

Approaching the Concept of *Mass* from a 20th Century Perspective

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ABSTRACT: *This article aims to bring to the forefront the approach to the concept of mass from multiple perspectives - psychological, psychoanalytical, philosophical and anthropological - in order to explain a unique historical phenomenon that has remained in the collective memory as the period when the human spirit lost its way in the context of massification and globalization. The aim of this article is to use the concept of mass to study themes with deep resonances in philosophy such as depersonalisation, alienation and loss of discernment in order to create a panoramic view of the causes behind the emergence of totalitarianism.*

KEYWORDS: mass concept, crowd psychology, psychoanalysis, anthropological philosophy, anthropology

INTRODUCTION

The concept of *mass* approached from a psychological perspective in *The Psychology of Crowds* by Gustave Le Bon

The 20th century saw the most perfidious forms of manipulation and coercion in which empty promises were reiterated behind speeches that were often religious in their mystical aspect. The Platonic cavern had become the whole of Europe, and the common man is a prisoner in an artificial climate, induced by the various strategies of manipulation by persons designated by public opinion as an authority. The sovereign power of the press coupled with the advent of radio became real psychological weapons by which the crowds were kept from the Mephistophelian projections of the demagogues of those times. The collapse of previous social structures has induced real psychological earthquakes, both individually and collectively, which have shaken old beliefs. The thinking of the crowd had become captive in the hands of demagogues, who, under the guise of saviours of the many and the humble, would direct the feelings of the crowds in the desired directions for the acquisition of their own power by techniques of manipulation taken to the extreme.

Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931) was among the first authors to understand that these changes occurred first in the collective mind, which had already begun to create different forms of reaction under the impulse of new forces acting on it, under the seal of illusions determined by the new ideologies. The author demonstrates that under the influence of subliminal stimuli, the individual within the mass loses his moral bearings and cognitive capacity, giving in to instinctive urges under the seal of a hypnosis-like state: "regardless of the similarities or differences in their way of life, their occupations, their character or their intelligence, the mere fact that they have become a crowd endows them with a kind of collective soul."¹

The *Psychology of Crowds* appeared in 1895 and has remained a landmark work whose theories have been proven true. Le Bon will analyse the crowd as a whole because he attributes to it a mental unity and a transitory collective spirit, which coordinates all individuals, tracing the same direction in thought and feeling whereby "conscious personality disappears, will and discernment are abolished."² For Le Bon, the fact that the individual reacts and acts differently in the midst of the crowd is an undeniable truth, and the price paid for acquiring this spiritual homogeneity is the abolition of individuality through the loss of self-consciousness and rationality.

Similarly, Gustave Le Bon analyses the type of psychological and cognitive mechanisms under which the individuals in the crowd come under, in order to shed light on the many mental phenomena that herald major changes by overturning value systems established over time within an advanced civilization, stating that "the psychological crowd is a provisional 'being', composed of heterogeneous elements, welded together for the moment, like the cells of a living organism, which in their totality form a new being, having characteristics very different from those possessed by each of the component cells."³ The work proves to be groundbreaking in its psychological approach to crowds and in its highly pertinent observations on the diminishing cognitive capacity and self-awareness of the individual in a crowd because, in his view, "crowds accumulate not intelligence but mediocrity."⁴

A first cause of this state of mind is identified by the French author in a certain feeling of invincibility that the individual acquires in the midst of the crowd, coupled with a lack of responsibility given by anonymity, because "the individual included in the crowd acquires, just because of the increased number of people he belongs to, a feeling of invincible power allowing him to give in to instincts that he would have repressed on his own."⁵

The second cause is identified in the power of suggestion endowed with an infallible force because it completely replaces critical thinking, and "the individual, immersed for some time

¹ Gustave Le Bon, *Psychology of Crowds*, translation and introductory study by Lucian Pricop, Cartex Publishing House, Bucharest, 2019, p. 31.

