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Changing Images of Man — Part I

O.W. Markley



The following paper is Part I of a two part series excerpted from the 319-page Policy Research Report 4 of the Center for the Study of Social Policy of the Stanford Research Institute. Part I examines the importance of society's image of the nature of the human being for social evolution, and the obsolescence of the current Western industrial-economic image. Part II, to be printed in our Fall, 1976 issue, will explore characteristics of an adequate image of humankind and the feasibility of the emergence of such a new image.

O.W. Markley was the Project Director for the Changing Images of Man report by the Stanford Research Institute. Other contributions were Joseph Campbell, Dwayne Elgin, Willis Harman, Arthur Hastings, Floyd Matson, Brendan O'Reagan, and Leslie Schneider.

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We must now look beyond the technological and material frontier to a new frontier which is essentially that of man searching for himself.

Images of humankind which are dominant in a culture are of fundamental importance because they underlie the ways in which the society shapes its institutions, educates its young, and goes about whatever it perceives its business to be. Changes in these images are of particular concern at the present time because our industrial society may be on the threshold of a transformation as profound as that which came to Europe when the Medieval Age gave way to the rise of science and the Industrial Revolution.

A Working Definition of "Image of Man"

We use "image of man" (or of man-in-the-universe) to refer to the set of assumptions held about the human being's origin, nature, abilities and characteristics, relationships with others, and place in the universe. A coherent image might be held by any individual or group, a political system, a church, or a civilization. It would consist of beliefs as to whether we are basically good or evil, whether our will is free or is determined by external forces, whether we are cooperative or competitive, whether we are essentially physical or spiritual in nature whether men and women are essentially equal, and so on. It includes both what man (woman) "is" and what he (she) "ought to be."

Most societies have an image of man, which defines his social nature, for example. But different societies may assume exactly opposite social characteristics. Hopi culture, for instance, sees man as ideally cooperative while "mainstream" American culture usually sees the "best" man as competitive. And of course, men and women behave in those ways in each of those societies. If the successful or ideal adult is assumed to be competitive, then children as they grow up are encouraged to be competitive, games are based on competition, success in competition is rewarded, and

Rampant industrialization and consumption need not prove to be the dominant characteristics of our future society.

competition becomes a dominant motive, thus validating the assumption of the image. The same is true, in a similar manner, if a society's image defines man as cooperative, as independent, or as having any other of the many possible social attitudes.

An "image of the nature of man" is thus Gestalt perception of humankind, both individual and collective, in relation to the self, others, society, and the cosmos. It may contain many levels and face contradictions and paradoxes — as does the living human being — and still be experienced as an organic whole.

However, any image is necessarily selective, not only as to what categories of human attributes are included, but also as to the facts which are asserted to be true of them. Some images are narrow, ignoring many possibilities; others are more comprehensive, embracing more of man's potential being. Each, however, selects which attributes and qualities are to be considered real and which are to be developed, admired, accepted, despised or otherwise attended to.

These images are held at varying degrees of an awareness by persons and by societies. For some (e.g., the "True Believers" described by Eric Hoffer), images are likely to be in the forefront of awareness, seen as reality and used consciously in perceiving the world and in making decisions. For most, however, assumptions about the nature of human beings are held subconsciously. Only when these hidden assumptions are recognized and brought into awareness is an "image of man" constructed. Then the image can be examined carefully with perspective, to be retained, discarded, or changed.

Images and Social Policy

In this study we attempt to perceive and analyze the "images of man" that are fundamental organizing principles of our own civilization and key civilizations that have contributed to it. No one knows the total potentiality of humankind, and our awareness of human "nature" is selective, shaped by our symbolic and presymbolic images. From the total possibilities — nature, abilities, and characteristics — our images of humankind reflect those aspects we are "in touch" with — being influenced by scientific knowledge, mythology, traditional assumptions, and the institutions which already exist or which are developing.

All public and private policy decisions necessarily embody some view (or compromise of views) of man in the world. The kind of educational systems and educational goals a society sets up, the ways in which it approaches the problems of material distribution (poverty and wealth), how it treats the welfare of its citizens, the priorities it gives to various human needs — all these aspects and many more are affected by the image of humankind that dominates the society. Precisely *how*, of course we cannot say with detailed accuracy — which is why metaphors, myths allegories, theories, (all of which attempt to express an image) are useful. But in a very real way, all policy issues are issues relating to fundamental assump-

tions about the nature of man and his concerns:

- If we see ourselves as separate from or superior to nature, then an exploitation ethic can be fostered more easily.
- If we see ourselves as part of or one with nature, then an ecological ethic can be fostered more easily.
- If we view human beings (e.g., in medicine, employment, architecture) as animated machines of physical parts, then non-physical aspects of our existence are likely to be ignored.
- If we view humans as solely spiritual rather than physical beings, then material aspects of our existence are likely to be ignored, (e.g., in public health, employment opportunities, housing).
- If human nature is seen as complete and fixed, then our task is to adapt ourselves and our institutions to that nature.
- If human nature is seen as continuing to evolve, then our task is to understand the nature of that evolution and to design our institutions to enhance that development.

The Relevance of Images to Modern Society

While it is obviously important that our underlying images and beliefs be good maps of the reality in which we live, we probably do well not to pay them overmuch attention as long as the continuing welfare of society and its citizens seems secure. Many of our present images appear to have become dangerously obsolescent, however.

An image may be appropriate for one phase in the development of a society, but once that stage is accomplished, the use of the image as a continuing guide to action will likely create more problems than it solves. (Figure 1 illustrates, in a highly simplified way, the interaction between changing images of man and a changing society.) While earlier societies' most difficult problems arose from natural disasters such as pestilence, famine, and floods (due to an inability to manipulate the human's environment), our major problems emerge unexpectedly from newly found abilities to manipulate our environment and ourselves in unprecedented ways, and from our failure to ensure wise exercising of the "Faustian" powers (as Spengler termed them).

Science, technology, and economics have made possible really significant strides toward achieving such basic human goals as physical safety and security, material comfort, and better health. But as Table 1 illustrates, many of these successes have brought with them problems of being "too successful" — problems that themselves seem insoluble within the set of societal value premises that led to their emergence. Improved health, for example, has caused population increases which exacerbate problems of social organization, food distribution, and resource depletion. Our highly developed system of technology leads to a higher vulnerability to breakdowns. Indeed, the range and interconnected impact of societal problems that are now emerging pose a serious threat to our civilization.²

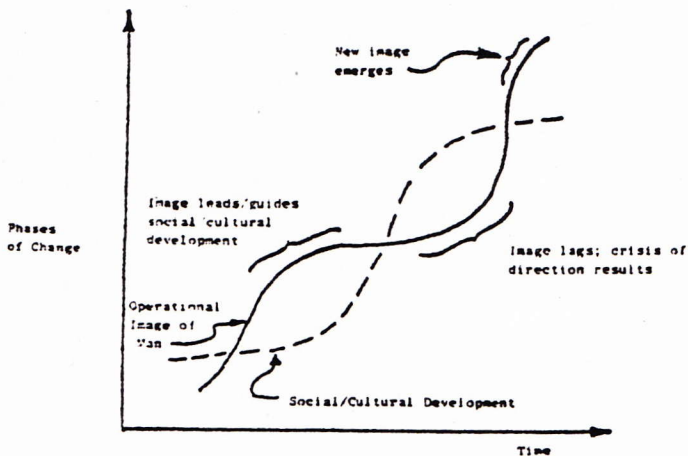
When images "lead" social development they are antici-

Table 1

SELECTED SUCCESSES AND ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL/INDUSTRIAL ERA

"Successes"	Problems Resulting from Being "Too Successful"
Reducing infant and adult mortality rates	Regional overpopulation; problems of the aged
Highly developed science and technology	Hazard of mass destruction through nuclear and biological weapons; vulnerability of specialization; threats to privacy and freedoms (e.g., surveillance technology, bioengineering)
Machine replacement of manual and routine labor	Exacerbated unemployment
Advances in communication and transportation	Increasing air, noise, and land pollution; information overload; vulnerability of a complex society to breakdown; disruption of human biological rhythms
Efficient production systems	Dehumanization of ordinary work
Affluence, material growth	Increased per capita consumption of energy and goods, leading to pollution and depletion of the earth's resources
Satisfaction of basic needs	Worldwide revolutions of "rising expectations"; rebellion against non-meaningful work
Expanded power of human choice	Unanticipated consequence of technological applications; management breakdown as regards control of these
Expanded wealth of developed nations; pockets of affluence	Increasing gap between "have" and "have-not" nations; frustration of the revolutions of rising expectations; exploitation; pockets of poverty

Figure 1
Hypothesized Time/Phase Relationship Between Images and Social/Cultural Development



patory, and provide direction for social change. When images are in this relation to society they exert what Polak has termed a "magnetic pull" toward the future.³ By their attractiveness and meaning they reinforce each movement which takes the society toward them, and thus they influence the social decisions which will bring them to realization.

As society moves toward achievement of the goals inherent in the image, the congruence increases between the image and the development of man and society: the promise of the image is explored, needs are satisfied. Then, as with paradigms and myths, there may come a period in which the evolution of the society goes beyond the adequacies of the image. Policies based on the dominant image then become consequently faulty, even counterproductive, precipitating a period of frustration, cultural disruption, or social crisis and the stage is set for basic changes in either the image of man or the organization of society.⁴

Furthermore, there is no indication that our society, operating under its currently dominant guiding images and value premises, will not continue to create such problems at an increasing rate. Researchers at the Hudson Institute have identified what they call a "basic long-term multifold trend"



that represents a cluster of social forces similar to those causing the "successes" noted in Table I.⁴ According to Kahn and Bruce-Briggs, the multifold trend includes:

- (1) Increasingly sensate (empirical, this-worldly, secular, humanistic, pragmatic, manipulative, explicitly rational, utilitarian, contractual, epicurean, hedonistic, etc.) cultures
- (2) Bourgeois, bureaucratic, and meritocratic elites
- (3) Centralization and concentration of economic and political power
- (4) Accumulation of scientific and technical knowledge
- (5) Institutionalization of technological change, especially research, development, innovation, and diffusion
- (6) Increasing military capability
- (7) Westernization, modernization, and industrialization
- (8) Increasing affluence and (recently) leisure
- (9) Population growth
- (10) Urbanization, recently suburbanization and "urban sprawl" — soon the growth of megalopolises
- (11) Decreasing importance of primary and (recently) secondary and tertiary occupations; increasing importance of tertiary and (recently) quaternary occupations
- (12) Increasing literacy and education and (recently) "knowledge industry" and increasing role of intellectuals
- (13) Innovative and manipulative social engineering — i.e., rationality increasingly applied to social, political, cultural, and economic worlds as well as to shaping and exploiting the material world — increasing

problems of ritualistic, incomplete, or pseudo-rationality

(14) Increasingly universality of the multifold trend

(15) Increasing tempo of change in all the above

The impact and likely consequences (for better *and* for worse) of continuing with this societal trajectory can be inferred from a study of Figures 2 through 5.⁵ If such projections of the future prove correct, we can expect the associated problems of the trend to become more serious, more universal, and to occur more rapidly.

