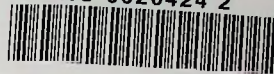




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*The Transformation of Green Ideology
in Consumer Society*

Hilary Kenna, March 1991

A Dissertation submitted to the
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and Complementary Studies
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Most of the above illustrations are contextual rather than specific references.

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INTRODUCTION

Consideration for the well being of people and the natural environment seem to take second place to what have become the primary concerns of modern society today - the pursuit of material wealth at all costs and the achievement of greater scientific and technological progress.

These concerns are by no means specific to the contemporary twentieth century, rather their roots lie in the very introduction of industrialism nearly two centuries before. I discovered this last year while previously studying the work of John Ruskin and William Morris and also the Arts and Crafts Movement. I became intrigued by the contemporary significance of Ruskin's and Morris's teachings and also the way that social and environmental problems of nineteenth century industrial England seemed to closely resemble those of today's twentieth century ecological crisis. It occurred to me that the spirit of Ruskin's and Morris's teachings had re-emerged today under the umbrella of ideas put forward by the contemporary Green Movement as alternatives to present day consumer culture. It is this that is destroying man's ability to think and act independently as well as destroying the precious irreplaceable natural environment that sustains all life - the earth.

I realised as I began to research further, that there were people in England like Morris and Ruskin since the very introduction of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, such as William Blake, Lord Byron, Thomas Carlyle among others, who dissented from the mainstream of industrial capitalist society. They questioned its very basis, not merely the unjust distribution of wealth and power, but the modern ethic of instrumental rationality that desanctifies the outer world of nature and the inner world of man (his soul or spiritual well-being), reducing both to manipulative objects. In short, their dissent was from the mainstream of a society, where the well-being of people and nature became secondary only to rational technological progress. Such a society concerned first and foremost with ends, which employs every and any means to achieve those ends, might be termed what has become ultimately known in the late twentieth century as consumer society.

This dissertation attempts to trace how this continual path of dissention (usually by a small minority) from the mainstream of industrialism or consumer society has grown much bigger and stronger in the last two decades of the twentieth century, to form what has become the contemporary Green Movement. In doing so, this dissertation also tries to examine the transformation of what has subsequently become green ideology in such a consumer society.

It would be impossible to assess every element relevant to this discussion in this

limited space. Therefore I have focused upon specific examples which I feel to be particularly important.

The first chapter focuses on nineteenth century England, especially the work of Morris and Ruskin as well as touching on Blake, the Romantic Movement and antimodernism in America. In the second chapter I have chosen the work of two men, Lewis Mumford and Ivan Illich because they have studied deeply and accurately the problems of contemporary society. They offer a worthwhile critique of consumer society where means have been sacrificed to ends. Both men examine the relationship between man and his tools emphasising the need for them to be reconciled in more natural and metaphysical terms. This idea is also one of the main preoccupations of the contemporary green movement.

The third central chapter focuses upon the life and work of E. F. Schumacher as one of the cornerstones of the contemporary Green Movement. I have chosen Schumacher because his life's work seems to embody all that previous dissenters were ultimately groping toward. Schumacher also simplifies the problems of industrial and consumer society in what he calls the "idolatry of giantism⁽¹⁾" while offering constructive alternatives that his work puts into practice, and which encompass the spirit of the philosophy for which he has become famous - "Small is Beautiful". The holistic and sustainable approach to life that Schumacher preaches seems to embody all that the contemporary Green Movement has come to represent, thus any future positive translation of green ideology in contemporary society may be based on the spirit of his teaching.

Chapter four examines briefly the recent phenomenon of green consumerism, its apparent contradiction in terms and suggests that it may perhaps be just the initial stage of reaction by consumer society to the sudden growth and strength of green ideology. The last chapter concludes my discussion with two contemporary case studies that I believe may represent how the second stage, and future transformation, of green ideology in consumer society will emerge. I have chosen education and design as the areas for my specific case studies because I feel both have tremendous influence on creating the new awareness needed in society, if any change is to be brought about. Also, both education and design should and can play a key role in enriching human inner life by broadening man's intellectual and creative abilities. The two areas will thus be of fundamental importance in the future positive transformation of green ideology, which will hopefully create a society where people and nature matter more than external lifeless things such as material goods and industrial, technological progress.

Footnotes:

1. E. F. Schumacher - Small is Beautiful - economics as if people matter London 1973

Section 1

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CHAPTER 1

Historical Precedent: Relevance and Revelation

In the course of this chapter, I will examine the historical background and development of the "consumer society" which is so familiar today that it has become like second nature to us. There are so many complex factors and phenomena which have led to the process of this development, it is impossible to examine each one in this limited space.

I will therefore focus first upon the Industrial Revolution in nineteenth century England and why it began there in the eighteenth century, paralleling it to the growth of a consumer society whose roots may be seen to have first developed there; and secondly upon the subsequent anti-modern reactions to the Industrial Revolution in England with the rise of the Romantic Movement, the Gothic Revival, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the Arts and Crafts Movement (I will also mention American Antimodernism), whose dissent from mainstream industrialism can be paralleled with what has become known as today's "green ideology". Both factors inevitably combine as a valuable historical precedent that helps to reveal the subsequent transformation of green ideology in consumer society.

In his book Tools for Conviviality (1973) which is a pioneering critique of contemporary consumer society, Ivan Illich lays down interesting criteria which helps to set this chapter in the context of the whole of this dissertation. He suggests the existence of two watersheds within every path of progress of the last two centuries. Illich believes the Industrial Revolution which began in England in the eighteenth century to be the first path of modern industrial progress which has culminated ultimately in the "second watershed"⁽¹⁾ of uncontrollable technological growth and ecological crises of contemporary twentieth century.

According to Illich, at the first watershed, "the desirable effects of new scientific discoveries were easily measured and verified",⁽²⁾ undoubtedly, there is some apparent truth in this statement, but it is easy to overlook, with present hindsight, the value to be gained from the historical precedent of this first watershed in terms of revelation and relevance to the second watershed of contemporary society. Indeed many of the problems which exist today stem from the very introduction and spread of industrialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and this shall be the basis for discussion in this chapter.

The second watershed (one at which we have presently arrived, says Illich) is approached when the discoveries of the first watershed are segregated into further areas of research and specialisation, whereby this scientific knowledge for the common benefit of all becomes mythologised and institutionalised by radical monopolies. The result is that the progress that is demonstrated in previous

achievement "is used as a rationale for the exploitation of society as a whole, in the service of a value which is determined and constantly revised by an element of society, by one of its self-certifying professional elites".⁽³⁾ This second watershed and its apparent complexities will be discussed in a later chapter; suffice to say, the relevance of the first watershed will help to reveal the second.

The Industrial Revolution began in England in the latter part of the eighteenth century, at a time when attitudes to the arts and to life in general underwent a profound change which has influenced Western thought to the present day.

This change sprang from the combination of a number of incidents which occurred in the latter decades of the eighteenth century. The most notable of these incidents was perhaps the French Revolution of June/July 1789 which, unlike any other previous revolution, seemed to make "ecumenical claims"⁽⁴⁾; its armies set out to revolutionise the world and its ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity spread beyond Europe to South America, the Near East and India. The French Revolution began a period of constant social and political unrest because it had effected the transfer of power from the old aristocracy to the bourgeoisie. It sparked off revolutions in many different places in 1830 and 1840 simultaneous with those in Paris and all of which were led by members of the middle classes who demanded participation in government. Countries under foreign rule, such as Belgium (until 1830) and parts of northern Italy (until 1866) were inspired to revolt against their oppressors and fired by the ideals of nationalism. Everywhere there was growing conflict between the forces of continuity (monarchy, landed aristocracy and Church) and new forces of change.

These political incidents were coincided by almost equally revolutionary changes in science and philosophy. The mechanistic conception of creation as an orderly system set in motion by "a divine clockmaker" according to Issac Newton, gave way to a more dynamic and organic one rooted in the realisation that every production of nature was the result of a long evolutionary process. Charles Darwin later consolidated this notion in the theory of evolution put forward in his book "Origin of the Species" (1859).

Philosophy was also given a new direction by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) who shifted its focus away from the problems amenable to empirical investigation and the rational deduction from evident scientific facts which was always applied to solve those problems, to an analysis of the most general concepts and categories such as religious beliefs, morals, aesthetics etc. Kant, in effect, brought to an end the attempt of men like Newton, Locke and Bacon to make philosophy a branch of natural science and in doing so, also broke away from the traditions of rationalism and empiricism.



fig.1 *Dudley Street, Seven Dials* (1872) by Gustave Doré. It depicts the misery of the poor working classes in nineteenth century England.

It was thus amidst this climate of turbulence and change that the Industrial Revolution first emerged in England in the 1780s, with the invention of the steam engine. This which enabled the mass production in mechanised factories of goods for mass consumption. In England, industry was unhampered by the guild restrictions, and trade was unhindered by the local customs barriers which still survived on the continent. Also expansion was made possible by the exploitation of overseas markets, especially in the still growing colonial empire (the annexation of India more than made up for the loss of the United States to Wilkes and the Puritan Colonists).

The spread of industrial production and the enrichment of its entrepreneurs, led to a drift from the country to the cities and the subsequent growth of a large urban proletariat population. The machines of industrialism appeared to promise new material prosperity and modern comforts to the poverty stricken and often backward agrarian masses of England. As industrialism spread it signalled the subsequent turning away from an agricultural way of life to an industrial one and from age old traditional hand crafts to mechanised mass production. Old cottage industries also collapsed under the pressure from large scale industrial competition.

Conditions for the poor classes of factory workers became gradually worse as the merciless expansion of industrialism progressed. As urban populations grew infinitely larger, decent housing became exceedingly scarce and proper sanitation virtually non-existent. The factory workers (which included women and children) had to work long hours for little pay and the cost of human suffering at this social level was appalling. Man was no longer the master of his craft but rather a machine minder who failed to see the value of his personal toil in the larger purpose of industrial production. Labour in industrial England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thus became degraded as never before in the "factories and bureaucracies of organised capitalism"⁽⁵⁾. Contrary to the prophets of pre-industrial society, the rationalisation of economic life did not primarily bring new skills, prosperity or happiness to those who needed it most, but rather it destroyed many traditions and crafts as well as increasing the poverty and suffering of the lower classes. (Fig. 1)

Strong reactions against the injustices of capitalist industrial society, began to emerge politically, intellectually and artistically in the nineteenth century through the work of men such as Karl Marx, William Blake, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Joseph Mallord Turner and Thomas Carlyle, to name but a few.

Consequently, the birth of the Romantic Movement in the arts, was perhaps the response of numerous individuals to this constantly changing climate of industrial England at the turn of the nineteenth century. The Romantics judged works of art,



fig.2 *Newton*, print by William Blake (1765)



fig.3 *Nebuchadnezzar*, (1765)
print by William Blake

literature and music not by the predetermined rules of Newton's and Locke's universe of Hard Facts⁽⁶⁾, but rather by the sensibility of the individual - from their own inner light. The poet Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), also one of the greatest writers about the visual arts of his time perhaps sums up the essence of the movement, "Romanticism is precisely situated in neither choice of subject nor in exact truth but in a way of feeling"⁽⁷⁾.

William Blake (1757-1827) the poet, painter, writer and philosopher was one of the earliest Romantics. The huge volume of his work is too complex to try and examine here, but it is worth mentioning that Blake is one of the earliest, most significant dissenters from the mainstream of industrial progress who have existed (though in a minority) since its introduction in the eighteenth century. The value of Blake's work as a historical precedent that helps to reveal the problems of contemporary life in the twentieth century is only beginning to be fully understood by people like Kathleen Raine who is an active figure in today's Green Movement.

Blake's work deals more with the human orientated and spiritual aspects of Romanticism rather than the more nature orientated work of those like William Wordsworth, John Constable or Joseph Mallord Turner. Blake rejected the solid external material universe of industrial rationalisation in nineteenth century England that led to the impoverishment of man's spiritual and imaginative inner qualities and the creation of a society which valued material wealth above all else. This is clearly conveyed by him in a poem called "The Human Image" (1794)

There souls of men are bought and sold
And milk fed infancy for gold;
And youth to slaughter houses led
And beauty for a bit of bread.

Blake's art and writing might be seen as epic struggles, that try to reconcile the imagination with understanding (reason), the ideal of man with the experience of men and above all man's intuitions of the divine with the accepted ideas of God. Some good examples of these struggles can be found in one of his many books, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" (1790). The prints of "Nebuchadnezzar" and "Newton", both dated 1765 are two examples from the book which show that Blake was aware of the dangers of succumbing totally to reason and materialism (like "Newton") on the one hand, or to the imagination and sensuality on the other (apparent in the terrifying image of "Nebuchadnezzar"). (Fig. 2 and 3) Blake emphasises the need for a balance between the two, if there is to be any hope for reconciliation between man's spiritual well being and the progress of industrial

rational society. This notion is echoed time and time again in the call for a holistic, sustainable approach to life in the twentieth century by E. F. Schumacher and today's Green Movement.

Literary and artistic work that celebrated the beauty and power of nature also flourished in the Romantic movement. The work of painters such as John Constable (an English Romantic painter) represented a new approach to art, one of close observational study of nature which enabled man to discover existing qualities in her that had never been portrayed before thus producing an original style. The worship of nature almost as a deity and saviour from the industrial monster that was destroying both man and the natural environment of nineteenth century England can be found in the work of great Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth. Wordsworth, found in nature almost a religion, a set of moral principles by which to live life.

"In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being"

The pantheism of the Romantics had a profound influence upon many artists, writers and social thinkers in the nineteenth century and there is no doubt that the movement has unprecedented relevance for many environmentalists and deep ecologists of today. Much contemporary "deep ecology" and eco-spiritualism refer constantly to the Romantic era rooted in the "sense sublime (of nature), Of something far more deeply interfused"⁽⁹⁾.

Joseph Mallord William Turner, one of the greatest Romantic painters, portrayed nature as never before. He was fascinated by the violence of nature and how man paled in significance to her vast destructive forces. Indeed, as Turner's explorations of colour and light became more intense in his paintings such as "Rain, Steam and Steel" (1840) and "Snowstorm - Steamboat of a harbour's mouth" (1841) and the actual forms diminished, the energy and power of nature and her awesome beauty became ever more apparent.

John Ruskin, the most influential of all the Victorian writers on the arts, was one of Turner's most ardent admirers. He believed Turner to be more "realist" than any landscape painter of the past or present. This was mainly because Turner had revealed "nature as the literal handiwork of God",⁽¹⁰⁾ or more importantly as the artists own expression of "imaginative transformation".

One of Ruskin's other great loves was for nature, which he recorded with encyclopaedic accuracy in his writings, as well as eloquently singing the praise of the beauty of all things natural. Streams and flowers gave Ruskin immense pleasure but it was the clouds and the mountains that aroused his excitement "bordering on delirium"⁽¹¹⁾. Again and again they appear in his writings as the evidence of God's power. The view of nature as a benevolent or moral being is also illustrated in almost all of Ruskin's writings - "The Socialised Tree" and "The Law of Help" are convincing symbols and the laws that Ruskin deduced from his observation of nature and applied by analogy to art and society are by no means absurd. If anything, they have inspired many of today's environmentalists - Jonathon Porritt, Arne Naess, Kathleen Raine, Rudolf Bahro and many more. However, one point must be made about Ruskin's view of man's relationship to nature and one which causes a split among "Greens" whether or not that relationship is biocentric (life centred) or anthropocentric (human centred).

It would seem that Ruskin believed that nature was designed for the convenience of man, a notion inbred in him during his youth by the "doctrine of special creation"⁽¹²⁾. Nevertheless, Ruskin was at the same time aware and in awe of nature's power compared to puny man and had the greatest respect for conserving nature, being vehemently opposed to its destruction by ugly industrial growth.

Having been unjustly disclaimed in the past for his insanity, today Ruskin is back in favour, and interest in his theories and beliefs is growing. He is even regarded by many as an environmental prophet "with much to say on the political and cultural crises of the later twentieth century"⁽¹³⁾.

His diversity of thought is apparent and amidst some of his most eccentric projects, a great deal can be learnt. One thing which was most important to Ruskin was the notion that art and society were inextricably intertwined and all his efforts in later life were put into this one aim - the creation of an aesthetic socialist utopia. It was this vision which had a profound influence on many artists and social thinkers in his own time especially William Morris and in turn the international Arts and Crafts Movement as well as the growth of antimodernist thought in nineteenth century America. In the twentieth century, although they differ in many ways from Ruskin, men like Lewis Mumford, Ivan Illich and E. F. Schumacher have continued essentially in the spirit of his vision and they in turn have become constant references for contemporary Green thinkers.

For Ruskin's thoughts on human society and the solutions he had to offer, the history and fabric of Venice was his chosen role model. This was for nearly 500 years a



fig.4

Work, by Madox Brown (1821-1923), one of the mostly socially ambitious Pre-Raphaelite paintings. The figures convey morality in terms of a 19th century pre-occupation -the dignity, necessity and apportion of labour

perfectly governed republic whose moral and aesthetic health was still manifest in its surviving architectural and ornamental works. Ruskin conceived of Venice as a hierarchical though co-operative community of men and women of varying talents, for each of whom the "social space existed for the full expression of their creativity"⁽¹⁴⁾. This was his example of "Utopia" for the work class of Britain.

The clearest statement of Ruskin's views on art and society and his aversion to what was happening in industrial England can be found in the famous chapter "The Nature of the Gothic" in the second volume of his book Stones of Venice (1853), to which William Morris notably wrote the preface, describing it as "one of the very few and necessary and inevitable utterances of this century"⁽¹⁵⁾.