² *Ibidem*, p. 34.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 31-32.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 33.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

in an agitated crowd, quickly falls (...) into a particular state that comes very close to the state of fascination of the hypnotized."⁶

Another cause noted by Gustave Le Bon is mental contagion, because "in a crowd, any feeling, any act is contagious, so contagious that the individual very easily sacrifices his personal interest in favour of the collective one."⁷

A final reason identified by the French psychologist, is given by the sense of certainty that the individual feels within the mass, taking as absolute truth what others say or an authority to which prestige has been attributed, so that "not having the slightest doubt as to what it believes to be true or error and having, on the other hand, a clear notion of its strength, the crowd is as authoritarian as it is intolerant."⁸ The collective soul adopts a form of religiosity in the face of a ruler to whom it allows itself to be seduced, a feeling that manifests itself in "the worship of a supposedly superior being, the fear and power attributed to him, blind obedience to his commands, the inability to question his dogmas, the desire to spread them, the tendency to consider as enemies all those who refuse to admit them."⁹ However, behind this power, given by the number of individuals, lies the weakness and psychological insecurity of primitive beings whose "need not for freedom but for servitude"¹⁰ gives them a behaviour bordering on the irrational, observed the French psychologist.

By analysing these collective manifestations, Le Bon had already understood a large part of the responses to these behavioural mutations by deciphering the mechanisms at work within crowds.

The concept of *mass* approached from a psychoanalytic perspective in *Collective psychology and ego analysis* by Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) uses psychoanalysis to penetrate the depths of the human psyche and to approach the changes suffered by the individual within the collective from a different perspective. His work, *Collective Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), builds on the work of Gustave Le Bon, *The Psychology of Crowds*, but the subject of the behaviour of the individual in a mass state is developed through his original theory, that of the libido, to justify the hypnotic relationship that is established both between the members of the crowd and the leader and between the components of the mass. The two types of crowds that Freud chooses for his study, the church and the army, were at that time two social nuclei of immense importance for the life of Western civilization, observing that "in the church (...) and in the army, however different they may be, the same illusion reigns: that of the presence, visible or invisible, of a leader (...) who has the same love for all the members of the collectivity. It is all about this illusion; if it were to disappear, the army and the church would immediately

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 34.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 49.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 62.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 97.

disintegrate, (...)."¹¹ The Austrian psychoanalyst observes that the Church possesses a democratic trait in the existence of the idea that all subjects are equal before Christ and loved without differentiation.

What Le Bon understood as the *collective soul* under the auspices of mental contagion and suggestion, in Freud is transformed into a psychoanalytic interpretation of the Oedipus complex, in which the father figure becomes central through the foundation of bonds similar to those established within the family. Beyond the explanations found for the solidarity of the members of a crowd, which refer to the theory of libido, interpreted through the Oedipus complex, Freud finds another argument for the feeling of cohesion of individuals within crowds, through identifications, which he explains as "mechanisms still insufficiently known, difficult to present"¹² that become the first manifestation of an affective bond.

An interesting aspect of the functioning of collective mind is captured by the Austrian psychoanalyst when he asks whether a leader could be replaced by a simple idea, concretized in a kind of belief, and whether it could retain its hypnotic character on individuals in a mass state. Likewise, the Austrian psychoanalyst observes that the simple association of common interests of the members making up a crowd, thus excluding the libidinal factor, leads "necessarily to mutual support and respect for others"¹³

So both Le Bon and Freud approach the mass from the perspective of affective relationships and the heightened affectivity that the individual acquires within himself. However, Le Bon speaks of atavism with direct reference to the primitive behaviour of man in a state of mass, and Freud speaks of libidinal relations similar to those created within the family, especially between the authoritarian figure of the father and his sons.

3. The concept of *mass* approached from a psychoanalytic perspective in *The Revolt of the Masses* by José Ortega y Gasset

In a context of political and social chaos, José Ortega y Gasset wrote *Revolt of the Masses* (1930), in which he built a whole theoretical apparatus about the power that ruled the world, coupled with an analysis of a historical crisis to which he organized the entire architecture. The theme of the masses and the depersonalization of the individual within collectivities has been treated, as shown in the previous pages, by other authors, but Ortega y Gasset manages to bring out other unexplored dimensions through the dialectic of mass-selected minority by which he highlights value as an attribute that differentiates an individuality from the mass.

