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LEVELS OF EXISTENCE: AN OPEN SYSTEM THEORY OF VALUES¹

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Today, in the minds of many, there is a passionate certitude as to what is wrong with man. He is simply breaking apart at his moral seams. From every direction fingers point with certainty to the evidence that he is becoming ethically decrepit. From one direction, "the establishments," the finger points at the psychedelic and confrontational behavior of youth, while from youth's direction it points at the callous exploitation of our environment by established businessmen and the older generation's failure to live by the values vocally professed. Business managers see a breakdown of the work ethic in the "make-work" phenomena and careless practices of their employees but the public points to shoddy engineering and merchandising practices of the employers as evidence of value sickness in the business man's behavior. Dissenters are called immoral because, in the name of "civil rights," they have frightened many of their fellow citizens. Yet these same dissenters point to the immoral activity of those who use "civil rights" as a shield as they carry on vicious and even murderous attacks upon those who are dissenting. These and countless other value problems are cited as the signs of rampant immorality and unethical behavior in our people, our country and our world.

This point of view says that we are witness to the decline of a fine moral and ethical structure to which our way of life owes its strength. It says a cancerous condition is manifesting itself in our moral life. But before one agrees, some serious questions might be asked. For example, should we accept such inferences which may be drawn from a narrow perceptual field—one reduced by fear, narrowed by limited

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premises and restricted by an incomplete view of man? Is it possible that those who conclude the current actions of man are immoral and unethical are blinded by illusions of the past, fear in the present and terrifying visions of the future?

From the point of view of a framework which I shall propose man's troublesome behavior can be seen as a healthy sign, as a sign of growth, rather than as a sign of decay, as a sign of reaching for a better form of existence rather than as a sign of the disintegration of all that is good, as a sign of the emergence of that which is better, which is more human in man rather than as a sign of a breakthrough of the worst that is in him.²

Today such a suggested viewpoint appears to border on the brink of irresponsibility and may seem to have within it more than a twinge of the crackpot. How, one may ask, can one take the ethical problems of today, twist them full around, and come out with the bad as good, the immoral as a sign of health and the unethical as a sign of growth? Is not this, which is suggested, a rather fanciful manipulation of data, or perhaps even a highly irresponsible and dangerous distortion of fact?

The notion that much of man's current behavior is immoral and unethical is, as I see it, based on a premise consisting of three parts:

- I. That beneath it all man is a beast driven by original sin, aggressiveness, and a death instinct.
- II. That civilized human behavior, good values, can only be superimposed on man and therefore must be constantly imposed upon him lest his animalism override his humanism.
- III. That these good values, Judeo-Christian ethics, Buddhist principles or the like, have been revealed to man and are the prime tenets by which he should live.

Logically within this three part premise man's current problems represent a breakdown of his values. But this is not the only premise from which we can look for understanding. There is another rapidly developing point of view, based on a different three part premise, which casts quite a different light upon our value problems. It is the humanistic, organismic, systems, or as I call it, the *Level of Existence* point of view. This premise holds:

- I. That man's nature is not a set thing, that it is ever emergent, that it is an open system, not a closed system.

² The reader may note the similarity of some aspects of this framework to the writings of Abraham H. Maslow. In certain respects this work is a revision and extension of Maslow's views.

- II. That man's nature evolves by saccadic, quantum-like jumps from one steady state system to another.
- III. That man's values change from system to system as his total psychology emerges in new form with each quantum-like jump to a new steady state of being.

My version of this point of view is a revised, enlarged and, in certain critical aspects, a new version of this developing point of view. Particularly, it is a *hierarchical systems* point of view which is infinite rather than finite in character. According to the view I am proposing:

the psychology of the mature human being is an unfolding or emergent process marked by the progressive subordination of older behavioral systems to newer, higher order behavior systems. The mature man tends normally to change his psychology as the conditions of his existence change. Each successive stage or level is a state of equilibrium through which people pass on the way to other states of equilibrium. When a person is in one of the states of equilibrium, he has a psychology which is particular to that state. His acts, feelings, motivations, ethics and values, thoughts and preferences for management are all appropriate to that state. If he were in another state, he would act, feel, think, judge and be motivated in a different manner. A person may not be genetically or constitutionally equipped to change in the normal upward direction if the conditions of his existence change. He *may* move, given certain conditions through a hierarchically ordered series of behavior systems to some end or he may stabilize and live out his lifetime at any one or a combination of levels in the hierarchy. Again, he may show the behavior of a level in a predominantly positive or negative manner, or he may, under certain circumstances, regress to a behavior system lower in the hierarchy. Thus, an adult lives in a potentially open system of needs, values and aspirations, but he often settles into what approximates a closed system. When he is in any one level, he has only the behavioral degrees of freedom afforded him at that level (Graves, 1966).

PART I: LEVELS OF EXISTENCE

According to my research,³ adult man's psychology which includes his values, develops from the existential states of man. These states emerge as man solves certain hierarchically ordered existential problems crucial to him in his existence. The solution of man's current problems of existence releases free energy in his system and creates, in turn, new existential problems. When these new problems arise, higher order or different configurations of dynamic neurological systems become active.⁴

³ The author's research referred to in this article is included in a book now in preparation.

⁴ The brain is conceived as a series of neurologically ordered "dynamic neuro-

Outside the person are the social and environmental areas, the external conditions for existence, and various existential problems. These conditions vary from the problems which are the very worst for human existence to the problems which are those existential problems faced by individuals living in the best conditions for human existence extant today.

The specific functions of these states are defined by the interaction of two components which grow by periods of spurt and plateau (see Figure 1).

As man solves certain crucial problems for existence, N, P, O, . . . U, the growth rate of the components change and as they do higher order neurological systems or configurations A, B, C . . . H, are activated. The first existential state (1) is the A-N state, the state that exists when man is living in conditions where he spends most waking hours attending to that which will satisfy his basic physiological needs. The states which emerge later B-O, C-P, D-Q, etc., arise as each different and ordinal set of human problems are resolved. As the two components, *adjustment-of-the-organism-to-the-environment* and *adjustment-of-the-environment-to-the-organism*, develop in their spurt and plateau-like fashion, higher and higher psychological systems emerge. The alteration of the components produces a cyclic emergence of existential states which dictates that the psychology, and thus the values of every other system, is at one and the same time like and unlike its cyclic partners—an aspect of human existence and human values which, if not understood, leads to much confusion when so called value problems are discussed.

