

Roderick Seidenberg & Post-Historic Society

By Frank W. Elwell

Abstract

This paper will introduce Roderick Seidenberg's post-historic theory to students of sociology. Seidenberg identifies the increasing application of organization as evidenced in engineering works, articulated legal systems, religious institutions, military organizations, and imperial bureaucracies. However, it is only in the recent past that the principle of rational organization has come to dominate societies, extending and deepening its reach into all areas of social life, including the socialization of children, education, the production and consumption of goods and services, communications and transportation, and social welfare. Seidenberg posits that the principle of organization is rooted in our behavior as rational human beings, rationality or technique that seems ingrained into our very being that "we follow rather than invent." Seidenberg posits that history itself marks the struggle between instinct and intelligence as the guiding force in human affairs. Throughout the historical process, the force of conscious intelligence accumulated more experience, precision, and success in navigating the physical and social worlds and became ever more prominent. Older forms, habits, and customs are shed and replaced, under the pressure of increasingly rational thought, by new insights, ideas, and experiences. The old ways based on long-standing customs and traditions are reinterpreted and converted in their structure and function into the "rationalized and purposive institutions of civilized society." Paralleling Weber's rationalization theory, Seidenberg details the post-historic period we are moving toward.

Not much is known about the early life of Roderick Seidenberg. Sources report that he was born in Heidelberg, Germany, on October 20, 1889, though some accounts had it in 1890. When he came to America is still unknown—was it as a child with his family or as an adult? He studied architecture at Columbia University from 1906 to 1910, with enthusiasm for using architecture and leftist ideas to improve the lot of humanity, at least according to some of his friends (Clayton, 1998, p. 41). Around 1917 his friend, Carl Zigrosser, introduced him to Mabel Dwight (Mabel Williamson Higgens), a graphic artist. She had recently separated from her husband of ten years, rebelling against a domestic role that kept her from her artistic career. Although she was some 14 years older than Seidenberg, they soon moved in together into his apartment.

In late 1917, as a United States citizen, he was drafted for World War I. He declared himself an "absolute conscientious objector," meaning he would in no way contribute directly or indirectly to the war effort. He is imprisoned first at Camp Upton on Long Island, court marshaled for refusing to clean a parade ground, and sentenced to 20 years. The army sent him first to Fort Leavenworth and eventually transferred him to Fort Riley before releasing him in 1920 after serving about a year and a half of his sentence. While imprisoned, he wrote passionate letters in which he asserted the depth of his love for Mabel, the monotony of prison life, his heartfelt conscientious objection to war, and the abuse and torture endured by him and his compatriots. He wrote of his imprisonment in a 1932 article for H.L. Menken's *Mercury* titled "I Refuse to Serve," but only mentioned the abuse he and his fellow absolute conscientious objectors endured in passing. Instead, he focuses on the prison's hellish conditions and how nonviolent demonstrations improve conditions. However, his friend, Karl Zigrosser, details some of the abuse Seidenberg initially received at Leavenworth. This torture included prolonged periods of solitary confinement in dark cells, a bread and water diet, and being manacled nine hours of the day "with his arms out even with his shoulders" (Traxel, 1980, p. 107; Antliff, 2001, p. 161).

After his release from prison in 1920, he and Mable lived in Greenwich Village. She continued developing her artistic reputation and he became an associate with the New York architecture firm of Sugarman & Berger. With that firm, he designed the exterior of the New Yorker Hotel and the Garment Center Building (New York Times, Obituary 1973). Sometime in the mid to late 1920s, he met and fell in love with his future wife, Catherine Howard, and became estranged from Mabel Dwight.

Starting in the 1920s and into the 1930s, Seidenberg began authoring occasional essays for literary magazines. He published pieces in journals like *The Freeman*, the *New Republic*, and *The Nation*. Hirsch (2003) characterizes these pieces as rather "avant-garde artistic experiments," with a clear indication "that he saw culture and politics as interrelated" and that he "had a secular, left-of-center, cosmopolitan, and pluralist view of the world" (p. 71). Hirsch writes, "Seidenberg was markedly reticent about his past" (p. 71).

In 1935, Seidenberg worked as the national editor of Architecture and Art for the Federal Writers Project (FWP), a New Deal Works Progress Administration (WPA) to relieve mass

unemployment. At the national level, the FWP set itself the task of creating a comprehensive guidebook on every state in the nation, detailing its artistic, cultural, and historical attributes. The national office authorized each state to hire a few professional writers, but most state workers had to qualify for relief before joining the FWP. Some performed well; some were ill-suited to their tasks. On the other hand, the national office consisted of professionals with a broad knowledge of American culture and deep expertise in their fields. Hirsch credits Seidenberg as responsible for the “markedly superior in style and content” of the Guidebook essays under his editorship” (p. 72). “From the tourist’s point of view, Seidenberg thought adequate treatment of architecture necessary to any guidebook venture; but beyond that, he contended, the guides offered an opportunity to instruct American taste and to help ordinary Americans know and appreciate the built environment. There was an opportunity 'to clarify ... a broader conception of architecture as an expression of historical (and social forces)—as a resolution, in visible form, of the trends and tendencies of our civilization’” (p. 73).

In 1937, Seidenberg moved to Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he continued in architecture, altering old houses and turning to writing. In his personal life, when Mabel Dwight became chronically ill and destitute, he and his wife, Catherine, took her in and cared for her throughout her life. In 1950 Seidenberg published *Post-Historic Man* (this is sometimes referred to *Posthistoric Man*, both are acceptable, but I will go with the hyphen) following it up eleven years later with *Anatomy of the Future*. Both books were well reviewed at the time and then apparently forgotten by all except a few. In this paper, we will review the original works as an in-depth illustration of the rationalization process and the increasing dominance of social organization in coordinating and controlling human behavior.

Rational Society (*Post-Historic Man*)

Seidenberg begins by pointing out that we are a species dominated by organization. Since the beginning of our history, it is apparent that there has been a trend towards ever more explicit, consciously calculated rules and procedures guiding human action and thought. The trend of social organization is growing in its reach over more aspects of social life and in its depth of control. It is currently sweeping through societies, whether authoritarian, democratic or somewhere in between. Organization affects every aspect of life, from the most mundane to the

highly specialized. It is integral to our international production processes, which require immense coordination among various financial, mining, production, distribution, and consumption systems. Governments at international, national, regional, and local levels are all in the mix, as are educational institutions, correctional institutions, military, communications, and transportation industries. There is a clear trend toward ever more explicit, consciously formalized relationships among people within these organizations as well as the relations between these entities.