The starting point of the *Revolt of the Masses* is the installation of a continent-wide axiological crisis, to which the Spanish philosopher applies a profound analysis that removes the benevolent appearances of certain realities that have led to the greatest historical crisis with

¹¹ Sigmund Freud, *Collective Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, translation and introductory study by Lucian Pricop, Cartex Publishing House, Bucharest, 2021, p. 48.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 61.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 59.

disastrous effects for the existence of all humanity. In his seminal work, *Revolt of the Masses*, José Ortega y Gasset synthesizes aspects of his philosophical and historical thought and promotes a Nietzschean aristocratic ethic, which he adapts to new social categories. At the individual level, it condemns the abandonment of self-consciousness and individuality, and at the collective level, it condemns above all nationalism, which was already present in many European countries and manifested itself in the form of a kind of pride in belonging to a particular race to which ethnic superiority was attributed. Without any evasions, the Spanish thinker expresses what he sees and believes in the era in which he lived, presenting us, from his point of view, a reality full of appearances that lacked depth.

For Ortega y Gasset, the concept of mass expresses neither the collective or individual unconscious, nor the family ties that are established within the mass, but reflects a new human condition in the context of modernity. The originality of Ortega in his approach to the concept of the mass lies in his extremely precise analysis of a new human exponent, which he will call the *mass-man*, the main actor of the immense social and mental earthquakes that occurred with the installation of totalitarianism.

Ortega sees society as an intertwining of the select minority, which he calls the elite, and the majority or mass. In his opinion, the mass and the select minority generate two opposing human types, and the dialectic of the *elite man - the mass man* will become a central idea throughout his work, on the structure of which he will build a psychological profile of each social and moral segment. Through his constant criticism of individual and collective life, by means of which he analyses the moral behaviour of an entire society, Ortega assiduously seeks to restore the verticality of the human being. The Ortegian ethic primarily encompasses the recognition of excellence within society by assuming the historical role of the masses to listen to and accept the intellectual and moral superiority of the minority.

In his analysis of historical events, Ortega is equally interested in their psychological and anthropological perspective and focuses on the study of the vectors that maintain the social and mental power exercised by the mass, which, "*in its intellectual simplicity*", claims to take the place of the elite above all on the political stage, because, in his view, the political can give it the correct measure of the value it ascribes to itself. Likewise, Ortega y Gasset blames the elite, or the select minority, as he calls it, for the unvarying attitude in this process of merging into the masses by abandoning its historical mission, that of generating and perpetuating values. The masses take advantage of this weakness and impose their new norms, which lead to the creation of an upside-down value scale that already encompasses all levels of society. The immediate result of these actions imposes a new social dynamic in which mediocrity as a social standard, mimicry and artificiality prevail.

For the Spanish philosopher, the mass refers not only to a large number of individuals, but to a new human condition, that of an heir who believes he has only rights, without obligations. Brutalization, lack of individuality and authenticity mean mass for Ortega: "By '*mass*' (...) is not meant specifically the worker; this word here does not designate a social class, but a class

or a way of being human, which is manifested in all social classes and which is, precisely for this reason, representative of our time, which it dominates and governs."¹⁴

Ortega analyses both the mass and the select minority from a qualitative perspective and notes with deep pain that modern man is complacent in this state of mediocrity, unwilling to see the manifestations of a crisis on a historical scale, displaying self-sufficiency and ignorance: "The man-mass considers himself perfect. (...) Self-confidence is, as in Adam, heavenly. The innate hermeticism of his soul forbids him what would be the prerequisite for discovering his insufficiency: comparison with others. In order to make this comparison, he would have to step out of himself for a moment and into his neighbour. But the mediocre soul is incapable of such transmigration - the ultimate sport."¹⁵

Another extremely worrying phenomenon is the insertion of the mass, as an element devoid of personal and intellectual value, into aspects of society reserved only for the intellectual elite, noting that "a characteristic of our time is the predominance of the mass and the vulgar, even in groups where selection is traditional. Thus, in intellectual life, which, by its very essence, demands and presupposes quality, we see the progressive triumph of unqualified pseudo-intellectuals, unqualified and disqualified even by the very texture of their spirit."¹⁶ The philosopher's conclusion is that mediocrity has already become the norm throughout society, and anyone who is not willing to submit to it risks being eliminated, discredited.