But the multifold trend (essentially, rampant industrialization and consumption), with the associated problems, need not prove to be the dominant characteristic of our future society. As Figures 2 through 5 imply, for most of human history the growth of man's population was slow and its impact on Earth ecology relatively small. Men lived close to the soil in widely dispersed communities, such that the actions of one community had relatively little impact on most

Figure 2
The Growth of Human Numbers

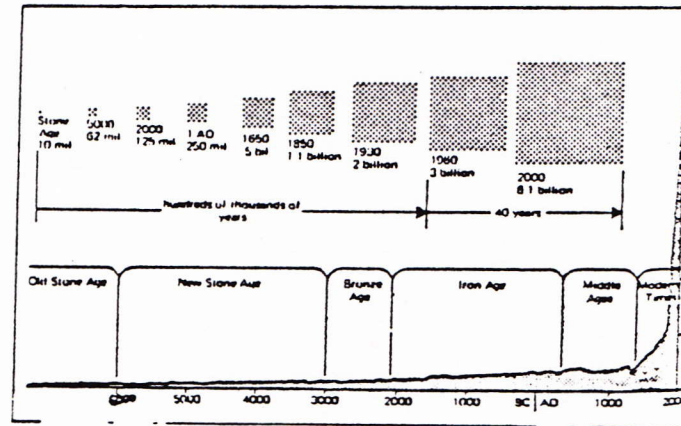


Figure 3
Urbanization in the United States

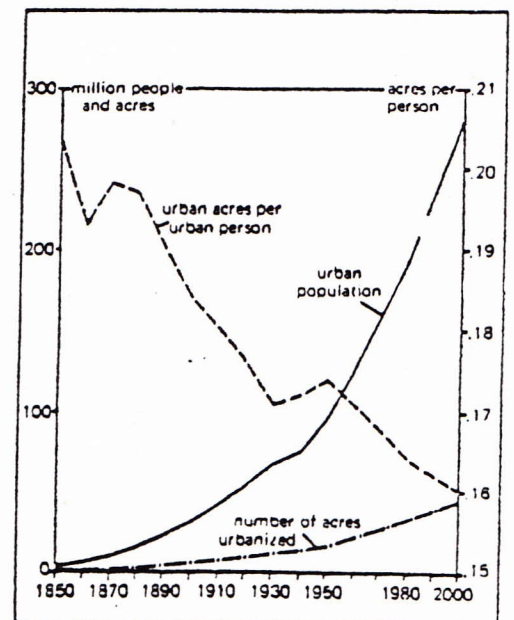


Figure 4
Selected World Population,
Wealth, and Consumption Trends

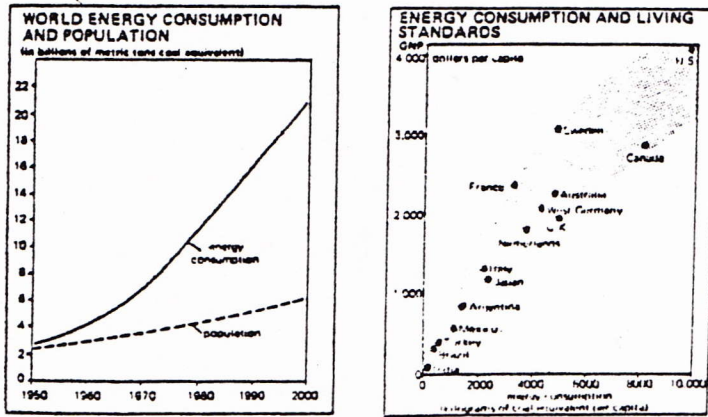
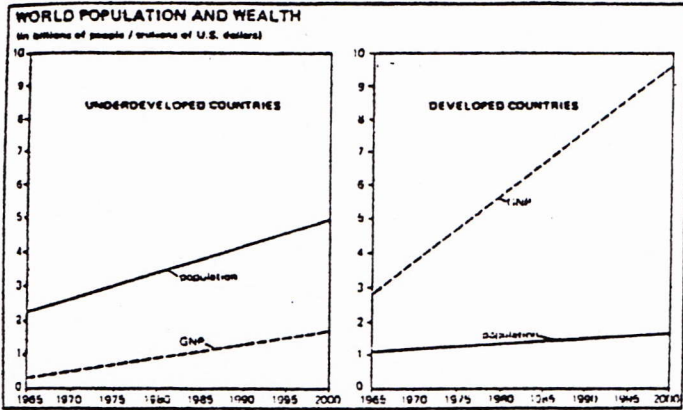
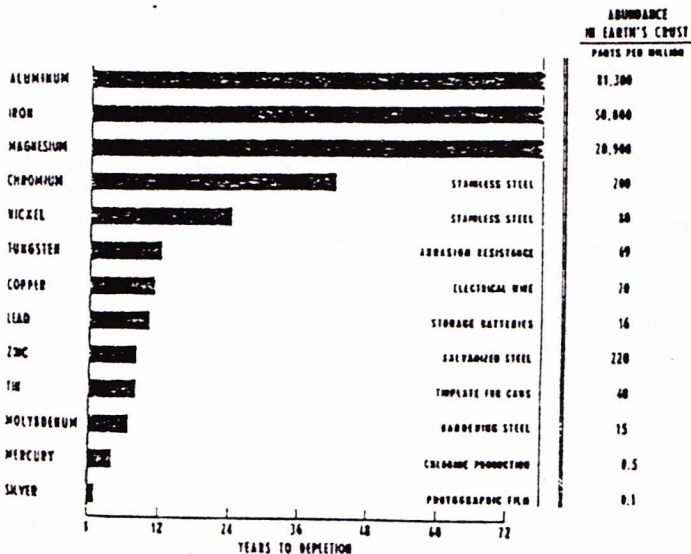


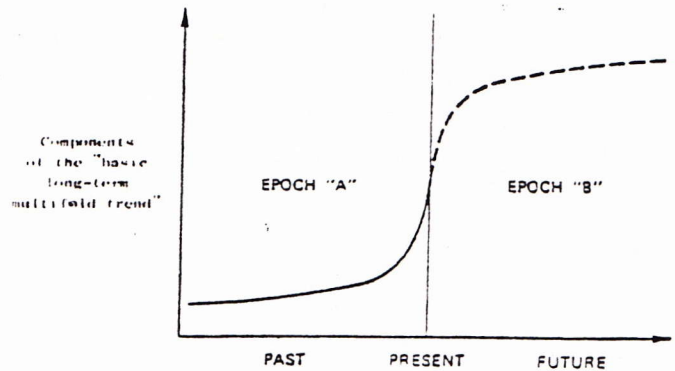
Figure 5
Depletion of World Reserves of Commercial Grade Ores
if World Population Had U.S. Living Standard



others not near by. But now society grows ever more complex, specialized and interconnected, and the production and distribution of essential goods and services is increasingly dependent on the continued integrity of human institutional systems. Human systems, however, depend on trust, agreement, and political law rather than on unchanging "natural" law, hence they are inherently less stable in times of rapid cultural change than are "natural" systems. They are particularly sensitive to breakdowns caused by war, terrorism and simplistic attempts at societal reform.

Salk has suggested a simple graphical way of comprehending these changes and the corresponding level of changes that need to take place during the decades to come.⁶ As portrayed on Figure 6, the past and future history of mankind can be represented as comprising two phases. Salk calls the first phase, which includes all of mankind's past history, Epoch A — an epoch in which (for the above reasons) the survival of the human species depended on essentially individual actions, on the survival of the fittest, and on successful competition with other life forms. He calls the second phase, which must characterize any desirable future, Epoch B — a future in which mankind limits the growth of those activities that undermine the welfare of the ecology; hence where the survival of the species will depend more on the behavior of the the whole species than of its individuals, on cooperation rather than competition, and emphasizing the survival, not of the physically fittest, but of the wisest.

Figure 6
Two Contrasting Epochs of Human History (Jonas Salk)



While it is perhaps unrealistic to expect that the United States and other industrial nations would voluntarily limit their own consumption of physical resources and share their wealth more equitably with less affluent nations, it may be equally unrealistic to think that we will not be forced into making just that choice. With only 6% of the world's population, the United States currently uses about half of the world's annual resource output. And it is this standard of living that we enjoy that is the growth goal of most developing nations — most of whose citizens are undernourished and undereducated.

As the late Prime Minister of Canada, Lester Pearson, observed,

"No planet can survive half slave, half free; half engulfed in misery, half careening along toward the supposed joys of an almost unlimited consumption . . . Neither ecology nor our morality could survive such contrasts . . ."

While not all researchers agree that such an epochal

transition is facing mankind, most agree that the developed nations of Earth now face a series of fundamental dilemmas. By more adequately understanding the nature of these dilemmas, how they have emerged, and how they might be resolved, it should be possible to see new possibilities for a better future. As a concise statement of why the role of images is crucial to such an understanding, four different types or "levels" of societal problems are delineated below.

- (1) *Substantive* problems lie at an applied to operational level, and are usually identified as immediate targets for corrective attention or increased allocation of money or other resources.
- (2) *Process* problems are those that impede the process of collectively setting priorities and strategies to solve the substantive problems.
- (3) *Normative* problems concern the appropriateness and effectiveness of a people's values, preferences, goals, and so forth, that are the basis of planning and priority setting
- (4) *Conceptual* problems are difficulties that seem to be intrinsic to the way we think, the words we use — in short, to the particular vision or understanding of reality that is dominant in a culture — thus affecting our ways of perceiving and doing; and also affecting the formation of our normative values.⁷

These four categories can be thought of as referring to the levels of (1) action, (2) communication and decision, (3) ideals, and (4) ideas.

The importance of distinguishing the above four aspects is evidenced by the fact that most informed persons agree on what the crucial substantive problems of our time are. Most of the visible disagreement — at least in the United States — occurs at the process level, in the assignment of priorities and the choice of strategies. But the third and fourth categories, normative and conceptual social problems, have been almost totally ignored to date. By addressing ourselves to these levels, we hope in this report to create new understanding through which societal problems that previously looked irresolvable may become increasingly tractable.

Signs of the Emergence of a New Image

But this is only part of the story told by this study. An analysis of the nature of contemporary societal problems, leads to the conclusion that in some sense we stand at the end of the industrial era, and that the images of man that dominated the last two centuries will be inadequate to a post-industrial period. However, there exists little evidence to suggest that this need alone would bring about a new dominant image, or that a change in the dominant image could be accomplished by rational deliberation, planning, and organized activity. On the other hand, whether by fortunate circumstance or creative unconscious processes, an emerging image with some of the needed characteristics does seem to have made its appearance.

This emerging image reinstates the transcendental, spiritual side of man, so long ignored or denied by that official truth-seeking institution of modern society, science. The new image denies none of the conclusions of science in its contemporary form, but rather expands its boundaries. In a manner reminiscent of the well-worn wave-particle example from physics, the new image reconciles such pairs of "opposites" as body/spirit, determinism/free will, and science/religion. It includes the inner subjective as well as the outer objective world as valid areas of human experience

from which knowledge can be obtained. It restores, in a way the balance between the Middle Ages' preoccupation with the noumenal and the industrial era's preoccupation with the phenomenal.

The evidence that such a new image is emerging does not rest solely on the growth of "new transcendentalism" movements; indeed, if there were nothing else to point to these might well be dismissed as mere manifestations of religious cultism such as often accompany periods of traumatic change. What cannot be dismissed, however, are the new emphases and findings in science which tend to support the spontaneous belief-system changes of a more popular sort.

One such development has been the discovery of the existence of a host of measurable physiological and physical correlates to inner, "private," subjective experience — rapid eye movement, galvanic skin response, muscle tensions, electric and magnetic fields around the body, EEG components, etc. These new probes and tools are being used to explore "altered states of consciousness," and have already borne fruit in important research findings. Thus science has legitimated systematic exploration of those realms of human experience in which our deepest value commitments have their source and which had heretofore been left to religion and the humanities.

Even more revolutionary in its implications is the evidence that a whole range of so-called "psychic" experience — from telepathic and clairvoyant perception to psychokinesis and mystical consciousness — may be a universally latent capacity of man, seldom observed because it is almost totally repressed.

More significant than the specific research findings is the new emphasis itself. For it seems that wherever the nature of humankind has been probed deeply, we find the essential duality of our experience. Mankind is found to be both physical and spiritual, biologically determined yet in some sense freely choosing. We are each separate yet bound together with others in a unity; we have natural urges toward an ecological ethic and a determined striving toward the highest we can discern, yet we are also selfish and often fail to live up to our highest images and ideals.

The New Image and Social Change

The power of an image to bring about change is not easily demonstrated for two reasons: first, because of the intangibility of images themselves and, second, because the existing scientific paradigm cannot readily accept the evidence suggesting the power of images. However, there are numerous indications that a person's or a society's images can strongly affect perceptions, and therefore actions (see Table 2).

The issues raised in this report are crucial ones. Indeed if the analysis is accurate, we may be experiencing the beginning of an institutional transformation as profound in its consequences as the Industrial Revolution, and simultaneously a conceptual revolution as shaking as the Copernican Revolution.

History gives us little reason to take comfort in the prospect of fundamental and rapid social change — little reason to think we can escape without the accompanying threat of economic decline and social disruption considerably greater than anything we have experienced or care to imagine. If in fact a fundamental and rapid change in basic perceptions and values does occur, such a chaotic period seems inevitable as the powerful momentum of the industrial era is turned in a

Table 2
INDICATIONS THAT PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIOR ARE
INFLUENCED BY IMAGES

- Clinical data from psychotherapy indicating the life-shaping effect of an individual's self-image
- Anecdotal data relating to behavior changes induced by self-image change following plastic surgery
- Studies of effects of experimenter expectations in research with both animal and human subjects
- Studies of effects of teacher expectations on student performance
- Research on expectancy set, experimenter beliefs, and placebo effect in studies of hypnotic phenomena, psychotropic drugs, sensory deprivation, etc.
- Anthropological studies indicating that perceptions of self, others, and the environment are highly influenced by cultural images and expectations
- Research on visual perception indicating the extent to which what is perceived depends on past orderings of perceptions (e.g., the Ames demonstrations), on felt needs, on expectations, and on the influence of important others (e.g., the Asch experiments)
- Studies of authoritarianism and prejudice, indicating the extent to which other persons are seen in terms of stereotypes
- Examples from the history of science indicating how new conceptualizations have resulted in new ways of perceiving the world
- Research on the role of self-expectations in limiting academic achievement of underperforming children
- Hypnosis research demonstrating the influence of suggestion-induced images and expectations
- Athletic coaching practices utilizing deliberate alteration of expectations and self-image
- Expectation-performance relationships in studies of conquered peoples, prison-camp populations, etc.
- Anecdotal data from executive development courses based on the alteration of self-image and self-expectations through auto-suggestion
- The sociological theorem of W.I. Thomas: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."
- Research of the Nancy school of psychology (Emile Coue, C. Baudouin, C.H. Brooks, et al) on the power of imagining
- Esoteric religious teachings, East and West, on the power of belief, images, and prayer, e.g., Matthew 17.20: "For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move hence to another place,' and it will move."

new direction, and as the different members and institutions of the society respond with different speeds. Thus, a great deal depends upon a correct understanding of the nature of, and the need for, the transformation which is upon us.