The function of social organizations is to coordinate the actions of individuals in an ever-closer mesh of institutionalized processes and procedures to achieve the desired ends of the organization more efficiently. While many complain of the red tape and inefficiencies of bureaucracy, the complaint is often one of it not being efficient enough. Interestingly, the proposed solution is usually the further refinement of its rules and procedures to broaden its reach (or alternatively, to put the organization in more competent hands). According to Seidenberg, the only actual critics of the trend toward greater organization are the anarchists, "whose number is inconsequential, and whose influence is nil" (1950, p. 3). Seidenberg is wrong on this point, as anarchist numbers and influence have increased as the influence of social organization over the individual has escalated dramatically in recent years.

Seidenberg relates the increasing specialization of the labor market and the motivation toward globalization (he calls it "internationalism") as stemming from the same principle of organization. We rarely question the principle; it has become axiomatic in how we conduct social life. "This bland and unquestioning acceptance is a measure of its momentum—the promise of a mounting trend toward further organization" (p. 4). Seidenberg asks, what are the causes of this increasing organization, and why does it seem to be accelerating in modern society? What effect will this all-encompassing principle have on our future? Are we compelled to accept its dictates for all our social activities? Finally, what does this mean for democracy, individual freedom, and the very concept of free will?

Seidenberg conceives of social organization as a process of consciously contrived and defined relationships in service to the ever-more efficient achievement of a desired end. As the organization is consciously contrived, it is clearly the product of intelligence, constantly assessing

and refining procedures to eliminate friction between the various parts of the organization. The organization's smooth operation demands consistency, standardization, clearly defined rules and procedures, and thus the elimination of variation and spontaneity in the various parts of the organization.

The organizational imperative is most apparent in political-economic sectors of society. Governments of all stripes and levels are expanding their power and scope, and economic institutions are enlarging and centralizing. Planning has replaced haphazard development, science, logic, and reason, and the increasing reliance on expertise, experience, and data are replacing intuition and laissez-faire development.

We now have an engineering approach to all physical, social, economic, and political problems. For example, educational programs, afterschool activities, counseling, and social work address delinquency problems. If that fails, there is the criminal justice system and its legions of juvenile courts, drug rehabilitation organizations, and reform schools. Pollution problems are monitored through science and dealt with through law and tax policy (however imperfectly to date). Moreover, who can doubt that any effective response to global climate change will have to be even more intensive organization by national and international organizations across governments and corporations?

The trend throughout history has been the increasing application of organization as evidenced in engineering works, articulated legal systems, religious institutions, military organizations, and imperial bureaucracy. However, in the recent past, the principle of rational organization has come to dominate societies, extending and deepening its reach into all areas of social life. This deepening includes the socialization of children, education, the production and consumption of goods and services, communications and transportation, and social welfare. Seidenberg believes the principle of organization is rooted in our behavior as rational human beings, a rationality or technique that seems ingrained into our very being that “we follow rather than invent” (p. XX).

However, he asserts, rational organization's dynamic nature is a recent phenomenon in the long evolutionary line of our species, as early sapiens exhibited little planned organization, living under instinct and tradition. Seidenberg maintains that the social group firmly integrated

early sapiens and that their actions and beliefs were within narrow limits of fixed patterns of norms, customs, and habits. This form of organization, he asserts, is far different than what modern people experience, with our explicitly codified rules, procedures, laws, and agreements. We live in a social world where traditions and customs are constantly questioned based on the efficient attainment of goals and readily abandoned or reinterpreted if the situation demands it. A world where social order is deliberate, consciously constructed and constantly expanded.

Humankind is unique, Seidenberg argues, in that we are subject to two forms of evolutionary change. First, as an animal, Homo Sapiens have been the beneficiaries of biological evolution, equipping us with advances in brain capacity as well as our social nature. Second, social evolution is based on the accumulation of material culture and the transmission of accumulated knowledge. This second type of evolution has far exceeded the speed and scope of natural evolution.

However, this social evolutionary process was not operating in early humans, for early humans did not have a history. Seidenberg posits a long prehistory before humans acquired written records or oral traditions. In *Anatomy of the Future*, Seidenberg argues that humans entered their historical period only after an extended period of development. In fact, the historical period only encompasses five or six millenniums, while the prehistoric period lasted “at least a thousand millenniums of slow biological evolution” (1961, p. 128). Given humankind's animalism, there must have been eons of time in which instincts ruled human behavior. Moreover, their divergence from this animalistic nature entailed humankind entering a new and increasingly conscious thought in addressing the problems of living.

Intelligence, according to Seidenberg, first rises as a complement to instinct, coming to the fore as a directive force when the stresses of living overwhelmed the person or novel situations arose in which instinct could not provide guidance. As societies' accumulated knowledge of the natural and social orders expanded, social evolution—changes in the relationship between societies and nature—resulted in better tools, plant lore, and agriculture over hundreds of thousands of years. This intensification of production, which entails ever more complexity and enlargement, caused a rise in population and the need for a more intensive social

organization of labor, production, distribution, and government based on criteria over and above simple kinship ties.

Seidenberg posits that history itself marks the struggle between instinct and intelligence as the guiding force in human affairs. Throughout the historical process, the force of conscious intelligence accumulated more experience, precision, and success in navigating the physical and social worlds and became ever more prominent. The pressure of increasingly rational thought forces older forms, habits, and customs to shed and be replaced by new insights, ideas, and experiences. The old ways based on long-standing customs and traditions are reinterpreted and converted in their structure and function into the "rationalized and purposive institutions of civilized society" (1950, p. 23).

Seidenberg is quick to point out that through the extended period of human history, it was not as if intelligence and organization replaced instinct, for, in his view, there is a biological priority throughout the historical process. "For the primary ends of life, however elaborated, are reducible to instinctual urges, which intelligence seeks to satisfy to its own means" (p. 37). Our instincts long for wealth, sex, and social prestige, and intelligence tells us how to achieve these goals. Seidenberg posits that throughout the early part of history, instincts had priority, but over time, as knowledge accumulated, intelligence began to dominate.

The transition, Seidenberg states, must have taken place over many generations in fits and starts, pushed by a developing consciousness, learned experiences, and contact with other groups, that instigated change in long-established traditions and ingrained habits. The tempo of change accelerated when humans became aware of the change over time. They stepped onto the stage of history and became historic beings fully conscious, entering a "world of choice, or consciousness of direction" (p. 21).

He writes that the fashioning of tools and the use of fires in early prehistory set the evolutionary trajectory. Nevertheless, the transition must have been unimaginably slow, with early humans guided by instincts within the biological order "to a position of increasing imbalance under the cumulative pressure of emerging intelligence" (p. 50). However, the decisive steps were the adoption of agriculture and the Scientific Revolution. With the adoption of agriculture, humankind learned to supplement nature's bounty by domesticating plants and animals (p. 41).

