

RAISE THE STAKES

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NATURE IN CITIES



Ed Bury

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CITIES WITHIN NATURE

by Beryl Magilavy

*A village of a hundred houses
and not even a single gate
without chrysanthemums.*
—Buson

Buson wrote this haiku during the last half of the eighteenth century, inspired by a village in rural Japan. Evoking stiff autumn breezes, migrating geese foraging in fields near the town and busy preparations for a harvest festival, the verse celebrates a unity of community intent and a symbolic appreciation of the natural world with its changing seasons that is notably missing in twentieth-century Western urban culture.

Seventy-five percent of North Americans now live in cities. How would a travelling poet describe them? Do we live in harmony with the natural world? Do we share a common vision? Do our cities represent the highest levels our culture can achieve? This is hardly what appears in the poetry of the modern industrial nations. We see lifelaces in decline — with populations often alienated from society and lacking coherent social goals.

This social atomization is evidenced by our unthinking treatment of the biosphere. Legacies of ozone destruction, water-table pollution, toxic contamination and extinction of species testify to our ever-expanding population and the misconception that natural systems oth-

er than our own are expendable. It is coming to be generally accepted that the form of the modern city includes waste-disposal policies, energy choices, patterns of consumer consumption and a physical layout which reflect a lack of a fundamental ecological ethic in our public life and popular thought. Our cities reflect the conviction that we are intrinsically separate from the rest of the natural world, locked in a fight to conquer the forces of nature.

American urban areas seem to represent the culmination of that "victory"; they are places where a person can live a life seemingly quite divorced from the natural world. They're where food seems to come from the grocery store and water from the tap; where the existence of garbage seems to end at the dumpster. In cities the pleasures of social interaction and cultural events, the quest for wealth and the rewards of ambition can become consuming interests. It is easy to succumb to the short-term fallacy that success is an individual venture dependent on human culture alone.

But the growing number of serious ecological problems we face has put an end to the time when this fantasy of separateness can be indulged. Population expansion and industrial technology have enabled our species to disrupt the design of the entire web of life, endangering ourselves and the future of all life on earth.



Carlos Montoya

New World Tree mural in San Francisco
by Juana Alicia, Susan Cervantes and Raul Martinez
with Aztec dancers, Grupo Xipa Totek

We have come to a point at which the interest of the whole earth must be made the interest of each one of us every day. We must consciously realize that we are a part of the natural systems in which we live, and start redesigning our lives with the long-term good of our lifelaces in mind.

Each person must do this. By eating, driving, buying commodities and ridding ourselves of wastes, we are already actors in this drama. Ignoring the implications of our actions is a political act in itself. It is going to take an enormous expansion of popular ecological consciousness to change the fixed, wasteful patterns of most cities.

This process of change is also circular. Just as community's culture evolves from its beliefs, so people's ideas can be influenced by the social forms surrounding them. The growing number of city-dwellers who have become aware that we are inextricably part of a greater natural whole can help create the social forms which will generate positive change and begin to wake up others.

This intertwined process can be called the "reinhabitation" of the

regions in which our cities are located. It is a two-part process: one of self-education, a personal reorientation in the natural world, a contemplative activity; and one of restoring and maintaining natural systems, getting out there and making an impact, a creative activity.

We city-dwellers need to find out, in terms of natural systems, where we are. We know the museums, how about the native plants? We all have the freeway routes in our heads; why not get to know the watercourses? Our local histories represent an irreplaceable store of native and settler wisdom about the areas in which we live. Knowing them establishes a sense of continuity that edges the mind toward long-range caretaking instead of short-term gain. Reinhabitation can be done on a walk through "unimproved" ground with a guidebook from the public library, a drive that traces the path of tapwater to its source, a chat with the grocer about local growers.

The other side of the reinhabitation process is more social and cooperative. Right now cities are the black holes of energy resources, the water web, the raw materials of the

world. As a society, we don't know any other way to do it. We have to get together and find those ways.

We can take action on the household level to recycle materials, compost organic wastes and reduce energy use. We can use our power as consumers to deny a market to products toxic in themselves and in the course of their production. We can get together in our neighborhoods and organize green areas for food production and recreation. And we can unite on a larger scale to organize Green City programs — community initiatives that deal with the larger issues such as transportation, renewable energy, urban wild habitat and sustainable city planning. A Green City program could combine a visionary description of an integrated ecological urban future with concrete proposals for public policy change. It could establish a storefront office to initiate community projects to make the proposals a reality, advocate those goals in the public sector and act as a clearinghouse for ecological information and to spread the word.

A Green City Program is just one model of action that can be taken by people to enhance the sustainability of cities. Different approaches may be better adapted to local cultures, but the most effective action will combine inner re-ordering of priorities with outer public action to snowball the impact of changes made in basic values and in social forms. The values change the forms; the forms change the values. If we consciously reinhabit our cities we will have found a moral common ground from which to work, a community intent worth sharing.

Our villages will be of a million houses. Alta California's chrysanthemums will be manzanita berries; the Hudson Estuary's, mountain laurel. Through a conscious reunification of ourselves with the natural world and action to back it up, we will have built the foundation on which to make the myriad social changes necessary to bring our cities back into balance with the rest of the earth.

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Since 1974 Planet Drum Foundation has been developing and communicating the concept of bioregions—through regional bundles, books, and the bi-annual review, *Raise the Stakes*. We are now working to foster exchange among bioregional groups and projects — the growing number of people exploring cultural, environmental, and economic forms appropriate to the places where they live.

Raise the Stakes is published biannually by Planet Drum Foundation. We encourage readers to share vital information, both urban and rural, about what is going on in their native regions. Send us your bioregional reports, letters, interviews, poems, stories, and art. Inquiries, manuscripts, and tax-deductible contributions should be sent to Planet Drum, PO Box 31251, San Francisco, CA 94131, USA. Telephone 415-285-6556.

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NATURE RETURNS TO ENGLISH CITIES

by David Goode

Take any great city and it is human creativity that produces the wonder. The skyline of Manhattan, the Grand Canal in Venice, the Champs Elysées in Paris, St. Peter's Square in Rome — they all have their magic. There is no doubt that some features of cities represent the pinnacle of human creative achievement. At the same time cities have produced conditions, ranging from the squalid to the unlivable, in which millions of people live despite their environment. Some cities can only be described as ecosystems in decay which can never be self-sustaining. Yet this need not be so. If we were to plan and design our cities in sympathy with nature, life could be very different.

I'd like to just mention a few things about urban population growth. Looking at the United Nations figures for population growth in urban areas throughout the world, the scale of growth in recent years is

urban built environments, and it is in that context that I wish to examine the role of ecology. I am concerned particularly about the rift between humans and nature.

We are divorcing ourselves from the natural world by building cities in the way we have. We need to think of ways in which we can relate more closely to nature in cities, either by protecting the vestiges of the natural world in areas that are unintentionally wild, or by creating completely new opportunities for nature to exist within an urban setting. By looking at the ecology of cities, we can learn a great deal about how nature can survive and what restoration is possible. By applying that knowledge we could alter the face of many cities to a dramatic extent.

Cities have grown and spread so rapidly that there are very often fragments of wilderness encapsulated within the urban area. Take London, for example. There are many frag-

nated to walk in the wood around Georgetown University and see five different species of woodpecker within a few minutes. It was a great surprise to see so many within the town, especially the big pileated woodpecker. While these fragments of the natural world do still exist, they are there only by chance. Very often these places were conserved because they happened to be areas that could not be built over.

These vestiges of the natural world are not the only places within the city where nature thrives. We can recognize a whole host of different habitats that are far from being natural. Consider a bomb site from the last war within a stone's throw of Westminster. Left for 40 years, allowed to go wild, it's still covered with many of the original colonizers — many would describe them as weeds. But they are extremely attractive. It is a wonderful place to go on a summer's day and sit with all the hover-flies, bees and butterflies, which you will not see anywhere else around that part of central London.

Similarly, there are railway lines, wonderful green corridors through the city. If you go a quarter of a mile on either side, you're into densely packed housing with very high population density. But the green corridors provide a place for nature and thousands of commuters enjoy them every day.

Then we have Victorian cemeteries. It's a strange story — cemetery companies were set up in the 1830s to bury the dead of London because the old village churchyards were so full that there were bodies coming out of the ground. It became a public scandal. So they started to develop cemeteries around the fringe of London. Since then London has spread way out beyond its 1830s boundaries and the cemeteries now form a ring around the center of the city. They have been left because the cemetery companies went bust when the ground was filled with bodies. With no more income they had to lay off the gardeners and these wonderfully designed landscapes, described by the landscape architects at the time as creating a sense of "pleasing melancholia," simply went wild. Now these places are a paradise for the people who live there. There are Friends of Highgate Cemetery and Friends of Nunhead. Many of these old cemeteries are being run as nature reserves. If ever you come to London, visit the Old Highgate Cemetery. It's a wonderful experience.

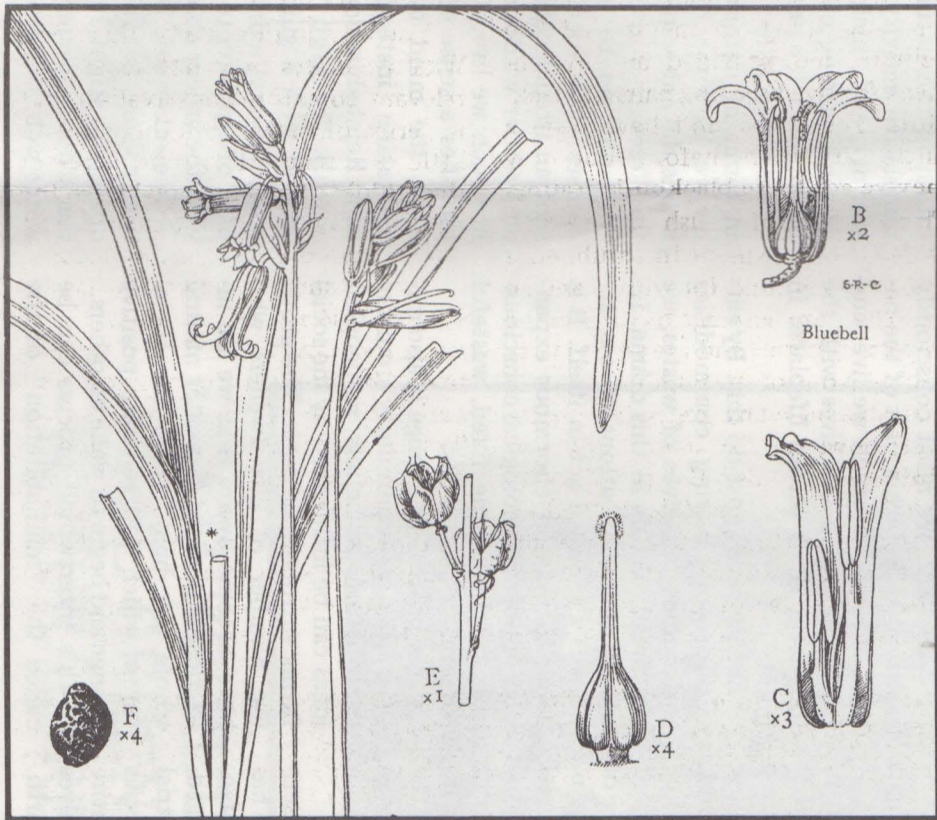
There is another place in London which is very special to me. It is a good example of something that is unintentionally wild which has caused people to change their minds about nature conservation in cities. It formed a very important precedent and has been quoted many times in Britain — a place called Gunnersbury Triangle. This is a tiny fragment of woodland in west London which was the subject of a pub-

lic enquiry a couple of years ago. British Rail and a development company proposed to develop warehousing on the land. There were already warehouses on one side and they wanted to extend that warehousing over the rest of that site. The local people said "No! This is important to us." A lot of people who travel on the tube trains into London every day pass the wood and they said "No! This is something special — this is the only bit of nature that we see." And when it came to a public enquiry, they had a couple of hundred people crammed into an evening meeting in the town hall, saying, "This is very important. You can't build warehouses there. We want to keep it as it is." This was despite the fact that it was a "land-locked" site that very few people ever got onto. But it was an important inspiration to them, and they wanted to keep it.

When ecologists working for the developers produced their case, they were working on the basis of traditional nature conservation arguments and saying, "There's nothing important there. It's not very big. It's not diverse. And it's only been developing as a wood over the last 40 years." They showed that in the thirties it was divided into small garden plots. But nonetheless, the enquiry showed conclusively that the place was important for nature conservation. The inspector came down firmly on the side of nature conservation. He said it was very important locally, and it was the local people who won that case.

At the moment, there are 20 nature reserves being designated similar to the one in London as a result of the same kind of pressures. Let me give you an example of the political impact. On a piece of woodland in London, the local council decided to have a nature reserve. They got the mayor along to the opening, and all the dignitaries. They issued invitations to the local population saying, "We are going to open Scadbury Park Nature Reserve." They had 200 people turn up for the opening. I was standing next to the mayor during the opening ceremony, and heard him turn to one of the others and say, "You know, this is the most popular thing we've done. We'd better have another of these." There are votes in nature and there's no doubt about it. You don't have to rely on scientific evidence. There is a very strong public feeling about this.

So how do you structure a program to encourage this sort of conservation? What's the background to it, and what sort of activities does one engage in? The Greater London Council (GLC) started such a program in London in 1982. I had been working with the Nature Conservancy, which is the government wildlife organization in Britain. I worked on bogs and marshes and all sorts of wild places out in far-flung parts of Britain. I was never involved in urban ecology. But I chose to work in London in 1982 when the GLC



English Bluebell
Endymion non-scriptus (L.)
syn. *Scilla non-scripta* (L.)

dramatic. The first city of one million was Peking in about 1800. By 1980, there were 235 cities with a million inhabitants. Over the lifetime of my father, born at the beginning of this century and still alive today, the population of the urban areas of the world has grown to the point where it now exceeds the total world population when he was born. That is dramatic enough but there is more to come.

Future predictions may sound rather like science fiction, but they are realistic about the rate of growth of urban populations on a world scale. By the year 2025, the number of cities with over four million inhabitants will be about 135 altogether, and they will represent a quarter of the total world population. We are moving towards a colossal number of people living within

ments of the countryside caught within the bounds of the capital. There are beautiful bluebell woods, pieces of the original ancient woodland of England, caught within the outer suburbs. Similarly, right next to a new town development there is a wood with a host of wild daffodils in it. The original wildflowers of those ancient woodlands provide a great contrast to the imposing apartment buildings nearby. Elsewhere in London there are other natural gems of marshland, heath and bog amongst the urban sprawl.

These wilderness areas within cities may be lands on which it isn't possible to build. They may be hills like Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, or creeks and ravines like the Valley Woodlands in Washington, D.C., where I stayed for a few days in November of this year. I was fasci-

decided they needed an ecologist at a senior level in planning. I thought, "Here's a great opportunity to get things going." I drew up a plan initially to say we needed a number of different elements in this program.

First, we needed to develop planning policies, and linked with this, we needed to have a data base. A total survey of 2,000 sites was carried out, collecting habitat information and putting it on computer so that we could very quickly produce the facts and figures on any place, whether it was a natural area or one of the artificial ones. We didn't include things like football pitches and close-mown town parks, but anything with a vestige of nature in it we looked at.

We also assembled a very good body of information on bird populations and plant species. We have distribution maps of all the major groups of plants and animals. This was done by the voluntary sector, people who go and collect that information in their own spare time. It's all coordinated by the voluntary organizations, rather like the Audubon Society or others that do the same thing in North America.

So from that we started to draw up a plan, and for each of the 33 boroughs in London, we are producing a conservation strategy saying which places are important.

Second, we needed to be able to give advice on how to create new habitats. At that time there was little information available. We produced a series of publications which were immediately in demand by the planning departments. We put together a popular handbook to start with, and went on to produce a guide to habitat creation with more technical advice. But even that one used a cartoon form and popular language. A parks manager or anyone could use it, even a householder with a garden. The great moment was when we had a letter from Stornaway, in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, requesting a copy of the guide to habitat creation. We thought, if people want to create habitats there, we must be getting somewhere! Subsequently we have produced more technical handbooks for planners to apply the whole approach.

Third, we needed to create examples of natural parks and show people how to do it. So there were examples such as Camley Street Nature Park near King's Cross Station. Another idea was to have a London Ecology Centre to promote public awareness, a place where people can go and learn about ecological issues. The centre has been a great success, and the idea is catching on in lots of other places. As a large public body, we were also able to give grants to the voluntary sector organisations working in this field. That was an important part of the program — developing a partnership with the voluntary sector.

A fourth vital aspect was to get publicity and in various ways spread knowledge — to get on TV and talk to people. In fact, almost the first thing that happened when I was appointed by the GLC was that the evening current affairs program on BBC (after the news, which, as you know, is peak viewing time) invited me to go on live and say what I was going to do about London. Now that was a great opportunity, and the publicity for urban wildlife conservation, on greening or whatever

it may be, has gone on and on throughout the last few years. There is a tremendous amount of media interest in it which we have been able to capitalize on.

Finally, there was a need for funding. The GLC was very strongly committed to ecology and environment and there was no problem about funding. My problem was that I didn't have the time or enough staff resources to do all the things we would have liked to have done.

Over the past five years we have had considerable success in developing this whole program and urban nature conservation is now well and truly established in London. Although the Greater London Council was abolished by the UK government in 1986, our ecological work has continued through the London Ecology Unit.