Such a venture as the one undertaken in this study must to some extent be speculative. The validity of the transformational argument advanced in this work is not conclusively demonstrable. At the least, however, the tentative conclusions of this study suggest that appropriate research studies should be undertaken so that two or five years hence we may be in a better position to answer two vital questions: what image of man is required? What is the nature and extent of the coming transformation of society.

Economic Man: Servant to Industrial Metaphors

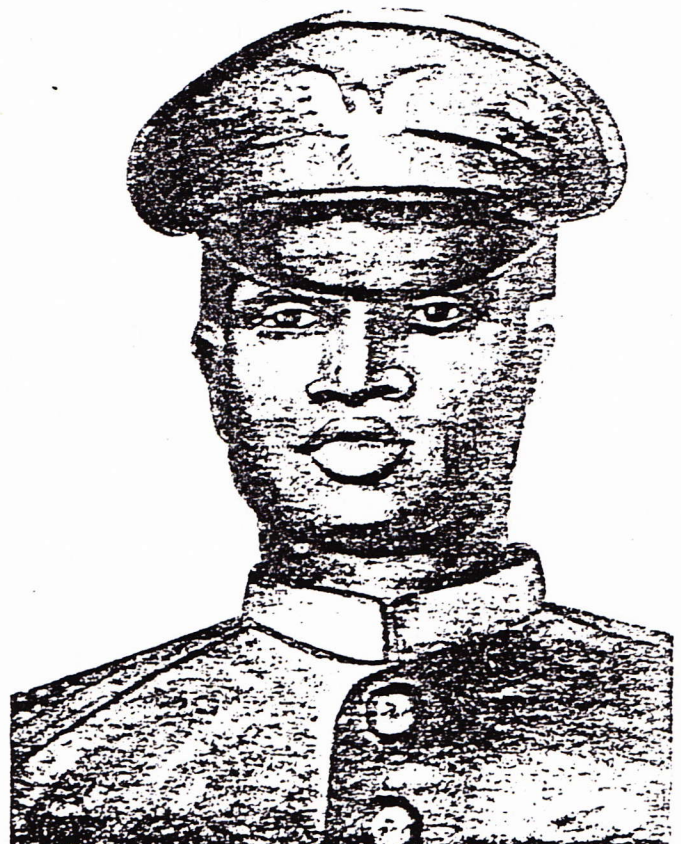
The imperatives of technology and organization, not the images of ideology, are what determine the shape of economic society . . . I am led to the conclusion that we are the servants in thought as in action, of the machines we have created to serve us.⁸

— J. K. Galbraith

Technology . . . has become the prime source of material change and so determines the pattern of the total social fabric.⁹

— R. J. Forbes

The above quotations reflect a prevailing sense that technological and economic developments have had a dominant influence upon the pattern of our total societal fabric. Indeed, industrialism is one of the most potent and widely spread cultural/societal systems in human history.



In America, no modern institution has escaped its influence: the school, the family, the community and city, the church, all have been influenced by this primary driving force of the modern era.¹⁰ Thus, the industrial revolution in modern times refers to more than machines and markets; it refers also to the people and institutions locked into a network of relationships dominated by economic and technological forces. The pervasiveness of economic forces suggests that we cannot anticipate the images of humankind that might emerge without giving consideration to the tugs and pulls of economic and technological influences.

Sources of the Economic Image of Man

The social effects of the Industrial Revolution markedly transformed the lives and actions of individuals in Europe, especially by the mid-nineteenth century. For example, the emergence of the concept of "factors of production" (land, labor, and capital) had revolutionary implications for the Western image of humankind. Humans (the labor component) were no longer a part of the organic whole of society; rather, the person, the laborer, became an objectified and standardized component of the production process. The tendency to see people as mere units in the production process, bought in an impersonal market place and forced to submit to the dictates of the factory in order to survive, was reinforced by the post-mercantilist socioeconomic ideology of laissez-faire, which discouraged government intervention in economic activities. The image inherent in this setting could reasonably be described as "economic man": rationalistic (able to calculate what was in his own self-interest), mechanistic (a factor of production), individualistic (with great responsibility to take care of himself), and materialistic (with economic forces acting as primary if not exclusive reward and control mechanisms).

In addition to the changes in economic structure that laid the groundwork for a market economy and factory-dominated society, we also can identify some of the basic value premises that emerged during that period of the Renaissance. This is important since many elements of the dominant images of mankind currently held by our society have their origins in the Renaissance and its aftermath, and can be inferred from the value premises of that era. These value premises are discussed briefly below:

Rationalism — Reason was elevated to a pinnacle in the eighteenth century Age of Enlightenment: "Reason would discover the natural laws regulating existence, thereby insuring the progress of the human race." A number of threads formed the intellectual fabric of rationalism. First, there was the rejection of revelation as a source of truth. Truth was no longer something that was found through a religious intermediary and divine revelation; rather, truth was discoverable through empirical observation of the world. Second, there developed an invidious distinction between reason and emotion. The rational mode of perception became dominant since that was the mode most useful in dealing with a physical world. "The way was paved for the increasing preoccupation in modern times with phenomena that were susceptible to mathematical and mechanical treatment, and for the increasing suppression of non-mechanical and so-called 'irrational experience'."¹² This suppression of the non-mechanical went hand-in-hand with the industrializing process, for that which could be calculated and measured had practical utility in the industrial world and what was irrational did not.

Mysteries of the cosmos have seemingly been displaced by an incomprehensible urban existence.

Individualism — In earlier societies, humans perceived themselves as inseparable components of the seamless web of being which extended throughout their natural social environments.¹³ For example:

To the Greek, the city-state was not merely a legal structure; it was a way of life. Every aspect of daily existence was intimately connected with it. The individual derived his importance from his relation to the state; he was viewed as a citizen who depends on the state and who can contribute to its welfare. But it is the state that is omnipotent.¹⁴

Man also had a collectivist image of himself during the Middle Ages: "Each citizen, serf or priest or knight, knew his place in the hierarchy of church and feudalism; and all emotions were channeled in community and religious ceremonies."¹⁵ With the Renaissance and Reformation came a new belief in the power and dignity of the individual. There arose a new confidence that a person could overcome problems and forge a life by his own efforts and by following the promptings of his own conscience.

Secular Progress — As the emphasis shifted from collectivism to individualism, so the focus of attention shifted to life on earth and attainments in the here and now, rather than rewards in life hereafter. Man saw his future in an optimistic perspective. No longer was happiness something to be gained in an afterlife — happiness could be found in this life. This optimism was grounded in a faith that the future would prove to be congenial or at least neutral to the strivings of the individual.¹⁶ This corresponded with a faith in the power of science.

Natural Law — There developed a belief in a pre-established harmony in the universe, a natural law of existence. In its economic form, this was the belief that if every man pursued his own self-interest for material gain, then the well-being of society as a whole would be enhanced.

Man as Master — Man came to think of himself as uniquely apart from nature so that it was his destiny to master the natural environment. The roots of this concept of man's relationship to his environment can be traced, in part, to Judeo-Christian traditions. "Especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen. Christianity . . . not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends."¹⁷ With the industrial period came the convergence of operational images of man and technological means whereby man could master his environment.

Materialism — In this period, the satisfaction of the individual's material wants became not only a necessary activity but a desirable one as well. Where, in the past, the acquisition of wealth had been disdainfully regarded, at least

theoretically, it now was strongly favored. Calvinism, as it came to be applied, suggested that one's life here on earth might hint at one's ultimate destination in the afterlife — to be "called" to one's work and be diligent in worldly endeavors while maintaining a spirit of rectitude was outward evidence of dedication to a religious life. Thus, "the energetic merchant was, in Calvinist eyes, a Godly man, not an ungodly one; and from this identification of work with worth, it was not long before the notion grew-up that the more successful a man, the more worthy he was."¹⁸ One must not over-emphasize the role of the "Protestant Ethic" in the industrializing process, yet "it is striking that without exception it was the Protestant countries with their 'Puritan streak' of work and thrift which forged ahead in the economic race."¹⁹

The compatibility among these value premises is striking and it is suggestive of the extent to which these premises collectively formed an image of man as possessor of a tremendous dynamism for altering the conditions of human existence. This is well summarized by Woodruff who examines the impact of European ideas upon the world and concludes:

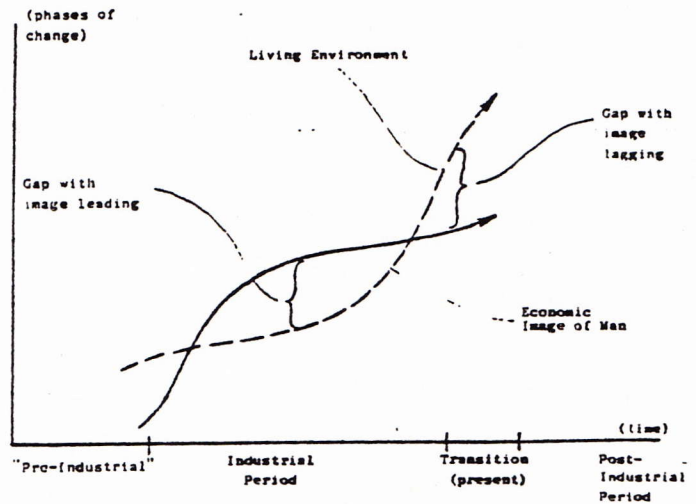
No civilization prior to the European had occasion to believe in the systematic material progress of the whole human race; no civilization placed such stress upon the quantity rather than the quality of life; no civilization drove itself so relentlessly to an ever-receding goal; no civilization was so passion-charged to replace what is with what could be; no civilization had striven as the West has done to direct the world according to its will; no civilization has known so few moments of peace and tranquility.²⁰

Although these value premises did not specify the exact form of society that would evolve, they did articulate the ground rules, so to speak, from which it would emerge. And in this function they formed a resilient, potent, and enduring base for the advent of the modern industrial era. But as the industrial system gives way to its socioeconomic successor, so should the images of humankind, the values, and the conceptual milieu yield to the offspring they have helped create.


The Image of Economic Man in the Contemporary Setting

We seem to have reached that point in American history where our dominant image of economic man no longer fits the physical reality. Until recently, the basic value premises of individualism, secular progress, materialism, and so on, have been commonplace in American society and gave support to societal change in the form of the industrial system. Further, these image components, growing out of the Renaissance, were sufficiently embracing in their interpretation and flexible in their adaptation to encompass a wide range of societal changes without themselves fundamentally changing — for example, theoretical notions of the essential equality of all humankind, which have only very recently, and still not fully, been incorporated into society as a practical reality. But in the process of historical evolution, merely a slight difference in rates of change can eventually create a significant disparity between images and societal experience. This "lead-lag" phenomenon — shown in its general version earlier as Figure 1 and related specifically to the economic image of man in Figure 7 — takes on added significance when applied to the particular historical period since the Industrial Revolution.

Figure 7
Hypothesized Interaction Between
the Economic Man and Society



In Figure 7, a portrayal of this period, the economic image is at first anticipatory; in other words, it is operating as a set of "ground rules" providing direction to societal change as industrialism emerges. The gentle slope of image change in the later portions of the industrial period suggests that the economic image continues to change, but in a slow evolutionary way as it is articulated to a greater degree through interaction with the changing living environment. Also during this stage, the living environment is gradually, and then with increasing momentum, being altered so as to conform with the rationale of the anticipatory, economic image of man. Then follows a "short" period of relative congruence or match between this image and the living environment. The period of congruence does not last for long since the economic image of man, which has become firmly embedded in the whole societal framework, provides a base for further changes in the living environment. Among these changes are increasing urbanization, increasing material abundance, growing energy utilization, and expanding



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transportation and communication networks. Changes in this living environment then proceed rapidly in accord with an internal dynamic that can "overshoot" the image base from which the initial momentum derived. In this later phase, the economic image of man must increasingly adapt itself to the realities of the altered living environment if it is to be a supportive image. However, such change in the underlying image of man is difficult to secure since the image is so basic to the society's "world view" that it changes only very slowly and with great effort; thus, the image increasingly lags behind societal changes and a gap or mismatch grows. When this mismatch between the image and the realities of the environment becomes too great, there is societal disruption — arising from a severe loss of meaning, purpose and direction. This, in turn, sets the stage for basic readjustment between the image of humankind and the societal context.