As each existential state emerges, man believes that the problems of human existence are the problems with which he is faced at the level at which he has arrived. He develops, therefore, a general way of life, a *thema for existence*, including a thematic value system appropriate to his current existential state. This thema is specified into particular *schema for existence* as a result of individual, group and environmental differences.

When man's existence is centralized in lower level systems, the subsistence levels (see Table 1) states A-N through F-S, it is characteristic of him to believe that there is something inherently wrong in a man

logical systems, cell assemblies or similar structures. Each of these dynamic neurological systems is seen as a region which operates according to its *own* psychological principles, for example, each system has *its own* laws for learning, values, etc. Connecting each system is something like a pressure switch which can be "off," partially "on," or all "on." It is conceived that for a new system to switch "on" increments of psychological force must increase. For a time, as these increments accumulate, the pressure like valve opens very slowly, but when a critical point is reached there is a spurt like movement to the next higher and qualitatively different system.

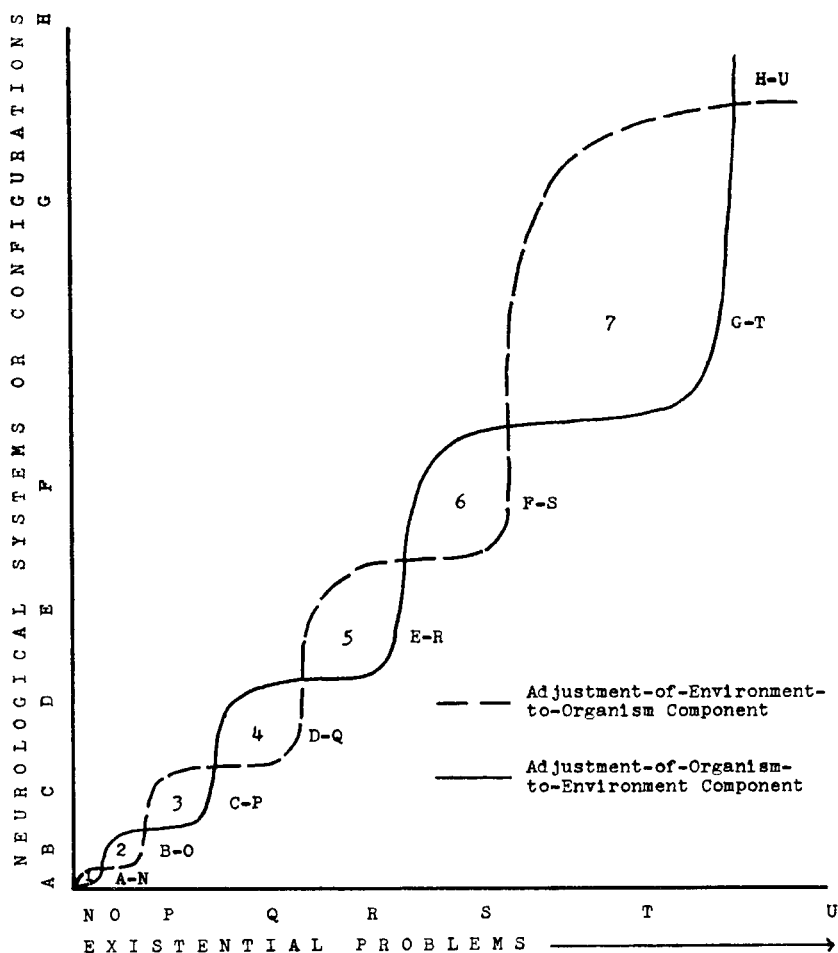


FIGURE 1 Emergence of the Existential States from the interaction of Components as Existential Problems N—U Are Solved and as Neurological Systems or Configurations A—H Are Involved.

whose values are contrary to the values dictated by his own existential state. Thus, what man values at the subsistence levels will lead him to abhor the values of a man who is at or striving for any other level for existence.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VARIOUS LEVELS

Automatic Existence (First Subsistence Level)

Man at the first subsistence level (A-N), the *automatic state* of physiological existence, seeks only the immediate satisfaction of his basic

**TABLE 1 DESIGNATION OF EXISTENTIAL STATES
AND THEIR EXISTENTIAL PROBLEMS**

Level of Existence	Existential State	Nature of Existence	Problems of Existence
Second Being	H-U	Experientialistic	Accepting existential dichotomies
First Being	G-T	Cognitive	Restoring viability to a disordered world
Sixth Subsistence	F-S	Sociocentric	Living with the human element
Fifth Subsistence	E-R	Materialistic	Conquering the physical universe so as to overcome want
Fourth Subsistence	D-Q	Saintly	Achieving everlasting peace of mind
Third Subsistence	C-P	Egocentric	Living with self awareness
Second Subsistence	B-O	Tribalistic	Achievement of relative safety
First Subsistence	A-N	Automatic	Maintaining physiological stability

physiological needs. He is in essence a simple reflexological organism who lives through the medium of his built-in equipment. He has only an imperative need-based concept of time and space and no concept of cause or effect. His awareness excludes self and is limited to the presence of physiologically determined tension when it is present, and the relief of such tension when it takes place. He lives a purely physiological existence. Man the species, or man the individual, does not have to rise above this level to continue the survival of the species. Man can continue the survival of the species through the purely physiological aspect of the process of procreation existence. He can live what is for him, at the A-N level, a productive lifetime—productive in the sense that his built-in response mechanisms are able to reduce the tensions of his imperative physiological needs—and a reproductive lifetime. But this level of existence seldom is seen today except in rare instances, or in pathological cases.

As soon as man, in his food-gathering wanderings, accrues a set of Pavlovian conditioned reflexes, which provide for the satisfaction of his imperative needs, and as soon as he in his wanderings comes upon his "Garden of Eden," that place in space which is particularly ap-

propriate for *his* acquired Pavlovian behavior, he slides almost imperceptibly out of this stage into the second existential state, an established form of human existence, the *tribalistic way* of life.

Tribalistic Existence (Second Subsistence Level)

At this second subsistence level, the B-O autistic state of thinking, man's need is for stability, a need for the continuation of a not understood but strongly defended way of life. This level of man has just struggled forth from striving to exist and now has his first established way of life. Of course, this way of life is essentially without awareness, thought, or purpose for it is based on Pavlovian classical conditioning principles. Therefore, B-O man believes his tribalistic way is inherent in the nature of things. As a result he holds tenaciously to it, and strives desperately to propitiate the world for its continuance.

