THE CONCEPT OF
INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
by Tony Macelli

This article is designed to contribute to a conceptual framework about the balanced development of the human individual and of human collectivities. Such a framework is necessary for the responsible educator and for the agent of social collective change. The teacher, the counsellor, the journalist, the community developer, the statesman...

The word 'integral' has two connotations: firstly that of 'wholeness' in the sense of nothing being left out. The second one is the sense of 'balanced', or even 'healthy'. When dealing with human development, that is with human psyche (or mental space or whatever) human social organisation, culture, and ecological patterns, the first or holistic connotation of the word integral forces us to think to some extent in terms of the theory of complex systems. At the very least, one has to be aware of all the reality that one is trying to 'develop', not only by looking at all the relevant parts and their interactions but also at the whole itself. The second of the connotations, namely that of balance, is often a matter of one's values – what one judges to be 'sound', 'vigorous', or 'good' or 'healthy'. There is thus only a limited place here for the abortive attempt by social scientists to emulate the natural scientists and become value-free. Whatever the values are, however, they must be explicit so that they may be both criticised and used in evaluation of programmes.

In wanting to 'integralise' human development the development theorist or the educator finds that he is not alone: that is also what they are trying to do in medicine and religion. It is interesting to look at the etymology of the following five words, which normally belong in different mental compartments.

healing
wholeness
holiness (has the same origin as wholeness)
salvation (fr. salvus, salus: Lat. = healed or whole)
religion (fr. relegare, to bind together or integrate)
The work development usually evokes the transitive sense (to develop something) and, in a kind of subsidiary position, the intransitive sense (to develop, oneself). In other words, even when we speak of an agent A developing some reality B we often assume that the inherent traits, if any, whereby B 'develops' are not opposed but rather encouraged selectively, in the deliberate process. Development in its mainly transitive sense therefore means some process of selectively suppressing or removing certain constraints and other undesired traits, processes, etc. — together with a selection, reinforcement and acceleration of certain desirable, existing processes, and the incorporation of new ones. Clearly, the values used in development work are therefore quite central to the whole issue.

Two other reflections about the use of the word development are in order. Firstly, we have been so hypnotised with economic growth that our language has been impoverished by the use of the word 'development' to describe all kinds of new industrial installations, even the least inspiring. The other point is that in certain circles it is also slightly gauche to talk about development because of its value-implications, and to substitute 'social change'. The latter phrase has its uses, but it is only embarrassment or cynicism that allows it to be used as a euphemism for development.

Finally, in the phrase 'integral human development' we come to the word 'human'. When we say 'man' we think immediately of both the individual and collectively, particularly the whole human race. If we decide that both the individual and the collectively are to be dual emphasis of our development efforts (say in terms of investment of funds) then one of the things we ought to do is to think carefully about the relation between the individual and the collectivity. We need to have clearly in mind the various possible forms this relationship can take, and how each of these forms relates to certain schemes of values. It is only in this way that one is then empowered to decide about what courses of action to adopt whenever there are, for example, trade-offs between the importance (in terms of investment of resources) to be given to the individual and that to the collectivity. Individualistic capitalism is close to one extreme, while totalitarian communism is close to the other, when it comes to making such trade-offs. It is instructive to see what happens in a small loving group to this relationship between the individual and the collectivity; but we shall not discuss this here.

Integral human development, therefore, is an attempt to combine and operationalise the three concepts involved. 'Integral' applies to both of the other two concepts. Thus, the reality of man to be developed must be integral: the 'whole man' is meant, with all his
richness and potentiality (and not merely homo economicus, if such a monster exists). On the other hand, the development approach itself must be integral: it must avoid overspecialisation or other forms of narrowness and imbalance. In both cases we have to remember that the human race is not all here at present, and that future generations must not therefore be callously ignored in the same way as one may leave a dirty bathroom for subsequent users.

But why talk about integral human development at all? The sad truth of the matter is that all over the planet such an approach is very uncommon at individual, community, regional, and wider levels of development. According to Francis Blanchard, director of the International Labour Organisation,¹

'It is now an accepted fact that the very pace and pattern of world development over the past quarter of a century have generated social, economic, and ecological imbalances. The relatively high rates of economic growth achieved by the developing countries taken as a whole have not been accompanied by corresponding improvements in the living standards of the great masses of the population ... Unemployment has reached crisis proportions in a large number of countries ... In quantitative terms, the problems of underemployment and inadequate incomes are even more serious ... It is urgent that policy-makers should look at the International Development Strategy more particularly from these points of view.

