Karl Marx posited for the final stage of communism " in place of the wealth and poverty of political economy the rich human being and rich human need. The rich human being is simultaneously the human being in need of a totality of human life-activities - and the man in whom his own realization exists as an inner necessity, as need". . MARX, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* edit by Martin Milligan, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959. p 100. In her very thorough and sometimes acerbic exegesis of Marx, Agnes Heller (*The Theory of Need in Marx*. London: Allison and Busby, 1976.) attempts to make two points: (1) Marx's analysis of society is always based on a "system or radical needs" and (2) he carefully eschews the concepts of "unrecognized" or "false" needs in the sense of Fromm or Marcuse which inevitably play into the hands of a vanguard whose competence lies in revealing to the masses the genuine nature of their needs.

considered as equal -- "since they are simply what people want" -- needs are consistently discussed as fitting into an objective hierarchy. They are generally spoken about as realities to be disinterestedly studied by needs experts, and which can in some way lead to the definition of a universal ethics.<sup>42</sup> For example, Erich Fromm believes that "the sane society" is an arrangement that

[...] corresponds to the needs of man, not necessarily to what he feels to be his needs (because even the most pathological aims can be felt subjectively as that which the person wants most) but to what his needs are objectively, as they can be ascertained by the study of man.<sup>43</sup>

Up to now, the most complete critical study of the needs discourse and its implications has been made by Marianne Groenemeyer. More clearly than anyone else, she has demonstrated that needs, in the current sense, are a new way of formulating the assumption of universal scarcity. Further, she shows that needs, defined under the guise of science, permit the redefinition of human nature according to the convenience and interest of professionals who administer and serve them.<sup>44</sup>

Of particular interest is the role played by "basic needs" in the transformation of economic man into needy man, a process which coincides directly with the redefinition of poverty in recent development theory.<sup>45</sup>

Development is based on the belief that necessity can be cancelled by engineering audacity, literally

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<sup>42</sup> In this connection it is important to reflect on the following evidence: Murray's original OED in 1892 divides the article on the noun "need" into two parts only: *a.* the necessity to *do* something and *b.* the imperial demand to *have* something. A third meaning of the noun "need" is documented for the first time by the OED Supplement in the late seventies. The first evidence is given for 1929. *c.* *a state of physiological or psychological want* that consciously or unconsciously motivates behavior towards its satisfaction. By the early 1930s instincts, when discussed by psychologists, are first identified with "needs".. at the same time "needs" are recognized as states of tension, that persist until relieved. By the early 1960ies psychology-texts begin to express needs in form of algorithms, for instance " *n.ach* = "need of achievement, which then enters into a formula that models the human need structure.

<sup>43</sup> Erich FROMM. "The Psychology of Normalcy." *Dissent* 1 (1154) p 43.

<sup>44</sup> GRONEMEYER, Marianne. *Die Macht der Bedürfnisse* Reflexionen über ein Phantom. Hamburg, Rowohlt 1988. More than a decade earlier, William LEISS in: *The Limits to Satisfaction. An Essay on the Problems of Needs and Commodities*. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1976 had explored the genesis of needs in the transformation of desires when focused on commodities.

John McKNIGHT, "Why 'Servanthood' is bad." *The Other Side* Jan/Feb 1989, 39-41: "Service syst3em teach people that their value lies in their deficiency" Their value however is realized by those who serve their needs. Empirical evidence shows beyond any doubt that development costs, pocketed by people with University Degrees are always a multiple of the benefits that reach the clients.

<sup>45</sup> The term "basic needs" is made to sound like a humanist invention when it is used within the development discourse. But, within an economic setting, "basic" is a word with a precise and accepted meaning. It seems to me impossible to seek legitimacy for the term "basic needs" in an economic discourse, without simultaneously stressing the commodity nature of human resources. To give credence to my suspicion, it suffices to read the dictionary entry by Neri SALVADORI "Basics and non-basics" *In The New Palgrave. A Dictionary of Economics*. NY:Mc Millan 1987. *vol 1*. "basic" is a commodity when it enters directly or indirectly into the production of all commodities - such commodities need to be produced , whatever net output is produced: When their prices change, all prices change."