Here he lives in a *primaeval* world of no separation between subject and object, a world where phenomena possess no clear contours and things have no particular identity. Here one form of being can be transmuted into another for there is correspondence between all things. At this level a seasonal, or naturally based concept of time prevails and space is perceived in an atomistic fashion. Causality is not yet perceived because man perceives the forces at work to be inherent, thus linking human consciousness at the deepest level. Here a form of existence based on myth and tradition arises, and being is a mystical phenomenon full of spirits, magic and superstition. Here the task of existence is simply to continue what it seems has enabled "my tribe to be."

But here, more by chance than by design, some men achieve relative control of their spirit world through their non-explainable, elder administered, tradition based way of life—a way of life which continues relatively unchanged until disturbed from within or without. When the established tribal way of life assures the continuance of the tribe with minimal energy expenditure, it creates the first of the general conditions necessary for movement to a new and different steady state of being. *It produces excess energy in the system which puts the system in a state of readiness for change.* But unless another factor, such as *dissonance* or challenge, comes into the field, the change does not move in the direction of some other state of being. Instead, it moves toward maximum entropy and its demise since it becomes overloaded with its accretion of more and more tradition, more and more ritual. If, however, when the state of readiness is achieved *dissonance* enters, then this steady state of being is precipitated toward a different kind of change. This *dissonance* arises usually in youth, or certain minds not troubled by the memories of the past and who are capable of newer and more lasting insights into the nature of

man's being. Or it can come to the same capable minds when outsiders disturb the tribes' way of life.

When such dissonance occurs it does not immediately produce a movement to a higher state of being. Instead it tends to produce a regressive search through older ways before new insights come to be. This is a crisis phase for any established way of existence and is always the premonitor of a new state, provided three other conditions come to exist. The first of these three conditions is *insight*. The capable minds in any system must be able to produce new insights or be able to perceive the significance of different insights brought to the system's attention from outside sources. But insight alone does not make for change since, "full many a flower is born to blush unseen and waste its freshness on the desert air." So there must also be a *removal of barriers* to the implementation of the insight—a matter not easy to achieve for, as can be seen, a period of confrontation arises. Then, if the insight can be effectuated, through the removal of the barriers, *the consolidating factors* come into play enabling the new steady-state of being to be born.

When, at the B-O level, readiness for change occurs, it triggers man's insight into his existence as an individual being, as a being separate and distinct from other beings, and from his tribal compatriots as well. As he struggles, now intentionally, since the operant or instrumental conditioning systems are opening, he perceives that others, other men, other animals, and even the spirits in his physical world fight him back. So his need for survival comes to the fore.

With this change in consciousness, man becomes aware that he is aligned against predatory animals, a threatening physical universe, and other men who are predatory men, those who fight back for their established way of existence, or against him for the new way of existence he is striving to develop. Now he is not one-with-all for he is alone—alone struggling for his survival against the "dragonic" forces of the universe. So he sets out in heroic fashion, through his newly emergent operant conditioning learning system, to build *a way of being which will foster his individual survival*.

Egocentric Existence (Third Subsistence Level)

At the C-P *egocentric level* raw, rugged self assertive individualism comes to the fore. This level might be termed "Machiavellian," for within it is all that he called the essence of being human. History suggests to us that the few, and there were few in the beginning who were able to gain their freedom from survival problems, not only surged almost uncontrollably forward into a new way of being, but also dragged after them to the survival level tribal members unable to

free themselves of the burden of stagnating tribalistic existence. And history suggests that the few became the authoritarians while the many became those who submitted. The many accept the "might-is-right" of the few because by such acceptance they are assured survival. This was so in the past and it is still so today.

This Promethean (C-P) point of view is based on the prerogatives of the "haves" and the duties of the "have-nots." *Ultimately* when this way of life, based historically on the agricultural revolution, is established, life is seen as a continuous process with survival dependent on a controlled relationship. Fealty and loyalty, service and noblesse oblige become cornerstones of this way of life. Assured of their survival, through fief and vassalage, the "haves" base life on the "right" way to behave as their might dictates. Ultimately a system develops in which each acts out in detail, in the interest of his own survival, how life is to be lived, but only a small number ever achieve any modicum of power and the remainder are left to submit.

Both the authoritarian and the submissive develop standards which they feel will insure them against threat, but these are very raw standards. The submissive chooses to get away with what he can within that which is possible for him. The authoritarian chooses to do as he pleases. They spawn, as their *raison d'être*, the rights of assertive individualism. Actually these rights become, in time, the absolute rights of kings, the unassailable prerogatives of management, the inalienable rights of those who have achieved, through their own intentionality, positions of power, and even the rights of the lowly hustler to all he can hustle. This is a world of the aggressive expression of man's lusts—openly and unabashedly by the "haves," more covertly and deviously by the "have nots." But when this system solidifies into a stabile feudal way of life, it creates a new existential problem for both the "have" and the "have not." For death still faces the "have," and the "have not" must explain to himself why it is that he must live his miserable existence. Out of this mix eventually develops man's fourth way of existence, the D-Q way of life.

Now man moves to the lasting security level of need and learns by avoidant learning. As he moves to this level he develops a way of life based on the culminated conviction that there must be a reason for it all, a reason why the "have" shall have so much in life yet be faced with death, and a reason why the "have not" has to live his life in a miserable existence. This conviction leads to the belief that the "have" and "have not" condition is a part of a directed design—a design of the forces guiding man and his destiny. Thus, the saintly way of life, based on one of the world's great religions or great philosophies, comes to be. Here man tarries long enough to create what he believes is a way for lasting peace in this life or everlasting life, a way which, it

seems to him, will remove the pain of both the "have" and the "have not." Here he seeks salvation.

Saintly Existence (Fourth Subsistence Level)

At the D-Q *saintly level*, he develops a way of life based on "Thou shalt suffer the pangs of one's existence in this life to prove thyself worthy of later life." This saintly form of existence comes from experiencing that living in this world is not made for ultimate pleasure—a perception based on the previous endless struggle with unbridled lusts and a threatening universe. Here he perceives that certain rules are prescribed for each class of men and that these rules describe the proper way each class is to behave. The rules are the price man must pay for his more lasting life, for the peace which he seeks,—the price of no ultimate pleasure while living. But, after security is achieved through these prescribed, absolutistic rules, the time does come when some men question this price. When this question arises in the mind of man, the saintly way of life is doomed for decay and readied for discard since some men are bound to ask why they cannot have some pleasure in this life? When they do, man struggles on through another period of transition to another level, now slipping, now falling in the quest for his goal. When man casts aside the inhuman aspect of his saintly existence, he is again charged with excess energy because his security problems are solved and he sets out to build a life for pleasure here and now.