Ruskin juxtaposed the creative improvisation that was allowed to medieval craftsmen at work in the irregular Gothic style with the demanding Renaissance architects for whom nothing was acceptable except classical symmetry. In his view, the alienating regimental modern factory of nineteenth century England had derived ultimately from the Renaissance's obsession with order. Ruskin also believed that by splitting the country into "morbid thinkers and miserable workers", the factory system created a situation which was both morally and socially dangerous. Ruskin, fearing that a revolution of the working class was imminent, preached the work ethic of medieval cathedral builders who remained satisfied with their lot because they found "joy in their labour". (Fig. 4)

It is an interesting paradox that Ruskin, who on the one hand disclaimed vehemently the degrading effects that the Industrial Revolution was having upon mankind and his labour as society became obsessed only with material things, he should also on the other hand propose alternative methods of labour to keep the lower classes from rising above their station. Perhaps, as Jackson Lears suggests in No Place of Grace (1981), it was out of his own misgivings about the future vulnerability and displacement of his own class - the educated bourgeois.

Nevertheless, Ruskin and others, notably Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin in his book Contrasts continued to expound the endless virtues to be found in the better moral and social state of the medieval world. Other contemporaries too, embraced medievalism: the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood is a notable example. The medieval world was seen to be better, purer and more whole than nineteenth century England with its monstrous effects of industrialism and its decline towards visual and spiritual ugliness.

In Fors Clavigera (translated "Fortune the Nail Bearer"), consisting of eight-seven



fig.5 Photograph of William Morris,1889

letters (1871-1878), Ruskin proposes a fundamentally morally based socialism rather than a Marxist scientific emphasis, believing every man should work with his hands for a living. He advocates fanatically the need for a work ethic and he abhors the capital system (which the Antimodernists in nineteenth America also disclaimed) and he urges that only through an ideal social state will the necessary reform come about.

Ruskin tried to put these theories into practice when he founded The Guild of St. George in 1878. This was basically a rural organisation which embraced all those willing to live "the simple life". Its members engaged in exemplary acts, such as, land reclamation, road building, sweeping projects and linen manufacture, also contributing one tenth of their income to the Guild. It was a dismal failure, mainly because Ruskin (self-elected leader of the Guild), became so obsessed with his Utopia that he began disclaiming Darwinism, renaming all species of birds and animals, not to mention planning the Guild's very own monetary system. He did eventually go insane.

However, the Guild of St. George was the precursor of many later Utopian ventures, notably William Morris's and if one only looks at Ruskin's bizarre latter years it is possible to miss the point of his teaching. He believed the loss of God and nature (through the industrial destruction of the environment), combined with rampant technological development and an economic system driven by competition, could lead to the eventual annihilation of civilisation and perhaps even nature itself. Foreboding as this may seem, it has familiar connotations for contemporary society in the twentieth century and is the message of caution heralded by much of today's green movement in the call for action to protect the future life on and off our exhausted planet.

Despite his failure at reform Ruskin's teachings found very fruitful soil, in particular, proving to be the seminal influence on William Morris and perhaps as a result leading him to a career as one of the most renowned and influential designers and social thinkers of the nineteenth century. This alone has earned him a place of respect and constant reference in history. (Fig. 5)

The firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Company (1861) was initially set up to provide exclusive handmade furnishings of "genuine and beautiful character" as opposed to the shoddy, badly designed products of industrial mass production. Ironically, although only the wealthy upper classes could afford them, Morris maintained he was committed to catering for every man and not just the "swinish luxury of the rich"⁽¹⁶⁾. For Morris, as for Ruskin, art and society were inextricably linked and this became the basis for all his artistic and ultimately political endeavour



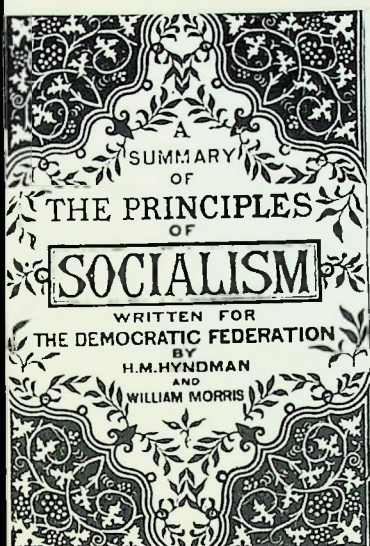
fig.6 Garland for May Day (1895) by Socialist League artist Walter Crane. It includes all the demands of Morris's aesthetic socialism.

in the form of his aesthetic socialism.

From 1877 on, socialism extended into every aspect of Morris's life and his artistic work and the company can also be viewed in this context. Morris believed that by living in a home-made beautiful by one's own effort, a fourfold effect could be gained - lost energies restored, exasperated nerves soothed, consolation offered and even relief from pain given⁽¹⁷⁾. This was his solution to the sickness and ugliness caused by industrialism in nineteenth century England. He called it the "art of living" and ultimately the "Aims of Art" in Signs of Change (1888).

Art was the expression of man's pleasure in successful labour and it became Morris's chief obsession in building his aesthetic socialist utopia into an "Earthly Paradise". If joy in labour was generally possible, then it was a "hideous injustice against society to compel most men to labour without pleasure⁽¹⁸⁾. Morris grieved the passing of nature's beauty, the obliteration of the arts and the destruction of man's true motivation to work resulting ultimately in his alienation, all of which he believed to be a direct result of capitalism in the industrial revolution.

In 1881, Morris began to set in motion the reality of his aesthetic social utopia with the firm's move to Merton Abbey in Surrey. Merton was truly "A Factory as it might be", where Morris's ideal notion of craftsmen busily employed at work they loved in shops that were in their own simple and beautiful dwellings. It was situated on seven acres of land which included a meadow, orchard and vegetable garden with willow and poplar trees and a mill pond. Working hours were less than normal and wages slightly higher with a partial system of profit sharing. The success of Merton Abbey both in terms of profits, the happy life and labour of the aesthetically sensitive workers and the beautifully crafted products reaffirmed Morris's belief in aesthetic socialism. It should be mentioned however, that the factory was subsidised by Morris. (Fig. 6, 7, 8 and 9)



SOCIALIST LEAGUE.
 ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND, 1890,
WM. MORRIS,
 OF LONDON.
Author of "The Earthly Paradise," "A Tale of the House of the Wrights," "The Defence of Combe," "The Life and Death of John Ball," "The Story of the Village," "Love is Enough," "A Dream of John Ball," "Signs of Change," "Translations of the Odes of Horace," and "The Words of Wey," etc. Editor of the "Commonwealth."
LECTURE
 IN THE
RADICAL CLUB, VINE STREET,
 ... (WHICH WILL BE OPEN FROM 1. THE PUBLIC).
 AT 3 P.M. SUBJECT I—
"HOW SHALL WE LIVE THEN?"
 THE FOLLOWING
LECTURES
 IN THE CO-OPERATIVE HALL, HIGH STREET,
 AT 8 P.M.
 Tuesday, Feb. 4th.—H. Holiday Spicing—"The Evolved Caneel."
 " 11th.—Amie Besset—"The Basis of Socialism."
 " 12th.—Stephen (Edith)—"Rural Democracy."
 " 13th.—W. Morris—"The Class Struggle."
ADMISSION FREE.
COLLECTION FOR EXPENSES. DISCUSSION INVITED.

THE SOCIALIST PLATFORM.—No. 2.

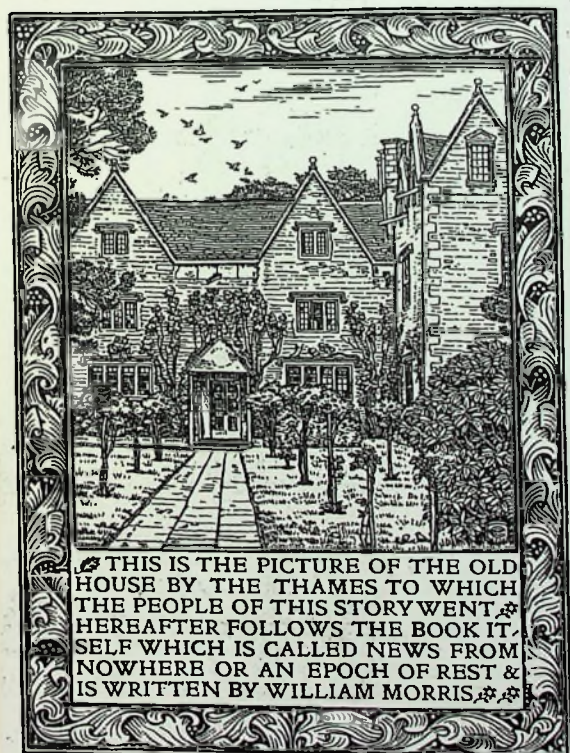


**"USEFUL WORK
 F.
 USELESS TOIL
 BY
 WILLIAM MORRIS.**

PRICE ONE PENNY.

LONDON:
 SOCIALIST LEAGUE OFFICE
 17 FARRINGTON ROAD, HOUGHTON VINE, E.C.

fig.7 Covers of some lecture pamphlets by William Morris 1884, 1885 and 1890



NEWS FROM NOWHERE OR
 AN EPOCH OF REST.
 CHAPTER I. DISCUSSION AND
 BED.

UP at the League, says a friend, there had been one night a brisk conversational discussion, as to what would happen on the Morrow of the Revolution, finally shading off into a vigorous statement by various friends, of their views on the future of the fully-developed new society.

YOUR friend: Considering the subject, the discussion was good tempered; for those present, being used to public meetings & after-lecture debates, if they did not listen to each other's opinions, which could scarcely be expected of them, at all events did not always attempt to speak all together, as is the custom of people in ordinary polite society when conversing

fig.8 News from Nowhere (1892) - Frontispiece by William Morris

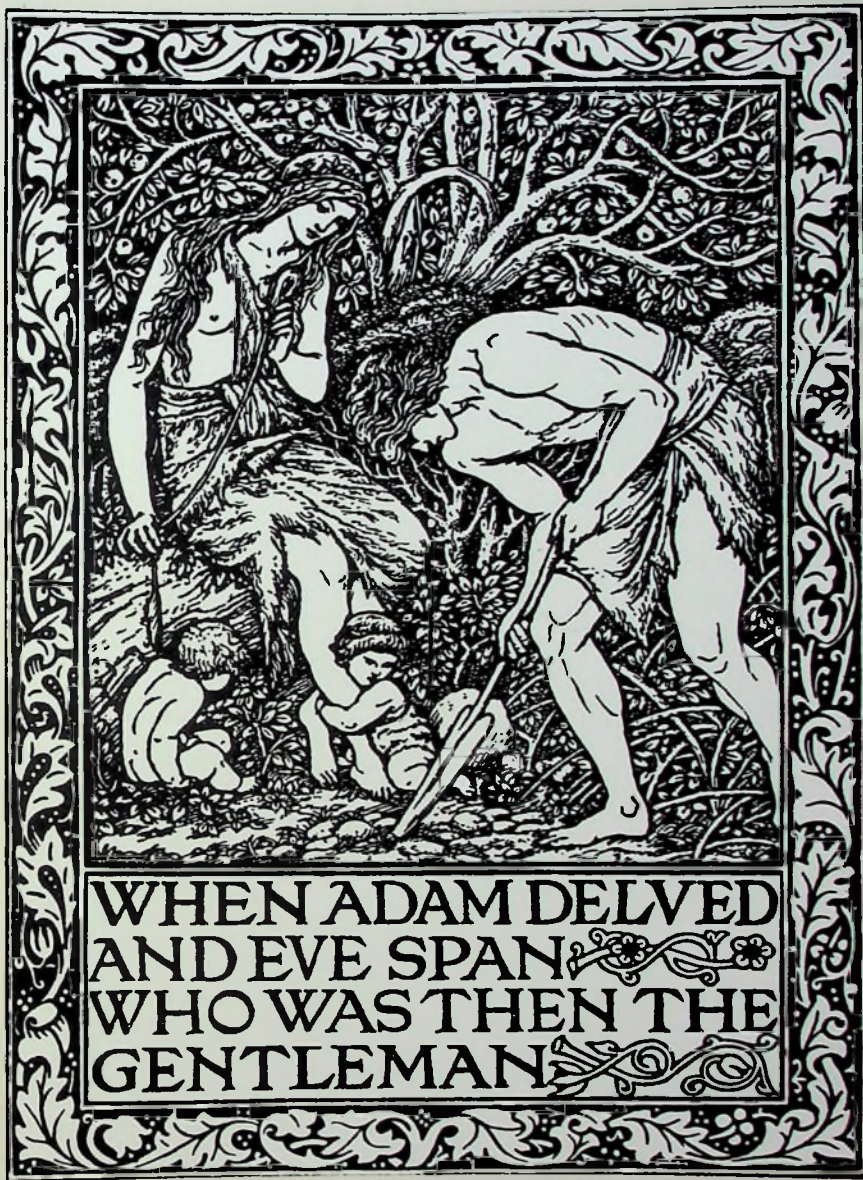


fig.9 *A Dream of John Ball* (1892) -
Frontpiece by Edward Burne Jones

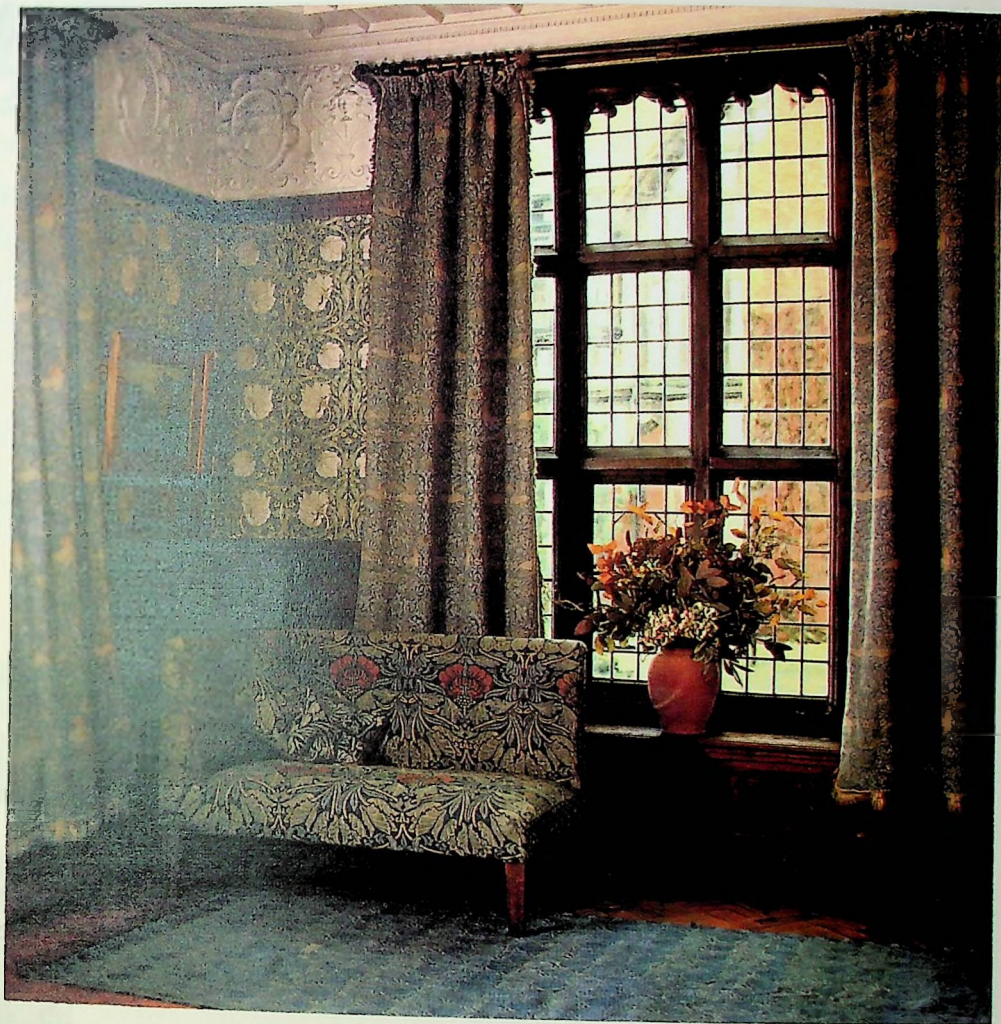


fig.10 Billard Room, Eightwick Manor, Stratfordshire
a house impregnated with Morris's nature.

Morris now began lectures (between 1877 and 1881) on how "man could make his house a healing container for his flagging or battered spirits"⁽¹⁹⁾ and his aim in life and work became "to make endurable the strange dwellings, the basest, the ugliest and the most inconvenient that men have ever built for themselves and which our own stupidity compel most of us to live in" (lecture "Making the Best of It, 1879). Nature played a major part in Morris's process of reform, and his aim in much of his design seems to have been to bring the outdoors indoors "I want the town to be impregnated with the country in short a garden with beautiful houses in it"⁽²⁰⁾. (Fig. 10) Morris felt that in the foreseeable future of this industrial age people would be starved of nature and therefore more likely to get it from his papers, chintz rugs, tiles and stained glass windows. (Fig. 11 and 12) It sounds more like a prophecy of what happened in the twentieth century, notably the last two decades with the growth of the Green Movement and the glut of "SPOOLA" culture which flooded the market of contemporary consumer society. Laura Ashley, Habitat and the Shaker Shop in London are just some examples of those who are catering for the "creation of a clean, pure, natural and beautiful lifestyle" which the 1980s promoted. (Lifestyle - An Earth Dweller's Guide to Life and the Universe, Summer 1990). (Fig. 13)

Alongside the study of natural forms, Morris believed the future of design was a tradition based on conservative one. Yet, this approach in no way hampered his originality, even though he was no avant-gardist (in the literal sense). He was however, in no way typical of those who designed for Victorian commercial manufacture. Morris's radicalism, perhaps, lay in his conservatism and his conservationism. By preserving traditions, and experimenting with them, as well as reviving many skills and crafts (pattern-making, weaving, book binding, etc.) Morris advocated a whole design approach. By thus encompassing all elements, true quality of design and workmanship, truth to materials and personal care of the maker, a true and moral work of art resulted.