Though domestication began as an unconscious process, observation, and intelligence soon supplemented nature to increase yields.

Seidenberg credits the Scientific Revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries as the second great intensifier of the shift from instinct to intelligence. The key to this revolution was not the discovery of new ways of thinking but the peeling off and abandoning of old ideas based on the ancients, traditions, faith, and emotions and instead relying upon observation and rational and logical reasoning. Through science, societies accumulate and organize knowledge and eventually apply it to order, control, and adapt to the natural and social environments. Furthermore, the accumulating successes of the scientific enterprise carry us ever more swiftly to a post-historic future.

Seidenberg recognizes that social evolution has long eclipsed organic evolution in speed and its accumulation of adaptations. Organic evolution is a slow process, dependent upon random change, environmental fit, and passing successful genes to future generations. On the other hand, social evolution depends upon experience and learning and is thus far faster and more responsive to adaptation to different natural and social environments. It is doubtful, Seidenberg concludes, that modern humans are more intelligent than their recent forebears, but they have the advantage of a highly developed culture; the mind is, from the first, a social product (p. 43).

Seidenberg asserts that what we know as history is simply the shift of direction in societies' social structure from instinct to intelligence. The first is marked by society as an organic whole, tradition-bound by the habits of the eternal yesterday. The second is marked by the explicit organization of society, one coordinated by rationality, observation, and cumulative knowledge. Seidenberg's definition of organization closely matches Max Weber's take on bureaucracy and the rationalization of society. Seidenberg begins by pointing out that organization primarily relies on predictability, which requires further organization and order in all contiguous system parts. Seidenberg writes that organization needs predictability and precision, which calls forth the application of the measurement of all things, a tremendous asset for integrating the various parts of the system and achieving order (p. 53).

Seidenberg considers the machine a crystal that, once introduced into the system, brought about changes in all that it touches. The machine performs its functions through the pure organization of parts working together with minimum friction and the highest possible efficiency for a predetermined goal—whether pumping water from coal mines or flying an airplane. Seidenberg asserts through the machine that "the incipient drift toward organization has been broadened into an obligatory and all-pervasive principle, encompassing in its sweep the whole of life" (p. 150). The mechanized world demands adherence to its rhythms as a price for its bounty. Expanding complexities of production, distribution systems, and the sheer number and variety of goods and services demand further coordination and control, as does the rise in the human population (pp. 133-34). An ever-more insistent, ever more restrictive organization of social life must necessarily condition human thought, behavior, values, and emotions.

Knowledge and experience are cumulative and rapidly increasing. An increasing tempo in the rate of change marks the shift between instinct and intelligence. Throughout history, the growing dominance of formal organizations marks intelligence's increasing role in human affairs. "The mounting flow of historic events reveals an ever-accelerating movement from the virtually unchanging vistas of primitive man to the ceaseless changes of today." Seidenberg asserts that, with this transition to organization, humans changed "from a pre-conscious to an ever more purposive and conscious phase," and societies changed from organic and tradition-bound entities to organizational patterns consciously designed for the achievement of specific goals (p. 50).

Seidenberg also notes that the technology of communication plays a critical role in the speed of social evolution, citing first the invention of the alphabet and later the printing press as accelerants of development. He predicts that instant communication in his day, a communication that is both universal and subject to further development, will appreciably speed up social change until it reaches its natural limits.

There is a difference between the organic societies of the past and future societies structured along rational lines. One difference that Seidenberg notes is in their "temporal awareness." In organic societies where instincts played a dominant role, it is unsurprising that such people would consider the past natural, binding themselves to tradition. In rationalized societies, people live with endemic change and thus look toward the future yet to be realized.

Seidenberg foresees increasing organization and technological progress, though he is aware of limits. It is certain, he states, that limitless development challenges common sense itself. Quoting Goethe's observation that trees never reach the sky, Seidenberg points out that the second law of thermodynamics argues against such hubris, as does any critical understanding of evolutionary theory or even the law of diminishing returns. Humankind could never keep up with an accelerating pace of change. However, he avers, we have not reached such limits as technological and organizational development are continuing to advance. "The momentum of change has perhaps not even reached its apogee, and life may witness new revelations beside which the surprises of the past may fade into insignificance. But even such a state of affairs is a far cry from an unending progression, a vista of indefinite advance" (p. 66).

Cultural knowledge accumulates even faster in the seventy-plus years since Seidenberg wrote his first jeremiad, as does the enlargement and centralization of social organizations. Furthermore, as this change quickens, the form and structure of society necessarily changes as well. He believes the changes are all-inclusive and irreversible. Going back to his crystallization analogy, Seidenberg likens it to a change of phase in the chemical world, a historically determined fate (p. 131 & p. 172).

This drift is not always in a straight line, and Seidenberg maintains that history is full of contradictions, reversals, and advances, as are the people who make it. Some intellectuals may warn of the drift, and others will deny or obscure it. As it continues, many will rebel against the loss of freedom, the loss of traditional belief systems, the mutation of values, and the constraints on behavior. However, such warnings and rebellions are transitory and of little long-term effect. The direction is unmistakable throughout human history; through the rise and fall of villages, city-states, empires, and nation-states, it is toward ever more organized societies along rational lines. The transition, Seidenberg asserts, is not one of choice but fate, inherent and inescapable as part of the social evolutionary process (p. 55 & p. 172). He asks, "Where is it taking us?" His answer is to a static, unchanging condition, a frozen state of permanence that may last as long as prehistory.

Post-History

Seidenberg predicts an ever-growing need to maintain coordination, control, and order, responding to the dictates of our complex economies, growing populations, and environmental and social impacts. Social organizations will necessarily continue to enlarge and centralize. The web of "societal relationships will be drawn ever finer and more firmly," ensnaring the individual ever more tightly under their coordination and control, restricting freedom of action and thought and subjecting individuals to their dictates (p. 176). Drawing analogies to the social insects, Seidenberg asserts that the objective of social organization is to seek ever more perfect adjustments of the organism to the physical and social environment, or "the demands of life through a collective rather than an individual technique of adaptations" (p. 182).

Under such conditions, the individual's consciousness will atrophy, gradually disappearing in the post-historic period. Seidenberg views human consciousness as a historical artifact resulting from the moving tension between animalistic instinct and social intelligence as the prime movers of human thought and action. He views history as a passing phase between prehistory and our post-historic future. To be clear, it is not the triumph of individual intelligence over instinct that is the prime mover here; Seidenberg is writing about social intelligence, or the cumulative nature of social experience as embodied by social structures and institutions. The individual organism is stationary in mental capacities throughout Sapiens' prehistoric and historic times, but social organization accumulates ever more knowledge, experience, and wisdom. The social evolutionary process thus reduces the individual to a "limited, vicarious, and partial share in the ever-widening panorama or societal enterprises and relationships" (p. 190).