We may speculate that the main culprits are: the inadequate personal education of individual agents of change; the difficulties of evaluating holistic programmes; unimaginative schooling; the poverty of the basic image of man entertained by planning institutions at municipal, national, and international level (excepting perhaps UNESCO). In short, we lack a collective human maturity when it comes to organised development programmes and the attempt to make what Neilbroner calls 'man's first act of history', the changing of the course of history and the start of a creative use of the future.

Roughly speaking, we may say that of the last three decades the first two were devoted to a narrow vision of development, dominated by economic growth, while the last decade has been tempered somewhat by an attempt to include the so-called 'human factor in development'. This is a phrase which I find particularly offensive (as if there were ever any other 'factor' in human develop-

ment!): it appears to arise out of the misbehaviour of certain ultra-simplistic and highly-aggregate economic models of economic growth. In these, the desired goal of high income or high national or other production is seen to depend, not only on capital and labour and returns to scale but also (not surprisingly) on other factors. These came to be considered as an aggregate and one began to talk about the human factor in development models. Tuqan\textsuperscript{2} tells us that

'In recent years, the added human factor has been almost equated with investment in the education of man. This emphasis on education could be said to have been due to two main reasons. Firstly, the West traditionally assigned a major role to publicly-supported education, which not only promoted social peace, harmony, and self-improvement but constituted a force in the process of wealth-creation. In other words, the development of learning and skills was apparent to everyone as a very considerable external economy of an educational system which, from the viewpoint of national output, provided its chief justification as a free public service.'

Recently we are finding that the human reality which is to be developed consists of more than three or four 'factors' and the single-factor approach is losing credibility. Even if some factors are likely to be strategic, the selection of such a factor cannot be a priori but must be the fruit of either experiment or the analysis of complex systems. The development goals, too have been explicitly diversified, so that one is now no longer talking about increasing the aggregate income but about many other goals, economic and non-economic, and about different goals as affecting the different groups of people involved. Quite recently, and not without some painful prodding from world events like famines and other scarcities, there has started a worldwide groping for wider concepts and programmes of development that attempt to do more justice to the wholeness and to the complexity that is man and his world.

It is very timely, therefore, for us to be talking about integral human development. It is also a fitting framework into which we shall be able to fit the subsequent talks in this series of seminars. We are attempting to make this orientation central to the work of our university especially with regard to the regional development of the Mediterranean.

It is not easy to develop a whole conceptual framework about integral human development in this short space, so we must perhaps lower our sights and try to hit the more important considerations. One way in which this could be done is to ask the basic questions. Since development involves the changing of some reality we must ask: development of what? Here we must look at the facts: what man is in his various aspects or parts. In addition, noting that development is not merely change but planned and guided, directional, change, we must also ask: development towards what? This question about directionality will involve us not only in facts but also in values. Finally, about this progression of what is towards what is desired, we must ask: development how? In other words, what are the tools and techniques, (mechanical or otherwise) and what are the strategies encompassing these tools and technologies, which can be used to force or coax this progression along? And in answering these questions we must, as already stated, be guided by the challenging word: ‘integral’. Here I can do no more, in this short space, than suggest skeletal guidelines and frameworks for replying to these questions. The deeper insights which will enable some flesh to be built around the skeleton.

A. Development of what? When sociologists talk about social systems they refer mainly to man’s institutionalised behaviour (actions) and role-expectations (images). The same can be said of psychologists. Similarly, in the field of culture, we have a complex and long-lasting system of symbols and images, and, as in processions and festivals, we have certain behaviour which relates intimately to these symbols and images. Also, at the level of man as a biological organism, man’s reality consists both of sense-messages and images and of behaviour such as food-gathering, shelter-building, body-functions, etc. We may thus visualise not only the traditional division into the four compartments: culture, sociopolitical (networks of relationships of power and influence), psychological, and organismic, but also the further subdivision of each of these into what we may briefly call (a) images and (b) actions. (See Fig. 3.1a, 3.1b, 3.2).

