

Winter 1992

RAIN

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RAIN

Quarterly \$5
Winter/Spring 1992
Volume XIV, No.2



Neighborhood Controlled Food and Transport



Direct Self-Government

Working Communities

Community Supported Agriculture
Downtown Community Television
Workbikes and Society
Self-Reliance and Activism in India
Real and Imagined Communities
Cities Against Centralization



Respected Local Labor

About this issue...

Cooperative incentives, as opposed to competitive ones, can lead to better quality products and stronger social ties, (see *Community Supported Agriculture* beginning on page 4, and *Making Workbikes for the Neighborhood* on page 14). Such incentives appear only in communities that actively work to assert the value of labor, especially that of local workers who have been marginalized by the global economy. For example, at *Downtown Community Television* (see page 10) independent producers are given a chance to work on important themes that are unacceptable to network television executives. They have put sweat equity into a formerly dilapidated building, which now acts as a haven from which to do their community work. At *Anandwan* (see page 22), leprosy patients, formerly rejected by society, transformed abandoned land into a hospital, a self-reliant town and a national center for activism. Cooperative incentives and valued work go hand-in-hand with broad participatory self-government on the community level, where people both decide and carry out policy. This kind of politics has a rich history (see page 32), and must be rekindled if communities are to function fairly and sustainably.



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“Neighborhood controlled food and transport”: communities are better able to examine and fulfill their own needs than is the world market. Here a fellow in Zürich, Switzerland experiments with milk containers and a “Long John” transport bike. The producer/consumer food co-op *Topinambur* (see page 6) wanted to transport food via human power. A fine modern version of this bike is now available from Oregon: see page 14.

“Direct Self-Government”: It is neither necessary nor desirable to hire professionals to administer cities and provide services. People can best do this themselves (see page 32). From a sketch of Pont-Aven, France, circa 1880.

“Respected Local Labor”: Here a healthy leprosy survivor works on the community workday at Anandwan (see page 22). The community workday, known as *Shram Dan*, was an idea of Gandhi’s, meant to make community service a regular part of the week. Anandwan is built on abandoned land, free from many economic pressures, where manual labor has as high a value as any other work. Since the town is self-reliant, projects at Anandwan need people more than money to survive.

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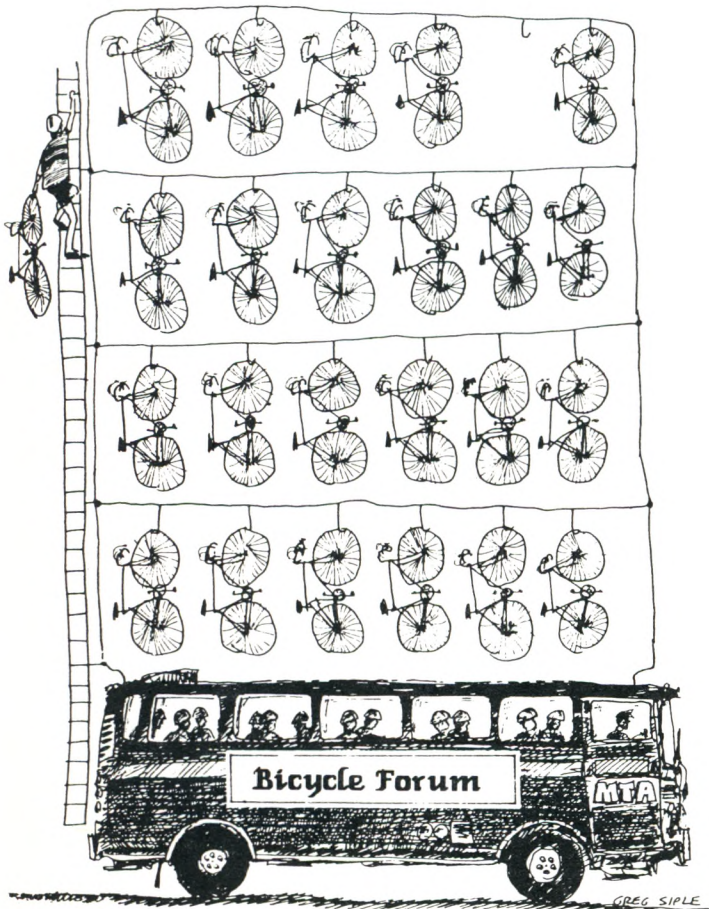
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Back Cover: From Punch, 1858. On the horse-drawn *Omnibus* (hence the modern word *bus*) space constraints meet Victorian fashion.



Community Supported Agriculture

The best way to support local farmers is to become partners with them. If we pay in advance for a year of our food, we share the costs and risks of agriculture. In return we get fresher food, keep good farms alive, and finally know where our vegetables come from. And our new friend, the farmer, can plan just how much to grow without having to fret about how generous the World Market will be this year.

This is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), a social and economic arrangement that aims to close the gap in the distant relationship between consumer and producer. The CSA model arrived in the US in 1984 from Switzerland [see Jan VanderTuin's account, page 6] spawning hundreds of small farms growing food for 10 to 100 families each. Some communities are even taking on the ownership of farmland themselves. With permanent land trusts and stable agreements with farmers, they foster community stability along with agricultural and ecological integrity.

Because the health of the land and the community is a major issue for those who've become involved, and because reliance on distant resources destabilizes local economics, these farms do not use petrochemicals. And since they produce nearly all of a family's vegetables, the farms tend towards agricultural diversity rather than ecologically destructive monocropping.

CSA's run counter to all modern agricultural thinking, the kind that emerged alongside the global marketplace. The current system hurts farmers and farm workers everywhere, puts great strain on the environment, wastes immense quantities of food, and makes many consumers profoundly suspicious about both their produce and the consequences of growing it.

The first Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project began outside of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, a town teeming with interesting social projects (see pages 8 and 9). A few similar projects already existed quietly in the States, but the idea didn't spread until after the Great Barrington group was picked up by the media in the mid-1980's, a time of massive US farm failure.

In a model CSA, the group calculates the needs of the its members and aims at growing just this amount of food, eliminating the waste in the process of farming for an impersonal market. Waste is phenomenal even among the most careful farmers: poor markets in Oregon this fall left nearly half of all organic produce to rot.

The members, also called share-holders, share all the



This broccoli is already paid for. Muslin Creek Farm in the hills surrounding Cottage Grove, Oregon is selling less on the unpredictable open market and more to consumers in neighboring communities who pay in advance for a season's vegetables. Muslin Creek farms without petrochemicals.

risk as well as the benefits of a farming project. If raccoons or deer eat the corn, or if squash are victims of a flash flood, it is understood that there will be neither corn nor squash that week. On the other hand, if the cabbage begins to bolt in alternating hot and cold spells, the unplanned bounty will be split among all. If there's too much food, the groups are large enough, 50-200 people, to be broadly aware of community needs, and they'll donate or sell the surfeit. Since tastes vary, shareholders often barter food among themselves from their twice-weekly allotments.

The CSA aims to grow just enough food for its shareholders, eliminating wasteful overproduction for the impersonal market.

This sharing of risk in the partnership between consumer and producer mitigates most of the headaches of modern farming: the need to scrape up capital, fear for an income and worry about bankruptcy. Rather than scrambling

for market share to stay alive, the farmer can enjoy the taste of stability that comes with satisfying consumers directly. Any farm can benefit from having even a small number of shareholders; the extra stability helps even market farmers.

When problems arise the share group can help to solve them: if there are too few hands at harvest time the shareholders, feeling committed to help, either take up the slack themselves or make some other group decision. A form of direct democracy can emerge in the midst of what used to be apathetic consumption. To help the shareholders make informed decisions, and begin to learn about problem-solving in agriculture, most CSA's ask them to come farm for a day or two each year.

CSA's are direct producer-consumer cooperatives, one of the best forms of non-competitive economics. While worker cooperatives are known for mostly equal relations *within* the company, they often acts as an unaccountable independent unit in the marketplace: cooperative capitalism. In contrast, producer-consumer co-ops have natural limits on size and domain. A small group of farmers must both farm and take care of their membership, so the membership won't vote to thin down their relationship through expansion. The face-to-face nature of the relationship, along with the shared risk of the community, ensures that production in general will be carried out to everyone's satisfaction.

The beauty of this solution is its creation of farmer incentive through social relationships, rather than through a profit motive: people finally are able to thank the farmer and lend a hand in times of trouble. And in regard to product, CSA's provide for people's needs directly, so optimal use of resources is defined by those affected rather than by a faceless bureaucracy, as in state-communism, or by a corporation, as in global market agriculture.

CSA projects are successful despite a number of cultural obstacles. The problem first is convenience. CSA farms drop off produce in town twice a week, so the household shopping isn't "one-stop". A convenience compromise is usually made: if the shareholders want to pay extra for the labor to deliver to their homes, they understand the costs, since the CSA hopefully keeps open books.

There are other compromises. People aren't accustomed to paying for vegetables before they see them, so some CSA organizers rename the commitment "subscribing" to vegetables, not quite an accurate description of a face-to-face relationship. But usually a new member changes more than the CSA: for example the modern cook is usually not familiar with seasonal vegetables, so CSA's offer recipes in their newsletters to help them learn about plant diversity.

One of the biggest adaptive problems with CSA's is farmer confidence. Often they end up giving people twice as much as they could possibly eat, trying to compete with the market's abundance. Farmers also don't always trust that their consumers will pay cost overruns. In contrast, shareholders tend to trust the farmer so much that it remains a challenge just to get people to look at the accounts, or visit the farm.

To get new customers, farmers often want to be more

lenient with payments, but collection schemes take time away from farming. Muslin Creek Farm in Cottage Grove, Oregon (see photos), has reached an interesting compromise with people unable to pay for an entire year's vegetables at once: monthly payments begin before the planting season, and stop during the fall, providing early capital for seeds, and a late season when vegetables come without payments.