Freedom of action is also an artifact of history. Seidenberg points out that individual freedom was impossible in a world activated by instinct, and it is "destined to evaporate" in the post-industrial future (p. 236). Toward that future, the tempo of social change will also gradually slow over many generations culminating in a period of unchanging continuity. It will be the end of history and the beginning of a post-historic age (p. 237).

Seidenberg is a reluctant pessimist, and he ends his jeremiad with the observation that social development has forced humankind to give up some of our most cherished myths. First, we gave up our belief in animism, then the earth-centered universe. In our age, we are in the process of giving up belief in the dignity of the individual and our exceptional worth. Even giving

up our beliefs in a God "whose attributes, under the impact of man's rationalistic scrutiny, became ever more abstract until He vanished in the metaphysical concept of the Whole" (pp. 237-38). He claims these illusions were "inestimable," but their loss are merely stages in our journey to the "icy fixity" of the post-historic age (p. 238).

Anatomy of the Future

Roderick Seidenberg published *Anatomy of the Future* in 1961, 11 years after the *Post-Historic Man*. He again points out the ever-accelerating speed of change in all aspects of the sociocultural system. Is this change merely continuing along the path set from the time of the Renaissance, Seidenberg asks, or is something new afoot? Foretelling the future, or prognostication through looking at the entrails of animals, is a lost art, he writes. All we must go on are forecasts based on some theory of history, either explicitly stated or assumed. Seidenberg points to several historians who have concerned themselves with writing about prospects for the future, particularly the cyclical theories of Arnold Toynbee and his treatise on *The World and the West*.

Seidenberg sees little merit in cyclical theories, even when it comes to the rise and fall of empires. He asserts that such empires "are neither related in a direct linear progression nor repeat precisely some inherent cycle of rise and fall" (1961, p. 6). However, his main criticism of such theories is their failure to recognize the "space-time continuum of history as a whole" (p. 5). He writes that they fail to consider the cumulative nature of social evolution, the increase and widespread dissemination of knowledge, instantaneous communication around the globe, the exponential rise in population, and the ever-increasing complexity of production and distribution processes. These and other changes have led to the impending formation of a dominant world culture, a phenomenon that is unanticipated and unacknowledged by cyclical theories.

Two difficulties in identifying laws or even historical trends are that history itself is a brief period and incredibly complex. Nevertheless, there are cumulative aspects of history that can be readily identified, this includes the gradual increase and dissemination of knowledge, the increase in the rate of change, and the increase in the size and scope of social units. This increase in size holds for entire societies and the social organizations within societies. Out of the profusion of history, we are beginning to discern a meaningful pattern. The social world is rapidly

evolving into "a single, homogenous, universal pattern of life," one dominated by social organizations, the profusion of knowledge, and rapid social change (pp. 6-7).

Many argue that social predictability is impossible because of individual free will. This impossibility, Seidenberg responds, ignores the sense of continuity that individuals and all societies rely upon in their daily activities. "Hence we may say there is a reciprocal, if inverse relationship between freedom and predictability; to argue that individual freedom precludes the possibility of social prediction is not only to run counter to experience, but to carry the logic of the situation to a *reductio ad absurdum*. In the void create by this barren logic, all social planning, indeed all social enterprise, would be implicitly restricted to a mincing and inert sterility" (p. 10).

Seidenberg writes that the growth and dissemination of knowledge, the increasing rate of change, and the increase in the size and scope of social units are tangible social trends. To deny the existence of such historical forces "is to separate the fabric of history into a meaningless series of isolated and unrelated facts," as well as deny social reality (p. 12). Such historical trends cannot tell us the precise outlines of the future. However, they can help us focus on their probable trajectories and their impact on the fundamental structures of human societies, that is, on the anatomy of the future (p. 13).

Seidenberg returns to his hypotheses of dynamic tensions between unconscious instinctual drives as part of humankind's biological endowment and conscious social intelligence's increasing role in addressing life's problems. Human brain development and communication ability first distinguish humans from the biological world. Once consciousness develops, it increasingly supplements instinctual drives—sometimes devising new adaptations in satisfying these drives, sometimes denying immediate gratification in hopes of later rewards. Others often learn these adaptations and, when successful, become a part of social order. The balance between instinct and intelligence moves increasingly toward intelligence, as exemplified by the rise of conscious social organization throughout human history. The interplay of these two motivating forces of human action comprises the operating force of history (p. 14).

While some maintain that humans stand alone as problem-solving animals, Seidenberg disagrees, pointing out that all life forms share this adaptability to some degree if they are to survive. Citing Flinders Petrie, Seidenberg defines humans "as an organism that seeks always to

undo its adjustments" (p. 14), or more precisely, a problem-raising animal. This faculty of perpetual dissatisfaction, of constantly seeking better methods or ways, is the prime mover of social evolution. This constant seeking may not be accurate for the tradition-bound history of peoples of the distant past, but it has undoubtedly been confirmed after the Scientific Revolution. Since that revolution, humankind has been continually undoing its adjustment, constantly searching for new and better ways of manipulating its environment and organizing social life.

The Scientific Revolution augured an increasingly rational approach to understanding nature and eventually using the knowledge gained to manipulate both natural and social environments (p. 15). Seidenberg argues that the Scientific Revolution is similar to previous historical transformative events, such as the agricultural revolution or the invention of writing. Like them, it was followed by an increase in population and changes in the structures of society. However, the Scientific Revolution also stands apart. It is different in that it is not focused on a specific change in technologies or customs but marks a fundamental change in the manner of thinking, specifically, the consistent application of "rational faculties" (p.18). This change was achieved by adding rationality to the tool kit of apprehension and discovery of knowledge and stripping away the fog of tradition, superstition, authority, and emotions, leaving rationality and observation as their core. Seidenberg asserts that this revolution in thought is irreversible, sustained, and continuous, "whose trajectory into the future promises to augment our deviation from the past in ways beyond our reckoning" (pp. 18-19).

Science, coupled with engineering, has produced breathtaking achievements. Seidenberg anticipates that humankind will soon have control over the evolution of our kind as well as all other life on earth, a period of unprecedented power but also responsibility. Nevertheless, the wonders science has produced to date, he writes, "support our sense of a great watershed" between our past and future. This watershed changes everything, from our material life to the very meaning of what it is to be human (p. 19).