It is perhaps this design approach which we could pay more heed to today. It is somewhere between the two extremes of the coldness of fully automated commercial production and the exclusiveness of "once off" or designer craft pieces. Morris may be dismissed as being boring and traditional, even regressive, but the fact remains that with the passing whims of much avant-garde or the eclectic pastiches of postmodern retro-culture, William Morris's designs remain as potent an influence as ever.

His work is perhaps a paradigm for sustainable design of the future, a concept which has become the fundamental priority of environmentally conscious designers of the twentieth century.



fig.11 *Vine Pattern*, wallpaper by William Morris



fig.12 *Larkspur Pattern*, wallpaper by William Morris



fig.13 Some items available at the Shaker Shop, London

Perhaps then today, in a society that is at once post-labourist, post-industrial and post-modern, William Morris has a new importance. His radical suggestion of a two tier economy in which fully automated production develops alongside a true renaissance in the creative arts and crafts acquires an unprecedented relevance to the problems of consumer society. Similarly his preoccupations with nature conservation and peace have a great significance in this troubled era of ecology.

Jackson Lears in his book "No Place of Grace" finds Ruskin and Morris to be forerunners of what is essentially known as anti-modernism. The subsequent transformation of American culture in the nineteenth century is a good example of how this sentiment became somewhat of a paradox and is perhaps why this period has not received the significance in history which it deserves.

Lears' book is in many ways a verification of the value of historical precedent in terms of relevance and revelation to contemporary life. Lears attempts to shed light upon the complex transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century and to suggest a framework for understanding this crucial period of history that is socially and intellectually more important than historians believe.

Nineteenth century anti-modernism questions the very basis of industrial capitalist society and runs much deeper than mere dilettantism or just the recurrence of a timeless Romantic theme. It is bound up with specific social and cultural transformations - during the nineteenth century and at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which seem to closely resemble the very complexities and confusions that exist in our time - the post-industrial, post-modern twentieth century.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, many beneficiaries of modern culture began to feel they were its secret victims; among both the educated and the wealthy on either side of the Atlantic, anti-modern sentiments spread. Anti-modernism recoils from an "overcivilised" modern existence to seek more intense forms of physical or spiritual experience supposedly embodied in medieval or oriental cultures. In America, as in Europe, anti-modernism affected more than a handful of intellectuals which pervaded the middle and upper classes and this is perhaps why there is an underlying paradox running constantly through it.

Just as Morris and Ruskin (both members of the educated upper classes) became aesthetes and reformers who sought to recover the hard but satisfying life of medieval craftsmen, later anti-modernists, in what became the international Arts and Crafts Movement (in Europe and America), they founded their ideas and action on the spirit of Morris's teachings but diffused his critique to later accommodate the very things to

which he was opposed. Although the Arts and Crafts movement sought the revival of handicrafts, it largely ignored Morris's career of socialist reform and agitation. By 1888, Morris was attacking the movement which had become synonymous with his life's work. Its "empty grumbings about the continuous march of machinery over dying handicraft" and its "various elegant little schemes"⁽²¹⁾ for encouraging public appreciation of arts and crafts angered Morris because none of it touched the heart of the matter - the degradation of work. In the philosophy of the Arts and Crafts movement, William Morris lost any revolutionary significance and became the patron saint of nostalgic aestheticism.

Anti-modernism then, though it is rooted in reaction against secularising tendencies has thus helped to ease accommodation (as in the Arts and Crafts movement) to new and even more secular modes. This ambivalence exists in enthusiasm for material progress on the one hand and the quest for intense and authentic spiritual experience on the other. It is this ironic path of accommodation to secularising modes, although often an unintended consequence of post-modern efforts, which has restricted its credibility and value as historical precedent to the social and cultural complexities of its time and of today. Anti-modernism is often thus dismissed as the mere escapism of an elite in society who found their position undermined by the transformation effected by the Industrial Revolution.

Lears believes anti-modernism to be much more than that and admits to being attracted to it initially because he too shared discontent with modern culture, "its humanist hubris, its complacent creed of progress"⁽²²⁾. Because of this, Lears also wishes his book to be an historically informed critique of "capitalist culture" though he recognises the failure of "progressive left" solutions as well. In order to do this he found the most powerful criticism tended to look back rather than forward, inevitably reinforcing the relevance of historical precedent to contemporary life. Lears admits to being on the one hand a product and beneficiary of the democratic capitalist system of which there is much worth admiring and keeping but which at the same time has served to legitimise many of the ills of contemporary consumer society. On the other hand, Lears is attracted to a Marxian critique but recognises its shortcomings, those which Morris called the "quasi-socialist" machinery of improved administration rather than a humane socialist community. Lears ultimately suggests democratic socialism as being the ideal alternative to the ills of contemporary society - one which the truest anti-modernists (such as Morris) also aimed at, but which the majority gave up with the temptation of material wealth and self gratification.

Anti-modernism, in Lears' view (he cites the life of several nineteenth century

American anti-modernists, by way of proving this, in his book "No Place of Grace") did eventually adapt its anti-modern alternative to the secular purposes they initially sought to oppose. In doing so, it also became the instrument for promoting intense experience and individualism rather than a path to salvation. Craftsmanship became less a path to satisfying communal work than a therapy for tired businessmen, capitalists and consumers. The careers of many of the American Arts and Crafts movement's key figures, such as Edward Pearson Pressey, Gustav Stickley and Charles Eliot Norton, are good examples. All members of the educated upper class, they took aboard the teachings of Ruskin and Morris to revitalise themselves and their vulnerable position in the transforming culture of industrial growth.

Other fundamentals of anti-modernism also became instruments of promoting "authentic experience" and individualism. What Lears calls the "marital ideal" no longer meant "a quest for the Grail" but a quest for foreign markets. Even Catholicism, art and ritual became a means of exalting "authentic experience" as an end in itself. Anti-modernism reinforced the shift from a Protestant ethos of salvation through self-denial to a therapeutic ideal of self-fulfillment in this world through more wealth and experience. The older and more moral ethos promoted "producer culture" of industrialising entrepreneurial society while the newer and less moral one embraced "consumer culture" of a bureaucratic corporate state. Thus anti-modernism is perhaps much more than escapism, but it eases both the anti-modernists themselves and others' adjustment to a "streamlined culture of consumption"⁽²³⁾.

Anti-modernism at its most profound is perhaps a minority group which has questioned the very basis of industrial capitalism society, representing "a chastened scepticism" about humankind's power to reshape the world in its own image ⁽²⁴⁾. It questions not only the unjust distribution of wealth and power but the modern ethic of instrumental rationality that "desanctified the outer world of nature and the inner world of the self - reducing both to manipulative objects"⁽²⁵⁾. This is loudly affirmed by the widespread international Green Movement of today's twentieth century. For example Kathleen Raine's essay "Outer World as Inner World" in the "Green Fuse. Schumacher lectures 1983-89" deals with exactly this notion.

In selected examples from the past century, it is possible to see the value of historical precedent as a major factor in helping to understand the contemporary workings of today's society. It also sheds some light upon the notion of consumer society as we know it today and conveys the growth of an ideology which from the beginning has dissented from the mainstream of industrial growth - one which has been transformed today and become more familiar under the guise of the Green Movement.

Chapter 1: Footnotes

1. Ivan Illich - Tools for Conviviality, New York 1973 Chpt 2 p.5
2. Illich, op. cit. Chpt 2 p.6
3. Illich, op. cit. Chpt 2 p.7
4. Hugh Honour and John Fleming -
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Part 4, Chpt 15 "Romanticism to Realism" p. 451
5. Jackson Lears - No Place of Grace - Antimodernism
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7. Honour and Fleming, op. cit. Part 4,
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13. Fuller, op. cit.
(quotes Dr Jeanne Cleggy of the Arts Council, London) Chpt 36 p.278
14. Fuller, op. cit. Chpt 36 p.288
15. Lional Lambourne - Utopian Craftsmen - The Arts and
Craft Movement from Cotswold to Chicago London 1980 Chpt 1 p.13
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17. Roderick Marshall - William Morris and his Early
Paradise Chpt X p.239
18. Fuller, op. cit. Chpt 37 p.286
19. Lambourne, op. cit. Chpt 10 p.281
20. Lambourne, op. cit.
reference to "Hopes and Fears for Art" Chpt 10 p.242
21. Lears, op. cit. Chpt 2 p.63
22. Lears, op. cit. Preface p.(xx)
23. Lears, op. cit. Preface p.(xiv)
24. Lears, op. cit. Preface p.(xiv)
25. Lears, op. cit. Preface p.(xi)

CHAPTER 2

Twentieth Century Antimodernism

Ivan Illich proclaimed nearly two decades ago that the second watershed of industrial and technological growth was in our midst. The past three decades have produced some of the greatest "antimodernist" thinkers of the late twentieth century. In the context of this discussion I have chosen the work of three men, Lewis Mumford, Ivan Illich and E. F. Schumacher, who in turn have tried to examine the problems of our machine age where both man and the natural environment have been displaced in the "reality" of life. Mumford and Illich, like most of their nineteenth century antimodernist predecessors, are essentially concerned with man's unhappy relationship to pervading industrial and technological growth. While both men do suggest alternatives, they never seem to have effected any realisation of their theories in society perhaps because they have overlooked a fundamental element - nature. It is in the life's work of E. F. Schumacher that the solutions they were groping towards can be ultimately found. E. F. Schumacher, now heralded as one of the alternative social and economic thinkers of our time, through his life's work has become a cornerstone of the Green Movement as we know it today and his book Small is Beautiful (1973) often proclaimed its bible.

By examining the intertwined relationships of mankind, the machine (industrialism) and the natural environment through the writing of these men, it is possible to begin exploring in some way the transformation of green ideology in consumer society today.

In 1951, Lewis Mumford gave a series of lectures in Columbia University which were then published in the book Art and Technics. In this, Mumford explores the relationship of art and technics as one of the fundamental components which makes up contemporary society - just as Ruskin and Morris believed art and society to be inextricably linked. Even though Art and Technics was written nearly forty years ago, it underlines "many of the shocking contradictions and tragic paradoxes" of present day's, almost post industrial society, that Mumford refers to as "an interesting age"⁽¹⁾.

Art is mainly an expression of the inner life and the purpose of art is to widen the "province of personality", is feelings, emotions, attitudes and values that can be transmitted to other cultures. Thus man has a means of internalising the external world and externalising his internal world⁽²⁾. Also with the aid of the symbol in art, man has developed art as a means of communication which can unite times past with times present and times present with ideal possibilities still to emerge in the future. This is the purest function of art according to Mumford.

Technics (a derivative of techniques and technology) in its purest sense, Mumford

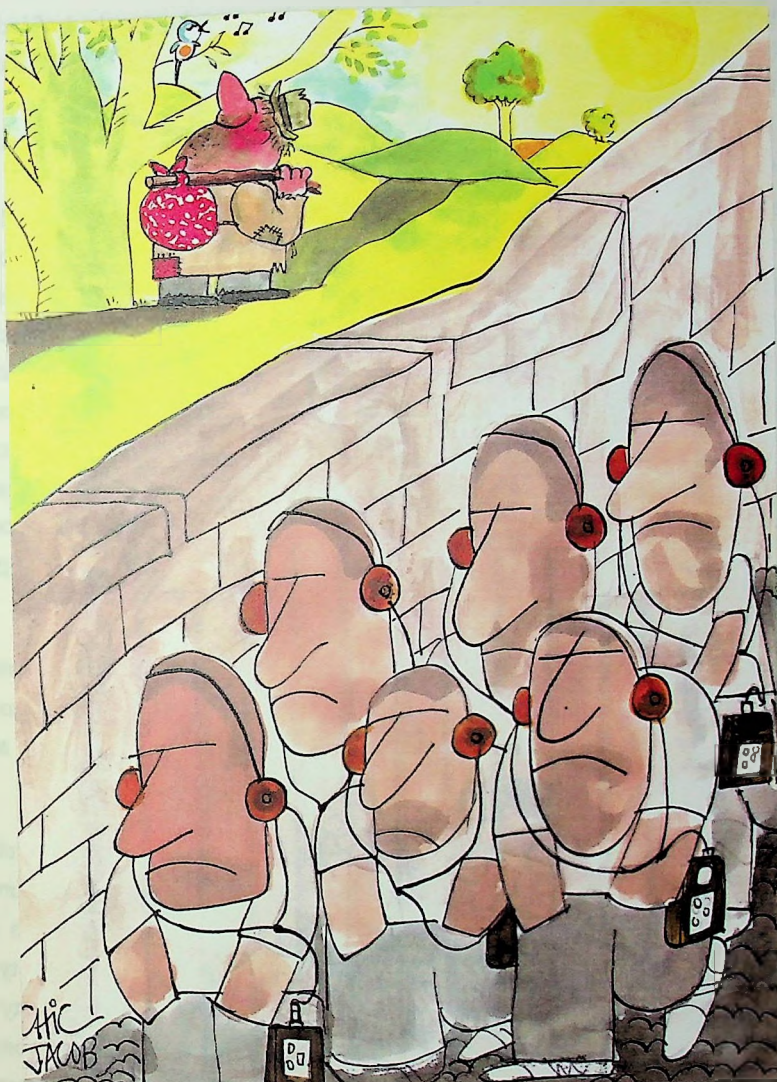


fig.14 Cartoon by Chic Jacob, UK, 1987.

believes to be the part of human activity, through the energetic organisation of the process of work that man controls and directs the forces of nature for his own purposes⁽³⁾.

Technics and art are thus, as Mumford claims in their purest forms, rooted in man's use of his own body and physical energy. The problem which has arisen in contemporary consumer society is that the courses of both art and technics have diverged in the past decades becoming perverted on the path to material progress which is the fundamental goal that today's consumer society ultimately strives towards.

During the last two centuries, there has been a vast expansion of the material means of living, throughout the world. Instead of this producing a much happier and healthier world state, developed to widely distribute leisure "favourable to the cultivation of inner life and the production and enjoyments of the arts"⁽⁴⁾, we find ourselves more than ever absorbed in the process of mechanisation, in fact passive rather than active beings. (Fig. 14)

We thus produce in effect one of the greatest paradoxes and problems of this technological age. As Mumford puts it: "All our hard won mastery of the physical world now threatens in the twentieth century the very existence of the human race"⁽⁵⁾, man has taken a back seat to his mechanical creation. By this supposed "humanisation" of the machine the paradox is vindicated in the mechanising of humanity and the resultant loss of the arts which once nourished man's humanity and spirituality.

Most of the great artists of the last two centuries have been in revolt against the machine and have proclaimed the autonomy of the human spirit for its spontaneity and creativity which a machine can never have. Unfortunately, however, in most of the twentieth century that protest has died away and people have begun to worship the machine and its masters because they represent the essence (or the illusion) of material progress. Thus a part of man's nature - art, expression of inner life - has been suppressed and man has become an exile in this mechanical world - "a Displaced Person"⁽⁶⁾.

It is important to establish here that Mumford is not wholly opposed to the use of one machine (which is evident in his lecture - "Handicraft to Machine Art") and neither are indeed Illich or Schumacher or even today's staunchest Greens. Mumford like many others, is calling for a re-evaluation of the present state of man's relationship to this mechanical world whose paradoxical path of progress has produced many

detrimental social and cultural effects. This "curse" that is accompanied by the "genuine gift" of the development of technology comes from "over commitment to the external"⁽⁷⁾, that is, the quantitative outputs - the ends which have come to justify the means. Inner life has become impoverished by the material values of consumer society.

What is needed is not a regression back to pre-industrial society but the establishment of limits within which machines can work without threatening the existence of man and his environment. Salvation, according to Mumford, lies in the readaptation of the machine to the human personality, "A human pattern, a human measure and above all a human goal must transform the activities and processes of technics"⁽⁸⁾.

Ivan Illich's Tools for Conviviality (1973) develops exactly this search for human limits on technology. Illich is essentially concerned with the social and political problems of industrial and technological growth, while Mumford is more concerned with the aesthetic dimension. Both are aware of the importance of man's relationship to his tools (the machine) with regard to his physical, moral and spiritual upkeep and well being. The need for a balance to restore man's wholeness in modern industrial society must be introduced into this relationship. This is exactly what Mumford and Illich are groping towards and what Morris devoted his life to. It is also the principle preoccupation with the subsequent search for harmony between man, his tools and the natural environment that is the essence of what is termed Green Ideology.

The first step towards this balance is to actually stop and recognise failure. The hypothesis of the industrial revolution was that machines can replace slaves but the evidence is all around us that machines enslave men. Illich suggests that as the power of machines increases, the role of persons more and more decreases to that of mere consumers. Illich believes these adverse effects of technological and industrial growth will only be eradicated when society acknowledges their existence and deals with them accordingly. In effect the methodology by which to recognise means which have turned into ends is the basis for his "convivial reconstruction".

