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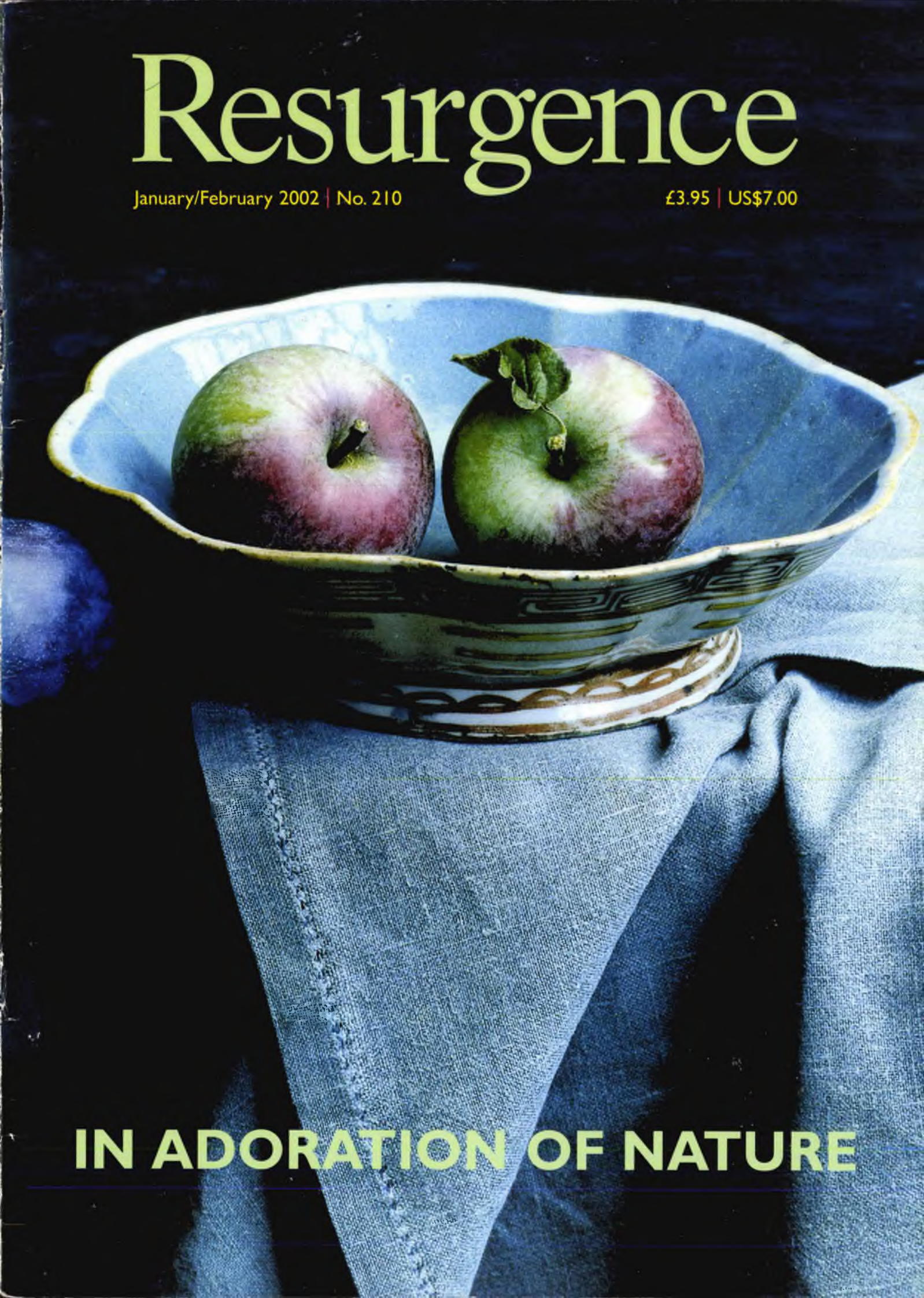


IN ADORATION OF NATURE

AND ALL SHALL BE WELL

COLIN HODGETTS

The times compel me to sing.

ILLUSTRATION: AXEL SCHEFFLER

I AM JUST putting the finishing touches to a setting of words by Julian of Norwich, the medieval anchoress. It is scored for soprano and far greater forces than the Hartland Chamber Orchestra can muster and I have no idea who will perform it. But I know in my bones that in the current atmosphere of fear we desperately need to hear her message, coming, as it did, out of a similarly troubled time.

"For this is the cause why we be not all in ease of heart and soul; that we seek here rest in those things that are so little, wherein is no rest, and know not our God that is All-mighty, All-wise, All-good. For he is very rest. God willeth to be known, and it pleaseth Him that we rest in Him, for all that is beneath Him sufficeth not us. This is the cause why that no soul is rested till it is made nowt as to all things that are made. When it is willingly made nowt, for love to have Him that is all, then is it able to receive spiritual rest."

I am not going to tease out what she means by "those things that are so little". We can each do that for ourselves. Nor shall I explore how we find release from attachment to "all things that are made".

Julian was "a simple creature, unlettered" who experienced sixteen Shewings over two days. She meditated for many years on these *Revelations of Divine Love* before writing them down. Unlike many other women mystics she sees Christ not as 'the beloved' with whom she seeks union, but as the Mother who nurtures. "The high Might of the Trinity is our Father, and the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, and the great Love of the Trinity is our Lord." She refers several times to Christ as "Mother".

The words with which I end my piece she hears from the mouth of Jesus, "*It behoveth that there should be sin; but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.*" What I have now just realized is that these words of reassurance are better relayed by Colin the composer than Colin the preacher. It has suddenly become clear why, at sixty, I should have turned to composition as a means of expression. Music slows the words down so that they can be contemplated in their simplicity. The sermonizer elaborates, explains, justifies, and lays himself open to diversionary nit-picking. He preaches to a handful of the mostly converted rather than to those who need to hear.

Having said that, I still have to find an audience for my song.

THE POLITICAL CLIMATE has also given impetus to my Francis of Assisi opera. The scene where Francis visits the Sultan allows me an opportunity to present the best in Christianity in dialogue with the best in Islam. The encounter concludes with no victor but with mutual respect and permission for Francis to travel freely in Muslim lands.

The Sultan Malik al-Kamil was a cultured man, just and peace-loving, who sought to negotiate with the crusaders. His overtures were rejected by the pig-headed Spanish Papal Legate, Pelagius, who could countenance no coexistence with men both evil and cruel who spat on the cross. It was without his mandate that Brothers Francis and Illuminato crossed the battle lines.

Al-Kamil had as his spiritual adviser the mystic Fakir ad-Din al-Farsi. (On his tomb is this inscription: *His adventure with Malik al-Kamil, and all that happened in regard to a monk, are very well known.*) He also reverenced the Sufi teacher Umar ibn al-Farid. The debate between the two sides must have been of a particularly high order. I am looking for a Muslim scholar who can help me construct a convincing dialogue between the two sides.

It must be a dialogue that has contemporary resonances. I had a message on my answerphone a couple of days ago from a woman describing herself as an 'Islamophobic' (a strategy that seeks to pass off prejudice as a physical condition and thus make it acceptable!). It reminded me of the irrational hostility I met to the inclusion of Muslim schools in the Third Sector Schools Alliance. I understood painfully why the Muslim community in Britain feels misunderstood and put-upon, even demonized. The attacks of 11th September have intensified hostility towards them. I have to respond to this situation with something more than a letter to the local paper.

Writing music is not, as some of my friends imagine, a gentle hobby pursued in retirement in a relaxed rural retreat. It is a calling — and the times compel me to sing. ●

Colin Hodgetts is a composer.

W E L C O M E

IN ADORATION OF NATURE

ON 11TH SEPTEMBER, the world's confidence in capitalism was shaken. That day, the symbols of militarism and materialism were shattered. Even though the reaction of the American government was to respond to violence with greater violence, we do not know what the long-term outcome of that tragic event will be .

The end of the World Trade Centre may prove to be the beginning of a new era. It may be realized that the politics of 'the West' and 'the rest' is deeply flawed. The twentieth century was dominated by dualism and divisions. British interests, American interests, national interests, self interests, and other kinds of narrow interests came before the interests of humanity and of the Earth.

The 'American way of life' was not for negotiation and was never to be compromised. This was the basis of US foreign and domestic policies. 11th September exposed the fallacy of such an arrogant approach to world affairs. It showed that there is no safety in selfishness. It proved that we are all together: all nations, all peoples and all creatures — humans and non-humans — we are all one. We are all connected. We need to move from 'me' to 'we' from 'I' to 'us'.

This is Wendell Berry's message. In his article in this issue Wendell presents a wise vision for America and, by implication, for the world. There is a great alternative tradition of thinkers and activists in America: Henry David Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, Walt Whitman, Ralph Nader, and more particularly Wendell Berry, symbolize that tradition. We can do no better than pay attention to what Wendell has to say. He has true answers to our crisis. His analysis is simple, clear, real and profound.

LIKE WENDELL BERRY from America, Vandana Shiva is the voice of sanity from India. She is an eloquent, radical and fearless critic of the culture of violence to people and to the Earth. Unless we can deal with corporate violence we will not be able to overcome so-called terrorist violence.

Then there is George Monbiot. He is a voice of conscience from Britain. Like Wendell and Vandana, George is a courageous critic of capitalist obsession with power, money and control. At times like this, when most commentators are cowed by current events, George urges us to keep the big picture in mind and not get blown away by the prevailing winds.

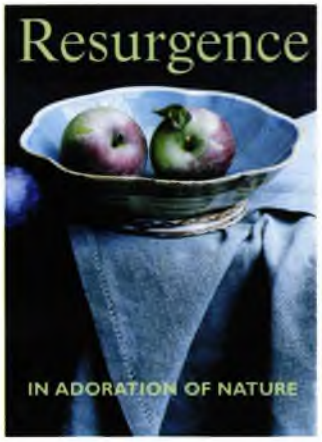
The problem with dualistic politics is that it is too human-centred. It divides the world, not only between 'the West' and 'the rest', but it also puts human rights above the rights of Nature. Godofredo Stutzin's profound and far-reaching article challenges us that we must recognize the intrinsic value of all life, and accept the rights of Nature with equal legal status.

Weaver bird building nest PHOTOGRAPH: NIGEL J DENNIS/NHPA

In the past, scientific efforts have been concentrated to learn 'about' Nature, so that we can exploit Nature and control her for human benefit. Now is the time to learn 'from' Nature and adore Nature so that human existence can be made sustainable. This was the last message of Donella Meadows whose untimely death was a great loss to America, especially at this time of crisis, when her sane voice, similar to that of Wendell Berry, would have been of immense importance.

After our special issues on Art, Technology and Crafts, we present to our readers this issue which covers a broader spectrum. We have brought together articles on architecture, design, food, economics, philosophy and poetics. Dear reader, I hope you enjoy this bouquet. I wait to hear your comments, criticisms and guidance, so that we may serve you better. ●

SATISH KUMAR



COVER
Spartan apples in a Chinese bowl
PHOTOGRAPH: TESSA TRAEGER

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C O N T E N T S

CORRECTION
The front cover photograph on Issue 209 and the top photograph on page 39/209, should have been credited to Steve Tanner. We apologize for this oversight.


Sandy Brown, our new Craft columnist

CRAFT

ART

POETICS

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IN THE PRESENCE OF FEAR

In the midst of death there is life.

PHOTOGRAPH: GLEB GARANICH/REUTERS

WENDELL BERRY

A US citizen's thoughts on the terrorist attacks in America.

THE TIME WILL soon come when we will not be able to remember the horrors of 11th September without remembering also the unquestioning technological and economic optimism that ended on that day.

2. This optimism rested on the proposition that we were living in a 'new world order' and a 'new economy' that would grow on and on, bringing a prosperity of which every new increment would be unprecedented.

3. The dominant politicians, corporate officers and investors who believed this proposition did not acknowledge that the prosperity was limited to a tiny percentage of the world's people, and to an even smaller number of people even in the United States; that it was founded upon the oppressive labour of poor people all over the world; and that its ecological costs increasingly threatened all life, including the lives of the supposedly prosperous.

4. The 'developed' nations had given to the 'free market' the status of a god, and were sacrificing to it their farmers, farmlands and communities, their forests, wetlands and prairies, their ecosystems and watersheds. They had accepted universal pollution and global warming as normal costs of doing business.

5. There was, as a consequence, a growing worldwide effort on behalf of economic decentralization, economic justice, and ecological responsibility. We must recognize that the events of 11th September make this effort more necessary than ever. We citizens of the industrial countries must continue the labour of self-criticism and self-correction. We must recognize our mistakes.

6. The paramount doctrine of the economic and technological euphoria of recent decades has been that everything depends on innovation. It was understood as desirable, and even necessary, that we should go on and on from one technological innovation to the next, which would cause the economy to grow and make everything better and better. This of course implied at every point a hatred of the past, where all innovations, whatever their value might have been, were discounted as of no value at all.

7. We did not anticipate anything like what has now happened. We did not foresee that all our sequence of innovations might be at once overridden by a greater one: the invention of a new kind of war that would turn our previous innovations against us, discovering and exploiting the debits and the dangers that we had ignored. We never considered the possibility that we might be trapped in the web-work of communication and transport that was supposed to make us free.

8. Nor did we foresee that the weaponry and the war science that we marketed and taught to the world would become available, not just to recognized national governments, which possess so uncannily the power to legitimize large-scale violence, but also to 'rogue nations', and dissident or fanatical groups and individuals whose violence, though never worse than that of nations, is judged by the nations to be illegitimate.

9. We had accepted uncritically the belief that technology is only good; that it cannot serve evil as well as good; that it cannot serve our enemies as well as ourselves; that it cannot be used to destroy what is good, including our homelands and our lives.

10. We had accepted too the corollary belief that an economy (either as a money economy or as a life-support system) that is global in extent, technologically complex, and centralized is invulnerable to terrorism, sabotage, or war, and that it is protectable by 'national defence'.

11. We now have a clear, inescapable choice that we must make. We can continue to promote a global economic system of unlimited 'free trade' among corporations, held together by long and highly vulnerable lines of communication and supply, but now recognizing that such a system will have to be protected by a hugely expensive police force that will be worldwide, whether maintained by one nation or several or all, and that such a police force will be effective precisely to the extent that it oversways the freedom and privacy of the citizens of every nation.

12. Or we can promote a decentralized world economy which would have the aim of assuring to every nation and region a local self-sufficiency in life-supporting goods. This would not eliminate international trade, but it would tend toward a trade in surpluses after local needs had been met.

13. One of the gravest dangers to us now, second only to further terrorist attacks against our people, is that we will attempt to go on as before with the corporate programme of global 'free trade', whatever the cost in freedom and civil rights, without self-questioning or self-criticism or public debate.

14. This is why the substitution of rhetoric for thought, always a temptation in a national crisis, must be resisted by officials and citizens alike. It is hard for ordinary citizens to know what is actually happening in Washington in a time of such great trouble; for we all know, serious and difficult thought may be taking place there. But the talk that we are hearing from politicians, bureaucrats and commentators has so far tended to reduce the complex problems now facing us to issues of unity, security, normality, and retaliation.

15. National self-righteousness, like personal self-righteousness, is a mistake. It is misleading. It is a sign of weakness. Any war that we make now against terrorism will come as a new instalment in a history of war in which we have fully participated. We are not innocent of making war against civilian populations. The modern doctrine of such warfare was set forth and enacted by General William Tecumseh Sherman, who held that a civilian population could be declared guilty and rightly subjected to military punishment. We have never repudiated that doctrine.

16. It is a mistake also — as events since 11th September have shown — to suppose that a government can promote and participate in a global economy and at the same time act exclusively in its own interest by abrogating its international treaties and standing apart from international co-operation on moral issues.

17. And surely, in our country, under our Constitution, it is a fundamental error to suppose that any crisis or emergency can justify any form of political oppression. Since 11th September far too many public voices have presumed to "speak for us" in saying that Americans will gladly accept a reduction of freedom in exchange for greater "security". Some would, maybe. But some others would accept a reduction in security (and in global trade) far more willingly than they would accept any abridgement of our Constitutional rights.

18. In a time such as this, when we have been seriously and most cruelly hurt by those who hate us, and when we must consider ourselves to be gravely threatened by those same people, it is hard to speak of the ways of peace and to remember that Christ enjoined us to love our enemies, but this is no less necessary for being difficult.

19. Even now we dare not forget that since the attack of Pearl Harbor — with which the present attack has been often and not usefully compared — we humans have suffered an almost uninterrupted sequence of wars, none of which has brought peace or made us more peaceable.

20. The aim and result of war necessarily is not peace but victory, and any victory won by violence necessarily justifies the violence that won it and leads to further violence. If we are serious about innovation, must we not conclude that we need something new to replace our perpetual 'war to end war'?

21. What leads to peace is not violence but peaceableness, which is not passivity, but an alert, informed, practised, and active state of being. We should recognize that while we have extravagantly subsidized the means of war, we have almost totally neglected the ways of peaceableness. We have, for example, several national military academies, but not one peace academy. We have ignored the teachings and the examples of Christ, Gandhi, Martin Luther King and other peaceable leaders. And here we have an inescapable duty to notice also that war is profitable, whereas the means of peaceableness, being cheap or free, makes no money.

22. The key to peaceableness is continuous practice. It is wrong to suppose that we can exploit and impoverish the poorer countries, while arming them and instructing them in the newest means of war, and then reasonably expect them to be peaceable.

23. We must not again allow public emotion or the public media to caricature our enemies. If our enemies are now to be some nations of Islam, then we should undertake to know those enemies. Our schools should begin to teach the histories, cultures, arts and language of the Islamic nations. And our leaders should have the humility and the wisdom to ask the reasons some of those people have for hating us.

24. Starting with the economies of food and farming, we should promote at home, and encourage

abroad, the ideal of local self-sufficiency. We should recognize that this is the surest, the safest and the cheapest way for the world to live. We should not countenance the loss or destruction of any local capacity to produce necessary goods

25. We should reconsider and renew and extend our efforts to protect the natural foundations of the human economy: soil, water and air. We should protect every intact ecosystem and watershed that we have left, and begin restoration of those that have been damaged.

26. The complexity of our present trouble suggests as never before that we need to change our present concept of education. Education is not properly an industry, and its proper use is not to serve industries, neither by job-training nor by industry-subsidized research. Its proper use is to enable citizens to live lives that are economically, politically, socially and culturally responsible. This cannot be done by gathering or 'accessing' what we now call 'information' — which is to say facts without context and therefore without priority. A proper education enables young people to put their lives in order, which means knowing which things are more important than other things; it means putting first things first.

27. The first thing we must begin to teach our children (and learn ourselves) is that we cannot spend and consume endlessly. We have got to learn to save and conserve. We do need a 'new economy', but one that is founded on thrift and care, on saving and conserving, not on excess and waste. An economy based on waste is inherently and hopelessly violent, and war is its inevitable by-product. We need a peaceable economy. ●

This article originally appeared on <OrionOnline.org>, the website of *Orion* and *Orion Afield* magazines, under the feature headline 'Thoughts on America', and will be included in a soon-to-be-released anthology of several related essays by Mr Berry, *In the Presence of Fear*, published by the Orion Society.

Wendell Berry is a farmer and a poet. The New York Times recently called him "The Prophet of Rural America".

THE NEED FOR DISSENT

GEORGE MONBIOT

Radicalism is more necessary than ever before.

IF OSAMA BIN LADEN did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him. For the past four years, his name has been invoked whenever a US president has sought to increase the defence budget or wriggle out of arms control treaties. He has even been used to justify President Bush's missile defence programme, though neither he nor his associates are known to possess anything approaching ballistic missile technology. Now he has become the personification of evil required to launch a crusade for good: the face behind the faceless terror.

The closer you look, the weaker the case against bin Laden becomes. While the terrorists who inflicted the dreadful wound in the world may have been inspired by him, there is, at the time of writing, little evidence that they were instructed by him. But bin Laden's culpability is irrelevant: his usefulness to Western governments lies in his power to terrify. When billions of pounds of military spending are at stake, rogue states and terrorist warlords become assets precisely because they are liabilities.

By using bin Laden as an excuse for demanding new military spending, weapons manufacturers in America and Britain have enhanced his iconic status among the disgruntled. His influence, in other words, has been nurtured by the very industry which claims to possess the means of stamping him out.

Now the horror of 11th September 2001 is being used by corporations to establish the preconditions for an even deadlier brand of terror. While the world's collective back is turned, Tony Blair intends to allow the mixed oxide plant at Sellafield to start operating. The decision would have been front-page news at any other time. Now it's likely to be all but invisible. The plant's operation, long demanded by the nuclear industry and resisted by almost everyone else, will lead to a massive proliferation of plutonium, and a near certainty that some of it will find its way into the hands of terrorists. Like Ariel Sharon, in other words, Blair is using the reeling world's shock to pursue policies which would be unacceptable at any other time.

For these reasons and many others, radical opposition has seldom been more necessary. But it has seldom been more vulnerable. The right is seizing the political space which has opened up where the twin towers of the World Trade Centre once stood.

Civil liberties are suddenly negotiable. The US seems prepared to lift its ban on extrajudicial executions carried out abroad by its own agents. The CIA might be permitted to employ human rights abusers once more, which will doubtless mean training and funding a whole new generation of bin Ladens. The British government is considering the introduction of identity cards. Radical dissenters in Britain have already been identified as terrorists by the Terrorism Act 2000. Now we're likely to be treated as such.

One of the peculiar problems we radicals face is that the targets of the attacks on America represented more clearly than any others the powers we have long opposed. For those of us who have campaigned against the predatory behaviour of the financial sector and the defence industry, the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon had come to symbolize all that was rotten in the state of the world. So, though ours is a movement built on peace, it has not

ILLUSTRATION: AXEL SCHEFFLER

been hard for our opponents to equate our dissidence with terror.

The authoritarianism which has long been lurking in advanced capitalism has started to surface. In *The Guardian* recently, William Shawcross — Rupert Murdoch's courteous biographer — articulated the new orthodoxy: America is, he maintained, "a beacon of hope for the world's poor and dispossessed and for all those who believe in freedom of thought and deed". These believers would presumably include the families of the Iraqis killed by the sanctions Britain and the US have imposed; the peasants murdered by Bush's proxy war in Colombia; and the tens of millions living under despotic regimes in the Middle East, sustained and sponsored by the United States.

William Shawcross concluded by suggesting that "we are all Americans now", a terrifying echo of Pinochet's maxim that "we are all Chileans now": by which he meant that no cultural distinctions would be tolerated, and no indigenous land rights recognized. Shawcross appeared to suggest that those who question American power are now the enemies of democracy. It's a different way of formulating the warning voiced by members of the Bush administration: "If you're not with us, you're against us".

The Daily Telegraph has set aside part of its leader column for a directory of "useful idiots", by which it means those who oppose major military intervention. Doubtless I will find my name on the roll of honour there. So, perhaps, will the families of some of the victims, who seem to be rather more capable of restraint and forgiveness than the leader writers of the right-wing press. Mark Newton-Carter, whose brother died in the terrorist outrage, told one of the Sunday newspapers, "A military strike is not the answer. Gandhi said: 'An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind,' and never a truer word was spoken." But when the right is on the rampage, victims as well as perpetrators are trampled.

Mark Twain once observed that "there are some natures which never grow large enough to speak out and say a bad act is a bad act, until they have inquired into the politics or the nationality of the man who did it." The radical left is able to state categorically that terrorism is a dreadful act, irrespective of provenance. But the right can't bring itself to make the same statement about Israel's new invasions of Palestine, or the sanctions in Iraq, or the US-backed terror in East Timor, or the carpet bombing of Cambodia. Its critical faculties have long been suspended and now, it demands, we must suspend ours too.

Retaining the ability to discriminate between good acts and bad acts will become ever harder over the next few months, as new conflicts and paradoxes challenge our preconceptions. It may be that a convincing case against bin Laden is assembled, whereupon his forced extradition would, I feel, be justified. But, unless we wish to help George Bush use barbarism to defend the "civilization" he claims to represent, we on the left must distinguish between extradition and extermination.

The terrorist attacks in America may have signalled the beginning of the end of globalization. The recession it has doubtless helped to precipitate, coupled with a new and understandable fear among many Americans of engagement with the outside world, could lead to a reactionary protectionism in the United States, which is likely to provoke similar responses on this side of the Atlantic. We will, in these circumstances, have to be careful not to celebrate the demise of corporate globalization, if it merely gives way to something even worse.

The governments of Britain and America are using the disaster in New York to reinforce the very policies which have helped to cause the problem: building up the power of the defence industry, preparing to launch campaigns of the kind which inevitably kill civilians, licensing covert action. Corporations are securing new resources to invest in instability. Racists are attacking Arabs and Muslims and blaming liberal asylum policies for terrorism. As a result of the horror, the right in all its forms is flourishing, and dissenters are shrinking. But we must not be cowed. Dissent is most necessary just when it is hardest to voice. ●

The above article is extracted from George Monbiot's regular *Guardian* column.

Campaign Against Criminalizing Communities (CACC), c/o The Haldane Society, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL. Tel: Stephanie Harrison (chair) on 020 7353 1633. <http://www.cacc.org.uk>.

Demonstration against the introduction of genetically modified crops, Bangladesh PHOTOGRAPH: SARAH BLACKSTOCK/STILL PICTURES

VOICE FROM THE SOUTH / SEPTEMBER 11

CORPORATE TERRORISM

VANDANA SHIVA

Solidarity against all forms of violence.

18TH SEPTEMBER 2001 was the day for solidarity with victims of the 11th September 2001 terrorist attack on the US. I joined the millions to observe two minutes silence at 10.30 a.m. for those who lost their lives in the assault on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. But I also thought of the millions who are victims of other terrorist actions and other forms of violence. And I renewed my commitment to resist violence in all its forms. At 10.30 a.m. on 18th September, I was with Laxmi, Raibari and Suranam in Jhodia Sahi village in Kashipur district in Orissa. Laxmi's husband Ghabi Jhodia was among the twenty tribals who have recently died of starvation. In the same village Subarna Jhodia had also died. Later we met Singari in Bilamal village who has lost her husband Sadha, elder son Surat, younger son Paila and daughter-in-law Sulami.

The deliberate denial of food to the hungry is at the core of the World Bank Structural Adjustment programmes. Dismantling the Public Distribution System (PDS) was a World Bank condition. It was justified on grounds of reducing expenditure. But the food subsidy budget has exploded from Rs.2,800 crore in 1991 to Rs.14,000 crore in 2001. More money is being spent to store grain because the Bank required that food subsidies be withdrawn. This led to increase in food prices, lowering of purchase from the PDS and hence build-up of stocks. The food security of India is collapsing.

While observing two minutes silence in the midst of tribal families who are victims of starvation even while 60 million tonnes of grain are rotting in the stores, I could not help but think of economic policies

which push people into poverty and starvation as a form of terrorism.

Starvation deaths in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Orissa are a symptom of the breakdown of our food systems. Kashipur was gifted with abundance of nature. Starvation does not belong here. It is the result of waves of violence against nature and the tribal communities. It is a result of a brutal state ever present to snatch the resources of the tribals for industry and private corporations, but totally absent in providing welfare and security to the dispossessed tribals.

The starvation deaths in Kashipur and other regions are a result of the ecological plunder of the resources of the region, the dismantling of the food security system under economic reform policies and the impact of climate change which caused crop failures.

Twenty years ago, the pulp and paper industry raped the forests of Kashipur. Today the paper mills are bringing eucalyptus timber from neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. The 'terrorism' of the pulp industry has already left the region devastated. Now the giant mining companies — Hydro of Norway, Alcan of Canada, Indico and Balco/Sterlite of India — have unleashed a new wave of terror. They are eyeing the bauxite in the majestic hills of Kashipur. Bauxite is used for aluminium — aluminium that will go to make Coca-Cola cans and fighter planes.

Imagine each mountain to be a World Trade Centre built by nature over millennia. Think of how many tragedies bigger than what the world experienced on 11th September 2001 are taking place to provide raw material for insatiable industry and markets. We stopped the ecological terrorism of the mining industry in my home — the Doon Valley — in 1983. The Supreme Court closed the mines, and ruled that commerce that threatens life must be stopped. But our ecological victories of the 1980s were undone with the environmental deregulation accompanying globalization policies.

Mining has been 'liberalized' and corporations are rushing to find minerals wherever they can. The aluminium companies want the homelands of the Kashipur tribals. But the tribals of Kashipur refuse to leave their homes. They are defending the land and earth — through a nonviolent resistance movement — the movement for the Protection of Nature and People. As Mukta Jhodia, an elderly woman leader of the movement, said at a rally in Kashipur, "The Earth is our mother. We are born to her. We are her children. The mining companies cannot force us to leave our land. This land was given to us by God and creation, not by the government. The government has no right to snatch our land from us."

This forced appropriation of resources from people is also a form of terrorism — corporate terrorism.

I had gone to offer solidarity to victims of this corporate terrorism, which was not only threatening to rob 200 villages of their survival base but had already robbed many of their lives when they were shot and killed on 16th December 2000 by the police.

Abhilash was one of the victims killed in the police firing. His wife Subarna Jhodia was expecting a baby when he was shot. When I went to meet her in her village Maikanch, she was sitting on the doorstep of her hut with the baby girl who was born after the father was brutally killed. I asked her what she had named her child; she asked me to give her daughter a name. I named her *Shakti* — to embody power in peaceful form — to carry in her the 'shakti' her father and his tribal colleagues have displayed over a decade of resistance against the terrorism of mining companies.

Fifty million tribals who have been flooded out of their homes by big dams over the past four decades are also victims of terrorism — they have faced the terror of technology and destructive development. 30,000 people died in the Orissa supercyclone, and millions will die when floods and droughts and cyclones become more severe because of climate change and fossil fuel pollution.

The tragedy of 11th September 2001 provides us with an opportunity to stop all forms of terrorism — militaristic, technological, economic, political. Terrorism will not be stopped by militarized minds which create insecurity and fear and hence breed terrorism. The present 'war against terrorism' will create a vicious cycle of violence. It will not create peace and security. We are already witnessing a xenophobic wave sweeping across the US, with Indians, Asians and Arabs being attacked and killed.

Terrorism can only be stopped by cultures of peace, democracy, and people's security. It is wrong to define the post-11th September world as a war between "civilization and barbarism" or "democracy and terrorism". It is a war between two forms of terrorism which are mirror images of each other's mindsets — mindsets that can only conceive of monocultures and must erase diversity, the very precondition for peace. They share the dominant culture of violence. They use the same weapons and the same technologies. In terms of the preference for violence and use of terror, both sides are clones of each other. And their victims are innocent people everywhere.

The real conflict is between citizens across the world longing to live in peace and security and forces of violence and terror — denying them peace and security.

The tribals in Jhodia Sahi had lit a lamp for me at the village shrine — a small stone. These tribal shrines are insignificant when one measures them in physical terms against the twin towers of the World Trade Centre. But they are spiritually deeply significant because they embody a generous cosmology of peace — peace with the earth, peace between people, peace within people. This is the culture of peace we need to reclaim, and spread.

The whole world repeatedly watched the destruction of the World Trade Centre towers, but the destruction of millions of sacred shrines and homes and farms by forces of injustice, greed and globalization goes unnoticed.

As we remember the victims of Black Tuesday, let us also strengthen our solidarity with the millions of invisible victims of other forms of terrorism and violence which are threatening the very possibility of our future on this planet. We can turn this tragic brutal historical moment into building cultures of peace. ●

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ECONOMICS

LOOT

NICK ROBINS

The East India Company was the world's first transnational corporation, setting the precedents by which today's big businesses operate.