Moreover, the "one-sided emphasis upon the rational component of the human psyche" is not just oriented toward the future but also the past. Earlier modes of apprehension and understanding are increasingly undermined by advances in science, destroying for many the long-

understood realities of life propagated by religion, spirituality, philosophies, traditions, and emotions. (pp. 19-20).

It begins with early humans diverging mentally from other animal life in the early part of human evolution. While early humans were unaware of this divergence between instinct and intelligence, over time, humans became conscious. Gradually, an awareness developed that set humankind apart from the rest of the animal kingdom. Seidenberg writes that through culture and cultural change, we attempt to synthesize our instinctual responses with our increasing bent toward "rational procedure." But the synthesis is never achieved, it is unceasing, and the dilemma remains at the core of the human animal (p. 21). With the scientific revolution's accumulation of knowledge, rationality took an ever-greater role in human affairs, and it would soon exert a dominant influence on the challenges of social life.

Seidenberg seeks to clarify his distinction between the two polarities of instinct and intelligence. Instincts, he writes, are the intuitive and emotional sensibilities of the mind—more concerned with ends that endow life with values. On the other hand, intelligence is focused on the conscious means to attain these ends. In describing intelligence, he uses such terms as "rational, analytical, deliberate, and purposive aspects of the mind" (p. 23). As unprecedented technological and organizational developments in the last hundred years or so take an ever-increasing role in human affairs, we progressively have the means of life under our control. However, this rapid increase and perfection of mundane means have completely "dissipated and obscured" our more intangible aims and goals (p. 26).

However, it is not a straight-line, unilinear development. "Even today, the methodical rationalism to which we seem wholly dedicated has called forth a dark and countervailing irrationalism" (p. 23). Seidenberg points to the rise of fascism in politics and philosophy, the appeal of existentialism, and the rise of modern art. In our day, many reject science; there is a renewed attraction to fascism, a rise of fundamentalist religions, a fascination with the occult, and Eastern mysticism. Seidenberg identifies rationalism as a "world movement" and the opposition to that movement as a rejection of its aims based upon "intuitive and emotional" responses to the loss of traditional ways of life (p. 27). The dominant institutions of societies are structured "to enhance the welfare of the community rather than that of the individual" (p. 27).

That is to say that the means of life are socially determined, while the individual has the burden of determining the meaning of life.

Seidenberg's analysis of modern art is of particular interest. He points out that dictatorships of the right and the left consistently condemn modern art. They see it as a revolt against a rationalized, bureaucratic life—of mass conformity and obedience to the state's authority—an affirmation of human freedom and spirit. "Thus the artist and poet, alienated under the persistent affirmation of pragmatic values and consciously oriented objectives, are merely prophets crying in the wilderness of a rationalized world. The revolt in the art world turns out to be largely a revolt in the name of art against a mechanized, collectivized world of blank conformity" (p. 31). As an architect, Seidenberg has the opposite opinion of traditional compared to modern architecture. Our world is one of box-like skyscrapers, in seemingly active hostility to anything that is not purely functional and efficient. In comparing Madison Avenue with St. Patrick's Cathedral, he points out that we live in a world quite different from traditional societies—a world devoted to efficiency and purpose, to things rather than people. The architecture of our time reflects our shallow lives, of a people cut off from tradition and spiritual values, unaware of the more mysterious aspects of life (p. 32).

Traditional societies resemble organisms, held together through cultural bonds of love and affection, of shared beliefs and values. Modern societies have all the character and charm of an organization. Nevertheless, it is organization that is increasingly necessary for the functioning of our complex society. It is an organization growing more complex and intricate with instant communication, rapid transportation of people and goods, and growing political, economic, and social globalization. Even though we are confronted with increasing organization in every aspect of our daily lives, we have convinced ourselves that "where there is no alternative, there is also no problem" (p.35). However, there is, indeed, a problem. Even though organization is necessary and on a path toward ever further expansion and centralization, it has a decisive impact on human freedoms, individual control over life choices, and democracy.

The reasons for organizational growth are easy to identify. An organizational imperative is "organization demands further organization" (p. 36). To deal with an organization, say a corporation, on a (somewhat) equal footing, workers must organize to achieve fair wages and

benefits. Individuals organize into parties, interest groups, or social movements to achieve political goals to influence government tax policies and programs. Seidenberg asserts that the efficient operation of any social group requires organization to function effectively. He also identifies more systemic reasons for the growth of organization, including the complexity and intensifying speed of production processes, the rapid growth of population, the expansion of scientific knowledge and its application in technology, the speed of modern communications, and the need to expand the exploitation of natural resources, particularly the growth and distribution of food. He makes it clear that energy is key to future growth, a resource upon which all others depend.

He foresees a time when nuclear energy will be called upon to replace fossil fuels, but it "will demand a very high degree of organization if it is to become effectively available in amounts commensurate with the scope of the problem" (p. 38). Seidenberg writes that the exponential population growth will also necessitate organizational forms worldwide to ameliorate the impact on the natural environment and the conservation of natural resources. "The problem arising out of man's primary instincts will either have to be abandoned to the cruel checks and balances of nature or resolved under the deliberate and conscious direction of human intelligence" (p. 39). Seidenberg predicts that as our numbers and technologies continue to proliferate, the need for further coordination and control will become even more compelling. To obtain maximum efficiency and predictability, the human element is increasingly being integrated into social organizations as producers and consumers—an integration that is slowly changing human nature.

This increasing organization is the historical struggle first detailed in *Post-Historic Man*, in which Seidenberg proposes that early humans transitioned from pre-conscious instinctive behavior to consciousness. Seidenberg posits that the transition from instinct to consciousness took place over millennia and entails ever greater rationality in social institutions and procedures. Modernity has brought a rapid increase in human production and consumption capacities, expanding populations, advances in science and technology, the exponential growth of knowledge, instantaneous communication, rapid transportation, and a dizzying rate of social change. All these trends combine to create a world increasingly vulnerable to disruption, instability, and disorder (p. 40).

As the disorder mounts, the drift toward further organization becomes inevitable, not so much as a conscious decision—though rational planning and bureaucracy are almost ingrained reactions to social problems for most people. Instead, "it arises out of the implicit necessities of the situation, out of the constantly greater need for integration and coordination in the functioning of our highly complex civilization" (p. 40). The drift, Seidenberg asserts, is not the province of just totalitarian regimes but democracies as well. It will continue, despite reactions against the rationalizations of life by anarchists and other irrational movements.

We are caught up in a significant shift from individual control by instinct to the social control of rational social organizations. By its inevitable expansion, the principle of rational social organization continues to transform the social structures of society—the institutions, procedures, and activities. This expansion of formal structure affects the character of the men and women who inhabit and are formed by that society. Organization, Seidenberg asserts, must necessarily move toward universality and thus humankind toward a collectivized society in which atomized individuals are subsumed in a vast organizational web. As social organization becomes more rationalized, as bureaucratic organizations become ever more dominant in human affairs, the very nature of human beings—consciousness, locus of control, introspection—will shift as well. Seidenberg sees the present as a "climatic turning point in this metamorphosis," we are rapidly moving into a future that is very different from our past (p. 41).