The lessons we've all learned from dealing with the harsh instabilities of market economics sometimes lead us to compromise the CSA idea. But if the concept is pursued now in it's most radical form, perhaps a new generation of farmers and consumers will develop sufficient will and understanding to risk working together.



Above: Over the winter CSA shareholders get seasonal vegetables such as Kohlrabi and Kale, salad greens and herbs from the greenhouse, and stored food from the root cellar such as squash, potatoes, onions, and garlic. Muslin Creek CSA is in its second season: if you're interested in talking to them, contact Tal Carmi, Leslie Rubinstein or Ross Randrup at 79296 Replsleger Road, Cottage Grove, Oregon 97424, phone: (503) 942-0805.

Zürich Supported Agriculture

The Origins of CSA

by Jan VanderTuin

The early 1980's were inspiring years for Swiss activists. The youth were rebellious, and citizens at large asked questions of the nation that epitomizes capitalism. I saw many evolving solutions to problems that I, coming from the States, had written off as unsolvable.

I was working part-time on an organic farm outside Zürich when I heard of an organic agriculture research institute in Basle. I went there with an eye open for alternatives to market agriculture, having felt burned economically as an agricultural worker and farmer in the States. The institute director sent me to Geneva, to a successful project that addressed almost every problem I'd encountered in modern farming.

This producer-consumer food co-op in Geneva was founded by a man inspired by the co-op movement in Chile during Allende's administration. The basic idea, that consumers personally cooperate with producers to fund farming in advance, makes for more efficient use of land, since you know how much to grow, and much less stress for farmers, since you already have money to live for the year.

The Geneva group had been running for nearly a decade on this principle, with 180 families getting their produce

from a small farm outside of the city. They began with small plots around town, producing somewhat haphazardly what they could with what money they got from people in advance. Although the harvests were small, the original investing consumers trusted that the growers were doing their best and would improve over time.

This was the most radical Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) group I have ever encountered. They actually sent out questionnaires asking their consumers how much money they made, in the hope that they would pay a share proportional to their income. They were very brazen, but I think this made them successful. If they wanted you to become a shareholder, they'd offer the idea to you without compromise. If you didn't "get it", they left you alone, and maybe you'd discover on your own or from your neighbor why CSA's were such a good idea.

The share-holders included committed families who worked for international development organizations and were looking for ways to live sensibly at home. The project wasn't perfect: they didn't have enough land to keep animals, so they imported manure, and they were always struggling with high land rents. Finding farmland is much harder in Switzerland than in the States. On the other hand this makes it easier to find good farmers, because in Switzerland they work hard to keep their limited amount of land healthy.

I went to two other CSA's, one in Basle and one in Liechtenstein, both associated with Anthroposophy, the movement that created Waldorf schools, Camp Hill Villages for the developmentally disabled, etc. Most of their share-holders came from this movement. The European Anthroposophics didn't really promote CSA's, however, as their counterparts in the States later would.

Back in Zürich I was introduced to Christophe, a rather philosophical vendor of organic produce, nuts, cheese and raw milk. He went from quartier to quartier selling on the street out of a cute little French step-van. We collected a small core group, and I organized a meeting of local farmers, organizers from the CSA's I'd visited, and others who showed interest in



At the farm: Paul, a founding member of Topinambur in Zürich, and a dedicated human powered utility vehicle enthusiast, prepares to ride for an hour and a half to deliver about twenty family shares. These go to a few communal depots in the families' neighborhoods. Before getting involved with community supported agriculture, Paul was involved in the design of the primary computer software for the Swiss tax system. Jan built the trailer.

starting a producer-consumer food co-op in Zürich. I was encouraged by Swiss interest in ideas that were unusual, especially since they came from someone who spoke no German. If only all of us could be so open as to accept outside perspectives that willingly.

We used the garden at an ancient Swiss farm that was extremely diverse and which had never switched to using chemicals. We set up a storefront in town for the project, which we called Topinambur, French for Jerusalem artichoke. At the storefront shareholders could pick up their share of vegetables twice a week, along with foods like olive oil and citrus fruits from various Italian co-ops we knew.

A friend of mine was a doctor for SSR, the big European student travel cooperative, and she sparked off a wave of interest in the Zürich CSA among SSR people. This brought one man, who had been involved in the movement to make Swiss banks more responsible, into the core group, and he managed to bring the project into the 'mainstream' of the alternative movement in the city. For me, this success became a problem in some ways as people were no longer joining for philosophical reasons, but because it was a fad. I think this left the project ideologically vulnerable to the 'free' market mindset and all its subtle accompanying problems.

But at the outset, the way the Swiss approached this project was significantly different than CSA's I later worked with in the States. In the States I often felt very frustrated, and embarrassed of my own culture's barriers to what was common sense thought and behavior in Switzerland. If I could make a few observations I would say:

- In Switzerland there is no stigma against thinking for the long-term. In many day to day situations it was apparent that this was a culture where people were concerned about their effect on the community.

- The average Swiss has more experience with cooperation in general. In the States people *can* cooperate, but for most of the population it's an unusual experience.

- The Swiss were interested in the history of the CSA project. In the States it often seems that history bores everyone, so people don't care to learn from it.

- The Swiss paid their annual shares in advance, allowing for almost no bookkeeping and no chasing down of late payments. This isn't because they all have big bucks:



In the courtyard of Topinambur's ancient farm, which had never moved to petrochemical agriculture, shares for over a hundred families are packed in Jute bags made by a co-op in Bangladesh. Weighing and dividing of the harvests is done in rotation by Topinambur workers, who also do farming, organizing, harvesting, running the Zürich store and delivering shares to depots.

they have a higher rate of savings and a better appreciation of long-term costs. In the States payment plans always creep in, adding to accounting costs and hassles.

- The most striking thing in Switzerland was the social commitment to these projects: both farmers and shareholders were sure of each other. In every group in the States that I have seen, the core group seems to lack faith in the consumer's willingness to pay true costs such as overruns. In Switzerland the organizers and farmers would rather be in another profession than continue to be martyrs and take personal losses while producing for the community. They initiate CSA's to create sustainability in human resources, not to push farmers to the breaking point.

After two years at Topinambur Christophe and I organized another project: a food delivery system based on human power. The result was trailers [see photo left], and the beginnings of my present work [see page 14].

Switzerland has many problems that I wished to help solve, many of them international. The level of energy and commitment among activists there was something I have rarely experienced in the States. Whether I like it or not though, the States are what I know best, and the time came when it seemed impossible to get involved in Swiss change as deeply as I would like. I never doubted that I could start a CSA in the States, and I wanted to introduce the idea through a working example. After returning to the States it took about a year and a half before I found people to start the experiment with. As it turned out it wasn't in a large city but in the small community of Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

Community Supported Agriculture:

Robyn Van En has taken on the job of **national clearing house** for CSA materials. Her farm in Massachusetts was the first in the US to be called a CSA. If you would like to know about CSA near to you, she's a good place to start: **Robyn Van En, Indian Line Farm**, RR3 Box 85, Great Barrington, MA 01230, phone: (413) 528-4374.

Additionally, Robyn has produced a manual, which she sells for \$10: **The Basic Formula to create Community Supported Agriculture**, the best bet for any group wanting to organize CSA on their own.

Robyn also sells a **CSA Video** for \$35: **It's Not just About Vegetables**, which Jan VanderTuin and Downtown Productions of Great Barrington made in 1986. If you would like a broadcast quality copy for airing on television, contact Mickey Friedman/Jon MacGruer, Downtown Productions, 22 Railroad Street, Great Barrington, MA, 01230, phone: (413) 528-9395.

Your nearest **Waldorf School**, or **Camp Hill Group** may be involved with CSA. The related **Biodynamic** farm movement has taken up CSA with a passion: for certified biodynamicists in your area write Rod Shouldice, Box 550, Kimberton, PA 19442, phone: (215) 935-7797.

Permaculture: This sustainable agriculture movement is often connected to CSA. In fact CSA in **Japan**, the *teikei* movement to supply organic vegetables without government certification, is the current cover story of the **Tennessee-based magazine The Permaculture Activist**. For information on the permaculture group nearest you, write to The Permaculture Activist, Route 1, Box 38, Primm Springs, TN 38476. While you're at it, subscribe to this eclectic, brass-tacks quarterly at only \$16/year, \$20/year overseas. They also distribute **Australia's** cutting-edge **Permaculture International Journal**, for US \$20/year ppd.

INSAN Newsletter is published in English by the **Institute for Sustainable Agriculture** in revolutionary **Nepal**. This lively native permaculture group does excellent research and farm extension work, reported on in detail in this semi-annual. Available for only \$5/year overseas, or if you'd like to be a member, \$25/year: INSAN, GPO Box: 3033, Baneshore - 10, Kathmandu Nepal, phone: 977-1-471448, fax: 977-1-524509 Attn: INSAN, telex: 2439 ICIMOD NP Attn: INSAN.

The Permaculture Drylands Institute is publisher of **Permaculture Drylands**, a fine, bioregion-specific sustainable agriculture quarterly (\$12/year from P.O. Box 27371, Tucson, AZ 85726). They teach regular courses and hold workshops throughout the year: call (602) 824-3465 for more information. One workshop they're offering this March is entitled **Building Your Bale Straw House -- To Code!**

It's a risky game pushing permaculture's ecological design and alternative economics amidst the high-flying capitalist investment plexus of **Hong Kong**. This group tries to do respectable non-profit consulting to businesses and banks while holding onto its values: **Permaculture Asia Limited**, 1/F lot 1969 Tai Wan New Village, D.D.3 Lamma Isl., Hong Kong, phone: 852 9820703, fax: 852 9821452.

"Skills for a Sustainable future" is the title of a **four-day course in March** through *our* local **Willamette Valley Permaculture Association**. Contact them at 80260 Highway 99N, Cottage Grove, OR 97424, phone: (503) 942-7065. WVPA offers technical courses like this one, as well as native plant walks, plant and seed exchanges and other mutual support activities for permaculturists.