OURS IS A corporate age. Yet, amid the fertile arguments on how to tame and transform today's corporations, there is a sense that the current era of business dominance is somehow unique. But there was a time when corporations *really* ruled the world, and among the commercial dinosaurs that once straddled the globe, Britain's East India Company looms large. At its height, the Company ruled over a fifth of the world's people, generated a revenue greater than the whole of Britain and commanded a private army a quarter of a million strong.

Although it started out as a speculative vehicle to import precious spices from the East Indies — modern-day Indonesia — the Company grew to fame and fortune by trading with and then conquering India. And, for many Indians, it was the Company's plunder that first de-industrialized their country and then provided the finance that fuelled Britain's own industrial revolution. In essence, the honourable East India Company found India rich and left it poor. But visit London today, where the Company was headquartered for over 250 years, and nothing marks its rise and fall, its power and its crimes. By walking its bounds, however, by seeking out the places that formed its core, we can start to remedy this corporate amnesia, and begin the process of remembrance and reparation.

"The most formidable commercial republic known to the world"

– Warren Hastings, 1780s

THE CITY OF London is full of monuments, but none records the East India Company's existence. Like a snake, the City seems embarrassed of an earlier skin. This being Britain, however, what remains is a pub — The East India Arms on Fenchurch Street. Cramped, but popular with office workers, the pub stands at the centre of the Company's former commercial universe. Westwards lies Philpott Street, where it was originally based in the mansion of its founding governor, Thomas Smythe. Just up where Lime Street meets Leadenhall Street is the site of East India House, the Company's headquarters for more than two centuries, a plot currently occupied by the steel and glass of the Lloyds insurance building. And heading south is Mincing Lane, once the centre of Britain's tea trade.

The absence of any memorial to the East India Company at any of these sites is peculiar. For this was not just any corporation. Not only was it the first major shareholder-owned company, but it was also a pivot that changed the course of economic history. During its lifetime, the Company first reversed the ancient flow of wealth from West to East, and then put in place new systems of exchange and exploitation. From Roman times, Europe had always been Asia's commercial supplicant, shipping out gold and silver in return for spices, textiles and luxury goods. And for the first 150 years after its establishment by Queen Elizabeth I in 1600, the Company had to repeat this practice, as there was simply nothing that England could export that the East wanted to buy.

The situation changed dramatically in the middle of the eighteenth century, as the Company's officials took advantage of the decline of the Mughal Empire and began to acquire the hinterland beyond its vulnerable coastal trading posts. Territorial control enabled the Company both to manipulate the terms of trade in its favour and to gouge taxes from the lands it ruled. Within a few years of Robert Clive's freak victory over the Nawab of Bengal at Plassey in 1757, the Company had managed to halt the export of bullion eastwards, creating what has poetically been called the "unrequited trade" — using the East's own resources to pay for exports back to Europe. The impacts of this huge siphoning of wealth were immense, creating a "misery" of "an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before", in the words of a columnist writing for the *New York Tribune* in 1853, one Karl Marx.

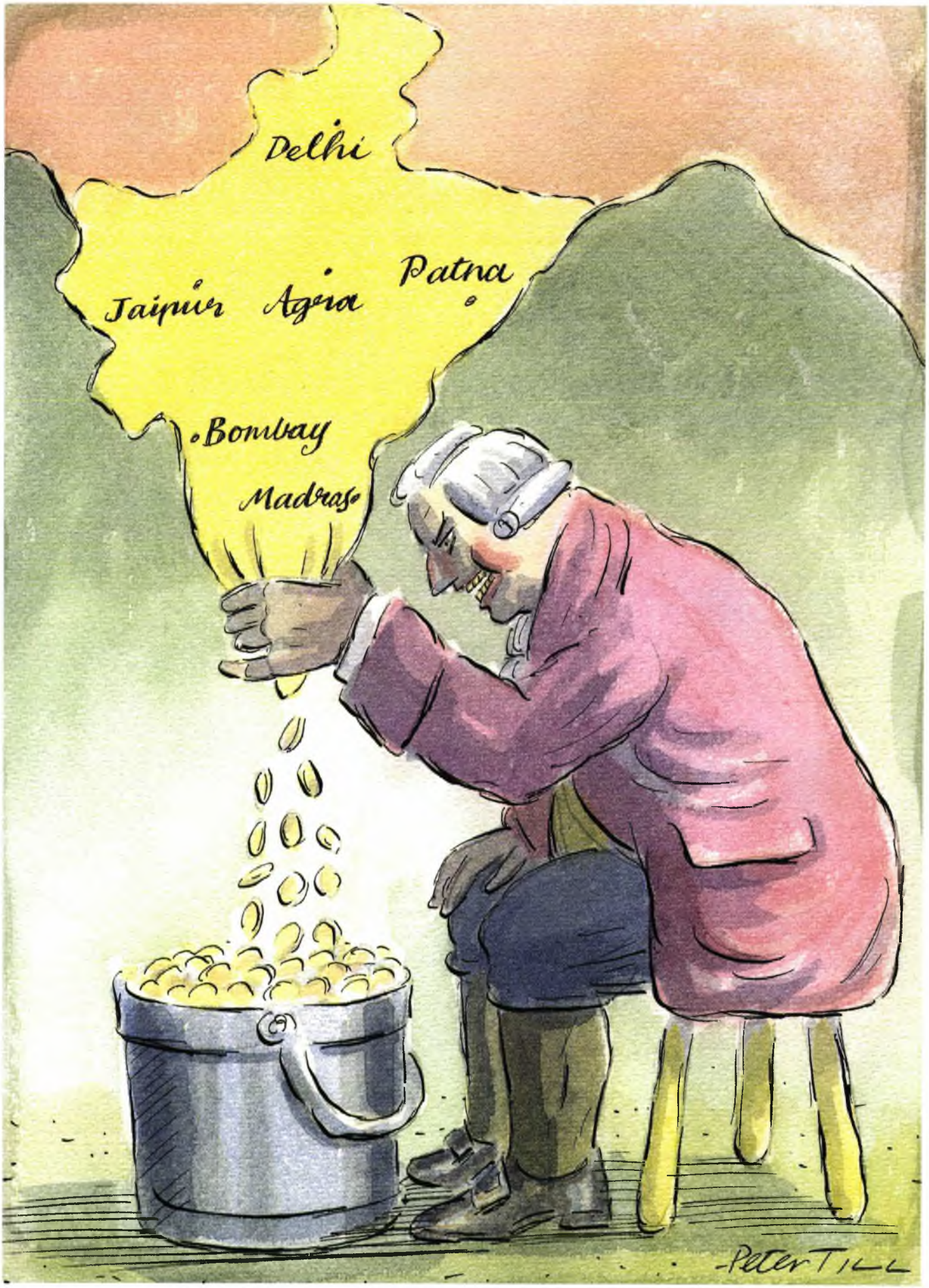
"If you will profitt, seek it at sea and in quiet trade"

– Thomas Roe, 1620s

BESIDE BATTERSEA BRIDGE in Chelsea, the Jacobean Crosby Hall stands newly scrubbed, a fine brickwork palace that gives little clue that it once hosted the Company during its first efforts to turn a profit. This was the copycat, catch-up world of seventeenth-century England, a marginal island kingdom competing for survival against both the catholic empires of Portugal, France and Spain, and the commercial calvinism of Holland. The four small ships that set sail from Deptford in 1601 were desperate to find an English niche in this lucrative trade. And initially the voyages to the East reaped huge returns: cloves sold from the Company's third voyage made profits of 234%.

What live on from these times are swashbuckling tales of piracy and high adventure. Pirates have an ambiguous place in English folklore, part feared and part celebrated, and the first wave of East India traders simply continued an old English tradition: trade where necessary and plunder where possible. Though sometimes favoured by local people in the East Indies in their battles against the Dutch, the motive was always the same: to secure exclusive control of local spice production. But the Company progressively lost the 'spice race', outgunned and outclassed by the Dutch. Driven from the Moluccas following the massacre of English traders at Amboyna in 1623, the Company eventually exchanged its remaining outpost in the East Indies at Run for New Amsterdam in 1667 — quickly renamed New York.

Forced from the spice islands, the Company refocussed its gaze on



ILLUSTRATIONS: PETER TILL

India, building up a string of forts along the coast, starting with Madras in 1640. Bombay followed in 1661, a wedding gift to Charles II from his Portuguese wife, Catherine of Braganza, and leased to the Company by the cash-strapped king for a sizeable loan and an annual rent. Calcutta came almost thirty years later, a crucial outpost in Bengal, by far the richest region of India. In fact, India went through a boom of unparalleled proportions as the influx of silver boosted demand for textiles and other goods. And the Company's shareholders prospered too: annual dividends from the Company's monopoly control on trade with the East exceeded 25% in the last years of the seventeenth century.

Looking at the fine lines of Crosby Hall, there is a certain symmetry between this buccaneering past and its more recent history. Originally built on Bishopsgate in the City, at the turn of the last century a public campaign saved it from the developers and paid for its relocation to Chelsea, many miles to the west. Converted into a college, its course changed again in the 1980s after Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's abolition of the Greater London Council and the disposal of its assets. Sold off against much community resistance, Crosby Hall was bought by a financier who had been drummed out of the insurance giant, Lloyds — itself the site for the next phase of the rise of the 'Honourable Company'.

"An Unbounded Ocean of Business"
– Daniel Defoe, 1720s

SITTING IN HIS airy study at the Delhi School of Economics, Professor Om Prakash has no doubts about the central contribution made by the East to the West's development: "Asia played a great role in civilizing Europe," he says. From the middle of the seventeenth century on, the growing influx of cottons radically improved hygiene and comfort, while tea transformed the customs and daily calendar of the people. And it was in the huge five-acre warehouse complex at Cutlers' Gardens that these goods were stored prior to auction at East India House. Here over 4,000 workers sorted and guarded the Company's stocks of wondrous Indian textiles: calicoes, muslins and dungarees, ginghams, chintzes and seersuckers, taffetas, alliballies and hum hums. Today, the Company's past at Cutlers' Gardens is marked with ceramic tiles that bear a ring of words: "silks, skins, tea, ivory, carpets, spices, feathers, cottons".

This lifestyle revolution was not without opposition. For hundreds of years, India had been renowned as the workshop of the world, combining great skill with phenomenally low labour costs in textile production. As the Company's imports grew, so local manufacturers in England panicked. In 1699, things came to a head and London's silk weavers rioted, storming East India House in protest at cheap imports from India. The following year, Parliament prohibited the import of all dyed and printed cloth from the East, an act to be followed twenty years later by a complete ban on the use or wearing of all printed calicoes in England — the first of many efforts to protect the European cloth industry from Asian competition. And it was behind these protectionist barriers that England's mechanized textile industry was to grow and eventually crush India's handloom industry.

The image of the Company as a purveyor of luxury lifestyles continues, and was given fresh impetus in 1999 when a new generation of British entrepreneurs founded the East India Company plc. This new Company hosts a 'virtual factory' on the internet offering a range of goods such as gin and India Pale Ale. For them, the use of the Company's name "gives credibility to virtually any product or service", combining "the great strengths of British brands — tradition, old-fashioned luxury, impeccable class — with the general appeal of exotic countries, seafaring, travel and adventure."

"What is England now? A sink of Indian wealth, filled by nabobs"
– Horace Walpole, 1770s

FOR THIRTY YEARS after Robert Clive's victory at Plassey, East India House lay at the heart of both the economy and the governance of Britain, a monstrous combination of trader, banker, conqueror and power broker. It was from here that the twenty-four Directors guided the Company's commercial and increasingly political affairs, always with an eye to the share price: when Clive captured the French outpost of Chandernagore in Bengal in 1757, stocks rose by 12%. Distance and poor communications, however, meant that the London board often had little real control over the actions of the private enterprise imperialists such as Clive, who exploited local rivalries to take control in Bengal and Karnataka.

The booty gained by the few soldiers and officials who managed to survive the wars, disease and debauchery in India created a new class of 'nabobs' (a corruption of the

Hindi word *nawab*). Clive obtained almost a quarter of a million pounds in the wake of Plassey, and told a House of Commons enquiry into suspected corruption that he was "astounded" at his own moderation at not taking more. Thomas Pitt, Governor of Madras earlier in the century, used his fortune to sustain the political careers of his grandson and great-grandson, both of whom became Prime Minister — an eighteenth-century version of the Kennedy clan. These 'nabobs' inspired deep bitterness among aristocrats angry at the way they bought their way into high society: by the 1780s, about a tenth of the seats in Parliament were held by 'nabobs'. A few lone voices — such as the Quaker William Tuke — also pointed to the humanitarian disaster that the Company had wrought in India.

All these forces converged to create a new movement to regulate the

Company's affairs. But so powerful was the Company's grip on British politics that attempts to control its affairs could bring down governments. In the early 1780s, a Whig alliance of Charles James Fox and Edmund Burke sought to place the Company's Indian possessions under Parliamentary rule. But their efforts were crushed by an unholy alliance of Crown and Company. George III first dismissed the government and then forced a general election, which the Company funded to the hilt, securing a compliant Parliament.

Yet the case for reform was overwhelming, and the new Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger — that beneficiary of his great-grandfather's time in Madras — pushed through the landmark India Act of 1784. This transferred executive management of the Company's Indian affairs to a Board of Control, answerable to Parliament. In the final seventy years of its life, the Company would become less and less an independent commercial venture and more a sub-contracted administrator for the British state, a Georgian example of a 'public-private partnership'.

"Callous, rapacious and luxurious beyond conception"

– Robert Clive, 1760s

FOR CENTURIES, THE City of London has ruled itself from the fine medieval Guildhall. It was here in 1794 that the Mayor of London made the Governor-General of Bengal, Lord Cornwallis, an Honorary Freeman of the City, awarding him a gold medal in a gilded box. Cornwallis had certainly earned this prize from Britain's merchant class. He had defeated Tipu Sultan of Mysore, extracting an eight-figure indemnity, and had just pushed through the 'permanent settlement' in Bengal, securing healthy tax revenues for the Company's shareholders. Seeking to increase the efficiency of tax collection in the Company's lands, Cornwallis cut through the complex patterns of mutual obligation that existed in the countryside and introduced an essentially English system of land tenure. At the stroke of a pen, the zamindars, a class of tax farmers under the Mughals, were transformed into landlords. Bengal's 20 million smallholders were deprived of all hereditary rights. 200 years on, and after decades of land reform, the devastating effects have still to be righted in Bengal.

This 'permanent settlement' was simply a more systematic form of what had gone before. Just five years after the Company secured control over Bengal in 1765, revenues from the land tax had already tripled, beggaring the people. These conditions helped to turn one of Bengal's periodic droughts in 1769 into a full-blown famine. Today, the scale of the disaster inflicted on the people of Bengal is difficult to comprehend. An estimated 10 million people — or a third of the population — died, transforming India's granary into a "jungle inhabited only by wild beasts". But rather than organize relief efforts to meet the needs of the starving, the Company actually increased tax collection during the famine. Many of its officials and traders privately exploited the situation: grain was seized by force from peasants and sold at inflated prices in the cities.

But even in good times the Company's exactions proved ruinous. The Company became feared for its brutal enforcement of its monopoly interests — particularly in the textile trade. Savage reprisals would be exacted against any weavers found selling cloth to other traders, and the Company was infamous for cutting off their thumbs to prevent them ever working again. In rural areas, almost two-thirds of a peasant's income would be devoured by land tax under the Company — compared with some 40% under the Mughals. In addition, punitive rates of tax were levied on essentials such as salt, cutting consumption in Bengal by half. The health impacts were cruel, increasing vulnerability to heat exhaustion and reducing resistance to cholera and other diseases, particularly amongst the poorest sections. As the Company forced salt consumption well below the minimum prescribed for prisoners in English jails, the effect was to treat the people as sub-human, a class below the criminal. And this for an institution that was starting to claim in the early nineteenth century that it ruled for the moral and material betterment of India.

"The most beneficent [government] ever known among mankind"

– John Stuart Mill, 1850s

ON THE OTHER side of the river Thames from the Millennium Dome, the East India Docks stand empty of shipping. The streets of a nearby office complex echo its trading past: Clove Crescent, Nutmeg Lane, Saffron Avenue. Built in 1806, the Docks were a wonder of the age. Yet, as is so often the case with monumental infrastructure, the Docks were built just as the Company's commercial days were coming to a close. Its dual role as trader and governor was viewed as increasingly anachronistic — not least by the rising free-trade lobby who despised the Company's mercantilist hegemony. In 1813, eager to sell their now competitive cloth, Britain's textile manufacturers forced the ending of the Company's monopoly of trade with India. The hammer blow came in 1834 with the final removal of all trading rights, and the Company's docks and warehouses were sold off.

Technology, free trade and utilitarian ethics now came together in a powerful package to uplift the degraded people of India. This European triumphalism was codified by the father and son duo, James and John Stuart Mill, who both worked at East India House for the bulk of their careers. Today known for his two liberal masterpieces, *On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*, John Stuart Mill spent thirty-four years in the Company's service, ending up as Chief Examiner and defending its existence to the bitter end as nemesis approached.

But while the Company promoted a mission to make Indians "useful and happy subjects", the twin pillars of Company rule remained the same: military and commercial conquest. By the 1850s, just £15,000 was being spent on non-English schools compared with a military budget of £5 million.

The telegraph, steamship and railway were introduced — and now it was to accelerate access of British goods to Indian markets that was the driving force. The removal of the Company's trading monopoly led to a rapid influx of mill-made cloth, shattering both the village economy based on an integration of agriculture and domestic spinning, and the great textile capitals of Bengal. Between 1814 and 1835, British cotton cloth exported to India rose by fifty-one times, while imports from India fell to a quarter. During the same period, the population of Dacca shrank from 150,000 to 20,000. Even the Governor-General, William Bentinck, was forced to report that "the misery hardly finds parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India."

"Plunder was the order of the day"
– L. E. Rees, 1857

WALK TO THE Foreign and Commonwealth Office from St James's Park and you will go up 'Clive's steps', named after the statue of Robert Clive that stands outside the old India Office buildings. It was here that the government transferred the administration of India in the wake of the disastrous 'mutiny' of 1857. Many explanations have been given for this uprising against Company rule in northern India, but the Company's increasing racial and administrative arrogance lay at the root.

The seeds of racism had always been there. Anglo-Indians were excluded from senior positions in the Company; non-European wives of the Company were forbidden to follow their husbands back to Britain. This slide into separatism also affected the Company's relations with its Indian soldiers, the sepoys. One by one ties between the army and local communities were cut: Hindu and Muslim holy men were barred from blessing the sepoy regimental colours, and troops were stopped from participating in festival parades. As missionary presence grew, fears mounted that the Company was planning forcible conversion to Christianity.

All these sleights and apprehensions came to a head when sepoys in northern India rejected a new type of rifle cartridge said to be greased with cow and/or pig fat. What turned a mutiny into a rebellion, however, was the Company's crass behaviour towards local rulers in Oudh, Cawnpore and Jhansi, who all turned against the Company as the soldiers rose. Symbolically, the first act of the mutineers at Meerut was to march the thirty-six miles to Delhi to claim the puppet Emperor Bahadur Shah as their leader.

The war lasted for almost two years, and was characterized by extreme savagery on both sides. The reconquest of Delhi by the Company's troops was followed by systematic sacking, and the surviving inhabitants were turned out of its gates to starve. Bahadur's two sons and grandson were then killed in cold blood, and the old Mughal was stripped of his powers and sent into exile in Rangoon. Yet the Company that had grown in a symbiotic relationship with the Mughal Empire could not long survive its passing. The uprising itself and the massacres of Europeans had generated a ferocious bloodlust in British society, and the anomalous Company was an easy scapegoat for the nation's fury. On 1st November 1858, a proclamation was read from every military cantonment in India: the East India Company was abolished and direct rule by queen and Parliament was introduced. Firework displays followed the proclamation.

The Company's legacy was quickly erased. East India House was demolished in 1861. India was no longer ruled from a City boardroom, but from the imperial elegance of Whitehall. Today, relics of Company rule can still be found in the modern Foreign Office that occupies the site. Statues of Company officials, such as Eyre Coote dressed as a Roman general, stand mute by a doorway. Spiridione Roma's grand mural, The East Offering its Riches to Britannia, brightens an otherwise dull stairwell. Originally commissioned by the Company to decorate the ceiling of the Revenue Room at East India House, the painting is an odd mixture of the classical and the exotic, the nationalistic and the commercial.

"Though the wound is hidden, the blood does not cease to flow"
– Mirza Ghalib, 1860s

MANY INSTITUTIONS HAVE justifiably disappeared into the anonymity of history. But in a country like Britain that is so drenched in the culture of heritage, the public invisibility of the East India Company is suspicious. Perhaps a single Hindi word can now help to explain this selective memory, this very British reticence: *loot*. Many would argue that the Company was no worse than other conquerors and rulers of India. What sets the Company apart, however, was the remorseless logic of its eternal search for profit, whether through trade, through taxation or through war. The Company was not just any other ruler. As a commercial venture, it could not and did not show pity during the Bengal famine of 1769–1770. Shareholder interests came first when it dispossessed Bengal's peasantry with its 'permanent settlement' of 1794. And the principles of laissez-faire ensured that its Governor-General would note the devastation of India's weavers in the face of British imports, and then do absolutely nothing.

One of the tasks of history is to rescue the memory of those cast aside by the powerful, to seek justice across the centuries. The East India Company's escape from reckoning enables the people of Britain to pass over the source of much of their current affluence and allows India's continuing poverty to be viewed as a product of its culture and climate, rather than as something manufactured in pursuit of external profit. Almost 150 years after the Company's demise, Britain has yet to reckon with the consequences, consequences that still echo to this day. For in the words of the Urdu poet Ghalib, who saw his city of Delhi laid waste in 1857, "though the wound is hidden, the blood does not cease to flow." ●

Nick Robins works on socially responsible investment and is an associate editor of ***Resurgence****. He is planning a ceremony of remembrance dedicated to the Company's victims in summer 2002. Please contact him at 27 Albert Grove, London SW20 8PZ for further details.*

ECONOMICS

JUST SO MUCH AND NO MORE

DONELLA MEADOWS

Let us rejoice in the logic of the Earth's economy.

Yucca plant, New Mexico White Sands National Monument
PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN KIEFFER/STILL PICTURES

THE FIRST commandment of economics is: Grow. Grow forever. Companies must get bigger. National economies need to swell by a certain percentage each year. People should want more, make more, earn more, spend more — ever more.

The first commandment of the Earth is: Enough. Just so much and no more. Just so much soil. Just so much water. Just so much sunshine. Everything born of the Earth grows to its appropriate size and then stops. The planet does not get bigger, it gets better. Its creatures learn, mature, diversify, evolve, create amazing beauty and novelty and complexity, but live within absolute limits.

Economics says: Compete. Only by pitting yourself against a worthy opponent will you perform efficiently. The reward for successful competition will be growth.

The Earth says: Compete, yes, but keep your competition in bounds. Don't annihilate. Take only what you need. Leave your competitor enough to live. Wherever possible, don't compete, co-operate. Pollinate each other, create shelter for each other, build firm structures that lift smaller species up to the light. Pass around the nutrients, share the territory. Some kinds of excellence rise out of competition; other kinds rise out of co-operation. You're not in a war; you're in a community.

Economics says: Use it up fast. Don't bother with repair; the sooner something wears out, the sooner you'll buy another. That makes the gross national product go round. Throw things out when you get tired of them. Throw them to a place where they become useless. Grab materials and energy to make more. Shave the forests every thirty years. Get the oil out of the ground and burn it now. Make jobs so people can earn money, so they can buy more stuff and throw it out.

The Earth says: What's the hurry? Take your time building soils, forests, coral reefs, mountains. Take centuries or millennia. When any part wears out, don't discard it: turn it into food for something else. If it takes hundreds of years to grow a forest, millions of years to compress oil, maybe that's the rate at which they ought to be used.

Economics discounts the future. Ten years from now, $2 will be worth $1. You could invest that dollar at seven per cent and double it in ten years. So a resource ten years from now is worth only half what it's worth now. Take it now. Turn it into dollars.

The Earth says: Nonsense. Those invested dollars grow in value only if something worth buying grows, too. The Earth and its treasures will not double in ten years. What will you spend your doubled dollars on if there is less soil, dirtier water, fewer creatures, less beauty? The Earth's rule is: Give to the future. Lay up a fraction of an inch of topsoil each year. Give your all to nurture the young. Never take more in your generation than you give back to the next.

The economic rule is: Do whatever makes sense in monetary terms.

The Earth says: Money measures nothing more than the relative power of some humans over other humans, and that power is puny compared with the power of the climate, the oceans, the uncounted multitudes of one-celled organisms that created the atmosphere, that recycle the waste, that have lasted for 3 billion years. The fact that the economy, which has lasted maybe 200 years, puts zero value on these things means only that the economy knows nothing about value — or about lasting.

Economics says: Worry, struggle, be dissatisfied. The permanent condition of humankind is scarcity. The only way out of scarcity is to accumulate and hoard, though that means, regrettably, that others will have less. Too bad, but there is not enough to go around.

The Earth says: Rejoice! You have been born into a world of self-maintaining abundance and incredible beauty. Feel it, taste it, be amazed by it. If you stop your struggle and lift your eyes long enough to see Earth's wonders, to play and dance with the glories around you, you will discover what you really need. It isn't that much. There is enough. As long as you control your numbers, there will be enough for everyone and for as long as you can imagine.

We don't get to choose which laws, those of the economy or those of the Earth, will ultimately prevail. We can choose which ones we will personally live under — and whether to make our economic laws consistent with planetary ones, or to find out what happens if we don't. ●

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Donella Meadows, who wrote and worked tirelessly on behalf of the Earth, died suddenly of meningitis on 20th February 2001. This is her last column.

Lazy Sunday afternoon, Regent's Park, London

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL DENT/IMPACT

SACRED SUNDAY

ANN PETTIFOR

We need to reinstate the concept of jubilee and resanctify Sunday.

I AM LOATH to use the phrase global capitalism. Capitalism it is for sure, but not the capitalism of old. It is something more virulent: the gross abuse of power by the rich and the dominant. And it's an abuse of power by, on the whole, one sector of capital, finance capital.

I recently came across a statistic that sums it all up for me. In 1970 90% of all international transactions were trade transactions, and only 10% were financial. By the year 2000, despite a *massive increase* in trade, the situation had been completely reversed. 90% of all international transactions are financial, and only 10% are trading transactions.

I watch my friends in the NGOs protesting outside the World Trade Organization, McDonald's, Nike or Monsanto, and I wonder, provocatively, why they bother. There's an awful lot wrong with these companies, and they do a great deal of harm. But they constitute only 10% of the global economy. This, whether we like it or not, is productive activity. But the biggest companies in the world, the banks, don't produce anything. They're largely engaged in unproductive activity. And they are holding the owners of industrial capital to ransom. Nowadays all management cares about is its shareholders and investors. The views of these groups matter far more than the views of consumers, suppliers or employees. So finance capital is dominant in the global economy and is calling the shots. Yet we don't find demonstrators outside the London Stock Exchange, the bond markets, or Citibank, Ings Bank and J.P. Morgan's!

These bankers, investors, speculators and bond-holders grow money from money, and that does not involve digging the soil, waiting for rain, manual labour, sweat or tears. Most of this money takes the form of highly volatile stocks and bonds, investment and short-term loans.

These changes to the global economy — the shift from the dominance of industrial capital to finance capital — did not come about 'naturally' or spontaneously. They are the result of deliberate policy-making — driven, first, by the City of London and the British government; and later by Wall Street and the US government. Both governments use the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as an agent for implementation of deflationary policies, whose ultimate purpose is not, as they have recently taken to insisting, to reduce poverty, but to protect the value of creditor assets.

In the 1920s similar deflationary

economic policies were applied to justify the dismissal of public servants, to suppress wages and to maintain unemployment. The most important of these policies was the stabilization of currencies, fixed in terms of gold, to guarantee debt service to foreign bondholders. Much the same happens today. Instead of the gold standard we have 'dollarization'. Currencies are once again stabilized to guarantee debt service to foreign bondholders and other creditors. The IMF, agent of all international creditors public and private, intervenes in the market and imposes and encourages a range of policies, including dollarization, currency boards and fixed exchange rates, whose real purpose is to defend the value of the assets of international creditors and lenders.

Central to our planned global economy dominated by finance capital, is the powerful lever of debt. Debt acts as the key mechanism for the transfer of wealth from weak to strong; from debtor nations to international creditors; from taxpayers and wage earners to the holders of paper claims; from productive to financial activity. Without the leverage of debt, IMF policy-makers would not be able to impose policy changes necessary to ensure such transfers.

Now how did this transformation of our global economy come about? Our economies and societies had to be transformed — they had to be reoriented towards the interests of finance capital and away, in a sense, from the interests of industrial capital. For 'globalization' to succeed, the interests of shareholders and their accountants had to take precedence over the interests of producers and consumers. The interests of money had to take precedence over the interests of people. Any restraints on the growth of capital, on consumption or on profit-taking had to be removed.

The transformation was planned, and systematically implemented through the de-regulation of international capital flows.

I am convinced that one of the most important of these restraints, or forms of regulation, was something we call Sunday. Central to the process of transforming our societies and economies away from a people-centred approach and towards a money-centred approach, was the defeat of the concept of Sunday.

Sunday was, and still is in some societies, a form of regulation. For more than 2,000 years, Jewish and then Christian communities and societies were obliged, on the seventh day of each week, to refrain from exploiting the land; to refrain from exploiting each other; to cease consumer spending. Sunday limited exploitation. Of people and of the land; it was environmentally and socially sound. It also limited consumption.

After thousands of years of regulating our consumption and our social and economic relationships, the principles and the ethics that lay behind the concept of Sunday have been destroyed. They had to be, to make way for a new set of ethics — which places money, not people and the environment, at the centre of our universe. Today the concept of Sunday as a day free from exploitation and consumption is no longer central to our society or to our economy. In its place we have the 24/7 phenomenon — consumption 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

I am campaigning for the transformation of our economy — back to the days when human rights took precedence over money rights. I want money put back in its box, which means that we need to re-introduce the types of regulation of which Sunday was one, but symbolically and practically, a very important element.

The need for discipline and regulation is why I consider the jubilee concept to be so fundamental and so relevant to the global economy. The concept that periodically, once every seven times seven years, society is automatically obliged to correct imbalance, to end injustice, to cancel debts and to start again — this too is a form of regulation, a form of discipline — on both lenders and debtors.

I am convinced that we need once again to reorient our societies and economies — away from the worship of the god of money and towards human rights. We need to re-introduce forms of regulation that discipline capital, and place human rights, not money rights, at the centre of human affairs.

I am afraid there are not many in our society today who can undertake this task of transformation. Money has infiltrated almost all our institutions. The media today write for money and about money. Very few newspapers are willing to take up the cause of the poor. They are there for their shareholders, the moneyed classes, not for their customers.

Political parties, regrettably, no longer care about or talk about the poor. They too have placed money, and the making of money, at the centre of their concerns and policy-making. They work for their rich donors and for the financial institutions in the City of London and elsewhere that have the power to discipline politicians if they do not do their bidding.