Such a descriptive model is certainly not complete without an explicit emphasis on the interpenetration of each of the four compartments: there is no sharp dividing line between, for example, psychologically-motivated behaviour and sociopolitically-motivated behaviour, neither is there between, say, sociopolitical images. In Fig. 5.2 we have added the environment, standing for anything outside the system. We have also elaborated ‘cultural
images' to make explicit reference to those cultural images which portray the human system itself, or part of it; these may be called reflexive cultural images since the rest of the system, and the environment, is reflected in them. For this reason the reflexive cultural symbolism may be regarded as a major structural feedback device which, on the basis of the system's current characteristics, influences those characteristics themselves. As soon as man gains knowledge about himself, he becomes a guided or cybernetic system. If this guiding or control is planned and deliberate, this is what is called development. Another method of picturing the system is given in Fig. 3.3, which also includes communications networks. The environment and the system's links with it are inserted, and we get Fig. 5.4. The message is this: all of the human system (depicted in fig. 5.2 or 6.2) is to be considered as a domain for development, not forgetting the ecological links and the spiritual links with the environment of the system. It is worth noting that concern with ecology is only recently becoming fundamental to development theory; and that spiritual links have rarely been considered as anything but an obstacle by development planners — a fundamentally mistaken attitude.

The interrelationship between all parts of the human system (not forgetting, as we have said, the links with its environment) is so great that bringing about any improvement in one compartment involves changes in most of the others. This does not represent merely a headache (too many things to consider) but can be a blessing since a change in one compartment can be made so that it can then influence several other compartments; provided that we understand the inter-connections and processes well enough to use such strategies effectively. It might be easier, for example, to change people's perception (images) of certain roles than to change the role-behaviours themselves directly. Images have a considerable if not primary role in social change and development: they may produce or impede change. In fact, social change can be defined in terms of the image-system rather than the behaviour-system:

We ... define social change as modifications in the meanings and values held by society or by important groups in society. ³

Since all parts of the human system are to be considered as domain for development, all geographic levels are ultimately indicated by the term 'integral' human development. The national

level is often quite arbitrary and has many disadvantages. The level of the local community is more real. For many countries one must focus on subnational regions because of an ecological, cultural or other coherence. In certain cases, including the Mediterranean, supranational regions must be considered as domains for integrated development efforts. (In the case of the Mediterranean this is mainly because of similar climate and lifestyles, and because of the dynamics of the closed sea.) We have already mentioned that spatial holism should be also complemented by temporal holism and a concern for future generations.

B. Development towards what? We know intuitively that although one may set achievable targets in development programmes, and in fact achieve them, there is no future state at which we shall all be content to say 'now, here, we have arrived at our destination'. Thus, the question is not to be really one about destinations but of directions: In what direction are we to develop? Two types of answers come to mind: (a) directions agreed either by 'authority' or by some participative on representative democratic consensus, and (b) directions imposed by the nature of things, things that are currently unchangeable. Let us consider the latter type. Nature may impose certain constraints: this is straightforward enough. However there is another and unexpected source of constraint: General System Theory. We have already stated that the commitment to 'integrality' implies that we must think in terms of the theory of complex systems. We have also already seen that human systems are guided or controlled and so cybernetic. However, they fall within a certain very special class of cybernetic systems, for which special forms of analysis apply. This is the class of 'Learning Systems', systems which learn. These are systems which are able to change their patterns of internal interconnection as well as their states in response to information about the external environment and also to reflexive information about the system's own states. Cybernetics alone is inadequate to describe this class, and we move into the field of General Systems Theory. One of the broad conclusions of this discipline has been that

un système devient plus complexe s'il parvient à développer son aptitude a s'organiser en fonction du changement, non seulement pour s'y adapter et survivre, mais pour s'enrichir et se développer.4