This reconstruction is learning to invert the present deep structure of tools and production. People should be given convivial tools which guarantee their right to work with high independent efficiency as well as enhancing their range of freedom. Also a new system of production should be designed to satisfy the human needs which it also determines. Illich's call for conviviality means the "autonomous and creative intercourse of persons with their environment"⁽⁹⁾. No amount of industrial production can satisfy the needs it creates among society's members. This is what consumer society as we know it today is based upon - infinite desires and demands

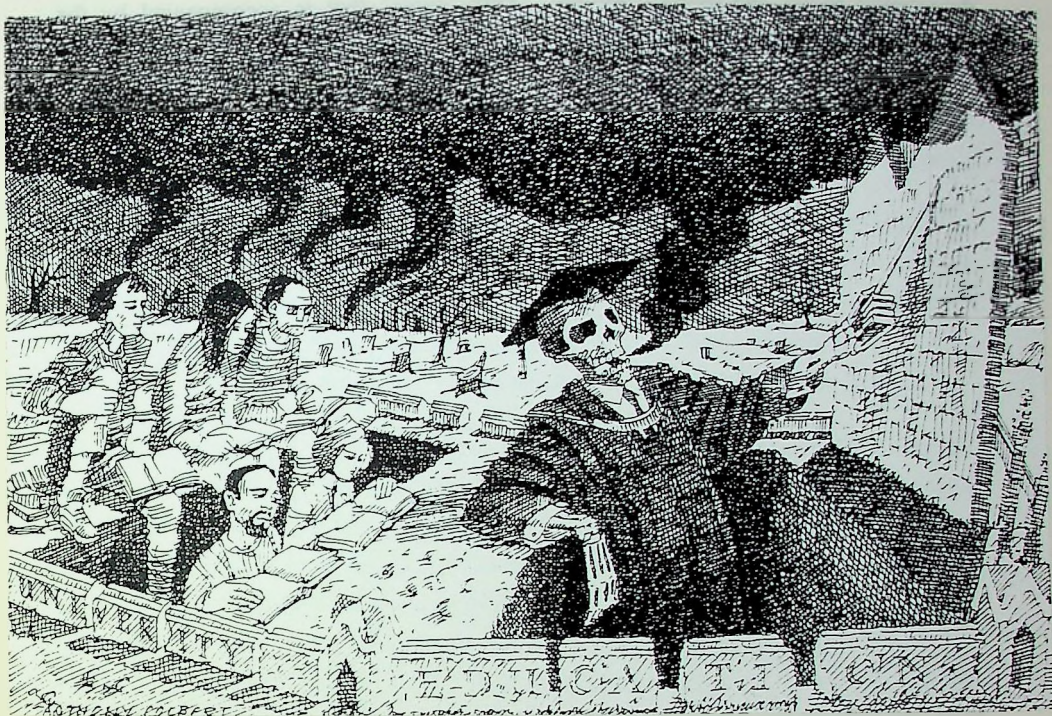


fig.15 This illustration by Anthony Colbert, accompanies David's Or's article in Resurgence Jan/Feb 1991, *What's Education?* - "Is its purpose to oil the wheels of industrial society and dominate nature?"

upon a finite source (the earth).

Throughout Tools for Conviviality, Illich continues to expound the virtues of creating a convivial world. He takes education and the medieval profession as being the best examples of manipulative institutions which are a result of approaching the second watershed. Furthering specialisation into segregated areas which together make up that institution (e.g. education and the medical profession), means people - the general public are exploited and conned by their dependence upon them. The simplest of ailments must now receive the appropriate specialised treatment just as the amounts of "useful" knowledge one can learn will dictate one's position within society. (Fig. 15)

Illich identifies six ways in which "all people of the world" are threatened by industrial development after passage through the second watershed ⁽¹⁰⁾. Illich's criteria must surely contribute to any contemporary critique of modern consumer society, but his arguments are often blurred by a complex use of language and terms, which tend to make his work less accessible and perhaps detract from what he has to say.

The first way in which society is threatened Illich calls "Biological Degradation". This means that overgrowth of the fundamentals of life of the natural environment (the earth) through which man has evolved. In other words unless we stop this process whereby all progression is dictated by material values man will find himself totally enclosed within his artificial creation - a prisoner of technology cut off from the reality of his natural and ancient environment to which he has adapted for hundreds of thousands of years.

The second effect of "Radical Monopoly" whereby over efficient tools upset man's independence as a human being in the environment. That is, radical monopolies produce dominant types of products which completely overwhelm any other means (be they non-industrial) of satisfying that created need. Man thus loses his confidence and capacity for satisfying his own needs (as he used to in the past) and becomes dependent upon that very thing (industrial progression) which is destroying his independence. Man is reduced to a passive consumer not an active creator which is his natural instinct. This point is very important as it underlines the illusion of today's consumer society as being merely an artificial creation of our industrial conditioning age.

Over programming, yet another of the evils of Illich's second watershed, is basically the notion of how all education methods have become perverted as only means to a

social material end. Subsequently, learning becomes like a consumer commodity and destroys man's individualism and deadens his creative and "poetic ability"⁽¹¹⁾. This helps to explain Mumford's sense of loss of the "arts" in an age of "technics" and is perhaps prophetic of postmodernist theory, especially Jean Baudrillard's general theory of the "end of the possibilities of Art" or the more general ending of "Reality" itself "in a kitsch world of endless simulation" ("Postmodernism in a nominalist frame" by John Rajdman). Illich sees no saving grace for today's education systems which he believes encompass every evil of the second watershed. Education in consumer society means a passive though well informed and specialised knowledge, suitable only for material ends, as opposed to the active, creative, convivial learning towards the spiritual and moral upkeep of man's being. Whether this is a fair approximation or not is to my mind very debatable.

"Polarisation", Obsolesce and "Frustration" are the three other titles of the ways in which the second watershed presents a threat. "Polarisation" represents the notion that as industrial progress pushes on, oblivious to all obstacles in its course, the rich continue to get richer and the poor continue to get poorer. Those in power will stay in power and the very means by which society tries to solve its injustices - politics - will no longer offer the participatory rights of all but become the radical monopoly of a rich elite.

"Obsolesce" is a factor which is increasingly escalating in today's consumer society. It is what keeps it going - the constant never ending desires for new to replace old and modern to replace "out of fashion". It is but a manufactured concept, one to which society has become industrially conditioned. All it ultimately does, like the rest of Illich's evils, is proclaim even louder to our deafened materialist ears, the ultimate paradox of consumer society. Obsolesce threatens the right to tradition and has meant judgement on the recourse to precedents (in language, myth and morals)⁽¹²⁾ has lost its value. In effect, we have lost our very roots (our environmental sense of tradition and culture) in the pointless pursuit of insatiable material desires.

The last effect of Illich's second watershed is "Frustration" which has resulted in a combination of the other five elements together. It symbolises all those elements of consumer society which would enable it to become "convivial".

I have thus underlined Illich's methods for recognising the failure of industrial progress which help to evaluate the notion of contemporary consumer society and provide some clues as to why an alternative which has recently been termed "green ideology" has an unprecedented relevance in the last decade.

Although the understanding and realisation of the problems of industrial growth and consumer society is a half-way step towards a solution to present practical workable alternatives poses an enormously difficult task. In fact, when it comes to presenting such alternatives, Illich and Mumford can fall far short. Illich's theories of "Recovery" through the "Demythologisation of science", the recovery of traditional legal procedure sounds suspiciously vague ⁽¹³⁾. His "political inversion" of voting majorities in favour of a specific institutional limitation which is at the same time composed of "very disparate" elements is again vague and very often contradictory and acutely pessimistic ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Mumford's offer of salvation is through cultural integration. This envisions art and technics bound up in harmony once more as was the case in pre-industrial times where man's need was both "to express his inner life and to control his outer life" ⁽¹⁵⁾. Despite his optimism, and perhaps as a result of industrially conditioned scepticism of anything outside the realm of tangible mechanical reality, Mumford's proposals remain somewhat unrealistic and unconvincing.

This perhaps explains why the importance of so antimodernist thought has been discredited as offering a worthwhile social critique both in the past (as Lears proved) and in the present where much of the Green Movement is regarded with scepticism, often scorned as a throwback to the hippy "flower-power" era.

Sadly this may also explain why many fascinating antimodern alternatives offered by the likes of Mumford and Illich lack any "real" substance and it remains they are just that - theories of reference and not practical, active realities.

My next chapter will focus upon the life work of E. F. Schumacher who remains one of the only practitioners of the antimodern alternatives that he preaches. In Schumacher's theories and the realities of his life's work, the aims of many antimodern thinkers are perhaps unified and achieved. The essential difference between Schumacher and his predecessors is that he re-evaluates the nineteenth century belief that man's purpose is to dominate and conquer nature and confirm his position as the highest of all evolved beings. Schumacher sees man as an integral part of nature - the life force which sustains him and whose purpose is to protect and conserve it since it is the very system which sustains all life.

Schumacher has thus become a cornerstone of the Green Movement today and much of the practical activity that "green ideology" offers as a solution to the problems of consumer society is founded essentially in Schumacher's spirit and the fundamental notion that "Small is Beautiful".

Chapter 2: Footnotes

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|-----|---|------------------------------|
| 1. | Lewis Mumford - <u>Art and Technics</u> New York 1960 | Chpt 1 p. 6 |
| 2. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 17 |
| 3. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 15 |
| 4. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 6 |
| 5. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 4 |
| 6. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 9 |
| 7. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 10 |
| 8. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 1 p. 14 |
| 9. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 2 p. 11 |
| 10. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 3 "Multiple
Balance" |
| 11. | Illich, op. cit. | Chpt 3 p. 65 |
| 12. | Illich, op. cit. | Chpt 3 p. 79 |
| 13. | Illich, op. cit. | Chpt 4 p. 90 |
| 14. | Illich, op. cit. | Chpt 5 p. 116/117 |
| 15. | Mumford, op. cit. | Chpt 6 p. 161 |

CHAPTER 3

E.F. Schumacher - Cornerstone of the Green Movement



fig.16 Photograph of E.F. Schumacher, 1973

Dr. Fritz Schumacher is one of the most unusual economists of our time because he has considered economics as if people and the environment mattered. Economics is the fundamental drive for all modern industrial and technological growth, as well as consumer society. Schumacher believes however, that economics is not sufficient as the sole drive behind all our activity unless it is accompanied by ecological and spiritual well-being. This view is best expounded in his book Small is Beautiful (1973) which has almost become the bible of the Green Movement today. (Fig. 16)

Within Small is Beautiful, Schumacher deals with every problem of consumer society hitherto mentioned by Illich, Mumford and various other twentieth century antimodernists who have also dissented from mainstream industrial progress. However, Schumacher's criteria, unlike many of his antimodern predecessors are simpler and more coherent and accessible to most people while also including thought for the natural environment. The proof of this is apparent, firstly, from the practical realities fo Schumacher's own life's work in which he has turned his words into actions and secondly in the legacy he has left to the Green Movement whose strength and credibility has grown over the last two decades.

The first part of Small is Beautiful is simply entitled "The Modern World". Schumacher sees the most "fateful of errors" of our material, mechanical age to be the problem of production , one which Mumford, Illich and other like Andre Gorz, took great pains, often submerging in complex social and political critiques, to explain. For Schumacher it is, however, simpler - the commonly held belief that the problem of production has been solved is in "fact a fallacy" and is the ultimate illusion of progress created by this expanding industrial age. He considers, it is mainly due to our inability to recognise that modern industrial systems fail to follow one most basic law of "good economics" (which in turn determines success in our consumer society), that is the distinction between capital and income. The problem, is that he feels modern industrial systems mistake their capital for income and squander it recklessly. This "capital", as Schumacher refers to it, is made up of the very resources from the natural environment not man-made and mostly irreplaceable which make industrial production possible in the first place. This "natural capital" is made up of "fossil fuels, the tolerance margins of nature and the human substance"⁽¹⁾ and is exactly what modern industry neglects and abuses along its path of environmental destruction to illusive material progress. These are the three components which Satish Kumar (a renowned contemporary environmentalist) refers to as "soil, soul and society" in The Green Fuse - The Schumacher Lectures 1983-1989 (1990). They also contribute in some way to every one of the various green alternatives to modern consumer society that the movement has offered in the last decade.

Schumacher's theories and work are among the most profound influences upon the contemporary Green Movement, whose strength and credibility have grown tremendously over the last decade. Because of the diversity and global nature of the movement's growth it is not possible to examine it in detail in this dissertation. I will thus focus on the theory and work of E. F. Schumacher by way of exploring the fundamentals of "Green ideology" and make brief parallels with the contemporary Green Movement as I proceed.

"Peace and Permanence" are two virtues expounded by Schumacher in his search for "new economics". He thinks they can only be realised where there is a full recognition of the failure of production (as previously mentioned) and of a second paradox which is also a dominant modern belief namely that the foundations of peace and happiness and permanence can be found only "in universal prosperity"⁽²⁾. Indeed the so called ills of modern society such as violence, poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation, which now have a bland familiarity to the majority of us, are such that we accept them as going hand in hand with our desperate quest for peace and happiness in the illusion of material progress. In other words, we are not yet aware that this paradox will never lead to any permanence.

Schumacher claims that the development of science and technology over the past hundred years has been such that the "dangers" have grown even faster than the opportunities⁽³⁾. This is being constantly reaffirmed today by the overwhelming evidence (of ozone depletion, the green house effect, acid rain, the list goes on and on) that the great self-balancing system of nature or "Gaia" (as James Lovelock recalls this theory in his book "Hothouse Earth" 1989) is slowly but surely breaking down. Man has been continually taking from the earth without ever giving anything back.

Unfortunately, although Schumacher (and Gandhi) recognised this decades before subsequent scientific verifications, consumer society is only now being jolted into the realisation of its actions. In other words, the growth and credibility of green ideology in consumer society in the last decades before these scientific verifications, are a direct result of its first realisation that such a society consumes the very basis on which it has been erected. Both Schumacher and the Green Movement believe this recognition to be the first step towards recovery. The next steps are much more difficult, - reconciling that life relationship between man, his tools (industrialism) and the natural environment.

Economics plays a central role in shaping the activities of the modern world, in as much as it supplies the criteria of what is "economic" and what is "uneconomic"⁽⁴⁾.

There is no other set of criteria that exercises a greater influence over the actions of individuals and groups as well as over governments. It is no wonder then, that Schumacher's "new economics" have become fundamental to the Green Movement's policies. Schumacher's alternative economics is composed of a re-orientation of science and technology as well as mans' spiritual and moral reconstruction. The twofold effect of these will be universal peace and permanence which we claim to be ultimately searching for.

The problem with science and technology today, according to Schumacher (and the Green Movement), is that their cleverness replaces their wisdom and allows them to violate the natural environment and displace man. The alternative to this must be a new eco-technology which is cheap enough to be accessible to virtually everyone and suitable for small scale application as well as being compatible with man's capacity for creativity. Out of the above characteristics is born non-violence and relationship of man to nature which guarantees permanence and thus one of the essential aims of the entire Green Movement.

The realities of these ideals can be found in Schumacher's work. For many years he was economics adviser to the British National Coal Board and sought to break the multinational organisation into smaller, more people orientated subsidiaries as well as introducing an employees share scheme. Schumacher also founded the " Intermediate Technology Development Group" in the late 1960s, whose criteria he offers as being some way toward a solution the gross injustices of the Third World.

Schumacher conceived Intermediate Technology as a means of helping the people in the "non-modern sector" of developing countries. It is in the poorest areas that the roots of the Third Worlds' continual decay can be found, where rural unemployment and little hope of any future employment cause the migration of poverty-stricken masses to the modern or urban sectors. This in turn causes over-population, further urban employment figures and numerous problems resulting in "mutual poisoning" of all the parts of these Third World countries. Schumacher's Intermediate Technology focuses directly upon the non-modern sectors of these countries, unlike many of the established aid schemes from the First World which focus on the modern sector.

Intermediate Technology proposes the creation of workplaces in the areas that people are now living in, that these workplaces be cheap enough to be created in large numbers and that production methods be relatively simple as well as from mainly local materials for local use. By this regional or district approach, the area is protected from the competition of huge mass production and ideally creates a "culture structure" at the same time. Also, the use of appropriate technology (perhaps

convivial tools) means that it is more people centred and less "economic" centred. Thus the distinction between "capital intensive" and "labour intensive" industry arises⁽⁵⁾. Schumacher's Intermediate Technology pays heed to the primary need of all people - to work for some reward which enables them to sustain life. It is geared towards helping people to help themselves and become self-sufficient, not dependent in an alienating machine world.

"If you give fish to the hungry man you feed him for one day but if you give him a fishing rod you feed him for the rest of his life⁽⁶⁾.

Intermediate Technology is a genuine step forward in the application of all the scientific and technological sophistication which we now possess because it is made appropriate to the ever-growing labour surplus societies that feel useless in this present machine age. Through Schumacher's Intermediate Technology, mass production is transformed into productive masses.

"Intermediate Technology" also extends its influence today into nearly every green alternative put forward to counteract the ills of consumer society. Because they are too numerous and various to examine in this dissertation, the following list of references will serve as some verification of where Schumacher's Intermediate Technology has been adapted by the work and writings of many renowned contemporary figures of the Green Movement. Rudolph Bahro's "Logic of Deliverance" (essay in *The Green Fuse*, 1990) and the foundations of ecological politics fighting the megamachine of industrialism, can be found in his book From Red to Green (1984); Arne Naess as one of the founders of "Deep Ecology" which influences green political parties all over the globe, especially in Scandinavia; Jonathon Porrit, an active member of the British Green Party and crusader of sustainable economics, apparent in his book Seeing Green (1989) and in his BBC documentary series "Where on earth are we going?" (1990); A. T. Ariyaratne, founder of the Sarodaya Sharamadana Movement of Sri Lanka; James Lovelock - scientist and environmentalist of the global cause who founded the "Gaia" theory. There are countless other examples.

The second component of Schumacher's "new economics" is concerned with ecological and spiritual well-being as an integral part of his "Intermediate Technology" and also with another fundamental policy which the Green Movement tirelessly expounds. This identifies the need for man's work to first, be more human rather than mechanical, thus leaving room for his creativity, and, secondly, to be reconciled with the environment, considering nature as the primary life force from which man has evolved. It is in the "soil" and the "proper use of the land" that the

unification of these two can be best brought about. Schumacher made this realisation, one which he calls "Buddhist Economics"⁽⁷⁾, while acting as overseas economics adviser to the government of Burma.

The Buddhist approach sees spiritual health and material well-being not as enemies but natural allies in the universal agreement that the "fundamental source of wealth is in human labour"⁽⁸⁾. From this viewpoint the function of work is threefold: first, to give man a chance to utilise and develop his facilities; secondly, to enable him to overcome his egocentredness by joining with others in a common task and thirdly, to bring forth good, and service the need for a "becoming existence". Consumer society's notion of work is more concerned with "outputs" than with people, thus dividing work and leisure into separate human activities - "man as a producer" and "man as a consumer"⁽⁹⁾. In the Buddhist's eyes this is a complete misunderstanding of one of the "basic truths of human existence", namely that work and leisure are complementary parts of the same whole living process and cannot be separated without destroying the "joy of work" and the bliss of leisure.