The Poverty of Our Abundance

There are two useful ways of assessing whether the foregoing analysis is relevant to changing images in our era. First, we can note that the economic image was born at a time when scarcity and abject poverty were facts of life. The question emerges, are they still such dominant facts of life that the image retains appropriateness for organizing our collective and individual behavior? Second, we can note can note the operational value premises that are inferred from the way in which people behave rather than what they say. These premises, in turn, can be related to the present societal environment and their continued appropriateness for organizing and directing our behavior can be evaluated. These points are discussed below.

John Maynard Keynes anticipated the profound disorientation and loss of meaning that might occur when a society achieved a condition of relative affluence but continued to deal with it as if there were continuing scarcity.

The economic problem, the struggle for subsistence, always has been hitherto the primary, most pressing problem of the human race. . . Thus we have been expressly evolved by nature — with all our impulses and deepest instinct — for the purpose of solving the economic problem. If the economic problem is solved, mankind will be deprived of its traditional purpose. Thus for the first time since his creation man will be faced with his real, his permanent problem — how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares. . . There is no country and no people, I think, who can look forward to the age of leisure and of abundance without a dread. For we have been trained too long to strive and not to enjoy.²¹

That we are rapidly approaching this point in America is dramatically illustrated by data which show changes in poverty levels and median family income levels over the last 40 years. There has been a veritable revolution in affluence — both in magnitude and in the rapidity with which it was acquired. In roughly the space of half a lifetime, from 1929 to 1969, the proportion of the total U.S. Population in poverty fell from 60 percent to 12 percent. Median family incomes rose, in 1969 dollars, from \$2,100 (estimated) in 1939 to \$9,433 in 1969 and will rise to an estimated \$22,000 by the year 2000.²² There can be no doubt that this unprecedented material wealth, acquired so rapidly, represents a quantum departure from past conditions. From this evidence alone, it is clear that one could expect a disjunction between the functional role of our traditional images of humankind and the new material

reality they confront. In the words of the social psychologist, Kenneth Keniston:

With the age-old goal of universal prosperity within sight, we must question whether the methods — technological values and virtues, the instrumental goals of our affluent society — that help us approach this goal of our affluent society — will serve to take us beyond it.²³

Obviously, the foregoing data and comments should not be interpreted as a suggestion that there are no longer serious problems of poverty in our society. This cannot be the case when 12 percent of the U.S. population in poverty translates as 25 million people. What can be questioned is whether a continuation of scarcity notions will help people get out of poverty. In many respects, the societal reforms necessary to cope with poverty (e.g., redistribution of income) have much in common with the reforms necessary to cope with the problems of affluence. Therefore, these are more complementary than competing concerns.

For those who now exist in relative affluence, scarcity premises may still seem appropriate for psychological rather than material reasons. The nature of this perennial scarcity is discussed by Easterlin in his article, "Does Money Buy Happiness?":

Each person acts on the assumption that more money will bring more happiness; and, indeed, if he does get more money, and others do not (or get less), his happiness increases. But when everyone acts on this assumption and incomes generally increase, no one, on the average, feels better off. Yet each person goes on, generation after generation, unaware of the self-defeating process in which he is caught up.²⁴

Thus, the purchase of happiness is an illusory phenomenon, "a distant, urgently sought, but never attained goal."²⁵

Despite the contemporary success in creating scarcity which is increasingly psychological, there are reasons to believe that "manufactured want" will not long endure in our society. First, we are destined to run, sooner or later, against the limits of world resources. For example, we are seeing these limits reached in food and energy shortages. Second, our material abundance seems to have been accompanied by a disturbing spiritual, personal, and social poverty. Etzioni suggests that the hedonistic thrust of the more recent period of industrialism arises when "old patterns of meanings erode without being replaced by a new set."²⁶ Thus, we have found only ephemeral and transient meaning through our consumption behavior. However, human needs are hierarchically ordered such that higher needs emerge when lower needs are satisfied.²⁷ This implies that as we become relatively satiated materially, other needs will arise — friendship, love, self-actualization, community with others — to assume a place of primary importance in people's lives. In turn, this suggests that profound disorientation may occur when our underlying image of economic man continues to exhort us to behave and find meaning in a way of life that is inimical to the fulfillment of these newly emergent needs.

The Present Mismatch Between Premises and Societal Realities

There are a number of inferable value premises that characterize the workings of our society. They may never have been declared as guiding premises, but the behaviors and policies during the industrial period suggest that they, or

This emerging image reinstates the transcendental, spiritual side of man. It denies none of the conclusions of science in its contemporary form, but rather expands its boundaries.

their close relatives, must have been at work. On the next page we list a number of such premises which seem possibly obsolescent. Since these are too many to discuss in any detail, seven that have particular relevance to the image of economic man are discussed below.

Premise One: that *progress is synonymous with growth of GNP* and that growth is inherently good. It is now well accepted that gross measures of growth such as GNP do not tell us a great deal about our society's welfare. For example, the level of pollution is correlated with the level of GNP: the question arises, what is growing — pollution or social well-being? Given the destructive as well as benevolent potential of our powerful economy, we can no longer afford blindly to accept the premise that "bigger is better" and "growth is good." The momentum of such an ideology may be suicidal.

When we combine our growth ethic with a passion for hard, numerical evidence of growth, we find that we tend to maximize most what we can measure best: the GNP, the rate of employment, years of education received, the number of cars produced, and so on. While these indices of success are useful, they tend to relegate more subjective measures of success (aesthetic maturity, capacity for love, environmental quality etc.) to an inferior status. Further, "hard" measures of growth such as GNP give a false sense of security, as long as they are going up, because they side-step the crucial question: abundance for what?

Premise Two: that there is a natural law of beneficial *self-interest* which assures us that when persons act in their own competitive, material self-interest, the public good is well served. In its economic form, this belief in a harmony between individual self-interest and the welfare of society as a whole was the essence of the *laissez-faire* concept.

There are several problems with this premise. A different description of this "natural" law is that: if we set up a social framework in which men are encouraged to be generous, most of them will rise to the occasion; set up one which encourages them to be selfish, and most will sink to that level. Thus, the assumption that man is motivated only by immediate self-interest may well be another of the self-fulfilling hypotheses of society. Having helped create a world in which human relationships are increasingly forced into the marketplace, we find superb confirmation of the initial dogma, that man is governed by marketplace motives. The incompatibility of this motivation with human actualization is summarized by Melvin Tumin:

... one may fairly say that what business stands for, ideologically insists upon and tries to get adopted as general principles of conduct, runs directly against and reduces the chances of evoking affection and love as principles of relationship . . . in promoting themes quite inimical to identification, affection, and significant membership, business thereby and to that extent tends to bring out, standardize, and reward the most unsocial impulses in man.²⁸

Not only does this diminished conception of man exist in the

realm of business practice, it is supported by economic theory which has "still an unmistakable aura of eighteenth-century pleasure-pain psychology. . ."²⁹

Premise Three: that *mankind is separate from nature* and it is his obligation to conquer nature. Man, who was so long subservient to nature, now finds himself in an increasingly powerful role as the creator of his own environmental context. However, given the highly interdependent links in the ecological chain, our capacity for manipulation of the environment must give way to an enlarged sense of symbiotic responsibility.

Premise Four: that the *technological imperative*, the increasing ability and hence requirement to shape and control the environment, including people, is an unqualified good. This is related to the utilitarian bias in the search for knowledge, so that only that knowledge is pursued which promises manipulative technologies. The "technological imperative" — that any technology which is possible is, ipso facto, necessary and desirable to apply — is now conflicting on occasion with what may become "social imperatives." For example, because the SST was possible it was presented to the American public as necessary and desirable. The public, however, decided that it was neither, and after an extended national furor, the project had to be abandoned. We are beginning to weigh the social, psychological, and environmental costs against the worth of such products of technology.

Premise Five: that we are first and foremost *rational beings* and feeling should be subordinated as an inferior aspect of our nature. This is an understandable premise in that it supported development of the cognitive skills needed in the industrializing process. However, this empirical view relegates the speculative world of art, music, poetry, and religion to a position of lesser reality. How then are we to give meaning to life in an affluent society if "higher" pursuits of man must be subordinated as "lower" in order to produce that affluence? We must realize the dehumanizing influence in the suppression of man's non-rational potentials.

Premise Six: that *individual identity* and success in life is to be measured by material possessions acquired and/occupational status achieved. The biblical injunction against this kind of thinking is to inquire what it profits a person to gain the world but to lose his soul. However, one's soul has become redundant in a world secularized by affluence: "the most effective way to establish (identity) distinctions is through styles of consumption."³⁰ *Fortune* magazine recently reported that in the consumer market of the 1970's there is

an increasing insistence by the customers on using consumption to express themselves, to help in fashioning their own identities . . . For increasing numbers of Americans, the clothes they wear are not simply material objects; on the contrary, they are viewed . . . as the most basic expression of life style, indeed identity itself.³¹ indeed indentity itself.³¹

Premise Seven: that there is *freedom in affluence*. We have

Table 3
POSSIBLY OBSOLESCENT PREMISES
THAT TYPIFY THE RECENT INDUSTRIAL ERA

- That *individual identity* is to be equated with material possessions acquired and/or occupational status achieved.
- That *mankind is separate from nature*, and hence it is our destiny to *master nature*.
- That *people are essentially separate*, so that little intrinsic responsibility is felt for the effect of present actions on remote individuals or future generations.
- That *progress is synonymous with growth of GNP*, that quality of life is furthered by a system of economics based on ever-increasing consumption.
- That there is *freedom in affluence*, that it is possible for people to earn "enough" money, and simultaneously have full freedom of choice.
- That both societal growth and protection of one's own interests are best served by *competitive aggressive behaviors*.
- That the individual should be free to make his own choice of "the good," and that the choices he makes in pursuit of *self-interest* will somehow add up to *desirable overall societal choices*.
- The "*technological imperative*" that any technology that can be developed, and any knowledge that can be applied, should be.
- That *economic efficiency* should be pursued indefinitely through the organization and division of labor and the replacement of humans by machines.
- That the search for knowledge is appropriately dominated by *utilitarian values* — science supported to the extent that it promises new manipulative technologies.
- That *man is rational* and that reductionism in positivistic scientific thinking is the approach to knowledge most to be trusted.
- That the aggregate knowledge of *specialized experts* constitutes wisdom.
- That the future of the planet can safely be left to autonomous *nation-states*, operating essentially independently.
- The "political premise" that "what ought to be" is not a meaningful concept because it is not achievable.

traditionally assumed that if people can simultaneously earn "enough" money and be given "freedom" of choice, they can take care of themselves. The fallacy of this view lies in believing there is no conflict between earning the money and the freedom of choice that is then available. The very act of earning "enough" money constrains the number of social, psychological, political, and physical choices that one can make. Margaret Mead has pointed out that to introduce cloth garments (effectively) into a grass or bark-clad population, one must simultaneously introduce closets, soap, sewing, and furniture. Cloth is a part of a complex cultural pattern that includes storing, cleaning, mending, and protecting.³² Imagine, then, the cultural constraints implicit in our society which is so laden with goods and services. Thus, the real philosophy underlying "freedom in affluence" is that once you have enough money to be free from want, than all further income gives you the freedom to want — as long as you want more material goods and services. This premise runs afoul if wants arise that cannot be largely satisfied by material means.

Thus the industrial state at this point has immense drive but no direction, marvelous capacity to get there but no idea of where it is going. Somehow the breakdown of the old images has seemed to lead more to despair than to search for new images.

Despite the pessimism implied by a lagging dominant image, there are numerous indications that a new, anticipatory image of humankind may be emerging:

- Youth involvement in political processes
- Women's liberation movement; black consciousness; etc.
- Youth "rebellion" against societal wrongs (e.g., protest against Viet Nam)
- Emerging interest in the social responsibility of business
- The "generation gap" implying a changing paradigm
- An anti-technological bias of many young people

- Experimentation with new family structures and interpersonal relationships
- The emergence of communes as alternative life styles
- The conservation/ecology movement
- A surge of interest in Eastern religious and philosophical perspectives
- A renewed interest in "fundamentalist" Christianity
- Labor union concerns with the quality of the work environment
- An increasing interest in meditation and other spiritual disciplines
- The increasing importance of "self-realization" processes.