In other parts of the country different mechanisms have been used to get ecological projects going in urban areas. One of these is the Groundwork Foundation, which relies on funding from government and statutory agencies, private sector industries and voluntary organisations to carry out a program of environmental improvement schemes. In one small town in Lancashire the total funding amounts to about a million pounds sterling per year spread amongst these various bodies. Volunteers do a tremendous amount of work.

This kind of partnership is essential to make the thing work, because you're making use of local money and also making better use of land and involving business and industry as well as the people who actually own land. The Groundwork approach was launched at the last international Green Cities conference in Liverpool in 1984 when the Secretary of State for Environment announced that local Groundwork schemes were to be extended to form a national Groundwork Foundation.

Another mechanism that's being used is a series of national garden festivals. This has been a very effective way of demonstrating what you can do using derelict land. At a derelict arsenal site in Liverpool, which was heavily-polluted land, 123 acres were reclaimed and landscaped to create the Liverpool Garden Festival in 1984. Since then, there have been other garden festivals every two years and the natural element has increased on each occasion. Wildlife gardens have now become firmly established. The horticultural suppliers now produce wildflower seeds, so there is a strong commercial side to this. A few years ago habitat creation was hampered because people couldn't get the native varieties, but there is now a very strong move to produce the right kinds of species. We are still not quite there with trees, because it's taken longer to get to the stage of having enough native stock of trees available for planting. But we are moving in that direction. There is a project for London this year called the Forest of London where I'm hoping that they are going to involve a large proportion of native species. But the difficulty is actually getting the suppliers geared up to producing them in time.

You may have heard of the concept of the green desert: close-mown lawn and lollipop trees. In many places that is what is called landscaping. Now we can do a lot better than that. For instance, there is

a conference proceedings available called "Ecology and Design in Landscape." It was the result of a joint conference between the British Ecological Society and the Landscape Institute; it tried to get the two professions to think together instead of one group thinking about design but not necessarily understanding the needs of birds or plants or whatever in the wild, and the other group just thinking about ecological principles without applying them. Another is called *Community Landscapes*, which is a packet produced by the Think Green Campaign for

tant that these birds are there. It shows what can happen.

In Birmingham, there is an urban ecology center where they have created an insect garden, taking advice from beekeepers. Beekeepers know exactly what sort of plants are good for foraging bees; the same plants are also very good for hover-flies and a lot of other insects. So they used that list of species and created a rather super roof-garden. The children from a local school have got a whole lot of pots growing plants to see what will grow best in that sort of situation. It's amazing what you

There is a very strong need for green. I think it may be a very deep emotion: the need for something green and wild or a place to go for sanctuary and solitude.

anyone working in this way in towns. It's intended for the local authority to distribute to the various community groups — another example of partnership.

It is amazing what can be done with a little imagination. There is a small development right in central London, by Covent Garden, a completely new building with a whole series of little gardens built into the courtyards to create shrubberies with trees. Most of the trees and shrubs are not native — they're the exotic species favoured in gardens. The scheme was not designed in any way to promote wildlife, but the interesting thing to me is that the building has provided an environment for five breeding pairs of blackbirds. There wouldn't have been a single bird there before, but now they've got these blackbirds nesting. This is a kind of thrush that normally feeds on lawns or in shrubberies and pokes around for worms and so on. They are actually feeding in the tiny shrubberies and are able to raise young. None of the buildings around that area have any greenery whatsoever; nowhere else could you hear birds singing. But the people who live there say, "Isn't it marvellous to hear blackbirds singing!" Some of them do, anyway. Perhaps the others are learning that they're blackbirds. To me, it's very impor-

can do right in the middle of a very densely built-up area. And it has produced something which is very attractive.

Obviously, there's a great deal that can be done, but it needs incentives. I think the local authorities can give incentives. They can be facilitators too. In Liverpool, for instance, tubs were provided. For one street they said, "Let's give everybody a tub and they can grow things." So everybody has a tub. Some don't have anything in them, but others do. Some look very attractive and the whole street has improved. So that's just one thing. One way of doing it.

You can do this in any old street. Window boxes may not seem very relevant to nature conservation, but in terms of motivation there is very little difference. If you're living in the middle of a town, you know, the key is really to think what you can do to have the most effect locally.

Two examples show what is possible. These are places where ecology parks have been created in Britain. The William Curtis Ecological park at Tower Bridge, opposite the Tower of London, was created in 1978, at the time of the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations. At the end of a walkway that was being planned, someone suggested, "Why don't we have an ecology park?" To which others responded, "What's an

(Continued on page 5)



Ed Bury

THE GREEN CITY AS THRIVING CITY

Implications for Local Economic Development

by David Morris

In discussing the greening of cities, one is reminded of the slogan that the French students used in 1968. On their posters they said "all that we want to change is everything," which comes from that famous ecological dictum, "everything is connected to everything else." When we pull a thread, we may in fact unwind a sweater.

The two fundamental assumptions underlying the way we've designed our communities are the assumptions of cheap energy and cheap disposal costs. In constant dollars, a barrel of oil that cost five dollars in 1910 cost a little over a dollar in 1965. The cost of throwing away a ton of garbage remained pretty much the same from 1900 to 1960. We could therefore ignore the operating inefficiencies and wastes of the systems that we developed.

Cities reflect that inefficiency and waste. Our cities are dependent creatures. A city of 100,000 people imports 200 tons of food, 1000 tons of fuel and 62,000 tons of water a day, and dumps 100,000 tons of garbage and 40,000 tons of human waste a year. We've accepted long distribution systems as the price we pay for progress and development. Indeed, we've elevated separation to the status of virtue and internalized those principles into our way of thinking about our local economies.

I was recently reminded of how much we take that state of affairs for granted when I was in a St. Paul, Minnesota, restaurant. After finishing lunch, I got a toothpick, and of course all toothpicks now have an obligatory plastic wrapper. The word *Japan* was printed on the wrapper. Now, I thought to myself, Japan has no wood, but it had been considered economical to take pieces of wood and send them to Japan, wrap them in plastic and send the whole thing back to Minnesota. That toothpick embodied 50,000 miles within it. Well, not to be undone, Minnesota just set up a factory. It's producing chopsticks and it's sending them to Tokyo.

This brings to mind an image of two ships passing each other in the Pacific, one carrying little pieces of wood from Japan to the United States, and the other carrying little pieces of wood from the United States to Japan. That is economical only if one accepts the twin assumptions noted at the outset — those pillars upon which our economic system has been established.

This import-export paradigm is the way our economy runs. It is also the way our waste economy runs. Washington, D.C., for instance, was becoming overwhelmed by its human wastes, and paid a consultant \$150,000 to come up with a solution. He suggested they barge them to Haiti. That recommendation was approved by D.C., but Haiti vetoed the idea. Haiti decided though they'd been offered the wastes of the capi-

tal of the Free World, they preferred not to be shat upon.

The integrated planetary economy was supposed to make us more secure, but has it? Global trade expands and so do planetary tensions. For example, developing countries are now exporting more and more food to the developed countries to earn the hard currency necessary to repay debts that they incurred primarily to build up their export industries. Industrial development and utilization both have increased. The developed countries are in an interesting protectionist free trade dance, a pas de deux of late planetary economics, in which each country tries desperately to preserve at least some amount of its sovereignty and its productive assets, at the same time

creasingly dependent and insecure people.

But now the rules have changed. Cheap energy and cheap disposal are no longer available. Despite the recent drop in oil prices, the cost of energy has risen more than 1000 percent in the last 15 years. Disposal costs have risen even more dramatically. In 1975 it typically cost about three to five dollars to dispose of a ton of garbage. Today in the U.S. it costs between \$30 and \$50 to dispose of that ton of garbage. In 1970, to dispose of a barrel of hazardous waste cost between \$5 and \$10 a barrel — although most companies just spilled it on the side of the road. Today, to dispose of hazardous waste costs about \$300 a barrel, and for many companies the disposed hazardous waste now has a legal liability attached to it that is potentially enormous.

What's important to note about these price changes is that they have changed not because of the real world exhaustion of supply, but because of a change in political attitude. The rising price of oil did not occur because oil began running out, but because OPEC artificially limited the supply. The cost of waste disposal did not rise because we suddenly ran out of dump space but be-

ply system which runs through the sewers.

Sewer water, carrying dissolved rock salt, can corrode insulation and lay bare wires. A neoprene gas can be generated and if a spark occurs, the explosion can send manhole covers flying. By one estimate Consolidated Edison spends \$75 million to repair damage caused by rock salt. That's part of the cost of rock salt. Another cost is polluted groundwater and the devastation of vegetation. New York State has made an informal estimate that the actual, internalized cost of rock salt is 80 cents a pound. Which de-icer should you buy?

The individual is unaware of this cost. It is the responsibility of the community to make price and cost similar.

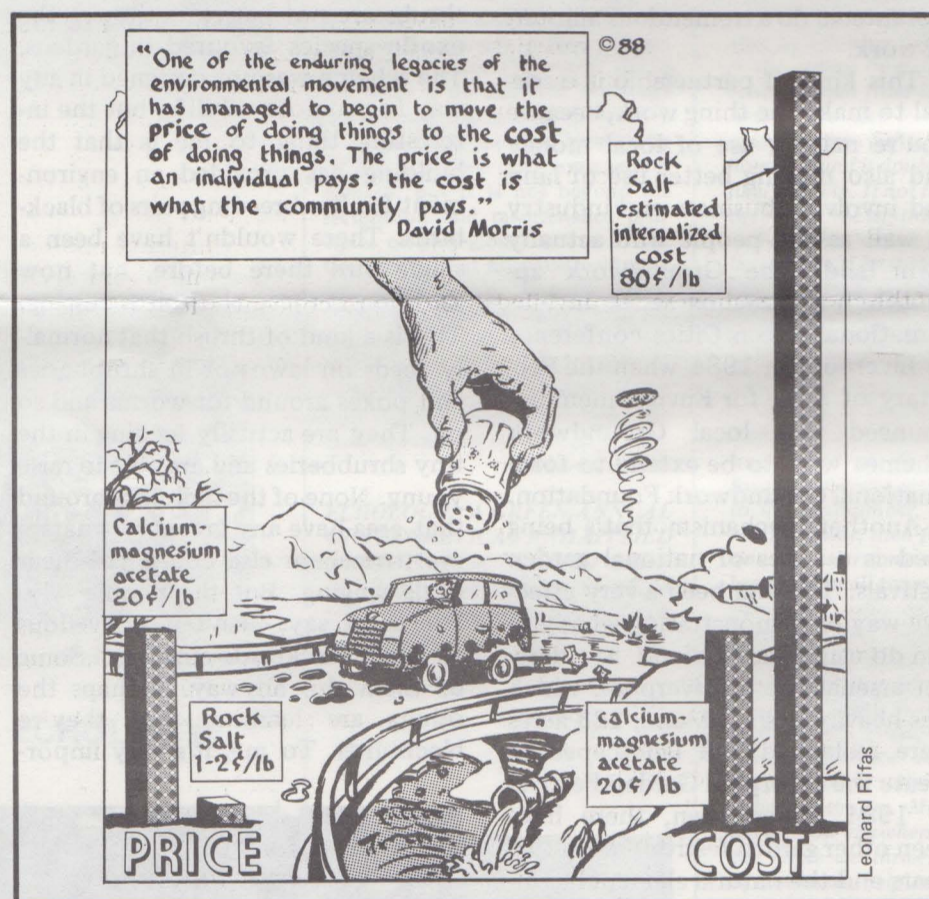
Even though the rules have changed, we haven't yet adopted a new paradigm, a new way of organizing our knowledge and our information. One of the principles of that new paradigm should be to extract the maximum amount of useful work ecologically possible from the local resource base. That sounds like a very modest proposal, but it has profound repercussions. As we begin to obtain more and more useful work, we find that we've begun to be more and more self-reliant and self-contained.

Is self-reliance economical? What do we mean by economics? What do we value in our economic system? Those who praise the global economy and trade as the underpinnings of our economic health invariably point to the benefits of comparative advantage and just as invariably point to the example of bananas. Surely local self-reliance does not mean raising our own bananas in the United States when the climate is so much more favorable in Guatemala.

It may be cheaper to import those bananas, once again, depending on what the price is versus the cost. Bananas that come from Central America come from countries that do not permit unions, are produced by companies that do not pay any taxes, and are grown by production methods that have no environmental regulations. I submit that if you calculated the number of dollars that have been spent by the United States in military intervention in Central America, and divided that by the number of bananas that are imported into the United States, you would find that it's very costly to import bananas rather than to grow them yourself.

When we look at economic signals, we need to look at them in a holistic sense. First, we are learning, as our systems get ever-larger, that the downside risks get correspondingly greater. Twenty years ago when we talked about a catastrophe, it meant a flood or an earthquake. Today when we talk about a catastrophe we mean the end of the ozone layer, the end of the human species. Local self-reliance also has a downside risk: you could try something and it might not work, but the risk is modest.

Second, local self-reliance leads to a diversity of experimentation. As communities experiment with



trying not to interfere with free trade and the mobility of resources.

Capital has become the lubricant for the planetary economy, the grease that lets the planetary machine function. We fervently believe that capital should flow at least as freely as raw materials and products. Last year 20 times more currency was traded than was needed to underwrite world trade.

We are more reluctant to embrace the unimpeded mobility of the third factor of production: labor. But we're inching up to it. Six months ago the Council of Economic Advisers recommended abolishing all barriers to migration in order to improve the economy.

We've lost sight of the underpinning of a society — the sense of community. Mobility is not synonymous with progress. We've ignored Benjamin Franklin's advice: those who would trade independence for security usually wind up with neither. We have made that trade and in the process have become an in-

cause communities, by establishing new disposal rules, artificially limited the supply. We consciously and willfully changed the cost of doing things the traditional way.

One of the enduring legacies of the environmental movement is that it has managed to begin to move the price of doing things to the cost of doing things. The price is what an individual pays; the cost is what the community pays.

Let me give you a specific example of price versus cost. Rock salt is used to de-ice roadways. Its price is very cheap: one to two cents a pound. There is at least one alternative to rock salt, made out of plant matter: calcium-magnesium acetate. It can be produced at present for about 20 cents a pound — 10 to 20 times more than rock salt. That's its price. However, rock salt has some problems. It corrodes the underbody of cars, it corrodes bridges, and in New York City, Consolidated Edison has found that it causes a great many problems in the electric sup-

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different technologies, we advance on the learning curve. Third, local self-reliance by definition reduces pollution by improving efficiency. Fourth, local self-reliance is economical because it recycles money internally for more productive purposes that would otherwise have to be spent on maintaining the system. A crude estimate that I made recently suggested that 15 years ago the United States was spending between one and three percent of its overall income for system maintenance and cleanup. Today we're spending almost 15 percent of our income for that purpose.

And finally, an advantage of local self-reliance is that we begin to channel our ingenuity into developing new bodies of knowledge that may be appropriate to a world that is in a very different condition. The technologies that we're developing in North America, for example, are technologies appropriate to nations that are resource-rich and people-poor. But 80 percent of the world's population lives in countries that are resource-poor and people-rich.

If you try to make the United States self-sufficient or self-reliant, the technologies you develop to do so will be neither appropriate nor compatible with the needs of developing nations. But if you move towards making our densely populated and resource-short cities self-reliant the technologies developed will be appropriate to a resource-poor world. The knowledge generated can become a major export commodity.

But the primary benefit of local self-reliance is not economic; it's psychological and social. It improves decision making because the costs of

the decision fall on the same community. We do not separate the productive process over long distances. Psychologically, we improve the self-confidence and security of our communities. We begin to miniaturize the economy. It means achieving what Fritz Schumacher, one of the great economists of our time, dreamt of: local production for local markets from local resources.

Is that theory or is that practice? Well, it turns out that in the scrap metal industry, the scale of production is much smaller than in the raw materials industry. The best example I know of is the steel industry, where the newest technology is called the mini-mill. They used to be called neighborhood mills, but the industry decided that that would raise the image of Mao Ze-dong's backyard furnaces, and they didn't feel this was good advertising.

Mini-mills use 100 percent scrap, and are very small — 200,000 tons a year average production. A raw ore-based, vertically integrated steel mill produces between two and three million tons a year. The healthiest, fastest-growing part of the steel industry is based on scrap that comes from regional markets and products often sold regionally.

Another example is the chemurgy movement, created 50 years ago by scientists from around the world concerned with using the then-large agricultural surpluses as industrial products. In 1932, the Italian ambassador to Great Britain arrived at the Court of St. James dressed in a suit made of milk. That is, Italian scientists had discovered how to weave the casein in milk into clothes.

In 1941, Henry Ford, a devotee of the chemurgy movement, unveiled

his biological car. The car body was made of soybeans, the fuel came from corn, and the wheels were made of goldenrod. The soybean plastic body weighed half as much as a steel-bodied car, so the car was more fuel-efficient. If you dented it modestly, the dents could be knocked back out. The car was warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer, and it was quieter — if you knock on steel and then knock on a soybean, you understand the sort of deadening characteristics on the inside of that car.