The keynote of "Buddhist economics" is simplicity and non-violence and how to attain given ends with the minimum means. It calls for all people to satisfy their needs by a modest use of natural resources which are limited and often irreplaceable. Buddhists recognise they are indebted to the earth, which is in fact their sustainable lifeforce. Thus the Buddhist relationship to the earth is one of replenishment and they conserve resources rather than waste them. They purify the environment rather than polluting it and are in harmony with nature through a meditation of its beauty. Their role is that of "stewardship", which Jonathan Porritt has constantly proclaimed. It is the religious duty of every Buddhist, as Schumacher discovered in Burma, to plant five trees and tend to their maturity. Schumacher stresses the tremendous "economic" value that this simple idea could have toward a solution to many Third World countries - "It could be done so cheaply yet the results would produce food stuffs, fibres, building materials, shade water, almost everything that man needs"⁽¹⁰⁾.

Schumacher believed the least practical way to the Buddhist approach must, in the replenishment of the soul of "consumer society", thus enabling us to build sustainable economics. Throughout his life Schumacher (he died in 1977), was a keen gardener and tree planter - he was president of the Soul Association and tirelessly promoted the organic cause and the "proper use of the land"⁽¹¹⁾.

There is another dominant belief today in the westernised world that man has become independent of nature through his scientific and technological progress. Unfortunately, it is only as recent scientific verification of a pending ecological crisis

have become widespread that we are slowly realising the inherent fallacy of this belief. Man and all living creatures of the earth make up an interdependent lifeforce and to violate any part will inevitably have disastrous effects on the whole.

In farming and agriculture Schumacher finds the most satisfying of alternatives to the ills of modern society. Agriculture keeps man in touch with living nature, of which he thus realises he is and must remain a vulnerable part. It also serves to humanise and ennoble man's wider habitat and bring forth food stuffs and other materials which are needed for life⁽¹²⁾.

Working with the soil helps to dispel one of the misunderstood notions of the nineteenth century which still exists today. Although man is proved to be the most highly evolved being upon earth, he does not have the right to use and abuse all other "levels of being" to satisfy his every desire. This is where the proper use of the land calls for a metaphysical approach like that of the Buddhist. Man must recognise his place on the ladder of "levels of being" and act accordingly. After all, before human activity became so conditioned to strive only for material wealth, there existed something else for which to strive. That something is the "centre", the soul or good part that is in all of mankind and enables him to create an orderly system of ideas about himself and the world which will regulate and give direction to his life's strivings⁽¹³⁾. This "centre" in today's consumer society is lost somewhere, misplaced by the illusion of material wealth as the only sensible aim in life. Schumacher continually underlines the need to restore metaphysical values to man. It is the only way man and the natural environment can hope to transcend the obvious destructive powers of infinite industrial and technological growth. (Fig. 17)

According to Schumacher, working with the soil will reinstate many values such as wisdom, love and beauty which seem strangely alien and too spiritual for the reality of contemporary modern society. Working with the soil also counteracts the alienation and depersonalisation of labour in a machine world. It re-establishes man's faith in himself, his own abilities, rather than dependence upon machines for the most successful and "economic" results. People can do things for themselves and it is the most natural thing for every person born to use his own hands in a productive way.

By a combination then of "Intermediate Technology", the proper use of the land and man's metaphysical reconstruction, Schumacher hopes to cure the social and ecological ills of this industrial and technological age. Whether they seem utopian or idealistic does not really matter; the fact remains they have become the basis for the fundamental policies of today's Green Movement, whose strength and credibility is growing more powerful by the day. Membership of its many organisation, such as

Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and other conservation groups have increased in their thousands in the last decade. Even the latest Euro-Elections have been astonishing victories for green ideas and for green parties, especially in Scandinavia, Germany and Britain. Quality of life and ecological concerns are now firmly on the political agenda.

Schumacher's influence has been enormous in the past decades. Organic ways of producing food and concern for the soil has influenced farming and the food industry and nearly every supermarket has now created sections for the sale of organically produced goods, not to mention the number of wholefood and organic foodstores that have opened all over the globe. Even the voice of the soul is being listened to on an increasing level as personal growth movements, spiritual communities and activities to enrich mind, body and spirit such as yoga, tai ching and meditation are emerging everywhere.

It appears the time of Schumacher has now come. Before concluding this dissertation with some contemporary case studies which I believe embody the Schumacher legacy and the future translation of green ideology, I will look briefly at "green consumerism". This may be seen as a paradox of the transformation of green ideology in contemporary consumer society.

Chapter 3: Footnotes

1. Schumacher op. cit, Section 1, Part 1, p. 17
2. Schumacher op. cit, Section 1, Part 2, p. 19
3. Schumacher op. cit, Section 1, Part 2, p. 36
4. Schumacher op. cit, Section 3, Part 2, p. 163
5. Satish Kumar - Introduction (P.xix) to The Green Fuse
The Green Fuse -The Schumacher Lectures 1983-89
edited by John Button, London 1990
6. Schumacher op. cit, Section 1, Part 4, p. 48
7. Schumacher op. cit, Section 1, Part 4, p. 49
8. Schumacher op. cit, Section 1, Part 4, p. 50
9. Schumacher op. cit, Section 3, Part 4, p. 205
10. Schumacher op. cit, Section 2, Part 2, p. 93
11. Schumacher op. cit, Section 2, Part 2, p. 103
12. Schumacher op. cit, Section 2, Part 1, p. 88

CHAPTER 4

Green Consumerism and Beyond..



fig.18 Cartoon by Andreas Buser, Switzerland

Three cheers
for the
green consumer.
The first impression

Is it possible to
be one?
The Second opinion



Consult **The Paper** with an *Environment* section every Friday.

fig.19 Advertisement in *The Guardian Colour Supplement*, underlines the paradox "green consumerism".

"Green Consumerism" is now a widely used phrase to describe what has essentially become a recent and important social phenomenon - namely the use of individual consumer preferences to promote less environmentally damaging goods and services. Needless to say it is not quite as simple as that. Green consumerism is the result perhaps, of the initial and unprecedented realisation of "green ideology" on a global scale in contemporary consumer society, which account for its diverse and paradoxical nature.

The effects of green consumerism upon the transformation of green ideology in today's consumer society can be examined in two stages. The first stage sees the initial paradoxical effects of growing environmental concerns in consumer society, and the second goes "beyond the green bandwagon"⁽¹⁾ to reveal what may be seen as its positive significance for the future.

In the last decade, scientific verifications of escalating environmental crisis have been given enormous media prominence and the result is a snowballing public concern for the environment. The environment has thus become a market issue from the consumer and not from the manufacturing end and it is perhaps the first time, since industrial consumer society began, that the "ends" called for a re-evaluation of the "means". Nature in a sense was back in business!

The subsequent and immediate growth and appeal of green consumerism in the late 1980's can be easily explained. First, it makes good "economic" sense - companies who are making a conscious environmental effort will win public approval and the consumer's money as well as the commercial competitive edge. This is where fundamental questions about green consumerism must be asked. Is green consumerism a contradiction in its very term? Can it successfully marry the growth economy and ecology? Surely, "green" economics, as Schumacher's Buddhist approach maintains, means consuming less and not just better. This is where the danger of green consumerism may arise in misleading people to think that if they "learn to consume BETTER", they can "expect to consume MORE"⁽²⁾. (Fig. 19)

There are by now hundreds of thousands of examples of "green consumerism", some of which are genuine and some of which merely cash in on the notion of being green for material gain. The dramatic increase of green publications in the last decade is a good example of how this consumerism has grown: The Green Consumer Guide (1988) by John Elkington and Julia Hailes rocketed to the top of Britain's bestselling paperbacks in 1988; The Blueprint for a Green Planet (1989) by John Seymour and Herbert Gurardet; The Friends of the Earth Handbook (1989), Karen Christensen's Home and Ecology (1989); John Button's How to be Green (1990) and John



fig.20 Just a few of the multitude of green products advertised in *Lifestyle - Green Guide to Healthy Living*

Gormley's Green Guide for Ireland (1990) have all become popular titles in the green sections which have appeared in bookstores around the globe. Many established newspapers (such as the Irish Times, Financial Times, Sunday Tribune, etc) and magazines (such as Which?, Good Housekeeping, Consumer Choice, etc) now contain a regular green column or feature on environmental matters. There has also been a significant number of new green magazines to appear on sale in the last two years such as Lifestyle - Green Guide to Healthy Living (1990) (Fig. 20), New Consumer Magazine (1989) and the Ethical Consumer (1989). Even television is taking aboard environmental concern as the number of green documentaries (such as Where on Earth are we going? (BBC 1990) by Jonathon Porritt, or The Fragile Earth (Ch4 1990)) increases and environmental issues get more privileged coverage.

The speed at which green consumerism can occur is best indicated perhaps in the Friends of the Earth's campaign of 1988, against the use of C.F.C's in aerosols which are a vital factor of ozone depletion. Within two years of the campaign, there is hardly an aerosol product left on the shelf of our supermarkets that doesn't carry and "ozone friendly" or "C.F.C. free" logo. Many other industries have followed suit, launching complete environmental ranges; the "Down to Earth " range by Reckitts and Colman is a good example. I conducted an interview on January 15th 1991 in their Dublin office with the marketing director of their Irish company, John Crotty who revealed that "over a year's market research" went into the development of the products, conducted in Australia, France and the U.K. The firm Ecover's range of "phosphate free" and "biodegradable" detergents and cleansers as another example of the "greener than green" products which have become available. It seems there are green ranges of many products today as companies realise their economic necessity to appease a growing consumer concern in the market place.

The Body Shop must surely top the list in a survey of worthy "green consumerism" as it embodies the successful marriage of the growth economy and environmental concerns. The shops have a complete range of facial, body and hair care products which deal with every conceivable cosmetic consumer need necessary for living a healthy, beautiful and natural life in a society full of the ills and ugliness of industrial materialism. What is even better is that the Body Shop actively supports and participates in environmental issues that its products promote. There are numerous examples: for instance, the Body Shop's paper making project in Nepal (a Third World country) not only provides employment for local people, but also generates funds for further development. The "Body Shop Romanian Relief Drive" (July 1990) sent thirty volunteers (including Anita Roddick, its founder) to help renovate orphanages as well as two 17.5 tonne lorries laden with much needed equipment.




Mama
'WE TWO FORM
A MULTITUDE' *toto*

MOTHER AND BABY RANGE

fig.21 Some examples of the free *Body Shop* Literature, available to educate the consumer. (printed on recycled paper)

HOW DOES THE BODY SHOP USE CLOSE-TO-SOURCE INGREDIENTS?

Once we have established how an ingredient from a natural source works, we look to see what it can do for our customers.

Ingredients are selected and used for their particular properties, and how these can benefit the skin and hair. Formulations use the appropriate quantity of each ingredient to ensure effectiveness. Some products contain a high percentage of the main, active natural ingredient (for example, 98% of our Aloe Gel is pure aloe vera gel). Others contain lower percentages, as appropriate. When formulating a new product, we ensure that the correct balance of all the ingredients is obtained, so that the product works.

ALOE VERA

Aloe Vera means true aloe. The aloe plant originated in Africa, but now grows in many warm climates throughout the Mediterranean and Australasia, and also in Texas and Latin America. It's a member of the lily family, but resembles a cactus. It has rubbery, spiny-edged, grey-green leaves, which when cut and squeezed exude a thick, clear gel, Aloe gel, which is water-soluble and has been used for over 3,000 years to promote the healing of skin lesions and burns. Wherever aloe vera has grown, the local population have picked it and used its gel on the skin... In various societies it has been known as the miracle worker, woodoo juice, the wand of heaven. More recently, scientific evidence is reinforcing what we have learned from history and tradition about the virtues of aloe vera. The Body Shop has incorporated this versatile and valuable natural ingredient into a whole range of products for the skin, and we also include it in many of our sun care products.

PINEAPPLE

While in Sri Lanka, Anita Roddick saw that, after eating fresh pineapples, the women then rubbed their bodies with the inside of the skins. Analysis in the UK revealed that

pineapple contains bromelain, which is a protein-digesting enzyme, and an excellent exfoliator. So the formulation for Pineapple Facial Wash was born.

JOJOBA

Jojoba is a yellowish vegetable oil or liquid wax obtained from the seeds of the evergreen Jojoba shrub, which grows in desert conditions, mainly in North Western Mexico.

The seeds give a very high oil yield, which was traditionally used by Apache and Mexican Indians over many centuries, as a hair and scalp treatment and for skin disorders.

Jojoba is an exciting resource as it is the only plant known so far which produces a natural liquid wax (radically different in composition from other plant derived oils) which has properties almost identical to sperm whale oil, spermaceti. The Jojoba plant can grow on some of the poorest land in the world, which may be useless for conventional crops. It can provide livelihoods and employment for people who have few opportunities. The Body Shop uses jojoba oil in many products, for both skin and hair and we offer a 100% natural Jojoba Oil which is particularly appropriate for sensitive skins, and suitable to apply to damaged hair. All in all, jojoba is good news!

THE BODY SHOP CODE OF PRACTICE

We research the past through tradition, and verbal and written history, to obtain knowledge about the age-old uses of natural ingredients.

We research still-existing practices using natural ingredients in parts of the world untouched by advertising.

We use naturally-based ingredients as active constituents in formulations; they are used for function, not decoration.

We use naturally-based ingredients in appropriate quantities, to ensure that the formulations are effective.

We only use natural ingredients which are easily renewable.

We encourage sources of natural ingredients in the Third World, thus creating trade...



The Body Shop is committed to using naturally-based ingredients, and to encourage the debate on their use in the cosmetics industry: this is an issue that needs to be discussed. This is sometimes difficult as the cosmetics industry can be clouded by secrecy at one end and by hype at the other: consumer confusion is the result. The Body Shop approach is to supply information about our products and the processes behind them:

■ In every Body Shop in the UK there is a Product Information Manual, available for customers' reference.

■ The Body Shop Catalogue gives details of our products and how they work.

■ Issues leaflets, such as Animal Testing and Cosmetics, and Customer Information leaflets on topics such as skin and sun are freely available in all Body Shops.

■ The Body Shop Book gives the full background to the products. (Paperback edition published 1987 by Macdonald & Co.)

For further information, write to:
The Body Shop International PLC,
Hawthorn Road, Wick, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 7LR

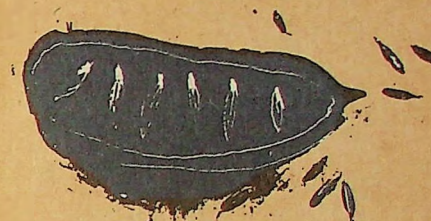
© The Body Shop International PLC 1989
2nd edition

BODY SHOP

Printed on recycled paper

Written by Sue Jackson. Designed and illustrated by Frances Myers

NATURAL INGREDIENTS:



WHAT?



WHY?



HOW?



WHAT IS NATURAL?

BODY SHOP

ISSUES

THE APPEAL OF THE NATURAL



natural

We see the word everywhere: in advertisements, promotions, on product labels... 'Natural' is used to sell anything from bottled water to cotton clothes, from breakfast cereals to complete lifestyles. Advertisers and manufacturers of all kinds have seized on the fact that the idea - and ideal - of what is natural appeals to fast-growing numbers of consumers.

Why?

'Natural' suggests something that is real...safe...pure...fresh...healthy...non-synthetic...right...and ultimately good.

'Natural' has positive associations. The simplest dictionary definition is 'existing in, or produced by nature', not artificial or man-made.

Returning to nature, even if it is only through the products we buy, is increasingly attractive. The human-race's interaction with the natural world has resulted in a catalogue of disasters, or potential disasters. The list grows everyday: acid rain, the greenhouse effect, the damage to the ozone layer, pollution in so many different forms... Our interference with nature has created an imbalance which could prove to be life-threatening. Even in the so-called developed world, basics such as food and water are sometimes unsafe.

In the face of all this, one reaction is to try to turn the clock back, to undo the harm we've caused, by growing, using, or buying what is natural...

That's easier in theory than in practice: it's a difficult task deciding what is 'natural' and what is not, especially when it is being used as a marketing concept.

More consumer information, leading to more consumer action, is the key. The rising tide of green consumerism is making change happen. Consumers want to know all about the products they buy - what lies behind them, what goes into them, what effects they have...the whole story. They want products that are healthy, safe - and as natural as possible. The Body Shop welcomes and encourages this demand.

THE BODY SHOP APPROACH TO NATURAL INGREDIENTS



Some of the ingredients from natural sources used by The Body Shop:

almond
aloe vera
arnica
azuki beans
bay oil
beeswax
camellia
camomile
camphor
carrot oil
cassia
cedarwood
cinnamon
chestnut
clary-sage
cloves
cocoa butter
coconut oil
comfrey
cucumber
elderflower
evening primrose
eucalyptus
hawthorn
henna
honey
jojoba
juniper oil
kaolin
lavender
lemon
lime
marigold
neroli
nettle
oatmeal
oat protein
orchid oil
orange oil
orange flowers
orris root
palm oil
peach kernel oil
peppermint oil
pineapple
rose oil
rose water
rosemary
sage
seda
sesame oil
soapwort
soya bean oil
sunflower oil
tangerine
thyme
vetiver
walnut
wheatgerm oil
witch-hazel

The Body Shop's approach to making and selling skin and hair care preparations is different from the mainstream cosmetics industry. We follow the route to health and well-being, rather than the quest for 'beauty'. We offer straightforward products to cleanse, polish and protect the skin and hair, backed up by honest information to enable customers to choose.

The Body Shop's approach to natural ingredients is rooted in reality. We do not use any ingredients to create an image, or to make false claims, or to manipulate our customers.

We use naturally-based ingredients because we know that they have been proved to be safe and effective.

We describe the naturally-based ingredients we use as close-to-source: we use them from as close to their sources as possible, within the contexts of safety and practicability.

Purists may say that, once any natural ingredient has been harvested and processed, it is no longer natural.

But The Body Shop believes that ingredients from natural sources can be used in skin and hair care preparations and still retain their essential qualities, if the products are formulated with care and integrity. Many aspects need to be considered. We combine close-to-source ingredients with other, synthetic ingredients, such as preservatives, to ensure that products work, last and are safe.