These disparate trends do not, when taken individually, signify the emergence of a new image of the human being; yet when they are considered collectively, they suggest substantial societal stirrings which may eventually emerge into a new and guiding image. The still vague outlines of this image seem to include an emphasis on cooperation over competition, ecological interdependence over exploitation, psychological-spiritual growth over material acquisition, and an integration of intuitive knowledge processes with the more rational modes. Since such a new image is in contrast to the familiar economic image, its manifestations would likely be seen as threatening to the larger culture. Therefore, signs of a healthy process underway can be equally interpreted as the impending disintegration of our society — such is the profound nature of transition from one dominant image to another.

To summarize: The interrelationship between the power of the industrial state, the control of the industrial dynamic and the lead-lag relationship of images can be woven into two distinct societal fabrics which could plausibly emerge out of the present. Stripped of all refinement, the skeletal outlines of two responses to the current image-society mismatch might be:

(1) A "technological extrapolationist" response — This hypothesized response assumes that: (a) the industrial dynamic would be sustained, (b) it would continue to be relatively "uncontrolled," and (c) the economic image of man would continue to lag and be forced to make adaptive changes in accordance with the dictates of the evolving industrial dynamic.

(2) An "evolutionary transformationalist" response — This hypothesized response assumes that: (a) the industrial dynamic is either self-limiting or else will be limited by society, (b) we will regain control (a greater degree of societal direction in response to the will of the people) over our societal system and subsystems, and (c) a new humanistic image of man will emerge which will guide us into a post-industrial era.

Despite the seeming clarity of these two responses, we are still faced with a dilemma. To the extent that modern man and his images are being shaped by the urban-industrial environment, it would seem fruitless to try to change the image without changing the environment which demands a certain pattern of behavior from man. On the other hand, it would seem equally fruitless to try to change the powerful dynamic of industrialism without the help of a potent image of humankind to guide us toward a different societal trajectory. One alternative is to attempt to do both. The other alternative is to accept — and some would suggest suffer — the conse-

quences of the working out of the logical extensions of the industrial state paradigm.

The material abundance associated with the industrial era has not been acquired without tremendous costs. Accompanying Industrialism was an erosion of Western man's belief in a cosmological order:

Contemporary man no longer "naturally" sees himself as a useful and necessary member of a social whole geared into a meaningful plan of existence within the totality of a cosmic or divine order.³³

If a meaningful existence is predicated, in part, upon the existence of, and congruence between, the human being's relationships to self, society and universe, then the industrial period has been very costly as it has left us alienated, to varying degrees, from these sources of meaning. Mysteries of the cosmos have seemingly been displaced by an incomprehensible urban existence. Social pressures have created an "other-directed" mentality such that many are alienated even from themselves. This would suggest that the next phase of our societal evolution should be the reintegration of man with his sources of meaning — to find the deep roots of significance among the ephemeral artifacts of our society. The continued extension of the industrial state seems poorly suited to this task. We must now look beyond the technological and material frontier to a new American frontier which is essentially that of man searching for himself. ■

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Changing Images of Man — Part II

O. W. Markley

We have seen how the predominant image of humankind in a society is a powerful shaping force on the social environment and how the social environment, in turn, influences the society's image. We have also seen how the dominant images that guided this society through an age of incredible success are now being challenged, because of our inability to deal adequately either with the problems created by the success or the problems attendant to past and emerging social and scientific developments.

Now questions of tremendous import arise. Could an image of humankind emerge that might shape the future, as the currently dominant images — man as the master of nature, inhabitant of a material world, and consumer of goods — our legacy of the past, have shaped our present culture? Could such a new image provide the bridge to carry us safely over to a post-industrial era? If so, what characteristics should the emergent image entail, such that it would be *both* feasible and adequate for the satisfactory resolution of the serious problems currently facing the society?

From the nature of contemporary societal problems, studies of plausible alternative futures, and our earlier considerations of the role played by a society's dominant image, we can postulate a provisional list of characteristics that a new image must possess if it is to become dominant and effective. At the minimum we believe it would need to: (1) provide a holistic sense of perspective on life, (2) entail an ecological ethic, (3) entail a self-realization ethic, (4) be multi-leveled, multi-faceted, and integrative, (5) lead to a balancing and coordinating of satisfactions along many dimensions, and (6) be experimental and open-ended.

A Holistic Sense of Perspective

A holistic perspective and understanding of life seems absolutely vital if we are to overcome the fragmentation and alienation that have become so common in the latter part of the industrial era. If in the absence of the myths and rituals of prescientific societies we are to regain a sense of meaningful purpose and integration — at the level of self, of society, and

We are being irrevocably shaped by our unprecedented urban-industrial environment which is premised upon images of humankind whose historical origins are far removed from contemporary reality.

of the universe — a generally acceptable sense of perspective or understanding must emerge in our society of "what it is all about." Just as an adequate new image should serve to reintegrate the specialized images that at present contend with each other, so too should it lead to a satisfactory sense of perspective and derivative methods for experiencing and participating in construction and discovery processes through which that perspective is maintained. Only then will the needs of continued evolution and the important function once served by myth and ritual again be fulfilled.

Ecological Ethic

An ecological ethic is necessary if man is to avoid destroying the complex life support system on which our continued existence on the planet depends. It must recognize that available resources, including space, are limited and must portray the human as an integral part of the natural world. It must reflect the "new scarcity" in an ethic of fragility, of doing more with less. It must involve not only a sense of mutual self-interest between individuals, but also the interests of fellow men and the more extensive interests among fellow creatures (both near and far, both present and future). An ecological ethic would imply movement toward a homeostatic (yet dynamic) economic and ecological system, in which the human acts in partnership with nature to harmonize ecological relationships and in establishing satisfactory recycling

O.W. Markley was the Project Director for the *Changing Images of Man* report by the Stanford Research Institute. Other contributions were Joseph Campbell, Dwayne Elgin, Willis Harman, Arthur Hastings, Floyd Matson, Brendan O'Reagan, and Leslie Schneider.

Given the apparent momentum of the industrial dynamic, it is difficult to know whether we could turn back even if it seemed we had gone too far.

mechanisms. Such an ethic is necessary to achieve a synergism of heterogeneous individual and organizational micro-decisions such that the resultant macro-decisions are satisfactory to those who made the component decisions, and to society. (The alternative way of arriving at satisfactory macro-decisions involves behavior controls that would deprive the individual of freedoms, as well as being in conflict with the next characteristic.)

An ecological ethic should incorporate concerns that are broader than those of the physical/biological ecosphere, however. It should also lead to concern for the processes of coordinated and balanced need-satisfaction and well-being among cultures (cultural ecology), among various institutions and types of activities such as the arts, the humanities, the sciences, politics and so forth (institutional ecology), and among various aspects of the self (intra- and trans-psychic ecology).

Self-Realization Ethic

The desirability of this characteristic of the new image is based on the view that the proper end of all individual experience is the evolutionary and harmonious development of the emergent self (both as a person and as a part of wide collectivities), and that the appropriate function of social institutions is to create an environment which will foster that process. This is the ethic which must supercede the man-over-nature ethic and the material-growth-and-consumption ethic which have given rise to a large portion of man's problems as he became increasingly preoccupied with solely material aspects of exploiting and controlling nature for selfish ends on a fragile and finite planet where the pursuit of such goals can be suicidal.

This self-realization would relieve the current hostility toward industrial and bureaucratic practices which tend to diminish man and the anxiety that we have somehow lost a sense of direction in the control and management of our human affairs — of what our ancestors would have called our destiny. The wide acceptance of a new ethic is required if we are to restructure our social institutions to satisfy the individual's basic need for full and valued participation in the society. As corollaries to this ethic, self-determination of individuals and minority groups would be fostered, diversity of choices would be honored, social decision-making would become largely decentralized, and the mechanism of creative voluntarism would be preferred over public bureaucracy for the accomplishment of most social tasks.

Properly understood, these two ethics, the one emphasizing the total community of life-in-nature and the oneness of the human race, and the other placing the highest value on development of selfhood, are not contradictory but complementary. Both are necessary to synthesize and coordinate mutualistic and hierarchical approaches in a symbiotic manner. The ecological ethic corrects for a selfish distortion of the self-realization ethic, and the latter corrects for an excessively collectivist version of the ecological ethic. Together, the two ethics leave room for cooperation and for

wholesome competition, for sociality and for individuality. But if the two ethics are to harmonize, the term "self" must be understood in broad terms, incorporating the diverse roles and aspects of existence of the human being. To quote three modern theorists,

It is by now widely accepted that the history of evolution may be regarded as the development of ever more complex organizations of living matter: molecules, proteins, cells, groups of cells, animals.¹

— Ralph Metzner

Consciousness, rather than being the product of a particular neural circuit . . . is the *organization* of the bio-system; that is, awareness is the "complementary" aspect of that organization — its psychological equivalent.²

— Arthur Deikman

Consciousness can be defined as a phenomenon which is synonymous with the structure of an organism.³

— W. Wolf

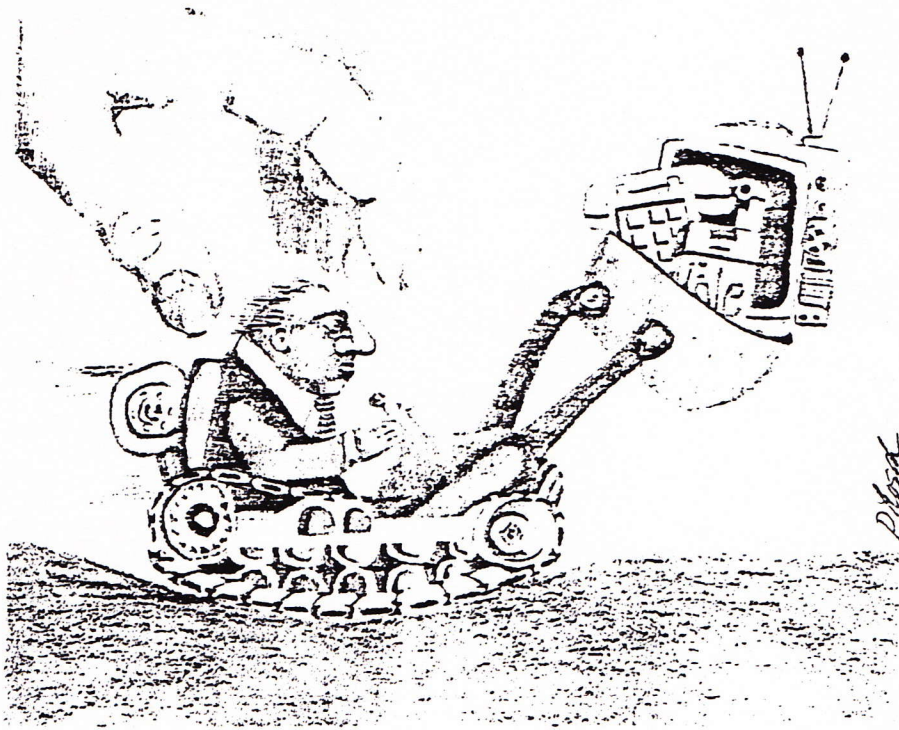
Thus, corresponding to the generally increasing complexity and differentiation of evolving biological systems, there has been a concomitant increase in *consciousness* which reflects that evolving state. Our sense of self must incorporate this vision if we are responsibly to accept the challenges that our era presents.

Just as the different systems within the body (cells, organs, and so forth) are interrelated, so too are the different systems within the body-politic (persons, institutions, and so forth), and this interrelatedness of necessity increases as our civilization becomes more tightly coupled and complex. It represents a higher degree of organization of the bio-system. If we try to "love our neighbor as ourself," not because it is what we have been taught is proper but because we hold the underlying image and perception that our neighbor *is* in a real sense ourself, then it might indeed become more feasible to arrive at meaningful social goals that can be satisfied within ecological constraints. Thus the new image of humankind should incorporate transpersonal as well as individualistic aspects of existence.

Multi-dimensional, Multi-faceted, and Integrative

We earlier noted how the images of humankind have over the past several hundred years become increasingly fragmented as specialization and reductionism have come to be emphasized in mature industrialized societies. If this trend is not reversed it is likely to lead, not only to continuing fragmentation of personality and culture, but also to ideological conflict as social policies based on old images compete for dominance. (For example, witness the current debate over the image of the human as portrayed in Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* and operant conditioning in the schools.)