The dreams of Henry Ford and the rest of the chemurgy movement were postponed, but they seem to be resurfacing again. Russell Buchanan, a scientist in Maryland, envisions the rise of botano-chemical complexes, as he calls them, rather than petrochemical complexes, as we learn to extract from cellulose the same things that we can extract from petrochemicals. One is a hydrocarbon; the other is a carbohydrate. Compare these words and they're basically the same. One of the differences, however, between a botano-chemical complex and a petrochemical complex is that it's easy to transport oil over long distances, whereas it's not easy to transport plant matter over long distances. So botano-chemical complexes will tend to be locally based and rurally based near their sources of raw materials and supplies.

Local self-reliance can become an economic development strategy, and cities are the best place to try it out, for several reasons. Most of us live in cities. Cities tend to be large enough to have an internal market, and can in fact become laboratories. Cities are concentrations of science

and technology. They have the ingenuity, the expertise and the machine toolshops to build prototypes and try them out. But what is your nearest city's research and development budget? It's probably zero.

The local self-reliance scenario is not inevitable nor is it even probable. It depends on political decisions. Economic development must be seen as a means to an end and not an end in itself. Albert Einstein once said that perfection of means and confusion of ends characterize our age. We're so mesmerized with technology and development that we forget to ask, "Technology for what?" and "Development for whom?" We have become consumers of change, but we don't know the difference between change and progress. To Bertrand Russell progress is ethical and change is scientific; change is inevitable, while progress is problematic. In other words, progress is value-laden and as we change, we need to ask ourselves, "Will we progress?" We can have a green city within a brown world by moving all of our production and disposal systems very far away from our city. But to truly embrace the ecological motivation behind a green city, we must become responsible for the wastes that are generated for our convenience. And the only way to do that is to begin to return that loop of production, use and disposal, back to the community.

Marcel Proust once said that the voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands but in seeing with new eyes. It is in seeing our communities and our cities with new eyes, in pursuing a globe of villages and not a global village, that we begin to create a new paradigm.



Nature Returns To English Cities (continued from page 2)

ecology park?" At that time they didn't really know, anyway. "But let's have an ecology park," they said, "it's something where people can see nature." I don't think anyone really knew what it would look like.

The park cost about £2,000 to produce. It was remarkably cheap, entirely constructed by volunteers. It had a landscape designer — someone who was brought in to draw up a plan and explain how to do it. They provided a detailed design with fifteen different habitats including a pond, a little spinney (small group of trees), a meadow area and even a sand dune at one end. But the pond was the thing that really clinched the place. It was very effective for local children who had never seen a frog in their lives before, and they went along and had a great time. Some had contact with nature for the first time in their lives. There was one little lad who looked into a bottle of things wriggling in the water and said, "Gorblimey! There's things what live here!" That park will have been the most important feature of the natural world in their childhood. They will never forget it. I'm sure many will think back to the place that they went to when they were kids.

Sadly, William Curtis Park is a memory for all of us now. It's closed and is being built over. It was done as an example using a vacant site before it was to be developed. So they had a closing ceremony. I hope I don't ever have to go to a closing

ceremony of a nature reserve again. It's not the kind of thing one should do, really. The emotional commitment on the part of the children was very considerable. And they said, "What's going to happen to all my trees? My minibeasts?" They call them all minibeasts — the things that live in the pond. "What's going to happen?" They used to come there every day saying, "What are we going to save today?" And they took them off to ponds and other places around about, in school yards, and they removed as much as they could before the park was destroyed.

Eventually the last lament was played and William Curtis Park died. But its effect lives on. It has captivated a lot of people and it showed what could be done. It was a pioneering venture and now natural parks are happening all over Britain in different towns.

A few years ago, there was a study done by Barbara Mostyn on the benefits to people of working in places like that, creating them, and to the children who go and enjoy them. She suggested that there were very strong emotional benefits: escape from the city, identifying with nature. That's freedom. There are no rules. It's not like a park where you tread on a flowerbed and you're in trouble. You know, you can do virtually what you like. And it's a peaceful retreat. These things are very important to people. Lots of people use a natural park in that way. I used to go and talk to them and say, "Why do you come here?"

"Well," they say, "It's the only place like the country that we can find."

There are tremendous intellectual benefits, too: learning about nature for the first time, actually finding plants. There was one lad who said, "We learned all about plants. I've never seen a plant before." He actually said that. "I've never seen a plant before. Only in a book." It was hard to believe at first but that was what we found.

The conservationists involved were learning skills of various kinds too, making ponds and so on. The other very good aspect to it was the social benefit to people meeting up with others in the community and actually doing something all together with a sort of team spirit. This was something that they all felt was a good thing.

I think those factors are important and while I'm just mentioning them in relation to that particular ecology park, they are true of any ecology park, or any area of the kind we're talking about. Nature is something that people want. There is a very strong need for green. I think it may be a very deep emotion: the need for something green and wild or a place to go for sanctuary and solitude — just to experience wilderness in the city, as a kind of spiritual refreshment. But it isn't something that is necessarily catered for in the present kind of planning we have.

I would like to end on a happier note, to describe a natural area that has been created next to King's

Cross Station in the centre of London. There is a little patch that was a rubbish dump and a derelict coal yard. When I joined the GLC I was told, "This is going to be an ecology park and it's your job to do it." So we created an entirely new environment with spinneys of willow trees, reed beds and a large pond. We built a nature study center too and the whole place has been a great success. Local people drop round on a summer evening and hundreds of school children use it regularly for pond dipping and studying nature. One lady told me that it was the first really beautiful thing they had in that part of London.

In the artist's drawing of what it was going to be like he put a heron on the edge of the marsh and I said, "Well, that's a bit of artistic license. We'll never get herons in there." But we did. In the first winter, the herons started to come in the evening to roost there. The children would stay to watch the first heron arrive. It was a great moment. The heron put his own stamp of approval on the scheme. We had done it just right. So it is actually working as a haven for wildlife, even right bang in the middle of London. And it's quite remarkable what can be achieved.

Ecology and Design in Landscape by Bradshaw, Goode and Thorp (1986) is published by Blackwell's, Ltd., Hythe Bridge St., Oxford, England.

The Community Landscapes Pack is available from the Manchester City Council, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA, England. Prices available directly from the publishers.



NATURAL RECYCLING IN ASIAN CITIES

by Christine Furedy

Resource recovery and recycling are now seen as essential elements in local and national strategies for environmentally sound development. In most Asian societies, however, the official administrative approach to waste recycling is piecemeal, or sectorially limited. The focus has been upon rural areas, with attention to biogas and specific uses for agricultural wastes. In urban areas, little has been done that has proved viable or has had a discernible impact on waste treatment. Nevertheless, the recycling of urban wastes occurs extensively as a result of the activities of individuals, households and enterprises attempting to make the best of scarce resources. The productive and waste-treating potential of such activities is inhibited in many ways, as they are generally disapproved of, legislated against and certainly not aided by administrations.

If recycling is to significantly affect the quality of urban life, city administrators, planners and the general public will need a fresh concept of the city itself — its essential functioning as a natural system (although much altered by people), its land uses, its infrastructures, its laws and planning priorities. This view, Michael Hough has recently argued in *City Form and Natural Process*, must come from adopting an ecological philosophy for urban areas, just as ecology is becoming the basis for national planning. Cities must be understood as possessing natural, intimately linked ecosystems that need to be protected as much as possible if urban environmental degradation is to be minimized. From this perspective, cities are seen as generators of vast, but mostly wasted, resources. Enhancing the use of urban wastes does something to restore natural cycles while providing part of the solution to urban problems of food production, waste disposal, drainage, climate and general environmental quality.

My concern here is to broaden the scope of thinking about waste re-

Asian cities' food-producing capacities are beginning to recognize the importance of waste reuse. Thus, planners should soon be exposed to more ideas about how cities can deal with their wastes with techniques that are ecologically sound, productive, and that reduce reliance on large-scale, expensive, mechanized modes of waste treatment.

URBAN AGRICULTURE AND WASTE TREATMENT

Urban agri/aquaculture is a key element in the capacity of any city to enhance its natural ecosystems and recover the nutrients and energy in its wastes. Growing plants, creating fish ponds and keeping animals all have multiple environmental effects and provide the opportunity for much waste treatment and absorption, while supplying food and fuel for urban dwellers. Thus, any strategy for ecological urban design will pay particular attention to promoting many forms of urban agriculture, both private and public.

Asian cities have advantages here in that most harbor diverse instances of urban agriculture. Ironically, it is the unevenness of modern development that has preserved and encouraged the survival of what are considered "rural" elements in the modern Third World metropolis. Where many people lack facilities to satisfy their basic needs, they apply customary skills to using wastes for their benefit. The development of metropolitan administrations (combining urban and surrounding areas), uneven spatial development, the pressures of urban prices which make any food and fuel production worthwhile, unregulated squatter or shanty colonies where animals can be reared, the lack of refrigeration to enable the transport of food from long distances, and intensive farming in hinterland areas are other factors contributing to urban agriculture.

The practices that are referred to here range from officially run or officially promoted schemes (such as the sewage farms of India, the sys-



Collecting mango seeds from urban refuse to grow new trees in Indonesia

temics). Idle public and private land is colonized with gardens and animal herds. In India, thousands of poor acquire their fuel, and supplement their incomes, by gathering animal dung to make fuel patties, thus aiding in the disposal of animal wastes. Pigs also dispose of excrement. Food wastes are extensively used as animal feed. In some cities, such as New Delhi, hotel and restaurant wastes are auctioned to poultry farmers. In other cases, the transfer is achieved through client relationships: farmers who supply hotels and restaurants with meat collect the food wastes as they make their daily deliveries. In Calcutta, cattle herders and pig farmers have established relationships with particular market stalls and food shops.

Many of these practices flourish illegally or unheeded. City planners have failed to understand that, while they undoubtedly present numerous problems for urban administration and public health, they may also contribute, directly or indirectly, to some aspects of environmental improvement.

Importance of Urban Fringes

Obviously, the greatest amount of urban agriculture takes place on the fringes of cities, where traditional farming has intensified and market gardens have developed to serve the urban population. As a highly controlled society, with ancient traditions of using sewage in farming and aquaculture, China has sought to preserve fish farming, pig and poultry raising and vegetable growing as close as possible to the main cities. In general, 80 percent of the vegetables needed by Chinese cities are produced within the municipal boundaries using human and animal wastes as fertilizer. Shanghai is well known for its systematic waste use for fringe food production. It is part of the city's food policy objectives for the 1980s to loosen controls on suburban communes so that these can undertake more agricultural product processing. One argument made for this is that the communes can then more readily recycle wastes back into agriculture.

The most extensive single example of natural waste treatment based on the exploitation of urban organic wastes and excrement for food production is to be found in the eastern fringe and hinterland of Calcutta, where sewage nourishes fish ponds and paddy fields, and productive vegetable farms use, in situ, the natural compost of the garbage dump that was created in the 1860s. The

aquaculture "system" developed essentially without official support, as a result of the experience of farmers and fishermen who began to benefit from the seepage of sewage into the wetland area and, later, the enterprise of a man who experimented with fish ponds using sewage in the 1930s. The practice of sewage farming, the growing of grass and other crops on municipal land with liquid wastes, was brought from England to India in the nineteenth century and has survived in some 25 cities and towns. There are numerous examples of arrangements between town sewage works and local farmers whereby the farmers gather sludge "cakes" from the drying beds of the sewage works for a fee. Often the sewage plants make a tidy sum. Human wastes may also reach fringe and hinterland farmers through well-established but unofficial networks in India, as when those responsible for cleaning latrines and sewers sell directly to farmers.

These practices, insignificant as some may appear, variously contribute to waste disposal and treatment, although this may rarely be the aim of the originators. For instance, it was decades after the growth of the sewage-using fish ponds in the east Calcutta wetlands that it was recognized that the ponds served a vital function in sewage treatment for a city lacking any functioning sewage treatment works. And, even so, the fisheries are being swallowed up by urban development on the one side and paddy field creation on the other.

Community-run Schemes

Obviously, the most effective, controllable and least hazardous ways of using urban wastes are community schemes which allow for pooling, systematic separation (e.g., of sillage and sewage) and economical reuse. Community schemes are more likely to be able to benefit from technical improvements, monitoring and research. The more conscious a city becomes of its wastes as potential resources, and the more that priority is given to appropriate infrastructure, the better will be the opportunities for systematic and safe recycling. It does not follow that waste recycling schemes should be large-scale and government-run. Many of the more successful community schemes have been run by nongovernmental organizations with some technical and financial aid from government. In several Indian cities such as Patna and Lucknow, well-run community latrines

Waste recycling should not be confined to municipal schemes shielded from public view, but should be designed to involve many citizens.

covery and recycling in the urban context by calling attention to the ways in which human and animal wastes and wastewaters are currently used in Asian cities. Many Asian cities already incorporate informal practices that can be the basis for ecological urban design. We know from simple observation that considerable amounts of excrement and wastewater are absorbed within the urban area. The movement for appropriate technology (which has gained much support in developing countries) is congruent with the ecological perspective. Those who argue for preserving and extending

tems for using excrement in agriculture in China and technically designed waste-using fish ponds) to household activities like feeding animals with leftover food or allowing household latrine cleaners to sell excrement to farmers.

In many cities, people grow small amounts of vegetables and herbs in pots, on rooftops, on small patches of land. Fruit trees are prized in home gardens. Sullage is often used to water these gardens, which also absorb organic wastes and excrement that are composted or simply dug in (good results can be obtained without elaborate composting tech-

recycling excrement are administered by community organizations.

PLEA TO PLANNERS

Before orthodox planners and bureaucrats dismiss the suggestion that urban agriculture must be assured a place in Third World cities in the interests of ecological balance, food production and waste treatment and disposal, they might consider the following points. These practices exist, indeed thrive, in most cities because there is a high demand for the produce and substantial numbers of persons willing to do the work of waste scavenging, animal herding and food growing. Only the well-controlled and serviced cities have any prospect of banning certain activities such as pig and poultry raising (Singapore has virtually eliminated these, but Hong Kong has been unable to do so). Even close regulation or substantial reorganization of animal herding is beyond the power of many cities. Calcutta, for instance, has been unable to persuade more than a very few of the herders of the city's estimated 50,000 cattle and buffalo to relocate to fringe dairies, in spite of considerable inducements. Periodic drives against the activities, which result in no long-run change, only serve to erode the authority of the municipal administration. We are by no means sure about the precise health and environmental consequences of many practices. The utility of many techniques in urban agriculture has been established; it is clear that the waste-treating aspects could be improved, but little thought has been given to how to develop the potential of waste-food-energy-links. Is it not time for explicit attention to the problems and potentials?

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

The ecological argument for addressing waste recycling is persuasive but, in the Third World context, there are numerous problems to be faced. The primary ones relate to public health. The handling of excreta is hazardous, and multiple health problems can be traced to poor sanitary arrangements. Sewage farm workers are known to have higher incidence of worm infestations and gastroenteritis than the general public. Some vegetables fertilized with raw sewage carry danger of infection; there is the problem of heavy metal contamination of sewage and wastewater systems. There are techniques for dealing with most of these problems, but the poor settlements of developing countries cannot yet intervene with systematic controls. If the standard to be aimed at is that no person should handle human excrement, it is hard to imagine how human wastes will be removed from even the largest cities of Asia, for most of these have extensive squatter and congested, unequipped slum areas. We have numerous latrine designs that produce safe compost from human excrement, but when will each city be thoroughly equipped with enough of these to serve its population?

Animal herding raises similar problems. It is possible to design cattle sheds where wastes are well disposed of and recycled, but the cattle herders maintain that they cannot afford to install them. Besides, there is the problem that animals move about and forage and their excrement is scattered. There may be

contamination of wells in the neighborhood of stables. Burning dung for fuel disposes of great quantities of waste, but contributes to severe air pollution.

Social and political aspects related to waste use are perhaps even more difficult to resolve than medical and technical ones. Religious beliefs pertaining to the handling of wastes must be respected by urban administrations, and it is a difficult and delicate matter to decide what attitudes can be gradually changed to promote safe disposal and use and what values must be accepted as "givens" in a social system. Even sex differences are a factor, as in households it is often women who make decisions regarding kitchen wastes and animal rearing, while male planners know little of the practices of the poor in general and women's spheres in particular.

Social status issues in waste-use promotion have hardly been discussed. It is generally agreed that the groups that traditionally do the "dirty work" are not likely to achieve social mobility as long as their jobs entail direct handling of wastes. But this work is not likely to be displaced in countries like India by mechanical water-borne systems requiring minimal maintenance and serving the great majority of the population. So how will attitudes to waste workers be transformed? Mohandas Gandhi recognized this problem half a century ago. His solution was to reduce abhorrence for waste disposal (and consequently for those engaged in it) by asking that every member of the community share equally in the unpleasant but necessary tasks with improved but simple methods. If the importance of waste recycling at the household and community level can be recognized, it may become socially accepted and the taboo attitudes will be gradually eroded. Such social considerations strengthen the argument that waste recycling should not be confined to municipal schemes shielded from public view, but should be designed to involve many citizens.

Open-minded planners are inhibited by the existing laws and regulations, which are not designed to allow and to facilitate the persistence and improvement of casual waste-using activities.

The consequences of planned changes are unanticipated because official plans do not take into account unofficial waste recovery. Thus, when the municipal scavengers (i.e., night soil removers) of Lucknow protested the installation of a sewerage system for part of the city, one of their concerns was that they would no longer have access to the excrement that they customarily sold to farmers to supplement their low wages. Similarly, the removal of cattle from Calcutta would deprive thousands of poor people of income earned by preparing fuel from dung.

