

# SARKAR'S SPIRITUAL DIALECTICS

## An unconventional view of the future

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**Although the Indian social revolutionary Prabhat Rainjana Sarkar may not consider himself to be a futurist, analysis of his works shows that his ideas are futuristic in orientation. This article presents his vision of the future, which is fundamentally different from traditional Western futures studies and forecasting methods.**

Prabhat Rainjana Sarkar is well known in India as a social philosopher, political revolutionary, poet and linguist. He has also been described as the complete Renaissance man.<sup>1</sup> These descriptions come as a result of his numerous books and articles in the fields of natural sciences, world history, art, health and political economy, his origination of the progressive utilization theory (PROUT) and his role as spiritual teacher of the social service and spiritual movement *Ananda Marga*.<sup>2</sup>

While these accomplishments are in themselves important, I am interested in discussing his contribution to futures studies. Futures studies<sup>3</sup> is an emerging interdisciplinarian field which holds as one of its basic premises that humanity is at an evolutionary crossroad. Many futurists believe that we may be undergoing technological, political and economic revolutions far more significant than the industrial revolution and possibly more dramatic than any other transitional period in human history. In addition, some futurists argue that we are on the threshold of global governance, interplanetary travel, artificial intelligence, and

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at the end of a world run by the nation-states of Atlantic–Western civilization. However, although this transition promises a bright future, the present is one of unprecedented suffering; we are on the brink of nuclear disaster and in the midst of widespread state terrorism—we face regional famines, desertification, water shortages and unprecedented environmental pollution.

### Futures studies

Futurists not only place the present in a larger perspective, they also attempt to design novel solutions, alternatives to the present. They ask: What are our possible, probable and preferred short- and long-range futures? While most futurists use quantitative data to make their predictions, others deduce probable events and trends from social change theories such as dialectics, and a few intuit their forecasts. In addition, some futurists are concerned with utopia, a perfect place; others about eutopia, a good place; while many about dystopia, a place of horror.

Professional futurists are concerned with the prevalence of suffering in human society, the failure of imagination of governments and businesses, and the inability of individuals to think intelligently about the future. Futurists hope to extend our understanding, our willingness to consider the legitimacy of what is possible, what can be real and what might occur. The field thus hopes to broaden the scope of what constitutes reality.

Notwithstanding the above general goals and concerns of many futurists, by and large futures studies, as developed in the West, has been concerned with forecasting the perturbations of capitalism and its ideological underpinnings—materialism, individuality and technology. It has also had a narrow empirical methodological orientation primarily concerned with refining forecasting techniques. However, the study of the future can never be fundamentally quantitative or exact, as the future does not exist. It must largely be interpretative. It must be visionary. It must, in the words of Elise Boulding paraphrasing Fred Polak from his seminal work *Image of the Future*, include the “eschatological or transcendent, . . . that element which enables the visionary to breach the bonds of the cultural present and mentally encompass the possibility of a totally other type of society, not dependent on what human beings are capable of realizing”.<sup>4</sup>

While Sarkar may not see himself as a futurist, an analysis of his works clearly shows that they are futuristic in orientation, as he is concerned with critiquing the present, with developing an alternative vision of the future, a eutopia, as well as with predicting new technologies and ways of life. Of course, the purpose of Sarkar's analysis is not simply theory building. He is a social revolutionary. His works are also intended to persuade, to inspire, as well as to transform oppressive social and political structures.

However, he constitutes the future in a manner alien to most Western-oriented futures studies—substantively and methodologically. For Sarkar, history and future are dialectical; progress is only possible in the spiritual realm; individual rights are only possible in the context of collective responsibilities; and democracy can only exist when education and ethics are universal. His vision of the future is fundamentally different from the predominant Western epistemological (linear, secular, empirical, individualistic, and liberal–democratic) tradition.

### **Mythic transition**

To understand Sarkar as a futurist, we must first understand his sense of mythos—of who we are, where we are going. We must understand his sense of the ultimate meaning of the present. We can gain insight from his language:<sup>5</sup>

Human civilization now faces the final moment of a critical juncture. The dawn of a glorious new era is on its one side and the worn-out skeleton of the past on the other. Humanity has to adopt either one or the other.