(A system becomes more complex if it manages to somehow


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evolve an aptitude for reorganising itself whenever changes occur, not only in such a way as to adapt itself and survive, but so as to enrichen itself and develop.) For such an eventuality, general systems theory demonstrates the necessity, Robin continues, for the system to disengage itself from rigid mechanisms: hence the need for the system to behave as a structure that is weakly hierarchical and avoids *hyperspecialisation* and *centralisation.* If we wish life on earth to become a matter of more complex systems (this has been the thrust of evolution so far) we must then avoid hyperspecialisation and excessive hierarchy in complex systems like the ecology (as influenced by man), the individual's cognitive structures, the sociopolitical or institutional networks, and the cultural interactions. Because if we do not heed these warnings we will be damaging the capacity of these systems to become more sophisticated and possibly even to survive as changes occur with the passage of time. These are very sobering conclusions when we note such facts as the agricultural policy whereby we are limiting the number and diversity of plant and animal species on the planet; the hyperspecialisation in our universities (these seminars are an attempt to counteract this in our own situation); the rigid hierarchical ordering of many sociopolitical realities. These constraints must be taken account of; as an example, here is the suggestion of Robin for a super-goal for human development:

 mantenir les conditions d'évolution des systemes vivants et des systemes ecologiques, afin de permettre à la structure la plus complexe, l'espace humain, d'exercer toutes ses potentialités, et afin de favoriser l'émergence de structures encore complexifiées.

(To maintain the conditions of evolution for living organisms and ecological systems, with the aim of allowing the most complex structure, man, to exercise all his potentialities, and with the aim also of favouring the development of structures of even greater complexity.)

Having this particular super-goal enables us to do several things. Firstly, other goals for more specific situations can be derived from this and other super-goals. Secondly, we learn to beware of hyperspecialisation and centralisation. Thirdly we see that the cybernetic and structural-functionalist analyses illuminate the way that complex systems, in our case the human system, are stability-seeking (since they are guided or controlled by multiple internal feedback links); but not the way in which development takes place. Normal methods of interaction (orientated towards stability) may inhibit development unless developmental goals and
values are constantly brought to the force as persuasive cultural images. I have chosen to reply in this way to the question of directions for development not because it is complex but because it is fundamental.

We have spoken of a class of constraints on development that are more or less determined by the nature of things. One is tempted to identify these constraints with the structure of a system; yet this is incorrect because it is the structure of the system itself which may change with 'development.' Structural constraints, and the time-scales for normal changes in the former may be of a different order. Possibly also structural changes carry many more causal implications. In any case, part of the development process is the explicit recognition of constraints and their bypassing or replacement; similarly unexpected changes, errors, or 'noise' may be converted into a potentially useful situation.

Development ... how? This question concerns not only the techniques or tools but also the strategies and policies that employ these tools, in order to bring about the desired directional process of structural and situational change in the human system, according to certain human values and within certain constraints. Of the techniques themselves we must beware: this is the lesson of Jacques Ellul's The Technological Society, which depicts one after another of man's activities and institutions becoming merely technique — a process which involves their impoverishment and their disengagement from meaning human values. Techniques must be seen, not in a perspective of incrementalism, but within deliberate strategies; failure to observe this dictum will result in either the maintenance of the status quo (in the same way as the stability-oriented normality described), or else in a kind of mindless social change which, more likely than not will lead in quite undesirable directions (since technique, or merely doing things, has its own momentum.)

The strategies at the economic level today generally have to give greater weight to the more visible and urgent problems of the world system, particularly the re-emergence of scarcities and the interrelated problems of unemployment, underemployment, income inequality. Of scarcities it is sufficient here to mention that in the two years ending in 1972, the world prices of wheat, rice, and crude oil have risen between 3- and 5-fold. As regards inequalities in income, within a region of economic organisation such as a nation-state, strategies based on GNP figures as targets mask and even aggravate the problem. As pointed out in the 1975 I.L.O. report, if (as in many developing economies) 20% of the population
obtain 75% of G.N.P., then the growth-rate of H.N.P. measures mostly the growth-rate of the incomes of the richest 20% of the population. (The word 'mostly' in this statement corresponds to a weighting of 75%.) This means that the wealthiest 20% of the population is automatically given the most importance. The reduction of inequality and the improvement of the well-being of the people clearly demands that just the reverse be done: the poorer 20% of the population should be given the most weight. As the I.L.O. report suggests, one should use socially-adjusted overall G.N.P. figures and also separate target growth-rates for different groups or classes of people.