Materialistic Existence (Fifth Subsistence Level)

At the E-R *materialistic level*, man strives to conquer the world by learning of its secrets, rather than through raw, naked force as he did at the C-P level. He tarries long enough here to develop and utilize the objectivistic, positivistic scientific method so as to provide the material ends for a satisfactory human existence in the here and now. But once assured of *his* material satisfaction he finds a new spiritual void in his being. He finds himself master of the objective physical world but a prime neophyte in the subjectivistic, humanistic world. He has achieved the satisfaction of a good life through his relative mastery of the physical universe but it has been achieved at a price—the price he has paid is that he is not liked by other men for his callous use of knowledge for himself. He has become envied and even respected, but liked he is not. He has achieved his personal status, his material existence at the expense of being rejected even by his own children (some of this can be seen today). The solution of material problems, coupled with this perception, begins man's move to his sixth form of existence.

Sociocentric Existence (Sixth Subsistence Level)

At the F-S *sociocentric level* man becomes, centrally, a sociocentric being, a being concerned with the relation of his self to other selves. He becomes concerned with belonging, with being accepted, with not being rejected, with knowing the inner side of self and other selves so human harmony can come to be. And when he achieves this he becomes concerned with more than self and other selves. He becomes concerned with self in relation to life and the whole, the total universe.

As man moves from the sixth level, the level of being with other men, the sociocentric level, to the seventh level, the level of freedom to know and to do, the cognitive level of existence, a chasm of unbelievable depth of meaning is being crossed. The bridge from the sixth level, the F-S level to the seventh level, the G-T level, is the bridge between getting and giving, taking and contributing, destroying and constructing. It is the bridge between deficiency or deficit motivation and growth or abundancy motivation. It is the bridge between similarity to animals and dissimilarity to animals.

Cognitive Existence (First Being Level)

Once we are able to grasp the meaning of passing from the level of "being one with others" to the *cognitive level* of knowing and doing so that "all can be and can continue to be," it is possible to see the enormous differences between man and other animals. Here we step over the line which separates those needs man has in common with other animals and those needs which are distinctly human.

Man, at the threshold of the seventh level, where so many political and cultural dissenters stand today, is at the *threshold of being human*. He is, now, for the first time in his existence truly becoming a human being. He is no longer just another of nature's species. And we, in our times, in our ethical and general behavior, are but approaching this threshold, the line between animalism and humanism.

Experientialistic Existence (Second Being Level)

Once man comes to the seventh level of existential emergence he will be driven on to the H-U *experientialistic level* and still higher levels of existence by the winds of knowledge, and human not Godly faith, and the surging waves of confidence. The knowledge and competence acquired at the G-T level will bring him to the level of understanding, the H-U level. If he moves on it will probably be toward the delight of tasting more of his emergent self. If ever man leaps to this great beyond, there will be no bowing to suffering, no vassalage, no peonage. There will be no shame in behavior for man will know it is

human to behave. There will be no pointing of the finger at other men, no segregation, depredation or degradation in behavior. Man will be driving forth on the subsequent crests of his humanness rather than vacillating and swirling in the turbulence of partially emerged man.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSITIONS

From the point of view presented above breakdown can be seen as a reorganization for higher level values rather than as the decay of a fine and lasting value system. Values change in a regressive-progressive fashion when each set of existential problems are solved and presage movement to higher level psychological systems. Within this point of view, the growth of values proceeds forward to a critical point then changes when this point is reached. The pressure of changing conditions produces first a regression and disorganization of values followed by a spurt-like move to a higher level of organization. The regressive disorganization is interpreted by many as *a* sign of decay when it can be interpreted from within this point of view as a sign of preparation for higher level reorganization. The movement to the new higher level of organization is interpreted by many as *the* sign of decay because the new values so often reject so many aspects of the values which immediately preceded them. This regressive-progressive reorganization is central to the interpretation of values proposed here. Thus the major signs of decay, in more customary frames of reference, become within this point of view, the all important sign of reorganizing growth.

This interpretation enables us to better comprehend value crises and confrontations. When man's old values are no longer appropriate to his new existential state they appear to break down as he searches regressively for a new value system more congruent with his new state of being. When he develops a glimmer of insight into his new value system behavioral crises such as riots and confrontations may develop. At these points he fights *his establishment*, his older generation, the old value system he is striving to go beyond. And here the establishments resist man's putting his new, but embryonic ways of thinking into operation. Then, as time passes, man overcomes the values of the past and develops his new values and consummates his movement into his next steady-state value system.

Thus my basic position is very simple. It is that adult man, as he grows psychologically, moves in a saltatory fashion from a value system appropriate in restricted living circumstances to higher value systems appropriate to better conditions of life and being. This position holds that man, as he and his societies develop, must subordinate old values

if ever he is to develop new values appropriate to his new state of existence. Develop and discard, retain and rearrange, this seems nature's way of handling all things. Should this basic ordering be different in the value realm? I suggest that perhaps the answer is no.

PART II: VALUES OF THE VARIOUS LEVELS

My research suggests that eight major value systems have emerged to date. They are the reactive, the traditionalistic, the exploitive, the sacrificial, the materialistic, the sociocratic, the existential and the experiential value systems.

TABLE 2 EXISTENTIAL STATES, ASSOCIATED MOTIVATIONAL SYSTEMS AND END VALUES

Existential State*	Motivational System	Means Values**	End Value**
H-U	Experience	<i>Experiencing</i>	Communion
G-T	Existence	<i>Accepting</i>	<i>Existence</i>
F-S	Affiliation	<i>Sociocentricity</i>	Community
E-R	Independence	Scientism	<i>Materialism</i>
D-Q	Security	<i>Sacrifice</i>	Salvation
C-P	Survival	Exploitation	<i>Power</i>
B-O	Assurance	<i>Traditionalism</i>	Safety
A-N	Physiological	No conscious value system; values purely <i>reactive</i>	

* A-N: a physiological system; B-O/H-U: psychological systems.