At this point in history, ideological conflict is too costly —



Paul Hirsch

our weapons are too strong and our institutional environment too fragile. If a new image is to contribute to resolution of the planet's woes, it must provide for an integrative reconciliation of the apparent dichotomies between opposing images (as quantum theory reconciled wave and particle images in physics). The new image must also be integrative in the sense that it builds on past successful images. Seldom if ever have historical infusions of new images from external sources been of a nonviolent nature, whether the new image was imposed by physical power or brought in by a charismatic messiah who was persuasive to some but not to others. For the new image to foster a smooth transition to a benign post-industrial and eventually planetary society, it has to be absorbed into the lives of people and the institutions of society without the disruptions that accompany most revolutions. This can only happen if the new image and its implications are seen as an integration, reinterpretation or improvement of the old.

Any image of man that has guided a stable society, whether that society be sophisticated or primitive, ancient or modern, Eastern or Western, agricultural or hunting or industrial, must be assumed to be rooted in the human experience of its time and place and in that sense valid. That image of humankind which can lead toward a pluralistic yet symbiotic world of greater fulfillment cannot be in direct opposition to any of these more restricted images. In the specific case of late twentieth-century America, the new image must somehow be made compatible with the basic symbols and images of the American democratic experiment, and with the individualism of the frontier and the energetic activism of American enterprise.

But just as the new image should be integrative, so too should it entail a high degree of differentiation, not blurring the distinctiveness, focus, and validity of various specialized images in efforts at integration. It therefore must be adequately multi-faceted, and, in keeping with the sense of

evolution, coordinate those differences at a higher level of complexity and coherence.

To perform this task of differentiated integration, the new image will likely have to be multi-dimensional. In keeping with the lessons learned from ecology and general systems theory, any new image will have to order the various aspects of our existence at the physical, organic, social, psychical, and spiritual levels. As Polanyi⁴ and Weiss⁵ have pointed out, these levels form a hierarchy; the functioning of systems at each level relies on the elemental laws of the lower level; but the principle of the operations of a higher level can never be derived from the laws governing the lower — the lower level system received its meaning from the higher system, which integrates the particulars of the lower into a new emerging gestalt. Such a multi-leveled image of humankind could thereby help both to integrate the contributions from various disciplines of science, and to contain meaning for and serve the needs of individuals and groups at varying degrees of maturity and modernity, just as relativistic physics includes Newtonian mechanics and commonsense observations as special cases of restricted validity.

Thus, if the requirements of various cultures, belief systems, and personality types are to be served, if cultural unity with diversity is to be fostered and the evolution of consciousness to be furthered, the new image must portray a general direction of growth in which various conceptual emphases are reconciled but retained. For example, the emphasis of: individuality and community; the way of the yogi (inwardly directed change) and the way of the commissar (outwardly directed change); freedom and determinism; nature and nurture; male and female; sensory and extrasensory; and salvation or progress through efforts by self and society and through divine intervention. The meaning of divinity must somehow come to incorporate both the images of person as separate from God, and of person and God as different levels of the same reality. In all such cases the various

partial images appear as *complementary* truths, neither denying the other, thus reflecting the views of such diverse groups as children and adults, lettered and unlettered, abstract and concrete minds.

Both of the dominant conceptual images basic to Western democracy (an agnostic survival of the fittest and a trust-worthy invisible hand) are in need of revitalization if self-interested individual micro-decisions are in fact to combine into satisfactory macro-decisions in today's complex, interconnected society. Thus, if the operative principles based on a view of the human as possessing free will and a valid sense of values are to remain viable, the new image must accommodate the concept and experience of the transcendental, the expansion of consciousness, in personal and cultural evolution.

Balancing and Coordinating Satisfactions Along Many Dimensions

The maximizing of concerns along one narrowly defined dimension would not allow the other criteria listed above to be met in a way that contributes to an increased quality of life. The related ideas of balance and coordination stem from ecology and general systems theory (as well as from various cultures' notions about wisdom), and provides a needed corrective to the one-sided life style of achieving an increased standard of living that has accompanied the growth of the value-empty economics and science in our industrial society.

Such a new image of man might be supportive of a philosophy (and indeed, a public strategy) of "well-being" — a term that Weisskopf uses to replace the term "welfare" and the older terms "happiness" and "utility," which have come to have predominantly economic connotations. Such a philosophy, would have to acknowledge that:

... a person, a family, a group or a nation can have too much wealth and income and may suffer from too much change, economic growth and production. It may consider that the way in which wealth is produced, distributed and consumed can, in itself, lead to a destructive way of life.⁶

Just as the complexities of ecology fare badly from single-valued approaches of such physical technologies as DDT, so too do the complex needs of the human system from treatments such as typify exclusively allopathic (drug-based) medicine, or a minimum wage law. The hierarchical structure of human needs requires coordinated "satisficing" if the overall goal of well-being is to be served. (The term "satisfice" was coined by Herbert Simon, 1957.⁷ It stems from our recognition that the trade-offs in real life are such that true "satisfactions" are not usually possible — hence we suffice as best we can, arriving at decisions that do not properly satisfy but may indeed "satisfice.")

In addition to these somewhat idealized objectives, however, the new image should point toward a transformed state of industrialized society that will seem achievable and preferable to the present state, yet have functional utility in the present. A positive guiding image is a crucial determinant in the fate of a people. In individual psychotherapy⁸ and in societal revitalization⁹, the expectation of success in confronting and dealing with crises is often a far more important variable than the specific methods or approaches used. For example, the American response to World War II seems to prove that our society is capable of extraordinary mobilization when it perceives itself to be in a crisis that it comprehends and expects to be able to deal with. But of course the

present situation is different from World War II; as Pogo said, "We have met the enemy and he is us." Rather than encouraging propagandistic efforts to mobilize society, a new image should lead to understandings of personal and social actions suitable for the highly interconnected and complex — but limited — environment that the symbol "spaceship earth" has come to signify. The image should have ethical implications that are immediately practical in application and should validate the sense that there is a way out of our current difficulties.

Experimental and Open-Ended

Self-consciously evolutionary rather than dogmatic and paradigm bound attitudes and images are necessary. It is unreasonable to expect the rate of change in society to diminish. If the society of the future is to avoid the image obsolescence and crisis that our present society faces, it will be necessary to anticipate — rather than just to react to — the necessity for such paradigm changes, and continuously to seek more adequate conceptions and images.

Thus the new image of humankind should incorporate the contributions of subjective processes as well as objective sciences. It should portray a vision of man-in-the-universe that is unrealized but appears realizable — incomplete in the sense of pointing to the greater mystery that each individual or culture must discover for itself, and thus encouraging exploration and self-development on the part of individuals, groups, and the entire human venture.

Indeed, this last requirement, that a new image be open ended and evolutionary, may be the key to the productive transition from an industrial past to a post-industrial future. For one of the strongest of current conflicts is that of *incremental versus revolutionary* change. Incremental change is typically seen as being inadequate to overcome the resistance of institutions which must somehow be fundamentally changed.

Revolution, on the other hand, might well cause so much social upheaval that the cure would be worse than the disease. We suggest that the resolution of this dilemma could be fostered by imagery which portrays the human and his culture as growing elements in an evolving cosmos. If personal and social evolution is seen as an *integral* part of human life, then perhaps much less impetus would be required to bring about needed change. One such image has been expressed in Dunn's phrase, "process teleology" in which human beings

... establish the process of human development as the goal of the process of social evolution. Both the process and the goal are understood to be open to further transformation as we advance with the practice and understanding of them.¹⁰

With such imagery it is conceivable that the incrementalist/revolutionary dilemma could be resolved by revolutionary changes at the conceptual level in the near term, but accompanied by incremental changes at the operational level, leading to thoroughgoing transformation of society only in the longer term.

Elements of a New Image

It would be impossible to cite all the contributions that influenced the envisioning of the composite image described below. However, the ways of thinking or imaging contained in the following works stand out as having had particular significance in this exploration:

The thrust of evolution seems to be toward greater 'consciousness.'

- General systems thinking (Laszlo, Bertalanffy)¹¹ but in particular the hierarchical relationships of ascending levels of "consciousness" (Polyani, Weiss)¹² and the process of "hierarchical restructuring" (Platt);¹³
- Various past theories and images (e.g., Judeo-Christian, Darwinian, Freudian, behaviorist) that somehow must be incorporated;
- The metaphor of the human biocomputer (Lilly)¹⁴
- The postulation of "state (of consciousness) specific" theories, needs, knowledge processes, and modes of explanation (Tart, Kantor, Maslow, Hubbard, Kohlberg)¹⁵
- The vision of continuing evolution of man — social (Dunn), cultural (Mead), spiritual (Chardin), and integrative (Aurobindo, Assagioli);¹⁶
- The "Perennial Philosophy" (Huxley and various occult writings (e.g., Ouspensky)¹⁷;
- The process of transformational discovery, as in the "Monomyth" (J. Campbell), "cultural revitalization" (Wallace), and in the work of Toynbee, Jung, and Eliot, as described in *The Experiment in Depth* (Martin).¹⁸

The Gradient

Figure 1 displays a number of theories about the nature of the human and their underlying images that we will attempt to show can be integrated into a more holistic image/theory of humankind. If this attempt proves successful, each composite part would come to be seen not as erroneous but rather as having its own validity (albeit a restricted one as seen from the perspective of the whole). First, it is useful to introduce the concept of gradient, and to see how it applies to the systemic properties of existence.

By "gradient" we mean, simply, "the grade or ascent . . . a series of transitional forms, states, or qualities connecting related extremes" (Webster's).

It is widely recognized that each succeeding level of biological and social evolution forms a hierarchical gradient of interacting levels of increasing complexity and order. The various scientific disciplines reflect this ordered series — from phylogenesis to ontogenesis to sociogenesis; from such disciplines as physics, chemistry, genetics, and physiology to ethology, psychology, sociology, and anthropology and to such newly emerging disciplines as systems theory and the policy sciences.

Some type of gradient should similarly be recognizable with regard to the higher aspects of human existence. In biological evolution, as each higher level system emerges, it brings with it the capacity to order chemical reactions in an increasingly coherent and purposive manner. Similarly with social and cultural evolution where, for example, ethical norms order or channel the energies associated with more primitive processes (such as anger) in keeping with higher needs, or where immediate gratification is postponed in order to obtain a greater gratification at some future time.

Three principles are enunciated in this approach: one, the dimensions of existence form a hierarchy of lower and higher levels or dimensions; two, the higher dimension, although resting on the foundations of the lower ones, cannot be understood in terms of the principles governing the lower ones; it receives its meaning from the higher dimension which integrates the particulars of the lower dimension into a new emerging Gestalt. Three, the highest level is the realm of the normative, of the moral sense, of the standards of value.¹⁹

An analogy to computer programming may be a helpful illustration at this point.

The Gradient in the Human Biocomputer. The real power and flexibility of the modern computer is found not in its hardware, but in its software — the gradient series of ever more general symbolic programs that make it feasible to use the computer for vastly different functions. The basic functioning of a computer for vastly different functions. The basic functioning of a computer requires one instruction for each operation that is carried out, and while programming at this machine language level is in principle very flexible, it requires too much time to prepare special purpose programs for different applications. Rather, it has been found useful to create a hierarchical series of macro programming languages, where a single instruction at one level generates a score or more detailed instructions at a more basic level.