Thus, for Sarkar, humankind is at a mythic transition; a transition that calls upon humanity to awake, to act:<sup>6</sup>

Just as the advent of the crimson dawn is inevitable at the end of cimmerian darkness of the interlunar night, exactly in the same way I know that a gloriously brilliant chapter will also come after the endless reproach and humiliation of the neglected humanity of today. Those who love humanity, those who desire the welfare of all living beings should be vigorously active from this very moment after shaking off all lethargy and sloth so that the most auspicious hour arrives at the earliest.

However, although Sarkar writes that humanity's future is inevitably bright, revolution of any sort—spiritual, economic, cultural, political—is an arduous task. Revolutionaries who desire to transform the numerous pathologies of the present must prepare their minds and bodies; they must be ready to suffer hardships. They must also undergo spiritual transformation—they must suffuse their minds with love, with selflessness. Thus when Sarkar writes that, "the future of humanity is not dark . . . human beings will seek and one day realize the inextinguishable flame that remains ever-burning behind the veil of darkness",<sup>7</sup> he is at one time affirming his faith in the power of men and women radically to transform the suffering on this planet, yet like Mao-Tse Tung, he reminds us that the "path is hard", that it is "strewn with obstacles".

In addition, his use of mythic language transforms events from the purely immediate and rational—that is, from problems that can be analysed and solved by short-term technological solutions—to the holistic and mystic—that is, to problems that can be solved through changes in how we see ourselves and how we see the world.

### **The good society**

The future then for Sarkar is part of the larger human story, part of humanity's evolutionary development. Evolution for Sarkar is the constant effort of the mind to bridge the gap between the finite and the infinite; it is the eventual mystical union, in the deepest sense of the word, between the soul and supreme consciousness. This is fundamentally different from many futurists who see progress primarily as increased economic productivity and a better standard of living—that is, more goods and services and the satisfaction of material needs for a large part of the global population.

Certainly, economic growth is important from Sarkar's perspective. His vision of the good society, however, is premised on individuals being guaranteed the basic requirements of life—food, clothes, shelter, education and health. The ultimate purpose of economic growth is to provide physical security such that women and men can pursue intellectual and spiritual development.

The principles of Sarkar's good society are developed in his comprehensive

theory—the progressive utilization theory or PROUT.<sup>8</sup> It is a global development model, a global vision of the future which intends to challenge both corporate and state capitalism, as well as various forms of communism.

PROUT attempts to balance the need for societies to create wealth and grow with the requirements for distribution. To achieve this, an integral part of the PROUTist vision are income floors and ceilings progressively indexed to aggregate economic growth. Thus, wealth will not be hoarded and thereby underutilized or misutilized as in the case of global stock markets. Unlike Marxism, which argues for equality, PROUT accepts individual differences and individuals' desire to own limited property and goods, as well as the key role of incentives in spurring technological innovation and economic growth. For Sarkar, individual good and collective good are symbiotic—neither one is more important; both find their apex through their interrelationship. It is the unabated accumulation and misuse of wealth that is the central problem. The key economic entity within the ideal PROUT society would be worker-owned and -managed cooperatives. These would include producer, banking, legal, health and other types of cooperatives. Because of economies of scale local small businesses would remain as well as large regional socialized industries run by quasi-governmental appointed boards. There would thus be three sectors—a government sector, a private sector and a people's sector.

In Sarkar's eutopia, he sees a more united, globally oriented human society. He sees temporary unifying sentiments such as nationalism, provincialism and religion transplanted by universalism. In this global society, although he believes there will be a world government with centralized powers, he does not believe one world culture will develop. In fact the key long-term trend will be the decentralization of culture and thus the flourishing of local cultures—languages and economies. This will be possible only once global capitalism and its need to homogenize, commodify and proletarianize everything has been eradicated. It is noteworthy that unlike most futurists, who argue for a decentralized economy and polity, Sarkar believes that without a centralized polity, capitalistic exploitation will continue. For Sarkar, there must be a strong polity structured with separate executive, judicial and legislative powers within the larger context of a spiritual society.