The mass-man, this newcomer on the world scene, is not interested in the fundamental values of the civilization he has just awakened to and is not willing to show solidarity with them, and his great shortcoming is that he wants to be led by people who are identical to him, with the same values. With the establishment of moral relativism, the mass-man takes over the entire public space, becoming a threat to the whole of Western civilization. From his point of view, the real cause of Europe's decadence is the irruption of this barbarian, in its various forms, into the living space, and by analysing its behaviour, Ortega manages to produce a medical record of the serious diseases of the spirit from which man suffers at the beginning of the last century. The Spanish philosopher's greatest contribution is to have described and named a new type of man as the product of an incredible acceleration of material progress and the diffusion of political interests clothed in religious ideologies. Thus, it is not the agglomerations themselves that are the reason for the Ortegian meditations, but the immense tremors induced historically by this *revolt of the masses*, translated into disobedience towards human values, excellence and authenticity.

Unlike the gregarious and atavistic individuals, under the sign of the unconscious, analysed by Le Bon and Freud, Ortega notices in the *mass-man* the lack of desire for individualization, of separation from the mass. Basically, the Ortegian thesis is summed up in the negative aspect that progress and, implicitly, modernity have brought with them, concretized in an intellectual

¹⁴ José Ortega y Gasset, *Revolt of the Masses*, translated from Spanish by Coman Lupu, 3rd edition, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 144.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 103-104.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 50.

hermeticism and an obliteration of the soul, new attributes that force modern man to a continuous conformity to totalitarian ideologies that impose a new way of being human. For Ortega, there is no hypnotic link established between leader and masses, only a conformism coupled with a mimetic desire, induced by a psychology of an extremely spoiled child who has been offered everything without being asked for anything in return. Ortega y Gasset's man-mass does indeed seem to act under the impulse of unconscious forces, but this state is only due to the feeling of superiority he has.

If the equalization in the two authors studied above was due to the pursuit of a common interest or to the fact that they had a single leader to whom they showed a family attachment, in Ortega, on the other hand, this equalization is a new social and intellectual norm, translated into a multiplication of a generic type from one end of Europe to the other, and this homogenization gives the new man a state of comfort. Another paradox Ortega discovered is that not only uneducated people belong to the masses, but also intellectuals, in other words, anyone who refuses to individuate and activate their critical thinking.

The greatness of the work lies in what it predicts with reference to the effects of the loss of conscience that encompasses all the facts and events in which *the mass-man* was already a protagonist, anticipating the horrors of totalitarianism. The mass, in a state of revolt, has lost all capacity to respect moral norms, to discern between right and wrong and refuses to know the true reality, choosing credulity and servility in the face of the seductive promises of demagogues. Ortegian elitism is the measure of the effort made to break away from the masses, not in acquired or inherited social status or material values held. For Ortega, society is the fruit of a natural hierarchy in which the minority or elite must constitute a model of behaviour, while the majority must obey this minority.

The concept of *mass* approached from an anthropological perspective in

***The Masses and Power* by Elias Canetti**

The Masses and Power of Elias Canetti (1905-1994) appeared in 1960, fifteen years after the end of the Second World War, proposing a different perspective for understanding the social and psychological phenomena induced by the formation of the masses, within which there is a definite cancellation of individuality. Equally, the paper aims to reveal what mysterious springs were at work within this era in which industrialism and excess production imposed a continuous stimulation of the need for consumption.

It is interesting to note that the approach of Canetti to the concept of mass is subjective, an angle of view conferred by the personal experiences that placed him, throughout his life, within aggressive masses, giving his analyses a personal perspective. The Canettian perspective is therefore internal, and through this immense work, Canetti aims to analyse the masses of the 20th century in order to understand the historical phenomenon embodied in the emergence of totalitarianism in all its forms. If the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset predicted the abandonment of collective consciousness through the emergence of the man-mass, Canetti, on the other hand, carried out a post-disaster analysis of the totalitarianism that was established, trying to explain the emergence of this phenomenon through anthropology.