Good ideas and techniques are becoming available for low-cost waste treatment and reuse but the financial and human resources for transplanting them into communities are desperately inadequate in most large Asian cities. Demonstration projects that are often very encouraging are carried out with resources and attention that cannot be bestowed on the duplication of the same schemes in hundreds or thousands of sites. This

constraint must lead us to consider the expedient of building upon existing practices and proclivities as far as possible.

CONCLUSION

These complex factors point to the need for basic research and for flexibility and sensitivity in urban policy making — qualities called for in all planning, but very difficult to achieve given the structures, pressures and preoccupations of Asian cities today. Thinking creatively about strengthening the links between urban food production, waste disposal and treatment, environmental quality and other factors such as income generation will require considerable changes in attitudes and policies of urban administrators, for in general, the "rural" aspects of urban life have been regarded as aberrant and unhealthy, and the force of urban bylaws has been directed at eradicating urban agriculture. More significant than official regulation in the long run has been the destruction of sites suitable for agriculture and aquaculture by building. As population and development pressures on cities increase, these activities inevitably dwindle from lack of space so that unless there is a deliberate effort to preserve some land and water sources within cities for these purposes, to enable unused or underused land to be used productively, to promote recycling and to improve on traditional techniques, Asian countries will lose the chance to create cities that are more ecologically balanced and more self-reliant. The starting point for changing attitudes and laws is to understand the nature and impact of actual waste-using, waste-treating practices and to develop safe techniques on the basis of knowledge and incentives already available in urban systems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ANNOUNCEMENT

BIOREGIONAL POETRY PROJECT

A project to publish an anthology of bioregional poetry from North America is underway. Works accepted will include poetry, very short prose pieces, drawings and photographs. Submissions should include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and the name of the artist's bioregion or watershed. Work will be accepted from any artist living in the North American continent and need not be restricted to self-proclaimed bioregionalists. The focus will be on the content of the art, its apprehension of a sense of place, and its ability to express that sense, rather than the eco-political orientation of a particular person. By the same token, works submitted need not limit themselves solely to the topic of nature. Submitters are encouraged to express any aspect of a particular bioregion which expresses its unique sense of vitality and place. Artists will retain rights to any accepted work, and will receive a copy of the final anthology.

The desire of the anthology's producers is to bring together a variety of works from across the continent to explore and present an important voice in North American art. Efforts are being made toward organizing reinhabitory institutions, such as local food production and watershed restoration. In order for this work to begin on a large scale, there has to be, at some point, a reperception of the values offered by industrial society. Perhaps the most interesting place to look for these new perceptions is in expressions of art in what might be called reinhabitory culture.

Submissions should be sent to:
Bioregional Poetry Project
199 Nottingham Road
Ramsey, New Jersey 07446



Sewage-using fishpond in Calcutta

CIRCLES OF
REGIONAL COMMENTARY
CORRESPONDENCE

WINDY BAY JOURNAL

by Doug Aberley



This is a journey of transitions — a trip accepted on short notice to Windy Bay on the east flank of Lyell Island, Queen Charlotte archipelago.

Several weeks ago a friend, Tony Pearce, mentioned an anticipated trip to the Queen Charlottes. The Haida were going to dedicate a new longhouse built at Windy Bay. This stream-carved indentation in Lyell Island is the centre of a multifaceted dispute among Haidas, Federal and Provincial governments and powerful logging interests. Windy Bay is the last unlogged watershed on Lyell Island, a pristine reminder of a preindustrial island ecosystem. The Haida have blockaded Lyell Island loggers in an attempt to protect Windy Bay from the destruction that progress always seems to bring. To complicate the issue even further, the entire southern tip of the Charlottes, including Windy Bay, has been furiously lobbied as a candidate for national park status. Powerful environmental and conservation group interests have been successful in convincing Ottawa and Victoria to designate South Moresby National Park. Negotiations are in progress — at their success Windy Bay and a hundred other islands will pass into the inviolate control of Parks Canada.

Beyond this change in ownership is the Haida aboriginal claim. Since antiquity, these original island inhabitants have been as one with the Queen Charlottes. Though victims of a devastating series of Euro-Canadian-induced slaughters, these handsome people have managed to survive and recently have escalated their tenacity into a well-organized struggle to regain control of their archipelago. So Tony's invitation to travel with him to Windy Bay was more than a holiday venture. It was a call into the centre of a hurricane blown up by the wild winds of politics, reawakened culture and environment.

Because Northwest B.C. is a "frontier" region, there is always a juggling of ways to move that get a person from A to B. This is particularly so getting from Hazelton, 200 miles inland, to the Charlottes, lying 80 miles off the northwest mainland. Car and Greyhound bus bring me to Prince Rupert on the coast,

where, after an hour of unpacking, rearranging, ticket-buying, baggage-stowing and just plain waiting, Tony, his son Erin and I are finally off at 11:00 A.M. on the Queen of Prince Rupert. Our ferry floats to the Charlottes several times a week. For \$12 one way, we have the run of a ship well-outfitted with food, magazines, comfortable lounges — and boredom relieved by a series of passages between green sculpted islands.

At 5:00 P.M. we are in view of the Queen Charlotte islands. Our destination is midway on the archipelago string, a town grandly named Queen Charlotte City.

Our hosts are Val and Wendy — sisters of Cree and Romanian ancestry who have long been Charlotte residents. These two women are owners of a tasteful, artistic empire that includes jewelry making, native-craft selling, antiquarian book marketing — all conducted with an apparently haphazard flair that belies their supreme competence. Their store, Rainbows, is a rare emporium concocted by people who value the same totems and images I do.

After an early-morning phone call, Tony lays out the next leg of our journey. We will fly in a Cessna 180 to Lyell Island. Depending on the weather, we will be dropped off at Windy Bay, Powrivo Camp or Sedgewick Bay. We walk to the government float to be introduced to the pilot, to stow our gear and to settle in. The engine warms, we taxi and are off.

As we climb, the awesome beauty that is an ocean/land edge becomes visible. Myriad shades of blue water spray onto the more somber intransigence of the land. Rock islets play hide-and-seek in yo-yo surf. Broad, sandy bays shelve into the sea. Flotillas of water-skimming birds fly in precision formations. It is a jolt to compare this new imagery with my land-evolved perceptions of shape, distance and cohesion.

The weather is not good. We are routed to protected Sedgewick Bay on the southwest corner of Lyell Island. Our descent is as unnerving as all such bush-plane landings are. We weave through the main valley that transects Lyell Island, side-slip off some elevation as one wing comes very close to treetop and finally drop at a sharp angle to relatively quiet water. We skip



Doug Aberley

across storm swells for a time, then quickly become a slow, noisy and inefficient pontooned boat.

Sedgewick Camp is the site of the recent Haida resistance against the continued rape of Lyell Island. A small cluster of buildings was built here to house warriors and elders, 85 of whom were arrested nearby in 1985 for blockading a road leading to yet another new logging area.

After we wait several hours, our Windy Bay transportation roars up Sedgewick Bay. The *Western Sunset* is a monster B.C. Packers seiner operated by Mike McNeil, husband of a Haida woman and obviously a master skipper. With the casualness of long practice, he soon has 34 of us loaded into every free nook and cranny of the 65-foot aluminium boat.

The sea is calm. The rain is light and even. We weave our way past low-tide shore — a dark band of grey rock bordered high by 1,000 feet of forest and low by deep, mammaled water. Eagles lurk in overhanging branches. Seals pop up to see the maker of the noise echoing in their last dive. The cloud background is a hundred shades of grey, punctuated with the odd high, blue window.

It is fitting that just before we reach Windy Bay, we sail past a huge and gaping logging scar — an ancient forest cut from

ridgetop to waterline — a wound bleeding muddy water into the ocean, with matchstick loggers scurrying to be successful in a business whose scale of slaughter is absolutely evil.

Around Gogit Point we see Windy Bay for the first time. It is both more and less than I have imagined. The bay is only a V notch in the Lyell Island coast, flanked by rocky outcrops. The bay's river drains several hundred square miles, its water a reddish wash of diluted tannin. We arrive at mid-low tide; it is apparent that at lowest water the river will cut through high-stranded rockfields. Only at highest tide is this a true bay.

Our arrival is heralded by omens: two eagles flying escort, and a suddenly drier sky becoming dominantly blue. For me it is a journeying past simple transition. I am entering a place where the natural power of both the land and the re-emerging Haida are in wonderful meeting. This fact strikes home as a drumbeat Haida chorus sings us ashore. You can almost feel the forest and sea inspired by a tradition not heard here in a century. In a rare natural outburst of cooperation, we form a human chain to get our substantial amount of gear from beach to camp.

I arrive at the forest edge and am struck by the power of the place that greets me. Past a fringe of wind-twisted hemlock

is a clearing perhaps 50 metres deep and 100 metres in length. Thirty tents are scattered in the surrounding open, mossy wood. The centerpiece of the clearing is a newly constructed longhouse. It is a clean cedar square of 25 by 25 feet — a facade repainted with three Haida watchmen. We are here to witness the dedication of this house: an event that will include feasting, gift-giving, rituals and elders' speeches.

This place realizes every dream I've ever had of a bio-regional outpost. Campfires roaring. A cooking crew efficiently splitting salmon. Pails of local foods in various stages of preparation. Wood smoke purposefully streaming from the longhouse chimney. A bustle of conversation and activity.

I set up my tent camp and do some serious exploration. This place is magic: the trees are huge, twisted giants, hung with bizarre decorations of short and long mosses. The forest floor is an undulating green carpet. Sunlight streams through a verdant world, illuminating a hundred shades of emerald. It is an environment perfectly balanced to regenerate itself — there is no wasted energy.

The house-naming ceremony has attracted an ever-growing number of visitors. There are 75 to 100 Haida. A score of non-Indians have come by kyak, Zodiac and floatplane, perhaps

CIRCLES OF CORRESPONDENCE



Doug Aberley

50 more arrive via helicopter or on rich men's sailboats. There are even two scarlet-clad Mounties to add a special formality to the occasion. A colorful mix of layered wool and store-new Gortex lends a festive air to the newly created encampment.

The ritual starts with women elders invoking Haida and Christian spirits. The imposing power of matrilineal guidance falls on the gathering. There is a special humour in these women. They are serious, stern teachers, yet their witty and ribald humour can burst like a southeast squall.

The feast begins. The women elders place a full plate of food on the roaring campfire and say a final prayer as Michael Nicoll pours oolichan grease on the flames to make a roaring focus to our prayerful concentration.

What a meal it is! To prepare a major feast for 200 in a wilderness location is a very difficult task — no power, no refrigeration, every item served either found locally or brought 100 miles by plane or boat. There is food for all: four kinds of salmon, smoked oolichans, gow (herring eggs on kelp), abalone,

urchins, bannock, salads, coffee and a dozen desserts.

Four traditional village chiefs speak. To Chief Tanu, in whose territory Windy Bay is located, goes the honor of the first oration. Seeing him in masking regalia, it is easy to imagine this little old man with flashing eyes as the incarnation of a hundred past Chief Tanus. After a short welcome in English, he speaks in Haida. I feel at this moment like a time-traveling voyeur. A thousand years ago there were ceremonies such as this: blanket-wrapped chiefs and tribespeople listening to a chief's homily. Haida is a lilting poetry of a language, rising and gently falling like calm ocean waves against a cedar canoe.

Chief Tanu names the house. We all dance around it, circling clean cedar, entering the building in our whole numbers. Drum song. Body sway. Somehow the painted facade watchers seem to be brought alive by our combined energy. The feeling of time-warp brings tears to my eyes. When will a gathering in such a place ever happen again?

The chiefs' oratory, thanking

many guests, is finished, and the ceremony shifts radically. Buddy Richardson, President of the Council of the Haida Nation, rises to speak of things other than the purely cultural. It is time to mention current struggles to maintain the Haida Nation, time to relate victories and defeats.

It is a speech focused on a single dominant metaphor. The Haida Nation had crumbled into the land. The people had died in great numbers; bones and old villages had returned to the soil. The songs and myths and legends and knowledge won through a hundred generations of adaption were nearly lost into the earth that once nurtured them. But today, the raising of a house from the same ancestral soil had signalled a reversal.

The battles of regeneration would be many. The ploys of outsiders and explorers would continue. But a house had risen. Amidst a seemingly irreversible decline, a resurrection had been realized on the shore of Windy Bay. Again I am brought to the tears that come unbidden from the unconscious center that re-

acts to the most special moments in life.

After the speeches are over, a series of dances and songs are given. Orchestrated by Guugow, these glimpses into traditional Haida culture and legend add another layer to the time-warp of the evening's events. In dance we see gogits, eagles, ravens. Honour and witness dances are performed by hop-twisting lines of beautiful, blanketed women. It is as if a genetic memory had been tapped by these new Haida, an awakening that has added flesh and bone and movement to a culture almost surrendered to the conjecture of anthropologists.

There is even a time for us non-Indians to dance. It is a sight beyond humour to see scarlet-clad Mounties doing a hopeful imitation of the difficult Haida dancing procession. For the brief minutes that these enforcers of foreign laws are amongst the dancers, it is possible to forget the tyranny they are often paid to protect.

After the formal ceremonies are over, deep dark overcomes twilight as we cluster around two large campfires. We older folk talk politics, while teenagers have a more boisterous time. I eventually end up at the louder gathering, fascinated by Guugow's drumming, songs and tales of ghosts and gogits.

Long after midnight, it is time for sleep. I dark-walk my way to my tent and settle in for much-needed rest. As I am just off to dreams, I am awakened by a giggling parade of women passing from sauna to creek pool. As I leave this memorable day behind, I am serenaded by Haida laughter, not heard here for a century.

What is there to say in closing this record? Much, I think.

We planned a journey, and were able to follow through with what all too often are only imaginary adventures. We made a score of transitions between our inland homes and the South Moresby Islands we finally reached. We were able to catch a rare glimpse of Haida culture as it struggles to remember its heritage. We touched many people who think as we do, gaining and giving strength for the struggles before us.

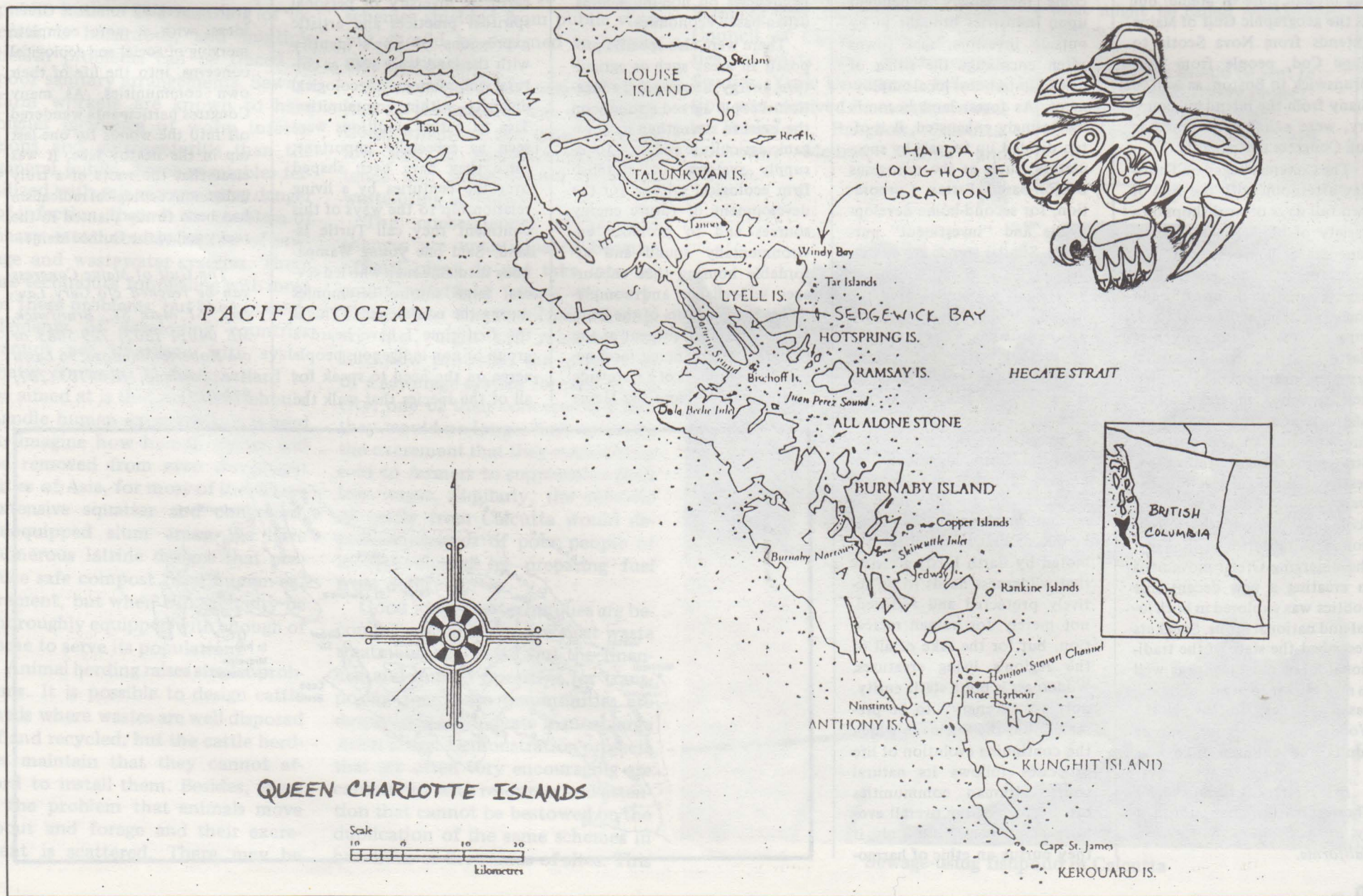
Most of all, in friendship and mild daring, we have learned a little more about the region that is our territory. In this exploration, the boundaries of Northwest British Columbia have become more real. The potential of a saner political, cultural, social and economic regime of our own making and control has been shown to be within our reach, and that of others of kindred ability. The forest slaughter we viewed is only a challenge for the Haida, ourselves and a dozen other Native nations to bring a more manageable pace of development to our raincoast region.