The utility of the computer metaphor of human functioning is illustrated in Table 1 (a). At the lower (machine language) end of the human biocomputer are such processes as genetic inheritance, instinctual, endocrine, and autonomic processes; semantic and cultural determinism — all of which we have some degree of subconscious awareness of; and as the experience of yoga, hypnosis, and biofeedback training suggests, all of which we can to some extent reprogram. At a higher level, that of normal waking awareness, the executive function of the human biocomputer manifests awareness of the self (*cognito, ergo sum*); and as part of that self-aware-

Figure 1
Complementarity of Various Images as They Might Fit in a Proposed Composite Image of the Person

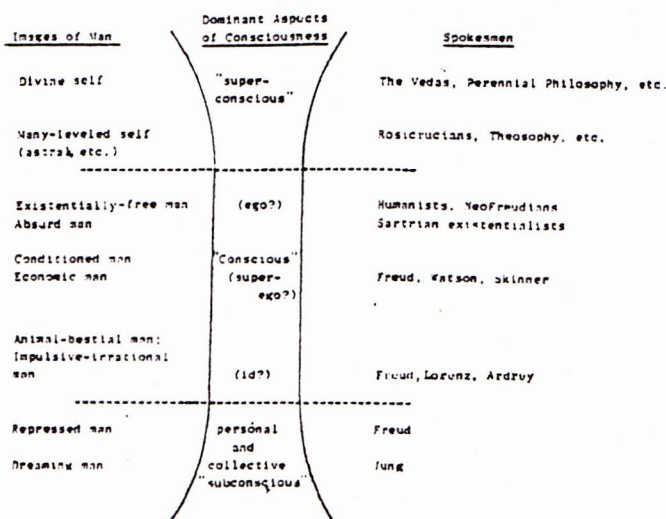


Table 1
Three Dimensions on a "Gradient of Awareness"

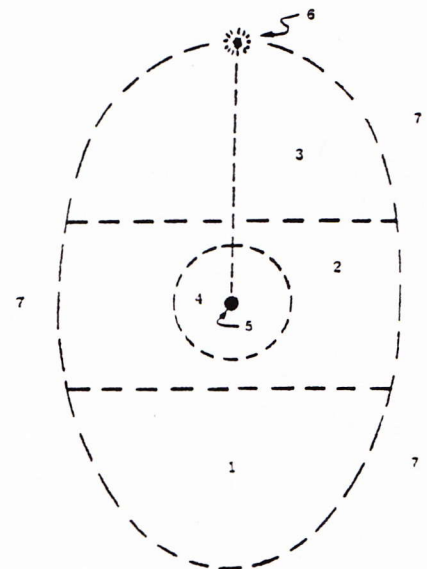
(a) Hierarchical Programs in the Human Biocomputer	(b) Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow)	(c) Hierarchy of Moral Orientations (Kohlberg)
Higher levels of awareness and functioning, metaprograms, transcendence of time and space, aesthetic and creative sense, supra-mental functioning astral levels, contact with spiritual entities, etc.	5. Self-actualization	6. Universal ethical principle
	4. Esteem	5. Social contact/shared understandings
Normal levels of waking awareness and ego functioning	3. Belongingness and love	4. Authoritarian law and order/doing duty
	2. Safety	3. Other-directed - conformist
	1. Physiological	2. Instrumental relativist
Subconscious awareness, id functioning, semantic and cultural determinism; psychosomatic process; genetic inheritance		1. Obedience and fear of punishment

ness, believes that it is constantly capable of choice and of re-programming itself, i.e., that it has freedom. Just how much freedom of choice exists at this level is somewhat problematical, however, for as Lilly has pointed out, there are still higher level metaprograms to which the human biocomputer is subject:²⁰

If such metaprograms (the basic beliefs; images of self, others, and the universe; influences from subconscious and superconscious aspects of self) determine the *criteria* for choice, then there is in fact very little true freedom of choice unless access to these levels can be obtained. We have only the most rudimentary maps for these aspects of the self, but they must be incorporated into any image of humankind adequate for the future. To the extent that a linear dimension of lower and higher is valid, however (and we will later discuss limitations of this approach), it would seem that it is the lower quasiconscious or unconscious aspects of man that are operative through the functioning of instinctual energies (Freud) and operant conditioning (Skinner); and conversely, the higher levels are those to which esoteric wisdom refers and from which the intuitive sources of creativity most likely stem. The Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli has formulated a map (reproduced here as Figure 2) that depicts these various domains of consciousness in a useful way.

The Gradient of Human Needs. Maslow described a gradient that parallels the above as being manifest by persons with different levels of need-fulfillment.²¹ He noted that persons who have adequately fulfilled their basic physical and emotional needs act from a very different type of motivation than do those who have not. Very simply stated, "deficiency needs" are those which, if not fulfilled, will eventually lead to illness or to death. Their non-fulfillment causes the deprived person to act at lower levels of functioning, as we have portrayed on Table 1 (b). Growth/being/wisdom needs, on the

Figure 2
Various Aspects of Consciousness/Function in the Personality



1. The Lower Unconscious
2. The Middle Unconscious
3. The Higher Unconscious or Superconscious
4. The Field of Consciousness
5. The Conscious Self or "I"
6. The Higher Self
7. The Collective Unconscious

The point is not that one should necessarily fight, cooperate, or meditate in any or in all circumstances, but rather that one should be able to do any of these things when they fit.

other hand, are the needs whose fulfillment provides a sense of meaning for existence, aesthetic or spiritual delight; non-fulfillment brings, not illness, but rather a sense of boredom or apathy (assuming that the deficiency needs are adequately met). It was Maslow's hypothesis that most people move sequentially through a "hierarchy of needs." Such movement likely occurs in two rather different modes. As Maslow emphasized, it can occur quite spontaneously — as one modal need type is adequately fulfilled, there is a natural tendency to grow and seek further. On the other hand, as noted by Clare Graves (another theorist who has developed the needs hierarchy theme), it can also occur to be stimulated in crises — as one modal behavior style becomes dysfunctional there is a tendency to seek another level of need fulfillment.

The Gradient of Human Morality. Still another similar gradient series, this time having to do with ascending degrees of moral thinking and acting, has been derived by Kohlberg²². In both cross-cultural and domestic studies, Kohlberg found that the dominant form of morality tends, over time, to follow a definite, hierarchical progression. This is true both of whole cultures and of the individual within the culture (until he reaches or surpasses the dominant form in his culture). Like the hierarchy of needs, these stages also form a gradient, as depicted in Table 1 (c).

Hampden-Turner has suggested that each of the dominant social sciences has a "hidden morality" that can be located in one of Kohlberg's categories, and that although most social sciences claim to eschew metaphysics, they make unverifiable moral assumptions that significantly affect their choice of methodology and criteria of validation.²³ Hampden-Turner concludes that only those social sciences that are consistent with Kohlberg's stage 6 have the demonstrated capacity to move from paradigm to paradigm (stressing congruence between and reconcilability of perspectives) despite dialectical tension.

The Relevance of a Gradient of Awareness for an Adequate Image of Humankind. What is the common characteristic of the various gradients we have reviewed? Recalling the operational definition of consciousness (the *organization* of the biosystem; with awareness as the psychological equivalent or complementary aspect of that organization), it seems reasonable to cast the image of ascending stages of evolution in terms of a gradient of awareness. As we come to higher stages of evolution, the attribute of consciousness comes to the fore. By this we mean the discovery of relationships and the making of choices — both individually and collectively — on the basis of understanding, appreciation and judgment; and being influenced by a relevant context with its past, present, and future rather than being determined by instinct, habit or some authority from another time and place. In this sense we speak of the evolution of consciousness manifest in hierarchical restructuring of our conceptions; and the derivative systems of thought, institutions, etc., through which we achieve coherent integration at higher orders of differentiation and complexity.

We have only briefly sketched some of the thinking that leads to this conception. Other contributions which are in keeping with an ascending gradient of awareness in evolution we have postulated: "this worldly" (e.g., D. Campbell, Polanyi, Weiss, Land),²⁴ "other worldly" (e.g., Cummins)²⁵ and "trans-worldly" (e.g., Hubbard, Aurobindo).²⁶ (Land's book *Grow or Die: The Unifying Principle of Transformation*, especially Chapter 10, elaborates this theme in more detail than we can do here.²⁷) Again, however, we are not here concerned whether these ways of thinking are right or wrong as judged by the methods of any one particular knowledge paradigm, but rather whether (1) they give us a vision of potential growth and further evolution beyond where we are now — a vision that accepts where (both as individuals and as a species) we are now, seeing ourselves now as being more highly evolved (in some ways, less in others) than was earlier man, and less highly evolved than we hope future man will be; and (2) they lay the conceptual beginnings of a general systems framework in which an integration of the various fragmented images of man — each of which can come to be seen as having a restricted validity — becomes possible. At this state of knowledge, then, we view the gradient of awareness more as useful metaphor than as proven theory. Indeed, it will likely not be possible to prove whether or not such a view is valid. Rather we will have to estimate what results might flow from translating this — as opposed to some other image of humankind — into concrete policies for the resolution of societal problems and the fuller realization of the human potentialities.

The Self

A second key element in our attempt to discover a more adequate, integrative image of man-in-the-universe concerns imagery regarding the nature of the self. In our culture, the dominant image which the person holds of himself is that of a separate and independent entity, as denoted by the very term "self" — defined by Webster's as "the person — having its own or a single nature or character." But even a cursory examination of the known facts of existence indicate that this is an unduly limited view, as explained below.

Transpersonal and Personal Imagery. The most basic aspects of our being which we have portrayed as being at the lower level (the machine language aspects of the human bio-computer) we share in common with all other persons. Indeed, because of this commonality, one suspects that it is only this level which is usually comprehended in the phrase "the nature of man." The next stage in developing an integrative image of humankind is explored in Figure 3 which shows these aspects as being transpersonal rather than idiosyncratic to each person. Jung's phrase "the collective unconscious" seems particularly appropriate for this level.

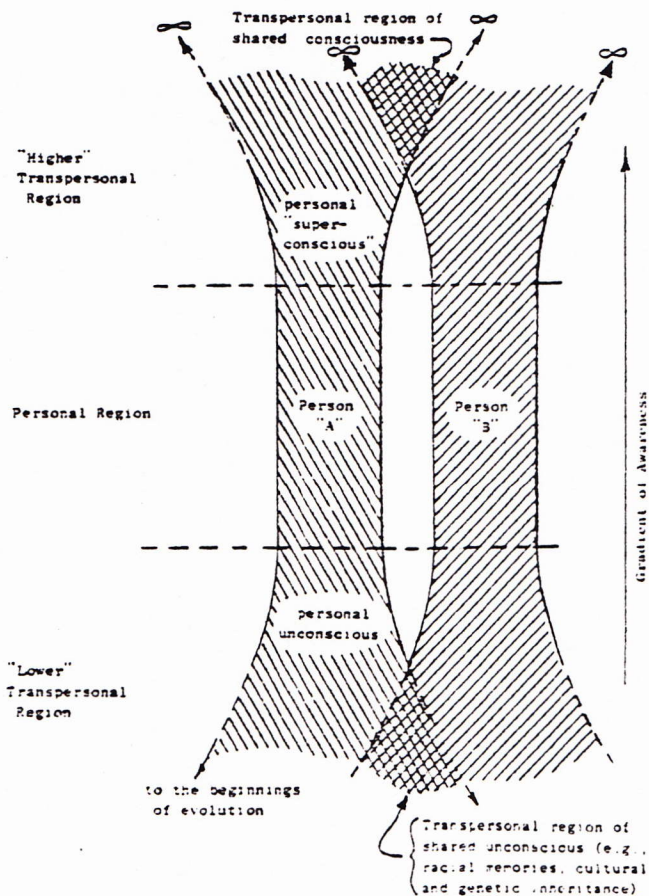
Coming up the gradient of awareness we observe the egoic and sensory level, where there is a valid perception of separateness between persons. The behaviors that are unique to this level, such as our use of sensory channels to communicate with other humans across the spatial distance that

separates us, are typically perceived as manifesting freedom in the sense of their being freely chosen behavior under the unique control of each person as a separate entity.

But coming still further up our gradient of so-called awareness we find — if the reports of yogis, mystics, and some recent laboratory evidence are to be believed²⁸ — that things once again become transpersonal in nature. Perceptions become intuitive and “quasisensory” (to use the term coined by McBain),²⁹ rather than stemming from the usual senses. And, typically as higher levels are reached, subjective experiences of mind-sharing are often reported, as are experiences of a disconnectedness or transcendence from the usual constraints of time and space¹⁰. Indeed, it is likely that only when we are able to expand our scientific image of man to include phenomena at this level will we be able to develop adequate theories to account for various psychic phenomena.

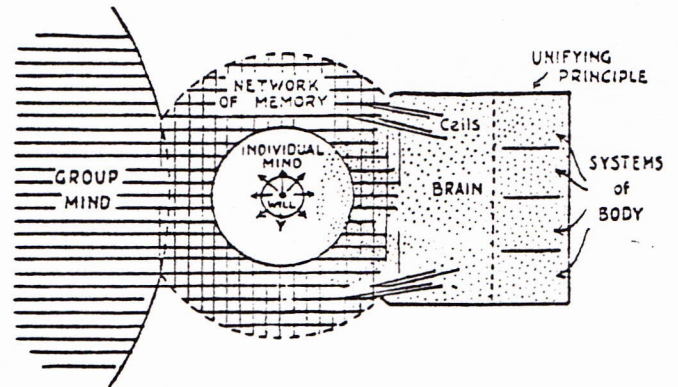
The schematicized integrative image of the person shown on Figure 2 is therefore cast in the shape of the hour glass, or cone, thus connoting the ways in which ones' nature is properly seen as transpersonal at the lower and upper reaches of existence and personal or unique in between. More speculatively (but based on anecdotal reports from various researchers in the phenomenology of consciousness) we might add the symbol of infinity for the uppermost reaches of the map, and the phrase “to the beginnings of evolution” for the lowermost: if the anecdotal reports are to be believed, infinity and the “beginnings of evolution” can be subjectively experienced, and when experienced, tend to merge.