The primary strategy for transforming the capitalist system is the development of regional self-reliant cultural movements based on local languages, local economies and local geography. For Sarkar, individual spiritual development must precede any systemic, societal change. In addition, cultural revolution must precede economic change, for capitalism works by creating a structure of cultural and economic dependency between centres and peripheries, between empires and colonies. Communism, which is also based on the materialistic industrial model characterized by centralization of wealth and homogenization of culture, creates similar oppressive structures.

Among the movements that are presently active are *Kasama*<sup>9</sup> in the Philippines and *Amra Bengali* in India.<sup>10</sup> Both are active in organizing women, students, workers, farmers, professionals and other groups and classes against the injustices and inequities of the present system. Their demands, for example, include 100% employment for local people; laws against the export of local raw materials; laws against the import of manufactured goods which can be produced locally; primacy of local languages in offices and schools; land reforms; rights for animals as well as concern for the long-term care of the

environment; and support for local music, writing, art and dance. In addition, *Kasama* recently participated in the ousting of Marcos and is active in gaining support for the removal of foreign bases and nuclear plants from the Philippines. *Amra Bengali* has contested various local elections and has established cooperatives throughout Bengal. It is now considered the third political force after the central government and the Communist party in Bengal.

Thus, through the creation and legitimation of globally oriented yet regional-based spiritual, cultural and economic movements and the ensuing dialectical conflict that these antisystemic movements will engender as they reconceptualize politics and economies, Sarkar sees the eventual demise of capitalism and communism. This demise, of course, as Sarkar's methodology will illustrate, is also a part of the natural dialectical transformation of the present world system.

### Methodology

Sarkar's vision of the future is based partly on intuition and partly on his analysis of history. He argues that most of us use very little of our mind, geniuses perhaps 1%, while others not even 0.01%.<sup>11</sup> We remain bounded in the body and the conscious analytic mind. However, Sarkar believes that through meditation, through the exploration of the deeper layers of the mind, we can develop our creativity and realize perennial truths. For the seer, past, present and future become known in these deeper layers. Reality is directly perceived. In addition, in the higher states of consciousness, time and space are no longer constraining dimensions; they reveal themselves to the knower of the Self. Although Sarkar enters this discussion as a mystic—much in the tradition of Tagore or Aurobindo, as a *guru*—many academics in the futures field are echoing his perspective. David Loye's *The Sphinx and the Rainbow*, William Irwin Thompson's *The Pacific Shift* as well as the perspective developed by Marilyn Ferguson in *Brain-Mind Bulletin*<sup>12</sup> all argue for the integration of the rational and the intuitive, as well as the use of the intuitive—the deeper layers of the mind—in truly understanding the mythic nature of the present and the coming of the sacred, the communal and the transcendent.

Equally important in Sarkar's contribution to the futures field is his theory of the social cycle. Whereas Marx argued that society moved through ages of precommunism, to feudalism, to capitalism, to socialism and eventually to a classless communism, and whereas many academic futurists argue that we have moved from an agricultural to an industrial era, and that we now stand on the threshold of a historical shift to a post-industrial information society centred around the Pacific Rim,<sup>13</sup> Sarkar sees society as moving cyclically through four ages. The motivity of this movement is not the forces of production impacting the relations of production as in Marxism, nor new technologies impacting society as in the writing of futurists such as Toffler, nor simply the influence of great men; rather, for Sarkar it is physical struggle (man's battle with the environment), mental struggle (the battle between new and old ideologies) and the spiritual attraction of the Great (that force which leads women and men towards the Infinite). The structure of this movement is dialectics.<sup>14</sup> Because of contradictions inherent in the initial state (the thesis), an antithesis emerges. The ensuing clash results in a synthesis.

Moreover, Sarkar believes that not only is societal movement dialectical, it is also pulsative; like breathing it starts, rests and starts. Similarly, societies have periods of rapid progress, of movement. Following their peak, a phase of exploitation sets in and then societies decline.