We also use synthetic ingredients as positive, acceptable alternatives to those 'natural' ingredients obtained by cruelty from animals, such as musk.

Naturally-based ingredients are fundamental to The Body Shop's products - they are also a fundamental part of our way of doing things.

NATURAL INGREDIENTS: the background

Natural ingredients were used in skin and hair care preparations long before the cosmetics industry existed. What nature offers us - plants, herbs, trees, and their roots, leaves, flowers and fruit; and substances from the earth - are the natural resources that people have turned to for thousands of years. People used what was easily available in their local environment: they looked to the land for materials for shelter and food, and for other basics such as cleansing their skin and hair, and protecting and decorating their faces and bodies. Plant derived materials were used in rituals of birth, death and marriage, and in some societies became imbued with religious significance.

Experimentation showed which plant extracts were effective as skin cleansers, or softeners, or astringents...which herbs were beneficial to the hair...which ingredients could be used to colour the hair or skin... Each natural ingredient had a specific purpose and use.

In some societies untouched by Western 'progress' and unpressurised by advertising, these traditional practices continue.

The Body Shop looks to these practices for ideas and inspiration. Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop, travels every year to other countries, other cultures, to learn how they cleanse, polish, and protect their skin and hair.

There is much renewed interest in the West in traditional methods of caring for the skin and hair. This is linked to the increasing revival of herbal remedies and other forms of 'alternative' medicine (at one time the only medicine, becoming 'alternative' only in the recent past).

People are finding some aspects of modern technology unsatisfactory, and are choosing other means of self-care, which they find more 'natural'. Many people now believe, however, that the combination of the two approaches, traditional and technological, is the appropriate way forward.

Evening Primrose

Evening Primrose is a plant with bright yellow flowers which open in the early evening. There are over 1,000 different strains of the Evening Primrose, many of which grow wild.

It originated in North America, arriving in Europe in the 17th Century.

The American Indians valued the plant for its healing properties, applying it topically to wounds. Herbalists in Europe began to use it extensively, and it became known as 'Kings cure-all'. It was prescribed as a remedy for all sorts of ills during the reign of Charles I.

Now extensive claims are again being made for the seeds of the Evening Primrose and especially its oil, and it is used to treat diverse ailments.

Meanwhile, The Body Shop offers a 100% natural Evening Primrose Oil to apply directly to the skin, to soothe irritated areas and soften dry skin. We also incorporate Evening Primrose into products such as Mostly Men skin care products, where its qualities are appropriate.

WHY does The Body Shop use natural ingredients?



C O C O A B U T T E R

Anita Roddick was first inspired to use cocoa butter after seeing women in the Polynesian islands rubbing lumps of a creamy substance into their skin and hair to make it shine...

Cocoa butter is used by women the world over who have easy access to it in their own local environment. (Pregnant women in Tahiti rub solid cocoa butter over their bodies to keep the skin supple.)

Now Body Shop customers can use it too: we've incorporated it into skin care products such as Cocoa Butter Hand and Body Lotion.

Naturally-based ingredients have a long history of safe use. Human beings have tried and tested plant-derived ingredients on their skin and hair for thousands of years. Many are still doing so in other cultures less pressurised by advertising. The ingredients from the earth and what grows in it have been proved effective.

It is natural for The Body Shop to turn to ingredients from the earth's resources: from plants, and from the earth itself (such as clay and chalk). It is a simple approach which works: but it is an approach which has to be supported by care and commitment.

Policies within the Body Shop itself, such as the "Time for Action" programme set aside regular office time during which the whole company participates in letter writing campaigns. Other activities include one day a week of company time where staff work in the community with a help group of their choice.

The Body Shop was named "Company of the Year" in 1987 Business Enterprise Awards and Anita Roddick was awarded an O.B.E by the Queen in January 1988. Since then it has gone from strength to strength. The Body Shop upholds its fundamental principles - no testing on animals, no advertising, minimal packaging and respect for people and the environment in its master plan to educate the consumer and spread new awareness. I discovered just how well this is organised when I wrote to their head office in London last year in the course of researching this dissertation. I was surprised to receive no personal response (that I received from other multinational companies I wrote to) but rather a standard information pack on the Body Shop which is thoroughly and competently prepared to deal with every conceivable query from the public. So, too, in all the shops can be found a comprehensive and attractive range of informative literature that is free! (Fig. 21). The shop windows of the company's branches are vehicles for campaigning on environmental issues, linking up frequently with green organisations such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, thus giving them a voice on the Highstreet of consumer society. As Anita Roddick herself claims, "I think you can rewrite the book on business"⁽³⁾. (Fig. 22)

Business and the environment bring me back to this initial stage of the growth of green consumerism. The sheer volume of increased "green consumerism" in the last decade (of which the previous examples above are only a small proportion) is perhaps an indication of the associative bandwagon effects which have become a very mixed blessing. Companies have so willingly jumped on the green bandwagon (as the speed of recent growth proves) because it provided new commercial opportunities and a competitive edge, and not because they felt it was their natural sense of civic responsibility to concern themselves with environmental problems.

More and more, recent scientific verifications have proved that the "green image" of many major companies is nothing but the sham of materialism. I.C.I., even though many of its products sport green logos, in 1988 made an official complaint to the Advertising Standards authority claiming that "the conditions of the ozone layer over the Antarctic were unrelated to the use of C.F.C.s in aerosols!"⁽⁴⁾. Shell, another leading multinational industrial company is paying one million pounds for a "Guardians of the Countryside Conservation Programme" in association with the

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH'S CAMPAIGN

Rainforest destruction is a global problem: Friends of the Earth is working in over 30 countries on this and other environmental issues. We believe that even here in Britain there is a great deal we can do to help save the rainforests.



WWF/Kevin Schafer

● Britain should stop funding development projects which destroy rainforests. Friends of the Earth along with other like-minded organisations, has successfully persuaded institutions such as the World Bank not to

fund road-building and colonisation schemes in the rainforests. We have persuaded governments to increase their support for projects which conserve rather than destroy.

● Britain should stop the importation of tropical timbers unless they come from properly managed forests. Friends of the Earth have proposed a Code of Conduct to representatives of hardwood importers, which would mean that only hardwoods from sustainable sources are imported into this country. We have also convinced them to set up a fund based on the value of imported hardwoods, which would be used to support conservation and management projects. Many companies, including The Body Shop, have agreed not to use tropical hardwoods unless they come from well-managed sources.



WWF/Fernando Urbina



THE BODY SHOP

The Body Shop makes and sells skin and hair products containing a high proportion of naturally-occurring ingredients: some of these originate from rainforests, but we ensure our supplies are from well-established plantations so that areas of virgin forests are not plundered.

The Body Shop believes that the indiscriminate clearance of tropical forests has to stop. We also believe that everyone should recognise the desperate need for the development of an internationally acceptable strategy based on conservation and husbandry. It should allow the controlled extraction of plant materials whose yield is understood. It should provide a livelihood for the traditional forest dwellers many of whom are now up-rooted by major clearance schemes and are destitute, jobless and suffering from ill-health.

We want to help develop this strategy.

The Body Shop supports Friends of the Earth in its campaign to conserve Tropical Rainforests.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

Friends of the Earth campaigns for the rational use of the Earth's resources.

We research, we lobby and we provide evidence to all interested political and media groups. We make noises in the right place at the right time and take action to protect the environment wherever and whenever necessary.

Our activities include:

- Fighting acid rain and other kinds of air pollution.
- Protecting the countryside from pesticides and destructive farming practices.
- Encouraging the recycling of packaging materials.
- Campaigning to protect the tropical rainforests.
- Preserving the habitats of threatened species of plants and animals in the U.K.
- Encouraging urban planning around people's needs.

We rely entirely on contributions from supporters for our work. We'd value your contributions today.



Poster: Original painting by Martin Jordan

HELPING THE EARTH FIGHT BACK

• FRIENDS OF THE EARTH •

• THE BODY SHOP •



Friends of the Earth

ponsorship of £75,000 for "Green" to the massacre of dolphins in

with confusion and paradoxes industries there are no legitimate or "environmentally friendly" is for myself when I wrote to the course of research for this of recycled paper in design and some major companies, such as respond at all, while others such as were willingly interested to inched "Greenglade", the first refill pad is composed of paper certainly no visible or tangible by Victor. Also, Wiggins environmental policy as such in manager in the company, Ms their interest in developing a crucial and not because the

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fig.22 The Body Shop links up with a Friends of the Earth campaign - giving them a voice in the high street.

THE RICHES OF THE RAINFOREST

Tropical rainforests are found in some of the hottest and wettest parts of the world – Latin America, West and Central Africa and South East Asia. They exist where conditions are absolutely perfect for plants to grow. These irreplaceable forests are the richest and most spectacular sources of life on earth.

Rainforests are home to at least half the planet's unique species of wildlife including tigers, mountain gorillas, birds of paradise, rare orchids and a myriad of multi-coloured insects.

Rainforests are also home to numerous tribes of forest-dwelling people. These people have learned to live in harmony with their environment and they have an unparalleled knowledge of the uses and properties of the forest plants and wildlife.

Tropical forests are the source of many raw materials used in modern medicines. On average, one in every four purchases from the high street chemist contains compounds derived from rainforest species. Over 2000 plants are being investigated for their properties in combatting cancer.

Additionally, the tropical rainforests anchor large natural cycles – the air, soil and water upon which we all depend. Where forests have been destroyed, floods and droughts have become more frequent and weather patterns throughout the world may have been disrupted.



World Wide Fund for Nature/Y. J. Rey-Millet



WWF/J. M. Rankin

THE FALLING FOREST

Every year, an area of tropical rainforest greater than the size of the United Kingdom is destroyed. In 1987 alone, Brazil lost 20 million acres of rainforests.

Cattle ranchers in Central America clear huge tracts of forest so that they can provide cheap beef for the North American fast food market – the so called 'hamburger connection'.

Commercial loggers in search of valuable tropical hardwoods such as iroko, sapele, ramin and meranti cause widespread devastation to satisfy the demand of rich countries such as Britain and Japan.

Unwittingly, the British public also contributes to rainforest destruction through their taxes. Our government provides money to institutions such as the World Bank, which in turn funds various 'development projects' in the tropics. These projects have often been disastrous for the rainforests.

In Brazil, forest dwelling tribal people have been shot, bombed, poisoned, infected with diseases and driven from their territories by land-hungry invaders.

Half of the rainforests have already been destroyed, mainly in the last forty years. At this rate, at least another half will be gone by the year 2000. In the short space of one human lifetime, we will have undone the work of millions of years of evolution. We are the last generation who can avert this catastrophe.



WWF/Bruno Zehnder

World Wide Fund for Nature, but it had to drop its sponsorship of £75,000 for "Green Shopping Day" in September 1989, because its links to the massacre of dolphins in tuna fishing were exposed⁽⁵⁾.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Ask before you buy. Do not buy any products made of hardwood timber unless you can be sure it comes from a forest that is being properly managed. Friends of the Earth has produced a Good Wood Guide that will help you choose the right products. Do not buy animals or plants that may have been taken from the wild in the rainforests.
- Write to The Prime Minister on the attached postcard and urge her not to use your taxes to fund any more destructive projects. Send the postcard to us so that we can take it to Downing Street.
- Write to your Member of Parliament and your Member of the European Parliament, and ask them to support initiatives to save the rainforests.
- Get active! Friends of the Earth has 250 local groups around the country, many of whom are working to save the rainforests. Any special skills or experience you have will be of invaluable assistance to them. Details of your nearest local group can be obtained from our office at 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ.
- Talk about it – tell your friends, neighbours, work colleagues and family about your concern for the rainforests. Organise support for the rainforests through any organisations – trade unions, political parties, church groups, youth groups, wildlife and conservation organisations – of which you are a member.
- Support Friends of the Earth and help our rainforest campaign. Please complete the attached coupon.



Friends of the Earth

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World Wide Fund for Nature, but it had to drop its sponsorship of £75,000 for "Green Shopping Day" in September 1989, because its links to the massacre of dolphins in tuna fishing were exposed⁽⁵⁾.

The whole paper industry is riddled from top to bottom with confusion and paradoxes regarding environmental matters. Just like the other industries there are no legitimate standards enforced which determine whether their "environmentally friendly" products are what they claim to be. I discovered this for myself when I wrote to numerous paper-mills in Ireland and Britain in the course of research for this dissertation and for my own interest in the capabilities of recycled paper in design and printing. I was amazed at the diversity of response. Some major companies, such as the Smurfit Paper company of Ireland, simply didn't respond at all, while others such as Wiggins Teape Ireland and a sister company E.S.M. were willingly interested to talk to me. Wiggins Teape Ireland have recently launched "Greenglade", the first Irish recycled product. Amazingly the greenglade A4 refill pad is composed of paper suspiciously similar to their old refill pads - there is certainly no visible or tangible difference, compared to, say, the "Treetops" refill pad by Victor. Also, Wiggins Teape Ireland admit they don't have any specific environmental policy as such in practice e.g. recycling office waste etc. The product manager in the company, Ms Brigitte Brew, whom I interviewed admitted that their interest in developing a recycled product was because it was competitively crucial and not because the company felt it an urgent environmental responsibility.

This is perhaps where the shift to a new second stage of green consumerism is necessary. The very growth of the first stage will inevitably lead to increased competition and it will get progressively harder for companies to indulge in "greenspeak", awarding themselves unworthy green logos or putting hefty mark-ups on green products. Green consumerism in the second stage will challenge all the shortcomings of the first and call for action in the future.

Green consumerism of this first and present stage, which we are only awakening to, is perhaps the last and ultimate paradox of consumer society. For it is slowly revealing the basis upon which it is erected to be the instrument of its very destruction. In a nutshell, consumerism equates more possessions with greater happiness and equates people with what material goods they own. It is a notion which Schumacher proved to be false and which the green movement is utterly opposed to. The negative results of consumerism seem to outweigh the good - what use are physical ease and comforts if they are not accompanied by "peace and permanence". The constant flood of new and improved goods may hold out promises of greater satisfactions but at the same

time, it will promote dissatisfaction with what we already possess. its all part of the vicious circle of consumer society which attacks people's self reliance and undermines their trust in their own abilities and judgements. '

The second stage of green consumerism (which we are perhaps on the brink of) will see people freed from the slavery of material conditioning and hopefully re-establish our independence and self-sufficiency. The second stage of green consumerism will therefore demand true freedom of choice (not just the illusion of consumerism) which cannot exist without the proper freedom of information. This means that the specialisation and segregation of knowledge that Illich called "overprogramming and radical monopoly" will be replaced by a more "convivial" access of information and "convivial tools", which encourage man's creative ability. Hopefully then, this next stage will let people do more for themselves, and spread the awareness of a greener, more balanced relationship between man, his tools and the environment.

The size of the human population and the power of its technology are such now, that we are creating environmental damage on a tremendous scale. This damage is created by the combination of two consumer ills - endless needs and wants in the form of environmental problems, specific pollutants (what we put into the earth) and ecological degradation (what we take out). These problems can and have been dealt with in the past through the self-balancing, self-sustaining and repairing of natural systems of the earth but now the sheer volume of the two combined are swamping this ancient ability. The earth simply cannot withstand the infinite needs of consumer society upon its finite resources. As people begin to realise this for themselves, the ecological limits of consumerism will become apparent and change will really occur.

Green consumerism is, at the end of the day, the immediate and shaky response of our consumer society to the current and ever more revealing environmental and social problems of industrial and technological growth. It is perhaps an offshoot of something much bigger that is only beginning. As time goes by, the bandwagon stage will be transcended by the true awareness that society must consume less. People will snap out of their clonish enslavements to the illusion of material happiness at the expense of all other things which sustain life on earth, and find peace in the reality of the natural environment from which they have evolve. Consumer society will inevitably tend to its greatest shortcoming by revising the "ends" which all its "means" are meant to serve.

Ultimately, perhaps the time of Schumacher's Small is Beautiful dictum has come, and the future positive significance of green ideology in consumer society will be found in the spirit of his teaching.

By way of concluding this dissertation, I will make reference to two case studies which I believe embody the future transformation of green ideology in consumer society and which are based in the essence of Schumacher's philosophy.

Chapter 4: Footnotes

1. Dorothy Mac Kenzie "Green Design: Beyond the Bandwagon",
Design Museum Issue 4 London 1990
2. Sandy Irvine "Beyond Green Consumerism" Chpt 3, p. 9
Discussion Paper No. 1, Friends of
the Earth, London 1990
3. Body Shop Information Sheets 1990: Profile Anita Roddick
4. Irvine op. cit., Chpt 3, p. 10
5. Irvine op. cit., Chpt 3, p. 10

CHAPTER 5

Case Studies - Schumacher College and O2



fig.23 Photographs of Schumacher College

The fields of education and design are among the most important contributors to the future translation of green ideology through creating awareness and change in contemporary society. This chapter will focus upon a case study in each field, which has transcended the bandwagon of green consumerism in a genuine search for alternatives to the social and environmental problems caused by contemporary industrial and technological growth.

Schumacher describes education as "The Greatest Resource" in his book Small is Beautiful and as history has proved it is man not nature who provides the primary resource: "that the key factor to economic development comes out of the mind of man"⁽¹⁾. Unfortunately, education today, (as Illich devoted his life to proving in Deschooling Society and Tools for Conviviality) is breaking down because of over-specialisation and the rejection of what should be integral parts of it - wisdom and metaphysics. As Schumacher rightly puts it, "know-how is nothing by itself, it is a means without an end"⁽²⁾.

The Schumacher College

The need for a holistic and sustainable approach in education is best expounded in the foundation of the Schumacher College, which has just opened in January of this year, 1991, at Dartington in Devon, England. The college prospectus describes itself as an "International centre informed by ecological and spiritual values", whose aim is to offer the opportunity for people of all ages, all cultures and backgrounds to take time out from their daily lives to study "the ecological and social predicament, and to take stock of their own values and attitudes towards life" (Article by Guy Larson, member of the core faculty of Schumacher College, published in the Journal Self and Society (1990)).