Figure 3
A Metaphorical Image of the Personal and Transpersonal Aspects of Consciousness



F.W.H. Myers has formulated a different but similar conception, shown below in Figure 4.³¹

Figure 4
A Personal-Transpersonal Mind/Body Model



Subsystem, System, and Supersystem Imagery. The ways in which a person is a separate and distinct system are but a small part of the ways in which he incorporates lower-level (sub) systems, and in which he is part of higher-order (super) systems. Displaying both the independent properties of wholes, and the dependent properties of parts, the person is a “holon.” Other dimensions could be added as well, but as Figure (3) shows, we now have the conceptual basis for a multi-dimensional systems-oriented image of person-in-the-universe that is indeed integrative in the ways desired.

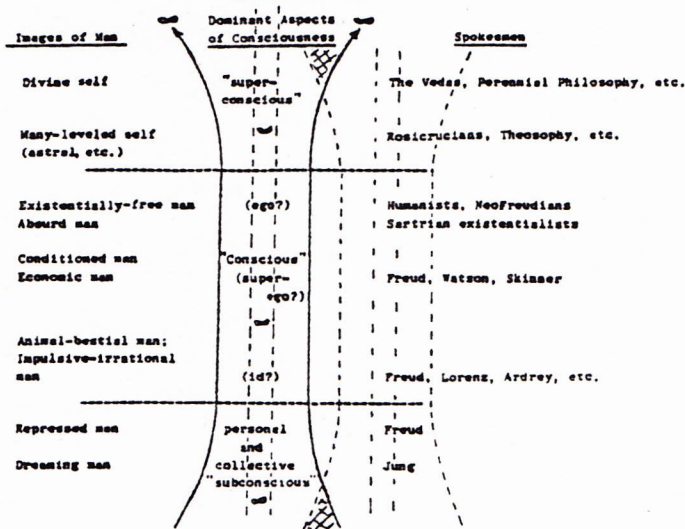
Before completing this image, we might pause to ask the important question: If the experience of individuality is but a small slit in all there is to the totality of our existence, where is the essence of man, the being (as opposed to the class) to be found? Echoing Koestler, where is the “ghost in the machine?”³² It is here that the image of humankind espoused in the Perennial Philosophy probably provides the best single answer:

The *atma*, the Self, is never born and never dies. It is without a cause and is eternally changeless. It is beyond time, unborn, permanent, and eternal. It does not die when the body dies. Concealed in the heart of all beings lies the *atma*, the Spirit, the Self: smaller than the smallest atom, greater than the greatest spaces.

— The Upanishads, 1000 B.C.

Finally then, to represent this self that is un-ferrous of space and time a “not-thing,” we complete the pictorial revision of our proposed composite image of humankind by adding the center as in Figure 5. It might be represented by another shape (e.g., as in Assagioli’s model shown earlier), but the tubular shape is often reported as the “feet” of those who experience meditation, and we agree in principle with Wilson that any adequate image will not be constructed, but rather seen through experience.

Figure 5
Composite Metaphor of an Integrative, Evolutionary Image of the Person for the Future



Man as Process

If the vision of the Perennial Philosophy is at all valid, this Center is the only truly static image. All of the other images of the human which depict how the self manifests are but temporary, ever-changing attributes of that self. As Norbert Weiner observed:

We are not stuff that abides, but patterns that perpetuate themselves; whirlpools or water in an ever-flowing river.³³

How can the vision of the static self "hidden in all things" be usefully reconciled with the many visions of the quasi-static — but in reality, changing — visions of the visible self that we call a person? If the collective wisdom of the myths of various cultures is to be trusted, the way of reconciliation is illuminated by Eliade's Image of the Center.³⁴ The idea of "moving from where we are not to where we most truly are" (William James) is well expressed in a now archaic meaning of the word "weird" (Anglo-Saxon *wyrd*), which is a word related to the German *werden*, "to become." Standing in direct contrast to the Indian notion of *dharma* or the current Western notions of socialization or conditioning (both of which see the individual as necessarily subject to the law imposed by society), *weird* is an unfolding from within of what is potential.* (Note that this is also the essential meaning of the root word *educere*, "to bring forth, as something latent," from which our word *educate* derives.) In this image of reality — as with Eliot's "still point of the turning world . . . Where past and future are gathered"³⁶ — the metaphysical ground of the person and what has brought him forth are one and the same. To realize this Center of one's being is said to provide conceptual release from the tyranny of such polarities as creator and creature, good and evil, I and Thou, and freedom and determinism.

But as *all* outward manifestations (or partial images) partake equally of this Center (as Figure 5 depicts), we find that we now have the conceptual framework for an image of humankind which, as we shall see, comes very close to satisfying the characteristics we earlier postulated.

**Dharma*, in its original and pure sense, means "innate tendency" or "true nature." In human beings, this means to grow toward Self-Realization and Cosmic Consciousness.³⁵ (ed.)

Examining the New Image for Conceptual Feasibility

If one agrees that the thrust of evolution seems to be toward greater "consciousness" (i.e., increasing organization of the bio-system, with "awareness" as the psychological equivalent or complementary aspect of that organization), the above framework provides the needed imagery for evolutionary growth, direction, and a holistic sense of meaning to life. It gives an open-ended and experimental sense of something to grow toward (both personally and culturally). Pursuit of higher states of awareness; increasing ability to integrate knowledge and to coordinate and balance the relative needs of the subsystem/system/supersystem relationships; and exploration of personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal aspects of existence — each of these contributes to the emergence of an "ecological ethic" and a "self-realization ethic"; to coordinated "satisficing"; and to goals of "ephemeralization" that are consistent with limits to growth of materialism. The term "thrust" has been chosen to describe this progress toward greater complexity and consciousness, not to denote the goal of evolution, but rather the path it seems to take. Goal is a term which is associated with the conceptual paradigm of linear causality; it is this paradigm that somehow must be transcended, if only in part. It is for this reason also that we have singled out Dunn's term "process teleology," because it explicitly avoids the difficulties of the older concepts of vitalism and teleology.

To illustrate how the holistic image portrayed by this framework could adequately incorporate and reconcile the more specialized images of humankind at various levels of development, some additional discussion is necessary.

We postulate that each of the various specialized images displayed in Figure 5 is appropriate to a given context or situation that has repeatedly been in human experience — which is why they exist in the image repertory of our various cultures. We further observe that to the extent which the person *cannot* manifest in an appropriate situation any of the various "ways of being" connoted by the gradient of awareness, to that extent the person is deficient in ways that limit his flexibility in dealing with a changing environment — hence limit the survival potential of the race. The ability to fight effectively (physically or psychologically) when one's survival (physical or mental) is threatened; the ability to experience aesthetic pleasure, to marvel at the mystery of existence, and to transcend one's individuality in a direct sense of participation in that mystery when appropriate — each of these is a part of the human experience through which each of us should be able to flow in and out as fitting. The point is *not* that one should necessarily fight, cooperate, or meditate in any or in all circumstances (nor should one necessarily impugn others for so doing), but rather that one should be able to do (and accept others doing) any of these things when they fit. All partake of the Center.

Needless to say, trade-offs are involved and coordination of different behaviors is required. As Jonas Saik has observed:

The conflict in the human realm is now between "self-expression" and "self-restraint" *within* the individual, as the effect of cultural evolutionary processes has reduced external restraint upon the individual.³⁷

While easy mobility across the various levels portrayed by the gradient of awareness is clearly in the interests of the survival of the human race and of the fulfillment of each individual's potentialities, such freedom needs to be exercised by the restraint that can derive in our era only from a holistic

perspective of life, growth, and evolution.

For these resources we emphasize the need for development of imagery of person-as-(in)-process; for a vision of growth not as in getting above persons at one level after another (as some occultists are wont to do), but rather in the expansion of awareness in both more and less inclusive directions; in the gaining of choices of appropriate behaviors that partake of all levels but are coordinated by the more inclusive ones; and in learning to dissolve fixations at any given level, hence being more able continuously to flow from a predominant orientation at one level to one at another, according to the needs of the environment and in appropriately coordinated growth.

It is primarily in the above sense that we believe that a holistic image such as the frame-work depicts could adequately integrate the various aspects and past images of humankind without blurring or invalidating their uniqueness; for only in this way will we have an ontological basis for tolerance of difference and change.

There are some difficulties with the framework as presented above. The main one is that it is — in keeping with the dominant conceptual paradigm of Western culture — essentially hierarchical in nature. Thus not only is the conception somewhat culture-bound; it does not easily integrate newly emerging mutual-causal thoughts in science. Other cultures have dominant conceptual paradigms that are essentially non-hierarchical and are more mutualistic as regards knowledge, ecology, and human development. As the anthropologist Maruyama has pointed out many functions of concern to a society are more usefully fulfilled by non-hierarchically structured paradigms.³⁸ But Maruyama also notes that when a hierarchical/self-righteous and a mutualistic/symbiotic paradigm have come into intercultural contact, the self-righteous paradigm has an almost irresistible tendency to run over the mutualistic one.

A somewhat different but related problem arises in connection with the exclusivist interpretation the Judeo-Christian tradition has put on transcendental images of man. There appears to be a basic contradiction contained in this tradition between the exclusivist (as in "no man cometh to the Father but through me") and the universalist (God as omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, therefore all that is, is God). The exclusivist is the tendency that has captured the popular imagination in the mainstream religious traditions of our culture. But this turns out to be not so much one side of a contradiction as one arm of a dialectic, one element of a paradox.

Better understood, these difficulties turn out to be based in misunderstandings (which is not to say that they will not be very real difficulties in a communication or political sense). They arise from having to use traditional language to express what are essentially non-traditional, "non-paradigm" concepts.

Thus we have used words such as "gradient," "thrust," and "hierarchy" when describing the evolutionary trend toward greater complexity and consciousness. We have used diagrams and tables which may seem to imply progression from "primitive" to "sophisticated," or "lower" to "higher." This may seem to imply an elitist view of human evolution. It might have been helpful to adopt a circular model in which, for example, the dreaming man of Jung would be cyclicly linked to the superconscious man in a visual system that implied ongoing process. But substituting one metaphor or visual image for another simply seemed to change the nature of the difficulty.

The problem appears to be primarily that reality is so much richer, so much more multidimensional than any metaphor, that all maps of reality lead to difficulties if they are mistakenly assumed to be literally true. Thus reality is hierarchical in one sense and not in another, and man is separate seeking self-fulfillment and yet part of a unity in a sense that makes self-fulfillment illusory. The "higher" forms of consciousness may be similar to the psychic abilities of "lower" forms of life (for example, household pets, dolphins, plants) in a way that makes the latter as "sophisticated" as the highest transcendental characteristics evolving in the human species.

Thus it would appear that an emergent world-wide image of man is *conceptually feasible*, providing we remain clear that it is an image, or a set of metaphors, and that its real function is to lead toward the direct experiencing of what it can only incompletely and inadequately express.

Winston Churchill stated that, "We shape our buildings and then our buildings shape us." Similarly but in a larger and more pervasive sense, we are being irrevocably shaped by our unprecedented urban-industrial environment which is premised upon images of humankind whose historical origins are far removed from contemporary reality.

The decision to suppress image change or to allow societal and image transformation confronts us with an important branch point in our history. The consequences of our decisions in the next few decades will endure long into the future:

The environment men create through their wants becomes a mirror that reflects their civilization; more importantly it also constitutes a book in which is written the formula of life that they communicate to others and transmit to succeeding generations.³⁹

Human beings can become adapted to almost anything and since our physical and psychological endowments give us a wide range of adaptive potentialities, it is crucial to distinguish between those images that foster a short-term *tolerable* living environment and those that foster a long-term *desirable* living environment. The dynamic character of adaptability is illustrated by a laboratory demonstration in which a frog was placed in a beaker of boiling water and immediately jumped out; when the frog was placed in a beaker of cold water that was slowly warmed to boiling temperature, however, the temperature change was gradual and the frog adapted in increments, making no attempt to escape until he finally died. Analogously, the mere fact that a society can generate an image of the human and, for a time, adapt to it does not necessarily ensure that it would be a desirable thing to do. We make errors and inadvertently accept images which may prove lethal both to our existence as beings seeking to unfold our potentials, and to our physical existence as an evolving species. Given our capacity to adapt — even to the point of virtual self-destruction — it is difficult to know whether or not we may have already gone too far with our industrial images. Given the apparent momentum of the industrial dynamic, it is difficult to know whether we could turn back even if it seemed we had gone too far.

Nonetheless, we are still confronted with the existential choice: "... in matters of life . . . it does not matter whether the chance for cure is 51 percent or 5 percent. Life is precarious and unpredictable, and the only way to live is to make every effort to save it as long as there is a possibility of doing so."⁴⁰ We can either involve ourselves in the recreative self and societal discovery of an image of humankind appropriate for our future, with attendant societal and personal

consequences, or we can choose not to make any choice and, instead, adapt to whatever fate, and the choices of others, bring along. ■

Life is occupied both in perpetuating itself and in surpassing itself; if all it does is maintain itself, then living is only not dying.

— Simone de Beauvoir

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