Elias Canetti interprets the political movements of the century of totalitarianism from an anthropological and philosophical point of view, with frequent references to the primitive states of the human being, but applied to the contemporary era in which instincts still have priority, but not those of survival, but those of domination. In fact, in retrospect, the 20th century seems to have been all about domination and national supremacy, as old and new nations tried, through the power and force of the accumulated masses, to conquer or exterminate other nationalities. As a descendant of the Jewish race, Canetti tries to justify the reasons for the frustrations embodied by Adolf Hitler and the ideology of Nazism.

For Canetti, a first necessity of the need for mass integration is the fear of being touched, a fear that turns into a real phobia of the individual alone in the face of the unknown, because "there is nothing man fears more than contact with the unknown. We want to see who is reaching out to catch us, we want to recognize it or at least be able to put it into context. At night or in the dark, the fear of a touch can intensify into panic. Even the garments do not offer enough security; they can easily tear, easily reach through them to the naked, smooth, defenceless flesh of the attacked."¹⁷ Through this instinctive fear of physical contact, man has everywhere created distances for himself, but within the mass, individuals gain equality, acquiring a kind of liberation, through the disappearance of any difference or distance given by social, intellectual or hierarchical rank, because "it is only within the mass that man can be saved from this fear of contact."¹⁸

In order to classify masses, Elias Canetti identifies a series of characteristics that distinguish human conglomerates, from size, density, rhythm, direction of movement, etc. Based on the identification of these characteristics, the author classifies masses, to begin with, into three types that he describes in detail: open masses, closed masses and circular masses.

For Canetti, the *open mass* is an enigmatic and universal phenomenon "that suddenly appears somewhere where nothing existed before. (...) Nothing was announced, nothing was expected. And suddenly the whole space is blackened by people. From all sides, others are swarming, it seems that the streets have only one direction. (...) You would think that the movement of one would be passed on to others, but it's not just that: everyone has a goal. It exists before words have been found to express it: the goal is the darkest place in which most people find themselves together."¹⁹

In opposition to the open mass is the *closed mass*, which is much more stable in that it does not absorb any human element within it, having a limiting character: "It gives up growth and fixes its attention on stability. (...) once the space is filled, no one is let in. Even when the space is overflowed, the dense mass remains the main point of the enclosed space. Those outside don't

¹⁷ Elias Canetti, *The Masses and Power*, translated from German by Amelia Pavel, 2nd revised edition, Nemira Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, p. 5.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

really belong to him. Limitation prevents uncontrolled growth, but also makes spreading more difficult and delays it. What you sacrifice in growth, you gain in stability."²⁰

The third category is made up of the so-called *circular masses*, which are those masses enclosed both inside and outside, being enclosed by two types of walls: a wall facing the city and another formed by the human bodies that enclose it inwards: "Twice-closed masses can be found in the arena. (...). Its place in the city, the space it absorbs, is known to all. (...). The rows are placed on top of each other so that everyone can see what's going on downstairs in the arena. The result is that the masses are face to face."²¹

The observations of Canetti are particularly relevant to the issue of social organization within the mass. Thus, if for Le Bon and Ortega y Gasset, the mass is seen as a flock of sheep in the Nietzschean sense, for Canetti, the mass acquires the characteristics of a pack, which implies a very clear hierarchy in the acquisition and distribution of food, coupled with the existence of a leader. From his point of view, the pack becomes the starting point for anyone who wants to unravel the mysteries hidden in the origins of totalitarian organisational structures. The Canettian classification of the pack has four variants: from the hunting pack and the warrior pack to the mourning pack or the breeding pack. The latter type of pack expresses, in his view, "one of the essential characteristics of the modern mass, the urge to enlarge."²²