Almost all of our social institutions have been corrupted by money. Today people marry for money — and not in the old sense, but in the sense that marriage ceremonies have themselves become money-making opportunities. From John Major charging guests for drinks at his son's wedding, to Madonna using her wedding as a commercially profitable operation — money has infiltrated social institutions which before were invested with different values. Sports events are dominated by the money-changers, and indeed have been corrupted by the money-makers.

There is only one place where money has not yet taken hold. And that's in places of worship. It is still possible to talk about the poor and about the marginalized in the churches, in temples and in mosques. People of faith are concerned about more than money. They are one of the few communities that do not worship the false god of money. Last Christmas I was visited by some people from a local church, carrying balloons, singing hymns and wishing me a merry Christmas. I asked them if they wanted money, and they said no — and I found it extraordinary.

Of course there are millions of others who share these principles and ethics, and who do not regard themselves as Christians or people of faith; but they invariably are scattered and disorganized. The church is one of the few social institutions that provides space for the hard graft of spiritual, social, political and economic transformation. ●

Ann Pettifor is Programme Co-ordinator for Jubilee Plus.

THE MAGIC BEAN

The velvetbean (Mucuna pruriens), Guatemala

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF JULES PRETTY

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JULES PRETTY

Tales of agricultural sustainability.

CENTRAL AMERICA is losing forest at the rate of forty-four hectares every hour. On the edge of the Petén forest in Guatemala, however, the statistics have been reversed. Here, farmers are using a magic bean to improve their soils and at the same time save the rainforest.

Farming practice in this area has previously relied on traditional slash-and-burn methods: fields are cleared in the forest, cropped for a couple of years, and then abandoned as families move to new sites. As the population has increased, however, (and as others came to log the forests), farmers had reduced their fallow periods and thus returned before natural soil fertility was restored. As a result both agriculture and the forest came under pressure — yields remain low or fall, and the forest steadily disappears.

Recently, local non-government organizations found that the incorporation of the velvetbean (*Mucuna pruriens*) into maize fields substantially increased cereal yields. *Mucuna* is grown as a soil improver. It can fix 150 kg of nitrogen per hectare each year, a free resource for farmers, as well as annually producing 50–100 tonnes of biomass on each hectare. The bean plants are allowed to fall on the soil as a green manure, suppressing weeds and helping to build the soil. This is the key to the protection of the Petén rainforest. Build the health of the soil, and farmers no longer want to burn trees to create new fields. They see the benefit of staying in the same place, and of investing in the same fields over many years. Since *Mucuna* beans were given to farmer Gabino Leiva by Centro Maya, an agency working in the Petén rainforest, his maize yield has more than doubled. Moreover, he's been cultivating the same field for over nine years, as his soil, now improved and rich in organic matter, can sustain production year after year.

OVER THE PAST FORTY years, per capita world food production has grown by 25%. Yet the world still faces a fundamental food security crisis: in the year 2000, 790 million people went hungry. It is clear that adequate and appropriate food supply is a necessary condition for eliminating hunger. But increased food

supply does not automatically mean increased food security for all. What is important is who produces the food, who has access to the technology and knowledge to produce it, and who has the purchasing power to acquire it. The conventional wisdom is that, in order to double food supply, we need to redouble efforts to modernize agriculture. It has been successful in the past. But there are doubts about the capacity of such systems to produce the food where the poor and hungry people live. In fact, these people need low-cost and readily available technologies and practices to increase food production. Sustainable agriculture methods offer just this.

Sustainable agriculture integrates natural and regenerative processes, such as nutrient cycling, nitrogen fixation, soil regeneration and natural enemies of pests, into food production processes. It minimizes the use of non-renewable inputs that damage the environment or harm the health of farmers and consumers. It makes better use of the knowledge and skills of farmers. It seeks to make productive use of social capital — people's capacities to work together to solve common management problems, such as pest, watershed, irrigation, and forest management. Sustainable agriculture not only produces food, but also contributes to public goods and services, such as clean water, wildlife, carbon sequestration in soils, flood protection, and landscape quality. Many of these non-food functions cannot be produced by other sectors.

The University of Essex recently conducted the largest ever study of sustainable agriculture in developing countries. The aim of the research was to audit recent progress in developing countries towards sustainable agriculture, and assess the extent to which such initiatives, if spread on a much larger scale, could feed a growing world population that is already substantially food-insecure. The study surveyed 200 projects in Latin America, Asia and Africa. It found that 9 million farmers have adopted sustainable agriculture practices and technologies on 29 million hectares (representing 3% of land under cultivation in these countries).

The survey found that a successful sustainable agriculture project may be substantially improving domestic food consumption or increasing local food barters or sales, without necessarily affecting the per hectare yields of cereals. This was often the case when a new productive element was added to a farm system (such as fish or shrimps in paddy rice), or better water management (such as water-harvesting and irrigation-scheduling) was introduced. On average, there was a 93% increase in per hectare food production with the adoption of techniques such as planting legumes (like *Mucuna*), using integrated pest-management, and introducing locally-appropriate crop varieties and animal breeds.

WHAT HAS ALL THIS meant for farmers at the forefront of this new agricultural revolution? Elias Zelaya's hillside farm, on the edge of the remote village of Pacayas in central Honduras, has undergone a remarkable transformation in the last decade. Now it is a model for diverse, sustainable and productive agriculture, with twenty-eight types of crops and trees, and pigs, chickens, rabbits, cattle and horses. But it was not always like this. Fifteen years ago the community was in the doldrums. The farm was poor quality pasture and maize land, and was almost abandoned by Elias's mother as worthless. No child in the village had ever been to secondary school. Land prices were low, and people saw their futures only in out-migration to the city.

Elias, though, learned both about low-cost, soil-improving technologies and how to adapt them to his unique farm conditions. The intercropping of legumes (such as *Mucuna*) with maize immediately boosted cereal yields and the effect was remarkable. The unimproved soils on the edge of his farm are no more that a few centimetres deep, and beneath is a hard bedrock. But in the fields where he grows green manures and uses composts, the soil is thick, dark, and spongy to the step. In some places on the farm, it is almost a metre deep. No conventional soils textbook will say this is possible — soils take thousands of years to create. Yet over a decade, Elias, and several tens of thousands of farmers in Central America like him, have transformed their soils and agricultural productivity.

There is now a boom in the local economy, with families moving back from the capital, and the demand for labour has put wages at close to double those in the surrounding countryside. All children now finish their primary schooling, and some have gone on to secondary school. As a neighbour of Elias's says, "Now, no one ever talks of leaving." People eat well and diversely, and they are more content with their own place. They can see a range of futures — not just one without choice.

Further west lies another transformed farm, this belonging to Irma de Guittierez Mendez, in the village of Guacamayas. It too is in the hills — in fact, 85% of Honduras is on slopes steeper than 15%. Her farm is another model for farmers everywhere, as she too works with nature rather than battling against it. The farm is covered with *terracita*, small terraces to conserve soil and water. More importantly, though, Irma is a teacher — both of fellow farmers and of professional agronomists who come to the valley to see this revolution for their own eyes. She says, "It is the responsibility of anyone who knows something to teach it to others in the community ... Our purpose is not to make a lot of money, but to help the community as a whole."

Luckily, Elias and Irma are not alone in forging a new way for agriculture. One of the most extraordinary changes to have occurred in the past decade is the emergence of this largely silent revolution in Third World agriculture. Why silent? Because it has been driven by millions of small farmers, poor in monetary terms, but rich in knowledge about nature and how to use it to increase food production. Many of them have jumped from pre-modern, unimproved agricultural systems directly to sustainable and high-producing systems. In every case, there are important lessons for us all. ●

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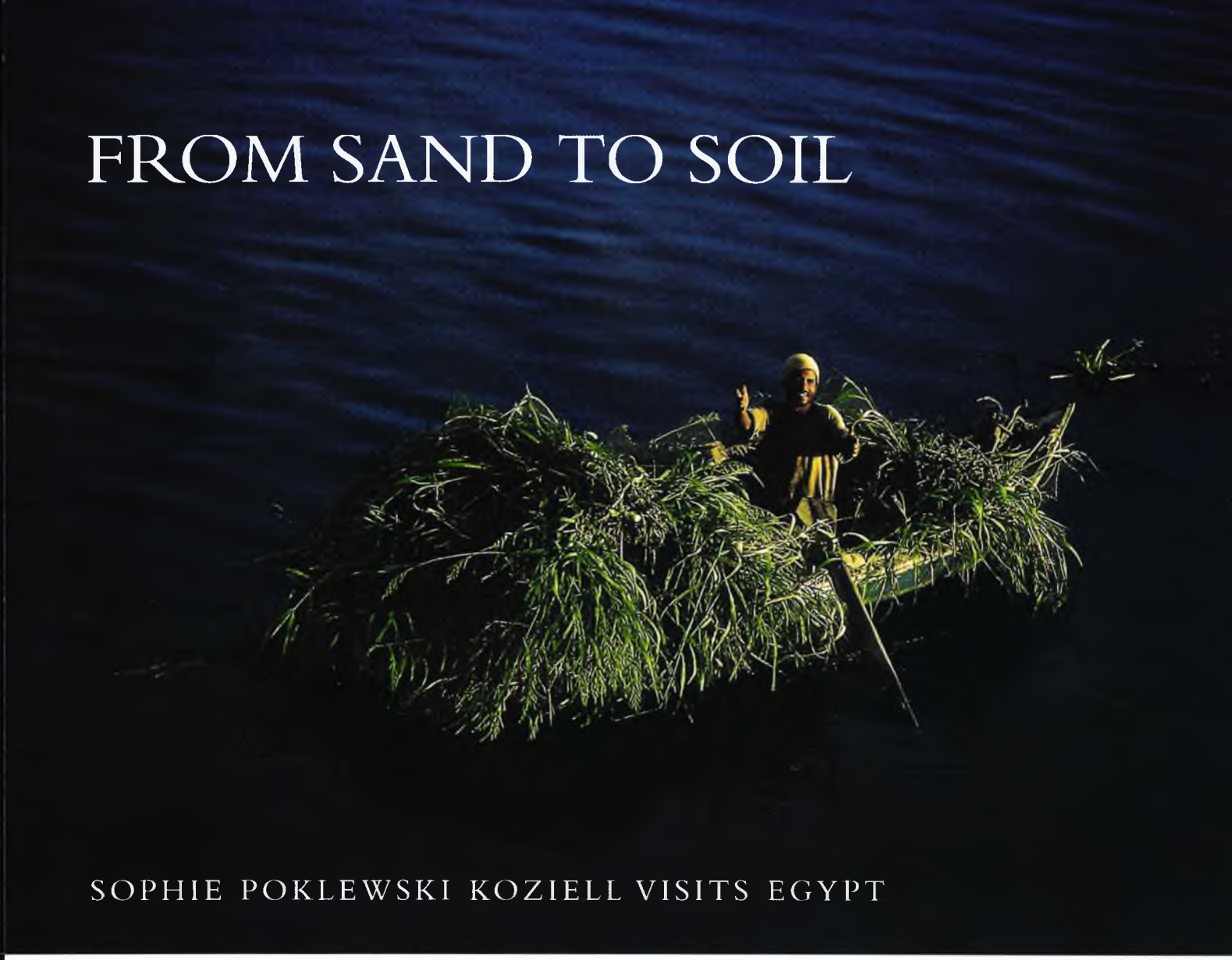
For more information on sustainable agriculture contact: CES, The University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ. <www2.essex.ac.uk/ces>

FROM SAND TO SOIL



SOPHIE POKLEWSKI KOZIELL VISITS EGYPT

Transporting fodder on the Nile PHOTOGRAPH: YANN ARTHUS-BERTRAND *from* ***The Earth from the Air****, Thames & Hudson*

GREAT RIVERS provoke eulogies: their names — the Amazon, the Volga — conjure up whole continents; their flows are lifelines. The Nile, perhaps beyond all others: this river is truly the mother of Egypt, for without it the country would not exist. A green garland of life clings to the water's passage, stretching for a mile or two on either side, until the irrigation systems peter out and the desert abruptly begins. This is where the 'other' Egypt lies — a vast 93% of the country. This area of parched mountains, nomads and whipped-up sandstorms does not support much life, human or otherwise. So it is not surprising that early civilization was raised on the banks of the Nile and has clung to them ever since.

Egypt's agriculture relies on the fertile Nile valley and the lush triangle of delta above Cairo where the river fractures before meeting the

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Mediterranean. Since the times of the ancient Egyptians the annual Nile floods have been the source of agricultural renewal. Providentially, the floods came in the scorching mid-summer, enabling crops to be planted during the temperate winter as the waters receded. The silt and nutrients carried in the floodwaters maintained the rich alluvial soil, creating some of the most fertile land in the world. Moreover, as the floods forced agriculture to cease for the three summer months when the waters were at their highest, labour was released, it is suggested, to address such Herculean tasks as the building of pyramids.

Flooding also brought its downside: villages and livestock were often swept away and useful agricultural land covered for months of the year. In the 1950s, President Nasser started his modernization of Egypt, which included the building of the High Dam at Aswan. This enormous concrete construction has restricted the flow of the Nile, in effect releasing 1.25 million acres of land for agriculture and settlement, and allowing up to three harvests a year. But by regulating the flow of the Nile its precious nutrient-rich silt has been diverted from the valley, and now settles at the bottom of Lake Nasser behind the dam. Perversely, artificial nutrients are now needed for agriculture and these are made by fertilizer plants run off the dam's hydroelectric power.

ONE OF THE MOST striking aspects of Egypt is the marriage of deeply traditional culture with aspects of modern life. In central Cairo, donkey carts ferrying fodder are driven by men talking on mobile phones. Similarly with agriculture: small plots of land are tilled by buffalo,

watered by an ancient irrigation system of small canals and channels, harvested by hand, but reliant on the bags of fertilizer and pesticide piled up in their margins.

Food scares from pesticides are regular and horrendous. Only a few summers ago, a number of people became ill from eating cucumbers tainted with toxic levels of pesticides, and DDT is still in regular use for spraying potatoes and other crops. Nevertheless, there are a few pioneers in Egypt practising organic and biodynamic agriculture and seeding ideas: one an extensive community enterprise — SEKEM — the other a small-scale banana plantation.

Walking along avenues of tall eucalyptus trees, watching a shepherd graze his skittish flock on rich grass and clover, it was hard to imagine that less than thirty years ago the SEKEM 'mother' farm was virgin desert. It took a truly committed visionary to bring the dust and sand to life using biodynamic farming methods. Ibrahim Abouleish is that visionary. Trained as a pharmacologist in Europe, he was greatly influenced by Steiner teaching. On returning home to Egypt his dream was to create an innovative model of development which involved concepts of biodynamic farming, and of integrating the economic, social and cultural spheres of life in all projects. The SEKEM name is now an umbrella term for a thriving community involving over a thousand people producing biodynamic and organic teas, herbs and spices, vegetables and cotton and phyto-pharmaceutical medicines. More than 150 family-owned farms are involved, and over 2,000 hectares are cultivated in this way.

The SEKEM farm is wedded to the local community, providing jobs, medical services and schooling. Despite its strict rules it has brought a multitude of benefits and opportunities locally. For instance, the immaculate airy buildings house not only phyto-pharmaceutical laboratories and tea-packing facilities, but also a kindergarten, a secondary school, lecture halls and a canteen. Handicapped children are nurtured and taught basic life skills. A spotless medical centre lies next to the gates, housing half a dozen doctors and specialists, and treats over 15,000 rural dwellers — not just SEKEM employees — with a combination of conventional and anthroposophical medicine.

ALI FAHMI, driving us out to his banana plantation on the main Alexandria road talked passionately about his approach to farming. To farm bananas organically in Egypt would certainly not be possible without Ali's fervent belief and ideals, as the obstacles in his way are seemingly colossal.

One of his difficulties is making a living from a farm of only fifteen acres. Such small farm sizes are not unusual in Egypt where land is strictly redistributed each generation by inheritance laws. Originally, his grandfather had 400 acres along the same stretch of the Nile, but now, split among so many relatives, there is little left. Moreover, organic production of bananas produces lower yields — a mere eight tons an acre compared with twenty to twenty-five tons using non-organic methods. Ali's problems are further compounded by a market that has yet to even recognize organics. His research shows that people buy his 'Balaika' bananas because they are the traditional small variety, are rarely damaged (unlike the street-traded bananas) and are very tasty. The fact that they are organically produced doesn't enter the equation. Few people know that the large imported South American bananas are sprayed with malathion, an insecticide, several times a year, and also treated with the fungicide Thiabendazole to keep their condition during the weeks of travel to distant markets.

Ali's farm is marked out by the compost mounds lining the dusty paths between the banana trees. All cut foliage is laid on these, mixed with chicken and cow dung, and turned by hand until it is ready to go back on the plantation. Neighbouring farms use fertilizer instead. Ali also prepares biodynamic mixes to enhance root growth and foliage, and is trying to find new ways of increasing yields using drip irrigation, instead of the traditional 'feast or famine' approach of flooding the trees each month, which shocks the root systems. Despite his enthusiasm and passion for his work, he admits it is an uphill struggle in a country where supermarkets refuse to label his bananas as 'organic', and where agricultural loans are paid in part in fertilizer. Competition from cheap imported bananas, grown on vast estates with cheap labour, is another major factor. It is the perennial problem of small producers trying to compete in the global market with all the odds stacked against them.

IN THE 1970s, Egypt was agriculturally self-sufficient with a thriving export trade. Today, over two-thirds of food is imported. Many people use the excuse of Egypt's growing population as a reason to continue with intensive industrial agriculture. They ask, "What part can organic and biodynamic agriculture, with its lower yields, play in the future?" On one hand, it seems such a tiny influence: only 0.08% of the total agricultural land is cultivated organically and few consumers recognize the benefits of buying organic produce. On the other hand, in a country that consistently defaults on repayment of international loans, whose important foreign currency earner — cotton — relies on expensive imports of pesticides, and where agricultural runoff contaminates water sources with toxic chemicals, organic production methods have something to offer. For instance, the Egyptian Biodynamic Association — a SEKEM initiative — has collaborated with the government to develop biodynamic methods to increase soil fertility and reduce use of pesticides. One result has been the cessation of routine aeroplane spraying of pesticides on cotton crops, and a tenfold reduction in the use of pesticides. These are remarkable breakthroughs in a country where environmental concerns hardly feature. Agriculture, however, is still the basis of the Egyptian economy, and over half the population is involved in farming. With 95% of the population reliant on 7% of the land, this land needs to be nurtured carefully. Perhaps some of the wisdom of organic farming methods can provide the key to dealing with such problems as rising soil salinity caused by over-irrigation. The ancient Egyptians called their country 'the black land' due to the richness of the Nile valley soil. The challenge is for modern Egyptians to restore and maintain such a gift of fertility. ●

Sophie Poklewski Koziell is Deputy Editor of ***Resurgence****.*

NATURE'S RIGHTS

LAW

GODOFREDO STUTZIN

Justice requires that Nature is recognized as a legal entity.

THE LAW HAS NOT marched at the vanguard of the processes of change: it has rather been part of the rearguard. By acting in this belated way the law fails to fulfil appropriately one of its basic functions: to give guidance to the community.

This task of using the tool of the law for guidance turns into an urgent challenge when the problems society faces surpass the managing capacity of the law in force. This requires the development of law in response to the situation facing our time.

According to its original meaning, development consists in unfolding a thing; in uncovering, revealing and performing what is contained in it. This is true of material things, of ideas, of persons and of institutions. Development is a process of organic character, identical with the growth of a plant that develops all that was potentially contained in its seed.

What is the seed that produced the law and must govern its growth? Undoubtedly, it is the notion of justice. The extension of the principles of justice must continue representing the development of law.

Today the realm of law comprises theoretically all individuals of the human species but members of the other species still remain outside, without being admitted to the privileges of the state of law.

It is this situation that has served as an argument in favour of the inclusion of non-human subjects within the legal community.

The development of law has reached a crucial moment: the idea and the ideal of justice have to acquire a new universality which comprises the entire biosphere, adding not only new objects, but also new subjects to the legal establishment.

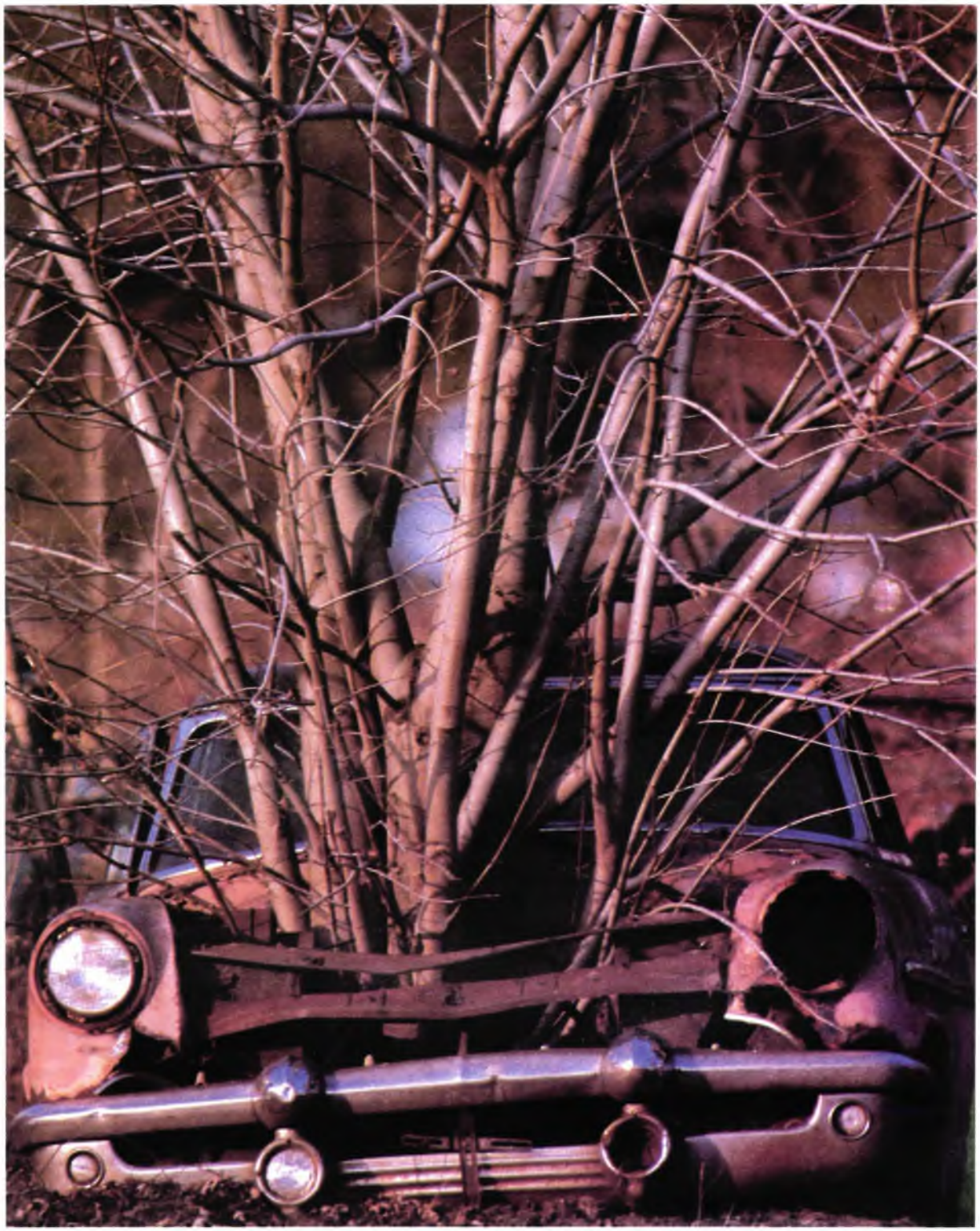
Justice is equitableness: the just equilibrium or balance between diverging interests. To establish justice means to create and maintain this balance, pondering the values in question in order to "tribute to everybody its own" and "not damage the other one". Being in charge of this mission, the law represents the visible expression of this equitableness. The state of law is the state in which the complex powers and interests that act in a community have come to find themselves in a condition of harmonious equilibrium. In its development the law should widen and deepen this state of balanced coexistence.

In the world of Nature the principle of equilibrium or balance constitutes the supreme law. Nature has been able to develop and maintain from its beginning an infinity of life forms and complex ecosystems, permanently correcting any loss of balance. Thus the biosphere has been and still continues to be the example of perfect coexistence between all its parts. Unfortunately, humans, instead of guiding ourselves by this example, have chosen the opposite path. Creating our own artificial world, the technosphere, we have placed it under the sign of unlimited economic growth at the expense and to the detriment of the natural world.

The scientific-technological revolution of our age has produced a situation that has no precedent in the history of planet Earth. For the first time, Nature, which has managed the destinies of this world since its birth, is being displaced by one of its creatures, the species self-named '*homo sapiens*', which is bent on imposing its own models and methods on the management of Nature's affairs. The technosphere is being placed upon the biosphere, impeding the latter's free functioning and development. In contrast to what happened in previous stages of Earth's evolution, in which the dominant species submitted themselves to Nature's rules, the human species has made a show of altering and suppressing these rules. What has thus been created is a clearly unbalanced ecological situation in which the relationship between one species with all the others has ceased to develop along the lines of relative equality and is instead unilaterally determined by the aspirations and fancies of the dominating species.

THE LACK OF ecological equilibrium is both the cause and effect of the absence of equilibrium in legal matters. The fact that the defence of Nature carries little weight in the realm of law reflects the virtual defencelessness of Nature in today's world; and this defencelessness, in its turn, reflects the absence of adequate defence provided by law. The possibilities of defending Nature in the present legal establishment are very limited, because only human interests are being taken into consideration; and among these interests the ones that predominate are nearly always those that favour the depredation of the natural world. The interests of those who promote actions that affect Nature belong to persons who exist and are known; the same is true of the contents of these interests; of their motivation and objective. On the contrary, the subject of the interests on which the defence of Nature is based very often lacks precise definition. The result is an evident lack of legal equilibrium between the aggressors and the defenders of Nature, which means that the former come out as winners from nearly all the situations.

This 'inferiority' that affects the defenders of Nature is the consequence of their not being able to plead their cause in a straightforward way: they cannot speak in the name of Nature and on behalf of its own interests, but are forced to resort to the aid of human interests and persons supposedly affected by the acts in question.



Nature reclaims her rights. PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN DETRICH

There is an obvious remedy for the legal inequality, amounting to a lack of equitableness or justice: it is the recognition of Nature as a legal entity possessing autonomous interests that deserve to be protected by law as rights.

The acceptance among legal persons of the rights of Nature does not pose a problem from the point of view of legal doctrine. A great percentage of the legal persons nowadays existing belong to the category of artificial persons recognized by law with full capacity to hold and exercise rights. Many of them constitute fortunes dedicated to certain aims quite different from natural persons. Nature could be classified in this group, being both creator and creation. Nature is essentially the whole of the natural world: a vast fortune dedicated to the aim of the development of life and its environment.

Although the law is free to create completely artificial legal persons as a means of furthering justice, it must be stressed that Nature, far from being a fictitious entity, possesses

real existence as a universal manufacturing body that is firmly structured and organized, essentially dynamic and productive, having functioned without interruption for billions of years. Its recognition constitutes an act of justice by which the law, advancing in its process of development, confirms the distinctive values inherent in the natural world, leaving behind the indefensible anthropocentric vision of Earth according to which the planet and all that exists upon it are but the environment of humankind, having no other value than their usefulness for the human species.

The defence of Nature comprises the defence of all and each of its components; Nature itself as a universal entity. In ecological matters it is not possible to recognize as legal persons the units of different levels that make up the natural world; the close linkage and the dynamic interrelationship that exist between all of them do not permit their legal isolation. Their defence must necessarily be based on the fact that they are integral parts of an organic whole and that the damage inflicted on any of them in some way affects all Nature; only thus the defence will have its proper force. In this respect, John Donne's words are applicable: "no man is an island, entire in itself", but "a piece of the continent, a part of the Earth", and "if the sea carries away a portion of the land, all Europe will be diminished."

ONLY FROM AN extremely limited viewpoint can it be maintained that the defence of the interests of Nature is contrary to human interests. Since humankind is part of Nature in a wide sense, human fate is indissolubly linked to that of the entire natural world. The conservation of a complete and healthy Nature is, consequently, in the interest of humankind, which means that the defenders of Nature are also the defenders of humanity; conversely, those who attack Nature, moved by short-sighted human interests, in the end attack humankind itself, threatening its future together with the future of the whole of Nature.

Such are the considerations that move people to undertake the defence of Nature, assuming its representation. Those who act in this capacity should be duly qualified or officially appointed legal entities or natural persons. The official appointees would be a kind of 'ombudsman' for Nature who take charge of the complaints or petitions made to them in defence of the natural world.

It must be stressed that the legal recognition of Nature only aims at giving it a voice in matters affecting it, so that its interests are taken into account and duly pondered in relation to the opposing human interests. The question is not that Nature should always come out on top, but that it should be heard as a party whose interests are recognized by law in conditions equal to those of human interests.

The recognition of Nature as a legal person pursues the establishment of a balanced situation between the parties of all conflicts that in some way affect the natural world, in order to arrive at equitable solutions. This premise leads to numerous advantageous consequences.

To begin with, there is a psychological effect of great importance: by obtaining the backing of the law as a holder of legally protected interests and rights, Nature comes to occupy a position that tends to grant it the respectful consideration of the community; in general, those who own rights are respected, while those who lack them are despised.

From the properly legal point of view, several weighty advantages must be mentioned:

a) The presence of Nature as a party in matters corresponding to Ecological Law allows the due identification of this branch of law as the one that deals specifically with the problems arising from the relations between people and Nature.

b) The fact that acts damaging the natural world can be judged directly as acts of violation, without need to find and determine persons affected by them, means a considerable simplification of the tasks of the law and of those who apply it in ecological matters.

c) The admission of Nature into the legal establishment produces a vigourization of the provisions protecting the natural world. By accepting that this world is not just an accumulation of goods serving as resources for people, but constitutes Nature's universal property which has its own value *per se*, independent of any possible human use, it has to be concluded that the *onus probandi* in the matter must be inverted: instead of starting out from the presumption that the components of the natural world as such are not good for anything and may be freely altered or destroyed, except if the usefulness of their conservation is proven, judgments have to be based on the contrary presumption that all that exists in Nature is good for something in the context of this 'life business' and must therefore be preserved, unless it can be proved that there is a superior interest that justifies an alteration or destruction. Likewise, the recognition of Nature as holder of a universal property of vital importance for the planet leads to the conclusion that human rights of property on natural objects are limited in their use by the 'natural function' they have to comply with, in the same way in which the rights of property on any object are subject to the demands of their 'social function'.

d) Finally, the legal recognition of Nature favours the unification of Ecological Law throughout the different legislations by providing the rules protecting the natural world with a common denominator, based on the needs of the biosphere and not on the subjective and fragmented interests of human groups.

Facing the difficult and urgent task of endeavouring to re-establish the ecological balance on our planet, the law-makers and lawyers form one of the groups that have greater possibilities as well as greater responsibilities of assuming that task. By decidedly promoting the development of law beyond its present limits through the admission of Nature as a legal person, they are in a position to establish a situation of legal equilibrium which, thanks to the force of law as a guide of human conduct, may powerfully influence the efforts to re-establish the lost ecological equilibrium. As men and women dedicated to bringing about justice, the jurists are, at the same time, under special responsibility with regard to the task of ensuring justice in human relationships with Nature. There is little doubt that the majority of them are conscious of this challenge and willing to assume it to the best of their abilities. ●

Godofredo Stutzin is a lawyer working in Chile.