There are, indubitably, trade-offs to be made. The existence of trade-offs and compromises in one of the major arguments for deliberate strategies and planning. Ritchie Calder tells a story about two men he heard commenting on a mechanised road-building project. 'If they used people with wheelbarrows, they could employ a thousand men!' declared one. 'Or,' retorted his companion, 'a million men with teaspoons.' Such trade-offs between production and distribution are paralleled by innumerable others in a complex plan. Thus, for example, income inequality itself tends to rise (unless deliberate and effective policy changes are adopted) as the economy of a developing country proceeds to a higher and higher production. The peak of inequality is attained usually where there is an average per-capita income between $200 and $500 per year. Traditional taxation and growth policies have, in recent years, failed to do more about the levels of income inequality than maintain the status quo. New strategies including structural changes are urgently called for.

In Africa, some countries are directly intervening in their economies and are bringing about structural changes for achieving the ultimate purposes of development. The Tanzanian development plan strongly emphasises the structural change in its society – which is most clearly expressed in the Ujamaa village approach based on the two principles of unified groups of citizens with their own leadership, and the grouping of scattered farm families. The Zambian plan proposes the establishment of 'intensive development zones', and Kenya has an integrated rural development program ... In Latin America, the most commonly proposed policies are tax incentives and the redistribution of economic activities to regions where poverty and unem-

*I.L.O. report: This general pattern has been confirmed by a number of studies.*
ployment are acute. ... In several countries important institutional changes have been brought about, for example changes in the system of ownership and the structure of enterprises; links with foreign investment; machinery for the protection of primary products; the systems of land tenure; the administrative machinery, and economic policy instruments.

In the complex human systems, especially of the developing countries, employment and income distribution are affected in a key way by technology (intensity, relevance), population (growth, distribution, female employment), external assistance (labour-intensiveness of funded projects), trade (rich foreign markets, tariffs), and education (relevance, elitism).  

It is however particularly important to remember that purely economic policies, those that alter the behaviour of persons, must be complemented by explicit attention to the 'images' or symbolic part of man's reality. Remembering that economic growth is a means, not an end — that is, a means towards a fuller and newer human reality we are forced to make certain conclusions. Firstly:

(a) it is important to evaluate continuously the effect that current economic policies and their eventual expected outcome will have on the organismic, psychological, socio-political, and cultural actions and images of people. The non-supremacy of economics is often lost sight of, leading to unnecessary human suffering and, as the momentum of consumption proceeds, to 'economic over-development' (with symptoms of obesity, cancer, narrowed culture, consumption addiction, etc.). Secondly,

(b) one can use the areas of the people's symbolic universe both as a tool and as a domain for development. However if development is conceived in terms of some economic programme which, as we have said, is a means of improving the human reality, then one must beware of image changing (e.g. value-changing) strategies that are coercive and are subservient to the economic programme rather than to a noble vision of man. One can easily end up destroying the very thing that one is trying to improve. The way to minimize the trade-offs between freedom and development that are implied in this dilemma is to encourage citizen participation in the setting of objectives, in planning, and in implementation and evaluation of development programmes. In this way the trade-offs are made by the people most directly affected; personal and so-

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6 — these factors and the previous quotation have been condensed from the 1975 I.L.O. report and the Survey of International Development, May-June 1975.
cial values will also change in the desired direction whenever the
individual is given the information and the facilitation necessary
for him to become involved in decision-making about development.

In Sicily, for example, 'From the point of view of the social
guides necessary for economic growth, the traditional Sicilian
value-system is obsolete. It was a means by which the Sicilian
had historically adapted himself to an exploiting environment, but
that environment has been changing rapidly since World War —,
according to J.A. Raffawle,7 who then suggests' investment in
human capital', that is, spending on:

- general education; training, acquiring knowledge of politico-
social environments; training in health and sanitation; democratic
planning, including the preparation of goals and involvement
(of citizens) in the subsequent processes; morale studies and
follow-through. The basic strategy of such investment should be
to structure a social system that encourages participation in
such activities and rewards such activities. ... a principal ob-
jective is to redistribute power and knowledge (for this purpose).

It is clear that whether or not a diagnosis such as Raffaele's
about obsolete values is considered to be too drastic, the type of
participative strategy he prescribes (unlike an authoritarian and
coercive value-changing strategy) is not likely to become distorted
and inhuman.

