

The Myth of Progress

“It’s not going too far, I think, to call belief in progress the established religion of the modern industrial world. In the same way that Christians have traditionally looked to the heavens and Buddhists to nirvana, most people nowadays look to progress for their salvation and their explanation for why the world is the way it is. To believers in the religion of progress, all other human societies are steps on a ladder that lead to modern industrial civilization. From the standpoint of the myth, the things our civilization happens to be good at are the things that matter, and the things our civilization has never been able to master don’t count; our kind of progress is the only kind there is, and the road to the future thus inevitably leads through us to future societies that will be like ours, but even more so. All of these claims are taken for granted as self-evident truths by most people in today’s industrial societies. Not one of them has a basis in logic or evidence; like the doctrine of the Trinity or the Four Noble Truths, they are statements of faith.”

---From *The Long Descent* by John Michael Greer (p.69).