The formulation comes from P. SCRAFFA, *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities*. 1960.

utopian, no-where. Development takes off beyond a minimal level of consumption determined by scientific insights into human nature. To share in a meaningful way in the benefits of this development, one must first consume a certain minimum amount of basic services, largely paid for by taxes and/or borrowing from future generations. One needs a prescribed amount of education,<sup>46</sup> health care, news, transportation, protection, administration in order to be human enough to share in this new world. But,

Insistence on basic needs is inevitably double-edged; it implies that you can become either more or less human [...] needs define humanity as divisible.<sup>47</sup>

And, as another has also clearly seen, "They [needs] define the individual and reduce it to the profile of its needs."<sup>48</sup> For Talcott Parsons, already in 1951, "[...] personality [...] is to be viewed as the establishment of a relatively specific, definite and consistent need disposition."<sup>49</sup>

As Michael Ignatieff has pointed out, no other age has had a term or idea which occupied that place in its constellation of meanings which need now occupies in ours.<sup>50</sup> Certainly needs are not the "necessaries" of Adam Smith,

[...] required by the support of life and in addition whatever the custom of the country renders indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order, to be without [...] Custom has rendered leather shoes necessary for life in England. The poorest creditable person of either sex would be ashamed to appear in public without them. In Scotland, custom has rendered them a necessary of life of the lowest order of men; but not to the same order of women, who may, without any discredit, walk about

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<sup>46</sup> For this reason it is useful to explore the relationship between "education" and "development" as hinge-terms in the discourse about public policy. As I will indicate in FN @ "need" was used in the new sense convertible to "drive" in pedagogics 20 years before it entered the discourse on public policy regarding other "spheres". In educational theory "need" soon came to designate a personal lack of the educand that must be supplied by society to make him capable of living the good life. Secondly, the "needs of society" or the "needs of others" became increasingly relevant criteria for choosing what the educand must acquire in the process of his or her education.

<sup>47</sup> GRONEMEYER, Marianne. *Die Macht der Bedürfnisse* Reflexionen über ein Phantom. Hamburg, Rowohlt 1988.p 22 and p 17

<sup>48</sup> HELLER, Agnes. *The Theory of Needs in Marx* NY: St. Martin's Press, 1

<sup>49</sup> In that same year (1951) the Yiddish expression "ich darf es wi a loich im kop" which is applied to something not desired at all, or totally useless led Marchall MC LUHAN to translate (in the Mechanical Bride 29, 2 cit. from OED Suppl.) "a smart operator needs a dame like he needs a hole in the head"

The attributive use of the noun "need" has snowballed since about 1940. According to the New OED the Economist of June 29 1940 p 1106/2 writes " the chief objection is...that the proposal introduces another needs test. In the same household, there will be a means test for an unemployed member, ...and a means test for pensions of war". Clearly the stress glides from "means" to "needs". T. Parsons whose quotation above is from *Towards a General Theory of Action* 1,1,18 repeats the same attributive use 3,3,308: identification does involve " a stronger need-push to get to the region of love and approval". During the sixties monstrous expressions of the same format become common: "social needs select goal-oriented behavior".

<sup>50</sup> Michael IGNATIEFF. *The Needs of Strangers*. London: Chatto and Windhus, The Hogarth Press, 1984.



barefooted. In France, they are necessary neither to men nor to women [...] <sup>51</sup>

This passage bespeaks a world in which (1) moral relations between strangers were mediated by custom or culture, and where (2) status defined necessities which, precisely for these two reasons, are not basic needs.