** *Italicized values*: primary orientation of each value system.

Reactive Values (First Subsistence Level)

The earliest appearing value system is a sub-system of the first level of human existence. It is a value system consonant with the A-N existential state where man is motivated only by his imperative needs. Since he is so motivated, since he lives by his built-in reflexological equipment, since he learns by imprinting and since he lacks awareness of himself as a separate and distinct being and has no consciousness of self, his values at this level are purely reactive in character. They are based on man's reaction to the presence or absence of tension. The *act* of reducing pain or tension, is what is good. Its presence is that which is bad.

In the moral sense this is an amoral system. There is no should or ought in behavior because man when centralized at this level does not operate cognitively. He only reacts. He does not think or judge

or believe. Today, this value system, as the dominant system in man, is more theoretical than actual, more transitory than lasting. This is so because if man is to stabilize at the first, or any level, two conditions of existence would have to obtain. The external world would have to continue in a relatively undisturbed state and the cognitive component would have to be absent or inoperant. The latter might exist in the severely retarded, or during severe conditions of stress in infancy, but it is hardly conceivable in a mature, healthy adult. And even if the cognitive component were not operant, one can hardly conceive of a static external world, for nature is always indifferent to man's fate. Thus, these very conditions of human existence, the presence of an indifferent but ever changing external world and man's emerging cognitive component, inevitably challenge man to seek a higher level of living and a new and different value system. But, no man will ever be without some reactive values. Any man, operating at a higher level of existence will always be, in part, a physiological organism. And depending on the current conditions of his existence reactive values may dominate his existence or they may be subordinated within emerging higher level value systems.

In his struggle for physiological satisfaction, man slowly accrues a stable set of Pavlovianly developed conditioned reflexes which provide automatically and dependably for the continuance of his existence. He then moves into the B-O existential state. Here at the second level his values are phenomenistic in character. They are phenomenistic in character since they do not arise from intuition or thought but from the passive association between physiological states aroused and stimuli experienced in the course of their arousal.

Traditionalistic Values (Second Subsistence Level)

The prime end value at the second level is safety and the prime means value is tradition. They are valued because here man's elders and their ancestors, though they cannot explain why, seem to have learned which factors foster man's existence and which factors threaten his well being. Thus, man's thema for existence at this level is "one shall live according to the ways of one's elders," and his values are consonant with this existential thema. But the schematic forms and values for existence at the second level are highly varied due to different Pavlovian conditionings from tribe to tribe, group to group. Each traditional set of values are tribal centered, concrete, syncretic, diffuse and rigid. The tribal member is locked into them and cannot violate them. At this level a value-attitude may contain several meanings because of the conditioning principles of generalization and differentiation. Here circumstances force the individual into a magical, superstitious, ritualistic way of life wherein he values positively that which

will bring forth his spirit's favor. He shuns that which tradition says will raise his spirits ire.

Though these values seem mysterious, peculiar, odd and unexplainable to some higher level men, they do order man's B-O state of existence. But the time comes when they fail energetic youth, who has not experienced the problems of his elders. Or the time comes when other ways of life challenge the values of the tribe. This state of boredom or this state of concern provokes generic man's first attack upon the values of "his first establishment" and ultimately sends him in search of his third nodal value system.

Exploitive Values (Third Subsistence Level)

Third level values derive from the C-P existential state. At this level the energy previously devoted to finding ways to satisfy man's physiological needs and to the maintenance of tribal ways, now released, awakens him to the recognition that he is a separate and distinct being. As a result man's quest is no longer for tensional relief or the continuance of his tribe's established way of life. Now, aware of himself as an individual being, now aware of the need to foster his individual survival, there comes to stage center, in his existence, *his* need for survival—a need which cannot dominate man until consciousness of self emerges as it does at this level. Concomitant with the emergence of self awareness and its bed fellow, the need for survival, is the emergence of the intentional, the operant, the instrumental learning system. Also, man begins to adjust the environment to his needs and seeks a primordial form of existence which he can control for his personal survival, not just one of automatic reactivity.

In this state with cognitive capacity increased, but still limited, and the operant learning system present to serve the need for survival of the individual, man proceeds into a sensory-motor exploration of his world. He begins to intentionally manipulate his world rather than passively accept it and from this manipulation develops his third level values.

Driven by the need to maintain his existence, each manipulates his world and egocentrically interprets the reward or punishment feedback as fostering or not fostering his own survival, which is his major value. He perceives that many try but few succeed and, as a result, comes to believe the heroic (e.g., Homeric) deed is the means to his survival. Thus, heroism become his valued means and the epic hero his most revered figure. To the victor, the hero, belong the spoils and the right to exercise greed, avarice, envy, gluttony, pride (and sloth if not being heroic) for he has shown through his deeds that the Gods or the fates see him as worthy of survival. From all of this develops a world of those who "have" and those who "have not," a world that

becomes one of authoritarian submission control. He who wins has a right to loot the world to his own ends. Those who lose have a right only to the scraps he will toss their way. Might is right. The power ethic prevails.

The power ethic reveres he who can tell time what he wills—and mean it, he who shows no fear of the world's wrath and assurance of its favor. Right is demonstrated in violent action—an aspect of this ethic which many see today but few understand. In the power ethic, the more daring and horrendous the act of man, the more it is revered. It does not matter, within the power ethic, whether a man has plans for replacement of the system which he attacks. The heroic thing is to attack the system and if there is nothing present to be attacked then, if he is truly a hero, he will create a dragon to be destroyed, for even if he should die in the course of his attack, he is assured that he will live—live on forever in the words of men. This aspect of the power ethic, which is bursting forth everywhere in our world today, confounds many people. The arch militancy, seemingly senseless bombing and destruction, be it by white or black, red or brown, probably is not driven just by anger nor is it senseless. It is likely that the power ethic is also involved.

The C-P conditions for existence, which spawn power ethics, produce a fearful insecure world for all. It is a world driven by man's lusts and is seemingly noteworthy for its lack of a "moral sense." But this is an error for at this level, where man is led to value the ruthless use of power unconscionably daring deeds, impulsive action, volatile emotion, the greatest of risk, morality is ruthless. It is the inhumane eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth variety, since he values conquest in any form and even war as the epitome of the heroic effort, as the entrance to immaterial Walhalla.

This is not an attractive value system from other frames of reference, but for all its negative aspects, it is a giant step forward for man. Some men, in their pursuit of power, *do* tame the mighty river, *do* provide the leisure for beginning intellectual effort, *do* build cities, *do* assign occupational positions that directly improve the personal lot of some and indirectly spills off to the betterment of the miserable many. But this way of life, and its value system, creates a new existential problem for man. The winner cannot but die and the loser cannot but wonder why—why he is doomed to his miserable existence. Each must now face his inexplicable existential problem and find an answer, a reason for being which coalesces the two.