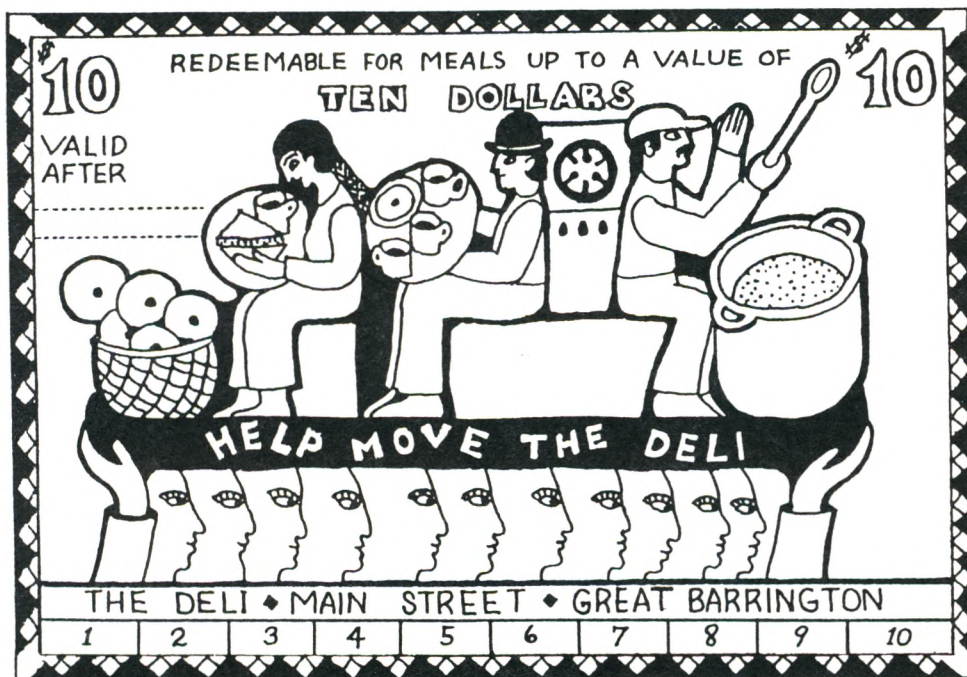
An **Urban Permaculture** design certification course will run in **Houston**, Texas from late February through September. Besides standard permaculture training, course participants will set up a Local Exchange Trading System (LETS) for barter, create multi-layered spiral herb gardens from salvaged bricks, produce pond ecologies in huge pots, and terrace uneven yards. Contact Anne K. Devlin-Firth, 213 E. 24th St., Houston, TX 77008.

Permaculture/Appropriate Technology **internships** at the **Aprovecho Institute**, nestled in the quiet, beautiful hills surrounding Cottage Grove, **Oregon**, are available for a mere \$350 per month for room, board and tuition. Interns must commit to 3 months at first, after which they may be offered an additional 12-month internship. At the end of the 15-month program they will be reimbursed \$1,000 to assist resettlement, and the institute will help the graduate find work in this country or overseas. Aprovecho is a beehive of activity, running permaculture courses all through the year. Contact: Aprovecho Institute, 80574 Hazelton Rd., Cottage Grove, OR 97424. Phone: (503) 942-9434. They also print the appealing **News From Aprovecho** newsletter, available for either \$15/yr or 1/10 of 1% of your yearly expenses.

Sustainable Agriculture: Siegfried E. Gerber, a horticulturist working hard to change current agribusiness practice in **Kenya**, writes a concise, 63-page booklet of sustainable agriculture techniques with blunt, on-site critique of African export farming. **Modern Agriculture and its impact on the Environment** is available for \$5 postpaid from: Siegfried E. Gerber, P.O. Box 30496, Nairobi, 0154-41243 Kenya.

AGTALON (meaning "to farm" in Filipino dialect) is a model non-governmental sustainable agriculture school and support group in the **Philippines**. Their program includes credit assistance, ecological training, co-op marketing, zero-import farming and the teaching of responsible social and economic behavior towards the local community. They would appreciate free copies of any pertinent publications: Agtalon, Nalsian Manaoag, Pangasinan 2430 Philippines.

In Great Barrington, MA, a low-price popular hangout, The Deli, had to move when its lease ran out, but the bank wouldn't loan the proprietor the money needed to renovate the new location. SHARE (see below) helped him issue a ten Deli Dollars note (at right), which he sold at US \$9 to customers and friends. This provided him a low-interest loan that he would pay back in prepared food over the following year. He raised \$5,000 in one month. Other community notes followed, side-stepping today's credit crunch and adding the element of trust to local economics. The Federal Government doesn't care about such local scrip provided it can be exchanged for US currency, and transactions using it remain taxable.



In Kansas **The Land Institute** conducts extensive research into prairie ecology, and hosts a number of interns every year at their popular school. The results from this well-respected research program are published in an easy-to-read quarterly, **The Land Report**, available for \$15/year from: The Land Institute, 2440 E. Water Well Rd., Salina, Kansas 67401.

UC Santa Cruz offers an **Agroecology Program**, which for years has helped organic farms survive despite the nearby agri-business regime in Watsonville. Get their free quarterly report: **The Cultivar**, Agroecology Program, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064. Phone: (408) 459-4140.

Land Trusts: The Institute for Community Economics helps non-profits buy land and lease it to low-income homes-owners on the same land, in order to both halt speculation on that property and provide low-income affordable house ownership. The land is common property but the house is yours. This makes your mortgage lower, since it doesn't include the land value, but the trust keeps you from selling too high. For more information contact ICE, 57 school street, Springfield, MA 01105-1331, phone: (413) 746-8660, fax: (413) 746-8862.

Farm conservation land trusts having difficulty preserving actual farm activity might benefit from a new booklet published by The E.F. Schumacher Society headquartered in Great Barrington: **A New Lease on Farmland: Assuring a future for Farming in the Northeast**. It describes the creation of working community agricultural land trusts through partnership, Revolving Loan Funds, CSA's, Loan Collateralization Funds, local currency

financing and non-profit lease management. It's \$6 from: **The E.F. Schumacher Society**, Box 76, RD 3, Great Barrington, MA 01230, phone: (413) 528-1737.

The **Schumacher Society** has built a **Decentralist Library** in Great Barrington, and has organized local community projects including Self Help Association for a Regional Economy (**SHARE**), which captured national media attention in 1991 helping some businesses issue local currency (see illustration). From *A New Lease on Farmland*:

"Two Farm stands in Great Barrington, MA have jointly issued a voucher or coupon which they sell in the late fall when cash is short and redeem in the summer, when cash flow is greater. Called a "Berkshire Farm Preserve Note", it is redeemable for \$10 worth of farm produce at either stand from June through September. Berkshire Farm Preserve Notes are sold at a 10% discount for \$9, effecting a low-interest short-term loan from the customers to the farmers."

The Society publishes transcripts of its annual lecture series, including work by Stephanie Mills, Francis Moore Lappé, Hazel Henderson, Jane Jacobs, Kirkpatrick Sale and Wendell Berry.

England's Schumacher College swings into it's second year lofted by the previous season's terrific response. On a dreamy 800-acre medieval estate in rural Devon, the college runs long courses taught by a fine faculty: the likes of Theodore Roszak, James Lovelock, Petra Kelly and David Bohm. Fees are about £1,000 for a month's course, including room and board. For more information, and a prospectus, write The Administrator, Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EA, U.K., phone: (0803) 865934, fax: (0803) 866899.



The Story of Downtown Community Television

After tiring of major media's inconsequential moralizing, Manhattan's homeless produced their *own* documentary. Over the past 20 years, thousands of New York City's under-funded community groups have learned to use video to tell their stories. A dedicated and impoverished bunch of film-makers at Downtown Community Television (DCTV) made sure they could.

Outside their hometown, DCTV is a well-known maverick in the world of professional news journalism. They helped pioneer video vérité and porta-pak documentaries. While risking their lives to film the underreported underside of modern civilization, they won eight Emmy awards.

In the 70's they filmed Cuba and post-war Vietnam for PBS, suggesting to American audiences through straight, unmanipulated images that the US government was seriously misguided to fight these revolutions. PBS blacklisted DCTV after nearly a decade of this kind of radical footage.

In the 80's, working independently for NBC, they covered growing US pollution and poverty. They filmed US sponsored repression in Central America, raising the hackles of conservative network executives. The grudge of one who became network president made DCTV victim to the most overt censorship within the US media during the Gulf War.

GLOBAL AND LOCAL CAMERAS

DCTV began in the early 70's, showing videos on New York street corners from the back of an old van, covering food co-ops, local politics and neighborhood organizing. With their youthful enthusiasm they won one of the first video small grants from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, contracting to hold video workshops, film cultural activities and show the results on the

streets. In pushing themselves to fulfill an agreement which was almost beyond them, they impressed the city, which continued to give them just enough money to live with their equipment in a bare studio in the poorer parts of Chinatown.

In a few years they collected enough friends, admirers and contacts that their documentaries aired nationally on public television and won awards. They usually were unable to cover their costs while working with PBS, but getting shows out to big audiences was worth sacrifices.

After being blacklisted nationally by PBS, a *local* PBS director, frustrated with his own system, sent DCTV to a friend at NBC. The network was relatively flush with cash in those days, and the producer was open-minded enough to know the advantages of an independent operation. He admired their willingness to die to get footage, so he sent them into the middle of the Chinese-Vietnamese war.

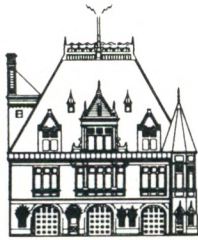
During the 80's NBC bought anything made by DCTV's Jon Alpert, whose documentaries were as terrifying as they

Left: DCTV's Jon Alpert interviews a Philippine New People's Army Guerilla. Their fight against the Marcos Government is chronicled in an Emmy Award-Winning documentary listed on page 12. Photo: Maryann DeLeo.

were funny. Comfortable US living rooms became less so when Alpert's first world camera went places that nice people were supposed to avoid. NBC producers, despite the enormous controversy every time they aired something of Alpert's, were compelled by the style and effect to continue paying for the honest and uncompromising perspective.