### **Social cycle**

What then are the different ages? Briefly, and certainly simplifying Sarkar's complex yet elegant analysis, humans originally were in the worker era (precommunism for Marx and the age of chaos for Thompson). Here, humans were controlled by their environment. The next phase was the martial era. In this age, the age of heroes as William Irwin Thompson has written<sup>15</sup> (feudalism for Marx), various clans fought for power. Empires were built by the strongest and the most courageous. During the exploitive phase of this era, empires grew through military colonization and through exploiting labourers and appropriating the wealth of others. The next historical phase was the intellectual era. It was brought about by those who controlled the environment, not through physical strength but through strategy, political strength, and ideology. This was the age of priests, of patriarchy and of civil society. Power was wrested away from kings by their ministers through the power of the written word. Political writers, for example, during the Renaissance movement in Europe redefined the power of the king and developed arguments for individual rights and government by social contract. The intellectual era, as evidenced by the relationship between the Protestant ethic in Europe and the rise of capitalism, was also the base for the era of the capitalists. It is in this capitalist era that we find most of the world. Even in Third World countries who, in terms of their 'internal cycle', are still in the martial era (due to underdevelopment from colonialism), it is capitalism that is the dominant ideology.

In addition, each era flourishes in its thesis phase—human rights, political participation, economic productivity and scientific development increase. During the decline phase, the creative abilities and work opportunities of the classes not in power are stifled. Peripheries are exploited and the ruling class controls the other classes through military force, cultural-intellectual force, or economic force or through a combination thereof, depending on the era. During the era of the accumulators of capital, all these forces are used in a particularly brutal manner.<sup>16</sup>

### **Revolution and evolution**

What then after a complete round of the cycle? According to Sarkar, the cycle continues in a spiral dialectical manner, wherein each phase evolves from the previous phase and is at a qualitatively higher level. At transitional points, however, there are variations. A counter-revolution can emerge, as in the case of Iran where the priests now run the polity, although it is not clear what the collective psychology is. Collective psychology, rather than control of polity or the relations of production, is considered the true empirical indicator of a people's place-time in the social cycle, according to Sarkar. Another alternative is counter-evolution, a slower move to a previous stage in the cycle. Both of these counter-phases are short-lived, as they are movements against the "natural flow of the cycle". The third and fourth alternatives are evolution and

revolution, that is, slow or rapid movement into the next phase. The Soviet and Chinese revolutions are examples of workers' revolutions followed by new martial eras (socialism in Marx's language or totalitarianism in the language of liberals and conservatives). Democratic socialism, then, is an effort to move to a martial era through a gradual evolutionary process.

Sarkar thus believes that major revolutions will occur throughout the world shortly. This is largely because in late capitalistic society exploitation, especially of women, is particularly brutal. "In order to accumulate more and more in their houses they [the capitalists] torture others to starvation; and to impress the glamour of their garments, they force others to put on rags. . . . [t]hey suck the very living plasm of others to enrich their living capabilities."<sup>17</sup> In addition, intellectuals and martial-minded individuals cannot express their tendencies and potentials. Some become servants of the ruling class—the "boot lickers of capitalists"<sup>18</sup>—while others remain unemployed.

It is these disgruntled intellectuals and martial-minded individuals who will bring on the next cycle.<sup>19</sup> The level of violence during transitions between eras is determined by the aggregate ratio of intellectuals to the martial-minded and the timing of the revolution is a correlate of the increasing population of these two classes. The question for Sarkar is whether humans can fundamentally alter the cycle. His conclusion is that although the social cycle follows a natural law and thus will continue, humans can reduce the exploitive phase of the cycle by bringing on the next era. The next turn of the cycle then becomes a spiral, with each new phase bringing on progressively higher levels of human development. Thus, the new martial era, although structurally similar to the historic one, will be qualitatively at a higher level. In addition, the intermediate anarchic workers' stage will be short-lived as power will quickly centralize among the intellectual or martial-minded leaders of the workers' movement.