An extremely interesting chapter in which Canetti analyses the levers of power, dictated by production and consumption, is clearly eye-catching. He starts from the issue of justice to which he ascribes an antiquity equal to that of the fair distribution of food among the members of a pack, because "the isolated nature of the incorporation of food is one of the roots of that dreadful excrescence which is power"²³, and the ideology of socialism brings to the fore the idea that justice means that all members of a community should have food, but at the same time, it demands that everyone should contribute to obtaining this food. Production and distribution become two primary activities that can sum up all socialist activity, but the 20th century means an over-stimulation of production, leading to its worship. From his point of view, this is also man's relationship with production today, and with the advent of the machine, any multiplication has taken on colossal proportions, but since this time we are talking about multiplied objects, man develops an attachment to things, which induces an even greater need for consumption, because "there are more and more objects for which man finds a use, and by getting used to them, new demands arise."²⁴ The technification of life has induced in man a sense of power, observes Elias Canetti, and "what was once production, the growing expectation of rain, of harvest, of the approach of herds of game and the raising of domestic animals has today become production itself. We push a few buttons, fiddle with a few levers, and the things we want come out done in a few hours or even faster."²⁵

²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 8-9.

²¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 24-25.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 123.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 255.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 258.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 256-257.

Canetti also approaches the phenomenon of the masses from a historical perspective in an attempt to understand and explain, from an anthropological and psychological point of view, the formation of various political movements, with profound social echoes, which have remained in human history as nationalisms. The author demonstrates a fine historical sense and makes a brief characterization of each nation seen through the prism of its symbols in an attempt to identify the causes of the outbreak of the Second World War and the immense massacres committed by social-nationalists on all of Europe, but especially on the Jews. He identifies the birth date of the Nazi party as the date of the *Treaty of Versailles* (1919), with decisions made against Germany, which was forbidden to form a new army. Hitler's immense success was due, among other things, to the almost obsessive repetition of the word *Versailles*, which in the collective mind was not only the equivalent of defeat, but was above all the prohibition of a "precise, sacrosanct practice, without which they could hardly imagine life. Banning the army was like banning a religion."²⁶ Thus, unable to form an army, the German people accepted Hitler's slogans with maximum enthusiasm, and the swastika symbolism "brings together the threat of terrible punishment, treacherous implications and hidden exhortations to military discipline."²⁷

Canetti also notes some psychological aspects related to the new power exercised by money, stating that "money and the masses are closer today than ever before"²⁸, and through inflation "a double devaluation takes place, which comes from a double identification. The individual feels devalued because the unit he relied on, which he respected as himself, has turned him down"²⁹, which makes the masses of people feel "devalued because the million is devalued."³⁰ Hitler used inflation, which had already sown another resentment in the German soul, to blame the Jews, knowing full well the connection they had always had with money, and "the Germans felt massively humiliated by the collapse of their millions."³¹

The two philosophers, Ortega and Canetti, analyse the behaviour of the masses from an anthropological point of view, but if the Spanish philosopher directs all his meditation towards philosophy in order to understand the new human condition, the Austrian writer analyses exclusively from an anthropological perspective the need for the constitution of the human being in masses, attributing to it an antiquity equalled by the history of humanity itself.

All four authors studied in the course of this article have demonstrated that although the crowd accumulates apparently different individuals, within the crowd, the component elements become almost identical in appearance, making it virtually impossible to individuate them. For Canetti, the mass is neither the indissoluble combination of the two elements: the mass and the select minority, nor the intrinsic relationship between leader and subjects, but it takes the form of a series of psychological transformations that individuals undergo within the mass. For Le

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 241.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 243.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 247.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 248-249.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 249.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 250.

Bon and Freud, homogeneity exists because the members of the mass are under a kind of spell maintained unconsciously or by the state of love that each member feels for the leader of the group. For Ortega, equality or homogeneity is (self-)imposed, because the strongest desire of the *man-mass* is intellectual levelling. In Canetti, on the other hand, equality is desired and forced out of fear of the unknown touch, from which, within the mass, the human being feels redeemed. Equally, Canetti interprets this human need not to be touched as a permanent obligation to create distances, of whatever rank, from social to intellectual and hierarchical, that protect him from approaching strangers. So, the Canettian man, although he desires distances and differences, nevertheless, his only salvation lies within the crowd, the mass. Thus, for Canetti, the reason and need for mass integration is as conscious as possible and relates to the need for liberation from the threat induced by the unknown, while for Le Bon and Freud it is unconscious and instinctive in nature, and for Ortega it is the expression of a new human condition characterized by a lack of value.

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