Alpert turned the NBC money over to DCTV, to help out the community programs. These expanded widely, strengthening the alternative video scene in New York.

DCTV bought and repaired a dilapidated Victorian fire-house in Chinatown (at right), which many of them moved into, and which became a permanent center for community video production and a theatre for forums and video festivals.



Such relatively good times couldn't last, and neither could the patience of the conservatives at NBC. The total news blackout of the US war in the Persian gulf made Alpert and the DCTV folk unhappy. It was obvious that there was more going on than the government wanted known, so they decided to go get the story. After making arrangements to travel with former Johnson administration Attorney General Ramsey Clark, the executive director of NBC nightly news authorized the production. Just as they were going out the door, a call came from a vice president at NBC nastily telling them not to go. DCTV figured the NBC people might have their wires crossed, but in any case they *needed* to go to the gulf: what was broadcast so far was simply too thin.

Jon Alpert thinks he and DCTV were being a little, perhaps willfully, naïve. The president of NBC, Michael Gartner, had evidently been waiting for a very long time to shoot them down, and this gave him the opportunity. While DCTV was in the Gulf and Ramsey Clark was condemning the US for war crimes, Gartner cancelled plans to air the results. But when Alpert arrived and showed the tapes to Tom Brokaw, NBC anchor, and other NBC News people, they decided to put it on the air. Two hours before going on, Gartner overruled everyone, denounced Ramsey Clark and dictated that nothing by Alpert would ever be shown again on NBC. End of relationship.

If more people in the upper echelons of network news, who consider themselves responsible journalists, had bothered to stand up to their bosses and take the risks Alpert did, this war would have been better covered, and might even have been prevented. That the anchors didn't stand up is a sign that the economic power the company holds over their news staff is considered nearly absolute.

Since Alpert's firing, times have been hard at DCTV, especially since this coincided with massive cuts in grants, particularly to small activist outfits. But the huge support

group that DCTV helped build in the New York community has proved very resilient, so the relative poverty is at least stable. Several programs have proven especially useful for the underfinanced community.

The "works-in-progress" group, according to DCTV Director of Community Affairs Hye Jung Park, is an effort to foster a cooperative spirit among fledgling documentary producers. Television usually sparks competition for money and air time, an attitude typical of the establishment culture that alternative film-makers fight against. So, on a regular basis producers using DCTV's facilities, some 400 groups a year, meet to critique each others work, network to get their material aired, and see if they can offer each other a hand with production. These regular meetings are a big hit with the local alternative video community.

Competition for money and air-time is usually fierce. In contrast, DCTV's "works-in-progress" meetings foster cooperation among documentary producers.

Hye Jung also acts as a kind of agent, a non-profit one, working hard to get videos to audiences, either through cable, at universities or sometimes on broadcast TV. Her success can be seen occasionally on PBS, no longer black-listing DCTV, where she gives footage to alternative media shows such as *The 90's*.

Along with other alternative media organizations in New York such as Globalvision and Deep Dish TV, Hye Jung tries to connect technically trained film-makers with organizations that are otherwise unable to put their message in video form. The alternative video community in the city is extremely diverse and active, and DCTV gives their space, equipment and expertise to those who need it.

Alpert and the other producers at DCTV continue to make documentaries, though not nearly as many as when working for NBC. Their Emmy Awards have not helped much: the news business is in recession too. NBC president Gartner slashed the news budget severely: why pay for good reporting when the advertising dollars come in without it? This was easier to justify after General Electric's takeover of NBC put financial pressure on the network. The rest of the news industry is in a similar state, which certainly encouraged the complacent reporting of the Gulf war.

Despite all this DCTV survives, through the skill and cooperation developed in their local and international activism. The disarmingly honest nature of DCTV's professional footage, forged in their neighborhood work, makes them sufficiently successful to fund further innovative, grassroots video-making. This is just the sort of radical positive feedback loop required to push America's conscience off the sofa and out into the real world.

DCTV PRODUCTIONS

This is just a small sample from Downtown Community Television's two catalogs, one of *professional videos*, listed on these two pages, and another of *community productions*, listed over on page 13. New releases and other alternative video news are found in their newsletter **Scanlines**. Both catalogs, along with information about facilities, classes, or use of the professional team are available from:

Downtown Community Television Center
87 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10013
(212) 966-4510

Award-Winning Videos

Third Avenue: Only the strong survive. This powerful Emmy winner documents the tough lives of six people who live or work on New York's Third Avenue. Eddie works in an auto junkyard, but to pursue the American Dream he steal cars. Trudy lives with her five children in a burnt-out and abandoned building. Ricky is a young male-prostitute. Joe has lived on the street for a decade and now asks his wife to take him back. Raul is a poor, hard-working, God-fearing man whose seven children are gradually being lured into working the streets. The Pascones own a barber-shop but their neighborhood has crumbled and there are no customers. But when the family gets together to sing and dance their spirits rise above their troubled life.



Don't Move -- Fight Back. A landlord stops providing services. Another violently and illegally removes tenants. This tape shows groups fighting for affordable housing, and winning!

Hard Metals Disease. In the U.S. 100,000 people a

year die from occupational diseases, virtually all of which are preventable. This investigative documentary, winner of an Emmy, explores the cobalt related hard-metals disease that can destroy a pair of healthy lungs in three years, and the legal loopholes that allow big manufacturers to go unprosecuted.

Urban Indians. Follows Joe, an unemployed Ogala Sioux, from pine ridge reservation to New York City and back again. The personal struggle of Native Americans continues.

Juvenile Justice. Most juvenile detention centers teach kids to become better criminals. But this short Emmy award-winning documentary follows three odd, successful approaches to problem kids: putting them in plush prep schools, sending them out camping together in the Texas desert, and teaching illiterate street kids to tell their stories through video.

South Dakota Gold Miners. A modern tale of miners, sick from silicosis, trying to get satisfaction in a company town. Takes place at the mine whose gold helped build the Hearst publishing empire, which years back hired Pinkerton detectives to kill strikers.

Chinatown: Immigrants in America.

Documents the densest neighborhood in New York, where heavily overworked immigrants struggle in garment and retail businesses. These are controlled by the unofficial government: the Chinatown Consolidated Benevolent Association.

The Story of Vinh. An Amerasian Vietnamese immigrant who speaks no English is misjudged by the New York public school system, which believes him to be 15 when he's actually 21. A story of culture clash and a clunky foster-parent system.

Vietnam: Picking up the pieces; Talking to the people;

Vietnam 1990. DCTV was the first US TV team allowed into Vietnam after the war, and over the years was given unprecedented permission to film anywhere they pleased. These tapes document the problems the US created in former South Vietnam: prostitution, slums, starvation, mines, poisons and broken relationships.

The Philippines: Life, Death

and Revolution. An Emmy award-winning look at Philippine social unrest, poverty and the insanity of the US backed Marcos government. Includes a controversial segment where New People's Army rebels ambush a government patrol.

Nicaragua '79 -- In the Beginning

Nicaragua: The Revolution Continued

DCTV documents the Sandinista victory over the Somoza regime. They were in the second car of the caravan driving into Managua the day of the triumph. The second tape

documents all the ugliness of the battle between the CIA's contras and the Sandinistas along the Honduras border, and other struggles of a young revolution.

Cuba: The People; El Dialogo; Fidel Comes to New York; Cuba 1990. *Cuba: The People* was the first US television documentary filmed in Cuba after the revolution. Given freedom to go anywhere, they visit factories, crowded bars, lively streets and abandoned buildings from Batista's day. The second tape is of the famous meeting between Fidel and the Cuban exiles that reconciled differences and allow separated Cuban families to travel freely between the US and Cuba. Reagan later stopped such travel. The 3rd tape is of Fidel's 1979 visit to the U.N., and the final tape is an update on Cuba's current struggle to deal with US aggression and the collapse of the Communist International.

Trouble at the Border; Revolution in El Salvador; Nowhere to Run. The death squads of this US-backed government does not hesitate to kill reporters. Terrifying footage of refugees chased past the border into Honduras, trying to survive with the help of the FMLN.

Nowhere to hide; Inside Iraq. The tapes that destroyed the relationship between DCTV and NBC. Includes the only uncensored report to come out of Iraq during the Persian Gulf War. Documents the horrible human toll from wildly inaccurate US bombing. Groups around the country have been showing these tapes to help people understand the consequences of the war.

What a way to make a living. Emmy winning collection of short pieces of people struggling, with bare success, to earn a wage in hard times.

To arrange an order, please call (212) 966-4510. There is a \$10 preview charge. For institutions, prices run around \$45 for a rental and \$200 for a sale, but DCTV says that no group will be denied access to these tapes because of lack of funds.

Community Video Collection

DCTV helps people produce these documentaries, and then helps promote them. If you want the complete catalog, write to DCTV, 87 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10013. If any of those listed below interest you, call (212) 966-4510 and DCTV will put you in touch with the producers.

Inside Schomberg. (18 min.) produced by teenagers near Harlem's Schomberg Plaza, concentrating on daily life and ongoing communal projects.

Soul to Seoul. (17 min.) a youth-produced video investigating the problems between the African-American and Korean communities in New York.

The end of an era: small business and the

neighborhood. (20 min.) activists explore gentrification and the disappearance of neighborhood business.

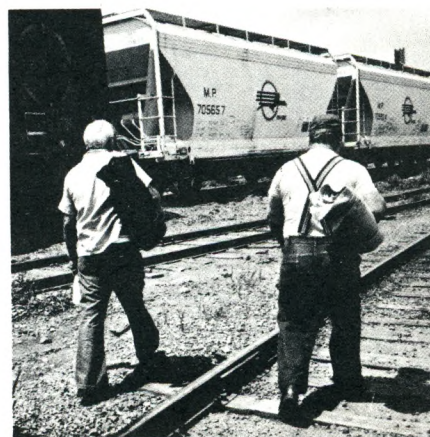
Gardens in a city under siege (20 min.) The Trust for Public Land has helped create community gardens throughout NYC; here's how they do it.