I think there is a future for this Northwest, although perhaps it will be our children who will realize the dreams that were expressed at Windy Bay. This region is our home, and it will someday be ours — once again.

ANNOUNCEMENT



The Seventh Assembly of the Fourth World will be held July 31-August 4, 1988 at Merideth College, Raleigh, N.C. This assembly is entitled *The New Economics Symposium, Community Economics As If The Earth Mattered*. Write to Seventh Assembly, 3030 Sleepy Hollow Road, Falls Church, VA 22042, USA; or to The Fourth World Review, 24 Albercorn Place, London, NWS, England.





GULF OF MAINE BIOREGIONAL CONGRESS

by Brian Tokar

New England, with its long-standing traditions of localism and self-reliance, would seem to be a natural center for bioregional activity. Yet, until this past summer, only a few small gatherings and an occasional newsletter (the "Robin") had emerged to represent this culturally diverse and politically self-conscious region. Many of the region's problems — a long-declining regional agriculture, runaway commercial development, huge disparities in wealth and economic power and a destructive dependence of rural areas on outside tourist income — demand a bioregional analysis and bioregional solutions. Thousands of people have gone "back to the land" since the early seventies, but the many "new ruralist" success stories we read about are more often than not the product of individuals' transplanted urban fortunes.

During the last week of August 1987, over 200 people gathered at a large summer camp near the town of Freedom, Maine, for the first major bioregional gathering in New England, the Gulf of Maine Bioregional Congress. In four days of workshops, caucuses and a large consensual Congress, they drafted a far-reaching program for the ecological and cultural renewal of the northern New England coast. Three-quarters of the participants were from the present state of Maine, but as the geographic Gulf of Maine extends from Nova Scotia to Cape Cod, people from New Brunswick to Boston, as well as many from the inland hill country, were equally welcomed as full Congress participants.

The Congress began on Thursday afternoon with the first of two full days of workshops on a variety of bioregionally important issues. Topics ranged from local forestry and coastal land use to radiation monitoring and the strengthening of local food-supply systems. Jamie Sayen of Earth First! presented a visionary plan for restoring big wilderness not just in the Gulf of Maine region, but along the entire Appalachian Trail corridor. Strategies for forestalling excessive commercial development were discussed along with new ecological approaches to economic revitalization. The role of the emerging Green movement in creating a new decentralist politics was explored in both local and national terms. Speakers described the state of the traditional labor movement, as well as new efforts to organize home-based workers in the North Woods. Most popular, among adults and children alike, was

Brian Tokar is the author of *The Green Alternative* published by R. & E. Miles, San Pedro, California.

the local plant walk offered by a local herbalist and a physician. They explained how even some of the most common local field plants have important medicinal properties, and how herbal remedies often relieve ailments that are far more intractable when treated by conventional medicine. One highly amusing slide presentation featured lawn ornaments as an expression of local culture as well as of people's often bizarre tastes in decorating their own living spaces. The evenings featured larger group discussions of bioregionalism and of the ideas of ecofeminism, as well as poetry readings and musical performances with a local flavor.

Many of the Congress discussions concerned local land-use issues. The state of Maine has far more land that is not inhabited by humans than the rest of New England combined. However, the reckless timber-management practices of the large paper companies that dominate the North Country are leaving the forests ever less capable of renewing themselves. In recent years, the woods have been subjected to massive sprayings of herbicides to kill off hardwood seedlings, which are treated as weeds by paper manufacturers only interested in "harvesting pulp." Recently, several paper mills have been found to be contaminating rivers with dioxin. Local economies become increasingly dependent upon industries brought in by outside investors, and towns often encourage the siting of new mills to boost local employment. As forest land becomes increasingly exhausted, it is often divided up for sale by speculators, such as the notorious Boston-based Patten Corporation, for second-home developments and "investment" purposes. Similar trends are emerging along the coast, which has long been a popular area for tourists, but which is currently undergoing a development boom that seriously threatens both the local ecology and the livelihood of long-term residents.

In response, the Congress developed refreshingly uncompromising statements on wilderness restoration and on the need to reorient local land-use policies. People embraced the idea promoted by Earth First! activists that wilderness needs to be actively protected and restored, not merely for human recreation, but for the sake of all of the region's living creatures. Wilderness is not a static entity, not just "scenery" to be preserved, but the setting in which the continuing evolution of life processes follows its natural course. Human communities can be part of the overall evolutionary process, but only if they pursue an ethic of harmo-

ny, live in tune with the patterns of the land and allow sufficiently large areas free of roads and buildings so that other species can thrive. This approach is distinct both from the conventional modern view of wilderness as "vacant land" to be "managed" for human use and from the misanthropic view of some proponents of "deep ecology" who assert that the human species is intrinsically destructive and abusive toward the natural world.

Most of the Congress discussions revolved around the question of just how to recast local communities in ecological terms. The first step is to resist the current wave of land speculation. Many Congress participants were veterans of local struggles over development and had learned how to merge strategies involving local organizing and education, struggles over zoning and tax assessments, the formation of Land Trusts to remove land from speculative markets and efforts to introduce land use planning at the town level. Discussions at the Congress could be the beginning of an effort to join together various heretofore localized campaigns into a more unified, more politically visible effort. On the economic level, people advocated strengthening and integrating local subsistence-based economies as a route toward reversing people's dependencies on non-indigenous, urban-based economies.

There were also specific proposals in areas such as agriculture, energy, housing and education. People agreed strongly on the need to strengthen local organic agriculture and local food-supply systems, to establish firm ecological criteria for the development of future energy sources and to promote environmentally sound and affordable housing that encourages self-reliance and complements the contours of the land. Many who were present at the Congress are planning local activities in support of a statewide referendum to close the Maine

Yankee nuclear power plant, an effort that could have a significant impact on other nuclear plants along the Gulf, from Point Lepreau in New Brunswick, to Seabrook, to the Pilgrim plant near Plymouth, Massachusetts. A committee was formed to begin designing a model housing development. The education discussion cited successful experiments to integrate a bioregional perspective into the public schools, such as Central Vermont activist Joseph Kiefer's programs in gardening and edible landscaping, which feature discussions of local and worldwide hunger and aim to foster a fuller sensitivity toward the land. Several resolutions on issues of peace and economic justice urged people to make personal commitments to a variety of ongoing projects to aid the hungry and homeless in the region.

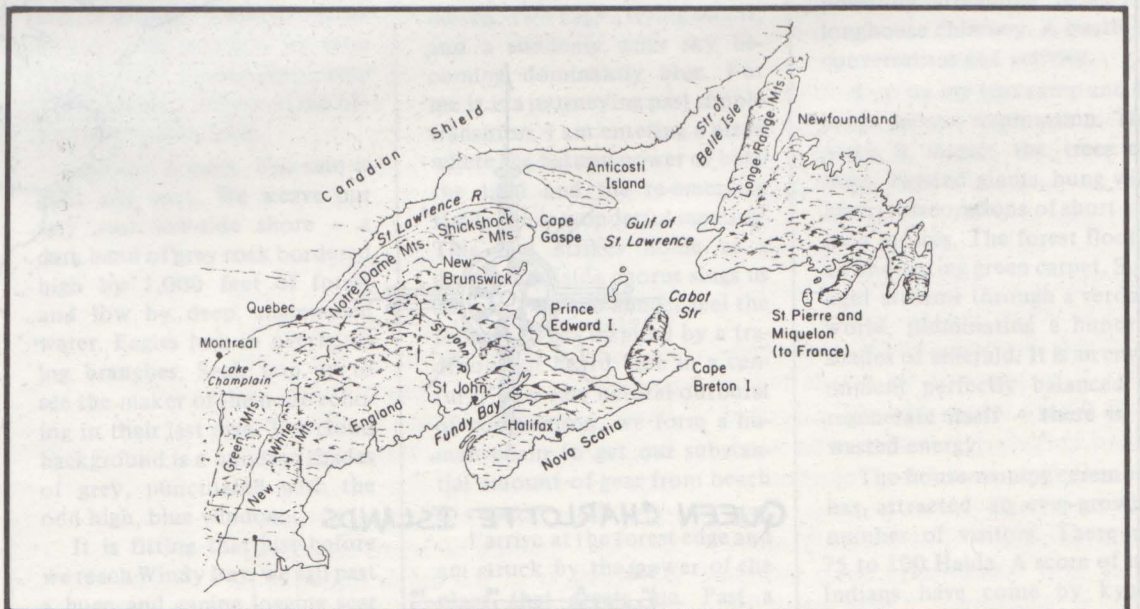
The cultural and spiritual components of bioregionalism were expressed in resolutions on the nature of spirituality and on the urgency of forming active alliances with the indigenous Indian nations of the region. In contrast to the contentious debates over spirituality at the huge national Green gathering that took place in Amherst, Massachusetts, earlier in the summer, the Gulf of Maine Congress embraced the validity of a wide variety of spiritual expressions of people's ties to the earth. A diversity of personal spiritual practices and artistic expressions of one's identity with the land were seen as cultural embodiments of ecological diversity within communities. Ties to native traditions were seen as especially important, since they have been shaped over the centuries by a living relationship to the ways of this continent they call Turtle Island. Said one young Wampanoag medicine man who led several large sunrise ceremonies during the conference, "This is the first time I have heard a group of non-indigenous people agree on the need to speak for all of the species that walk the

Earth."

The Green politics resolution approved by the Congress posed a broad vision of face-to-face democracy and local economic activity for local needs, both aimed toward disengaging from our present, highly destructive way of life. Highly bonded intentional communities and worker-owned enterprises specializing in ecological restoration would be brought together, towns and cities would become more fully self-governing, and all such experiments would be able to confederate together in bioregional Green alliances to present a truly living alternative and to spread their example to other places. By ending on such a far-reaching and visionary note, the Congress affirmed the importance of bioregional awareness in the emerging Green movement and the increasing depth of radical, ecological thinking in New England.

Over the four days of the Gulf of Maine Congress, many of the ideals of bioregionalism and social ecology came just a few steps closer to their realization — notions such as the embeddedness of people in the natural world, the evolution of regional identities without regard to conventional political boundaries, and the need for a politics and culture that emerge from the land itself. The Congress provided an important model for people from other regions seeking to infuse Green ideas, with a more complete merging of social and ecological concerns, into the life of their own communities. As many Congress participants wandered off into the woods for one last dip in the nearby lake, it was clear that the roots of a truly indigenous ecological radicalism had been firmly planted in the rocky soil of the Gulf of Maine.

The Gulf of Maine Congress can be reached c/o Gary Lawless, 61 Main St., Brunswick, ME 04011 (207) 729-5083 or c/o Roberto Mendoza, 96 Lawn Ave., Portland, ME 04103 (207) 879-0171.



TARASCAN MUSIC IN MICHHOACÁN

by Peter Garland



In 1977, having received a commission for my theater work *The Conquest of Mexico* and wanting to devote myself full-time to composing and writing, I traveled to Mexico with my friend Susan Otori. During previous visits I had become aware of the wealth of indigenous musical traditions in that country and had been turned on to Michoacán by the musical work of Henrietta Yurchenco. (Her album, "Music of the Tarascan Indians of Mexico" is on the Folkways label.) So a secondary purpose was to further experience and study traditional Mexican music.

The music of Michoacán stood out among all the other states for its diversity of instrumentation and styles, and for its special blend of Indian and Spanish elements. It is also characterized by a lyricism for which I felt many affinities in my own work. I had often heard about the natural beauty of the state: of pine-covered mountains and lakes bordered by Indian villages whose people still more or less kept to their traditional ways.

Michoacán is a state in western central Mexico with a substantial coastline along the Pacific Ocean; to the north it is bordered by the states of Jalisco and Guanajuato, to the east by the state of Mexico, and to the south, Guerrero. The Tarascan (or Purepecha) Indians inhabit the north-central part of the state, roughly two hundred miles west of Mexico City, an area of high mountains and lakes (an average elevation of 7,000 feet) that is distinct from the rest of Michoacán both geographically and culturally. Immediately to the south of the Tarascan highlands, the elevation drops dramatically down to the hot desert country of the tierra caliente (hot lands), a mestizo region with its own autonomous cultural and musical traditions. And to the north begins rancharo country, stretching up to Guadalajara, a

mestizo cultural area similar to others in central and northern Mexico. Approaching Tarascan country from the north and south especially, one is aware of an immense mountain barrier that closes in and defines the Tarascan cultural region.

In Michoacán, as in all of Mexico, the most important context for music is provided by fiestas. A fiesta can range from a private party at someone's home to a large-scale event lasting days in which entire villages or regions participate. Omnipresent at these are the musical ensembles: brass bands or string groups to accompany feasting, drinking, dancing and observance of civil or religious rituals. The larger the village or fiesta, the more musicians are hired. At the fiesta of San Pedro on the island of Jaracuaro, for instance, there were three brass bands and a *chirimia* group. During other festivals, such as those in Paracho and Zacán, music contests are sponsored, where any number and type of ensemble compete for prizes. In Cocucho, another fiesta in the Sierra, dancers and string groups from many neighboring villages assemble and dance for two days.

Another feature of many of these fiestas is the *serenata*, at which various music groups will play for the public, usually in the public square or nearby, each band playing alternate pieces. These *serenatas* are given as concerts, some of the better Tarascan bands even venturing into the realm of the classics — attempting pieces by Beethoven, Schubert or Tchaikovsky — much like band concerts of old in kiosks in public parks in small towns.

Fiestas combine music, dance, theater and spectacle into a unified art where all become participants — spectators as well as dancers and musicians. Art and daily life blur, providing the opportunity to step out of daily routines and experience life in a magical-poetic perspective —

for which the culture, traditions and landscape of Michoacán provide the Tarascan people with ample inspiration.

Several Tarascan composers are nearly as famous (though they earn far less money) as many of the well-known visual and plastic artisans in the state. With the exception of some *Viejitos* dance groups from the Lake region that perform in Patzcuaro hotels, almost all the music is consumed and paid for by the indigenous community. People are very aware of individual creativity and new material is constantly being composed for the bands, *orquestas* and string groups. Hence, in all this activity, a few composers and performers stand out and are known outside of their own community.

Music and dance are closely related among the Tarascans, and there is extensive use of masks and dance-theater performance. Virtuosity in dance is as recognized as it is in music. Composers, performers, dancers — as with all other arts and crafts, the Tarascan region abounds with them. One is reminded of what one reads about Bali — these same people are farmers, craftsmen, fishermen, laborers. The music, like agricultural production and trade and sale of goods in regional markets, is an aspect of cultural and economic self-sufficiency. The music is created within the community (with previously little pressure from extraneous commercial music) to satisfy the cultural needs of the community. But like all the arts, in the context of a rich tradition and an abundance of activity and talent, music quickly transcends a merely practical function. Among the Tarascans it is cultivated still as an art, much as flowers and song, poetry and music were cultivated among the ancient pre-Columbian kingdoms. Music is as necessary to the fiesta — to life itself — as food and drink.

The two principal musical genres among the Tarascans are the *son* and *abajeno*. The *son* is generally slower and more melancholic than the more dancey *abajeno*, and is also sometimes referred to as the "*son regional*," affirming its Tarascan identity. It is generally in 3/8 meter with the beat broken up in the melody into a syncopation that gives the music a special lilt and distinguishes it from waltz rhythms. It is primarily ensemble music, especially of the older ensembles, the *orquestas*. The *abajeno*, also a favorite of the *orquestas* and bands, is a faster, more rhythmically accentuated music, highlighting a 2:3, 6/8-3/4-type alternation of beats in a 3-beat meter. *Abajenos* are especially popular in fiestas, played by bands or *orquestas*. As the bottles and food are passed around, people warm up and begin to dance. These two forms are musically indigenous, and give shape and character to

Tarascan musical expression, one of the most enchanting blends to be found in the broad spectrum of Mexican music.

Michoacán music is played by a wide range of ensemble types. The ensembles of *pifano* (a bamboo flute) and drum, or *chirimia* (a double-reed oboe-like instrument) and drum are probably the most ancient style of music still prevalent in the Tarascan community. Often the two instruments are played by the same musician during the course of a fiesta. At the lake village where we lived, *chirimia* players performed for a fiesta whose purpose was to collect alms for the decoration of the church prior to the big fiesta to come.

Like the *chirimia* groups, the brass band has become something of a pan-Indian musical ensemble. The reasons for this are varied and complex, and reflect the influence of the French invasion of Mexico and of 19th-century military music. The state most famous for the Indian brass band music is undoubtedly Oaxaca, but it is also important in many other regions. In Michoacán, it is today the pre-eminent ensemble in village fiestas; when it is at its best, it represents the most advanced ensemble musicianship in Tarascan music.