To reduce the exploitive phase of each era, Sarkar argues for the development of declassed individuals who on a "well thought, preplanned basis"<sup>20</sup> predict the movements of the cycle and then through their revolutionary efforts, if necessary, bring on the next era. However, unlike present power élites such as the Communist Party or corporate executives who are part of the dominant class and ideology that "run the planet", these individuals must be declassed and have value structures based on love and neohumanism.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, while Marxists see the next phase as that of world socialism and while spiritual visionaries believe the next phase will be the Age of Aquarius, and futurists, in general, believe we are entering the age of technology and science, Sarkar believes it will be a global martial era, with some regions having moved to a new intellectual era. Describing this era, this new future, is difficult. We can postulate that government will be centralized, while the world economy will be highly decentralized and cooperative or socialist in nature. Although the world government structure will initially be strengthened by law framing international agencies, eventually a world polity will develop with executive, legislative and judicial functions. There will also exist constitutional rights for workers, guaranteed basic necessities for all, and rights such as world citizenship.

Economic growth will come from ending the global exploitation of workers and others peripheral to the world capitalist system. Through maximum–minimum wealth laws, the world surplus will be redistributed. Through worker involvement in business and through the end of stock markets, labour and capital will become more productive. Intellectual and spiritual resources

presently being wasted will become valuable inputs into economic development. In addition, PROUT writer Michael Towsey believes that a gender dialectic also exists, such that the breakdown of the patriarchal nature of capitalist society will lead to the incorporation of the mythic feminine in the emerging martial era. Neither gender will then be commoditized.<sup>22</sup>

### **Science and technology**

This new era for Sarkar is not one that pits spirituality against science. Sarkar believes that technological development controlled by non-capitalists, by humanists, will lead to increased economic growth, intellectual development and social equality. Sarkar, in fact, sees the development of technology that will have "mind" in it, that is, technology that will have some level of self-awareness. Most likely this will result from developments in artificial intelligence. Sarkar also forecasts that once full employment is reached, and once the untapped potential of humans, individually and collectively, is increasingly realized, instead of massive unemployment because of productivity gains from robotics, we will simply reduce our working week, so that "one day, we may only work five minutes a week. Being not always engrossed in the anxiety about grains and clothes, there will be no misuse of mental and spiritual wealth. [We] will be able to devote more time to sports, literary discourses and spiritual pursuits."<sup>23</sup> Struggle then will largely be in intellectual and spiritual realms—in the constant effort to reduce the gap between the finite and the infinite, between the present and the ideal future.

Sarkar sees the problem of food solved primarily through the cooperative economic structure. Each region will utilize its own raw materials and develop industries appropriate to the local environment. By encouraging self-sufficiency and self-reliance, some of the advantages of global trade will be lost in the short run—the North in particular will face a reduction in its standard of living. However, as regions develop and economic gains are redistributed, trade between different regions will flourish. Trade then will be between equals, rather than between centres and peripheries, or between the powerful and the emaciated. Sarkar also forecasts that food tablets will be invented to deal with any temporary food shortages that may arise.

In addition, "medical science will increase longevity"<sup>24</sup> perhaps to 150 years, and "in certain fields (we) will even be able to infuse life in the dead".<sup>25</sup> Sarkar also predicts that by "changing individual glands, a dishonest man may become an honest man".<sup>26</sup> However, glandular changes will not be able to transform root behaviour structures; only spiritual practices, according to Sarkar, can fundamentally transform the structure of the human mind. Unlike some futurists such as F. M. Esfandiary, who predict that we are on the threshold of immortality and that we may soon uncover "an aging gene",<sup>27</sup> Sarkar believes that death cannot be escaped as brain decay cannot be postponed.