Street Vendors (20 min.) explores the trials of recent NYC immigrants selling on the street.

WAVE Taster; We Care (25 & 33 min.) information about AIDS and giving care to people with AIDS.

Stop! In the name of love (24 min.) Improv theatre by & for teens, on sexuality & the risks of AIDS.

Attack on Women's Clinics (27 min.) a dramatic recording of an Operation Rescue attack.



LAMDA Update: Liberty for all (45 min.): a history of this New York gay and lesbian activist group.
Project Lifeline -- A Convoy of Conscience (64 min.) Central American refugees fight to stay in the US.

Build Homes not Bombs (18 min.) Homeless activists forge an alliance with the peace movement.

Bread and Puppet (15 min.) A portrait of an alternative political circus travelling around the US.

Authority versus Majority (75 min.) A theatre play dealing with political oppression in Latin America, with a Colonel who changes sides.

Shakur and Morales (23 min.) two ex-US political prisoners talk in Cuba, which granted them political asylum.

Biko Lives! (35 min.) From the music and politics festival connecting the South Bronx to South Africa.

Travelling at night (22 min.) Children learn the history of slavery in the US and go on a field trip into woods and caves of the underground railroad for escaped slaves.

1, 2, 3 ... freeze (15 min.) A pilot project teaching hospitalized children to create stop-action animation.

Litter Critter (20 min.) Story of kids who save New York from the Litter Critter.

Christmas, Inc. (25 min.) The Elves are tired of Assembly lines, the reindeer want to go to the beach -- Christmas finally happens through teamwork. A musical.

Buchhändlenn in New York (19 min.) New York's biggest German bookstore arrived when the Nazi's closed Mary Rosenberg's Nürnberg shop in 1939.



Making Workbikes for the Neighborhood

Each day, the average bike is pressed into service carrying groceries, boxes and bags far beyond its designer's original intentions. At best we hang panniers, baskets, pods and trailers off of it: sometimes frustrating attachments to use and maintain.

Better bike designs for hauling loads were first available nearly a century ago, then fell into disuse with the advent of the combustion engine. But today a tiny international network of ecology-minded bicycle engineers is leading a renaissance for workbikes. The old bikes are being brilliantly redesigned with lessons of the past century in mind, including the experience of being overrun by the automobile industry.

Today's mammoth bicycle corporations concentrate their marketing power on recreational and commuting bikes, perhaps unconsciously avoiding the transport territory of

motor-driven trucks and vans. The primary exception in the US is New York's *Workman's Cycles* (see *Rain* 14:1, p.44), a company making workbikes since the 19th century. The US market for human powered machines shrank as gasoline power caught on, and as a result *Workman's* has been conservative when investing in new bicycle design. They mostly build massive, heavy-duty bikes for use in industry, made to withstand the disrespectful treatment they receive on the factory floor.

Now, Jan VanderTuin of *Human Powered Machines* has brought more workbike models to the US from Europe, updating their design and broadening the social program for bicycle engineers. His designs are based upon classic European transport cycles, such as the "Long John" (or "Long Emma" as it's known to the British), and the Baker's Bike, with basket attached to the frame rather than

Left, Jan VanderTuin fetches the mail with his utility bike, whose load is on the frame rather than the handlebars. It has a waterproof container designed for the weather in Eugene, Oregon. The model is used to deliver pizzas to students at the University of Oregon. At right, Jan delivers packages on Manhattan's tough streets using a Long John, designed for easy manipulation of heavy loads (up to 180 pounds) in tight traffic. (NY Photo: Peter Britton). Both the narrow maneuverability of the Long John and the waterproofing of the utility bike suggest the depth of modification local workbike design could undergo with more support for alternative transport.



the handlebars (see photo left). Contrary to current practice, however, good bike design isn't just a matter of engineering: it must take the rider's community into account.

For example, in Italy and Switzerland many bicycles are built, frame and all, at your corner bicycle shop. Every day a variation on some classic model is built to meet local or personal needs, and the bike is typically repaired and adjusted in the same shop for its lifetime. In fact, it is difficult to get any *other* bike repaired there. The bike shop is part of your neighborhood, and the relationship between you and your bike builder strengthens over the years. This relationship is now being hurt by mass-produced bikes, designed for the least common denominator among consumers, built by robots, or people forced to act like them, who never get to know the riders.

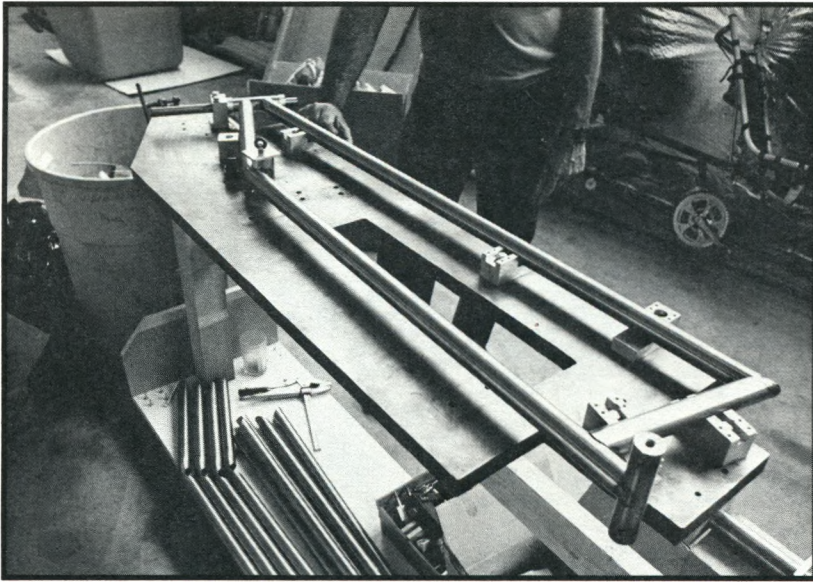
In Italy and Switzerland many bicycles are built, frame and all, at your local bicycle shop.

Local economies benefit from decentralizing and personalizing bike production. Custom Italian bicycle frames are famous throughout the world because each Italian neighborhood has bike designers and builders. Northern Italy's modern economic success owes much to a tight fabric of diverse skills in quick, custom, small-scale manufacturing. Italy has become something like the product idea shop of Europe.

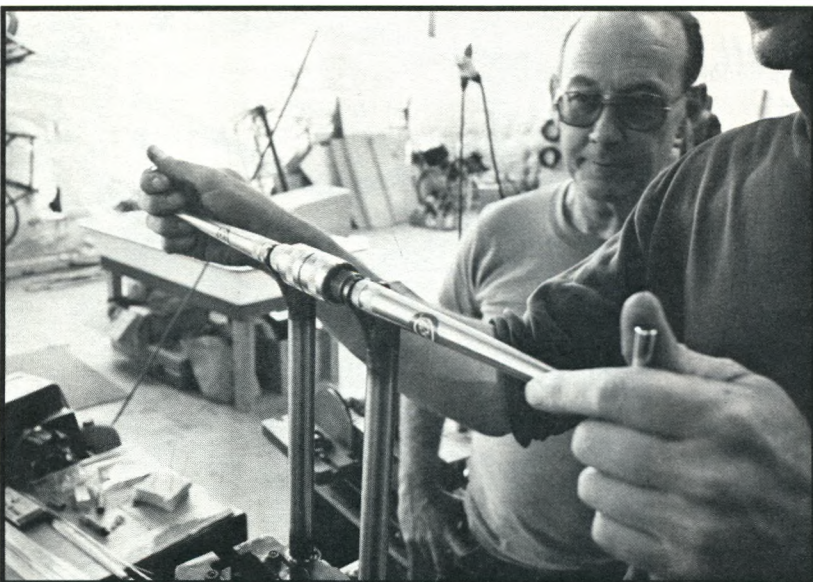
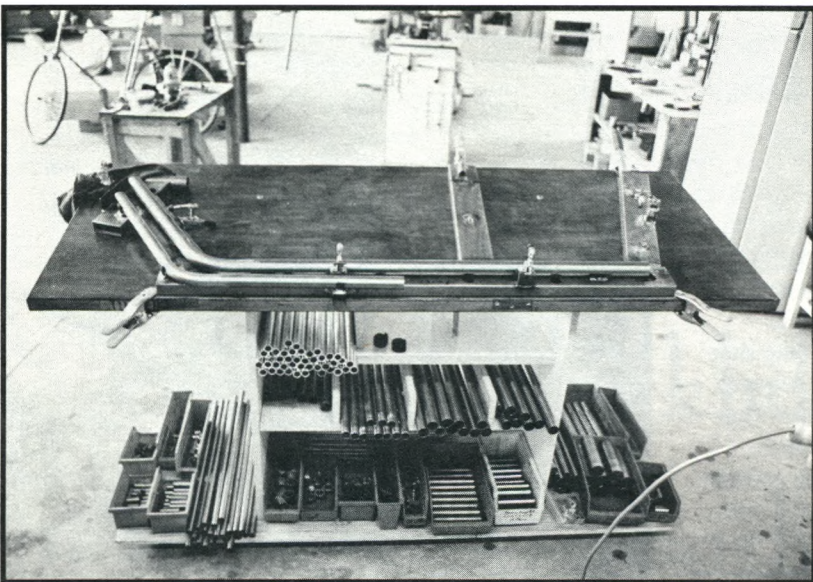
In Switzerland a century of molding bicycles to local needs produced a national school for bicycle design and manufacture, a bicycle unit in the Swiss Army, and a fleet of thousands of baker's bikes for the post office. In their neighborhood bike shops the Swiss learn that this

Below, Brad Evans rides a Long John with waterproof container on Oregon back country roads: this light-weight workbike is built like a mountain bike to handle rough terrain. If you'd like to order one, see page 17.