Today, the attempt to insert moral sense in the development discourse must rescind customary (we would say "cultural") norms which Smith could take for granted. And anything approaching the character of moral statement, within the ever more radically amoral context of developed societies, must resort to a new kind of appeal not formulated according to custom. <sup>52</sup> This situation brings out and partially legitimates the professional. He is uniquely positioned "to know" what strangers need, much better than the clients themselves, for they are bound to be misled by the vestiges of their traditional cultural traits.

Unquestionably, the Basic Needs approach to development does provide criteria, truly new ones, for formulating institutional claims based on the imputed needs of the weakest who, by definition, are those without the acquired ability to recognize their own misery, as a result of their "unmet needs". The metaphor or model, then, for the modern needs expert is the physician. <sup>53</sup> He, rather than the patient, knows what the latter needs because, more often than not, the "disease" is the result of the patient's own behavior. The principal task of the needs diagnostician coincides with that of the modern doctor -- he must educate those he serves to accept his views and comply with his prescriptions.

In the 1970s, "participation" and "advocacy" were still unsullied terms. <sup>54</sup> Experts presented themselves as servants who helped the poor become conscious of their true needs, as a Big Brother to assist them in the formulation of their claims. This welfare dream of bleeding hearts and blue-eyed do-gooders can today be easily dismissed as the nonsense of an age already past. "Needs", in a vastly more interdependent, complex, polluted and crowded world can no longer be identified and quantified, except through intense teamwork scrutiny of systems specialists. And in this new world, the needs discourse becomes the preeminent device to reduce people into individual units with input requirements.

We are at the threshold of a still unnoticed transition from a political consciousness based on progress, growth and development -- rooted in the dreams of the Enlightenment -- to a new yet-unnamed consciousness defined by controls which insure a "sustainable system" of need satisfaction. Development is dead, yes. But the experts who gave us needs are now busily at work reconceptualizing their gift to us, redefining humanity yet again. To survive, they say, we must now see ourselves not as

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<sup>51</sup> Adam SMITH. *The Wealth of Nations* Book 5, ch II, part 2, art.IV.

<sup>52</sup> Amartya K. Sen. *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981 contains passim valuable insights into the new language of needs-based entitlement.

<sup>53</sup> The consistency of the structural development of medicine and of modern consciousness during the last couple of decades has been exposed with in-imitable clarity by ARNEY/BERGEN.

<sup>54</sup> "participation" also can be called "concientization" "mentalization" "advocacy planning" ect. In all these forms hides a mobilization of needs and instrumentation of institutions which will mediate their satisfaction.

citizens but as cyborgs, in the image of immune systems, infinitesimally small units of a series of inclusive systems, ending no one knows where.<sup>55</sup> The all-important factor is best understood not as need but as requirement, the complex of requirements for each system. If this view comes to prevail, then men and women will indeed cease to be.

Some years ago, the promoters of development promised "more", thus creating the psychic condition for the implantation of needs,<sup>56</sup> which led to the creation of a needy addict, a being in whom we all share. Perhaps the new systems experts can be outwitted through the moral courage necessary to kick bad habits.

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<sup>55</sup> This is the embarrassing if not pornographic language in which the discussion is conducted in the North South Round tables: HAQ, Khadija; KIRDAR, Uner. edits. *Budapest Roundtable on Managing Human Development*.

"seriously consider adopting the challenge of reaching universal primary education and literacy by the year 2000." p 3.

"..Human development has to be increasingly managed" p 11.

HAQ, Khadija. *Roundtable on Adjustment and Growth with Human Development* Salzburg Roundtable 1986. Islamabad, Pakistan: NS Roundtable 1987. (from the final statement p 312.): "The objective (of adjustment) must be to achieve economic growth while protecting and promoting human development and equity oriented policies"

"The energy, food and debt crisis must not be succeeded in the future by a far more fundamental crisis...of human development." p 318.

<sup>56</sup> Ivan ILLICH, "The Ritualization of Progress" in: De-schooling Society. Harper and Row: NY 1971.