LETTER FROM CUBA

JAY WALLJASPER

Maintaining the magic of city life.

HAVANA DAYDREAMING

City life, Havana, Cuba

PHOTOGRAPH: HUMPHREY EVANS/CORDAIY PHOTO LIBRARY

A FEW MONTHS ago I found myself on a beach with my old friend Monte speculating about what would be the next big place, the 'new Prague', where bright young North Americans would gather to soak up Old World charm and bohemian energy. It had been Barcelona in the eighties. Kathmandu in the seventies. Rome and Tangiers in the fifties. Paris in the twenties. Where next? We had our guesses: Kerala; Tallinn; Antigua; Ulan Bator; Tripoli.

But it's a sure bet that the immediately upcoming Mecca for hip wayfarers is Havana. Of course! La Habana. Colonial capital, the sultry hothouse for musical cross-pollination, the viciously reviled (and naively worshipped) ground zero of a revolutionary experiment in social equity and command-control economics. Havana is unquestionably one of the most interesting spots on Earth.

I SPENT TWO WEEKS there in 1983 and was enchanted. The gorgeously gracious Spanish architecture, the bustling public squares, the jazz and sun and rumba rhythms, the whole city ready to dance at the first notes of a horn or guitar, the Caribbean breezes that seem to carry secrets for relaxed, refreshing, romantic living. Novelist Graham Greene, in his 1958 spy comedy *Our Man in Havana* observed, "To live in Havana was to live in a factory that turned out human beauty." Three years earlier, *Esquire* magazine's racy correspondent Helen Lawrenson proclaimed it "the sexiest city in the world. There seems to be something in the air of Havana which has a curious chemical effect on Anglo-Saxons, dissolving their inhibitions and intensifying their libidos."

The Cuban revolution changed little of that, as far as I could tell. "Havana is still the bright, bustling carnival that travel agents touted in the fifties," I reported to the readers of *In These Times*. "Whatever its other triumphs and failures, the Cuban experiment has proved with glittery glory that socialism does not have to be synonymous with guarded, grey grimness."

Havana somehow seems to unfasten the tight bindings of modern existence. "It is a place where nothing ever happens according to plan," Helen Lawrenson observed, "but anything else can happen and usually does. You never meet anyone you're supposed to meet; you never get anyplace on time; you never do any of the things you put down on your list as important; you never see what you meant to see; and you don't give a damn."

I, too, was delighted by the loose, lively way in which life unfolds there, according to its own fine patterns – this exquisite feeling, experienced most often outside the borders of Americanized frenzy.

ONLY NINETY MILES from Florida but off-limits for over four decades, Havana stands as an alluring attraction. Already it's popular with Europeans and Latin Americans as well as enterprising *Yanquis* who find a way around the State Department's travel ban. As soon as Fidel Castro dies or the US trade embargo is lifted, Americans will descend on the Cuban capital like a gold rush.

Revelling in my memories of Havana, I can't help but panic at the thought of tourists and developers invading from the north. "Havana is still Havana because of the Cuban revolution," explains the celebrated urbanist architect Andres Duany. "Mexico City, Caracas, Rio, and other once-splendid Latin American capitals have been diminished by thoughtless American-inspired developers who erased these cities' architectural integrity and Latin soul."

Communist planners left the city alone in part because they couldn't muster the money to wreck it. With the help of UNESCO, they preserved the charming Old Havana quarter, but when I was there, plans were on the drawing-board for demolishing most of the classic Central Havana district. It was saved, thankfully, by the same economic crisis that transformed Cuba into a world leader in organic farming and bicycle transportation.

Duany worries that the Cuban government after Castro exits will bring all kinds of development into the heart of Havana. He urges Cubans to look past typical Western all-for-the-auto urban planning and take lessons from Paris, Stockholm, and Portland, Oregon, in promoting urban growth that maintains the magic of city life.

And this is a matter of something more than architectural aesthetics. The spirit, the character, even the sexiness of a place, depend on the look of its buildings and the feel of its streets. It would be a tragedy if, in embracing Havana, we destroyed the very things that attracted us to this lovely city in the first place. ●

Jay Walljasper is Editor of ***Utne Reader.***

MORNING GLORY

Reflections on a morning spent at the first *Resurgence* conference in America.

SUZI GABLIK

TO PICTURE OMEGA Institute, the centre for spiritual and holistic education that was the backdrop for *Resurgence*'s conference on 'Global Sustainability', imagine a kind of playground of the gods, set deep in the woods of upstate New York and ornamented with a lovely lake. The date is 7th September 2001; all of us here still have our innocence and are living in a sweet kind of peace. It is the first morning of the conference; I get up early enough to see the sun rise through impossibly gorgeous veils of mist drifting over the lake. With the sky wrapped in pink, I do my T'ai Chi on the beach, pretending to be a figure in a Chinese scroll. And in the spell of this beautiful interworld somewhere between the senses and the spiritual, I absolutely *know* that we are angels of the Earth.

In anybody's life, there are good mornings and bad. Sometimes, if you are lucky, in the hours between breakfast and lunch, you might just find yourself having a morning of sheer glory. Leaving the lake, I head over for breakfast on the porch of Omega's dining-room, and from there make my way the short distance over to the main conference hall where Anita Roddick, Hazel Henderson, James Hillman and Peter Matthiessen are scheduled to speak — back-to-back, all before lunch.

Now imagine a possible scene in which Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and perhaps Euripides are seated under an olive tree sipping wine and dialoguing about the fate of the Republic. What would it take to make the world a better place? How can we build sustainable bridges to the future? What is environmental excellence? What is social justice?

The night before, in between discussing the explosive gap between rich and poor, global environmental deterioration, corporate transgressions, fossil fuels and solar power, Lester Brown had cited the Berlin Wall coming down as an example of sudden and unpredictable changes that can happen. Change was inevitable, he said, but can it happen fast enough? The question hovered in everyone's mind throughout the conference, weaving itself through conflicting elements of optimism and pessimism, leaving its traces upon the dichotomy of hope and despair, and producing many variations on a single theme: how can we make change happen more quickly?

But change, when it comes, may look different from what we thought. No one present in the room at Omega on that glorious morning could have imagined that, a mere four days later, on 11th September, there would be an altogether different kind of morning — convulsive, brutal, sickening — in which, materializing out of nowhere, two hijacked planes would intentionally plunge straight into the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in lower Manhattan. No one would have believed that hundreds of gallons of fuel and human freight would explode into a murderous fireball — and, blossoming like a lurid flower from the side of one tower, cause the entire building to collapse to the ground, killing thousands of people, and injecting a grisly, immutable terror into the heart of the American people. On that morning, the world did change: we all felt it. But there was no way to know for sure if these changes would kill or cure. When change is necessary, and is not undertaken voluntarily, it can, with vicious suddenness, arrive unbidden on its own.

I KNEW I HAD stumbled on a reliable guide for highlighting the very different personalities who spoke to us so eloquently that morning at Omega as soon as I read this quote, by Gregory Bateson, which was printed on a flyer for a collaborative art exhibition in Providence, Rhode Island, called 'Gaia Dialogues' that was in my mail when I got home. "What is the pattern which connects the crab to the lobster and the orchid to the primrose, and all of them to me and me to you?" Immediately I saw bizarre points of resemblance.

Anita Roddick was most certainly the orchid — a tropical, showy flower who made us laugh. Hazel Henderson, solar theologist, put one in mind of the primrose. Half-bitter, half-sceptical, Peter Matthiessen unquestionably had a strong soul connection with the crab. Indeed, he was a godly force of crabbiness, admitting to so much anger — about the ravenous destruction of environment, indigenous peoples and biodiversity — that he told us he might just have to disrobe as a Zen priest. That left James Hillman identified with the lobster, a strong-clawed crustacean, red when boiled. Possibly the most 'surrealistic', it didn't seem an inappropriate symbol for this rather crusty Pan-theist, always clad in a colourful shell of imagination and feeling.

Roddick spoke first, arguing that business cannot be separated from human rights and community ethics, and claiming that poverty in other countries is the biggest problem — and that it is being systematically ignored by big business and government. Getting through to the people who just want to maximize profits is one aspect of the problem; protecting workers from being exploited by corporate managers is another. As if in some wonderful cosmicomic, Roddick told us that her six-year-old granddaughter is now a vigilante consumer watchdog. She and her friends go into stores and confront shopkeepers by asking "Was this product made by sweaty children?"

"It's carnival against capital," she declared, promoting her particular brand of celebratory resistance. Like the 15,000 Indian farmers she described as spending an entire day laughing outside a government office in India until the government collapsed, Roddick's over-the-top humour brought the house down

every time she spoke. "I was put on the planet to do more than sell products," she declared emphatically.

"How can we release ourselves from the idea that the money system is the only game in town?", Hazel Henderson asked, following provocatively on Roddick's heels. Brainy and iconoclastic — and a world expert on green technologies and solar/hydrogen power — Henderson steered us in the direction of healthier, well-managed economies which would function within ecologically sustainable parameters. Our obsessional fixation on the profit motive and the GNP keeps us in thrall to competitive, money-driven behaviours when we could create instead alternative systems of trade modelled directly on nature's processes rather than on managed scarcity. In Henderson's estimation, economics is a form of brain damage.

Relaxing by the lake PHOTOGRAPH: OMEGA INSTITUTE

It has been said that a nation is not lost as long as the hearts of its women are still high. Only when the women's hearts are on the ground is it all finished and the nation dies. The personal velocity of both these women together generated such irreverent, almost ecstatic, feminine energy that many people in the room found themselves wondering what America would be like if they were in charge of running the country. Perhaps, 4.5% of the world's population might not be consuming 30% of the world's resources.

This would definitely be a hard act to follow. The two male speakers, however, proved more than up to the task, giving us a complementary dose of psychically raw masculine energy, penetrating right to the bone. Hillman spoke first, in lightning flashes.

"What is it that's resurging?", he asked us. The question was boomed out at full tilt. It's the environment — coming back out of denial, oppression, subjugation, repression. It's the *anima mundi*, the world soul. And it's the gods, whom we've so carelessly excluded from the events and things of this world. Look anywhere else, Hillman said, and you will find spirits everywhere. But our society rejects this as 'paganism'. The repressed returns, however, with a vengeance — as a symptom or a disease or a disorder. The old gods, Hillman warned us, have become a negative force working against us, in the form of Fundamentalism — their virtues have turned into vices.

And then, just as he said, it happened. Four days later, the world was drawn into a Holy War. The god of materialism received a mortal blow. Should we be a tiny bit envious of his intuitions and his prophecies?

"We want the world to stay here," Hillman boomed in conclusion. "Not because of ideas about sustainability but out of instinctual desire — because we fall in love with it. We need to break all these envelopes, so that we can fall in love with the world's beauty instead of reducing it to economics and science." In his brilliant and unorthodox way, Hillman has always been a master at crafting mythic manifestos. But on this particular morning it was as if he had put everyone under a spell.

Peter Matthiessen, as final speaker of the morning, proved to be the intriguing counterweight — a tough customer who refused to soften or blunt his sharp edges in order to become more 'audience-friendly'. "It's too late for nature-writing," he said, hitting hard right off the bat. "You have to be an activist-ranter now, and a pain in the butt." Which is precisely what he was, sometimes throwing his manuscript pages on the floor, refusing to stop in time for lunch, and all the while sprouting denunciations like dandelions across a sea of concerned faces.

"Who doesn't fear our efforts may be too little and too late? We have a great country and it pisses me off to see how we debase ourselves," he said. "It pisses me off to see how apathetic and spoiled we are." Driven nuts by the sheer waste of the nuclear shield, for instance, Matthiessen dramatically proclaimed the obvious: the same money would be put to much better use invested in environmental clean-up. There is still no measurable progress against pollution or population, he complained. "And now we want clones! Is that insane or what?"

At no point did Matthiessen attempt to temper his seething impatience with corporations. They won't change, he warned, because they're trapped in their own logic. ("We owe it to the stockholders to gouge your eyes out.") He knew he risked sounding obsessional and reactionary, but he didn't care. "I don't trust corporate people. This merchant mentality didn't use to be so highly regarded, but now managers have usurped the place of philosophers and shamans."

Despite the danger of sounding like 'Dr Doom', he informed us that he would not end on an upbeat note. Instead Matthiessen issued a caveat. Without spiritual change, we're not going to make the necessary turnaround. Without spiritual rebirth, the world is doomed. And having sounded the alarm — which, by the way, I totally agree with — Matthiessen ended with this line from one of my favourite poems by Antonio Machado: "What have you done with the garden that was entrusted to you?"

Does any question exist more powerful than this? Shall we ever succeed in realizing the truth? ●

This year's *Resurgence* Conference will take place from 5-8th September at the Omega Institute, Rhinebeck, New York.

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CONFERENCE

LOCAL FOOD GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

COLIN HINES

Moving the anti-globalization movement "from opposition to proposition".

I WAS SITTING next to an environmentalist friend with whom I have worked over the decades, at yet another huge public meeting on globalization. The eloquent speakers were piling one horror story upon another to an audience who had come because they already knew too well the adverse effects of the process. When a break was announced, my neighbour turned to me and said despairingly: "Thank goodness now I can go to the loo and slit my veins! Why do they do this to us; why don't we ever hear detailed answers and solutions to discuss?" Thus was born the idea behind a day in July last year given over to 'Local Food — Global Solutions'.

Its purpose was threefold. Firstly, to recognize that food is the one issue that can really bring home to a wide range of people what is wrong with globalization. Secondly, to link the myriad examples of what people are doing on the ground to take back control of the food economy from big business with the overarching national and international policies needed to turn these isolated examples into the norm. Thirdly, to come up with practical campaign ideas for what to do next and to pass such information, analysis and ideas on to all such future meetings.

This approach was felt crucial to ensure that the movement as a whole shifts its stance from opposition to proposition. To stop merely detailing the horror stories, with a few end-of-the-tunnel solutions thrown in, almost as an afterthought. Instead, to help build the wider movement's involvement through a set of policies that could actually bring about radical change in direction of the global economy.

The first part of the Local Food — Global Solutions event brought together around sixty people from the UK and Europe who had experience of working on UK food issues, European food policy and the World Trade Organization (WTO). They split into three seminars to attempt to put forward positive solutions based on local food systems. The participants were asked to propose how to change the direction of British agriculture post-foot-and-mouth, and to shift the goal of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture away from agribusiness's agenda, towards the encouragement and protection of smaller-scale, sustainable production for more local consumption.

IN THE UK GROUP it was recognized that the foot-and-mouth debacle is resulting in the potential for a radical rethink of UK agriculture away from the present emphasis on increasingly intensive and export-orientated production. There is a rising call for more local, less-intensive food production and the rebuilding of rural economies. However, the participants recognized that a post-foot-and-mouth agenda could be hijacked by more status quo interests. They will want to use it as an excuse to speed up the buy-out of small farmers and continue to call for the inevitability of the need for more 'efficient' agriculture. Some limited funds will be proposed for environmental upkeep in rural areas and enough aid for a niche market organic sector to keep the supermarket shelves stocked.

Michael Hart, a farmer from the Small and Family Farmers' Alliance, pointed out that, although farmers' markets and box schemes were welcome ways to link some farmers with local consumers, much more fundamental changes were needed to protect small and family farmers to ensure that they could make a living.

The answer for him was similar to that debated in the European group. It consisted of paying proportionately high prices for the level of production feasible for a small farmer to survive, and then progressively less for larger farmers. The latter always claim they are "efficient and competitive", so presumably they could cope with a shift of subsidies from the large to the small. Similarly the grants etc. for farming more environmentally should be in favour of the small farmer.

Indeed, such ideas are now reaching centre-stage in Europe, with the Green German Minister of consumer protection, food and agriculture, Renate Künast, warning that large farms will in future have to compete in the market without any European Union (EU) subsidies. Organic farms and small family farms will qualify for support. Künast has also made clear that the bigger the organic sector the less money need be spent on cleaning up pollution and soil problems created by large-scale conventional farms.

David Baldock of the Institute for European Environmental Policy stated that the current CAP is taking Europe gradually towards US-style regional specialization, geared to economies of scale for 'cheap' food and exports. This of course is the

Radishes PHOTOGRAPH: TESSA TRAEGER

very opposite of local diversity. However, until such time as a very different goal is achieved for the CAP there were existing EU policy levers that could help local production within the present policy framework, but which weren't at present being adequately taken up. For example, the policy of 'modulation' ensures the legal ability of member states to transfer up to 20% of the money at present spent on production subsidies towards environmental and other grants that can be more locally targeted and controlled. The French use this system to favour small farmers very much along the lines suggested by Michael Hart above, i.e. the first slice of the subsidy is not reduced for small farmers. The proceeds and additional national money can be spent on the present Rural Development Plans, which channels some money into local organic farms, rather than traditional larger entities.

Britain and the rest of the EU countries could therefore be pressurized to move further along the French path of favouring small farmers, but with an additional financial transfer to fund the building-up of local food infrastructure, such as local producer co-operatives.

There was also general agreement about the need to prop up small producers via local markets as soon as possible. One answer was the fact that there is currently a great opportunity to develop local sustainable food through schools and other public sector catering such as hospitals and care homes.

Of course, there are significant cultural and infrastructure barriers, and it was recognized that addressing these in an integrated way requires a partnership between different organizations with complementary roles. In schools, it is important to look at sustainable food in the curriculum (including growing food in schools' gardens) and sourcing healthy local food for school meals.

Sustain and The Foundation for Local Food Initiatives are working together to develop a broad campaign on this issue. The aim is to build on the work of organizations individually and on experience from elsewhere (e.g. in France and Italy on school meals). To give an idea of the significance of such a shift for UK farmers, it has been estimated that if government plans to ensure fruit consumption in schools used domestic produce, then that could provide a market for a staggering 40% of UK fruit production.

THE DAY ENDED with an evening public meeting that packed out the Conway Hall venue. It put forward many of the overarching policy changes that could ensure that local food became the norm, rather than the position today where it merely provides a few notable exceptions. As author of *Localisation — A Global Manifesto*, I kicked the evening off by asserting that none of the range of campaigns aimed at winning really significant improvements, from food to development, from environment to pensions and from schooling to health, had a chance of succeeding under the new theology of globalization.

To overcome this, a new goal for world trade and food production was required — to protect the local, globally. To achieve this would require an interconnected and self-reinforcing set of policies. These include reintroducing tariffs and quotas to protect the local economy, a 'site here to sell here' policy to overcome the threat of corporate relocation, a grounding of money within the region where it is generated, gradual introduction of resource taxes to adequately protect the environment and pay for this very radical transition, and, finally, an internationalist set of aid and trade rules that contributed to 'localization'.

Caroline Lucas, the Green MEP, looked at 'localization' from a European perspective, not surprisingly

since this was the election platform on which she was voted to the European Parliament. She made clear that what she calls "the central curse of the CAP" is never ever discussed, much less addressed — the curse of enforced global competitiveness. Having spoken to many farmers in the past months, the message she was getting from them was clear. They perceive that they are being asked to perform two mutually exclusive tasks simultaneously: to achieve ever greater levels of international competitiveness, i.e. to be even meaner, leaner, competition against international costs; but at precisely the same time, to achieve higher standards of social, environmental and animal welfare. This simply isn't possible.

Not only is this the model of agriculture in the existing EU; it's also the model being promoted in the countries of Eastern Europe seeking to join the EU — often with disastrous results. Take Poland. When Polish farmers are pitted in ruthless competition against the more 'efficient' existing EU member states, it is likely that Poland will lose up to two million agricultural livelihoods.

Lucas was adamant that present proposals for greening the CAP won't be enough, unless combined with policies which specifically reject the need to ruthlessly compete on price in international markets. As more consumers, farmers and workers are experiencing the downsides of such globalization, now is the time to consider how this can be replaced with 'localization'. Dramatically reducing world food trade and re-localizing production must be central to the debate about transforming the CAP — indeed, fundamentally re-nationalizing agricultural policy, decentralizing it within nations, and only dealing with transboundary issues at the European Union level is the key.

Lucas insisted that the CAP must be replaced by a Localist Rural and Food Policy. Its goal would be to keep production much closer to the point of consumption and to help protect and rebuild local economies around the world. Its measures include the introduction of eco-taxation to ensure that the real costs of environmental damage, unsustainable production methods and long-distance trade are included in the costs. It would also promote the production of healthy foodstuffs by providing assistance for change-over costs and marketing to ensure that intensive systems are replaced by more benign ones, such as organic farming.

To allow this to happen, over time import controls would need to be gradually re-introduced to protect those goods which can be produced domestically from imports which could otherwise threaten such a rediversification of national agricultural systems. This new policy would also end the long-distance transport and live export of animals, restrict the concentration and market power of the major food retailers through new competition laws, and encourage rural regeneration and employment.

THE LABOUR MP for Nottingham South, Alan Simpson, described how last year he had put down a Food Poverty Eradication Bill in the House of Commons. It proposed placing a duty on government to eradicate food poverty within fifteen years.

He also proposed a Producer Liability Bill. It would cover genetically modified (GM) crops, but also encourage consideration of the implications for agribusiness of things like pesticides, herbicides and growth hormones. Simpson asserted that what has to be said is that "If your science is so good — if you're so convinced of its virtues without consequences, then you have to take out comprehensive public liability insurance." The industry knows that would kill off the GM crop agenda. They know that not only is their product unsellable, it's also uninsurable. Even NFU Mutual — the main insurer for farmers — is telling the farmers it won't insure them if they grow GM crops.

Alan Simpson called for local authorities to set up their own local food commission. Local authorities could exercise their democratic mandate by negotiating for safe food contracts and accountable food suppliers.

A jocular instance of what such a future could entail was recounted by Simpson when he described how he was having a joke with a farmer who was a stall-holder at a farmers' market. He thought he would catch the farmer out and said, "Of course, you can't tell me the sell-by date. There's no bar-code." The farmer replied, "No, but would the dug-by date help? Because they were in my field yesterday afternoon. I brought them in this morning and they'll probably be on your plate this evening. Is that all right for you?"

TIM LANG, Professor of Food Policy, stated that the food movement has come a long way. Years ago when he worked with the Food Commission, they were called Red Ken's food terrorists, and the Food Leninists. Lang, being a vegetarian, was able to reply, "No, we're Lentilists, thank you very much!" However, he felt that we are witnessing public policy failure. A new policy framework is required which will take an integrated overview of the whole food system; organize reform in collaboration with our European partners; focus on food and environmental quality, not just on price and quantity; rebuild local and regional food supplies to cut 'food miles'; promote and protect ecological and public health; prioritize biodiversity throughout the food supply chain; ensure a healthy diet is available to, and affordable by, all, and oblige firms in the food chain to internalize as many as possible of the costs that are currently externalized onto the public purse, consumers and innocent third parties.

To achieve this, food prices should reflect the full costs of production. Food miles are a key indicator to improve on, partly as this is a matter of consumer consciousness and partly because food miles are a 'short-hand' for energy use. A larger portion of the value generated in the food chain should accrue to the farmers who grow the primary products. Shortening the supply chain would help. Either the break-up of the big retail chains is needed or tight regulation of competition amongst them, or both. Supporting small farmers and curbing the power of supermarkets could thus lessen any price rises for the poor.

The Food Standards Agency is safety-focussed, which in Lang's view is too narrow a remit. Instead he proposes a new National Food Policy Council that should be required to integrate competing demands of environment, safety and health with a sustainable rural economy. Lang felt that 'food poverty' is the running sore of the current food

Farmers' market, Rome, Italy PHOTOGRAPH: FERDINANDO SCIANNA/MAGNUM PHOTOS

system. 10–15% of UK citizens cannot afford to eat an adequate diet. Key ways forward include raising the minimum wage and improved access to shops. Diversity of shops is just as important as diversity of crops.

The final speaker was the Indian activist and academic, Vandana Shiva. As usual she gave an inspiring, impassioned speech, which asserted that opening food markets to exports was not the answer to rural poverty, but one of its causes. She explained that the new threats to food security faced by the poor in India, and especially food producers, come from four sources that erode food entitlements. These are: the decline in food production, as acreage to cash crops such as cotton and sugar cane has increased; the dumping of imported products from both rich and poor countries, made worse by the removal of import restrictions; the increasing cost of inputs, particularly due to price deregulation, and falling farm prices caused by the withdrawal of government procurement.

Of course, all these examples of reducing food security are worsened by the insistence of the WTO on ever lower protective barriers. Mr Prakash Singh Badal, the Chief Minister of the most prosperous state in the so-called breadbasket of India — Punjab, warned in December 2000 that "the implementation of the WTO Agreement (aimed at further trade liberalization in agriculture) in the present form would lead to bloodshed in the country." For Mr Badal "signing of the WTO Agreement amounts to signing the death warrant for the farm sector."

Vandana Shiva was clear that the alternative that needed to be proposed at the WTO's next governmental meeting [in Qatar last November] should involve policy commitments, globally and nationally to protect the small farmer, reduce costs of cultivation, reduce environmental destruction, reduce need to purchase external inputs such as seeds and chemicals, localize production of staples, focus on food first rather than export first policies, and focus on high-value exports based on fair trade and environmental protection.

Shiva concluded by listing some key policy goals required for world food trade to foster food security and localization. These included fair trade rather than free trade; maintenance of import controls, i.e. qualitative restrictions; no imports except to meet genuine scarcity and no imports allowed where prices are below the cost of production in India, or in the country of origin, to prevent dumping and the destruction of livelihoods; no export subsidies either hidden or overt; trade monopolies prevented; procurement only by government-controlled entities; and fair prices to farmers and consumers rather than low prices to farmers and high prices to consumers.

Vandana Shiva finished off her speech with a global demand that imports be controlled by governments and that exports should only consist of genuine surplus leftovers after food security needs have been met at all levels by domestic production. "Let the world food trade deal in the leftovers!" ●

Full details of 'Local Food — Global Solutions' can be seen at <www.go-local.org>. For Sustain go to <www.sustainweb.org> and for The Foundation for Local Food Initiatives see <www.localfood.org.uk>.

Colin Hines is the author of ***Localization — A Global Manifesto*** *(Earthscan).*

Traditional village north of Antananarivo, Madagascar PHOTOGRAPH: YANN ARTHUS-BERTRAND *from* ***The Earth from the Air****, Thames & Hudson*

BEAUTY IS THE STANDARD

DAVID W. ORR

We must love our children enough to design a world which instructs them towards community, ecology, responsibility, and joy.

THE SKYMALL catalogue, conveniently available to bored aeroplane passengers, recently offered an item that spoke volumes about our approach to raising children. For a price of several hundred dollars parents could order a device that could be attached to a television set that would control access to the television. Each child would be given a kind of credit card, programmed to limit the hours he or she could watch TV. The child so disciplined would presumably benefit by imbibing fewer hours of mind-numbing junk. He or she might also benefit from the perverse challenge to discover the many exciting and ingenious ways to subvert the technology and the intention behind it, including a flank attack on parental rules and public decency via the internet.

My parents had a rather different approach to the problem. It was the judicious and authoritative use of the word "No". It cost nothing. My brother, sister and I knew what it meant and the consequences of ignoring it. Still, I sometimes acted otherwise. It was a way to test the boundaries of freedom and parental love and the relation between the two.

The Skymall device and the word "No" both represent concern for the welfare of the child, but they are fundamentally different design approaches to the problem of raising children and they have very different effects on the child. The device approach to discipline is driven by three factors that are new to parenting in the postmodern world. It is a product of a commercial culture in which we've come to believe that high-tech gadgetry can fix human problems, including that of teaching discipline and self-control to children. Moreover, the device is intended mostly for parents who are absent from the home for much of the day because they must (or think they must) work to make an expanding number of ends meet. And, all of our verbal assurances of love notwithstanding, it is a product of a society that does not love its children competently enough to teach them self-discipline. The device approach to parenting is merely emblematic of a larger problem that has to do with the situation of childhood within an increasingly dysfunctional society absorbed with things, economic growth, and self.

We claim to love our children, and I believe that most of us do. But we have, sheeplike, acquiesced in the design of a society that dilutes the expression of genuine love. The result is a growing mistrust of our children that easily turns to fear and dislike. In a recent survey in the USA, for example, only a third of adults believed that today's young people "will eventually make this country a better place". Instead, we find them "rude" and "irresponsible". And often they are. We find them overly materialistic and unconcerned about politics, values, and improving society. Not infrequently they are verbally and physically violent, fully adapted to a society that is saturated with drugs and violence. A few rape or kill other children. Why are the very children that we profess to cherish becoming less than likeable and sometimes less than human?

Some will argue that nothing of the sort is happening and that every generation believes that its children are going to hell; that eventually, however, things work out. Such views are, I think, fatuous, because they ignore the sharp divide imposed between the hyper-consumerism of the post-modern world and the needs of children for extended nurturing, mentoring and imagining. It's the economy that we love, not our children. The symptoms are all around us. We spend 40% less time with our children than we did in 1965. We spend, on average, six hours per week shopping, but only forty minutes playing with our children. It can no longer be taken for granted that this civilization can pass on its highest values to enough of its children to survive. Without intending to do so, we have created a society that cannot love its children, indeed one in which the expression of real love is increasingly difficult.

NO SOCIETY THAT loved its children would consign nearly one in five to poverty. No society that loved its children would put them in front of television for four hours each day. No society that loved its children would lace their food, air, water and soil with thousands of chemicals whose combined effect cannot be known. No society that loved its children would build so many prisons and so few parks and schools. No society that loved its children would teach them to recognize over 1,000 corporate logos but fewer than a dozen plants and animals native to their locality. No society that loved its children would divorce them so completely from contact with soils, forests, streams and wildlife. No society that loved its children would create places like the typical suburb or shopping mall. No society that loved its children would casually destroy real neighbourhoods and communities in order to build even more highways. No society that loved its children would build so many glitzy sports stadiums while its public schools fall apart. No society that loved its children would build more shopping malls than high schools. No society that loved its children would pave over 1,000,000 acres each year for even more shopping malls and parking lots. No society that loved its children would knowingly run even a small risk of future climatic disaster. No society that loved its children would use the practice of discounting in order to ignore its future problems. No society that loved its children would leave behind a legacy of ugliness and biotic impoverishment.

Of course we do all these things in the belief that they are the necessary price of creating a better world for children. But at some level I believe that our children understand that such arguments are phony. I think this awareness explains what often appears to be their unfocussed anger. Our children often mirror the larger incivility and rudeness that we inflict on them. They mirror the larger self-indulgence of a society organized around machines, instant gratification, and excessive individualism. They know that mastery of, say, Shakespeare counts for considerably less in this society than making it big in sports or business or drug-dealing. They understand intuitively that the real curriculum is not what's taught in schools, but what's written on the face of the land. It is remarkable, in fact, that they are not angrier.

What would it mean to make a society that did in fact love all its children? This is, properly understood, a design problem that calibrates what we intend as parents with how we earn our living, conduct our daily lives, build homes, design communities, manage landscapes, and provision ourselves with food, energy and materials. I would go so far as to say that the well-being of children in the fullest sense of the word, not gross national product, is the best indicator of the health of our civilization. And I believe that it is the ultimate standard for ecological design. How do we design a civilization for children?

The starting point is the child itself and its need for joy, safety, parental love, play, and the opportunity to explore the wider world safely. Such awareness must begin early in life with the development of what Edith Cobb once called "compassionate intelligence" rooted in "biological motivation deriving from nature's history". The child's "ecological sense of continuity with nature" is not mystical but is "basically aesthetic and infused with the joy in the power to know and to be". Childhood is the "point of intersection between biology and cosmology, where the structuring of our worldviews and our philosophies of human purpose takes place."