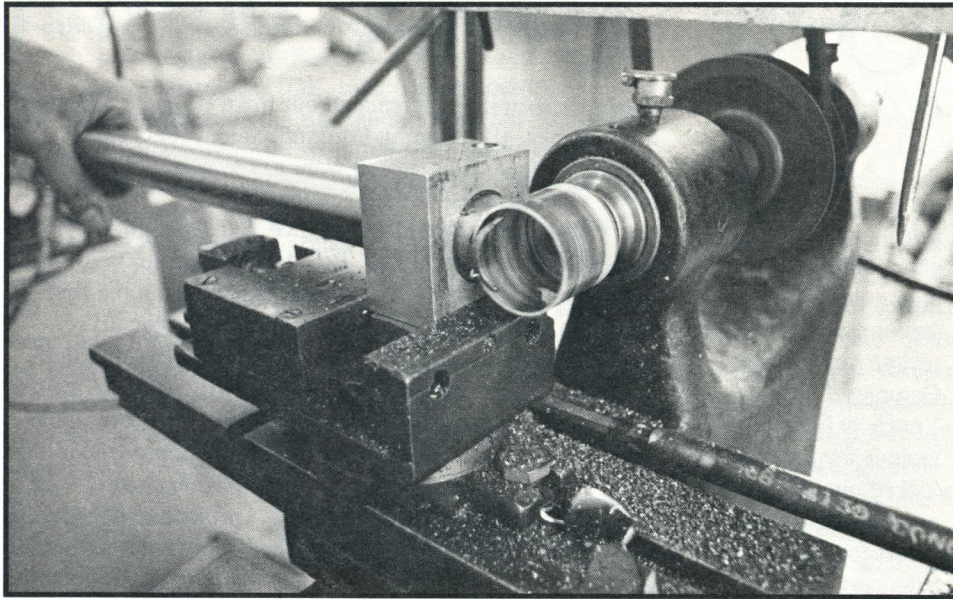


With the collapse of machine tool industries in the US during the 1980's, special purpose machines such as the horizontal mill at **right**, shown cutting a curved miter joint, became less readily available (except from factory closing auctions). These kinds of machines are essential for quick prototyping of bikes to fulfill evolving community needs. The disappearance of such hardware burdens local small-scale workbike builders, but their primary burden is the general high cost of bicycle-building tools. Custom-made bikes are usually made for the reasonably well-funded, and so the tools are priced for recreation cycling, not for more practical vehicles. One solution is to create new tooling arrangements. VanderTuin has spent years researching inexpensive tube bending, cutting and welding. **Top left**, Dick Ryan of Ryan Recumbents demonstrates how a standard industry jig (a design frame that holds tubes in place for welding) is used. A jig's plate is cut with expensive equipment out of solid steel, putting it out of range of producers for a small local market. Instead VanderTuin builds his own jigs (**directly left**) by cutting rectangular steel tubes and welding them together. He then places it on any flat surface, such as this door, to do a preliminary, or tack, weld. Not only are these light, cheap, and just as good as the solid plates: they allow one bench to produce any model with a simple change of jig. In either case, bicycles are then made true with various inexpensive straightening devices, such as the one used in the **bottom** photo for forks.



technology is adaptable, so bikes find their way into a broad range of activities. VanderTuin would like to see communities in the US develop this kind of technical understanding and appreciation of transport diversity.

Large-scale bike manufacturers have failed to understand workbike technology, perhaps because a bike's design must relate to some specific social role, a situation which defies easy national marketing. VanderTuin designs and prototypes with community-sized intermediate scale production in mind. For small-businesses the key is to facilitate low capital start-up of local bike construction. For example, a big expense in building bicycles is the almost immobile flat steel table "jig" (the frame used for holding the bicycle tubing in one plane for welding, see top two photos). Instead of using these, VanderTuin makes jigs



In Hamburg another group has established a neighborhood center in which they live, work and do community service. They run a bicycle workshop cooperatively with the community where, for a subsistence fee, people come to get help creating bikes for unusual needs. In the US local inventors are unable to support themselves doing appropriate technology work like this, and no one helps since the prevailing ideology pressures them to make a business success of it, alone.

Community supported organizations can incubate endless applications of appropriate technology. Workbikes are used in local delivery of mail,

out of readily available rectangular steel tubes. When a given design is called for, a small manufacturer could pull out the appropriate jig from a stored collection.

If it's hard to imagine a transition to small scale manufacturing in the US, VanderTuin points to the experience of the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) in Britain. The OxTrike project designed a load-carrying tricycle from scratch, specifically so it could be built inexpensively with tools and materials available in any developing country. For example, the brakes are constricting bands, and the brake lever is a pedal on the frame. Most significantly, ITDG taught a detailed, intelligent, shop-worn manufacturing process to the potential builders. They've since set up dozens of OxTrike community workshops around the world.

The situation in the US is similar: few are now involved in community-level bike production, and setting up the appropriate scale for a new type of bike here is very much like doing a third world development project. So like a development worker, in addition to making the bikes, VanderTuin teaches workbike design and manufacture to the community, in conjunction with the University of Oregon.

Sometimes you have to start a third world project to bring appropriate technology to first world neighborhoods. VanderTuin visited such a group at the Universität Oldenburg in Germany: their international development group produced and broadcast a television show detailing the construction of a bicycle trailer. They also taught community workshops in which people built trailers -- now tailing bikes and mopeds throughout Germany.

Of course communities benefit by more directly supporting their own appropriate technology research. An experimental bicycle group VanderTuin knew in Frankfurt, established as a state vocational school, created unusual, useful designs such as rainproof bikes and trikes for the handicapped. A group of ex-students from this school founded a co-op whose bicycles are now well-known in Germany.

pizzas, groceries, laundry and other goods. They transport the elderly, children and anyone else who needs to get anywhere. Ideally service operations are owned and run by the neighborhood, allowing them to determine in open assembly if the appropriate services are being provided.

Greenpeace Europe's EcoBike campaign highlighted what happens when a community does *not* control its own bike technology. Greenpeace listed torrents of wastes and toxins associated with normal bike production; they constructed an alternative bike using the cleanest methods they could find, given their limited research funds. Most current bike production is not only environmentally unsound: bicycle factories, and affiliated mining operations, wield sufficient clout to displace people in developing countries, and to overwork unionless assemblers in politically oppressive states like Taiwan. Both the technology and economics of manufacturing have to change if they are to be truly ecological.

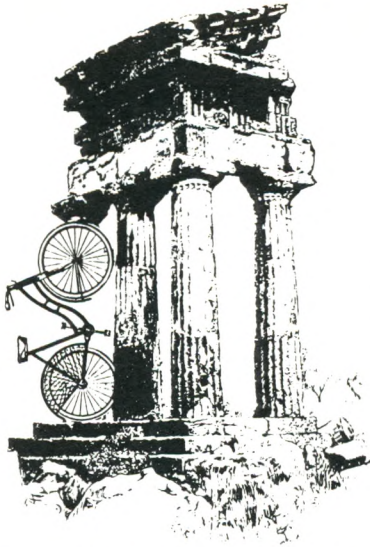
In the impersonal world-market the creativity of bicycle makers is stifled and the needs of bicycle riders are not addressed. VanderTuin and his colleagues are giving us a set of solutions. But until deep problems are tackled more directly, by more people, the original vehicle of personal liberation, and the modern symbol of ecological awareness, will not fulfill its potential.

*Addenda: **The Workbike Workbook**, diverse & detailed workbike materials VanderTuin has collected over the years, is available now for \$10 postpaid. He is also writing another workbike book, available next year. Contact him about the book or the bikes at Human Powered Machines, P. O. Box 1005, Eugene, OR 97440, phone: (503) 343-5568.*

*The **Bikes** themselves cost from \$669 to \$949 for the Baker's Bike, \$995 to \$1700 for the Long Jan, depending on gearing, racks, containers, insulation and components. "TIG welded cromoly with powder coat finish", and every penny of profit goes into furthering community bicycling.*

The Bike Column

By Danielle Janes



A variation on the familiar "park & ride" facilities for cars, found at US commuter train stations, appeared recently in Münster, Germany. These "park & bike" lots include covered and locked bicycle mini-garages that allow

safe storage of bikes overnight. Driving cars to "park & bike" lots, then taking bikes the rest of the way, can help save people & cities from the expense of downtown parking.

You might prefer to ride all the way from suburb to city if you live in Holland. With 9,000 some miles of bike paths, it is probably Europe's densest region of bicycle friendliness...although the town of Erlangen, Germany recently completed over 100 miles of paths.

No one flying into Copenhagen, Denmark will probably need the International Bicycle Fund's **Survey of Airline Baggage Regulations for Bicycles** (but to order one send \$1 to the IBF address below). The city has over 5,000 bikes that can be borrowed *free*, scattered around town in specially-designed racks. Bike-carrying racks on taxis are compulsory, and free bikes are also available in the Danish wilderness at Hoge Velume National Park.

Motoring tourists often drive right by potential friends and possible regional understanding. This is particularly true in poorer countries where the majority have no access to automobiles. The International Bicycle Fund's Africa cycling tours offer an alternative to alienated, superficial tourism. These include: *The Tunisia Odyssey, Oasis And Riviera*, March 1992; *Historic North*, April 1992; and *The Kenya Grand Tour*, July 1992. For more information, contact: **International Bicycle Federation - Africa Tour**, 4887 Columbia Drive South, Seattle, WA 98101-1919.

For teenagers, **Sports For Understanding** offers a healthy way to learn from other cultures and make new friends. They bring teenage cyclists of all skill levels on bicycle rides through foreign countries. For more information, contact: SFU, 3501 Newark St, NW, Washington, DC 20016, USA, phone: (800) 424-3691.