Sarkar also forecasts that children will be born in "human reproduction laboratories",<sup>28</sup> and that parents will choose the characteristics of their children. Sarkar forecasts that in the long-term future we will become thin beings with large heads and will lose our physical reproductive facilities. We will become primarily intellectual and psychic beings. According to Sarkar, we will gradually take on the functions now performed by Cosmic Mind (loosely, 'Nature')—we will in mythic language become as gods. This image should be contrasted with

that of other spiritual visionaries and futurists who believe that technological development should be severely limited and that we should not tamper with 'Nature'.<sup>29</sup>

We will thus become an increasingly technologically developed society with spirituality as the base and goal of life. We will look back at the days of the nation-state and the great capitalist and totalitarian communist empires and wonder why it was ever doubted that they could not be transformed. We will primarily be psychic beings travelling to other planets through space technology (the conquest of space will be in the forefront given the upcoming martial era),<sup>30</sup> and even through our minds, that is, we will be able to leave our bodies in one place and travel with our minds. The stars will eventually become our home. We will have granted legal rights to all humans as well as plants. What of the threat of nuclear war? For Sarkar, mind remains more powerful than matter and nuclear weapons are fundamentally matter. Thus, he believes that we will discover ways to counter nuclear devices, especially with the end of the arms race and the military-industrial complex that capitalist and communist poles have created.

The problem of power and exploitation will not go away, of course. Most likely it will be fought in the mental realm, between ideologies and perhaps even at the level of psychic warfare. The martial era will naturally develop its own contradictions as the centralization of the polity may eventually lead to oppression. New visions of the future will then emerge.

Sarkar's vision of the future is also a programme for spiritual, economic and political change. He, along with others, has initiated PROUT movements throughout the world. His activism in India, in fact, led to his political imprisonment for seven years. Although the self-reliant, cultural people's movements are still small, Sarkar believes that eventually they will reach a critical size and then pose a significant challenge to the present world system. Then the vision of PROUT will further face the test of the real world of violence and power.

### Critique

Sarkar's vision of the future, his idea of the good society and his predictions can be critiqued forcefully from a variety of perspectives. The purpose of this article is the presentation of an unconventional view of the future. I shall therefore present only a brief critique. First of all, the maxi/mini limits on land and wealth run counter to the liberal-democratic ownership principles of capitalism. The spiritual basis of PROUT also contradicts the *laissez-faire* ideology of self-interest leading to harmony for all. Thus, PROUT movements, as they gain support, will be severely challenged by the world capitalist system. As the history of antisystemic movements such as the international socialist movement has shown, we should not discount the ability of the capitalist system, on the world and national level, to stifle and co-opt antisystemic movements. In addition, instead of transforming capitalism and communism, Sarkar's cultural and ethnic movements may lead to various forms of ethnocide and race wars. He also appears to discount the possibility of nuclear holocausts. All in all, his vision appears overly idealistic.

PROUT's concept of leadership is also problematic. Sarkar's spiritual leadership, although obviously necessary to transform capitalism and to ensure the humanistic applications of technology, raises the possibility of an

authoritarian religious leadership developing over time. Finally, neither his view of history, nor his predictions of the future, at present, have any empirical basis. For example, how can we reliably deduce which regions are in which era of the social cycle? In addition, will all regions be in one global martial era, or will some have their own internal cycles?

Of course, Sarkar has responses to all these critiques. Again, very briefly, for him the world capitalist system will transform due to its own contradictions. The cultural movements will primarily emphasize spiritual unity and universality and secondly attempt to polarize the ruling class and the exploited classes. The development of a populist spiritual leadership will be balanced by increased educational development among the public and by strengthened judicial institutions. Finally for Sarkar, his theory of history and his forecasts are intentionally interpretive and intuitional. Although empirical validation is important to him, transforming the world is more so.

### The new human in the new world

Although Sarkar is idealistic, he emphasizes the precarious struggle ahead for humanity. He warns us of the possibility of a world destroyed by pollution and ravaged by human greed and evil, yet his vision remains optimistic. But we should not be surprised, as Sarkar has written: "I am an incorrigible optimist, for optimism is the essence of life."<sup>31</sup> Sarkar's vision is a global vision, and although he develops a partially deterministic theory of history, it is women and men who must act courageously, who must bring about preferred visions, who must with their intellect develop new scientific possibilities and societal futures, and thus develop the new human in the new world. As Sarkar states in his classic mythic language:<sup>32</sup>

Let the cimmerian darkness of the interlunar night disappear. Let humanity of the new day of the new sunrise wake up in the new world.

