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Consider the past couple thousand years. You should see patterns emerging: people cluster, and they cluster around certain locations—and avoid others. Why? Good question; we don't quite know the specifics yet. But what we do know is that people move. From location A to location B—from location X to location Y. We move—let this be as organic as walking or as technologically driven as driving—but we move—and for good reason: we feel like it.

Yes, it is feeling that drives us—whether it is the feeling of fear or the feeling of love, or a desire for rationality—we decide. And just as our feelings shape our choices, so do choices shape our experience—and from this experience we derive 'the truth': a list of pros and cons that define our priorities and shape our preferences. This continued process of assessing and reassessing, defining and implementing shapes how we make meaning, how we form narratives, and how we allocate resources. Some narratives we love—some narratives we loathe. Some narratives we can share—others are exclusive.

All else equal, I am portraying the human decision-making process as a semi-conscious allocation of value in favor of one option over another in an evolving fashion. And so when we come to speak of space allocation, we come to a comprehensive understanding that all things are alive—alive in a sense that they are part of an organic whole. Decisions made by a certain class of citizens will influence all other classes: where we live and how we move will determine our collective landscape. Yet the collective landscape is shaped by more than just agglomerated choice—it is shaped by agglomerated agglomeration—that is to say, it is a consequence of all action and reaction that has come into existence since the beginnings (if there ever was such).

In this framework of thought, we could then look at the development of the city as a natural consequence of a set of interrelated happenings: the expansion of low-density housing options in the outskirts and the emergence of gigantic towers at the center are all consequences of collective action that is bound by natural order. And thus, pinpointing specific actions that trigger other actions gets complicated. Segregation of the different, clustering of the similar, and emergence of the new are intriguing processes—yet when we observe them outside of their context, they become irrelevant mathematical models that fail to answer the question: why do we care?

How to cluster is critical for the collective, and for very good reasons: if we allocate resources well, we can increase choice and utility—and so enhance both the collective and the individual living experience. And allocation is the key—if we allocate resources badly, we get horrible outcomes: super-low-density nuclear wastelands in Japan left by nuclear warfare are examples of this negative trend. If we really wish to transcend the fragmentation, segregation, and inequality that autocracy brings, we must come to an understanding about how to allocate. All else equal, proper resource allocation is a skill that we must all master if we hope to coordinate individual desires with collective action.

Our lifestyle choices can coincide with what is best for the common: as we institute more and more effective ways to communicate, we increase the likelihood of nonviolent interest alignment and resource allocation. Assume a point in time when the dynamics of resource allocation produce the best possible outcome for both the individual and the collective. At this point, interest alignment is symbolized by collective consensus: allocation of resources is no longer a question but rather a call for action.

Let's call the possibility of this collective economical consensus 'equilibrium symbiosis condition,' or ESC for short. At this point, individuals would be allocated the equilibrium amount of resources by the collective in return for pursuing agendas that satisfy both collective and individual desire. Will we ever reach ESC? That's quite irrelevant. The important question, rather, is: how do we increase the quality of communication between individual members of the collective? How do we shift the collective towards equilibrium symbiosis condition? Which tools to use and which tools not to? How to facilitate dialogue, represent meaning, and frame conversation? Which language to speak? Which question to ask? Which priority to set?

While asking such questions comes in handy in the quest to forge global consensus, it is important to remember that they are only the tip of the iceberg. Larger questions such as who are we, where do we come from, and where are we going will continue to baffle the experts and leave plenty of room for charlatans to make big bucks. Nonetheless, global developments such as the ones that have ended the great wars and created technology have reshuffled the rigid and unjust framework of pre-industrial authority by asking these very same questions.

How to decide and how to allocate has been the central theme of discussion for centuries—not only among great thinkers, but also among the general public. Hayek, in his book *Freedom to Serfdom*, advocates for freeing commerce to increase the number of transactions and thus interactions and productivity among people.

