



# Civilizational Transformation

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A what scale must we consider “paradigm change”?

*2010 Paradiso Workshop*  
European Commission  
Brussels  
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Ruben Nelson  
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# Question 1

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**How different will the  
21<sup>st</sup> Century be?**

# Answer Q1

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We are facing a  
paradigm change **of** the  
modern/Industrial  
form of civilization.  
And we do not yet know this.

# Question 2

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What is a **paradigm change of a form of civilization**, and how long does it take?

# Answer Q2

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## Initial Form

## Emergent Form

## Transition

1. Troop

Tribal

20,000 Years?

2. Tribal

Settled – Regional

6,000 Years

3. Settled<sub>R</sub>

Empire – Regional

2,500 Years

4. Empire<sub>R</sub>

Modern/Industrial

1,000 Years

5. M/Industrial

Co-Creative/Co-Evolution

400 Years

# Question 3

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**How do such  
transitions occur?**

# Answer Q3

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## Up to now

- **Slow**
- **Unconscious**
- **Regional**
- **Optional**

# Answer Q3

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## Up to now

- **Slow**
- **Unconscious**
- **Regional**
- **Optional**

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- **Rapid**
- **Conscious**
- **Global**
- **Required**

# Question 4

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**What drives such transitions?**

# Answer Q4

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**A civilization slowly changes its mind/heart/spirit about:**

- **The nature of reality**
- **The nature of the human**
- **The relationship of reality to the human**
- **The roles of the human within reality**

**The root civilizational project changes.**

# Question 5

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**How would you characterize the  
civilizational transformation  
to which we are now  
awakening?**

# Answer Q5

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**FROM:**

**Life is essentially seen & treated as a production/consumption function.**

**TO:**

**Living is essentially seen & treated as a co-creative, co-evolutionary process – one that for humans must now become a conscious and reflexive design process.**

# Question 6

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**Who knows how to  
cooperate consciously  
with their own evolution  
as a whole form of  
civilization?**

# Answer Q6

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Who knows how to  
cooperate consciously  
with their own evolution  
as a whole form of  
civilization?

**NO ONE!**

# Answer Q6

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Who knows how to  
cooperate consciously  
with their own evolution  
as a whole form of  
civilization?

**NO ONE!**  
**YET!**

# Question 7

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**Who could pick up this work  
(franchise)? Who could  
become a living, learning  
laboratory for themselves  
and the world?**

# Answer Q7

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- Singapore
- New Zealand
- Brazil
- Alberta
- Europe
- ...

# Question 8

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**Who will be the first to:**

- Pick up this work
- Own the franchise
- Earn the reputation as the leading living, learning laboratory for the co-creation of the next form of civilization?

# Answer Q8

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- Singapore
- New Zealand
- Brazil
- Alberta

- **Europe?**



A photograph of a stone cairn, a stack of rocks, standing on a rocky, dark-colored peak. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The image is framed by a light blue border with stylized white clouds on the left and right sides.

# Over to YOU!

Our Future **is** in Your Hands, Minds and Hearts

**Thank you**

# Contact

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# The Danger is Overwhelming

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The failure today, to bring the potential reality and implications of peak oil, indeed peak everything, into scientific discourse and teaching is a grave threat to Industrial society.

The concept of the possibility of a huge, multifaceted failure of some substantial part of industrial civilization is so completely outside the understanding of our leaders that we are almost totally unprepared for it.

Charles A.S. Hall & John W Daly, Jr.  
*Revisiting the Limits to Growth After Peak Oil*  
American Scientist  
May-June, 2009

# Letter to Her Majesty

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So where was the problem? Everyone seemed to be doing their own job properly on its own merit. And according to standard measures of success, they were doing it well. The failure was to see how collectively this added up to a series of interconnected imbalances over which no single authority had jurisdiction...Individual risks may rightly have been viewed as small, but the risk to the system as a whole was great.

British Academy  
July 22, 2009

# Letter to Her Majesty – II

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In summary, Your Majesty, the failure to foresee the timing, extent and severity of the crisis and to head it off, while it had many causes, was principally a failure of the collective **imagination** of man bright people, both in this country and internationally, to understand the risks to the system as a whole.

British Academy  
July 22, 2009