Ultimately, third level men see that, in spite of their manipulations, life seems not in their control. Egocentric values break down from the weight of the existential problem they create. "What is this all about? Why was I born? Why can't I go on living?" says the

“have” “Why can’t I find some success in life?” asks the miserable “have not.” Eventually they conclude that life’s problems are a sign indicating that if one finds the “right” form of existence the result will be pleasure everlasting. This sends man on his quest for that ordered form of existence that will assure an everlasting state of satisfaction. But historically, as in our time, when this quest begins man searches for his next higher value system and is accused of a breakdown in his moral and ethical ways (e.g., the attack of the Romans on the early Christians).

As C-P values fail to meet the test of time, both the “have” and the “have not” must explain why their new problems have come to be. Out of this striving, they create man’s fourth subsistence form for existence from whence emerges his fourth level value system. Here man develops a way of life built around his explanation of his “have” and “have not” world as part of an ordered plan. He believes it is meant that some shall have in life and yet face death, that some shall have less and that the many shall not have. There is meaning in man’s living, in why roles are assigned, and why some men shall suffer and why all men must die. Fourth level men believe life is a test of whether one is worthy of salvation, be this salvation occidental or oriental in flavor.

Sacrificial Values (Fourth Subsistence Level)

In his new existential state his thema for existence is, “one shall sacrifice earthly desires now in order to come to everlasting peace later.” This thema gives rise to its associated value system, the sacrificial system, because at this level man focuses his earthly existence not on the end salvation but on the means to that end, sacrifice of desire in the here and now. There is a similarity in this system to its earlier cyclic partner, the B-O value system. Again man values the means toward a tensionless state but here, in the D-Q system the means is not a continuance of tribal ways administered by ones elders. Instead, the means are those prescribed by some all powerful, other-worldly authority.

At the fourth level man does not propitiate his spirits for removal of threat to his immediate existence. Rather he is on a quest for everlasting peace. Here he reveres the established, the lasting, the unchanging as he did in the B-O state, not the lasting ways of his tribe but the all encompassing ways for all mankind. Here man’s search for his Nirvana peaks in those absolutistic, sacrificial values which, if followed, will assure him that he will achieve the end which he values most, the end that is known as salvation. This end is the ultimate reward for living by the values which “the power” has laid down as the basis of man’s earthly behavior.

The most representative schema of this thematic form of valuing is

to value Nirvana, or some other form of tensionless state, such as heaven. In any of the schema the valued means must fit with the end value. The saintly, the monkish, the Christian form of existence must coalesce with whatever is the particular group's heavenly end. Thus, they require the giving up of bodily and selfish desire in the here and now. Typical means-values in all schemas are denial, deference, piety, modesty, self-sacrifice, harsh self-discipline and no self-indulgence. These means are learned through avoidant learning methods.

At this level man accepts his position and his role in life. Inequality is a fact of life. He believes the task of living is to strive for perfection in his assigned role, absolute perfection, regardless of how high or how low his assigned station. He believes that salvation will come ultimately, regardless of his original position, to he who lives best by the rules of life prescribed for him. What one wants, or desires is not important. What is important is that he discipline himself to the prescription of his world. Thus, the prime value of fourth level man is self-sacrifice. He who sacrifices best his wants in the way authority prescribes is most revered. The leader values the life that enables him, if necessary, to sacrifice his self in the protection of the led. The led values sacrificing self in support of the leader.

Fourth level man values the suppression and repression of his inner life and a rigid ordering of the outer world. Kindness to his own kind is valued and tolerance toward the unbeknighted is professed. He values *his* absolutistic moral laws and the words "should" and "ought." Life is considered a serious business; only institutionalized pleasure is permitted. Rules are black and white and only *his* authority has the proper word. *His* authority defines both virtue and sin. Thus, this system has much in common with the B-O system but now it is man's ultimate authority that sets the rules for life instead of man's elders.

Of all the value systems which exist, this fourth level system is one of the most confusing. D-Q values oftentimes appear diametrically opposed, so opposed that they appear to be different value systems. For example, the oftentimes enemies, Pakistanians and Hindus, share the same thematic value system within this point of view. The holy wars of the crusades stemmed from the same value system as the non-violence of Ghandi or Martin Luther King. These are the same because centrally they value sacrifice now to achieve a better state later. Yet, peripherally, fourth level systems are, at times, so different that many wars have been fought over whose sacrificial values should prevail.

This central-peripheral problem can be seen in many other forms. For example, doctrinaire Catholicism and atheistic Communism are mortal enemies, yet within this point of view, they are only polar opposite schema varying from the same central sacrificial thema. We see this, also, when earlier forms of fourth level values are contrasted

to later forms. For example, the Manchu dynasty versus "Mao Think." In the earlier Manchu form, each man was assured, if he lived his role properly, that reward would come hereafter. But after knowledge and technology started to burgeon from the efforts of those who achieved the fifth level, this same sacrificial thema took on the schematic form of current "Mao Think." But once these values bring a modicum of earthly security to those who pursue them, their very success creates a new existential problem for man which appears in the crisis stages between outmoded D-Q values and E-R values.

This D-Q to E-R regressive disorganization of fourth level values is seen by many people as the ultimate sign of man's depravity. When Kant saw fifth level values begin to emerge, he was led to recoil and to try to establish a new fourth level schema. It led Schopenhauer to his pessimistic view of man's values and Freud to the postulation of the Death Instinct. Fourth level man sees the ultimate destruction of all that is good in man as fifth level wants begin to impell man to seek a new form of existence and a new value system. As man casts aside the inhuman, overly denying aspects of the sacrificial ethic it is as if a feeling of independence surges up within him. The saints of the church, Godrich, for example, could no longer stand their saintliness; and the current better-off Russian has started to employ the profit motive. Overcoming self's desires had to give way to what might be termed an Adlerian "Will to Power."

The time comes when some people question the price of sacrificial values and the price of the saintly existence. They ask, "why can't one have some enjoyment in this life? Why must life be only a time of denial?" When this question arises in the mind of man, the sacrificial ethic is doomed to decay and readied for discard. But man cannot move on until he perceives his next set of problems. He must perceive that he cannot have enjoyment in this life so long as he is at the mercy of an unknown world, so long as he is the servant of the universe rather than its master, so long as he does not express his independence from predetermined fate. Concomitant with this perception man once again attempts to adjust the environment to the self and he begins another tortuous climb, this time to the E-R level.