The string groups range from just strings to any combination of strings and added winds. They are known as *conjuntos* (groups) or *orquestas*, but are distinct from the older-style *orquestas antiguas* or mixed wind and strings, very much like a small chamber orchestra, which are also found among the Tarascans and play in a more "classical" style.

Our contact and time spent with the Orquesta of Quinceo was perhaps the most enriching musical experience of our stay in Michoacán. It is one of the last, and the best, of the *orquestas antiguas*. Their repertoire consists almost exclusively of elegant *sones regionales* and Tarascan *abajenos*, and their sound was closer to the "old" style. The newer *orquestas* lack the old style's variety of string instruments and winds, and tend to feature a "rhythm section" of strummed guitars and *vihuelas*. The Orquesta of Quinceo, whose full official name was "Orquesta Antigua de Musica Regional 'Tata Lazaro Cardenas' de Quinceo," consisted of eight musicians: B-flat clarinet, alto saxophone, trombone, three violins, cello and double bass (occasionally a trumpet would join, and the third violinist would not be present). The group was led by Don Francisco Salmeron Equihua, alto sax player and principal composer and arranger, and by Tata Juan Crisostomo, violin player, composer and original founder of the *orquesta*. These were two of the most renowned and cre-

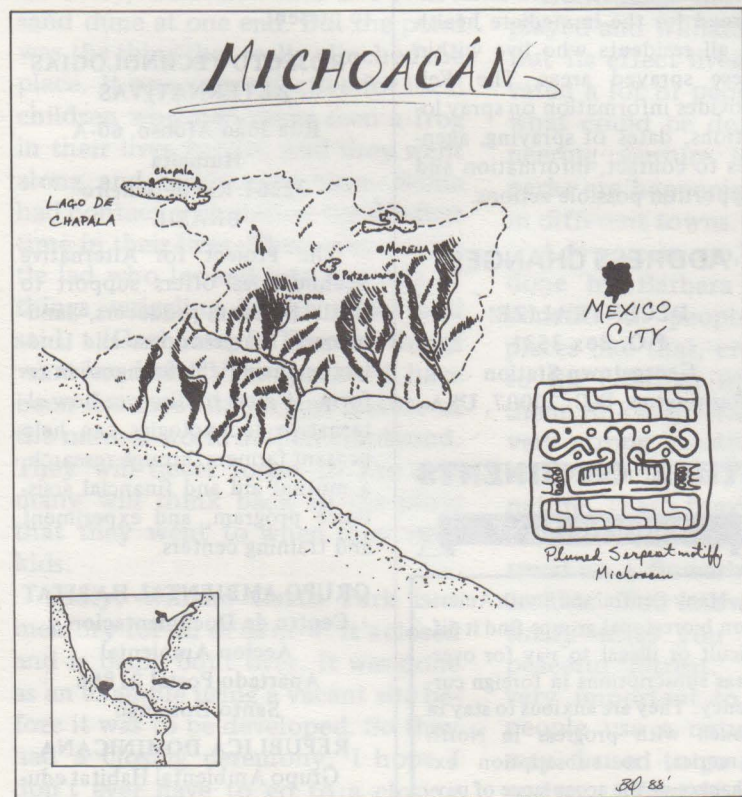
ative musicians in the entire Tarascan community — the term *Tata*, Tarascan for "grandfather," connoting special respect and affection. Two such strong creative temperaments don't work together for forty-plus years without some friction — Juan complaining sometimes that Don Francisco didn't want to play his pieces and Francisco complaining that Juan Crisostomo complained all the time . . . but the music this *orquesta* made was sheer magic.

We had seen members of the Orquesta of Quinceo in Tzintzuntzan at another event. Dressed in blue suits, playing Beethoven — we knew them playing in the dirt-floor patios in compounds of one-room plank houses, *trojes*, as they are called, where cheap cane alcohol and rich beef chile stew (*churipo*, in Tarascan) with steaming hot tortillas were passed around. Men and women wore traditional ponchos and long, pleated skirts. All of the elements — the food, the dress, the construction of the houses, the beautiful Sierra scenery, the music — formed a whole that is Tarascan culture — that is Michoacán.

We first met these musicians at the 1978 music contests in Paracho. We had lived in the Lake region for six months, and had no idea what these *orquestas* were. Imagine our surprise when we encountered a kind of Tarascan "classical" music — funky and rough-edged to be sure, but full of melody and gentle dance rhythms, and an instrumental balance of strings and winds brought over from 19th-century western Europe. Our enchantment was immediate and apparent to all the audience, mostly Tarascans, crowded by the stage set up on the plaza of Paracho. Subsequent to the *concurso* of *orquestas* (which Quinceo won), they and we were invited to the house of the Bautista family (whom Yurchenko had originally recorded) to eat lunch. So, within a brief hour of our arrival in Paracho, we were in the home of the Bautistas, eating that delicious red chili beef with rice and tortillas, and talking music with the Bautistas and these rural-looking, poncho-clad musicians from Quinceo. We asked them when they'd be playing next: a wedding at the village of Arantepacua, the next one in after Quinceo on a dirt road that leads into the Sierra from Capacuaro, a Tarascan wood-furniture-making town in the mountains halfway between Uruapan and Paracho. "About two weeks from now," they said. "We'll be there," we replied.

That Saturday, making the 60-plus-mile trip to Uruapan, then up the Paracho highway to Capacuaro, cutting off from there on the dirt road that goes to Quinceo, Arantepacua, Comachuen and who knows where, we wondered how we were going to be received in a village

(Continued on page 13)



Bill Ouesada

WEAVING ALLIANCES



The following are additions and updates for the Bioregional Directory that appeared in Raise the Stakes #12. You may want to keep this page with your copy of RTS #12 Emerging States: A Bioregional Directory. In the future, Weaving Alliances will have further information about new and continuing groups. Let us know about your latest activities.
- J. G.

PACIFIC COAST

GROUPS

EAST BAY GREEN ALLIANCE
P.O. Box 3727
Oakland, CA 94609, USA
(415) 849-3616 Jess Shoup
(415) 537-8203 Greg Jan
(415) 826-7873
Juan-Tomas Rehbock

A "Green Politics" group based on the eastern side of San Francisco Bay. Sponsors lectures, discussions, rallies, interest groups, dances, a newsletter and (together with the San Francisco Greens) a twice-monthly "Green/Bioregional Lunch." A member of the Northern California Greens and the Committees of Correspondence.

MAPWORKS
201 Maple St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060, USA
Martin S. Clynné

A designer and publisher of custom cartography who is intrigued by the bioregional movement and interested in exploring ways to portray areas (and the movement as a whole) in map formats.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA GREENS
P.O. Box 3727
Oakland, CA 94609, USA
(707) 937-2029 C. S. Jones
(415) 540-0671 Florence Wallack
(415) 537-8203 Greg Jan

A network of about ten "Green Politics" groups ranging from Carmel to Mendocino. Member groups sponsor demonstrations, lobbying, discussions, radio programs and publications. Meet regularly and have sent representatives to inter-regional meetings of Committees of Correspondence.

THRESHOLD
International Center for Environmental Renewal
201 Spear Street #1600
San Francisco, CA 94105, USA
(415) 777-5299
John Diamante

Threshold, a national organization dedicated to environmental renewal, is currently assisting with interim coordination of bioregional mapping plans and co-sponsoring NABC-III.

Threshold's San Francisco office is involved in participatory public education for moving North Bay counties toward clean transit, preservation of Richardson Bay and other area projects.

NEW CONTACT PERSONS

JOHN & ELEANOR LEWELLAN
Box 372
Navarro, CA 95463, USA

Sea vegetable harvesting (Mendocino Sea Vegetable Company), ocean and forestry protection.

JUAN-TOMAS REHBOCK
334 Connecticut Street
San Francisco, CA 94107, USA
Outreach for ecology groups in Latin America.

ADDRESS CHANGES

RHYS ROTH
South Sound Bioregional Group
1814 Garfield Avenue
Olympia, WA 98502, USA

The other address for this group remains the same.

**ELLEN SAWISLAK
DAVID ALBERT**
New Society Educational Foundation
New Society Publishers
P. O. Box 582
Santa Cruz, CA 95061, USA
(408) 458-1191

This is in addition to their already listed Philadelphia, PA, address.

PACIFIC MOUNTAINS

NEW CONTACT PERSONS

NANCY KRAPE
Chinook Community Congress
4705 S. E. Harrison
Portland, OR 97215, USA
(503) 233-2754

Contact for the Lower Columbia Watershed.

BILL SEAVEY
Relocation Research
Box 1122
Sierra Madre, CA 91024, USA
(818) 355-5379

ADDRESS CHANGES

SISKIYOU REGIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT
P.O. Box 741
Ashland, OR 97520, USA

BASIN AND RANGE

GROUPS

HOPI EPICENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH
22 S. San Francisco St., #211
Flagstaff, AZ 86001, USA
(602) 774-2644

An advocate for traditional Hopi people that works to stop mineral exploitation of tribal lands. Write for information about biannual newspaper.

NEW CONTACT PERSONS

JANE and RON GRUNT
29 Palms Inn
Palms, CA 92277, USA

JENNIFER RENZI
4227 N. Wilson Avenue
Fresno, CA 93704, USA
(209) 222-3483

ROCKY MOUNTAINS

GROUPS

DEEP BIOREGIONAL ACTION-EXAMINER AND GREEN HIPPIE INTELLIGENCER
P.O. Box 748
El Prado, NM 87529, USA
(505) 776-8969

Both a publication and an action-group (a sponsor of All-Sentient-Beings bust at the World Bank). Seeks to increase bioregional consciousness among hip-

pies and hip consciousness among bioregional moderates. Write to obtain issues.

MEXICAN CORDILLERA

GROUPS

IMETA
Farallones 60-B
Col. Acueducto de Guadalupe
07270 Mexico D.F.
MEXICO

The Mexican Institute of Appropriate Technology (IMETA) is dedicated to research, development and promotion of appropriate technologies for food, energy, environment and social housing; and to consulting and engineering services for small and medium-sized industries.

DESARROLLO Y MEDIO AMBIENTE (Development and Environment) is a largely technical journal dealing with appropriate technology issues, written with the non-specialist reader in mind. Write for subscription information.

GREAT PLAINS

GROUPS

HEARTLAND CENTER FOR SPIRITUALITY
3600 Broadway
Great Bend, KS 67530, USA
(316) 792-1232

An intentional farming community of Dominican Sisters that maintains a Bioregional Study Committee for the Arkansas River watershed in Kansas.

KAW VALLEY PERMACULTURE
1311 Prairie Avenue
Lawrence, KS 66044, USA
(913) 841-8321
Michael Almon or
Kelly Kindscher

Kaw Valley Permaculture is a loosely structured, non-hierarchical network of people promoting sustainable permaculture food systems in small and moderate-scale settings. Membership benefits: seed exchange, scion exchange, grafting skills exchange, literature exchange, cooperative marketing of organic produce and cooperative purchasing of tools and soil amendments. Annual membership dues are \$5.00 per household.

PUBLICATIONS

CITY MAGAZINE
71 Cordova Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3N 0Z9, CANADA

CITY MAGAZINE is Canada's only national urban magazine. Since 1974 it has been exploring urban development, social criticism, trends in architecture and urban literature. It searches for the kind of city we want to live in, presenting comments, articles, poetry, short stories and art. \$3 per issue or \$12/year (four issues) for individuals, \$20/year for institutions. (Prices are in Canadian dollars.)

GREAT LAKES AND MISSISSIPPI BASIN

ADDRESS CHANGES

RON WEMIGWASE
P.O. Box 112
Cross Village, MI 49723, USA

ATLANTIC MOUNTAINS

GROUPS

NEW LAND TRUST
Lynn and Paul Ferrari
Box 258 Plumadore Road
Saranac, NY 12981, USA
or
Damian Gormley
16 Church Street
Swanton, VT 05488, USA

Began in 1978 to protect a specific tract of earth below Lyon Mountain in the northeast Adirondacks. Currently initiating formation of a Lake Champlain bioregional association for southwestern Quebec, northeastern New York State and western Vermont.

EARTH MISSION newsletter. Write for subscription details.

PUBLICATIONS

ROBIN NEWSLETTER
40A Brooks Street
Worcester, MA 01606, USA

ADDRESS CHANGES

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL ECOLOGY
P.O. Box 89
Plainfield, VT 05667, USA

LINDA MARKS
(contact person in Atlantic Mts. for Institute for Gaean Economics)

In addition to her home address, which was listed, her business address is:

785 Centre Street
Newton, MA 02158, USA
(617) 965-7846

TAD MONTGOMERY
Gap Mountain Permaculture
11 Old County Road
Jaffrey, NH 03452, USA

ATLANTIC COAST

GROUPS

THE NORTH SHORE ENVIRONMENTAL WEB
P.O. Box 101
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia
B2H 5E1, CANADA

A number of citizens along the north shore of Nova Scotia joined together in 1986 to form the North Shore Environmental Web, concerned with the long- and short-term effects of local chemical spraying. They are also concerned for the immediate health of all residents who live within these sprayed areas. The Web provides information on spray locations, dates of spraying, agencies to contact, information and support on possible actions.

ADDRESS CHANGES

DECENTRALIZE!
P.O. Box 3531
Georgetown Station
Washington, D.C. 20007, USA

OTHER CONTINENTS

ANNOUNCEMENT

Many Central and South American bioregional groups find it difficult or illegal to pay for overseas subscriptions in foreign currency. They are anxious to stay in touch with progress in North America, so subscription exchanges or the acceptance of payment in kind for subscriptions would be of help to them.

GROUPS

CENECOS
Viamonte 1396
1053 - Buenos Aires
REPUBLICA ARGENTINA

The Center for the Study of Organic Agriculture (CENECOS) holds weekly study meetings in Buenos Aires emphasizing wholesome cultivation of plants and self-sufficiency. On their experimental farms in the surrounding Pampas grasslands, they offer courses on family gardening and edible and medicinal native plants.

BOLETIN DEL CENECOS is a quarterly newsletter, and special publications are available such as the **MANUAL FOR THE ORGANIC HOME GARDENER AND INTRODUCTION TO THE BIODYNAMIC METHOD.** Write for subscription information.

CETAAR
Casilia de Correo 5182
Correo Central
1000 - Buenos Aires
REPUBLICA ARGENTINA

The Center for the Studies of Appropriate Technologies (CETAAR), based in Buenos Aires, is located on the edge of the estuary of two large subtropical rivers, with the vastness of the Pampas grasslands as hinterland. CETAAR associates in operating a rural experimental center, maintains a data base on appropriate technology and organizes impoverished rural and urban communities to develop low-cost housing projects, using locally available materials.

BOLETIN DEL CETAAR is a newsletter published quarterly and special technical bulletins are issued on special projects. Write for subscription information.

MUSEU MBORORÉ
Avenue San Martin 615
3370 Igazú
Prov. de Misiones
REPUBLICA ARGENTINA
(0757) 2483
Luiz Rolón

Works with last remaining indigenous people (Guananíes) in the area of Igazú Falls, which is threatened by Las Vegas-type casino development that would tear down a large amount of native forest. Operates an ecologically oriented public museum showing the region's history from 1542 to present.

PROJECTO TECNOLOGIAS ALTERNATIVAS
Rua João Afonso, 60-A
Humaitá
22261 Rio de Janeiro
BRASIL

The Project for Alternative Technologies offers support to small peasant producers, landowners, sharecroppers and landless in their fight for agrarian reform. It aims to discover how alternative technologies can help peasant farmers through research, a mutual aid and financial assistance program, and experiment and training centers.

GRUPO AMBIENTAL HABITAT
Centro de Documentacion y Accion Ambiental
Apartado Postal 21886
Santo Domingo

REPUBLICA DOMINICANA
Grupo Ambiental Habitat educates the citizens of the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean Bioregion about ecological issues

Tarascan Music in Michoacán (continued from page 11)

we'd never been to, walking into a strange house and announcing that we were friends of an *orquesta* that we hardly knew. We brought a bottle of brandy as a token gift for the hosts.

From Quinceo, which is perched on a hillside, one descends into a beautiful, flat valley to Arantepacua. The man who opened the wooden gate to the compound of wooden *troyes* was obviously surprised to see us. After a few words of explanation from us he gave us a big smile and invited us in, saying he was very pleased to have us at his son's wedding. Passing inside, we gave him the brandy, which elicited a further smile.

The *orquesta*, seated in a circle, was playing as we came in. Not stopping, they smiled and nodded among themselves, thinking, no doubt, "My God! Those gringos actually showed up!" Having met once, we were like old acquaintances, with lots of handshakes and "How are you's." The rest of the local Indians looked at us with friendly curiosity. We came with our tape recorder and hand-held mikes, which made this a "significant" occasion for them as well as for us — an honest-to-goodness recording session was

happening at their wedding. Well, the *orquesta* would just play that much better. We found a seat in the *orquesta* and accepted a shot of cane alcohol from our hosts and another offered laughingly by Don Francisco, the *orquesta's* leader, from a bottle circulating among the musicians. The fiesta recommenced.

People danced, the *orquesta* played. People smiled and laughed as drinks were passed, as couples squared off dancing, the men with their hands clasped behind their backs, their feet tapping out the beat.