### Notes and references

1. P. R. Sarkar, born in 1921, resides in Calcutta. He developed the progressive utilization theory (PROUT) in 1959. He also started the Renaissance Universal Movement—an association of spiritual and socialist oriented intellectuals—that year. He has written in diverse fields such as health, ethics, devotional literature, fiction, history, political economy, biology, linguistics and philosophy. PROUT's opposition to Indira Gandhi's government lead to Sarkar's being jailed in 1971. He was released in 1978 when the Janata government created the conditions for an impartial Judiciary. See Prabhat Rainjana Sarkar, *Poet, Author, Philosopher* (Vermont, USA, Ananda Marga Publications, 1986).
2. *Ananda Marga* is a social service and spiritual movement with centres throughout the world. It teaches meditation and other spiritual practices, and is involved in community health and educational development projects. Although its cultural roots are Indian, it is universal in its approach.
3. Throughout this essay, I use the terms futures studies and futurists in a general sense. Although there are numerous differences between futurists, there is an emerging futures field, which in general accepts the liberal–democratic secular–capitalist tradition, although many do believe this system will undergo massive shocks in the near and long-range future, primarily due to technological changes. This 'continued growth' view is best characterized by the Washington DC based World Future Society and developed in its journal *The Futurist*. Herman Kahn is perhaps the most famous writer in this genre of futures studies. In contrast is the Hawaii and Europe based World Futures Studies Federation which is critical of the present global system, its structure and its ideological underpinnings. Johan Galtung's writings best characterize this perspective.