The establishment of the college has been made possible by a generous endowment from the Dartington Hall Trust which was founded in 1925 by Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst. They have been inspired by the work of Rubindranath Tagore (poet, and playwright and social reformer, 1861 - 1941) and foreseeing many aspects of our contemporary predicament, set about creating the physical and spiritual fabric for a sustainable life. Dartington has always been (since the time of the Elmhirsts) a place of intellectual and emotional stimulation, drawing many outstanding artists together establishing for example, the renowned Summer School of Music in 1949, which included musicians like Stravinsky, Poulenc, Britten, Tippett and more recently Maxwell Davies. Dartington College of Arts offers degree courses in Art and Design, Theatre and Music, each with an emphasis on the place of the arts in life of the community. The Schumacher College is yet another extension of the energy of all

From INSPIRATION TO ACTION

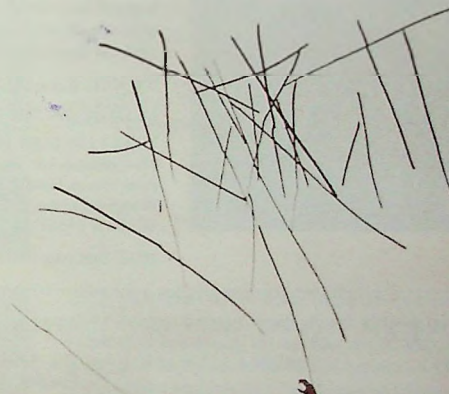
Business, Politics & The Arts in the Age of Ecology

Three pioneers at the leading edge of the Green
Movement will describe how they bridged the gap
between the practical and the spiritual.

ANITA RODDICK
Business and Values

SARA PARKIN
Politics beyond Power

ANDY GOLDSWORTHY
Art in Nature



The 1990 SCHUMACHER LECTURES

fig.24 Leaflet advertising *The Schumacher Lectures*, 1990

previous activities at Dartington and perhaps indicates the significance of what has become green ideology to life in contemporary society.

The college is located in The Old Postern - a mediaeval house dating from 1380, in the beautiful grounds of Dartington, Devon. The campus includes residential accommodation, study and lecture rooms, dining rooms and a library and is set within the 800 acre Dartington Hall Estate in South Devon. (Fig. 23)

The college takes its name from Dr. E. F. Schumacher and its courses are based essentially on the philosophy that "small is beautiful", encouraging people to think globally and to act locally. What makes the college so unique is the way it goes about creating a forum for inquiry and new ideas rather than direct campaigning for green ideology. One of the most distinctive features of the Schumacher College is its effort to re-unite forms of learning that have usually been forced apart by intellectual institutions on the one hand and therapy schools on the other.

While institutions of higher education develop knowledge and skill, increasing what an individual knows or can do, they pay little attention to the contemplative capacity of the mind and thus allow the channel which connects intellect and insight to become restricted. This is what Schumacher anticipated in Small is Beautiful: where education that had become solely concerned with "know-how" with little regard for wisdom, was just a means without a purposeful end. Schools of therapy, on the other hand, focus predominantly upon personal growth and less on intellectual content, and are often thus dismissed as having little substantial significance to the reality of contemporary life.

The Schumacher College aims at broadening out people's concern with personal happiness and security into a closer scrutiny of the beliefs and priorities of contemporary society, such as consumption, possessions, working, attitudes to working and personal responsibility to nature and to other people.

Satish Kumar has been appointed director of the Schumacher College and is one of the key inspirations behind it. He is one of the founding members, and presently chairman of the Schumacher Society formed in 1977 shortly after Schumacher's death, to promote his ideas and teachings. The society organises the Schumacher Lectures (Fig. 24) and Schumacher Book Service, from which a recent publication The Green Fuse (1989) has come. The book contains various Schumacher Lectures (1983-89) given by prominent Green thinkers, such as Jonathan Porritt, Helena Norberg Hodge, Hazel Henderson, Rudolf Bahro, James Lovelock, Arne Naes and many others; Satish Kumar has written the introduction to the book. Satish Kumar's own life and



fig.25 Feature headings for *Resurgence* by Paul Peter Piech

work encompass much of Schumacher's teachings and he is an active figure slowly but surely bringing about the second stage of the transformation of green ideology in contemporary society, essentially based on Schumacher's philosophy.

Dr Kumar, born in India, was originally a Jain monk and disciple of Gandhi's successor Ninoba Bhavé from whom he learnt the importance of land reform and non violent change in society as well as respect for all living creatures and the natural environment. Dr Kumar has been editor of the journal Resurgence for the last twenty years, which was originally founded by John Papworth in 1966, who was wholly inspired by the teachings of E. F. Schumacher. Resurgence (like the Schumacher College) is more a forum for ideas and enquiry rather than a vehicle of direct dogma.

Satish Kumar works on Resurgence from his home in Devon. All who write for the journal contribute their work free of charge or out of love, as Dr Kumar suggests in an interview in Resurgence in the November/December issue of 1981. The administration, advertising, editing, design, printing and publishing of Resurgence all take place locally and in the homes of its various workers and supporters around the Devon area. It puts into practice the philosophy that Small is Beautiful, which its pages continually expound. Its bi-monthly circulation has increased to 10,000 today. (Fig. 25)

The philosophy of Resurgence again like that of (Schumacher College) reflects the tradition of predecessors such as Morris and Ruskin; among those who have contributed regular articles are Ivan Illich and of course E. F. Schumacher. Many of its contemporary contributors are key figures of today's Green Movement - Jonathan Porritt, James Lovelock, etc. and the artistic work of contemporary Green artists such as Andy Goldsworthy are also regularly featured.

Resurgence and the Schumacher College do not merely represent one single facet of green ideology, be it deep ecology, decentralism or world peace, but they rather encompass all of these things. It is this holistic and sustainable approach that Satish Kumar believes to be the successful and perhaps only way of finding solutions and alternatives to the problems of contemporary society. These essentials are the very ingredients which make up the educational approach that the Schumacher College stands for - an holistic education that includes intellectual study, mindful reflection and real interaction between people. It emphasises the interrelatedness of all things - the individual, human society and the natural world, and it embraces all branches of knowledge, of experience and of awareness, spiritual or secular. At the same time the college strives to emphasise that the realm of our activity (be it work or education) should be small or of an appropriate size, rather than huge, multinational or mass



Rupert Sheldrake



James Lovelock



David Bohm



Manfred Max-Neef



Theodore Roszak



Helena Norberg-Hodge



Jonathon Porritt



Reb Anderson



Hazel Henderson



Charlene Spretnak



Vandana Shiva

fig.26 *Scholars in Residence* at the Schumacher College, 1991

organised, inevitably becoming impersonal, mechanical or even sterile. The college encourages people to think globally and act locally or as Schumacher considers in the epilogue of Small is Beautiful "we each of us can work to put our inner house in order".

Each course at the Schumacher College is residential, taking up to forty participants and lasting about five weeks with a fee of approximately £1080. Such expensive courses would inevitably suggest that the college's claim "to make widely accessible an education in touch with the profound changes taking place in our culture" is largely a fallacy since only a small number of people would be in the privileged position of being able to afford five weeks off for "intellectual retreat"⁽³⁾. This is one of the paradoxes that always seem to accompany an alternative movement to the mainstream of contemporary life, as well as leaving the venture wide open to scepticism and criticism. However, it is interesting that the Schumacher College offers bursaries to those "who need it" (states the prospectus) in order to take part in one of its courses. How and to whom these bursaries are given and how much they are is open to speculation. Each five week course is based around the presence of the particular "Scholar in Residence", who has been chosen for his or her innovative, substantial and widely respected contribution to some area of current thinking and for a strong ability as a teacher and communicator. (Fig. 26) The following is a list of the Scholars for the first year, 1991, and the title and subject of their given course as laid down in the College prospectus.

COURSE 1: Jan 13th - Feb 15th

JAMES LOVELOCK

"The Health of Gaia"

Planetary physiology and medicine

COURSE 2: Feb 24th - Mar 22nd

HELENA NORBERG-HODGE

"Ancient Wisdom"

The relevance of traditional
cultures in Modern Times and
the Post-Industrial Age
(Fig. 27)

COURSE 3: Mar 29th - Apr 12th

HAZEL HENDERSON

"Life beyond Economics"

Includes participation in the
Dartington Conference

ANCIENT WISDOM *for* MODERN TIMES

*The relevance of traditional cultures in
modern times and the post-industrial age.*

Fewer and fewer traditional cultures remain untouched by the Western world's approach to production, consumption, nature and social values. Yet in the industrialised countries themselves there is mounting disquiet about these issues. How can the 'developed' world relate to traditional cultures in ways that are truly helpful, while allowing the possibility that traditional cultures may have as much to offer - in their attitudes to nature and society, for example - as we have to offer them in material and technical aid?

A TWO WEEK RESIDENTIAL COURSE
AT SCHUMACHER COLLEGE,
DARTINGTON, DEVON

FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 8 1991

Scholar in Residence: Helena Norberg-Hodge.

fig.27 Leaflet advertising the course *Modern Times*, led by Helena Norberg Hodge at the Schumacher College

ABOUT THE COURSE

This two week residential course provides an opportunity for people concerned about the relationship between traditional cultures and the post-industrial age to reflect on the underlying issues in the company of tutors who have substantial first hand experience of working with and learning from a variety of traditional cultures around the world.

Some of the questions to be discussed are:

- how do the spiritual values of traditional cultures translate into ecologically sound ways of living?
- how do technological development and economic change affect a traditional society's relationship to its resources?
- what are the impacts of westernisation on social relationships, personal identity and spiritual values within traditional cultures?
- how can we plan ecologically-appropriate aid and trade with non-industrial societies which stress quality of life rather than economic development?
- what direction and inspiration can industrialised societies draw for their own futures from contact with traditional cultures?



Helena Norberg-Hodge, the Scholar in Residence, is a pioneer in bringing ecological concern and intermediate technology to aid initiatives in the third world, particularly Ladakh, India. She will co-ordinate the course and bring to bear her experiences in Ladakh and elsewhere.

COURSE TUTORS



Peter Bunyard (left) is a biologist and former editor of *The Ecologist*. He will lead a series of five seminars entitled *The Relationship Between Traditional Cultures and Ecology - A Colombian Experience*. The implications of Colombian policy of restoring land rights to native people will be explored. James Cowan (below) is a prominent writer on the aboriginal world view.

His work explores the world of aboriginal people, especially that of the aborigines of Australia. He will give a series of seminars on the differences between the western economic view of the land and aboriginal spirituality, which views the land as sacred.



Herbert Girardet (below) is an ecologist, film maker and author. His series of seminars will explore how modern technology is undermining the human experience of the past, and how we can create a sustainable future which takes the coming generations into account. Victoria Bomberly is a Native American and is chairperson of *State of our Nations*, a group working to develop issues of economic self-sufficiency, environment and culture amongst Native people. Victoria will contribute a



series of seminars on the Native American cultural heritage and on the potential for mutually beneficial relationship between Native American culture and contemporary American society. Core faculty will be available to give courses or tutorials which will amplify the themes developed in the main course. Faculty members are Guy Claxton, a psychologist, Helen Chaloner, whose interest is in the possibility of bringing spiritual practice to everyday situations, Brian Nicholson, whose doctorate was in quantum chemistry, Stephan Harding, who is interested in ecology and evolution, and Satish Kumar, Editor of *Resurgence* and College director.

Return to: The Administrator, Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, TOTNES TQ9 6EA, Devon, England.
Please send me a Schumacher College prospectus and course application form.

NAME

ADDRESS

Postcode

Tel.

Picture overlaid: Virgil shows Maecenas a Bee-Paradise.

fig.27 Leaflet advertising the course *Modern Times*, led by Helena Norberg Hodge at the Schumacher College

COURSE 4: Apr 14th - May 17th RUPERT SHELDRAKE	"The Rebirth of Nature" Examining the Life sciences
COURSE 5: May 19th - Jun 21st JONATHON PORRITT	"The Green Heritage" Exploring the roots of a living tradition
COURSE 6: Jun 23rd - Jul 26th VICTOR PAPANEEK	"Design for the Real World" How architecture, implements, and tools can be designed on a human scale
COURSE 7: Sep 8th - Oct 11th THEODORE ROZAK	"Earth, Soul and the Imagination Linking the sacred with psychology and the Arts
COURSE 8: Oct 15th - Nov 15th REB ANDERSON	"The Zen of Mountains and Rivers" A synthesis of Eastern and Western spirituality
COURSE 9: Nov 17 - Dec 20th MANFRED MAX NEEF	"Ecological Economics" Meeting the challenge of our time

The range of subjects that the courses cover is wide and varying and each course is also supplemented by the college's Core Faculty which is comprised of Satish Kumar, Helen Chaloner, Stephen Harding, Brian Nicholson and Guy Larson. It is their job to look after the groups as a community as well as administration of the college and providing seminars of their own. Also included in the courses are instruction in meditation and a variety of physical activities ranging from working on Dartington's pioneering ecological projects, or walking in the beautiful grounds of the estate or Dartmoor, to Tai Chi, dance and other forms of moving meditation. Participants of the course are also responsible for cooking and cleaning etc. In effect, the college promotes a complete experience, perhaps even a new simple and natural lifestyle which involves its participants fully. The Schumacher College is one of the few practical examples of the future positive translation of green ideology in our contemporary society.

The role of design has become a very important contribution to the future translation of green ideology in contemporary society and is also very much a part of the Schumacher College's curriculum, as Victor Papanek's course would indicate. The extent to which design is being affected by environmental concern and vice versa is gradually being assessed in the design world. For example, in May 1990 the London Design Museum held a conference to examine these issues and at the Erasmus Conference of European Design Education in November 1990 in London, the environment was a major item on the agenda, emphasising the need for its inclusion as an important part of the curriculum of every design school. More and more it seems environment will become a new parameter to consider in a given design problem.

In the last four or five years, paralleling perhaps the growth of green consumerism (mentioned in the previous chapter), green design has become an important, not to mention, lucrative business. In fact, whether one likes it or not, much of the recent environmentally friendly design has only been a direct result of the bandwagon effect, encouraging people to consume better and in doing so assuring them they can continue to consume more, rather than urging people to consume less, and scrutinising the very values of consumer society and in doing so, creating the new awareness needed for a thoughtful, sustainable lifestyle.

Design has come to be associated with all the things that are antithetical to green ideology, such as fashion, faddishness, superficiality, the encouragement of obsolescence, replacement rather than repair, disposal not re-use and convenience not consideration. The 1980's has been regarded as the most noticeable designer decade in contemporary society. Designers are no longer anonymous subtle problem-solvers but often superstars; many, such as Philippe Starck, Vivienne Westwood, Bruce Oatfield, Norman Foster, Sir Terence Conran, to name but a tiny portion, have become household names, readily absorbed into the mainstream of contemporary consumer culture. Design has perhaps approached its second watershed (as Illich would describe it) and is facing a challenging new role in the climate of growing environmental concern.

The holistic and sustainable approach of Schumacher's philosophy may be the answer to this new challenge and perhaps become the future role of design in the positive translation of green ideology in contemporary society. It is also the fundamental basis upon which my next case study is founded.

During the course of research for this dissertation, I wrote to a number of design agencies, trying to find a suitable case study that would demonstrate these ideas in



fig.28 O2's logo - O2 stands for oxygen which is essential for all life

practice. The response I got was interesting and varied. Some agencies such as B.R.S. Premsele Vonk of Amsterdam admitted that any attempts to go green failed because the necessary information wasn't available to overcome technical difficulties. Other companies such as Proforma of Rotterdam, although they don't see themselves as a green agency, have undertaken a number of green projects, for example, a free calendar, printed on recycled paper, which aims at creating awareness among the people of Rotterdam to environmental problems as well as offering practical advice for improvement. Another of Proforma's environmentally-sympathetic projects is a coffin, designed by Huibert Groenendijk, that is made from cheap, natural, biodegradable materials.

I also received a very positive letter from Jeanne Philip a director of the Design Factory in Copenhagen, who is very interested in the future relationship between design and the environment. He is also an active member of the international design group that I have chosen to make a case study of in this dissertation. I discovered this group by following a tenuous connection with a recent industrial design graduate of N.C.A.D. called David Rothwell, who was believed to be working with a green design company in Denmark. When I traced Mr. Rothwell, he provided me with great assistance in gaining the information that was necessary to make this case study, one which I believe embodies Schumacher's philosophy and the future role of design in the positive translation of green ideology in contemporary society.

O2 International

The "O2 international non-profit organisation"⁽⁴⁾ was set up in Denmark in 1988, in Copenhagen, by a group of environmentally conscious designers led by Neils Peter Flint, a Danish industrial designer. Mr Flint, earlier in his career, had worked in Italy with Sotsass and became gradually more and more concerned with the influence of design upon the world's environment, as well as with the materials that designers prescribe and their methods of manufacture. When he was in Milan, he met up with other concerned designers such as Morten Skou and Claus Bech Danielsen and decided to return to Denmark and to set up an organisation devoted solely to design and the environment - hence "O2" was established. (Fig. 28)

O2 is essentially concerned with creating environmental awareness among the design world and emphasising the need for a new holistic and sustainable design approach to modern development, one that creates design that is both environmentally conscious and humanistically compatible. In order to achieve this, O2 has also become essentially concerned with educating designers and making freely accessible to them the kind of information that is needed to create a new form or design, which has

hitherto been scattered, misleading and often inaccessible. O2 is not only exploring new environmentally sympathetic concepts and is not simply "a think tank"⁽⁵⁾ but is working in as many areas related to design as possible to put its theories into practice. O2 consider themselves to be "Constructive Environmental Activists"⁽⁶⁾.