Similarly, Paul Shepard once argued that mind and body are imprinted in the most fundamental ways by the "pattern of place" experienced in childhood. For Shepard, the conclusion is that children must have the opportunity to "soak in a place" and to "return to that place to ponder the visible substrate of their own personality." Conversely, the child's sense of connection to the world can be damaged by ecologically impoverished surroundings. And it can be damaged as well by exposure to violence and poverty, and even by too much affluence. It can be destroyed, in other words, when ugliness, both human and ecological, becomes the norm. Ecological design begins with the creation of places in which the ecology of imagination and ecological attachment can flourish. These would be safe urban and rural places that included biological diversity, wildness, flowing water, trees, animals, open fields, and room to roam — places in which beauty became the standard.

At a larger scale the same standard applies to the ways children and adolescents are linked to landscapes. Typical industrial era land-use patterns teach young people that:

• The highest and best use of land is for building shopping malls, roads

and parking lots;
• Land has little value beyond that of utility and economics;
• Some land is expendable as landfills and waste dumps;
• The poor live on poor land, the well-to-do live on good land;
• Roads to satisfy our cravings for mobility trump community needs;
• Lawns are merely decoration maintained by the use of chemicals and by fuels that will be exhausted in their lifetimes;
• Prime farmland is far less important than development;
• Biological diversity is less important than economic growth.

One consequence of the homogenized and utilitarian landscape is that most young people learn little about how they are provisioned and virtually nothing about better alternatives to meet real human needs. By separating how our lives are provisioned with food and energy from how we earn our keep, we have removed a great deal of ecological reality from daily experience. The things that we used to do for ourselves as competent citizens and neighbours we now purchase from one corporation or another at a considerable markup. It should astonish no one that civility, neighbourliness and communities are in decline and that crime and anomie are on the rise. But when living and livelihood become too widely separated, human bonds deteriorate. People do not need each other as they once did. And when minds and landscapes are widely separated, whole categories of thought disappear, ecological competence declines, and awareness of our dependence on nature atrophies.

In an ecologically and aesthetically impoverished landscape, it is harder for children and adolescents to find a larger meaning and purpose for their lives. Consequently, many children grow up feeling useless. In landscapes organized for convenience, commerce and crime, and subsidized by cheap oil, we have little good work for them to do. Since we really do not need them to do real work, they learn few practical skills and little about responsibility. Their contacts with adults are frequently unsatisfactory. When they do work, it is all too often within a larger pattern of design failure. Flipping artery-clogging burgers made from chemically saturated feedlot cows, for example, is not good work, and neither is most of the other hourly work available to them. Over and over we profess our love for our children, but the evidence says otherwise. Rarely do we work with them. Rarely do we mentor them. We teach them few practical skills. At an early age they are deposited in front of mind-numbing television and later in front of computers. And we are astonished to learn that they neither respect adults nor are equipped with the basic skills and aptitudes necessary to live responsible and productive lives. They imitate the values they perceive in us with characteristic exaggeration.

Aerial view of Bourtange New Village, The Netherlands PHOTOGRAPH: DICK ROSS/STILL PICTURES

ASSUMING THAT WE can muster the good sense to solve the problem, what would we do? Part of the solution is to rejoin mind and habitat at the landscape level by reconnecting living with livelihood. This can only be done in places where a large part of our needs for shelter, warmth, energy, economic support, health, creativity and conviviality is met locally in competently used and well-loved landscapes. To some this will sound either utopian or like a return to some mythical past. It is neither. In fact, it is an honest admission that we've tried utopia on industrial terms and it did not work. It is

merely to recognize the fact that, for better or worse, the organization of our landscapes arranges our possibilities, informs our minds and directs our attention. A landscape organized for the convenience of the automobile and trivial consumption tells young people more about our real values than anything taught in school. Worse, it deflects and distorts their intelligence at a critical point in life. It is possible, however, to organize landscapes to teach usefulness, practical competence, social responsibility, ecological skill, the values of good work, and the higher possibilities of adulthood. And it is possible to restore minds to the tutorship of soils, wildlife, plants, water, seasons, and the ecology of place.

The farms, feedlots, mines, wells, clearcuts, waste dumps, and factories which provision us are mostly out of sight and so out of mind. As a result we do not know the full costs of what we consume. Ignorant of the damage we do, we leap to the conclusion that we are much richer than we really are. Ecological poverty and poverty of mind and spirit are reverse sides of the same coin. When we get the design right, however, the manner in which we provision ourselves becomes a reminder of our larger relationships and obligations. The true aim of ecological design, then, is not merely to improve the various technologies and techniques by which we meet our physical needs, but to improve the integration of the human mind with its habitat and to fit in a larger order of things. "To live," in Wendell Berry's words, "we must daily break the body and shed the blood of Creation. When we do this knowingly, lovingly, skilfully, reverently, it is a sacrament. When we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration. In such desecration we condemn ourselves to spiritual and moral loneliness, and others to want."

Ecological design in its fullest measure is not just smarter management by technicians, but rather a wider awareness and visible manifestation of our awareness that we are part of a larger pattern of order and obligation.

Frank Lloyd Wright once commented that he could design a house that would cause a married couple to divorce within a matter of weeks. By the same logic it is possible to create buildings and cities so badly as to cause a culture to disintegrate socially and come unhinged from nature. Compare the architecture of the modern world with that of earlier civilizations. The ancient cities of India, Greece and Rome, for example, were planned, in Peter Wilson's words, as "representations of microcosm and macrocosm, projections of the human body and distillations of the universe". The architecture of houses and public buildings, he said, was a means to "portray to people their relation to one another as well as to important features of their environment," a kind of "diagram of how the system works." Buildings were not simply machines, as Le Corbusier would have it, but a map showing "how the individual, the various orders of groups, and the cosmos are linked and related." For all their imperfections as places and cultures, inhabitants in such cities were oriented to larger patterns.

Compare this with sprawling cities of the twentieth century that give no clue about any cosmology larger than the Gross National Product. They have become sprawling wastelands, islands of sybaritic affluence surrounded by a sea of necrotic urban tissue. For the most part, our buildings, in which we spend over 90% of our time, are poorly built. They are often made of materials that are toxic. They are often oversized and use energy and materials inefficiently. They are mostly disconnected from any discernible sense of community or any larger ecological or spiritual pattern. And what do such cities and buildings teach us? They teach us in exquisite detail that we are alone and powerless in the world, that energy and materials are cheap and can be consumed with impunity, that the highest purpose of life is consumption, and that the world is chaotic and dangerous.

Architectural design, in other words, is also a form of pedagogy that instructs us well or badly, but never fails to instruct. When we get the design of buildings and communities right, they will instruct us properly in how we fit within larger patterns of energy and materials. They will tie our affections and minds to the care of particular places. When architecture becomes a form of ecological design it promotes ecological competence and the use of local energy and materials, and creates larger patterns of order.

THE GOAL OF ecological design is not merely to meet our needs within the boundaries of ecological carrying capacity, but more importantly, to inform our desires. Good design would instruct us in what we need and the terms of our existence on Earth. In other words, the systems we devise to provision ourselves with food, energy, materials, shelter and health need to constitute a larger form of education. But if these systems are designed to educate, they must give quick feedback about the consequences of our decisions and they must work at a comprehensible scale. They must be devised in ways that create competence and practical understanding. They must be resonant with our deeper needs for meaning embedded in ritual and celebration. And design intelligence and the practical competence necessary to maintain it must be faithfully transferred from one generation to the next.

Good design must also meet other standards imposed by the way the physical world works. It must result in systems that are flexible and resilient in the face of changing circumstances. Given limits to our knowledge and foresight, good design would never lead us to bet it all, to risk the unforeseeable, or to commit acts that are irrevocable when the consequences are potentially large. And it would reorient our sense of time, giving greater weight to our future prospects and to long-term ecological processes as well. It would never cause us to discount the future.

Finally, designing ecologically begins in the belief that the world is not meaningless, but coherent in ways that are often mysterious to us. Our task is to discern, as best we are able, the larger patterns and scales in which we live, and to act faithfully within those boundaries. Design, in this larger sense, is not simply the making of things but rather a striving for wholeness. At its best, ecological design is the ultimate manifestation of love — a gift of life, harmony and beauty to our children. ●

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The gridshell framework at night

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF THE WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

THE CRAFT OF BUILDING

OLIVER LOWENSTEIN

The marriage of craft skills and technology broadens the horizons of eco-design.

ACROSS THE SLOPING parkland of a West Sussex valley, a series of clusters of pre-modern vernacular and local buildings sits restored and resplendent for all to see how life was lived before and during the onset of industrialization. Near the entrance, the buildings include a Tudor market-house. Further afield lies Bayleaf Farm, complete with a medieval crop-rotation garden and wicker beehives. Intermeshed with a treasure-trove of information about the region's traditional means of living, from coppicing to charcoal burning, the main purpose of West Sussex's Weald and Downland Museum is the preservation of regional historical buildings. There are a dozen or so sitting amidst the expansive grounds, a veritable physical database of a whole range of historical building techniques which have pretty much disappeared. The vision which infuses the Museum is to preserve this knowledge in a time when it is at risk of becoming extinct.

Over the last decade, the number of buildings that the museum was collecting and restoring began to increase. Along with this, the archive and historical material was also bursting at the seams. The Museum's then director, the late Chris Zeuner, began to think of ways out of the impasse. He knew he needed extra space and the solution he was drawn to was a completely new building, within the Museum's grounds, which could be put to use both for repairs and as an archive and learning centre.

Zeuner knew he wanted a building which embodied the spirit of crafts and tradition, but he also envisioned a building which spoke to the dawn of a new millennium as well. In 1996 he began to draw together a project team to research a building which would combine rural and traditional skills with a leading-edge, innovative approach. After tendering a plan which emphasized the sophistication of its timberwork, Cullinan's, the mid-sized eco-hued London architect practice, came on board. Sustainable building issues were implicit in the project right from the beginning, with the Museum underscoring the use of local resources and material, the need for a low-energy design, and an empha-

sis on employing a skilled workforce from the West Sussex region.

Five years on, the building emerging from within its tree-surrounded site is striking. Its distinctive appeal lies in its marriage of organic form to a thoroughgoing and innovative sustainable aesthetic. It is a timber-based building utilizing a ground-breaking engineering technique called 'gridshell', and as a consequence it is infused and constructed, literally, out of the ethos and spirit of carpentry.

This is the first gridshell building of its type attempted in this country. Gridshells are, at core, lattice shell structures: shell-shapes pocked with diamond lozenge holes. Because of their shell properties they are phenomenally strong, and don't require internal supports. There is a tradition of timber gridshell engineering which reaches back to the turn of the last century. But the first recent gridshell derives from 1975, when the eminent German architect, Frei Otto, unveiled a revolutionary gridshell building in Mannheim, Germany. Since then, there have only been a handful on the planet.

At the Museum this latest gridshell acts as the skeleton supporting the building's outer body. Visually it comprises three rippling domes, the woven soft curves of the woodwork similar to the upturned hull of a wooden boat, and demanding the same specialist craft skill to create.

THE SCARCITY OF timber gridshells is understandable. They're very complicated to engineer and build. One problem is the high rate of breaking timbers; another, the lack of wood technology to produce laths long and strong enough to create effective structures. But in the intervening twenty-five years parallel revolutions in glue and wood technology meant the project team could realistically contemplate laths with much longer spans. Using recently-developed super-strong, yet environmentally-sound polyurethane glue, six pieces of oak timber were bonded together into impressively long thirty-five- to fifty-metre laths.

Another part of the solution came from the computer revolution. The structural engineers, Buro Happold, began applying modelling techniques to explore the bending properties and behaviour of wood, hoping to ensure a minimum of breakages — the major practical problem of these buildings. Taken together, the convergence of this research, from the synergies between wood, glue and materials technology, to the simulation and modelling capacities of the digital realm, illustrates how timber design is in the midst of a transformative revolution. This convergence is enabling the potential realization of radically different, yet low-energy, sustainable buildings, which were hitherto impossibly complicated to construct.

A third dimension must be brought to this — the carpentry ethos. The specialist, hands-on knowledge the carpenters brought with them has been central to making the project work. In a building world where the emphasis has been increasingly on the factory-fabricated and mass-produced, the Weald and Downland gridshell building is just a showcase of individual skill and craft in the twenty-first century. It is a gift for the carpenters, enabling them to show the versatility and contemporary relevance of their skills. The gridshell was constructed on a specially-prepared scaffolding system. When the scaffolding was removed, the laths slid into the shell-like form, each part being cajoled into place by the carpenters, a forest of jacks tightening the position of the intricate criss-cross timber lattices, with the elaborate whirling weave of the building's surface becoming clearly visible.

Even though this surface form had been originally anticipated by the computer model, once the structure was up, much fine-tuning was needed by human eye and hand, supported by repeated and careful measurement, the carpenters knocking the laths into position, pushing out flat areas and deepening where the building needed greater volume.

Since its completion, the gridshell has been covered in locally-sourced Western red cedar cladding. With this finished, the roof has taken on something of a contemporary version of the layered cladding found on Norwegian and Russian churches.

WHILST THE BUILDING is heavily subsidized by the Heritage Commission, the costs are lower than anticipated for a wooden building of this sort, comparing well with its high-tech competitors. All this, and its demonstration of the potential of the emergent timber design, should give the high eco-tech end of the architecture community pause for thought. Whilst the last few decades have seen architectural design increasingly exploring natural form (think of the Eden Project's biomes), generally, architects have so far ignored the possibility of making their organic forms out of organic materials. The gridshell building takes this extra step. In some ways, this strand of craft is analogous to how scientists such as Fritjof Capra and Brian Goodwin have used computers to understand Complexity and Chaos science, appreciating more fully nature's 'web of life'. If there is a 'Complexity Architecture' today, then the gridshell aesthetic is to this architecture as Capra's holistic 'web of life' is to mainstream Chaos studies.

It is also a testament to Zeuner's original vision of making the traditions of craft skills wholly relevant for a new century: a kind of new 'hands-on/high-tech' building paradigm, enabled by the convergence of developments in wood and related materials technology, and the computer's capacity for simulated modelling, with the skills of the crafts tradition. Add to this the lightweight properties of the gridshell, and it becomes a fitting example of how wood can be an extraordinary candidate in the search for extra-light materials and structures.

It also manifests a contemporary refrain to a time when craft was central to building — the cathedrals of the Middle Ages — evoking something of a new-millennium medievalism. In the midst of a contemporary building-and-architecture world all too in hock to automation and prefabrication, the gridshell building re-energizes making, marrying head and heart with hand for the continued integration of craft into the culture of building. ●

For further information about The Weald and Downland Museum in West Sussex, contact: 01243 811363.

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BUILDINGS LIKE TREES

DESIGN

WILLIAM McDONOUGH

Architects need to meet the challenge of ecology, economy and equity.

An interview

IN A WORLD where most of us just hope to do less harm to the natural environment, William McDonough says we can act beneficially. While we scurry to find ways to recycle, he promises to trash the concept of waste altogether. Named a Hero for the Planet by *Time* magazine and recipient of the first and only Presidential Award for Sustainable Development, this bright-eyed architect delights in turning accepted ideas inside out and inventing new language to express his philosophy of eco-effective design.

The buildings he has created speak for his revolutionary vision better than anything he can say about them. The Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies at Oberlin College has been described as one of the most environmentally intelligent buildings in the world. Then there's his work with chemist Michael Braungart to spearhead the Next Industrial Revolution, designing products — such as carpeting and shoes — that cycle back to their manufacturers instead of to the landfill. But McDonough's redesign of Ford Motor Company's huge River Rouge plant may be the ultimate demonstration of his vision for the built environment, and the ultimate test of his principles of ecology, equity, and economics.

How rigid is the common definition of 'green' or 'sustainable' design?
Sustainable design and green design are not the same thing. Green design describes a process that honours the natural world to the optimal extent. The things that are green in the world celebrate diversity; they are powered by the sun. The whole notion of the single photosynthetic cell multiplying itself, transforming into new species, learning how to have sex, creating mammals and humans, for example, is the magic and wonder of a green world. Things are fecund. Growth is good.

But in the modern world, when commercial actors talk about growth being the engine of commerce and environmentalists talk about growth being the structure of the world, we realize that we've adopted a machine mentality. In green design we are now looking at the idea that there is such a thing as a *living* machine.

For example, at Ford's River Rouge facility, we are designing an assembly plant that will have 454,000 square feet of habitat for native species on the roof. We are using plants to absorb stormwater, make oxygen, sequester carbon, fix nitrogen, and so on. But if all we end up doing is taking plants and using them to serve human purposes, then we're using plants as machines. I think that the question of green design today is ultimately about how humans pick up tools of nature.

In that context I would say that the argument that growth is bad for the environment is a silly argument — because the real question is, What do you want to grow? You can grow a tree — that's good. We grow asphalt — that might not be good. But to grow things that are fecund and generative, that's good. If I can design a building that makes more energy than it needs to operate, then I'm designing a building like a tree. And it could be fecund — but only if, for example, I make sure the species on the roof are natural species that evolved through the place. On the roof of The Gap in California we planted the native grasses of San Bruno, so that the birds flying overhead look down and say, "Oh my god! It's our people. They're back!"

Now sustainable design is not green design. Green design is part of it, a third. The other two factors, equally important, and equally creative as zones in which to work, are the social equity issues and the economic issues. We don't really use the word sustainable very much in our work because sustainable is not that interesting. I mean, who wants to celebrate maintenance? We want to celebrate the abundance of the world and the generosity of spirit. So we are looking for a sustainING strategy. Then you can have all the hot water you want, so long as it's solar-heated. The philosophy of the work I do is really about community. When we begin a project, we don't really think of ourselves as designing buildings; we think of ourselves as creating an environment for a community. And we start with the idea of all species in that community. Instead of simply saying, How can we begin loving our own children, even for seven generations, we ask? How do we love all the children of all species for all time? In that sense it's a fundamental act of restoration and regeneration.

And the next question we have to ask is, When do we become native to this place?, because that changes the way you think about community, and it changes the way you design. For example, this renovation at the River Rouge — it's a two-billion-dollar project with a twenty-year plan. And I realized that Ford had declared themselves native to Dearborn. By saying they are staying, that they are going to clean up their own mess — not just leaving it behind, but transforming it from an icon of the first Industrial Revolution to an icon of the next — what a phenomenal act! It's an indigenous declaration.

You put forward three components of *sustaining* design: ecology, social equity, and economy. How might a building honour all three equally?
Affordable, profitable things that build diversity and mixed use and connect to the natural world in ways that are fecund and healthy — that would meet the criterion.

One of the things we are looking at is how we can design communities

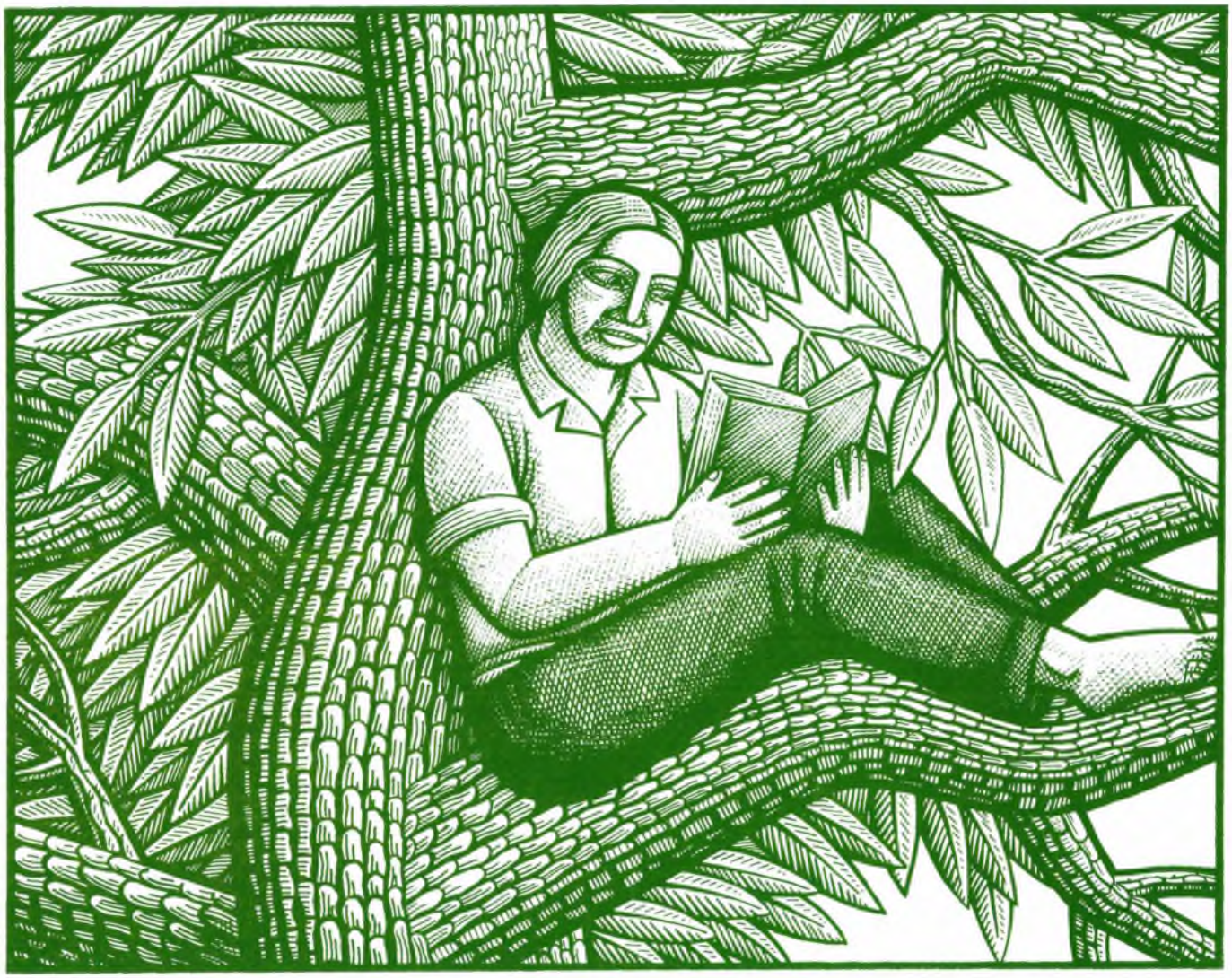


ILLUSTRATION: CLIFFORD HARPER

with homes that are very, very low in toxicity, very high on the solar energy front, and still affordable. Affordable, say, for the carpenters who built them, who may come from cheap, terribly insulated, double-wide modulars set on three-quarters of an acre, and whose families need two cars costing them $12,000 a year after taxes because they are so remote from culture. But maybe they could get alternative transportation so they don't need two cars, and end up with a solar-powered house that's worth twice as much. That's the kind of strategy we're developing on the affordable front.

I also think our communities need to enjoy much more diversity of provision. Our society focusses on just one part of the market, as if everybody wants to live in a three-bedroom house. Actually, young people want to go to cities and wear black clothes and find mates; young families might need some space where the kids can play outdoors; and then older people want to be part of a community again, maybe one that's pedestrian. If we don't engage all these people in a mixed-use way, we're not being socially intelligent. We're not even being economically intelligent.

The Herman Miller facility you designed seems to exemplify how architecture can build stronger ties between people, the buildings they inhabit, and the landscape that surrounds them ...

When we designed the building, we thought about all these issues. We curved the building so that the water moving off the site created wetlands and travelled for hundreds of yards before it actually left the site. So it provided the optimal amount of habitat for as many species as possible. The people who work there really get to celebrate that. They get to look at this fecund place that is constantly changing colour. It's full of butterflies. They call the building "the greenhouse" now, and the gift they give visitors is honey made from the site.

Inside, we designed a street where all the office workers and the factory workers convene. The coffee and the training rooms and the bathrooms — all the places you go — are on a sun-filled street full of glare and plants and sculptures. Does it produce productivity? Well, yeah. The performance of the company went up 24% after they moved. This means that the building is being paid for about every three months by the increase in business.

The stories are quite astonishing. Sixteen people left for higher wages. If you're in business, you know that when you lose an employee, you've lost something that you've invested in, and you have to invest more to replace that person. Well, those sixteen people all came back. And when the President of the company said, "Why are you back?", they said,

"We want our jobs back because we had never worked in another factory before. We couldn't work in the dark." In a market where there is almost no unemployment, Herman Miller has a waiting list. If we can design a landscape that becomes a life-support system for people who work, instead of a work-support system for people who don't have a life, perhaps we become the employer of choice. That's more valuable than just about anything in the economic sector. It's also phenomenally valuable in the social sector.

Is sustaining design currently an affordable choice for small businesses and nonprofits?
We actually work with lots of little organizations. The Oberlin Environmental Studies Center, the building we're doing with David Orr, is definitely a not-for-profit project. It's a research project, and was done with grants from foundations — and it's only 15,000 square feet. We're doing the new Woods Hole Research Center, with George Woodwell and his scientists — people tracking global warming, the carbon balance, and so forth. Their building again is small, and, like Oberlin's, will make more energy than it needs to operate. We do small schools, we do houses for families ...

But the larger commercial projects have the resources that allow us to experiment on a large scale, so what we do there appears dramatic to other people. When I put a grass roof over a whole building as habitat, people think that's interesting. When we make our office buildings with windows that open, we get written up in the *Wall Street Journal*. I told their reporter that we had reached a low point of Western civilization when a window that opened was news. It's terrifying.

In Palm Pilot's new headquarters in California, we're designing the building to have outdoor offices. Here you are in San José, one of the most beautiful climates in the world — this is almond country, for heaven's sake! — and they've trapped these young software types in gas chambers. Everybody's sealed up, with the air conditioning running. So we're designing our building with windows that open and outdoor offices. Why not? Sit outside under a tree and do your work. Why is it that we have to lock everybody up in a gray rectangle to think that they are working?

In 1992 you created a list of nine principles of sustainable design for the 2000 World's Fair, including rules like "Insist on the rights of humanity and nature to co-exist," "Recognize interdependence," and "Eliminate the concept of waste." How can these principles serve organizations and communities as they consider their responsibilities toward the larger world?
The Hannover Principles are really meant to help someone understand their relationship to the natural world, to technology, and to hope. You see, there's a kind of fierceness here. When it says, eliminate the concept of waste, it doesn't say, minimize waste. It doesn't say, please recycle.

What's exciting is that once these protocols start manifesting themselves, you see that all sustainability is local. It becomes a system that divests itself to the local level. So the products that are preferred and the ones that have economic benefit are local products.

We're going to get back to the ability to have pedestrian communities and mobility services, and we're going to benefit from the multiplier effect of an urbane situation. We're designing a town now where there is a day-care centre, health-care centre, and elder-care centre, all connected in the centre of town, so that we bring these generations back together. And it's a transit point, obviously, so they can get wherever they need to go. Then it has a botanical garden where people, especially elders, can spend their winters in a beautiful greenhouse full of delightful plants, which are purifying the water of the public laundry, which is serviced by the transit system. And it's all solar-powered and the water is purified, so the community's effects on global warming and on water quality from their laundry are zero.

I think that sustainable development starts, though, with the restoration of our cities. The rebuilding of existing communities is our most urgent opportunity. The next level would be the regeneration of the brownfields, for a lot of reasons.

I'm also concerned about our highway system. All these highways that slice through cities or cut off the waterfront really have to be looked at as some kind of strange detritus from a moment of high cultural amnesia. We're doing a project for the Fuller Theological Center in Pasadena where we're proposing that they actually cover over the Pasadena Freeway for a whole block. There's all this air over these stupid highways that could be fantastically viable as parks and all sorts of things. And it would knit the city back together, connect the two sides again.

As our transportation systems become pollution-free, all of a sudden the highways could be in tunnels. They can be buried, just like when New York City switched over to electric locomotives — they put the trains underground and they got Park Avenue, some of the most valuable real estate in the world.

Your work bespeaks a great optimism. Do you really believe we can design our way out of problems such as deforestation, toxic waste, social injustice, and mass consumerism, or are there limits to what human ingenuity can accomplish?
Well, we're all on the planet for a certain period of time, and you can decide what you want to spend your time doing. If the existing trajectories play themselves out, then we have huge tragedies in the making. All we're saying is that we'd rather spend our time on a strategy of change that allows our children a story of hope. And I don't know that we can stop it. Much of the past has already determined the future. Global warming is underway, bioaccumulation is a serious concern, persistent toxins are persistent.

There is no answer for everything. I just think that if we model ourselves on a system that's had 15 million years' experience instead of these 100-year-old experiments that are taking place without any control, the bet might be a little bit better. We say this very humbly because it took humans 5,000 years to put wheels on their luggage. So how smart are we? ●

This interview originally appeared in *Orion Afield*, 195 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. Tel: 001 888 909 6568. <www.oriononline.org> ($30/year for eight issues).

Kara. *sculpture by Sandy Brown*

DANCE OF CLAY

SANDY BROWN

Craft in everyday life.

MY EARLY LIFE could not be described as creative, artistic or cultural, but I was restless, looking for something that seemed to be missing. One day when I was nineteen I answered an advert in *The Times* which was the start of an adventurous journey that ended up with a fortuitous visit to Japan.

I arrived with five dollars and the address of a youth hostel in Tokyo and was gradually drawn into Japanese language and life where I met a lot of potters. You do there. I remember being invited to a tea ceremony. Its importance in Japanese culture is huge: it is as significant, for example, as mass is to Roman Catholics. The tea ceremony is a model for every social occasion involving food and drink. It is a slow, highly-stylized ritual to prepare the tea, and effectively it is a meditation about appreciating a tea bowl. The tea bowl we were invited to appreciate that day was a crude irregular bowl which I thought must have been someone's first pot. I knew I loved it for its freshness and its awkwardness. The bowl was imperfect; I am imperfect. I identified with it absolutely. For me, this was an astounding new sense of values and aesthetics. Here was a new way of looking at things, a new way of appreciating objects.

Then later, visiting Mashiko, village of a thousand potters, someone offered me some clay and a wheel and said have a go — and off I went. Later, I started working in a traditional folk pottery which made lively pots arising out of a local vernacular, and even now these pots still look very modern to me — vibrant and expressionistic.

Eating was also an important part of my education. Eating in Japan often involves going to small restaurants where the use and enjoyment of studio ceramics is evident. In fact, top chefs there are often a driving-force for the use of contemporary ceramics in their establishments. They are very inventive with their use of pots, taking great pleasure in the visual display and presentation of their food on studio pots. I felt immensely nourished by this, physically, visually and spiritually.

I returned to England after five years in Japan with my partner of the time, a wonderful potter, Takeshi Yasuda. He was a marvellous inspiration and guide, and gave me confidence in my intuition and the courage to work spontaneously.

I have since developed a colourful, free, painterly use of glazes on my ceramics. My use of clay is robust, direct. I *like* to see fingermarks and thumbprints, and I look out for interesting accidents. I don't plan, I don't sketch in advance, I respond in the here and now and do something immediate. Take my plates, for example. Over the years I must have made thousands of plates and have never to my knowledge repeated the painting on them.