The *orquesta* went through its repertoire for us. The classic Tarascan *sones regionales* are elegant, almost formal in their eloquence and seriousness. These were interspersed with the more lively *abajenos*: this *orquesta* really cooked. Eleuterio Crisostomo, son of Juan Crisostomo, is the finest trombone player I've heard in Tarascan music; his brother Cecilio plays double bass with rapidity and freedom. This is "hot" group-playing that makes you think of jazz — the reeds and strings taking the melody, with entirely different and equally interesting rhythm and harmo-

ny taking place on one level between the Crisostomo brothers, on another between them and the rest of the group. Between pieces the musicians smiled and chuckled, pleased with their performances — after one *abajeno* an enthusiastic spectator yelled out for our tape recorder, "Orquesta de Quinceo!" On the tape you hear Tata Juan laughing with pleasure.

We found that recording Mexican Indian music rarely, if ever, left the impression of our taking something for personal gain. Music can't be resold like textiles. Recording it doesn't impinge on individual privacy as much as taking a photograph. People knew that we recorded the music because we loved it, as they did. We were "encantados por la musica . . ." (though we did pay musicians for formal recording sessions we held, as for any professional service — like they were paid for their work at fiestas).

We heard a lot of fascinating music in our two-year immersion in Michoacán culture. For a composer, technical and musical knowledge is not an

end, but rather the means to an end which is to be found in creative and cultural activity — in Mexico we were going after "the truth," not just the facts. For an artist, this "truth" is intensely personal and relevant to current issues and needs.

Many of the lessons we learned were as much sociopolitical as musical. We found that cultural self-sufficiency, the elements giving character to a local, regional musical style, was interconnected with economic self-sufficiency. And we found in Tarascan music a culture that had resisted today's excessive hybridization. The hybrid process, in Mexican music and elsewhere, traditionally has been one in which a new, intrusive musical influence does not overwhelm and destroy the regional culture, but merges with it to create a new, regionally-adapted entity. This in the past has occurred over centuries, or at least generations. Now, that process has gone out of control, to a point where more musical cultures have disappeared or are in danger of dying due to the weed-like infestation of media culture than at any time in history. The process seems irreversible, but if there is to be anything stem-

ming that tide, culturally or politically, it will come from people who have decided to make a stand, not in some abstract sense, but on the basis of *where they are*. A revitalized sense of regionalism is needed — one that is no longer isolated, but internationalist in perspective. Music has a role to play in this. For me the Tarascan culture, imperiled as it is, offers that sort of cultural model.

In an era infatuated with technology and gadgets, it was a good reminder to live among a people whose technical means were far simpler, yet whose cultural expression was so rich. In the end, all this is a reminder that civilization can be measured only in terms of the imagination, not material technology. It is that lesson which my Tarascan friends, with the example of their music and culture, gave me above all. Tarascan culture resisted the Aztecs and survived the Spanish, and seems to be holding its own in the face of the twentieth century. May it continue to survive — and thrive!

Editor's note:

This article has been adapted from a larger work of musicology by the same author.

ASK LOKI



Just before the Winter Solstice, handsome Loki appeared at the Planet Drum office with a sprig of mistletoe, a mischievous twinkle in his eye and special expertise with caves, earthquakes and restoring burned forests. He volunteered to demystify significant questions and advise the perplexed. Ask Loki and be amazed.

— Judy Goldhaft

Dear Loki: I've just read "Social Ecology versus Deep Ecology: A Challenge for the Ecology Movement" by Murray Bookchin, and about a half-dozen negative responses to it from Earth Firsters. I haven't seen folks so exercised since the jogging craze. Is there going to be a World Ecology Title punch-out?

— Harriet Smithfield,
Eco-feminist off
Great Barrier Reef

Dear Harriet:

Having run out of Libertarians to thrash (they eventually drifted away from sheer weightlessness) Bookchin has turned to "ecofascist slime" deep ecologists. When they bugle back "Leftist, leftist, leftist!" it makes them sound even more rightist, rightist, rightist.

What we have here is a case of bad terminology all around. And who can blame anyone. Everybody's got deep dish Earth-shock. You know, "We share the same planet! All people and all life forms!! Now what?" It's hard enough to speak coherently much less to avoid falling back on outdated language.

Here's Loki's advice for starting over. Everybody stop talking and writing about social and deep ecology for six months. Murray, go climb Mt. Hood. Dave Foreman, open a worker-owned, vegetarian, multiracial pizza parlor in Howard Beach. Really challenge yourselves.



IN MEMORIAM DAVID GAINES

If you've ever heard of Mono Lake on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada in California, seen photos of its shining white tufa rock towers rising above the surface as a reminder of the depth when it was an inland sea, learned about the struggle to preserve it from being drained by Los Angeles's seemingly insatiable thirst, or spotted a SAVE MONO LAKE bumper strip, you've been reached by the work of David Gaines. Ten years ago he founded the Mono Lake Committee to study the condition of this singular but largely ignored water body on the edge of the Great Basin desert, to inform and educate people about it and to launch an unrelenting struggle to protect what we now know to be a unique and important wild area. Mono Lake had some admirers before Gaines who had wandered off main roads to see it, Mark Twain among them, but it never had a better student or friend. David was killed in a highway accident driving back to his home beside the lake in mid-January.

The Mono Lake Committee defense organization, its educational and tour programs, the remarkable Mono Lake Visitor's Center and special research and outreach activities of Mono Lake Foundation present a model for levels of commitment that should be adapted to natural sites in bioregions everywhere. David Gaines considered himself to be a "resident of the Great Basin bioregion . . . striving to understand this land, and the relationships between animals, plants, rocks, volcanoes, storms and ourselves."

The committee has won a court ruling to increase spring-fed water flows into the lake for the time being and sponsors several other lawsuits against Los Angeles's Department of Water and Power. Contributing to legal expenses for these in memory of David Gaines would be a good way to recognize his vision, and organizing a group where you live modeled on the Mono Lake Committee would extend it even further.

The Mono Lake Committee • P.O. Box 29 • Lee Vining, California 93541 • (619) 647-6386.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Planet Drum members who do not live in North America are strongly encouraged to attend the next North American Bioregional Congress (NABC III). One obvious reason to participate is to imagine how a continent congress could occur where you live. Another might be to observe how "United Statesians" relate to other North Americans (and *vice versa*) at the first NABC held beyond the boundaries of the U.S.A. (the site will be in the "Canadian" area of Cascadia). This truly terrestrial event will be held August 21-26, 1988.

After two NABCs, activists in the bioregional movement have learned something about overcoming huge local differences. Now we can concentrate on roll-

ing back national distinctions. Frankly, we'll need all the help you can give to accomplish this.

"OK, I'm encouraged. Now how do I get there?" Is that what you're saying? We don't know yet. Planet Drum can't help with transportation costs directly. What we can do is begin to provide all the information and transoceanic hitch-hiking help that we can locate. We will respond to any request for assistance by letting you know who else in your area wants to come, how they intend to get there and whatever other planetary travel information we have. If a sponsoring angel who wants to donate travel funds appears we'll be sure to let you know about it.

We still have a box of excel-

lently printed "Proceedings" from the last NABC — which was held in the Great Lakes Bioregion in 1986 — for \$10 (plus \$4.75 air mail; \$2 surface rate) if you want to find out something in advance about what will go on. You might also write NABC III Site Committee / G.R. Ash / Box 69004 / Station K / Vancouver, BC / Canada V5K 4W3 to get registration information from the Cascadian host organizers.

Here's your chance to represent not only a bioregion (Is this really happening to me?) but a whole continent, AUSTRALIA, SOUTH AMERICA, ASIA, EUROPE, AFRICA . . . get in touch with us now.

WEAVING ALLIANCES (Cont.)

caused by the rapid "development" of the country. It recently participated in the first joint conference of environmentalists from the Dominican Republic and Haiti (both share the same island and a common history). GAH documents environmental problems and exposes ecological destruction caused by an economy that is controlled by multinationals rather than inhabitants.

HABITAT is a quarterly bulletin covering environmental issues of the whole Caribbean Bioregion. Write for subscription information.

NEW CONTACT PERSONS

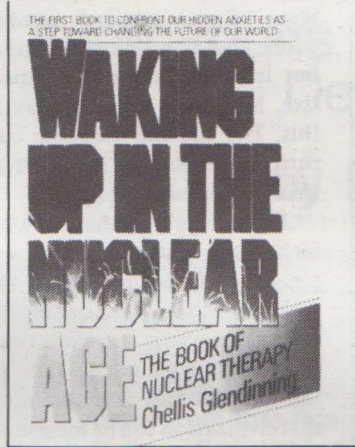
RICHARD OLDFIELD
Green Options
12 Polden View
Glastonbury, Somerset
ENGLAND BA6 8DZ

C. R. RAMANATHAN
Ganapathi Palayam Post
Udamalpet Taluk
Tamil Nadu — 642122
INDIA

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KLAUS SCHLEISIEK
Roter Hahn 42
D2000 Hamburg 72
W. GERMANY
(+49) (40) 644-9412

RIFFS, READS & REELS



WAKING UP IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

In the fifties the existence of The Bomb was palpable. People talked about it at cocktail parties and wore outfits called "bikinis," named after the unlucky atoll picked as ground zero for a test of the improved H-bomb in 1954. In the eighties, with nuclear stockpiles thousands of times bigger, we may talk about the feasibility of Star Wars, the difficulties of verification, or the complexities of SALT II. But we don't wear White Sands jeans. We don't think about it much. We're used to it.

Chellis Glendinning's *Waking Up in the Nuclear Age* presents a personal challenge to this anesthesia. Drawing on her experience as a therapist, she not only urges the reader to acknowledge the horror of atomic weaponry and a sense of being personally threatened, but maps out a path for coming to terms with it all.

The first step is to examine the value systems underlying our social actions: the heroes we try to emulate and the myths that ground our emotional assumptions:

When we take uranium from our mountains, when we transport dangerous radioactive materials across our homeland, when we explode hydrogen bombs in our desert, when we threaten nuclear war on our neighbors — all with no recourse to the impact of these actions on our planet or ourselves — we are completely immersed in our myth of people against nature. At one with this idea instead of with the Earth, we cannot even see what it is we do.

Using the metaphor of the rite of passage, Dr. Glendinning goes on to propose that having rejected the old ways, the next step is to construct new myths from which to draw inspiration for a new life. While noting that no consensus has been achieved in this country as to what these myths should be, she discusses several that are beginning to emerge, proposing them as a promising foundation for a new peaceful ecological ethic. The new myth of time as spiral, for instance, focuses on the circular changes in the life cycle as opposed to the old myth of the linear advance of "progress." The new myth of people in nature elaborates a union of people with the natural world as opposed to the old myth of a constant struggle between the two. Drawing on the stories of participants in a series of workshops, she illustrates sources of a refound connection with nature which can generate new values and the rediscovery of traditional myths to reconnect ourselves with the natural world.

A sixty-four-year-old woman said that digging her fingers into the soil when she tends her garden gives her satisfaction. A lawyer surrounds himself with photographs of ascuba-diving adventure. A welfare mother said she keeps a plant and a rock in her room. . . . As former Army officer and men's movement activist Shepherd Bliss says, it is time for "a resurgence not of U.S. American nation-love,

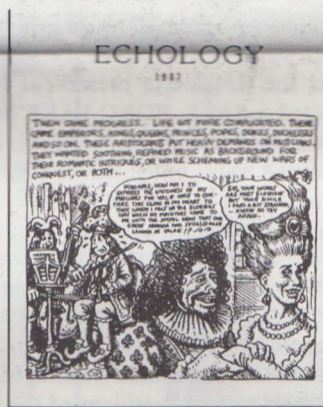
but of North American country-love." The Grand Canyon. The Black Hills. The Mississippi River. The Florida Everglades. Yosemite Valley. Ohio farmland. The New England Coast.

A reinhabitation of place — the acknowledgement of our connection with the natural systems of our bioregions, can provide the spiritual strength from which to discard the old myths and reinvent oneself as a "new hero," an individual who single-handedly takes action for the greater social good.

By giving many examples of heroic actions, large and small, taken by average people in the face of the nuclear threat, Dr. Glendinning eloquently proves the thesis of her book that a conscious realignment of personal values can lead to the eventual restructuring of society. The signing of the revolutionary pact this December eliminating a whole class of nuclear weapons is an historic first step toward bringing those aspirations for peace to political fruition. It will be up to wakeful citizens in every country to see that the process continues to unfold toward the new promise of a nuclear-free world.

— Beryl Magilavy

WAKING UP IN THE NUCLEAR AGE: THE BOOK OF NUCLEAR THERAPY • CHELLIS GLENDINNING • BEECH TREE BOOKS • WILLIAM MORROW • 105 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, NY 10016 • \$14.95



ECHOLOGY

Julie Marsden was seventeen and had turned her back on a passionate interest in music to spend more time reading when she by chance caught the Mekons, a U.K. country band, at the club I-Beam and changed her mind. "I was in a rotten mood to start with, the fixed dismal state that ruins a show and the electric noise was a depressing irritation. But halfway through the set I broke. I laughed. I experienced the ultimate value of entertainment and the people who can entertain seem to have an immense desire for life."

Had Julie stayed back in her room curled up with *Echology: A Green Annual of Theoretical and Applied Sociomusicology*, she would have recognized in "Diatribes on Modern Music" by R. Crumb, the deftest hand of the underground cartoonists, an opposite "confrontation" with entertainment in a similar scene: "One night recently I was sitting in the Bluebird Nightclub in Fort Worth, Texas, taking in the scene. I was kinda 'getting with' the music — a Mexican blues band — two electric guitars, electric bass and two saxes — I was sorta digging it. But after awhile, I started getting that old feeling of irritation, and then ended up vexed, dizgusted. . . . Why does it have to be so GODDAM LOUD???"

Echology is an annual collection of essays, cartoons, poetry and musical scores featuring dancer-musician-activist-scholars attempting to point

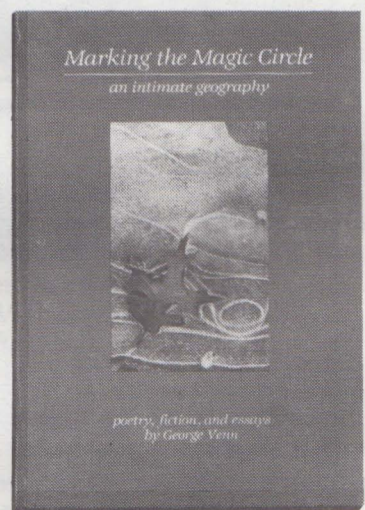
ethno- and sociomusicology toward the play and joy of transforming this society locality by locality. Normally, a scholarly music publication looking to shake things up a bit would be a welcome addition to a seriously limited field of criticism, but this fledgling creation of editor Charles Kiel is already experiencing a critical identity crisis. There seems to be an ambiguity as to who *Echology's* constituency is. On one hand, the journal's editorial philosophy aligns itself with the intimacy and youthful amateurism of Julie Marsden's club scenario. Yet the pieces it prints are full of regret and confusion about the present state of music. This critical outsider's stance makes transforming society a difficult maneuver.

Echology also reneges on the promise of its title in a bioregional sense. One is led to believe that socio-ethnomusicology concerns are going to be interpreted in the framework of a strong connection to region, place and ecological niche. There should be a world of possibility in this. You could pair Eugene Odum's view of habitat with Les Blank's cinematic eye for social-regional interaction. Maps could carry the analogy forward — New Orleans cartoonist Bunny Mathews recently produced one of Cajun culture cartographically defined by its dance halls. The best work in this genre is being done in small community newspapers such as *Wavelength* in New Orleans and *The Austin Chronicle*. As of yet there is no feel that *Echology* is really addressing these themes.

The musical habitat, locality by locality, has been done some serious damage, but it is not beyond the restoration and maintenance principles of bioregional action. If the two versions of musician community — Julie Marsden's vitality and R. Crumb's somewhat cranky concern for endangered musical styles — can come together in the pages of *Echology* with a little more focus from Charles Kiel, good times are "just around the corner" (bar).

— Robert C. Watts

ECHOLOGY: A GREEN ANNUAL OF THEORETICAL AND APPLIED SOCIOMUSICOLOGY • 81 CRESCENT AVE • BUFFALO, NY 14214 • One-year Subscription of \$10 gets you 2 issues.



MARKING THE MAGIC CIRCLE

This book has the qualities of home. George Venn gives deep and purposeful attention to housekeeping.

Its richness is in the soil and weather of the pacific northwest, in an attachment to place that grows out of the ongoing work and devotion of living somewhere, in the web of saying over and over where we are — and if you think you know that,

tell me how we're going to live here.

Sometimes the housekeeping is tiresome. It's probably true that there are "periods" of northwestern literature, from the Paleolithic to Gary Snyder. And it's essential work, this kind of scholarship and sorting — Venn slices with a sharp knife the distinction between place as microcosm and place as province — but really, even when we've figured out what place means, who's going to tell us what a regional literature is? It's the kind of thing they worry about in the provinces and publish at university presses.

But it's also true that this body of lore and writing — the act of discovery and naming that the book embodies — is the best tool we have to make our map of home, to mark the magic circle. Its richest parts are the life and language of growing up in the small towns and farmlands of the northwest. But then there's another, more distantly told story, where experience knots itself into poems, or a meditation on barns that's as rich as barns get. And then there's the richness that comes of being witness to a writer's life as it finds — loses, finds again — a way to find a way to say it.