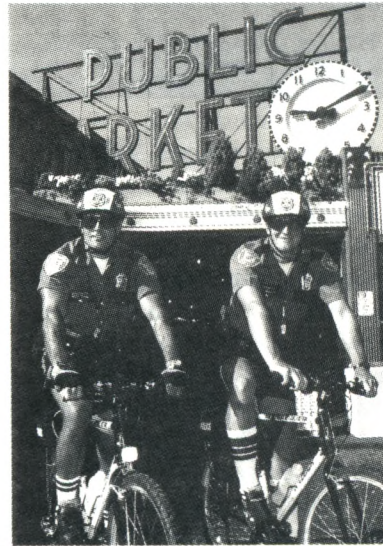
Among local governments in the US, we have recently seen a number of creative and cost-effective uses of bicycles, or their co-optation, depending on your point of view. Fire inspectors from San Luis Obispo (CA) ride bikes to building inspections, and Seattle and King County (WA) employees can check out government bicycles for business trips during the day.

The bicycle police patrol pioneered by the Seattle (WA)

Police department just reached our town (Eugene, Oregon) this summer, after finding Portland, Salem (OR) and countless other cities. If you want to see *your* police on bikes, consider this 77-page manual:

Policing By Mountain Bike. Sgt. Paul Grady. \$55 from PDG Enterprises, P.O. Box 14255, Seattle, WA 98114. In the summer of 1987, the Seattle police began the first mountain bicycle patrol in the country, using locally-produced Raleigh bicycles. They quickly discovered that without cars they maneuvered more swiftly in dense traffic, and that patrolling was turning into more of a preventative exercise. It became easier to hear, see and apprehend alleged

troublemakers. The project achieved overwhelming public approval, lowered patrolling costs and raised cop cardiovascular capacity. The increased personal interaction between the public and the bike patrols reduced friction, and the benefits to the urban environment, through reduced gas consumption and pollution, surely helped bring the enthusiastic response.



It costs approximately \$3,000 to equip an officer with bicycle, on-site maintenance, seasonal uniforms and accessories, so around 20 police can be outfitted for the cost of a single car patrol. With 40 Seattle Police mountain bike riders arresting over 1,000 felony narcotics dealers in just one year, the arguments in favor of *automobile* patrols are failing even among enforcement hawks.

The manual describes Seattle's bicycle patrol equipment, maintenance procedures, recruitment guidelines and ideas for finding funds. The bike patrol was funded through donations for its first five months. The idea finds support easily. Suggested sources include:

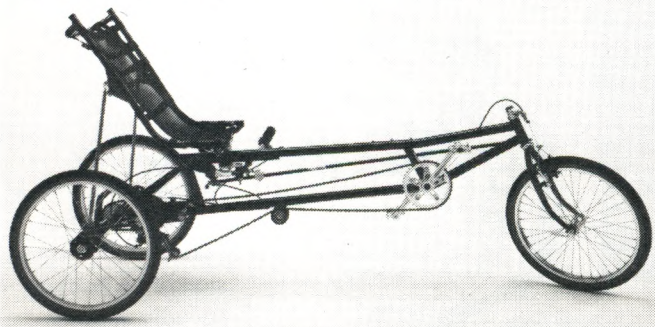
- 1) local community service organizations, businesses and professional associations, neighborhood associations, private corporations and bicycle clubs. The Tacoma Washington Police Department began their program with a grant from a business association interested in easing tensions downtown;
- 2) mayoral and city council lists for receiving donations from the public;
- 3) grants for narcotics enforcement;
- 4) other department funds for the low start-up costs.

In addition to police bicycle training information, half the manual is specifics on vital equipment, uniforms and accessories. Although some recommendations might not be useful to the bicycle commuter (like the bullet proof vest),

others might be, like advice about flat tire avoidance. Who better to offer suggestions than cycle cops on the streets 6-8 hours a day, year-round? (OK, bike couriers perhaps.) Grady uses Tuffy strips inside the rims and thorn-proof innertubes. A Kevlar™ puncture-proof strip that fits inside the tire, or a Specialized™ puncture-proof guaranteed inner tube were also recommended.

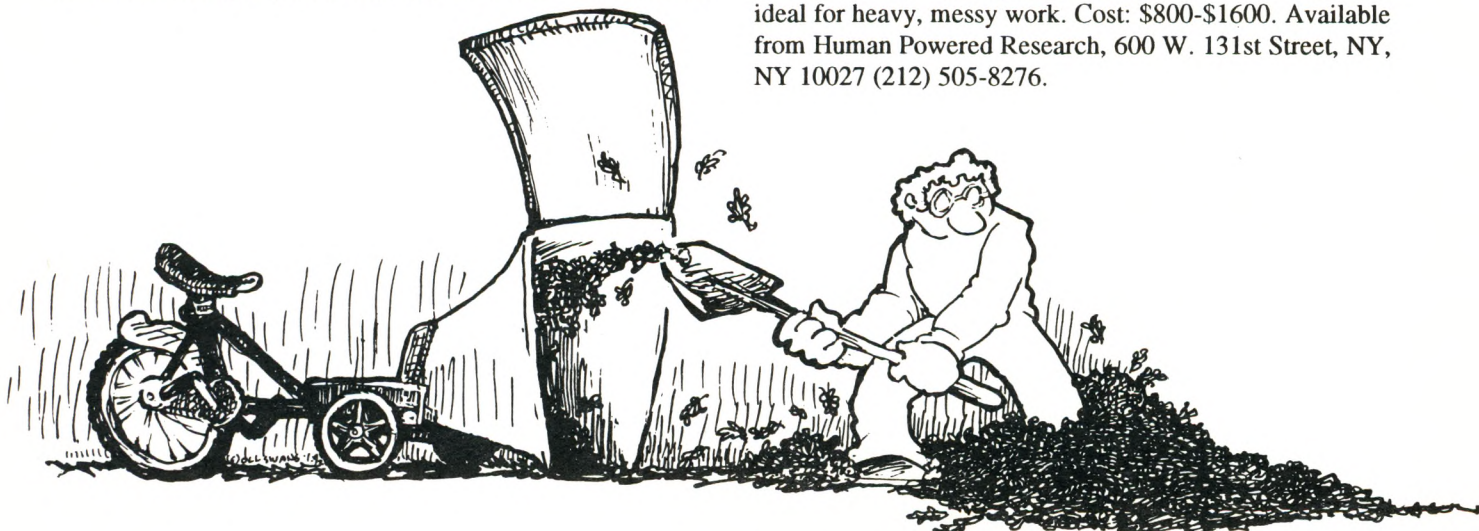
Bicycle patrols lead to other city bike use because maintenance costs increase after about 18 months, when the bike should be retired to less rigorous duty. Grady suggested using them for plain clothes patrol, park detail or even for use by the police academy as physical fitness equipment.

Giving a copy of this book and a letter of encouragement to your local department may be all it takes to get a bicycle patrol rolling.



This **recumbent trike** is the most comfortable vehicle of *any* kind you'll ever ride. The fast new trike from Dick Ryan of *Ryan Recumbents* (3910 Stewart Rd., Unit F, Eugene, OR 97402, phone: (503) 485-6674) is latest for bicyclists tired of aching backs and butts. Cost: \$1,000.

Mobility Resources, Inc. in New Mexico distributes **all terrain bikes** and special **utility trailers** designed to handle unpaved conditions. The cargo bags are versatile and can be custom designed with carrying pouches of any size or shape. These human powered vehicles can greatly enhance transport fleets by reducing costs and decreasing energy expenditure. In addition, MRI offers technical advice on tool selection, trains mechanics on assembly of trailers and bikes, and sets up repair workshops for on-site maintenance.



MRI also assess an organization's cycling needs based on such factors as travel distances, terrain, weather conditions, and available skills. Their trailers include:

The **One-Wheeler**, which uses square aluminum stretching from below the bike seat to a sturdy 24" plastic wheel. In between are cordura fabric bags capable of carrying two headloads of materials. The other bag carries smaller items. Together this is a 6000 cubic inch capacity. The One Wheeler is ideal for single track paths yet sleek enough to safely glide through urban thoroughfares. Costs \$275 + extra \$45 for the wheel.

The **Cargo Hauler** is made of PVC pipe wrapped in fiberglass and supported by bicycle forks and 24" plastic wheels. This sturdy vehicle, weighing just 23 lbs., has a canvas basket suitable for carrying large, heavy, or irregular shaped objects. Costs \$440.

The **Versa-Van** is a steel chassis that supports a custom designed container capable of transporting up to 500 lbs. of goods, from electronics to plumbing equipment to medicine. A bakery in Santa Fe, NM uses Versa-Van to deliver more bread than the baker's Izuzu Trooper! Costs \$318 without "Twex" (Coextruded thermoglazing w/ aluminum wall). \$948 with "Twex" container.

The **Stretcher Trailer** uses telescoping aluminum, plastic net and a plastic wheel to make a lightweight portable emergency vehicle. It's perfect for carrying a disabled person to a clinic. A related version, meant for paved road transport of the sick, has two wheels for added stability and hitches to the bicycle for faster trips. \$490.

Contact **Ken Hughes** at: Mobility Resources, Inc., P.O. Box 381, Santa Fe, NM 87504, phone: (505) 988-9297, fax: (505) 983-4853.

Dumptrikes, from George Bliss of *Human Powered Research* in New York City, are used by the Village Green Recycling team to haul newspapers, bottles and cans, and by a Manhattan construction company to deliver materials and remove debris. With a capacity of nearly 400 pounds, the various models of the dump trike, with their sturdy frames by Workman Cycle and their Rubbermaid 1/2 cubic yard polyethylene containers, are ideal for heavy, messy work. Cost: \$800-\$1600. Available from Human Powered Research, 600 W. 131st Street, NY, NY 10027 (212) 505-8276.