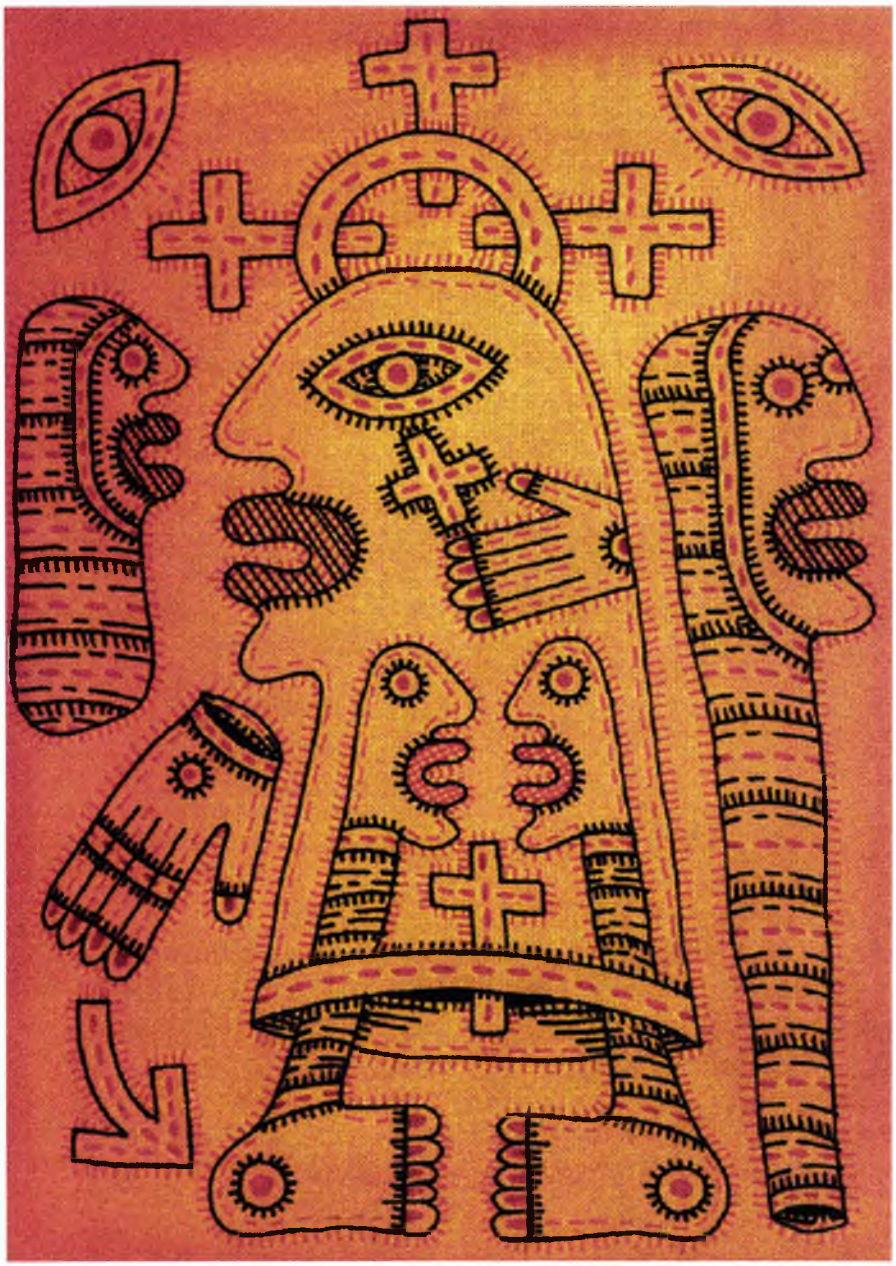
Recently, I have been developing this language of painting on more sculptural ceramics: large standing monumental forms which are in effect free clay canvases, full of adventure and accident, for the exuberant glaze painting. I love doing the glaze painting: it is when I am most alive, alert, free and in a heightened state of awareness. And to extend this feeling, which is almost the best feeling there is, I have been doing big paintings in acrylics too. I dance and move about, responding instinctively, almost as if my body has been taken over, and watch the painting appear on the canvas. Being in that state is the best, when I am as a commentator, observing the art appearing before me. That is when I have lost my will, and surrendered, trusting instinct when it says do a blue swish there or a red square here. And in that surrender I allow my intuition to provide the structure and the composition.

NOW, THIRTY YEARS down the line my work is a mix of several elements, an important one of which is making figures. Partly because of my difficult childhood I was for a while having recurring nightmares, and started making figures of images which appeared in dreams. The clay, being tactile, does often allow images to surface deep from the unconscious. I have seen from the way other people respond to them that what is personal is also universal, so I have long been exhibiting them alongside my other work.

Currently I am working on some female figures, seven feet tall, iconic beings of our time. Again, I don't plan them in advance; in fact I resist the temptation to second-guess them. All I know is that a figure is compelling itself to be made and I make it in order to find out what sort of figure it will be.

My pots provide stability in my outer world; the foundation to my work is pots to be used and lived with, bringing art into the core of our everyday lives, not something apart. When I was growing up I was aware of the immense power of the everyday objects we live with: how when I visited my grandma's house I loved her and the things in her house as being part of her. Now I find that power in my own pots — my kitchen is full of them, they go in the oven, they are washed up and placed and used every day. And I encourage you to live likewise, to live with art as part of your lives, not something to be distant from, but rather something to celebrate the everyday and elevate it into something spiritual. ●

Sandy Brown will be contributing a regular column on Crafts from the next issue of ***Resurgence****.*



A SHAMANIC SPIRIT

KATE HOWLETT-JONES

The art of Ian Pyper makes the invisible visible.

ART

"IT'S HARD TO understand why someone would buy one and put it on their wall," says Ian Pyper of his paintings. "I don't know why they do, because that's not really what they're about." Ian is not being modest: he sees his art as a diary and a spiritual map.

Ian Pyper is full of these conflicts: a frank, unaffected man who has little truck with the pretensions of the art world, he is at the same time intensely passionate about his drawing. He is a spiritual pragmatist; a down-to-earth eccentric, who enjoys confounding the art world's attempts to place him neatly within a category. Art critic, Joe Ryczko, coined the phrase "paléolithique moderne" to describe his work — another contradiction.

It is one title Pyper does seem comfortable with however, acknowledging the similarities between his art, the Aboriginal body maps and ancient tribal art, with its recurrent symbols, spirals and patterns. His work also shows a strong link with the 'X-ray' painting of Aboriginal art, in that it often depicts both the outside and what is hidden on the inside, making the invisible visible.

The rhythms that echo through Pyper's work are "a bit like music — but I'm no musician. I may have been, but I've only got two fingers and a thumb on each hand, so I practically couldn't. But rhythms, like music, travel through my drawings instead." He describes this as his "lyrical touchstone". To this background, he draws to the beat, speeding up and slowing down in time.

DESPITE THE STRIKING similarities to Aboriginal art, his are not copies: by the time he had discovered the parallels, the form of his art had long since determined itself. It germinated when he was a boy; his mother would worry that he was "doing those weird pictures again." He was in fact surprised when, about five years ago, someone drew his attention to Aboriginal art, but also pleased to find that others had clearly felt the same influences and compulsion as he had.

He feels that the resemblance is far from coincidental: both forms spring from a common source. A modern shaman, Pyper frees his mind up to the automatic drawing that flows through him, pushing a channel through to the spiritual world he feels existing alongside this one, the same world, perhaps, into which the Aboriginal and ancient tribal artists were tapping. Pyper's is definitely not an internal landscape: "I don't dream these things; they're coming from somewhere else. ... They're frames in a film of what's going on, a snatch of text, a bit of shorthand from a larger context."

Aboriginal artists refer to this other world as the 'Dreamtime', but, as is the case for Pyper, this has nothing to do with what Western culture would call dreams. Dreamtime represents an ancient state of being, the sacred past of humanity's ancestors, a time when heroes and

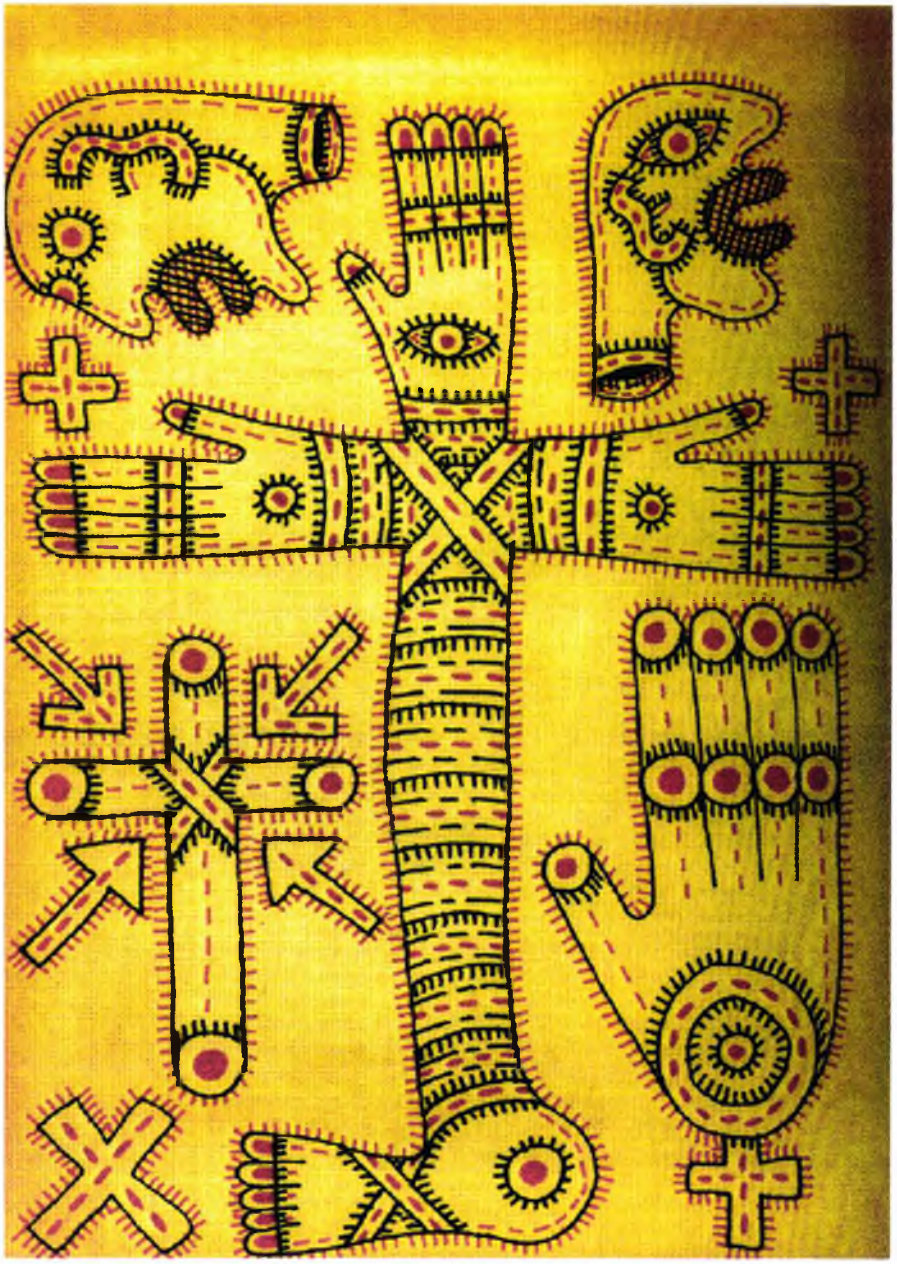
spirits lived in close harmony with nature and carved out traditions to be passed down over generations. Crucially, this period is also believed still to exist today as an eternal, sacred present. The act of creating art is considered not so much as an individual process, but instead as a ritual and a personal responsibility to maintain our connections with Dreamtime.

Pyper's drawing process is heavily infused with ritual. He has a stage of preparation during which he empties his mind, sitting with his pens laid out and a clean sheet of paper before him. This is followed by a buzz of heightened activity while he is entirely focussed on drawing, a state that he has described as "a form of meditation". Unlike many more traditional artists, he is always sure of a sense of completion, certain that the process has come to its natural end and that the drawing is as it should be.

Pyper is reluctant to discuss his drawings. Not only does he resist the suggestion that psychological explanations lie behind; he is fearful that analysis may kill off their key spontaneity. The pictures spring from a deeper level of consciousness, he feels, a secret world that would be lost to him as soon as its workings were revealed.

On the other hand, there's a sense that this reticence is also down to the fact that he is still coming to terms with what he calls his "vocation". Coming from a staunchly working-class family from Liverpool, his father saw little value in art, encouraging him instead to earn money from his talent by becoming a draughtsman. Having attended a scientific school where art was ridiculed, he fell into accountancy at the National Coal Board. Eventual redundancy in 1981 came as relief, leaving him free to devote himself to drawing full-time. His relationship with conventional art remains uneasy: "I'm not interested in galleries. If you took me to London, I'd probably spend most of the time in record shops."

This defiant matter-of-factness tends to surface whenever the conversation steers towards his work. Although he might shyly let slip glimpses behind the curtain, he is happier to focus on practicalities: how he painted wallpaper remnants with food colouring and gravy browning because that was all he could afford. And his work is hard graft: not just emotionally, but physically draining too, struggling with wrist pain and frustration until it becomes unbearable and he must stop. "If I could draw in a different style, an easier one for me, I would. But I don't have a choice."



Paintings by Ian Pyper

IAN PYPER SEES no reason for analysis: he says he is not interested in communicating a message to other people and couldn't care less if no one ever looked at his pictures again. He files them away, getting his "spiritual diary" out perhaps twice a year to look through them. But all this cannot hide his genuine, enormous affection for the fruits of his labour and the figures that people them: maggot babies, hearts stitched like tapestries, lost faces. He doesn't like to share them. "I don't like selling them. I remember each as an individual, think about them, wonder where they are, and miss them. I'd like to win the lottery so I could buy them all back!" ●

Ian Pyper's work can be viewed at Raw Vision Gallery, Letchmore Heath, near Radlett, Herts. Tel: 01923 856644. Email: <rawvision@btinternet.com>

Kate Howlett-Jones is a freelance writer living in Graz, Austria.

***Aphrodite's Rock**, painting by Steve Whitehead*

THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
or grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

– *Wendell Berry*

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF ROCKS

ART

MICHAEL PARASKOS

The art of Steve Whitehead transcends the obvious.

STEVE WHITEHEAD was born in Coventry, England, in 1960 and studied Fine Art at North Warwickshire College of Art and University College Wales, Aberystwyth. At first sight such a start might seem inauspicious for an artist who would deal with the relationship between material and non-material reality. Coventry was in the 1960s and 70s a very materialistic place, a centre of heavy industry and in particular a place producing motor cars. Yet it should be remembered that other artists interested in the ideas we see in Whitehead's work came from similar industrial and urban backgrounds, from the Pre-Raphaelites of the Victorian age to the Expressionists of Germany, suggesting that there is a link between the reality of urban life and the desire to transcend that reality.

Even when he moved on to live and study in rural Wales, however, there was not an automatic transfer for Whitehead to an environment that was sympathetic to something we might call a 'romantic' attitude to art. Aberystwyth in the late 1970s and early 80s was dominated by formalist painters who were technically and aesthetically highly competent, but had little time for ideas suggesting that painting might move the viewer beyond the obvious. What is more, they were hardened abstract artists, not at all like the realist painter Whitehead was to become. What they did teach, however, was a strong respect for the history of art, encouraging students to learn from past masters. This was unusual at the height of Modernism, when the past was more often treated as something to rebel against, and it led Whitehead to start exploring historic artists with whom his work shares a great deal, such as the early nineteenth-century Biedermeier painters of northern Europe, and German Romantics such as Caspar David Friedrich.

Whitehead's style is meticulous and laborious. His art is not about gestural expression, but about a more contemplative experience of the world, that requires time, and intellectual and emotional effort, on the part of both painter and viewer. In this it is perhaps more holistic than expressionism, employing both mind and body in an engagement with the visual world, rather than the typical expressionist desire to disengage the mind. Through this Whitehead achieves images that go beyond a simple transfer of visual experience from the real world onto a flat surface.

Whitehead believes that close engagement, or communion, with physical reality can lead to metaphysical reality. His paintings move beyond being a record of the real world, into being alternatives to that world. They are superficially photographic, but in fact they embody a kind of stillness and meditative quality.

A good example of this is the painting 'Aphrodite's Rock', painted by Whitehead in Cyprus whilst he was a Visiting Fellow at the Cyprus College of Art. In real life the rock itself is a bizarre enough object sticking up out of the sea, in a part of the island where the white mud of the seabed is continuously stirred up, turning the water to the colour of milk. It is not surprising that ancient Greeks saw this as a magical place where the goddess of love, Aphrodite, was born. Today the site is corrupted by tourism, but Whitehead's painting re-spiritualizes the sense of awe that the rock once provoked. He does this through a crisp realist technique that renders the rock in more detail in the painting than the eye would see by looking at the object itself. This starkness recalls the type of emphasis that often banal objects take on in dreams, or in Surrealist paintings. In dreams they can become symbols of something other than themselves, and so in Whitehead's painting the rock where Aphrodite was born becomes a symbol of something more than its physical reality. It is this that makes the image so striking and, even to a casual passer-by, so arresting. ●

A selection of Steve Whitehead's work can be seen at Panter and Hall Fine Art, 9 Shepherd Market, London, W1J 7PF. Tel: 020 7399 9999.

Michael Paraskos is a lecturer in History of Art at the University of Hull.

POETRY

EDITED BY PETER ABBS

NEW VOICES

THIS ISSUE IS given over to two new voices. This is the first time these poets have been published; both are concerned with the potency of the spiritual element in life, but each has a different voice and intention.

Martin Schmandt writes of his work: "It has arisen out of the need to develop for myself first of all a compelling religious language. At stake is not only spiritual conviction but also language itself. Our task is to sustain the tension of spiritual seeking."

Lucy Calcott declares: "It is my intention that the poems stand apart from the modern tendency towards irony and that they express the relevance of the age-old cry for love in a broken world. It is my aim to develop a simple poetry, usually imagistic, and the poems are sparse for this reason."

The poet is a cultural ecologist, a bridge-builder, one who draws different worlds together

– Peter Abbs

TWO POEMS BY MARTIN SCHMANDT

ORDINATION

From the scuttlings of a hundred and seventy lives
we pressed in. We brimmed the chapel, on graves

stood tip-toe, to witness, all at once, what *we* do
sniffing by inches, by crisis, by illness; to hear you

vow, carve your name in a marble groove, dare
break from cover, stand in the cross-hairs,

announce to Fate your fate, bait chance,
shake your fist at the snake-eyed dice.

You put on God like a coat of holes, drink in God
like bullets; start where the Dead go.

A mouse in the peregrine claw grows wings, grows wide
over his old field.

From ATTRACTION

On Piero della Francesca's 'Magdalen'

The brow is proud, and though the eyes are inward,
The mouth is a voluptuous eruption;
Her hair is loose, for mourning or for love.

She was the first to see the risen Christ,
a courtesan,
The woman once possessed by seven devils;
here upright, stable,
Substantial as a tablet of the Law.

Piero dresses her in billow green,
or the green
of a serpent, but drawn
Virginal by white at waist and wrist,
all simplicity,
columnar, calm
Within the slow explosion of her cloak –
its red skin, its white flesh broken,
the blast
of Eve's shattered apple
that made an open book
of good and evil,
and slammed shut Eden,
a single infraction
making law of rupture and attraction.

St Veronica with the Sudarium

THREE POEMS BY LUCY CALCOTT

ADULTERESS

I see him
Drawing in the sand,
The girl glancing up at him.

I see all of us
Standing around,
With that quick-to-judge

Look in our eyes.
I turn from the noise,
To the silence

To find him again.
Gnarled feet.
Scarred hands.

Long piano playing fingers
Drawing
In the sand.

VERONICA AGAIN

Veronica came by her husband's bed,
Keeping vigil night after night,
Moistening his lips,

Holding his lifeless hand.
Whispering sweetness
Into his dormant mind.

Week after week,
Month after month,
Until he died.

Now Veronica stands
With the bloody print of love
Tarnishing her face and hands.

MARY MAGDALENE

I was watching Miriam
abandon herself to Jesus.

I saw her pour alabaster oil
gently over his head.

Her frenzied hands
caress his face.

Her long wisps of ebony hair
brush over his feet,

drying the great outpouring
of his tears.

I watched him curl
his fingers around hers,

lift her head
from his knees.

Stroke her cheek.

Drink her love
into holy week.

POWER OF THE WORD

PETER ABBS: POETRY IS TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

POETICS

WHAT KIND OF poetics can we formulate out of and beyond our Post-Modern age?

Increasingly over the twentieth century poetry has been retiring from the public arena. It would seem a neutral act of cultural description to say that the power of the word has conceded to the power of the image, and the power of the written word to the power of television, film and video. We live in the midst of a vast revolution in communications and a crisis in forms of representation. We have no choice but to recognize the way in which the various modes of electronic communication shape the rhythm of our sensibility and expectation. Mass communications mark the age even as they fragment and make all things kaleidoscopic and ephemeral.

We live in a world of two-dimensional gliding surfaces, of constant stimulation and simulation, of quickly rising and fading simulacra. Our fast-moving lives are lived out against a background of global news, eclectic information, musical theme tunes, advertising images and general exclamatory hype. The individual is born into a verbal and visual maelstrom and dies with it.

The poems we make and sing must express, in however indirect a way, something of this cultural maelstrom, even as they struggle to point beyond it. They need not be Post-Modernist — for irony and pastiche cannot take us very far into the hinterland of consciousness — but they must relate to our unprecedented cultural predicament. As poets we have to understand the actual cultural world in which we live but we do not have to coincide with it. The gift of poetry involves prophetic insight and truth-telling.

Satyr, Villa Garzoni, Collodi
PHOTOGRAPH: EDWIN SMITH

OUR TASK, THEN, is to adapt, not by becoming light entertainers but by forging the necessary anti-thesis — to evoke lost possibilities, to express further patterns of connection and signification, to converse with banished angels and repressed demons, to cancel and transcend.

Yet the Post-Modernists are right in one respect: they warn us of the dangerous seductions of Grand Theory and Master Narratives — for our sense of life is deeply broken and in the age of internet, video, television and a market-directed global economy there can be little hope for a national cultural centre other than that determined by vested interests and multinational companies. For the moment the poet can only occupy the extreme edge, a precarious landscape of shadows where the light is cast by an eclipsed sun.

This is not meant to invite despair but merely to urge that we face directly the predicament of poetry and then to consider whether the negative can in certain definable ways be redeemed. For on the edges real lives still unfold, and where life unfolds real art can still be created and the spirit, transgressing the repressive materialism of the age, can still darkly flourish. To make the point with an example, I would suggest that there is more fulfilment in reading a new poem to a friend or to a gathering to mark a wedding or a funeral than in having it published in *The Times Literary Supplement* or *The New York Review of Books*, where any exchange may well be entirely mechanical and as unreal and as abstract as a small cheque in the post some months later. The Greek poet Cavafy never offered his volumes for sale — they were privately printed and given as gifts of the spirit to those individuals who might appreciate their narratives, images and cadences. Cavafy exemplifies the convivial poetics I want to advance. But first we must consider the precarious condition of poetry in post-modern culture.

Contemporary poets know they are invisible survivors and that the great genre they represent is a threatened animal in the ecology of culture. A few figures make the situation clear. The late American Poet Laureate, Joseph Brodsky, pointed out how a standard publishing

house in America bringing out a volume of poems would aim at 0.0001% of the entire population. Poetry journals in Britain — generally subsidized — sell between 200 and 800 copies, mostly to poets published in them or desperately hoping to be. A new volume of poetry, on average, will sell about the same number.

These slim books, generally unreviewed in newspapers and magazines, sitting on a few library shelves, have a forlorn semi-existence — a phantom life. Poetry, it has been said, is now only read by poets. Such a terrible contraction in less than a hundred years has created a poetry mafia and a poetry ghetto — a no-go area guarded internally by a few mafiosi — and a general regression into a kind of narcissism and a cult of the ironic.

By now it must have become clear that any convivial poetics for our time must not be confused with the naive or the ironic or the suburban. Rather, it must be mapped inside a remarkable culture that goes back and back: from T. S. Eliot and Paul Celan and Mandelstam, through Coleridge and Goethe, through Shakespeare and Dante, to Ovid, Sappho and Homer — and to the shamans and myth-makers before them. There can be no escaping the tradition for, again and again, an individual word will carry ancient poetic sediment, and one of the poet's tasks — as language is the poet's medium — is to shake the hidden pollen and seeds that lie there, to allow for a new and quite unexpected fertilization. An endless linguistic resurrection! Not to work the deep geology of language is to fail the medium.

IT IS SIMILAR WITH images and rhythms. One immediate contemporary image coming into the imagination will often relate to another in the tradition and both may relate to a single archetypal configuration. A fusion takes place securing, at once, spiritual depth and a rich tangle of historic association. One of the tasks of the poet is to take a particular image into its deep imaginal field and by so doing increase the supply of psychic energy available. Such acts of connection widen our sense of what it is to be human, and free us from the worst elements of electronic and commercial culture — the banality of slogans, brand names, jargon, immediate mass-think. In this sense, the poet is a cultural ecologist, a bridge-builder, one who draws different worlds together that another harder journey may continue, that the future may not fall into the abyss. The poem is a magnet drawing together in a new forward constellation the complex associations, rhythms, images already often present in or under the culture. Thus the past enters the present and unfolds into the future, a single creative gestalt working through time.

How then are we to reanimate poetry in our times? I want to suggest we de-professionalize it — that we free it from The Arts Council, from Poetry Competitions, from small groups squabbling for small advantage. I want to suggest that we move dialectically — that we conceive poetry as essential to the fabric of our daily intimate lives and yet, at the same time, root it fiercely in the transcendent and Other, that we drive these two energies together until they become one force, one reality, a lived poetics.

I am haunted by the image of the Greek poet Sappho making her sharp lyrical poetry out of the daily circumstances of her life; out of her inner life of feeling as it unfolded in relationship to her actual life and circumstances. "Let us suppose", writes the scholar Richard Jenkyns, "that the complete works of Sappho had survived. We should have had, if we can judge from the existing fragments, a remarkable picture of the daily life and concerns of a circle of friends (and enemies)." One of the surviving fragments of Sappho reads quite simply:

Day in, day out,
I hunger and
I struggle.

It would seem, out of this daily hunger and struggle — close to music and dance and intimate with the gods and goddesses — issued her lyrical poems.

But, of course, there is nothing vague about such poetic activity. It requires a dialectical cast of mind, bringing together in one manifold contrary dispositions of the psyche.

To evoke Sappho is not, of course, to petition a return to the past. That is always and for ever impossible. For better and for worse, we occupy a very different cultural time and space. Yet the image and example of Sappho suggest a convivial poetics — an intimacy in writing out of our lives, a meeting the world with the living word, an existential aesthetics on the edge with an exploratory commitment to love and friendship and life. Perhaps such values translated into the harsher idiom of our own times could contribute to the renewal of our sad and withered art and foster a new orientation to our work.

At or near the end of History Sappho cannot be the person she was at the beginning. She has to change — even while her gifts and obsessions remain. The struggle — day in, day out, over so many centuries, over so much conflicting experience, after so much intellectual argument, after so many moral devastations, after so much knowledge — necessitates inner developments of an extreme and uneasy kind. Today the background of the gods cannot be taken for granted and the innocence of sexuality has gone forever. The waters washing the small island of Lesbos are badly polluted and the banner of Lyrical Poetry has been taken down for the international banner of Coca-Cola.

Yet Sappho's need for love remains and the loss of the gods creates a new conscious impulse in her for metaphysical grounding. This new need with the collapse of accepted religious structures and, indeed, all backgrounds has become all but obsessional. Yet she knows she is still very human, very vulnerable, crazy and in quest — and that the power of the word is still there to express and explore her historically unprecedented predicament. For poetry is not so much a criticism of life, as Matthew Arnold claimed, as the creation of life, a means of intensifying, deepening and expanding our existence.

The poem comes out of the engaged act of individual life. We have no choice but to begin where we are and where we find ourselves in relationship to others, as well as to Nature and to the realm of Spirit. We need an exacting, paradoxical, convivial poetics: a poetics that keeps both anguish and hope alive and trembling. ●

Peter Abbs is the Poetry Editor of ***Resurgence****.*

Fred Beer's father Arthur (leaning on the gatepost), his uncle Alfie and aunt Lil at Watergap, Welcombe, circa 1902

AND LEAVE THE HOUSE FREE

JOHN MOAT: AN IMMACULATE EMPTINESS

DID I MENTION that Fred Beer has died? The year before last, at Christmas. He was eighty and had lived his life here in the valley, and was our neighbour for forty years. Firstly along with his father, Arthur (who as far as I know was all his long life over the way at Watergap) and Dolly his mother, and later with just Dolly, and then on his own.

We have a photograph of Arthur and his brother Alfie and his little sister Lilian, taken we reckon in 1902. Just as wonderful a photograph as could ever have been. The three children so alive, and so unassumingly assured of their liveliness that it seems unalterable that they and their landscape (which is barely altered in a hundred years) are each the other's possession. The one reality ... or the one figment. Looking at that photograph it strikes me that the universal magic that surrounds us all is somehow convened in that moment into a predetermined here and now. As if before that, here was where it (whatever it was) was headed, and after that moment each moment was another moment away. When I look at the photo I feel exposed — my foot in the valley seems in forty years to have left a very tenuous print. In fact I feel I

should tread even our meadows with a curious delicacy because, while there's certainly nowhere else I belong, I can't be altogether confident I belong here either.

I was twenty-four the year I arrived, and I think it was that year I wrote a small poem I titled *Ages*. Four ages, eight lines: to each age a couplet. The last couplet reads:

Knows how to depart
And leave the house free.

Forty years closing the gap on my dying has shown me that leaving the house free may be easier said than done. But now, as with a number of other tricky simple things, Fred has taken me to school.

Fred generally had trouble with his breathing, and towards the end it was just too much of an effort. Finally the day came when he himself couldn't manage the breathing any more, which meant something or someone else would have to take over. Which meant the hospital — which meant leaving Watergap. Antoinette, my wife, who packed his bag and took him on his way, never doubted he'd accepted he was leaving for good. Or if not for good, simply for ever.

Some minutes after they'd gone I went from our place across the lane — I think I imagined I would somehow be with Fred. But he was gone. Watergap was empty, uninhabited. The Rayburn was still going, and there was plenty enough around to touch on memories. But Watergap had been vacated. And the next day it was the same. No sense of violence and nothing heavily stated — just the clean here and now, with nothing to impede or spook whatever the future had in store.

So had Fred not been attached? The valley wasn't just his earth, it was his everywhere. And whatever his attachment, I guess it was so unconsidered and inclusive a fact that it didn't feature in his questioning. Unless some wonderment came to him those last summer evenings I saw him leaning on the meadow gate, his cap pushed back, the old cat lounged shoulder to shoulder round the back of his neck, watching down the valley the swallows in the sunlight slaloming midge to midge over the stream.

So what were the memories ... from the slow-turning years before ever I arrived? Hay-making like as not. As a boy there'd been Arthur's shire horse: the hay-making horsepower, and that same slow manpower that built the meadow banks or the two leats a mile in all to drive the mill. And much of the memory would have been the quiet — harness-shake, switch of the tail, stream and birdsong and the call to tea.