Materialistic Values (Fifth Subsistence Level)

At the E-R level man perceives that his life is limited by his lack of control of the physical universe. His need for independence is unsatisfied. Thus, rationalistic man who "objectively" explores his world comes to be. The thema for existence is "express self in a way that rationality says is good for me now, but carefully, calculatedly so as not to bring down the wrath of others upon me." The end value is materialism and the means to the end is rational, objective positivism,

that is, scientism. This pragmatic, scientific, utilitarianism is the dominant mode of existence in the United States today.

Fifth level materialistic values derive naturally from its thema. They are values of accomplishing and getting, having and possessing. An important "means" value is achievement of control over the physical universe so as to provide for man's material wants. Here he values equality of opportunity and the mechanistic, measuring, quantitative approach to problems, including man. He values gamesmanship, competition, the entrepreneurial attitude, efficiency, work simplification, the calculated risk, scientific scheming and manipulation. But these fifth level, self centered values are not "to-hell-with-the-other-man," egocentric values of the third level system. Here he is careful not to go too far. He avoids inviting rage against himself. He sees to it that the loser gets more than scraps but never as much as he.

Fifth level values improve immeasurably man's conditions for existence. They create wealth and techniques. They lead to knowledge which improves the human condition. But to fourth level man they are akin to sin, to the sixth they are the crass materialism of "The Status Seeker." They, too, give way because once they seem to effectively solve the problems of man's earthly, materialistic existence, they create a new existential problem for him. He has learned how to live with want, A-N through D-Q, and how to overcome it, E-R, but he has learned this for his self and his self alone. He has not learned how to live with his abundance, nor how to live when there are other men who still must live in want. Now he has a new problem and now he must seek a new way of life and a new value system.

When his E-R existential problems are resolved, man finds his material wants have been fulfilled by the over exercise of his need for independence. His life is good, and on the surface seems relatively assured. Now as the other side of man, his subjectivity, gnaws for its opening, there emerges a feeling of dependence. The need to belong, to affiliate himself rather than "go-it-alone," becomes central. This affiliative need, which is man's third form of belonging need, now organizes man's existence. As it does, the adjustment of the organism-to-the-environment process becomes dominant again and gives rise to a new thema for existence: "Sacrifice some now so others can have too."

Sociocratic Values (Sixth Subsistence Level)

Again, as in the B-O and D-Q states, man values authority but not that of his elder's wishes, nor of his all powerful authority, but the authority of those contemporaries whom he values. Thus, I call these values sociocratic because the peer group determines the means by which this end value, community with valued others, is to be obtained.

On the surface sociocratic values appear shallower, less serious and even fickle in contrast to values at other levels because the surface aspect of them shifts as the "valued-other" changes his preferences. But the central core of this system is a very solid process. It is being with, in-with and within, the feelings of his valued other. He values interpersonal penetration, communication, committeeism, majority rule, the tender, the subjective, manipulative persuasion, softness over cold rationality, sensitivity in preference to objectivity, taste over wealth, respectability over power, and personality more than things.

At the sixth level it is the feelings of man, rather than the hidden secrets of the physical universe, which draw his attention. "Getting along with" is valued more than "getting ahead." Consumer goodwill takes precedence over free enterprise, cooperation stands out as more valued than competition and social approval is valued over individual fame. Consumption and warm social intercourse are more valued at this level than are production and cold, calculating self interest.

Two other aspects of sixth level valuing stand out. Here man values commonality over differential classification. To classify people into types or groups is to threaten the sociocentrics' sense of community. The other aspect is his return to religiousness which again he values as he did in the previous adjustive systems. But here he does not value religions per se, religious-like ritualisms, nor religious dogma. Rather it is the spiritual attitude, the tender touch which he reveres.

To many, such as the materialistic establishment, the ascendance of these values signify the breakthrough of man's most regrettable weakness, his tenderness, his subjectiveness, his concern for others rather than his individuality. When sixth level man tries to fit in rather than take over, those who see values from other frames of reference despair of this value system. When some electrical executives recently contrived to allow all to live, rather than kill off the competitor as in C-P "Robber Baron" days, or price them out of business, as at the E-R level, those whose values had a strong D-Q flavor sent them to jail. But this point should not be misunderstood. The F-S values are still lower level subsistence values. The company executives did not think of *all* others. They thought only of themselves and of *their* valued others, but not the public interest.

When man centralizes his values at the F-S level, many feel that man has lost his self, that he has given it up for social approval. But the frame of reference advanced here indicates that this conclusion is in error. It suggests that man has simply subordinated his self interest for the time being and that self interest will return again but in a new and higher form, the G-T form of existence.

Existential Values (First Being Level)

The G-T, seventh level of existence, develops from the resolution of man's animalistic problems, those he has in common with other animals. Previously he learned and developed values which would assure physiological satisfaction, provide for the continuance of a way of life, assure him that he would survive whether others did or not, assure him of a future salvation, which would bring *him* earthly satisfaction here and now, and enable him to be accepted and liked by others. But, now, at the threshold of the seventh level, something happens which changes his behavior markedly. After being hobbled by the more narrow animal-like needs, by the imperative need for sustenance, the fear of spirits and other predatory men, by the fear of trespass upon the ordained order, by the fear of his greediness, and the fear of social disapproval, *suddenly* human cognition is free. Now with his energies free for cognitive activation, man focuses upon his self and his world. The picture revealed is not pleasant. Illuminated in devastating detail is man's failure to be what he might be and his misuse of his world. Triggered by this revelation, man leaps out in search of a way of life and a system of values which will enable him to be more than a parasite leeching upon the world and all its beings. He seeks a foundation for self respect which will have a firm base in existential reality. This firm basis he creates through his seventh level value system, a value system truly rooted in knowledge and cosmic reality and not in the delusions brought on by animal-like needs.

Today seventh level man, with his mind open for cognitive roaming, is developing the coming mode of life. The leading edge of man, eighth level man, is capturing a glimpse of the future modes of life and values for mankind. Proper behavior in the seventh level of existence is the recognizant way. Its ethic is "recognize, truly notice, what life is and you shall know how to behave." That is the foundation stone of the existence ethic. The proper way to behave is the way that comes from working within existent reality. If it is realistic that one should suffer, then suffer he should. If it is realistic to be happy, then it is good to be happy. If the situation calls for authoritarianism, then it is proper to be authoritarian and if the situation calls for democracy, one should be democratic. Behavior is right, is proper if it is based on today's best possible evidence and no shame should be felt by him who behaves within such limits and fails or has to change. This ethic prescribes that what was right yesterday may not be seen as right tomorrow. And it prescribes that some behavior which was wrong yesterday will always be wrong, just as some behavior which was right yesterday may or may not be right today.