Since the Scientific Revolution, human society's advances have been confined to material and social structural concerns rather than spiritual and ethical values, focusing on the means of life rather than its ends. The accelerating technological developments play havoc with societies, upsetting traditional institutions, customs, norms, and values, which prove inadequate for maintaining social cohesion and order. Traditional institutions and norms are progressively replaced "in favor of deliberate control and administration, of planned management and direction" (p. 44).

Since the 18th century, there has been an insistent demand for yet further rational social organization to provide the coordination and control needed by massive and growing populations, complicated production techniques, extensive supply chains, the detailed division of labor, and massive inequalities within and between societies. These are just a few of the

coordination demands on modern social structures. There are numerous groups and organizations whose actions must be coordinated domestically and globally. All these organizations interact with one another, and all continue to change because of these interactions and further technological innovations. Formal social organizations increasingly coordinate "every phase and aspect of contemporary life," whether economic, political, or social. This rational order has not evolved slowly over time like prehistoric societies' rituals, norms, and values. They are "intentionally contrived and consciously integrated" and rapidly adopted into the structure of sociocultural systems, thus contributing to the tempo of social change and the need for further regulation. "For we live in a world that is moving, irreversibly it would seem, towards a condition of total organization" (p. 44).

Everywhere, Seidenberg asserts, we confront rationalized institutions focusing us on means rather than ends. Society markets higher education to the young as a means to a decent job and a comfortable lifestyle rather than for citizenship or the love of learning. Religion is marketed as the key to wealth and success rather than spiritual guidance and transcendence. Medicine is corporatized and monetized rather than caring for the sick and elderly. Agriculture focuses on finance and production rather than care for the land.

This rationalization is not only true for authoritarian societies, where traditional structures and norms are often eliminated through coercion and force. Formal organizations of both government and corporate variety taking over the functions of informal institutions of family and community are also proceeding in democratic societies despite the cultural lag of tradition. Seidenberg adds that this is true for representative democracies and oligarchies disguised behind such democratic facades (p. 45). The drift toward total organization is not the result of some political, economic, or social ideology. It is not the result of a conspiracy of evil men—such as the capitalist class, communist conspiracists, wannabe dictators, or the plans of the Illuminati. It does not need military conquest, missionaries, or even propaganda to spread its control. Rather, the rationalization process provides the needed control and coordinating function "of all other means in the milieu of modern life" (p. 46).

Because rational social organization is so ubiquitous and integral to modern life, we fail to grasp its direction and potential in weakening primary groups and its impact on individual

human attitudes, values, and behaviors. Few question its nature, and fewer still posit that its growth is the dominant social force determining the future of human societies (p. 47). Rational social organizations are built along the lines of a machine, with the various human parts serving specific functions in their contributions to the organization's goals. Seidenberg points out that it is a fitting metaphor, as machines and bureaucracies are consciously designed along similar lines. It was the rise of political, social, and economic organizations along with machine technology that created the Industrial Revolution. "The growth of modern technology and the improvement of machine design, contingent upon the phenomenal advances in science and the ingenuity of engineers, demanded in turn the development of appropriate social accommodations to insure their smooth and fruitful functioning" (p. 48).

A technological society requires a corresponding increase in rational organization, not only in the core industrial countries but also in areas supplying raw materials, cheap labor, and markets for industrial goods and services. Globalization is not just a recent phenomenon. Seidenberg recognizes the existence of worldwide distribution systems allocating raw materials to core countries and industrial products domestically and around the globe. He writes of the necessity of communication and transportation systems for these complex and far-flung operations. All such activities require coordination, synchronization, control, and conformity. The need has intensified in the 60 years since Seidenberg wrote his opus.

While Seidenberg identifies the development of machine technology as the initiator of the need for the increased coordination provided by rational organizations, its recent expansion is also due to the sociocultural system's needs. "Organization breeds organization," Seidenberg writes, comparing it to the actions of "crystallization," always seeking the integration of whatever it touches into its systems, eliminating chaos and promoting predictability, calculability, and order. He writes that expansion is "global in scope" as humankind is moving in unison under the impetus of rationalization (p. 51).

There is, of course, opposition to the rationalization process. Nevertheless, even this opposition must be organized to be even partially effective. Seidenberg illustrates this by pointing to the collapse of nineteenth-century anarchism, the one philosophy that explicitly opposed rational organization in all its forms and advocated its destruction. Now the province of cranks

and terrorists, it was once a movement that rivaled Marx's communism. To illustrate the "inherent necessity" of organization even in the pursuit of irrational goals, Seidenberg points to Nazi Germany. The anti-rationalism of Germany's "descent into the past" was accomplished through military and industrial technology and ever tighter organization and coordination by the fascist state.

The irrationality of Nazi Germany occurred in one of the most advanced civilizations of its time. Their "blood-and soil revolt," the mass murder of millions of misfits, Jews, Romani, Slavs, and homosexuals, were accomplished "with characteristic Teutonic zeal and passion, to the organizational procedures of a world directed towards the future rather than the past" (p. 52). Seidenberg predicts that these irrational eruptions will continue in the future, as they are a reaction against the ever-growing rationalization of social structures. He believes they are reactionary movements "fought with the technological means and organizational procedures of the very system they aim to destroy" (p. 126). As such, they tend to reinforce rather than undermine the organizational structure of the social system.

The growing successes of science and industrial technologies have engendered in many a faith in their power and efficacy. While these successes create social change that creates problems, such as population growth and environmental destruction, mitigating these threats will undoubtedly involve more rationalization. Seidenberg points to the inevitable increase in global programs to deal with the problem of regulating population growth, organizations of far greater range and scope than in the past. He also points to the growing mechanization of agriculture, both in response to a growing population and other social forces such as technological innovation, an organizational imperative, and corporate farming (p. 55).

Seidenberg asserts that the social structure of future societies will be one of universal rational organizations. The drift, he writes, is deepening, reaching downward into ever more personal relationships and outward into all manner of social, political, and economic activities. He then asks, what will be the effect of this future on the individual? "What influence will the form and structure of society under the dominant sway of organization exert upon the means and ends, the ways and values of life?" (p. 56). Can freedom exist in a society that reduces the individual to a mere cog in the social mass?