When I arrived it wasn't a lot different. Except now the stutter of the Fergie, and evenings the old Morris leaving for The Anchor, and finding its own way home gone eleven. But change was the order and was in something of a hurry. It didn't seem to hurt so much at first. The sound of the milking machine was sleepy in the summer evenings, continuo to the clink of pails and the scuff of hoof. I helped with the hay. The horse had gone and the scythe, but still it was hay-forks to turn, toss and load first the wagon and then the rick with the sweet sun-scented stuff — a small enough skill but one which with the thirsty tiredness of evening made one feel part of the round and slow-breathing of the earth.

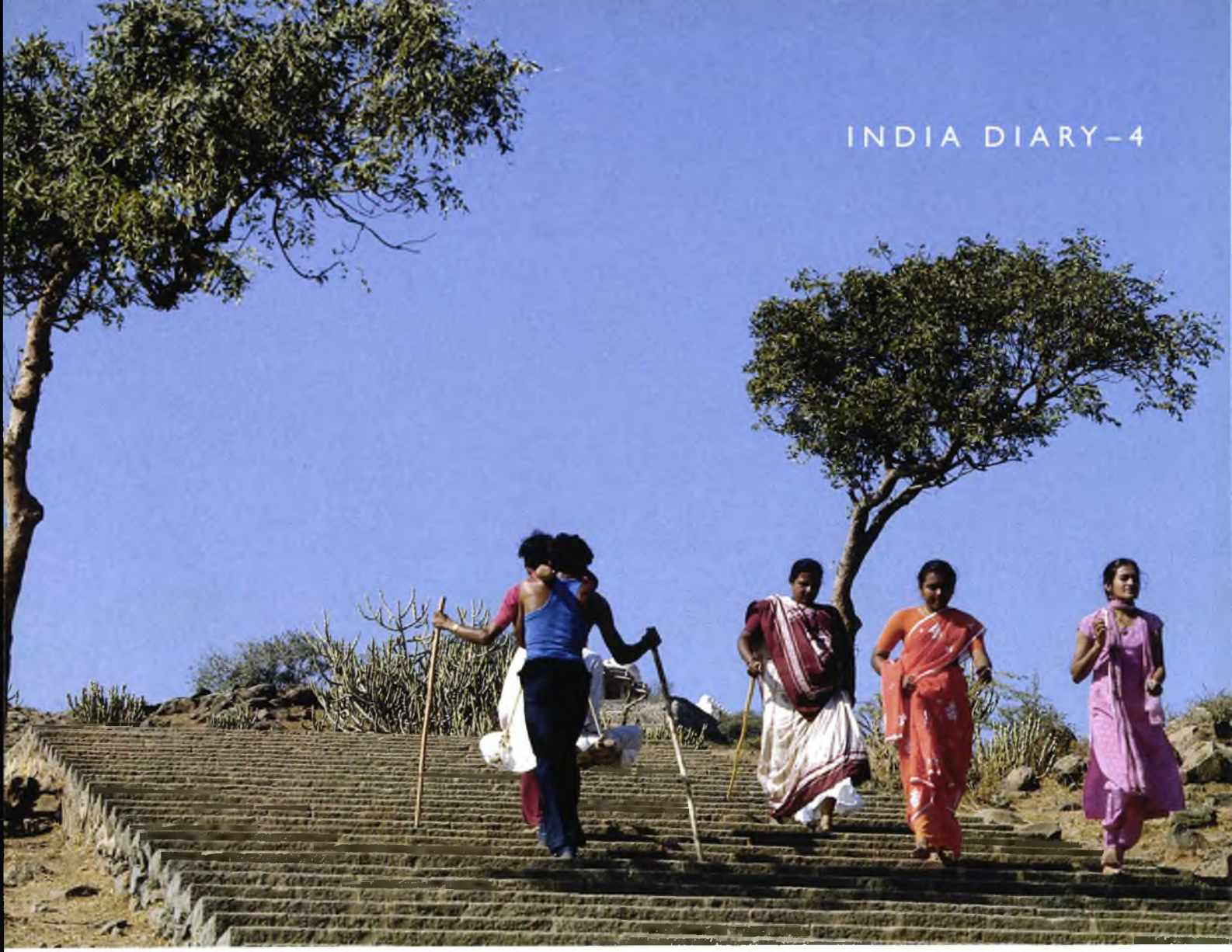
But then on the back of the tractor came the spinner that laid the hay in neat rows ready for the pick-up, packing and racket of the baler. I think this was what's called labour-saving — it meant you no longer sampled the hay, and that what was once a bit of an art was reduced to a slog. You paid the baler by the bale, so Fred wasn't wasting time with small bales. Down in the damp where the grass was heavy with reed, it was all a man could do to lift a bale, knee it up to his chest and continue the lift to arm's length to the man building the load. You lifted the bales by the twine, and when they got round to binding with nylon, then for a writer's hands it was blisters by dinner, and by tea raw to the bone. Not that tea ever changed — and you'd go without fingers for a week for a bit of Mother's pasty.

Anyhow, hay's done with long since — and my better guess is that Fred's mind was settled back before that. Back to a time before silage and slurry when there were still fat trout in the stream, and never a lad not to have tickled one for his tea. The real hay is just another memory, like Fred's cows that went with the quotas. And now this spring day all the hills around are silent. The clarion of lambs was stopped abruptly last week — heaps of wool lying in the fields. What would Fred, leant on his gate, be thinking? More than likely not a lot. If it wasn't in his valley, this old virus, then it was elsewhere, and elsewhere is neighbours to nowhere at all. Sutcombe or Siberia ... it's not a lot of odds.

Gone, and left the house free. Nothing of his; no behest, no bequest to hold back the future, nor to hurry it on. And now I'll tell you something, the moment forgives it all. In fact my best guess is that if it were this evening Fred was leaning on his gate, he'd not be wasting precious breath digging over the past. There'd be plenty enough to hand, and to ear and eye. The stream full and run clear, chattering after the rain. The thrush — yes, thrushes are back this year, thank God. No swallows yet, but so many birds.

New grass in the meadows, and along the path the celandine open in the sunshine like the milky way gone to butter. Gorse and blackthorn on the hill, and in the hedges already the bluebells and ... and already so many flowers. Not that Fred could be doing with flowers, not if they weren't set businesslike on the kidney beans. Which makes it worth telling that the day he was buried, a properly dark day in December, I stopped by on the way up to the church, to feel again if there was anything abroad in the house, half-expecting, I think, there'd be a wavering of voices from the room at the end, the glee of the famed Boxing-Day party at what was called Watergap Arms, with Fred behind the bar responsive to the room's sway, Arthur on his squeeze-box leading the carols, and Auntie Dora's laugh like she was a rooster who's laid an egg ... but no, just the immaculate emptiness. So then I was leaving, but, wanting to stop a moment longer, I took a glance round the back, and there in the wreck of Dolly's flower-bed, on a winter-wrecked old bush was (I'm telling you this ridiculous truth) one red immaculate rose. ●

John Moat is a poet, a painter and a novelist.



Nearing the Jain temples, Palitana, Gujarat, India

PHOTOGRAPH: R A ACHARYA/DINODIA PICTURE LIBRARY

TO BE A PILGRIM

SATISH KUMAR and JUNE MITCHELL

FROM AHMEDABAD, early in the morning, we started our bus journey to Palitana. It took us five hours to arrive at our destination. This is the most sacred place of pilgrimage for the Jains. One pilgrimage to Palitana, according to tradition, is considered equal to ten pilgrimages to any other holy site. Palitana was, is and will always remain the holiest of the holy sanctuary. For the liberation from the forces of attachment, anger and desire and for the realization of peace and joy within, one needs to go to Palitana and meditate upon the mountain.

Next morning at six o'clock we started our ascent of Mount Shatrunjaya. The 2,000-feet climb is made easy by nearly 3,000 steps. With each step pilgrims contemplate that they are moving upwards, towards a state of enlightenment where pain and pleasure, sorrow and happiness, loss and gain can no longer disturb. As we were climbing the mountain, the sun was climbing up the sky. The horizon was steeped in deep orange, a dawn of luminosity. The pilgrimage connected us with the luminosity of the sky and the luminosity of the heart.

Our fellow pilgrims were singing sacred songs and chanting mantras. Many of them were walking barefoot, as their adherence to nonviolence does not allow them to wear shoes made of animal skins. "Touching the holy ground with the bare skin of your feet connects you to the spirit of the place," said a pilgrim.

After one and a half hours of climbing we reached the top, where a whole town of temples was buzzing with the devotees. Nine hundred temples adorn the peak. The most sacred of them is the temple of Adinath, the first of the twenty-four Jain *tirthankaras* (spiritual guides). In the temple, which was modest in size, we

joined the devotees who were engaged in reciting the name of Adinath and drawing the sacred symbols, with rice.

Behind the temple is the sacred tree believed to be the one under which Adinath obtained the supreme knowledge. The devotees circumambulate the tree over and over so that their souls are liberated by the power of the tree.

Around the temple there are images of the other twenty-three tirthankaras; some of them are in white marble, some in red stone, some in black and some in yellow. This indicates that in the Jain tradition enlightenment is achieved by all the races of humanity. One tirthankara — Mallinath — is a woman, showing that enlightenment is not gender-specific either.

Pilgrims believe that the simplest way to find self-liberation is the way of devotion — *bhakti*. You surrender your ego, your individuality, even your identity to Adinath, so that there is no separation between the pilgrim and the divine. Bhakti is the means and the goal of the pilgrims who stay in Palitana for weeks and climb the mountain every day. Some go up twice: at dawn and dusk. There are over 1,000 Jain monks and nuns in the town who practise bhakti. There is a continuous flow of Jain pilgrims who find the peace and purity of this place utterly captivating. Having refreshed themselves in the atmosphere of devotion, they can return to their ordinary lives re-enchanted and reinvigorated.

On our way back, half-way down we visited the temple of Padmavati. She is the guardian angel of the twenty-third tirthankara, Parshwanath. Placing the paste of sandalwood on our forehead, the keeper of the temple said, "Padmavati is the goddess of grace and protects all pilgrims. Her name means the lotus spirit: as the lotus is tender, multi-petalled and pure, so is Padmavati. Those who invoke her spirit — the spirit of the lotus — will receive lotus qualities: the ability to stand in the mud. The lotus is the symbol of detachment. As no mud can stick on the lotus, no negative karma can stick to a pilgrim who is devoted to Padmavati. A state of equanimity within reveals our gentle lotus qualities. It is up to us whether we sit on the soft seat of lotus or on the hard bed of nails. Life is what we make of it. A lotus life is a life of beauty, colour and petals of joy. Padmavati asks the pilgrims, 'I am lotus: are you? If not, why not?'"

We sat facing the image of Goddess Padmavati for ten or so minutes contemplating on lotus and wondering why we hit our heads against the rocks of ego and bleed ourselves into sorrow and suffering when we are capable of letting go and being a lotus.

We said to Padmavati, "Yes, Goddess, yes; why not? Why not *be* like lotus when we *are* lotus?" With sighs of relief and realization we bowed to the Goddess.

AT THE BOTTOM of the hill, on the left, as we came down, there is a newly built temple which celebrates the first teaching of Mahavir. Here the image of Mahavir seated under a tree simultaneously faces four directions. It is believed that angels and demons, kings and queens, monks and nuns, men and women, lions and deer, elephants and eagles all came to him. He sat in utter silence and yet everyone understood his message.

THE NEXT MORNING we were invited by Jayu Shah for breakfast at one of the Jain guest houses where pilgrims are offered a meal for one rupee. It is a token charge so that pilgrims don't feel embarrassed to be given something free — but in effect it is a gift so that the act of pilgrimage can be undertaken by rich and poor alike.

Jayu Shah was a businessman in Mumbai. One day he decided that he had had enough; all the wheeling and dealing of business was not worth his precious time. So he renounced the pursuit of fame and fortune and decided to live a life of simplicity and service. Now he walks barefoot, sleeps on the floor on a mat, and takes care of pilgrims to Palitana.

We joined Jayu Shah for a simple breakfast of local bread, sun-dried vegetables and fresh milk. After the food was finished, Jayu meticulously cleared the *thali* (a meal plate) and the small bowl, rinsed them with a little water and drank it. He explained that this is the Jain way of finishing the meal so that nothing is wasted and there will be hardly any washing up to do! He was indeed a perfect example of Jain simplicity and ecology.

Afterwards he took us to see his latest project some ten miles away from Palitana. It is a cow sanctuary, known as *goshala*. The state of Gujarat was suffering from drought. For the past three years there has been no rain whatsoever. The cattle suffer the most; therefore, Jayu welcomes cows and bullocks which have no food and no water. The farmers cannot afford to keep them, so dozens and dozens of animals were being brought to this goshala every day. Already there were over 4,000 head of cattle which were given refuge. Jayu was preparing to take up to 10,000. He was raising money to dig wells and to buy food. 2,000 trees were planted on the site. The cows were well looked after by a team of devoted workers. The place was clean; the cow dung was gathered twice a day and turned into fuel or compost. Thousands of cattle with enormous horns stood side by side peacefully and in good temper, chewing their cud — no sign of aggressiveness. They seemed as if they were in a haven.

"Cows are an essential part of the economy: they provide milk, fuel, compost, and bullocks for threshing and ploughing. Bullocks are also the workers to press oil in the village oil press. Bullock-carts transport more goods than all the Indian freight trains put together. Therefore, Jains have taken great care and shown their compassion in looking after cows. Even when cows are old and no longer useful we look after them at the specially built old cows' home," said Jayu, who did not seem to discriminate between his devotion to religion, to guests and to the cows. In Jayu's view cows are, therefore we are, "While taking care of cows, you learn to take care of everything. You become a caring person," said Jayu.

AT MIDDAY WE MET a great Jain monk — muni Hitaruchi. Before he became a monk, he was a well-known diamond merchant in Mumbai. After many years of dealing in diamonds he heard an inner calling—"Is your entire life meant to be spent like this? Will you find the true meaning in these diamonds which are ultimately pieces of stone? Why not deal in true diamonds? The diamonds of the soul qualities: compassion, love and truth."

The calling was so overwhelming that Hitaruchi threw the shopful of diamonds into the street and took vows of poverty. He became a wandering monk with a begging bowl in his hands.

Hitaruchi started to practise meditation and study the Sanskrit language. "The real treasures of wisdom are encapsulated in the Sanskrit scriptures," said the muni.

"Many Jains are Jains in name only: their understanding and practice of Jain principles are paper thin. They have become bounded by rituals without the living practice." So muni Hitaruchi decided to wear organic, unbleached cotton as a first step towards the practice of nonviolence. He persuaded some farmers to grow cotton without chemicals and spinners and weavers to make the cloth by hand and keep it unbleached. This was a true revival of Gandhian *khadi*. "In the recent past khadi is being made with inorganic cotton, mixed with polyester and bleached. What a travesty of the ideals of Gandhi and khadi," Hitaruchi protested.

The monk said to his followers that if they wished to walk with him, then walk in simplicity — no cars, trucks, lorries or jeeps should be used to carry their tents, food and other belongings, as these fossil-fuel-guzzling means of transportation are most violent to Earth and are against Jain principles. Only the least violent and traditional means must be used such as bullock-carts. Better still, carry your bags on your back!

Hitaruchi and his followers came on a walking pilgrimage from Ahmedabad to Palitana. There were over 1,000 people who made the sacred journey. Along the way they ate only organic food and cooked on renewable fuels such as wood or cow-dung fires. No electricity, kerosene, petrol or gas was used. The utensils used were not made in factories: no stainless steel, nor plastic. All pots and pans and plates were made of copper, brass or bronze, traditional metals commonly used in India. The utensils were all made by hand. This was a unique example of practising purity of means for the purity of ends.

There seems to be something special about Gujarat. It produced Mahatma Gandhi, and now here is Hitaruchi, a revolutionary monk who teaches simplicity and genuine spirituality. Some Jains call him extremist, but he is a sincere monk who practises what he preaches.

Jain temples, Palitana, Gujarat, India PHOTOGRAPH: R A ACHARYA/DINODIA PICTURE LIBRARY

There was a great buzz in the room. A large number of people had come to Hitaruchi for his teachings. "Nonviolence must be the nonviolence of mind, of thought, of speech and in everyday life. It is not merely a pious doctrine but a way of life and only through the practice of nonviolence can one find fulfilment, joy, and true peace. Nonviolence is an all-embracing principle. It is the seed principle as well as the supreme principle. Nonviolence is not only not harming others for *their* sakes; it is about not harming others for *one's own* sake. When we harm others we are harming ourselves even more," said Hitaruchi.

"Nonviolence is not just a matter of personal behaviour. Nonviolence includes social, political, economic and ecological dimensions. If there is social injustice, political oppression, wasteful industrial production and destruction of natural resources, then it is impossible to practise nonviolence."

With this message Hitaruchi was walking from village to village asking people to seek contentment in quality of life rather than in the quantity of material possessions. Hitaruchi is a prophet of Jain ecology. ●

(to be continued)

SUSTAINABLE OPTIONS

Fair farming, plant fuels and food for thought.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF FARMING

Dear Editor

I WAS DELIGHTED to read Jules Pretty's article about the real costs of conventional farming (*Resurgence* 205), especially as the European Environment Agency instigated his report via a small grant to help him estimate such costs for the EU as a whole. As Jules says, his initial estimates are very conservative, and obviously omit the external costs of the foot-and-mouth disease which the UK tourist industry and taxpayers are currently paying for.

Some may argue against putting monetary values on such intangibles as honeybees and hedgerows. However, without such estimates, their values enter our market-dominated societies at virtually zero, and are therefore that much easier to destroy and lose. Any monetary value greater than zero helps to draw attention to one of the three prices we pay for our food: over the counter; through tax-funded subsidies; and via environmental and health externalities. Such evaluations also help to lay the basis for the green taxes on, for example, pesticides, nitrates, wastes and energy that are needed to help bring these external costs into market prices.

In 1989, while at Friends of the Earth, I commissioned, along with the Inland Revenue Staffs Federation, the first European study into equity implications of the green taxes that would be needed to bring the huge environmental externalities of energy, transport and agriculture into market prices. Whilst there has been considerable progress since then, with the internalization of some externalities into prices in the transport and energy sectors, there has been no such progress in agriculture.

Hopefully, BSE and the foot-and-mouth disease will help speed up the process of reforming the Common Agricultural Policy, allowing organic and conventional farming to compete more fairly in the marketplace, with due recognition given to their very different negative and positive externalities. We hope that our forthcoming report on the environmental impact of agriculture will contribute to the process of such reform.

Yours sincerely
David Gee
Information Needs Analysis and Scientific Liaison
European Environment Agency
Copenhagen
Denmark

PLANT DIESEL

Dear Editor

I VERY much concur with issue 207's views based on a solar economy and sustainability but practical solutions seem to be out of reach.

ILLUSTRATION: VERONICA GOSLING

One simple solution which has not been aired is the use of plant fuels as viable alternatives to petroleum and how such a switch would alter our very relationship with the atmosphere.

Hemp oil was regarded as the original diesel by the Ford Motor Company before deciding on crude oil for its automobiles. It would be far more radical for governments to consider hemp as a fuel than to decriminalize its use as a drug. The rebel government of Bougainville PNG, cut off from civilization, has adopted coconut oil which runs its old diesel vehicles just as well.

The use of such alternatives represents no net CO_2 atmospheric burden when combusted.

Using plant diesel would strengthen global economies at the mercy of OPEC and petroleum multinationals and add utility to agriculture, atmosphere and the sun.

Yours sincerely
Rajith Dissanayake (MSc FRAS)
31 Elmwood Avenue
Kenton, Harrow HA3 8AJ

SIMPLE LIVING

Dear Editor

IN *RESURGENCE* 191 Kirkpatrick Sale reviewed a book *The Plain Reader* edited by Scott Savage. I eventually obtained a copy of the book and have read it several times.

The essays on various aspects of 'simple' living Amish-style make thoughtful reading in our rushed society. The book states that the Amish way of life strengthens community spirit and leads to peace and contentment.

Does anyone know of people living a Christian, simple lifestyle such as this in the UK or Europe?

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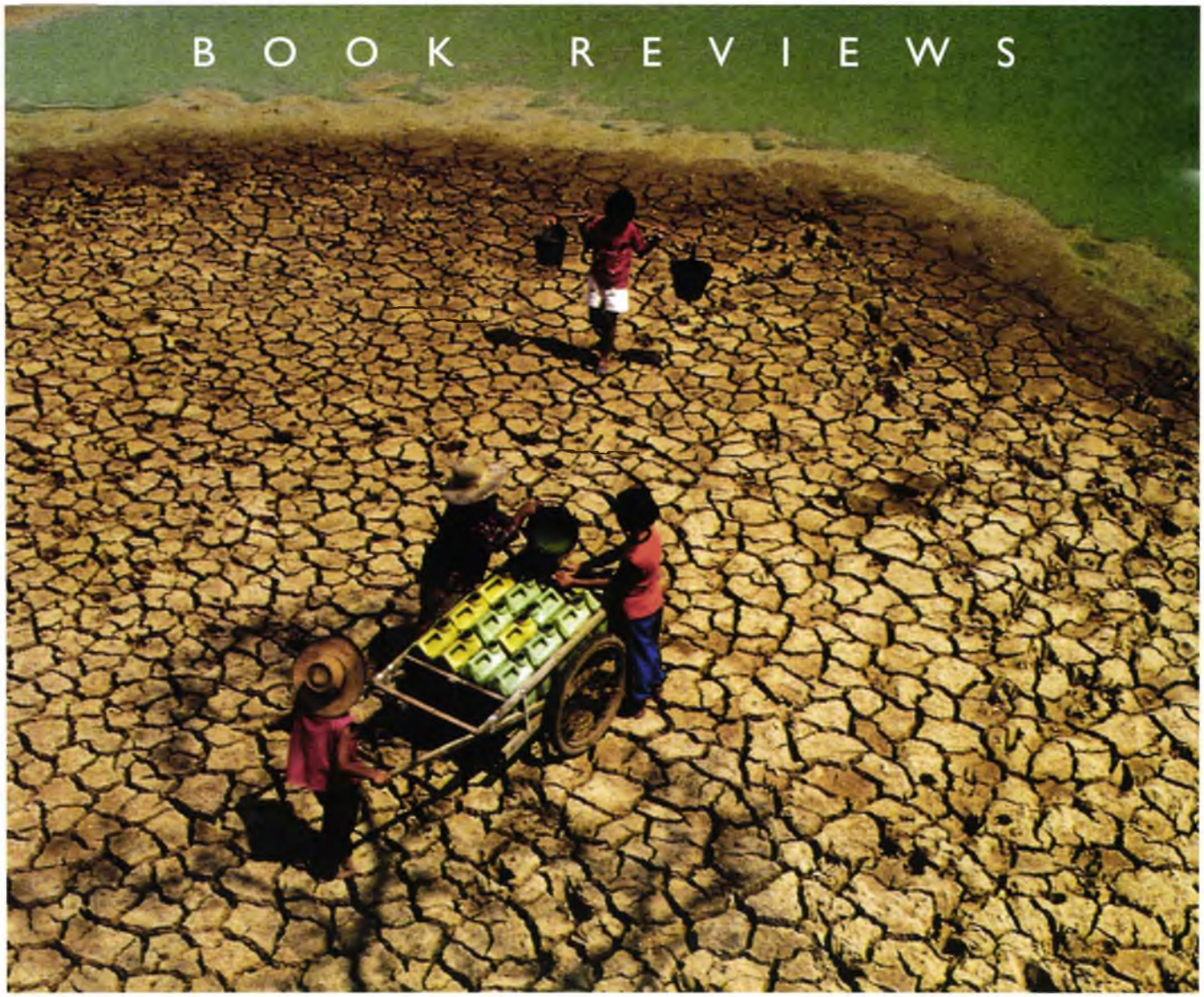


Bjorn Lomborg says things are not so bad... PHOTOGRAPH: DAMRONG JANTAWONSUP

NO FRIEND OF THE EARTH

Andrew Simms believes the case made by this 'sceptical environmentalist' is really that of a credulous economist.

The Skeptical Environmentalist
Bjorn Lomborg
Cambridge University Press, UK, 2001, £17.95

BRACE YOURSELF. Things look bleak. As a result of humankind's impact on the environment species are becoming extinct at a rate "1,500 times higher than natural background extinction". Furthermore, "20% of tropical forests" have disappeared. A third of fish are taken from stocks showing decline and 38% of agricultural land is degraded to some degree.

So says Bjorn Lomborg, the self-styled "sceptical environmentalist" who has ignited the ire of the Green movement with a series of articles and the publication of his book. But you have to wonder: if these are the conclusions of a sceptical environmentalist, how does the average or doom-laden Green see things?

This is one of Lomborg's problems. One moment he picks fights with long-forgotten ghosts of the environmental movement, such as those who thought all natural resources would run out next Tuesday. The next, he agrees with negative assessments of the planet's health but comes to economic policy conclusions that, in terms of the analytical rigour he demands of others, fall way below standard.

There are also oddities in his arguments, considering that they have been sold as an attack on mainstream Greens. He asserts that there is enough food in the world to feed everybody today and plenty of know-how to improve productivity and meet future demand. Development experts have used the same argument to deny the need for biotechnology in the food chain. No

environmentalist would disagree with Lomborg's cursory dismissal of nuclear power as an expensive security risk or his plea for huge investment in solar power.

Lomborg is a deliberate contrarian. He is like a border-guard with statistics, one who demands that all visitors have forms filled out in triplicate, until he sees a face he likes and then just waves them through.

For the first point, take global warming. The book's hype leads you to suspect that he will deny its reality. But Lomborg concedes that it is happening, is human-driven, is serious and will impose the greatest costs on those in the world who can least afford to deal with it. He also has no dispute with the possibility of 'catastrophe' scenarios, such as the collapse of the western Antarctic ice sheet, causing a 10m rise in sea level.

He focusses on uncertain climatic feedbacks that could swing towards more or less global warming but emphasizes the lower end of future projections. He simply believes that things will not be that bad. He replaces the precautionary principle with the complacency code. Do not waste money on preventing climate change, he says. It would be better to rely on increased aid flow to help poor countries, or trust to the global marketplace, managed by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Here the sceptical environmentalist becomes the credulous economist. On one hand, the appalling aid record of industrialized countries holds little promise. On the other, it is not realistic to expect poor countries such as Bangladesh, which faces the prospect of an extra 20 million environmental refugees, to defeat poverty by competing with China through the WTO for the world's textile trade.

There are contradictions and important omissions in Lomborg's book that undermine his case. He assesses the value of gross domestic product as an indicator without mentioning an important rival measure, the widely referenced Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, devised by Herman Daly, the economist. Professor Daly showed in the US that growth can be "uneconomic" — that as the economy gets bigger, welfare can decline. The crucial determinant to raising welfare, it seems, is not crude growth but policies that ensure better distribution.

Lomborg ascribes problems with managing the global commons, such as the world's fisheries, to a lack of decent property rights regimes. Rightly concerned about the limitations of the Kyoto protocol, he fails even to mention the main contender to solve global warming, although it would answer all his doubts. Plan B for climate change, the Contraction and Convergence model, requires setting a maximum greenhouse gas concentration target. After that, all countries logically claim their right to share the 'emissions pie', achieving per capita entitlements that become equal within an agreed period of time.

The scheme meets US requirements for global involvement, while the tradable rights help solve the problem faster and more surely. It has also won enormous government support worldwide.

Intentionally or not, Lomborg has written the 'business-as-usual' bible. It would be great to believe his message. We could all retire, climb mountains and write novels. But Lomborg's assurances feel like those you get from a barefoot taxi driver with only twenty per cent vision: one who says that everything will be fine — he knows the way — and then speeds, squinting heavily through the windscreen, down the motorway at 100mph. ●

Andrew Simms is head of the Global Economy Programme at the New Economics Foundation.

PARADISE FOUND

John Lane delights in some of the world's loveliest gardens.

Icons of Garden Design
Edited and with an introduction by Caroline Holmes
Prestel, UK, 2001, £19.95

THIS IS A BOOK to delight all gardeners — those, too, who regard the garden as one of the greatest art forms. It traces the development of garden design worldwide from medieval gardens to the contemporary creations of twenty-first-century designers. As well as the classic gardens of Le Notre and 'Capability' Brown — Blenheim, Versailles, Stowe, Vaux-le-Vicomte — the book includes gardens of the East — Daisen-in and Katsura Rikyu in Kyoto, the 'New' Summer Palace Gardens in Beijing — and others in India, Finland, Russia, Sweden, Poland, America and Sri Lanka. Other gardens illustrated and discussed — there are seventy-seven of them in all — include Ryoan-ji in Japan, the Villa d'Este and Boboli in Italy, Tsarskoe and Petershof in St Petersburg, the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Tuileries in France, and, in England, Hampton Court, Chatsworth, Castle Howard, Stourhead, Kew, Hidcote Manor and Sissinghurst. I have had the good fortune to visit all of these and it is true to say that they have given more pleasure than all but the greatest pieces of music I know.

Of course, for all its splendid photography, a book of this kind cannot reproduce the experience of a walk through a paradise garden, but it can act as a reminder, an inspiration and a pointer towards delights to come. Looking at the photographs of the formal gardens at the Châteaux of Chenonceaux, Vaux-le-Vicomte and Villandry — all clipped box hedges, topiary yews and potager squares — I want to catch the first train, spend the night in the locality and be the first to enter them the following morning whilst the dew is still on the grass! Equally attractive are those wonderful Italian gardens — Palazzo Farnese, Villa Lante and Sacro Bosco — which depend on their union of nature and architecture; or, if you prefer, the delectable English ones, leafy, romantic, untrained — or seemingly so. Another advantage of this attractive book is that each entry is accompanied by a short essay on the development and influences of

the garden concerned.

Admittedly the creation of a great garden takes imagination, dedicated practice and money — a great deal of cash. It is one of my regrets that some of the money allocated to the country's cultural establishments — museums, art galleries, opera houses and concert halls — was not employed to create great new parks and city gardens. These would, of course, have taken lengthy periods to establish; but if major developers can bide their time to buy up properties in the interests of making money, I fail to see why the State or Local Authorities could not have done the same in the interests of the public. Regardless of age, race, class or income, a garden is the one thing which everyone enjoys. Nonetheless, if this is not to be, some of us can still create our own places of sanctuary. ●

John Lane is author of many books, including ***Timeless Simplicity*** *(Green Books, £8.95).*

'Island' rocks amid the 'sea' of gravel

RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS

Stephan Harding hopes this book will reach the heart of government.

Gaia: The Next Big Idea
Mary Midgley
Demos, UK, 2001, £9.99

IT IS CLEAR to more and more people that if we are to solve the massive ecological and social crisis of our times we need new ways of seeing ourselves and the world. Our old, habitual understanding of human beings as isolated individuals living in a machine-like universe which we can exploit and conquer to satisfy our every whim and fancy is out-of-date and is increasingly dangerous. The philosophy and science which we have inherited from the seventeenth century have delivered significant benefits, but have also delivered unto us the very crisis itself. As such, they cannot help us in finding a way out.

So argues the philosopher Mary Midgley in this brief, well-written and cogently argued book. Gaia theory, Midgley suggests, is the 'big idea' which could help us out of our difficulties. The theory, as formulated by its originator James Lovelock, suggests that the Earth is a self-sustaining, life-like entity in which myriad tightly-coupled feedback relationships between living and non-living things (such as rocks, atmosphere and oceans) maintain habitable conditions on the surface of the Earth over huge periods of time, despite major threats such as meteorite impacts and an ever-brightening sun.