Statistical data has shown that as people cluster around certain locations in a process called 'urbanization,' they also become more and more dependent. While people in the countryside have been more or less self-reliant, the modern industrial age demands quite the opposite: it demands that people work together in a complex and ever-evolving environment. And this is where the concept of freedom emerges: freedom is unique because it moves away from the widely held notion that a higher authority is needed to get things done. We don't necessarily need an autocratic government to get the job done; we just need people who care enough—people who get things done. Yes, it is we, the people, who must take command of our lives. If we hope to prevail in the face of the ever-changing challenges that the modern industrial age has to offer, we must make the move.

Of course, many would claim that this process is going to require a whole new mindset: a mindset that elevates creativity, forgiveness, and constructive thinking to a new level. And not surprisingly, this is exactly the kind of process we see today: people from all nations unite in a unified stance against the forces of destruction, self-hatred, and fear. Not surprisingly, the horrible events that shaped the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries have left a deep mark on all nations. An event such as the brutal colonization process or the horrifying industrial holocaust has left millions displaced and little to hope for. So most would agree: we have a lot to get done. Nonetheless, there are a lot of developments we can celebrate, like medicine, the automobile, or the internet.

Bogart and Bruegmann talk of a process that can offer solutions: the emergence of a technocratic society that is led by a new creative class; a creative class that is no longer limited by social constructs such as birthright or privilege. Instead of dividing the population by primitive myths to exhort goods from the collective, this new class brings technology and access: "A recent version of the attempt to explain urban form by the inherent nature of the capitalist system is the widespread idea that sprawl has some relation to the increasing globalization of markets" (Bruegmann 101). And indeed it does: as markets globalize, the city explodes—it is no longer a place but an expanding concept—the concept of cooperation among a specific species of earthlings: the human.

While this organic process proliferates tools to make meaning, it also motivates: how to enjoy the dynamic global landscape without hurting the collective? “Recognition of the value of flexibility involves merely recognition that an urban economy is a living organism....No design can be judged until pictured in a state of adjustment; our most acute distresses, and our most intriguing opportunities, are accompaniments of adjustment” [Edgar N. Hoover (1968, 281) (Bogart 28)].

And I would have to strongly agree with Hoover: acknowledging “the value of flexibility” is the key to bringing forth a new understanding. If we intend to move beyond the fragmented past, a creative approach is desired. If we want to see change manifest in our cities and beyond, this new understanding is crucial. The creative class must rise above the fragmented history and forgive the injustices of the past to focus their energy on the present. But who is this new creative class? “In a series of articles and books, Professor Florida has linked metropolitan economic success with attracting members of the creative class, people who are ‘primarily paid to create and have considerably more autonomy and flexibility’ [than less privileged classes]” (Bogart 108).

And indeed: ‘flexibility and autonomy’ are the central pillars of the creative approach: how to allocate, and how to align, can be answered by the many, in a collective personification of the human desire: to belong, to have good food to eat, to remember good times, without forgetting the seven years of drought to come. While imperial projects such as Egypt, Rome, and Britain have failed to adapt to the changing environment, their memory lives on. People will continue to unite behind systems to uphold and renovate the machine that keeps us afloat. And Bruegmann points this out: “In theory, public policy ought to be based on an attempt to draw up a balance sheet showing which kinds of environment achieve the most benefits for the most people without unduly harming any group. Because of the complexity of urban systems, however, it is often difficult to draw up such a balance sheet” (Bruegmann 222).

While it is true that ‘urban systems are complex,’ it is also true that their complexity is a blessing for the creative individual: the multitude of influences and the rapid rate of change empowers the open-minded. This diversity empowers the individual to expand into areas undiscovered by the past—to take in what the universe has to offer—to construct narratives and to give meaning.

Technology-driven, our generation can do what so many others have wished to: we can get to know each other—on the internet or while traveling the globe. We can make the world a more pleasant place to live in, a more friendly environment for the creative mind, the creative mind that the supreme being has entrusted all of us with.