Seidenberg is not predicting a slide into totalitarianism as exemplified by twentieth-century dictatorships or in such novels as *1984*. Such authoritarian regimes may serve as a transitional phase. However, if the system's foundation is cruelty, terror, and domination of the masses, they will inevitably become the target for revolt. Instead, in line with the modern democracies of the West, he forecasts an evolutionary trajectory in which the individual is absorbed into the multitude of organizations that make up the sociocultural system. He predicts a system that increasingly manipulates information and manufactures opinions. Individual consciousness will slowly erode, "along with its spiritual implications," and in the long millenniums, the total integration of humankind into "a stable, unchanging, and unchallenged unity" (pp. 57-58). Like many social scientists, he believes human beings are sufficiently plastic in human "nature" and sufficiently adept at technology and rationalized social organization that humans could adjust both their environment to their needs and their needs to their environment (p. 58).

The complexity of modern social structures—the myriad of government and corporate organizations and their interrelationships—all drive social structures to higher levels of order, systematization, coordination, standardization, regimentation, and conformity. Rational social organization demands order and, therefore, the elimination of chaos and uncertainty (p. 59). Modern societies are thus driven to consciously contrived laws, rules, and regulations rather than relying upon internalized traditional norms, customs, and values.

Rational organizations increasingly dominate social structures increasingly replacing the functions of traditional organizations. In the process, organization necessarily diminishes the individual's role and integrity. But it is not a smooth and unobstructed evolutionary process. Culture is necessarily rooted in the past, with traditional values promoting individual liberty and the sacredness of human life. Traditional culture is incompatible with the new ethos of rationalization with its increasing disregard of traditions and values. Such traditions serve to slow down, though not arrest, the spread of modernity (p. 60). However, Seidenberg avers, individual freedom is only viable in the transitional phase we call history. For humans were ruled by instincts in prehistory and will be ruled by rational social organization in post-history (p. 63).

Seidenberg recognized more than sixty years ago, well before the development of big data and internet surveillance and manipulation, that organizations would mine our personal data for purposes of coordination and control:

To that end, we are classified and indexed, tabulated and numbered, not as persons but as irreducible fragments of the social whole, in the name of increased efficiency and further expansion, of increased order and standardization. Our births, deaths, and marriages, our income and occupations, our habits, tastes, and predilections are being analyzed and correlated in a critical search for social control and predictability....The commonly accepted notion that the freedom of the individual will be preserved, if not enhanced, as society itself becomes increasingly organized betrays our homage to nineteenth-century liberalism; today, the problem of the conflict between freedom and organization is emerging in all its desperate implications as the dominant challenge of the future (pp. 61-62).

In the twenty-first century, with the development of electronic communications and more powerful surveillance techniques, the old faith in nineteenth-century liberalism that freedom and privacy will be preserved may be waning! Moreover, Seidenberg postulated that in the distant future, the individual would diminish in importance, be ever more open to surveillance and manipulation by rational social organizations, and finally lose all status, becoming an atom in the social whole of a "mass-directed civilization" (p. 64).

Contemporary individuals are without direction from the internal dictates and binding mores of primitive societies. Yet, many are stripped of guidance from religious institutions, community bonds, and past traditions. Finding themselves isolated, they are reduced to a small, insignificant role in the functioning of vast, impersonal, bureaucratic organizations that continuously monitor and regulate their actions. Thus alienated, the individual is subject to the external constraints of laws and regulations of the whole society and the rules of their immediate organization. At the same time, they are subjected "to a continuous barrage of manufactured opinion, propaganda and mass manipulation" to enforce conformity and loyalty to the system (p. 64).

The character and speed of the transformation have engendered a backlash of opposition. Some engage in violence against the system, lashing out in often irrational anger and hatred toward those perceived as collaborators hastening the new order (p. 65). Others apathetically go through the motions or drop out of mainstream culture and exist on the margins. Yet the fate of the opposition is evident, for it is part of the long evolutionary process that began when humans

first attained consciousness, was hurried along by the rise of science and industrial technology, and continued in the social dominance of rational social organization. "[I]n view of the inescapable nature of our course, the one supreme question that remains to be asked is whether mankind, aware of the ultimate sterility of the present trends, can preserve the humanizing traditions of its vanishing past" (p. 65).

Seidenberg views individualism as a transitional stage, "arising out of a welter of changing modes of social cohesion," as the balance between instinctual and rational modes of operation shifts in dominance (p. 72). Concurrent with this shifting dominance, life's challenges have become so complex, interrelated, and urgent that they can only be met with equally complex and interrelated organizational procedures planned along rational lines. According to Seidenberg, the course is set, humankind cannot "live half in the future and half in the past by revitalizing the simplicities of an earlier dispensation" (74).

He argues that intelligence is different from knowledge, understanding, or wisdom. Intelligence is "directionless, a neutral agency of the mind concerned above all with the mutual relationships of presented facts and given data." Knowledge is the accumulation of these factual relationships. As knowledge accumulates, it serves "as a moving fulcrum," increasing the power of intelligence "in the growing complexity of human affairs." As modern society accumulates more precise and accurate information and knowledge about the material and social world, the role of intelligence becomes indispensable (p. 79).

Therefore, material and organizational development depend on the accumulation of knowledge; their interaction has produced the technological and organizational advances of the past few centuries. This lack of a storehouse of knowledge helps explain the long-delayed historical development of the systematic application of rational intelligence to the material (technology and the manipulation and control of things) and social world (organization, coordination, and control of people). Seidenberg claims that this delay points to a critical limitation of intelligence as knowledge can continue to grow without bounds. In contrast, intelligence, or our ability to synthesize and integrate this knowledge meaningfully, has definite limits (p. 81). Here again, Seidenberg may be in error, as general artificial intelligence may soon exceed human intelligence by many orders of magnitude. But regardless of any limitations, we

are following a course of ever-increasing complexity in a social world that is already so complex and intricately connected that it is beyond our individual capacities of understanding (p. 93).

The development of technology and formal social organization has resulted in a highly detailed division of labor so that in the modern era, the individual finds herself increasingly circumscribed, a mere cog "on the edge of ever vaster, socially sustained enterprises" (p. 84). Rules and regulations constrain personnel actions and decisions within these organizations. These rules are based on standardization and consistency, all designed to promote productivity and efficiency in achieving the organization's goals. These organizations dwarf the individual, and their actions are often beyond the individual's comprehension or control. In societies increasingly dominated by rational organizations, the individual becomes an "unthinking beneficiary" of a system designed by social intelligence that increasingly eliminates individual intelligence (p. 85). With the development of the technology of surveillance and social manipulation, the social system progressively constrains individual behavior and thought. The organization reaches its ideal efficiency to the degree in which it reduces individuality to its minimum in serving "the demands of human automatons" (p. 85). Thus, the need of the social system for ever-increasing organization, coordination, and control, no matter the type of the political-economic system—dictatorship or representative democracy, capitalism, or socialism.