What is the holistic design approach that O2 has devoted all its efforts to serving? It starts first and foremost with becoming environmentally aware in our design thinking and realising that design has an important role to play as fundamental, intelligent planning process, strongly concerned with utility. It also manifests an understanding of how to use modern technology, and not merely a superficial styling formula that is added to propagate consumer values. O2 believes if environmentally conscious designers assume responsibility as professional problem solvers, innovative and lateral thinkers, trained to think outside traditional disciplinary boundaries, then their contribution may be crucial towards saving the planet.

Niels Peter Flint calls this approach "Overall Solution Design"⁽⁷⁾. This means that the whole design approach must be environmentally conscious from its very conception, to its planning stages, where many decisions can be influenced by the designer; in the selection of materials - their recycling and biodegradable properties, as well as in the type of manufacturing methods used in production and finally in the user stage, by considering the life expectancy of the product for repair and re-use rather than replacement and disposal. Designers, it appears, play a key role in the "overall solution", first as knowledgeable specifiers and modifiers of expectations; secondly as innovative and lateral thinkers, working out how to deliver needs in a completely new way; and finally in setting new tastes and standards where the emphasis is on function and utility but nevertheless still being aesthetically pleasing at the same time.

Before a holistic and sustainable design approach can be brought about, a new kind of awareness and information must be created - which O2 sees as its primary function. Educating designers and spreading environmental consciousness are the principle concerns of O2.

O2 International has now five offices in France, Austria, Italy, the U.K. and their headquarters in Denmark. It is comprised of professional designers in every discipline, communication and marketing people, architects etc., now working actively with industry and other areas. By pooling together their creative skill, energy and knowledge as well as their different resources, O2 has become a collective environmental consciousness in the field of design. The O2 Pages, a quarterly issue published by O2's headquarters in Denmark is an example of how the organisation has set about spreading this new awareness and information. The Pages contain articles

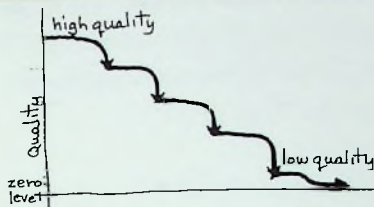


Figure 1: Cascading of Quality

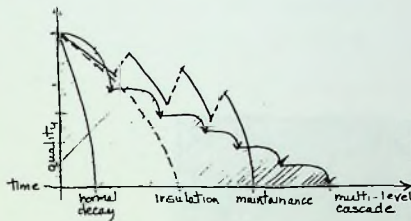


Figure 2: Quality-decline curves

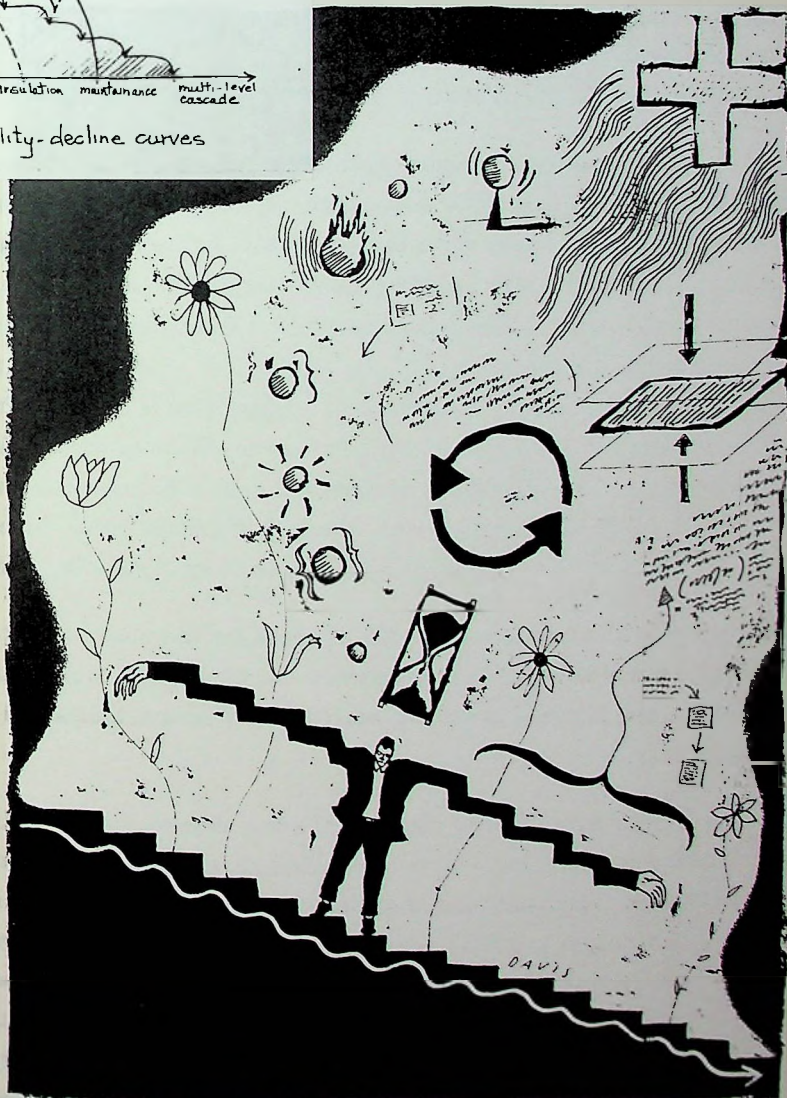


fig.29 Cascading - A Tool for Resource Conservation
accompanying illustrations for article in O2 Pages

and information on a wide range of design and environmental issues as well as up-to-date news on O2's global activities and projects.

Articles such as "A Second Life for Materials" by Frida Deveil⁽⁸⁾, "Overall Solution Design" by Neils Peter Flint⁽⁹⁾ and "Cascading - A tool for resource conservation" by Ted Sirkin, Architect MAA⁽¹⁰⁾ (Fig. 29) are examples of how O2 both discusses and puts forward new methods of design approach. "Cascading", for instance, suggests ways in which to utilise the qualities and by-products of a resource continually throughout a whole system (and not just at its end - by recycling for example) and is based in the application of three principles - "Appropriate fit - between quality and task", "Augmentation - maximising the time quality product" and "By-products as new resources" (see Fig. 29).

Other articles which are included in O2 Pages such as "Batman, Adventure and Ecology" by Neils Peter Flint⁽¹¹⁾ and "Utopian Poetic Projects - Oriental Sunshine in Paris" by Thierry Kazazian are examples of how the whackiest lateral thinking can produce a wealth of new creative ideas which may often later inspire radical design solutions. (Fig. 30 and 31) Anita Roddick of the Body Shop is also a firm believer that anarchy is the best way to creativity (Profile: Anita Roddick, produced by the Body Shop 1990).

Mr. Flint believes the recent lack of imaginative design and creativity is due to the loss of "real adventure and myth" in a world he dogmatically condemns, where "mankind has been paralysed by materialism"⁽¹²⁾. The article was written around the time of the movie blockbuster Batman (1989) which Flint accuses of being mega-big nonsense entertainment that "passively and mercilessly" serves up man's "dreams and fantasies" for the commercial benefit of the "multinational entertainment machine"⁽¹³⁾. The article is completely over the top, but it does have some unsettling if familiar connotations and is perhaps in some way reminiscent of Blake's philosophises that man would lose his imagination and other inner magical qualities to the sole pursuit of materialism.

There is also a tremendous amount of informative news in the O2 Pages, about international environmentally orientated activity as well as O2's own activity and design projects. The issues carry a section entitled "News International" which gives updates on recent practical examples of how green ideology is being translated in contemporary society. One such example is "Terra Verde" - an ecological department store that opened in October 1990 in Soho in the heart of New York city, by Katherine Tiddens, an environmental writer and activist of the last twenty years. The store is selling over two hundred products which are as environmentally friendly as

possible (ie. from cradle to grave) and according to O2 is run according to the latest principles of any modern business but with stringent environmental and moral ethics included.

At the back of each issue of O2 Pages there is also a page entitled "Info" which gives a list of names and addresses of organisations, events, magazines and books that provide more environmental information. The rest of O2 Pages is taken up with O2 News giving details of their latest activities and projects.

In May 1990, O2 held a weekend workshop in Denmark. The main topic was low energy lighting, as preparation for a product development project on various types of lamps planned between O2 and a major industrial manufacturer. The group was led by Richard Braenderup of Tivoli Lighting Design and by Kim Bork, a Danish lighting designer. The architect Maria Politis also presented plans for a major urban development called "Torsted West" near Horsens in Denmark which is part of W.H.O's project "Healthy Cities - Health for all year 2000".

In July 1990, a similar weekend was held in London where all the O2 offices got together to discuss O2's structure activity and future projects. Such activity has included a series of six, monthly seminars entitled "On the way to cleaner products for the future", which began on September 26th, 1990 in Copenhagen, Denmark and which will be covered in English in O2 Pages.

O2 International also created a seminar for (the fifth year) architectural students at the Royal College of Art in London in November 1990. Theo Crosby, partner of the internationally renowned design group Pentagram, recently elected professor of design at the R.C.A. and an active member of O2, headed the project. The theme of the seminar was "Poverty in the context of Ecology" which O2 set about analysing, later setting a brief on the subject as a four week project for the students. This is not the first time that O2 has linked up with the field of design education. Back in July 1989, one of their earliest activities was the seminar "Days of Reflection" held at the Les Ateliers Saint Sabin School in Paris. During the seminar, six research teams were formed from designers of the different O2 offices and students of the school. They were given a design brief ranging from Nutrition, Packaging, Nomadism, Communication and Transport in which they had to explore environmental implications. Although the possibilities produced were not real jobs, they showed that it is possible to overcome cultural and language differences and complete initial investigations through drawings, models and analysis that may address to some extent urgent environmental problems which spread greater awareness among designers.

One of the most exciting and desperately needed projects which O2 is presently undertaking is a "How to make Sustainable Design Manual", due to be produced some time this year. It is something that is badly needed in the design world as often designers can be unintentionally dangerous. They simply don't know anything about the consequences that the processes and materials they use in their work may have upon the environment. Such a manual would be extremely beneficial in changing this ignorance. It would provide new kinds of information and knowledge that have hitherto been scattered, misleading and often inaccessible and which would enable designers at last to produce alternative environmentally sympathetic solutions towards the holistic approach needed for sustainable design. O2 Denmark has received funds from the Danish Ministry of Industry and Council of Technology to aid in the production and research of such a catalogue/manual even data base which will focus on furniture design, industrial design and packaging.

In London, Anderson Fraser (also the printer for O2 Pages) of Anderson Fraser Publishing has produced a comprehensive guide called Recycled Paper - A Manual for Designers and Printers (1990). The manual is composed of six parts:

The Print Manual - has 56 pages of information and guidance which explain intrinsic and practical differences between recycled and virgin papers as well as constructive advice on potential problems.

The Print Comparator - shows 23 stocks printed at two screen rulings enabling you to assess the effects of each paper on print experience and to make the necessary technical adjustments.

The Design Guide - is comprised of 40 pages to assist in selection and use, also providing a glossary of terms and a chart giving details of a range of over 50 recycled papers.

The Report - is 40 pages of background information about paper use in the world, the papermaking process from forestry to recycling and other environmental issues.

The Postcards - contains 40 postcards showing various images on a range of recycled boards.

The Samples - includes four paper sample pads and a list of stockists.

It is through the efforts of "O2" and others like Anderson Fraser, as well as the recent M.A. thesis The Green Paperchase (1989) by a St. Martins College, London, graduate and now a renowned green design consultant, Anne Chick, that new

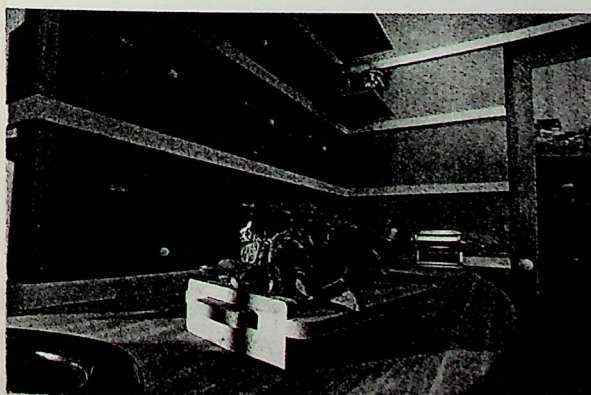
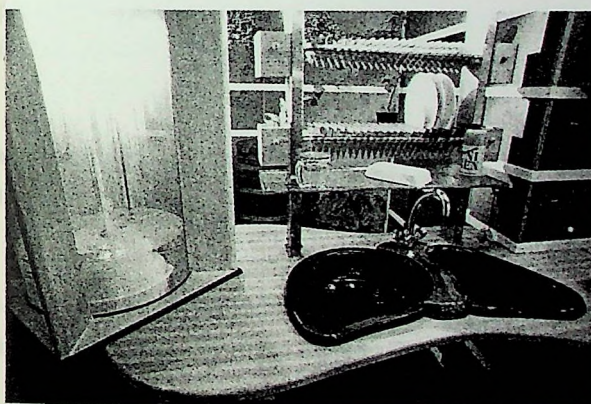
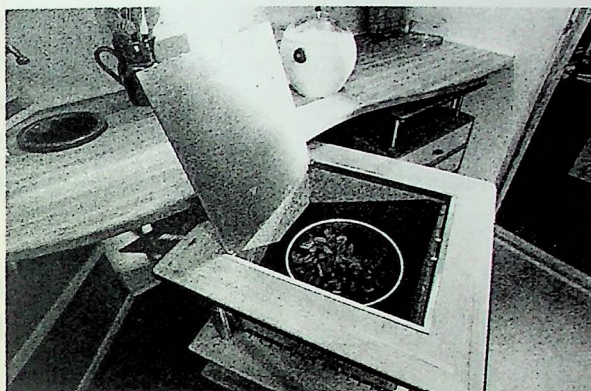


fig.32 - 35 *The Green Kitchen*, O2 1990

awareness will be spread and new information made accessible; thus designers will be enabled to pursue a more holistic and sustainable approach. In turn, they will perhaps be a tremendous positive influence upon the future translation of green ideology in consumer society

Before concluding this study of O2, I will look briefly at their actual design contributions to solving environmental problems.

O2's "Green Kitchen" (Fig 32 - 35) must be their most renowned and successful contribution to sustainable design. The concept of the green kitchen was designed mainly by Claus Bech Danielsen, Niels Peter Flint and Morten Skou, with others and was presented at the international design exhibition NordForm '90 in Sweden. It is based on the principle of completely environmental consciousness in every activity and material used in the kitchen. The wood for all the units is red hardwood beech, normally used only as waste wood for chip boards because of an irregularity in the grain. Additional use of stainless steel, brass, rubber etc. in the units is designed to make disassembly and recycling easy by not using glue. Natural wax and water-based paints are also used.

Drawers, cupboards and shelves are designed as a system of modules to be put together by the individual's tastes and needs, providing maximum possibility for variation. All the units are on wheels so the kitchen can provide supplementary workspaces (for children etc.) and make maximum use of space and cleaning easier. The kitchen also contains a wide range of alternative utensils such as the "Electric Pot" (Fig. 36) which conserves energy by enabling several foods to be cooked at the same time. The fridge is substituted by a larder into which cold air is blown and regulated by a thermo-stat. There is also the ingenious "APURE" - Aqua Purifying Recycling System (O2 Pages No.2 p28-29) designed by Morten Skou, through which all water used is collected and purified for re-use. The separation of waste is an integral part of the kitchen, as is low energy lighting. O2 is presently working within industry to make the vision of this "Green Kitchen" a reality. A follow-up project of a "Green Bathroom" is also in production.

Another project to which O2 submitted and won, in a Japanese design competition in Nagoya was their solution to the brief of designing equipment or systems for the provision of all types of information appropriate for installation at public meeting places. Niels Peter Flint led the team of O2 designers (which included David Rothwell a 1990 graduate of N.C.A.D) whose solution was a modular bus-stop system that had garbage segregation and provided information using video screens while you waited for the bus. This project is presently being developed for production.

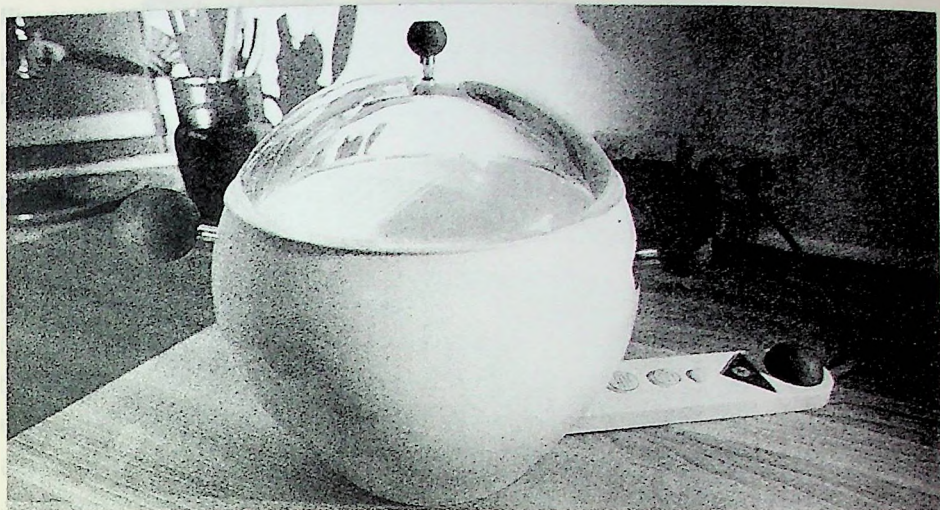


fig.36 *Electric Pot*, O2 1990

O2's efforts to bring about Schumacher's holistic and sustainable approach in the field of design have been tremendous. The organisation must surely be one of the most recent and best examples (along with the Schumacher College) of how the future translation of green ideology in contemporary society will emerge.

Chapter 5: Footnotes

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| 8. | O2 Pages, op. cit., | No. 1, p8-9 |
| 9. | O2 Pages, op. cit., | No. 2, p12-13 |
| 10. | O2 Pages, op. cit., | No. 2, p16-17 |
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