Lovelock is an eminent scientist, and his insight is formulated in carefully phrased scientific language. However, for Midgley, Gaian thinking goes beyond science. It is "an idea large enough to have both a scientific and religious aspect", an idea consonant both with a systems science view of the Earth and with ancient ecological wisdom which sees the whole of creation as alive, majestic, relational and intelligent. Thus, Gaian thinking in its broadest sense can help our culture to reunite science and spirituality, empowering us to appreciate why the Earth and its inhabitants matter in and of themselves, irrespective of any use we might put them to. Inspired by such a holistic, panoramic vision there is a chance that we will at last move towards a right relationship with the Earth.

With its concise, clear and careful argumentation, this book is an excellent introduction to holistic thinking, and, conversely, to the limitations of the Enlightenment project in general and of neo-Darwinism in particular. Perhaps it is timely, and a good sign, that the political think-tank Demos has decided to publish this book. May all the politicians and policy-makers who turn to Demos for ideas and advice read it immediately. And may they feel the stirrings of Gaia within them, for unless we act on such stirrings, and soon, this particular divine mother will surely show us her displeasure. ●

Stephan Harding teaches Gaia Theory and Deep Ecology at Schumacher College.

GET RICH QUICK

Andy Rowell questions why society accepts consumerism as the ultimate goal.

Selling the Work Ethic: From Puritan Pulpit to Corporate PR
Sharon Beder
Zed Books, UK & USA, 2000, £9.99

NEXT TIME YOU are stuck commuting to work, ask yourself a simple question: why do you do it? Why the daily grind? Is it money, status, need, enjoyment? These are the questions that Sharon Beder asks in this in-depth critique of the work ethos that drives modern capitalist society. Why, she asks, does our society revolve around the all-important production and consumption of resources?

The result of overproduction and rampant consumerism is environmental destruction. So we make more and more cars, in spite of the knowledge that driving them will kill people and will pollute the planet. We know we are causing climate change, but like addicts we cannot stop. We have to work, don't we?

It never used to be like this, so how did it all start? As Beder points out, the "idea of money-making being the primary goal of the most admired people in society, the goal of nations, and the major determinant of social success would have been strange to previous societies." In early Christian, Greek and Jewish cultures the love of money was considered the "root of all evil".

It was the Reformation, she argues, that changed making money from something viewed with "suspicion and contempt" to the primary goal of society. With the emergence of Protestantism, work became the "central defining characteristic" of human existence. You became wealthy with God's blessing. Poverty was a sign of sin and wickedness. So the capitalist ethos was born and making profits became a means to an end. Time itself suddenly became money.

By the time Adam Smith wrote the *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, he argued that pursuit of profits by businessmen served the common good. "Smith and his followers", argues Beder, "freed the businessman from guilt over his pursuit of

Workers making cabbage patch dolls, Shen Zhen, China

PHOTOGRAPH: WALLY McNAMEE/CORBIS

self-interest in a way that religion could not." Soon this philosophy took off and by the beginning of the twentieth century, the "prevailing economic philosophies enabled employers to clothe their selfish interest in increasing profits as being beneficial to the wider community."

At the same time, companies became larger and more unaccountable. "Work", said one oil executive, was more important than "love, learning, religion and patriotism." The problem was that for millions of workers, work was, and still is, a mundane activity, "something to be endured", a "matter of serving time".

For many that could find work, the reality was grim, in effect chained to a production line, working long hours, undertaking the same task, hour after hour, day after day. The irony, says Beder, is that having made work the centre of life, capitalism then proceeded to destroy it as a "satisfying, meaningful activity". But still the bosses demanded loyalty from the workers. Ford Motors set the new trend in its in-house magazine, which was designed "to bind employees to the corporation". Shell started talking about its employees as the "Shell family".

So success is now measured in terms of profitability; and material wealth is now the "ultimate human motive". Those who are rich have status and those who are poor do not. You only have to pick up a newspaper to see how the overpaid footballers, film- and soap-stars and businesspeople are admired and aspired to in our 'Posh and Becks' culture.

But as the elite have become rich, the workers are becoming poorer, they work harder, are more depressed and stressed and only find temporary part-time work. In the UK one third of the work force is now part-time, while the bosses can earn 400 times more than the average worker. We work in order to consume and consumerism itself has become an "aggressive device of corporate survival".

As the work ethic is promoted by all — the church, schools, the media, the main political parties and governments worldwide — Beder argues that "we need to find new ways of judging and valuing each other which are not dependent on work and income." However, like many books of this kind, it fails to outline a coherent alternative. So we know the illness but still struggle for the cure. ●

Andy Rowell is a freelance writer.

MENDING OUR WAYS

Jane Rasbash reflects on a new theory for improving personal health.

Immunology of the Soul
Dr Ursula Anderson
Synchronicity Press, USA, 2001, $19.95

THIS IS NOT AN easy-to-read self-help book; rather a well-researched testimony of the circumstances leading to dysfunctional behaviour and healing of body, soul and society. The soul here is a vehicle for sacred connection expressed through feelings and emotions. The book's authenticity reflects the author's lifetime experience as a child psychiatrist, healer and spiritual seeker.

Dr Anderson outlines horrible evidence of violence, particularly towards women and children, lying deep within the social structures for generations. As she attempts to elucidate how this has happened, she delves into medicine and mythology as well as interpreting clinical trials and social evidence. Anderson argues that the roots of the problem lie in the Judaeo-Christian creation story that sets the conditions for a patriarchal society.

She maintains that violence and illness are disorders of the soul caused by disconnection with spiritual source. In past generations wholesome genes have been altered by negative circumstances and these are passed on. Each person has a tendency towards certain behavioural conditions and illnesses but whether or not they manifest depends on the inherited propensity and how the body, mind and soul are stressed, from the moment of conception through pregnancy and the early months. Persistent stress affects the autonomic nervous system and can lead to dysfunctional behaviour and chronic illness.

The author suggests that psychotropic and other drugs can worsen the situation by further changing the energy of the genes; at best they only create the conditions for healing. She favours addressing these propensities through *immunizing* the soul.

Dr Anderson works with young people using visualization as a catalyst for change. She asks them to relate their anger or negativity about a situation — e.g. abuse — to a colour or a place in the body. Over several sessions she guides the child to experience positive feelings, colours and sensations. She then removes the negativity through 'visualized surgery' and replaces it with newly learned positive energy. Although she generally works with individual children, she suggests using biofeedback and relaxation methods in the school curriculum. Children also benefit from the inner harmony of the mother, and women should work towards this for themselves and their offspring. She warns against social pollution such as pornography and violent media and advocates political will for change in these areas.

I found the book challenging and had to pause many times to absorb the nuggets of information, the whole being a compelling read. I would recommend the book to those curious about the relationship between escalating violence, chronic illness and breakdown of wholesome values. ●

Jane Rasbash is associated with SEM, a Thai non-governmental organization working with marginalized groups in South-East Asia.

REDEFINING SECURITY

Adam Curle unveils the planet's suffering during war.

Planet Earth: the Latest Weapon of War
Rosalie Bertell
The Women's Press, UK, 2000, £12.99

THIS BOOK RECOUNTS the research and experiments through which the great powers aim to protect themselves from attack by lesser ones. It explains the danger this poses to the environment and sets out the ways in which these might be obviated, suggesting ways of transforming the concept of security based on maintaining the existing power structure into one based on the well-being of the planet and its peoples.

The book starts with current examples of typically heartless and deceitful escapades of power and folly: Kosovo and the Gulf. These horrible and shamefully continuing episodes typify the last decade of the century from which we have just emerged. They are escalations of the injustice with which the powerful have always afflicted the weak, and now with the help of atrocious weapons. A crucial purpose of the book is to reveal the extent to which research on these weapons already damages the Earth.

These weapons not only kill their enemies, but also destroy the non-human environment with defoliants, contaminating explosives, radioactive wastes, and incineration of forests. Their furnaces (as in the Gulf War) generate typhoons in which tens of thousands of people die. The preparation for war, let alone fighting wars, devastates vast areas, degenerates the soil, water and the atmosphere by dumping poisonous wastes and leaking toxic substances, thereby depriving living creatures of their rightful habitat. The skies are used for military purposes — for bombing, for 'star wars', for reconnaissance. But the most imponderable and potentially devastating is the role of the planet itself as both victim and perpetrator of terrible damage.

These developments sum up the terrible facts that threaten life on our planet. But why this tremendous scientific, technological and economic effort? In one sense the answer is very simple; Rosalie Bertell defines it as security. We all know the good pacifist poster: it starts with two men sitting happily reading a paper. Then one feels slightly anxious; he gets up to fetch a cannon and, reassured, resumes his seat and goes on reading. Now it is the turn of the other to be worried — he needs two cannons to give him a sense of security ... You can guess the conclusion. It is distressing that so much destruction of people and environment has often been carried out by men and women of good heart, who have not moved beyond traditional approaches to security.

Gulf war victim
PHOTOGRAPH: PIERRE GLEIZES

But is it as simple as that? Are the engines of the world's nations driven only by fear? No, they are fuelled also by vanity, pride and above all lust for power and profit. We are at the mercy directly or indirectly of the great powers, of the vast unaccountable corporations — even the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

At the end of the Second World War millions of us began to recognize the opening offered by a possibly wiser peace and a more open society. I remember feeling that I must honour my survival hitherto by trying to lead a useful life. I asked a friend, a distinguished economist, where I could invest a small legacy without benefit to the arms industry. Nowhere, he said: even if you buy an apple or a tube of toothpaste, a fraction of what you spend will contribute to the nose cone of a nuclear missile. So we are all in it.

As an antidote, Rosalie Bertell stresses that we must develop a new sense of security which puts the Earth and all its inhabitants first, and that this must supersede the old paradigm of security which protects wealth, financial investment and privilege through the use and threat of violence. She refers to a number of projects, planned or in practice, which together cover the spectrum of human and environmental need. The most comprehensive and imaginative of these is the Earth Charter. But even this is not enough; what is essential is a total revolution of the human heart and understanding. •

Adam Curle is Emeritus Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University and, formerly, professor of Development Studies at Harvard. He holds the Gandhi International Peace Award.

END OF THE ROAD

Ken Avidor looks at a practical guide to living car-free.

Divorce Your Car
Katie Alvord
New Society Publishers, B.C., Canada, 2000, US$17.95 / Canada $22.95

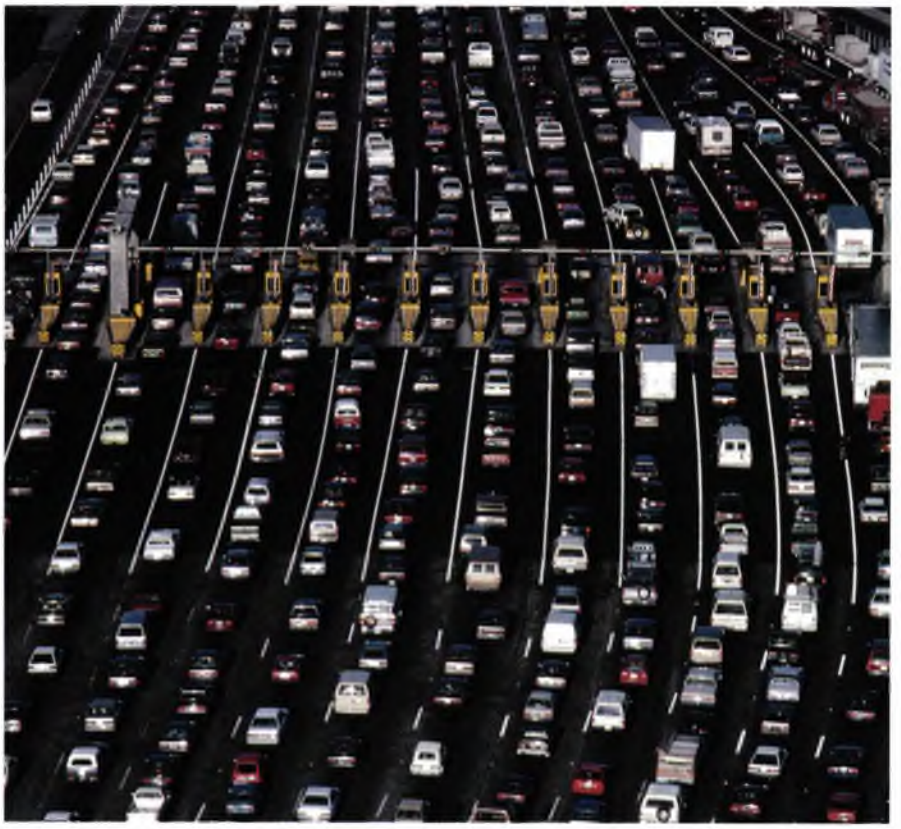
KATIE ALVORD seeks to break the cycle of auto-abuse by taking the romance out of the car culture. The first chapters give a concise but thorough history of our relationship with automobiles. Alvord pays special attention to the automobile industry's lies and manipulation, methods similar to those used by abusive spouses to increase and maintain the dependency of the abused spouse.

Alvord then shows us what we get in return for all the love and devotion we lavish on our cars and, like photographs of the bruised faces of battered spouses, it is not a pretty picture. The grim statistics prove that our obsession with automobiles has terrible consequences for individuals, communities and the environment.

But, this is a practical, self-help book, and Alvord wisely avoids sending the reader into a tailspin of despair, by maintaining a cheerful, optimistic tone. *Divorce Your Car* is full of useful strategies for reducing individual car-dependence. Bicycling, walking and public transport options are realistically presented. There are resources in the back of the book for people who choose to go beyond individual action.

The Cult of the Machine that dominated the twentieth century is in decline. The dream of achieving greater happiness and prosperity through technology no longer inspires much enthusiasm. The myth of 'technological progress' in the twenty-first century is more often greeted with suspicion and derision, and more and more people are demanding the legacy that automobiles and other machines stole from us: nature, culture, community and transcendent spirituality. *Divorce Your Car* is an essential guidebook to help lead us to a more humane, post-industrial era. ●

Ken Avidor is the creator of ***Roadkill Bill****, a weekly comic strip about cars and technology. <www.roadkillbill.com>*



Morning rush-hour traffic, San Francisco PHOTOGRAPH: JIM SUGAR PHOTOGRAPHY/CORBIS

Kayapó chief Kanhok in his manioc garden on the edge of Gorotire village. PHOTOGRAPH: HERBERT GIRARDET/STILL PICTURES

BOOKS IN BRIEF

EARTH JAZZ

Marian Van Eyk McCain suggests we need more responsive and skilful ways of relating to the Earth.

"CAPITALISM", says veteran social commentator Charles Handy, "is the only game in town. Even if we wanted to, there is no way to stop it." Some capitalist models are more benign than others, but how can we predict which will prevail? In *The Elephant and the Flea*, Handy outlines various possible scenarios.

His interest captured by the corporate trend towards outsourcing employee functions, the author, after decades of secure employment in traditional ('elephant') organizations, joined the growing band of 'fleas' — consultants, contract workers, self-employed individuals — with portfolios of small, sometimes diverse jobs. Its fine insight into 'portfolio living' is this book's main strength. It disappointed me, though, in its failure to stress that even benign forms of capitalism, if based on economic growth, must result in the Earth's inability to pay the bill.

Editors David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus lead off with this very problem in their foreword to *The World & the Wild*, saying, "The development engine is still powered by high octane capitalist fuel, without nearly enough of that necessary additive, respect for nature." However, as this international collection of writings demonstrates, nature conservation is a complex and controversial issue. Is it essential to protect some wild places from human interference to preserve species — and our own sanity? Or is "wilderness" merely the mental construct of economically privileged urban intellectuals alienated from nature? This book is essential and exciting reading for anyone with an interest in that debate. If our minds could move in responsive, flexible ways (one contributor, Evan Eisenberg, calls this playing "Earth Jazz"), a creative synthesis could emerge. We need to study the skilful ways in which many indigenous peoples, such as the Kayapó Indians of the Amazon, work *with* their forests for mutual benefit.

This synergistic theme is expanded by Andreas Suchanke in *Eco-Geography*. The Kayapó example is just one of many with which he illustrates the potential of *Homo sapiens* for beneficial, co-creative interdependence with other life forms. We cannot develop that relationship, though, until we learn to stop, look, listen and attune to our surroundings, using not just rational, scientific understanding, but also imagination. This book, an unusual blend of evocative nature writing and scholarly science, forces the mind into dozens of totally new and surprising connections.

They are as unacknowledged in the mainstream media as the forest gardens of the Kayapó, but experiments in sustainability, organics and permaculture are quietly occurring in many female, monastic communities in the USA these days, according to feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether. In *Religious Feminism and the Future of the Planet* this Christian writer enters co-operative dialogue with her Buddhist counterpart, Rita M. Gross, as they share their personal stories, explore their own and each other's religious traditions, the relationships between faith and feminist convictions, and developments in ecological awareness within Buddhist and Christian thought. Not only is their subject matter well handled, but their process illustrates how well interfaith dialogue can — and should — be done. ●

The Elephant and the Flea
Charles Handy
Hutchinson, UK, 2001, £17.99

The World and the Wild
David Rothenberg & Marta Ulvaeus (Eds)
University of Arizona Press, USA, 2001, £17.99

Eco-Geography
Andreas Suchanke
Floris Books, UK, 2001, £14.99

Religious Feminism and the Future of the Planet
Rita M. Gross & Rosemary Radford Ruether
Continuum, USA, 2001, £17.99

Marian Van Eyk McCain is an author and freelance writer whose own, latest book, ***Elderwoman****, is due for publication by Findhorn Press in March 2002.*

LISTEN TO THE BUTCHER-BIRD

Black-throated butcher-bird

PHOTOGRAPH: ROLAND SEITRE/STILL PICTURES

Jim Nollman differentiates between music and sound.

The Book of Music and Nature
Edited by David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus
Wesleyan University Press, USA, 2001, £21.00

AS ONE WHO has played music with many different species of animal over the past several years and promoted the experience for almost as long, I have developed a rather curmudgeonly theory about how and when, I believe, natural sounds produced by the likes of wind and whales suddenly jump out of the background to insist we refer to them as music. Simply put, if it seems to possess the sense and order of music, then it is music. If it doesn't, it isn't. One caveat: those people most capable of hearing music within nature also tend to perceive nature more like Gaia, and less like the bottomless resource that leads to environmental depletion. I might conclude that your grandchildren's future is at stake depending on how well you listen.

It is with this understanding that I have been reading and listening to this brilliant book-anthology/CD combination: a new collection of essays attempting to make 'sense' out of the relativist connection between music and nature. I conclude that most of the writers gathered here do indeed hear the upbeat melody of a trilling robin on a warm summer morning as a wonderful song, but are just as enamoured with the academic game of language and culture that invents intellectual hurdles to keep them from leaping too quickly from heart to head and back again.

Sitting in my living-room, listening to the robin in the garden through an open window while reading the essays, I clap wildly for the singing bird and yet also feel myself acquiring genuine insight about the subject of music in nature, reading the arguments of aesthetes, ethnomusicologists and biologists who insist I withhold my applause until they define the terms more accurately.

The chapters run the gamut,

including narrative excerpts from the poet Rilke and the novelist David James Duncan, erudite essays by composers like David Toop, ideas from aesthetic philosophers and anthropologists, and firsthand accounts by soundscape artist Daniel Quinn sitting on an ice floe recording walrus and field recordist Bernie Krauss out in some jungle searching for that fast-disappearing habitat still free of aeroplane sounds.

Every aesthetic concept is up for grabs in this collection, especially the definitions of nature and music. John Cage has written elsewhere that art (including music) is "whatever you can get away with", which leads him and several of his modernist disciples to argue here that nurturing the grating sounds of the inner city or a six-lane highway at rush hour is music if we simply wish it to be. Perhaps good advice for people who have to endure the urban cacophony, although Cage's laissez-faire aesthetic seems to provide a subtle yet screwy encouragement to the likes of Exxon to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Composer Pauline Oliveras begs for far greater discretion, outlining a series of exercises to guide students through a programme of aural meditation. "You are part of the environment," she writes. "Explore the limits of audibility." In the most probing essay in the book, Tim Hodgkinson interviews Pierre Schaeffer about the cultural implications of musique concrète, which is defined as music composed of raw sounds: thunderstorms, steam-engines, waterfalls. This has led, of course, to the genre of Paul Winter, Alan Hohvaness, Pink Floyd, and everyone else who has ever used a recording studio to overdub a wolf, a whale, or a ringing telephone into a song.

The accompanying CD does an admirable job of fleshing out the text. Although a bit of it sounds discombobulating outside its written context, some excerpts are simply wonderful, including a Nepali sarangi meditation of great virtuosity entitled 'The Butterflies of Jumla'. David Lumsdaine's paradigm-shattering recording of the Australian butcher-bird displays in all its glory a birdsong which is as musically sophisticated and healing as a Miles Davis solo. My own personal favourite is the musical excerpt of Tuvan throat singer Anatoli Kuular, who composes songs only to be sung in the habitat where the music originates. As Kuular's recordist Ted Levin explains, the goal is "to present as vividly as possible the wonderfully permeable border between sounds of the non-human world, human imitation of that world, and musical constructions involving those imitations." ●

Jim Nollman is author of ***The Charged Border: Where Whales and Humans Meet.***

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If you support the work of *Resurgence* magazine, the Small School, Schumacher College and Schumacher Society, then why not consider making a legacy to The Environmental Research Association charitable trust, in your will? For further information contact Bridget Baker, ERA, Ford House, Hartland, Bideford, Devon, EX39 6EE.

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THE HYDROGEN ENERGY ASSOCIATION
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Male, 43, suffering from tinnitus, would like to meet a special, understanding lady with a view to friendship and possibly starting an organic vegetable garden together. Please write to Box 210/1, Resurgence, Ford House, Hartland, Bideford, Devon EX39 6EE.

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The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you murder the hater, but you do not murder hate ...
Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

– Martin Luther King

RESURGENCE ADVERTISING

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COPY DATES:

Issue: Mar/Apr : 2nd Jan, 2002
Issue: May/Jun : 1st Mar, 2002

Send your copy with PO/cheque/Visa details to: **Gwydion Batten, Resurgence Advertising, Ford House, Hartland, Bideford, Devon EX39 6EE. Tel: (01237) 441293 Fax: (01237) 441203 e-mail: <advert.resurgence@macace.co.uk>**

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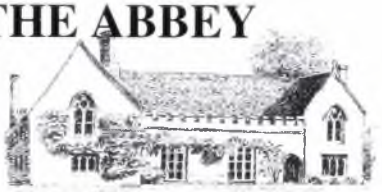

The Abbey is home to a small resident community (often open to new members). We aim to provide a meeting place to explore different approaches to living a vital, grounded and realistic spirituality.

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Spiritual Dimensions of World Events

THE WORLD GOODWILL NEWSLETTER

At root, the inter-locking crises of globalisation are spiritual in nature, and their solution also lies in this realm – the realm from which guiding principles and visions have always emerged. In its regular newsletter, World Goodwill seeks to uncover the meaning behind the trend of world events, and to indicate how the *practical* application of ideals such as goodwill and unanimity can resolve seemingly insurmountable problems.

To obtain a free copy of the newsletter, please contact:

World Goodwill, (Dept. R), Suite 54, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EF. T: 020 7839 4512; F: 020 7839 5575; E: london@lucistrust.org Web: www.worldgoodwill.org

THE ORDER OF THE CROSS

The Order of the Cross, an informal fellowship whose members are vegetarian or vegan and pacifist, was founded in 1904 by the Reverend John Todd Ferrier.

The Order seeks to follow a mystical, spiritual path and "to proclaim a message of peace and happiness, health and purity, spirituality and Divine Love." Its Message is universal in its scope, revealing the essential oneness of all religious aspirations, the continuity of life, and the unity of all living creatures in the Divine. It touches the deep issues of life and explains our relationship to the Eternal World through our spiritual constitution. The Cross is seen as a symbol of spiritual being in which the life attains uprightness and balance.

Regular public meetings and worship services are held on Sundays at 11 am and Wednesdays at 7 pm (except during the Summer recess) at the Headquarters of the Order as below. Meetings are also held at other centres throughout the UK, as well as in the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

For further information and publications list, please contact THE ORDER OF THE CROSS (R), 10 DE VERE GARDENS, LONDON W8 5AE
Telephone: 020 7937 7012 E-mail: ordcross@ivu.org Internet: http://www.orderofthecross.org

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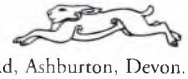

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LECTORIUM ROSICRUCIANUM
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BMLR7 London WC1N 3XX

Mankind seeks liberation, but liberation is there already! The eternal, undeniable basic principles of truth do exist, they are even mankind's true heritage. They take form in the axioms of the Universal Teachings of all times. However, do not think of books or words, but of Gnosis, a force, a power that reveals Itself to those who raise themselves out of suffering by concrete deeds.
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INNER GUIDANCE OF THE WORLD

The guidance and inspiration of the inner subjective government of the planet stand behind all constructive human efforts. Given different names by people in the East and West – the Spiritual Hierarchy, the Masters of Wisdom, or the company of Illumined Minds – its members function as custodians of the divine Plan. They watch over our evolution and guide the destiny of humanity. They carry this forward by implanting ideas in the minds of thinkers and by evoking consciousness, rather than by infringing upon the free will of the human spirit through enforced control. They are governed by love and wisdom.

More on this theme is given in a compilation of the writings of Alice A. Bailey and Helena Roerich, *The Spiritual Hierarchy: Inner Guidance of the World,* available free from:

School for Esoteric Studies

58 Oak Terrace, Dept. R
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www.esotericstudies.net

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Schumacher COLLEGE

An International Centre for Ecological Studies

Programme for 2002

SEEING WITH NEW EYES: SCIENCE AND THE NATURE OF LIFE

Chris Clarke, Rupert Sheldrake, Arthur Zajonc & Brian Goodwin

March 3-22, 2002

For nearly 400 years, Western culture has been heavily influenced by a science and a technology which assumes that the universe is a meaningless machine made up of disconnected atoms. But science is gradually changing, and these underlying assumptions can now be authoritatively challenged. This course will study some of the key changes coming from physics and biology, discussing what they mean for the nature of life and consciousness and how we understand the world.

Chris Clarke was Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of Southampton and is author of *Reality Through the Looking Glass*. **Rupert Sheldrake** is a biologist and author of the best-selling *Seven Experiments that Could Change the World*. **Arthur Zajonc** is professor of physics at Amherst College and author of *Goethe's Way of Science*. **Brian Goodwin** was Professor of Biology at the Open University, and is now Co-ordinator of the MSc in Holistic Science at Schumacher College.

Masters Level Credits Available

THE ROOTS OF LEARNING: SCHOOLS, LAND AND FOOD

Prue Leith, Alan Dyer, Sue Clifford & Mary Tasker

March 23-28, 2002

One of the best ways of integrating an ecological world view into schools is by working with activities which all children do on a daily basis — eating and spending time outside. By involving children in food preparation and growing and care of the school grounds, they can learn a wealth of lessons about the interconnectedness, diversity and wonder of nature. This course provides educationalists with inspiration and practical ideas, and provides a forum for discussing the educational significance of such innovations.

Special course fee: £250. This is a reduced rate made possible by the generosity of a private donor. This course is only open to those currently working in education in the UK.

MSc IN HOLISTIC SCIENCE

A one-year course which uses various methodologies to explore whole systems. It is co-ordinated by **Brian Goodwin**, author of *How the Leopard Changed its Spots*.
Please contact the Administrator for details.

WHERE EARTH AND SOUL TOUCH: A JOURNEY IN ECOPSYCHOLOGY

John Seed, Ruth Rosenhek and Mary-Jayne Rust

April 14-May 3, 2002

Ecopsychology takes as its starting point the understanding that the human self is fundamentally interconnected with nature, asking how we have come to be so destructive of the world we depend on and why we are so addicted to growth and consumption. Such a perspective creates a radically different approach to environmental activism and this course explores these issues in depth, using philosophical inquiry, discussion, and experiential deep ecology exercises.

John Seed is founder and director of the Rainforest Information Centre in Australia and co-author of *Thinking Like a Mountain*. **Ruth Rosenhek** is co-director of the Rainforest Information Centre and has spearheaded the GoldBusters campaign to raise awareness internationally of the damage caused by gold mining. **Mary-Jayne Rust** works as a Jungian Analyst and Art Therapist, and researches and writes on the psychological underpinnings of consumerism.

Masters Level Credits Available

LIVING OFF THE SUN: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FUTURE

Godfrey Boyle, Peter Harper & Dave Elliott

May 12-24, 2002

How can we create clean, safe, sustainable energy supplies for everyone on the planet by 2100? The answer lies in the Sun. It is the ultimate source of power underlying a family of renewable and sustainable energy sources. This course will investigate how humanity can act at various levels, from local to national and global, to realise this enormous potential during this century, and will explore what implications the increasing use of renewable energy might have for our economy, society, values and culture.

Godfrey Boyle is Senior Lecturer in the Design and Innovation Department at the Open University and **Dave Elliott** is Professor in the same department. **Peter Harper** was the originator of the term "alternative technology", and is now Head of Research and Innovation at the Centre for Alternative Technology.

Course fee: £1000

Three-week courses cost £1500, which includes tuition, accommodation, food and field trips. If you cannot afford the full fee, please apply for information on our bursary policy.

For further details please contact:

The Administrator, Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EA, UK
e-mail: schumcoll@gn.apc.org
Tel +44 (0) 1803 865934 Fax +44 (0) 1803 866899
From outside the UK, replace the first '0' with the appropriate international dialling code.
web: http://www.gn.apc.org/schumachercollege/

On our website you can find the full text of the College prospectus, current course programme, and application form. Additional material such as student profiles, articles of related interest and scholarship details is also available.

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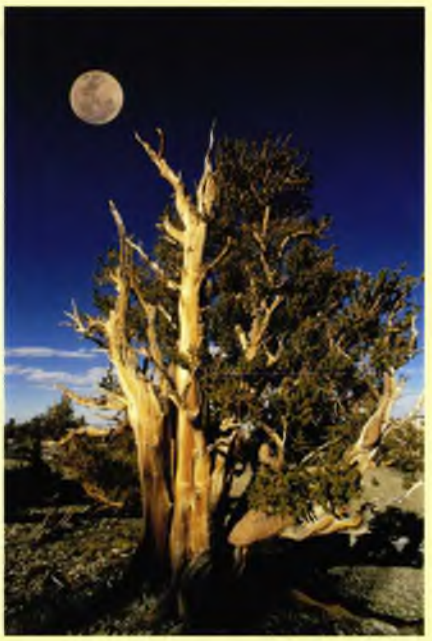

Bristlecone pine tree
PHOTOGRAPH: MICHEL VIARD/STILL PICTURES

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Whereas it minds its own business
& lives in its one place so faithfully
& its trunk supports us when we lean against it
& its branches remind us of how we think

Whereas it keeps no bank account but hoards carbon
& does not discriminate between starlings and robins
& provides free housing for insects & squirrels
& lifts its heartwood grave into the air

Whereas it holds our firmament in place
& writes underground gospel with its roots
& whispers us oxygen with its leaves
& may not survive its new climate of ultraviolet

We the people for ourselves & our children
Necessarily proclaim this tree
Free from commerce & belonging to itself
As long as it & we shall live.

– *William Heyen*

From the Preface to *Trees Be Company* — An Anthology of Poetry published by Green Books, 2001, at £9.95. Green Books, Foxhole, Dartington, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6EB.
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