Seidenberg stresses the transition humankind is undergoing: a change in social structure toward rational social organization in response to specific challenges of living. Our initial successes with science and technology encouraged us to extend the range and influence of rational procedures to all aspects of social life. We extend the system's benefits "little inclined to question its bearing or ultimate direction" in area after area of social life previously untouched by its reach (p. 100). One can see this drift since Seidenberg's day in expanding educational systems, daycare, welfare agencies, and old-age institutions.

This drift has human consequences: psychological problems, rage against the system, widespread alienation, apathy, drug abuse, meaninglessness, and social dropouts. These problems are addressed, naturally enough, through social organizations aimed at promoting conforming behavior. While the techniques of terror, fear, confinement, and other uses of force are prominent today, Seidenberg believes these are ineffective and require too many resources

to be efficient. He writes that they will gradually be supplanted by rationalized and more invasive "modes of indoctrination" (p. 102). Even dictatorships, he predicts, may be replaced by more enduring and stable methods of control based on science and technology.

The most serious and sustained opposition to organizational drift are our traditions and the philosophy of humanism. "The entire tradition of humanist values based upon the spiritual primacy of the self, is now at stake" (p. 104). As rational social organization transforms the social structure of society, it continuously confronts our sense of values. Rational social organizations have focused all our critical intelligence on the means of life and left the individual to find meaning. These values and ideals, at least for now, are a countervailing influence on the drift toward rational social organization, but their power over human thought and behavior is in decline.

Seidenberg, writing amid the Cold War as well as a burgeoning environmental awareness of Americans, recognizes specific problems of nuclear war, population growth, and the rapid exhaustion of natural resources. He also recognizes that there is extreme poverty in three-quarters of the world. Addressing these problems, Seidenberg argues, can only be successfully approached through further social organization. In a profound sense, he argues, these problems have been caused by our social organization and, despite its limitations, will have to be resolved through rational intelligence (p. 125). There is a worldwide acceptance of rationalization as the solution to our problems. It has become integral to how we perceive the world, a habit of thought of individuals, and total societies (p. 127).

Consciousness, Seidenberg insists, is a product of our dichotomous make-up of instinct and intelligence. The intelligence of historical humans has created the high cultural attainments of science, religion, arts, and the humanities, as well as the proliferation of complex rational social organizations. These attainments, he argues, constitute "a dramatic emergence of a new dimension of life," and consciousness will change in interaction with this new dimension (p. 128). The "organizational network of modern life demands, and in turn promotes, increased predictability in every phase and aspect of our complex civilization" (p. 138). He projects that "consciousness will gradually fade out" as rational social organization becomes the controlling feature of human thought and action and eventually achieves a stable condition in which change

slowly recedes. The social order solidifies ("crystallizes" is his term). In sum, his theory is that human history is a period of rapid and accumulating change in which individuals reach the height of a conscious phase, only to lose that consciousness as social organization and technological change slows and eventually stops in future millennia (pp. 129-130). Increasingly, the means of life become confused with its ends; no longer concerned with transcendence, human life focuses on itself in the routine of daily living (p. 139).

The prime function of rational social organization is to make ever-finer adjustments to the natural and social environments or, conversely, adjust the individual to the needs of the social and natural environments. Social animals, insects, and mammals have only one approach to survival: "life becomes encased in an endless cycle of rigidly established routines. Like an inward-sweeping spiral, intelligence moves, not toward greater freedom, but towards the elimination of all freedom" (p. 152).

In this conception, the historical era of humankind is but a brief period of cumulative change and consciousness between the two much more extended periods of pre- and post-history in which human life is unchanging and fully adjusted to its natural and social environments. He avers that this future may seem improbable, but it is the fate of many life forms on earth, and we are clearly moving in that direction (pp. 143-144). Seidenberg asserts "that our rationality is in the service of an encompassing irrationality...the world has become subtly mad beneath the façade of its rationality (pp. 144-145).

Many perceive the nonconforming individual as an anti-social deviant. "In the present stage of our development, the locus of the conflicts is to be found in the depths of our spiritual, and perhaps even more, our psychological maladjustments" (pp. 146-147). To hasten the smoother functioning of society, we have developed modern techniques to promote the adaptation of the individual to the social system. These techniques run the gamut from more effective forms of advanced persuasion and advertising to the use of psychoactive drugs in democracies to the more immersive indoctrination of propaganda, force, cruelty, and coercion of the more authoritarian regimes (p. 143).

Already, Seidenberg maintains, there is a rising protest of humanists arguing against organizational drift and the consequent dehumanization. Nevertheless, the process continues.

Past values are rapidly being transformed and reinterpreted into different forms of organized religion, education, and loyalty to corporations and nation-states. "The transformation of the world into an ever more organized, rationally directed systems of living constitutes the dominant characteristic of our passage into the future" (p. 142). In the process, we are losing the "depth-dimension of life" as rational social organization expands into all areas of social life, appearing ever more "necessary, meaningful, and inevitable" (pp. 142-143). Thus, "the circle of protest and understanding narrows as the system itself expands, and there with the potentially creative focus of life become ever more diluted, ineffectual, and impotent" (pp. 147-148).

Even if humankind manages to escape this fate, Seidenberg argues, we will confront mounting social problems caused by societies "tragic imbalance between the high achievement of its technology and the static if not regressive capacities of its individuals" (p. 149). Seidenberg gives short shrift to forecasts of superabundance or the creation of a material paradise, pointing out that the hoarding characteristics of the rich know no bounds. He considers nuclear war a clear possibility, leading to the collapse of civilization, pointing out that his speculation is "on an as if basis, on the assumption, however dubious, that humanity will spare itself the desperate ignominy of suicide" (p. 171). However, another fate awaits if we manage to get through this threat of civilization collapse and destruction. "In the long perspective of the future there is reason to believe, certainly, that the seeming divergencies of our world will be absorbed and forgotten in an all-inclusive rationalization of life" (p. 171).

References

- Antliff, A. (2001). *Anarchist Modernism: Art, Politics, and the First American Avant-Garde*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Hirsch, J. (2003). *Portrait of America: A Cultural History of the Federal Writers' Project*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Seidenberg, R. (1932/1994). I Refuse to Serve. In R. F. Sayre, *American Lives: An Anthology of Autobiographical Writing* (pp. 504-514). Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Seidenberg, R. (1950). *Post-Historic Man: An Inquiry*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Seidenberg, R. (1961). *Anatomy of the Future*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Traxel, D. (1980). *An American Saga: The Life and Times of Rockwell Kent*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.