Where are we now? And now how do we live here? Well, listen —

— Jerry Martien

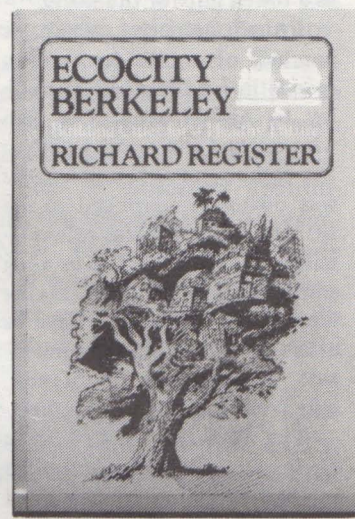
If there's any discovery here, it may be that confidence is generated by marking the magic circle — the region — and asserting its centers. Even from biologists like Ardrey, we have learned that the animal who fights or defends home ground is doubly strong and likely to win. If not from biology, then from the mythic Antaeus we can see that defeat will come in battle only if he is abstracted into space. If not from myth, then from medicine we might be persuaded that the patient who heals at home heals faster and more surely than the patient who heals in hospital. If not from medicine, then from war, our war, Vietnam, we might learn that those who fought for home were impossible to kill, outnumber, even find. If not from war, then from the continuous assertions of small colleges and small town chambers of commerce who publicize that they are "the cultural, educational, and religious center of the intermountain west," or that they are "the regional center." This power of the magic circle to generate confidence also generates spiritual allies — strength, health, belief, optimism. Mere existence may go on elsewhere, but within the circle we thrive. The freight of weakness, helplessness, alienation, anguish — all that grinds without the bearings of the magic circle — is well known.

El Greco overcame those feelings by carrying clods of Cretan soil in his pockets all the time he lived in Spain. A northwest writer who moved to New York took a wall-sized photograph of Mt. Rainier with him for his office. If this confidence becomes excessive, it becomes dangerous; literally, chauvinism, less literally, nationalism. At its best, it is the result of love for home — that passion of Native Americans, 17th century Dutch, and others. This is never the same as love for a nation. Your region is not your nation. Thus, as the magic circle creates confidence, so the whole force of a region generates, nurtures, and sustains vitality, creativity, energy, delight.

Sometimes, that confidence comes from just one tree.

— from *Marking the Magic Circle*

MARKING THE MAGIC CIRCLE: AN INTIMATE GEOGRAPHY • POETRY, FICTION AND ESSAYS BY GEORGE VENN • WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAN BOLES • OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS • CORVALLIS, OR 97331 • PAPER \$12.95



ECOCITY BERKELEY

Whether in our personal lives or in our cultural visions, it is easier to know what we don't want than what we do. Our ideas of what is wrong with the present culture are often detailed and refined, but we have only vague images of what could be created in its place.

Ecocity Berkeley presents a positive vision of a new culture in which author Richard Register proposes ways in which cities can be made ecologically healthy, and applies these ideas to the city of Berkeley, California. The first half of the book introduces the concept of ecocities as places that "seek the health and vitality of humanity and nature." Register lists ways in which cities today fall short of these goals: over-reliance on the automobile, suburban sprawl and other insults to human and nonhuman nature. He then suggests creative solutions to these problems. For instance, non-car transportation (train, bicycle, foot) will become more feasible and widely used when our life and workplaces are brought closer together. As a first step toward this goal, he suggests that zoning laws and tax incentives be used to promote higher-density, mixed use of land in cities.

Register's suggestions of how to physically rearrange cities to reduce ecological damage would, in themselves, comprise a worthwhile and innovative book, but *Ecocity Berkeley* is more than a book of city planning. This book is clearly written with an emphasis on the quality of human life. For instance, while an ecocity might be higher in density than many present cities, it would be designed not to feel crowded. As is clear to anyone who has experienced both lifeless suburban sprawl and the vitality of some parts of Santa Cruz, San Francisco and Portland, low density is not an end in itself. An ecocity would be designed to be an aesthetically pleasing, joyful place to live. A series of drawings of possible ecocities plays an integral role in illustrating their human appeal. People, buildings and trees coexist in images overflowing with a sense of life.

The second half of the book applies these ecocity ideas to a real city. While this section may be meaningful to Bay Area residents who are familiar with Berkeley, there is much to be gained by anyone from the example of these ideas put into practice. We get a clearer picture of the obstacles to be confronted and the time-frame involved, as well as a better idea of what one ecocity might look like. The author suggests that inhabitants of other cities rewrite this part of the book in ways appropriate to their own regions. If people were to take up this challenge, *Ecocity Berkeley* could lead to new and healthier ways of inhabiting our cities.

— Mary Gomes

ECOCITY BERKELEY: BUILDING CITIES FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE • RICHARD REGISTER • NORTH ATLANTIC BOOKS • 2320 BLAKE STREET • BERKELEY, CA 94704 • \$9.95

Planet Drum PUBLICATIONS

Books



● **Reinhabiting a Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California**, Edited by Peter Berg. 220 pages. Essays, natural history, biographies, poems and stories revealing Northern California as a distinct area of the planetary biosphere. \$8 postpaid. "The book serves as both a pioneer and genre model... representing a vital and widespread new ethos."— *New Age Magazine*



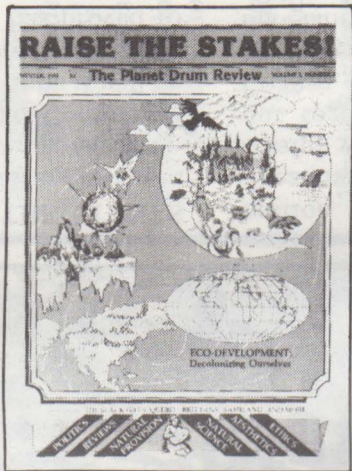
● **Devolutionary Notes** by Michael Zwerin. 64 pages. A first hand account of European separatist movements today. \$3.50 postpaid. "... a strange and fascinating little guidebook that is 'redesigning the map of Europe.'" — *Rain Magazine*

BUNDLES

- **Reinhabit the Hudson Estuary: The Hudson Estuary Bundle.** Essays, poetry, graphics, and poster compiled and produced by New York area reinhabitants. \$10 pp.
- **Backbone - The Rockies.** A six-par Bundle of essays, poems, journals, calendars and proposals about the fragile Rocky Mountains. \$4 postpaid.
- **Watershed Guide & Living Here.** A four-color poster with pamphlet evoking the natural amenities of the San Francisco Bay Area watershed. \$3 postpaid.

RAISE THE STAKES BACK ISSUES

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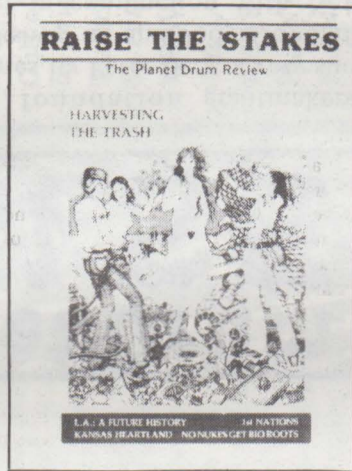


● **Eco-Development: Raise the Stakes, The Planet Drum Review No. 2.** Contains regional reports from Quebec, Northwest Nation, The Black Hills, Brittany, Northumbria, Scotland, Samiland, and northern California. Feature articles include: Reconstituting California by Jack Forbes, Eco-Development by Raymond Dasman, The Suicide & Rebirth of Agriculture by Richard Merrill and the Limits of Population Control by Stephanie Mills.

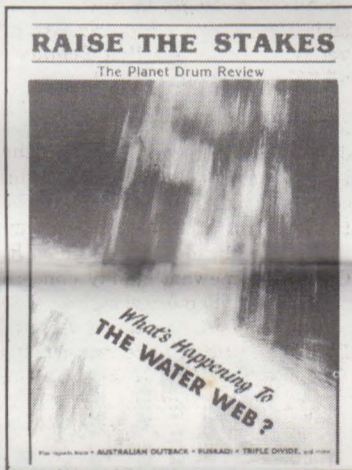


● **Cities - Salvaging the Parts: Raise the Stakes, The Planet Drum Review No. 3.** Contains regional updates from the Black Hills and Samiland as well as in-depth reports from Aboriginal Australia, the Rockies, the North Atlantic Rim, and the Klamath/Trinity, Passaic, and Sonoran Watersheds. Other features include Bioregional Comics by Leonard Rifas, Aesthetics by Micheal McClure, Renewable Energy to Renew Society by Peter Berg,

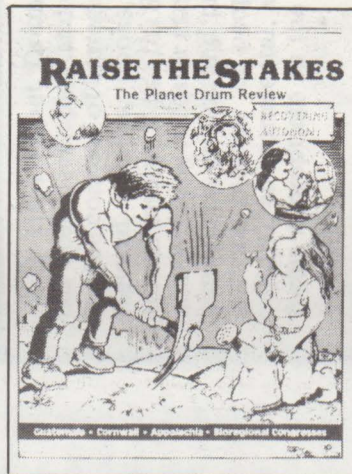
Cities: Salvaging the Parts by Gary Snyder, Ernest Callenbach, Murray Bookchin and Morris Berman, Decentralism by Jacques Ellul, No Guarantees by Tom Birch, and poetry by Peter Blue Cloud.



● **Harvesting the Trash: Raise the Stakes No. 6.** (Winter 1983). Features a special section, "Harvesting the Trash," plus resolutions from the KAW Council and a discussion of the links between bioregionalists and antinuke activists. This issue is in limited supply.



● **What's Happening to the Water Web? Raise the Stakes No. 7.** (Spring 1983). Highlights "The Water Web," special section with Donald Worster's historical look, "The Flow of Power," and articles about the Columbia River Watch and terminal lakes. Plus reports from Euskadi and the Australian Big Scrub, and in North America from the Connecticut River area, the Slocan Valley, the Gulf of Maine, and the Triple Divide. Centerfold photo essay, "Songs of the Outback."



● **Recovering Autonomy: Raise the Stakes No. 8.** (Fall 1983). Important interviews with Bo Yerxa on community self-determination, Shann Turnbull on bioregionalism in relation to economics, and Bill Wahpepah on the new directions of the American Indian Movement and the International Indian Treaty Council. Also Declarations of Shasta (Northern California) Emergence into bioregional politics, Reinhabiting Appalachia, and coyote woodcut centerfold by Daniel Stolpe.



● **Open Fire: A Council of Bioregional Self-Criticism. Raise the Stakes No. 10.** (Summer 1984). From about seventy persons, guest editor Jim Dodge selects representative gripes from Marni Muller, Bill Devall, Gary Snyder, Kelly Kindscher, and others. The Centerfold is Peter Berg's "Amble Towards Continent Congress." The Insert: A Bioregional Directory. Also: Slocan Valley, New South Wales, & Alaska reports. Networking news and reviews.

RAISE THE STAKES

The Planet Drum Review



● **Urb an' Bioregion: Green City, Raise the Stakes No. 11** (Summer 1986). Featuring a special four-page insert of Peter Berg's essay "Growing a Life-Place Politics," this expanded issue is about creating Green City. Articles by Ernest Callenbach and Roy Rappaport discuss new visions of city design; Wolfgang Sachs and Peter Meyer look at future socioeconomic possibilities and problems. Reports are from Cascadia, the Driftless bioregion and the Guggisberg region of Switzerland.

RAISE THE STAKES

The Planet Drum Review



● **Emerging States: A Bioregional Directory, Raise the Stakes No. 12** (Spring 1987). A directory of over 100 bioregional groups, publications and contact persons, primarily in North America, including a *Represented Bioregions of North America (1987)* map. Listings include names, addresses, phone numbers, a description of activities, and membership/subscription information.

Issues 1, 4, 5 and 9 are sold out. We will, however, make complete sets of *Raise the Stakes* available to libraries and archives.



- **Become a member** of Planet Drum foundation. Membership includes two issues of *Raise the Stakes*, at least one bonus publication, a 25% discount on all our books and bundles, and access to our networking and workshop facilities.
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- **Send a report** from your region to *Raise the Stakes*, for publication in the Circles of Correspondence section.

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STAKES RAISERS THIS ISSUE

Beryl Magilavy - editor; Peter Berg - editor; Judy Goldhaft - art & Weaving Alliances; Xenia Lisanevich - design & production; Mark Weiman & Joseph Stubbs - layout & pasteup; Regent Press - typesetting; Warren's Waller Press - printing; Bill Quesada - cartography; Mission Photo - photo printing. Thanks to Pollution Probe of Toronto, Canada for permission to print articles based on presentations at their Greening the Cities Conference, to Jim Savage for editorial assistance, to Juan-Tomas Rehbock for translations, to Jean Gardner for help with graphics, to Bonnie Monte for copyediting, to Mary Gomes for assistance of many sorts, and to all our contributors for performing valiantly under extraordinary time constraints. Thanks also to the Helen Crocker Russell Library, Olga Talamante and La Rasa Information Center.

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Planet Drum PULSE

This issue of RAISE THE STAKES contains some of the ideas presented at Pollution Probe's International Symposium on Greening the Cities Conference in Toronto last spring. We hope it will be as well-received as the *Bioregional Directory* (RTS No. 12) which has proved to be our most successful issue to date. See Weaving Alliances for Directory updates.

Summer and fall brought a renewed push to provide a firm foundation for Planet Drum's Green City Program. Beryl Magilavy, who has joined Planet Drum to coordinate publications and the Green City effort, has led a fresh assault on the

bastion of foundation grantmakers. Speaking dates by Peter Berg, a very successful workshop he and Judy Goldhaft put together in conjunction with New College of San Francisco, and a Green City questionnaire mailed to Alta California Planet Drum members have generated a core of volunteers to help get the Green City Program off the ground once sufficient funds are raised for its publication.

On March 9, 1988 Planet Drum will hold a performance-benefit at the Julia Morgan Theater in Berkeley, CA to help with printing costs. Call us for more information. (415) 285-6556.

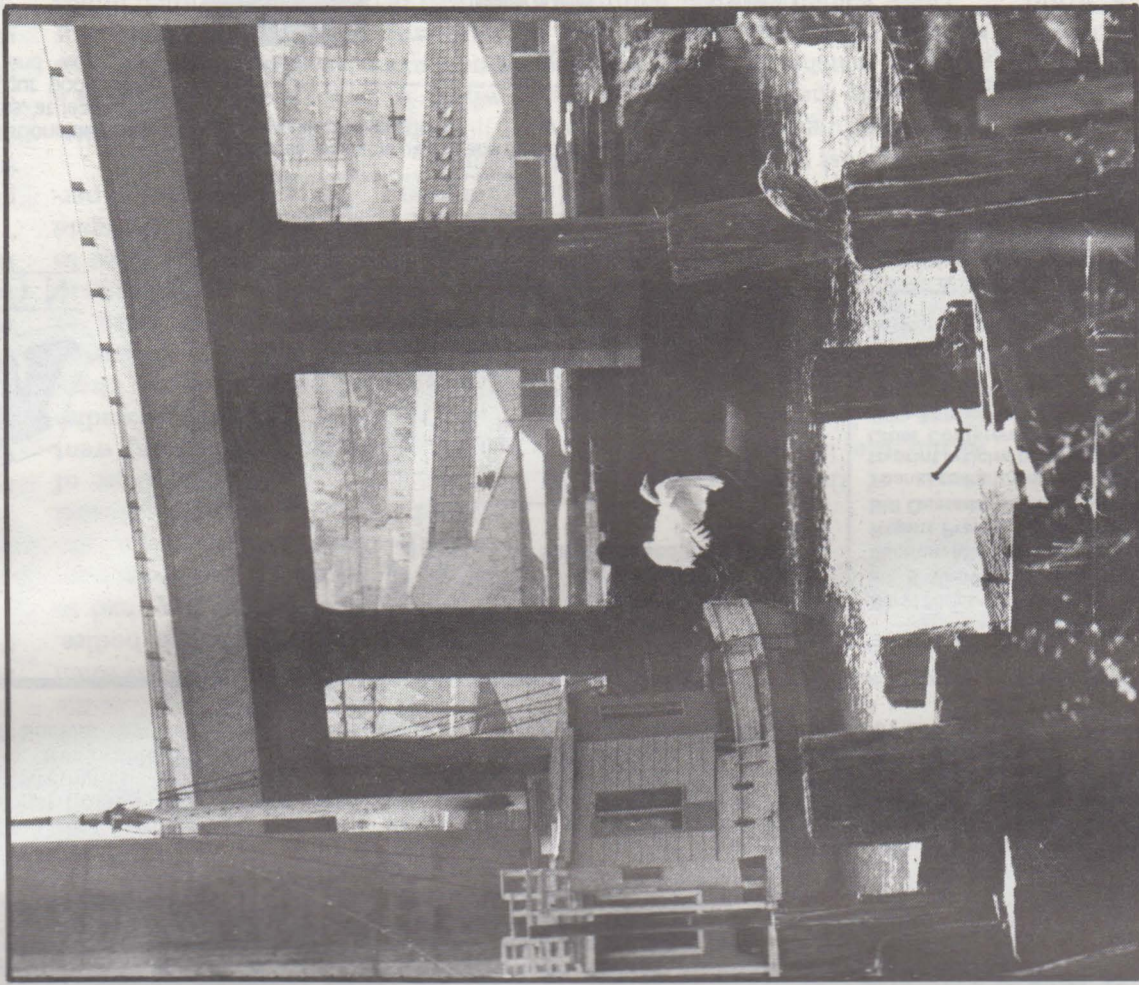
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The Planet Drum Review

WINTER 1988

NUMBER 13 \$2

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