4. Elise Boulding, "The imaging capacity of the West", in Magoroh Maruyama and James Dator (editors), *Human Futuristics* (Hawaii, University of Hawaii, SSRI, 1971) page 30. *Image of the Future* by Fred Polak was published by Oceana, New York, 1961.
5. P. R. Sarkar, *The Supreme Expression II* (Ananda Nagar, India, AMPS, 1978) page 161.
6. *Ibid*, page 164.
7. P. R. Sarkar, *Light Comes* (Calcutta, India, AMPS, 1986) page 21.
8. Books about PROUT by Sarkar's students include the following: Ravi Batra, *The Downfall of Capitalism and Communism* (London, Macmillan Press, 1978); Ravi Batra, *Regular Cycles of Money, Inflation, Regulation, and Depression* (Texas, Venus Books, 1985); and Gary Coyle, *Progressive Socialism*, (Sydney, Australia, Proutist Universal Publications, 1984). Also see, Acarya Krtashivananda Avadhuta, *PROUT Manifesto* (Copenhagen, PROUT Publications, 1981); and Acarya Tadbhavananda Avadhuta, *Samaj* (Calcutta, India, Proutist Universal Publications, 1985).
9. Kasama USA, *Kasama: Six Demands to Strengthen Democracy in the Philippines* (Washington DC, Kasama USA Support Committee, 1986).
10. See Acarya Tadbhavananda Avadhuta and Jayanta Kumar, *The New Wave* (Calcutta, Proutist Universal Publications, 1985) page 135. For example, *Amra Bengali's* demands include: (1) The abolition of non-Bengali domination of industries; (2) preferential employment of local population; (3) use of Bengali in official work; (4) termination of Hindi linguistic domination; (5) eradication of materialistic pseudoculture; and (6) halting the drainage of Bengal's economic wealth to other parts of India.
11. P. R. Sarkar, *The Supreme Expression*, *op cit*, reference 5, page 80.
12. David Loye, *The Sphinx and the Rainbow* (Boulder, CO, USA, Shambala Books, 1983); William Irwin Thompson, *The Pacific Shift* (San Francisco, Sierra Club Books, 1985); and Marilyn Ferguson, *Brain-Mind Bulletin: write to Interface Press*, PO Box 4221, Los Angeles, CA 98842, USA.
13. See Sohail Inayatullah, "The concept of the Pacific shift", *Futures*, 17, (6), December 1985; and Johan Galtung, "World conflict formation processes in the 1980s (United Nations University Paper, 1981). See also for books on the post-industrial era, Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* (New York, Bantam Books, 1981); and Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (New York, Basic Books, 1973).
14. P. R. Sarkar, *The Human Society* (Calcutta, AMPS, 1984) and *Abhimata* (Ananda Nagar, India, AMPS, 1973).
15. See William Irwin Thompson, *Darkness and Scattered Light* (New York, Anchor Press, 1978), and *Evil and World Order* (New York, Harpers, 1976).
16. See also Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Politics of the World Economy* (London, Cambridge University Press, 1985).
17. P. R. Sarkar, *Problem of the Day* (Ananda Nagar, India, AMPS, 1959) page 3.
18. P. R. Sarkar, *The Human Society*, *op cit*, reference 14, page 97.
19. Tim Anderson, *The Liberation of Class: P. R. Sarkar's Theory of Class and History* (Calcutta, Proutist Universal Publication, 1985) pages 14–15. These ages are also related to different distinct mentalities. "Firstly, the worker . . . seeks employment through simple physical or mental skills; secondly is the martial type, where greater physical capacities are developed along with the thought of domination, courage, honor, prestige and discipline; thirdly, the intellectual where greater psychic abilities are developed and utilised in the process of gaining objects of existence and enjoyment; and, fourthly, the commercialist or capitalist where mental abilities specifically aimed at the acquisition and manipulation of physical wealth are developed." The worker is dominated by the environment; the martial type attempts to dominate the environment and the other classes through physical strength; the intellectual attempts to control the environment and the other classes through the mind/ideology, and the capitalist attempts to control the environment and the other classes through the ownership of the means of production. Importantly, Anderson warns us not to confuse these categories with the old Indian caste system. These "are purely psychological types interacting with the existing social condition to create the particular objective class relationships of the era."
20. P. R. Sarkar, *Idea and Ideology* (Ananda Nagar, India, AMPS, 1967) page 85.
21. P. R. Sarkar, *The Liberation of Intellect-Neo Humanism* (Calcutta, AMPS, 1982).
22. Michael Towsey, *Eternal Dance of Macrocosm* (Copenhagen, Proutist Publications, 1986).
23. P. R. Sarkar, *Problem of the Day*, *op cit*, reference 17, page 13.
24. *Ibid*, page 40.
25. *Ibid*.
26. P. R. Sarkar, *Abhimata*, pages 130–131.
27. See F. M. Esfandiary, *Optimism One* (New York, Norton, 1970); also see Sohail Inayatullah, "The future of death and dying," in *Futures*, 5, (2), 1981.
28. P. R. Sarkar, *Problem of the Day*, *op cit*, reference 17, page 40.
29. See for example, Jeremy Rifkin, *Declaration of a Heretic* (Boston, Routledge and Kegan Paul,

- 1985). He is the best critic of the New Biology (genetic engineering, brain drugs, and the host of other emerging fields which promise radically to change human nature).
30. In the USA, for example, indicators of the emerging martial era include the changing structure of the corporation towards increased employee rights and ownership. These are especially prevalent in the new high-tech centres in California. The desire for exploration in outer space, although presently certainly an outgrowth of the capitalist class's attempt to colonize the future, could become a part of the new era as the first colonists break away from Earth and establish their own polities and cultures. Another indicator is the desire for a more centralized polity, although here again a desire of the capitalist class to control value-oriented intellectuals may lead to this class's demise, as advanced capitalism works best in a decentralized weak democratic system. Thus, a centralized system can be authoritarian, yet it can also liberate the exploited classes. Finally, although new eras lead to class change, Sarkar argues that inevitably the revolutionaries become exploiters and suppress the potentials of the other classes. Thus, the emerging martial era may not be the glorious New Age that some futurists envision. Sarkar, however, does believe that this New Age is possible, but that it will take radical changes in how we see the world, and how power, wealth and knowledge are constituted and distributed.
  31. P. R. Sarkar, *Light Comes*, *op cit*, reference 7, page 241.
  32. P. R. Sarkar, *Human Society II* (Calcutta, AMPS, 1984) page 135.