Bearing these warnings about coercion we must, then, consider
parts of the symbolic universe as domains for development. Most
of the problems of the human race at present arise out of, or can
be explained in terms of:

- (a) inequalities in the distribution of social power, food, energy,
  and wealth;
- (b) parochiality of the mental images of decision-makers and
  also citizens over space and over time;
- (c) limitidness and exclusivity of the sphere-of-concern and
  sphere-of-trust in the minds of the individual and also for the
  group, rarely extending to 'mankind';
- (d) runaway (although potentially controllable with modern tech-
  nology) social and economic processes.

In considering problems and the strategies for solution, it is
clear that the realm of images and that of actions is clealy
linked. For example, global structures for influencing equitable

7 The Economic Development of Nations. Random House, N.Y., 1971,
p. 298.
distribution will also influence the scope of images and values. But a strategy of consciousness-raising that widens the scope of these images and values will help strengthen the global structure. In the context of integral human development, the 'image-strategy' chosen must satisfy certain criteria of integrality. The current disintegration of culture, social systems and 'mental spaces', and the current disequilibrium in our relations with the ecology of the planet – all these will require a coherent programme of integralisation, where each of these systems is made to approach wholeness and balance in development. If a system of symbolic tools are to be used in this programme, these must become broad cultural entity of some kind which can be woven into human perceptions and aspirations. What models do we have to guide us? Three historical cases are mentioned in the following passage:

In some periods of history, for example the early Christians era and the Renaissance, many good symbols were born — good in the sense that they fulfilled many sides of man's nature. ... the symbolism of alchemy attracted Junh because he saw in it an effort to encompass all sides of man's nature and to forge opposing forces into a unity.8

The functions of mythology according to Joseph Campbell in his Creative Mythology (the fourth volume of his work, 'The Masks of God') are

1. to reconcile waking consciousness
2. with awe and gratitude to the ... universe as it is,
3. to interpret the universe, to explain it.
4. the promotion and enforcement of the moral order,
4. (the most vital, the most critical)
   to foster the CENTERING and the UNFOLDING of the individual in integrity, in accord with
   (d) himself (microcosm)
   (e) his culture (mesocosm)
   (b) the universe (macrocosm)
   (a) that awesome ultimate mystery which is both beyond and within himself and all things,
      'wherefrom all words turn back together with the mind,
      not having attained.'

The criterion of holism and integrality is explicitly mentioned and used in the last two quoted passages respectively. As a measure of the worth of the symbolism this criterion is well rooted in psychology, and we should try and retain it. In searching for a unifying nucleus that can take much 'symbolification' and that is at the same time integral, we look for something that can also do justice to the great human Threshold – the crucial crossroads of the present two or three generations which are of fundamental importance for the future of mankind.\(^9\)

What better candidate for this than the idea of integral human development itself? The idea of integral human development, of mankind and the whole man, can be made the nucleus of a coherent modern mythology, ideology, theory, belief system, or whatever. The central theme can be enriched with the aid of special symbols, adventurous theoretical constructs, ideologies, experimental actions, directions of individual development, mythic visions and, sustaining all these, appropriate works of art. Publicly-held high\(^{10}\) aspirations will be encouraged by various means, centred on human growth and the future of mankind. These will give the stimulus and the rationale for channeling men's disintegrated psychic energies into a new energy towards new directions of endeavour: integralisation of the mankind system, integralisation of culture including art/science/technology/education/religion/morality, fulfilment of individual personalities through participation in collective life, adjustment of institutions so that they nurture rather than stunt the individual, etc.

Some will be sceptical about the rate of return from investment in these directions. But others, who recognize the often immediate powerful social force of an appropriate and timely image or ideology, may well be afraid of the other radical implications of such an encouragement of energy released at the grass roots. Neither scepticism nor fear are in order. Such energies would sooner or later spread, generally reorienting social priorities and perceptions; they would probably become focussed onto defined and specific issues, such as the search for new economic and non-economic structures for reducing global inequities, institutionalised underdevelopment, and other restraints on the holistic growth of the new man and of the new mankind.

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\(^9\) Most of these elements will have to be adapted and made to cohere.

\(^{10}\) not only G.N.P.