Western man at this moment in history is approaching this great

divide, the landmark between *subsistence level systems* and *being level systems*, (Table I). Across this psychological space man may come to the end of his first value trek—the trek which favored the existence of the *action prone man*, the more animalistic man. If man, in mass, can span this space, and truly establish his seventh form for existence, then for the future of mankind, an amazing process will be uncovered. Theoretically, the eighth level system is more like the first psychological system (B-O), than any other. My data suggest that man will move on to repeat on a higher level his first six psychological stages with a *center on intellectually prone man* as contrasted to *action prone man* of the first ladder. And then he will repeat the process a third time emphasizing his *compassionate component*. And, by then, in all probability, man will have changed his self and will move infinitely on. But space does not permit the development of this part of my data so we must return to man at the seventh level of being.

The G-T state develops when man has resolved the basic human fears. With this a marked change in his conception of existence arises. His attention turns to his failure to focus upon the truly salient aspects of life. He sees now that he has the problem of life hereafter, not life now, not life after life, but the restoration of his world so that *life* can continue to be. The most serious problem of existence to date is now *his specie's* existential problem.

Thus at the seventh level, the cognitive level, man truly sees the problems before him if life, *any life*, is to continue. His thema for existence is now "express self so that all others, all beings, can continue to exist." Thus, his values here are of a very different order. Values at the seventh level came not from selfish interest but from the recognition of the magnificence of existence and from the desire to see that it shall continue to be. To seventh level man, the prime value is existence and thus he focuses on the problems that the nature of existence per se creates. Now, for the first time, man is able to face existence in all its dimensions, both those which seem to be known and those which are unexplained, even to the point of valuing inconsistencies, oppositions and flat contradictions.

His "means" values here are *accepting* values. He values the genuine acceptance of human nature as it is and shuns artificiality and preference for what it should be. He values all human appetites but is not a compulsive slave to any of them. He values spontaneity and simplicity and ethics that "make-sense"—but not conventionality. Just "continuing to develop" is more valued than striving to become this or that. The activity is more important than any acclaim that may result. He values solving problems more than fulfilling selfish desires and what must be done rather than that which he desires to do. Universality is valued over provinciality and broadness of view is

preferred to pettiness. He values the long run of time, even beyond his life. Detachment is a value which replaces the objectivity of his E-R days, and a few deep relationships mean more to him than broad acceptance by other men. Faith is more important than religion and viable ends determine more his behavior than do the means to the ends.

Above all else he values democracy in the very deepest sense. He is not an egocentric, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," but a "Do unto others as they would have done to them" democrat. To him there are many roads to Rome and what matters is not the path that is taken, but that one gets to Rome, to the continuance of all life.

Since he values "life," he looks at the world in the context of the many problems that life creates: different wants in different species, different values in different men. He sees the world and all its things, all its beings, all its people, as truly interdependent. He sees them entwined in a subjective-objective complex. So he values pluralism. He values that which will enable all animals, all plants and things to be, and all mankind to become. His ethics are based on the best possible evidence as to what will benefit all. Concern with the majority, the needy or the desiring is not enough. He values that which will bring good to him and all the universe. Yet the peripheral aspects of what he values today may change tomorrow because as he solves one set of problems he seeks another in its place.

Oddly enough this value system is seen as decadent by many. It is seen as decadent because it values new ways, new structurings for life, not just the ways of one's elders. It values others as well as self, the enjoyment of this life over and above obeisance to authority, others having "just as much as me," and it values all and self, not just the selected few. But as magnificent as this value system may seem to those who can feel it, it is not, as so many have thought, the ultimate for man. Beyond it lies another value world that few men have yet to know.

For those men who have come to a relative satisfaction of their need to esteem life, a new existential state, the H-U state is just beginning to develop. It emerges when cognitive man *truly realizes* that there is much he will never know about existence. This insight brings man to the end of his first ladder of values because now he learns he must return to his beginning and travel again, in a higher form, the road by whence he has come. A problem solving existence is not enough. It must become subordinated within a new form of autistic existence. This I call the intuitive existence after the seventh level thema of existence, "adjust to the reality of existence that you can only be, you can never really know."

Experientialistic Values (Second Being Level)

The eighth level values are called the experientialistic values. Here man values those "vast realms of consciousness still undreamed of, vast ranges of experience like the humming of unseen harps we know nothing of within us."⁵ He values wonder, awe, reverence, humility, fusion, integration, unity, simplicity, the poetic perception of reality, non-interfering receptive perception versus active controlling perception, enlarging consciousness, the ineffable experience (Maslow, 1962).

Since eighth level man need not attend to the problems of his existence (for him they have been solved) he values those newer, deeper things in life which are there to be experienced. He values escaping "from the barbed wire entanglement of his own ideas and his own mechanical devices." He values the "marvelous rich world of context and sheer fluid beauty and face-to-face awareness of now-naked-life."

These eighth level experientialistic values are only beginning to emerge in the lives of some men. If the conditions for the existence of man continue to improve, the day will come when they will be the dominant value system of man. The time will come when all other values will be subordinated within their supra-ordination but they too will pass away. And when the time comes that the leading edge of man finds eighth level values wanting, some men, somewhere, sometime will accuse these new venturers of a breakdown of man's values.

And so we come, momentarily, to the end of man's value trek. The theory presented is of course a sketch; it is not finished. Obviously, it is oversimplified and obviously man does not necessarily move slowly and steadily as described. In our world of past and present there are societies and people at all levels, and societies and peoples whose levels are mixed, but these and other complications, such as transitional state value systems, are complications to be dealt with elsewhere. All men do not progress and some societies may wither and die. Man may never cross his great divide but on the other hand, he may. And so the problem of ethical and moral decline lies, this theory says, not so much in the breakdown and discard of 'the old' as in the retention of existentially inappropriate values during a period of profound transformation in human existence.

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⁵ This and subsequent quotations from Vivian de Sola Pinto & Warren Roberts (Eds.), *The complete poems of D. H. Lawrence*. (Volumes I & II). New York: The Viking Press, 1964.