Transportation
 Alternatives, 494
 Broadway, New York
 City 10012, phone:
 (212) 941-4600

A spin-off organization of Transportation Alternatives, *Auto-Free New York*, prints the *Auto-Free Press*, a bi-monthly newspaper exploring "the upper limit of devehicularization of the nation's largest city". Their latest projects include greater transportation alternatives at Newark's airport, an auto-free Central Park and the expansion of pedestrian-friendly areas. A recent article explored the history of NYC play streets (streets closed to motor vehicles for children to play safely on, left), an idea whose time has come again. In 1991, Transportation Alternatives organized the **First International Conference For Auto-Free Cities** and are now helping to

A safety snippet: for more information on **bicycle helmets** contact the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, 4611 7th St. S., Arlington, VA 22204.

Periodicals: *City Cyclist*, the bi-monthly magazine of *New York City's* upbeat ecological transportation advocacy organization, **Transportation Alternatives**, tracks the latest NYC cycling campaigns, including access to bridges and auto-free parks. It teaches you how to survive the fast-paced NYC scene, including articles about NYC-proof bike locks, how to handle pollution, where to find bicycle parking and how to get involved with good-time bicycle activists. Each issue points out the latest roads to avoid, where to complain about road problems and the inspiring story of a "Commuter of the Month". Available with a \$20 TA membership from:

put together the second (at the **University of Toronto May 22-24**. Contact *Auto Free Toronto*, 40 Dundas Street W., Suite 219, Toronto, Ontario Canada M5G 2C2, phone/fax: (416) 392-0089). TA membership is \$20 and can include both *Auto-Free Press* and *City Cyclist*, if you request it. Send to: Transportation Alternatives, 494 Broadway, New York City 10012, phone: (212) 941-4600.

The Bicycle Network's **Network News** is packed with current newspaper clippings and photos covering bicycle use around the world. Recent articles range from translations of articles about Chile's construction of bike lanes along major highways, to information about Portland (OR) Area Bicycle Coalitions' work for bikes on buses and light rail. Ten years of back issues would provide a fair history of the global bicycle revolution, which editor John Dowlin calls the

velolution. Free sample copies are available in exchange for a cycle-related clipping, with the name and date of the source, if it is used. Or you could subscribe by sending \$25 plus \$7 postage to **John Dowlin**, *Network News*, P.O. Box 8194, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

Additionally, Bicycle Network affiliates have published an inspiring 1992 bi-lingual (French & English) bicycle wall calendar emblazoned "**Cycle & Recycle**". Its evocative bicycle photos, chosen by bicycling organizations around the world, would encourage bicycle enthusiasm in even the most reluctant. Available for \$7.00 from Bicycle Network, P.O. Box 8194, Philadelphia, PA 19101, USA. Also available from the International Bicycle Fund in Seattle, the International Human Powered Vehicle Association in Indianapolis, Transportation Alternatives in New York City, and *Le Monde à Bicyclette* in Montréal.

The monthly **California Bicyclist** (Northern Edition) covers the sports/racing side of bicycling and the latest in high-tech components. But what it offers is valuable for every bicycle user, like what to expect from bicycle tune-ups, a guide to 1991 bicycle books and how to register your bike's serial number (for a small fee) with the **National Bicycle Registry** (call (800) 848-BIKE or write 1832 Tribute Road, Sacramento, CA 95815). For subscriptions send \$12/year to *California Bicyclist*, 490 Second Street, Suite 304, San Francisco, CA 94107, phone: (415) 546-7291, fax: (415) 546-9106.

Cyclegram, the Bicycle Coalition of the Delaware Valley's bi-monthly newsletter, covers pertinent local issues, as well as information about pending national bicycle legislation and national studies and conferences. Available with your \$25 membership from: Bicycle Coalition of the Delaware Valley, P.O. Box 8194, Philadelphia, PA 19101, phone: (215) BICYCLE. BCDV is affiliated with the League of American Wheelmen.

International Bicycle Fund is "a non-governmental, non-profit organization promoting bicycle transport, economic development, international understanding and safety education." Their semi-annual four page newsletter, **IBF News** has sections focusing on each of those areas. IBF also publishes material dealing with remote area travel by bicycle, many about Africa since IBF organizes the African Bicycle Tours mentioned on page 18. To receive IBF News and support their good work, send \$25 to IBF, 4887 Columbus Dr. South, Seattle, WA 98108.

Bikecentennial's quarterly **Bicycle Forum** is packed with useful ideas for bicycle advocates and planning professionals. With a welcome emphasis on bicycle safety (including fun educational materials for bicycle helmet and safety campaigns), each issue includes various nitty-gritty domestic and international bicycle activism news, hints for the bicycle map maker, readership input on bicycling dilemmas, the latest bicycle books and several feature articles. Recent features included Bicycle Transportation

Policy in Africa, Promoting Helmets in Madison, Improving your city's roads for bikes, Palo Alto's Success Story and a critical review of the bicycle development guide from the Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Individual subscriptions are \$14.95, from *Bicycle Forum*, Box 8308, Missoula, MT 59807

Maps: If you are planning or **developing** a city bicycle map, the Bicycle Federation of America can help make the task easier. BFA's library of 50 urban bicycle maps, along with map designs, can be rented for two weeks for \$25 (plus \$25 deposit). Contact: Bicycle Federation of America, 1818 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Oregon Bicycling Guide. 1988. This waterproof map with Oregon highways routes is color coded for suitability on one side and covered with more detailed views of Oregon cities (Portland, Corvallis, Salem, Eugene, Bend, Medford, Pendleton and Klamath Falls) on the other. Available from: Bicycle Program Office, Oregon DOT Rm 200, Transportation Bldg, Salem, OR 97310. Price: *free*.

Eugene Bicycle Map. 1985. Also waterproof and color coded by route suitability. Includes tips for riding in Eugene, finding government bicycle programs & clubs, and maintaining your bike. Available from: Bicycle Program Office, Oregon DOT Rm 200, Transportation Bldg, Salem, OR 97310. Price: *free*.

Oregon Coast Bike Route. May 1991. A non-waterproof color coded map that shows where the Oregon Coast bike route departs from Highway 101. An elevation guide and an Index to Parks, Waysides and Campsites will help the planning of comfortable rides. Bicycle Program Office, Oregon DOT Rm 200, Transportation Bldg, Salem, OR 97310. Price: *free*.

The **Durnham & Wilmington (N.C.) bike maps** (1991) are waterproof and color-coded. The spectacular Durnham map shows changing elevations with different colors. Both have fun cartoons to help the beginning bicyclist avoid mistakes, make pre-ride bike checks, figure out how long a ride will take, and much, much more. Published by Bikecentennial (MT) for the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Available from Durnham City - Planning Department, 101 City Hall Plaza, Durnham, NC 27701. phone: (919) 560-4137. Price: *free*.

After seeing **Bikecentennial's** wonderful map work, you won't hesitate to order their free catalog and information about bicycle maps and guidebooks. Contact Bikecentennial, P.O. Box 8308, Missoula, MT 59807, phone: (406) 721-1776.

Explore Minnesota Bikeways Maps: Northwest, Twin Cities Metro East & Metro West, and Southeast. These waterproof maps have a color coded rating system indicating the roads' suitability for bicycling. Also, paved shoulders & off-road bikeways, public parklands (with facility information!) and mini-tours (historic & cultural attractions) are also shown. To receive a map order form with the prices, write to Bicycle Planning Unit, MNDOT, Transportation Bldg., 395 John Ireland Boulevard, Rm B20, St. Paul, MN 55155.



Anandwan: The Value of People

Story and photos by Arun Narayan Toké

Anandwan is a cooperative village carved from barren land by crippled social outcasts. The town is home to some 3,000 survivors of leprosy who are socially independent, live off the land, set the world's standards for rehabilitation, and coordinate some of India's most daring and prominent ecological and social programs.

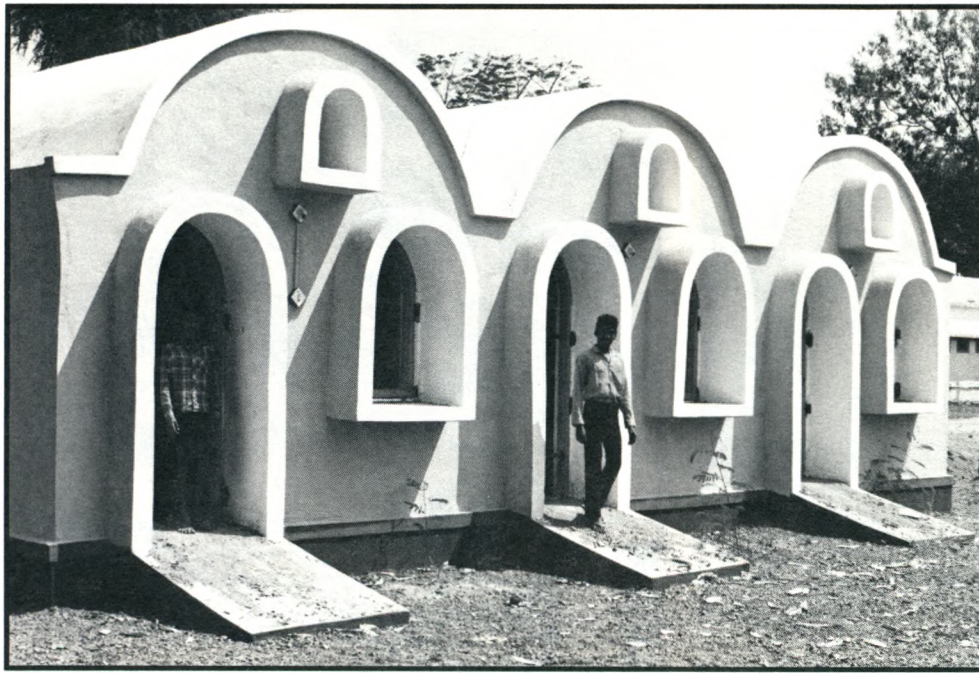
For centuries societies shunned those who contracted leprosy, a deforming disease of the nervous system that was incorrectly thought to be unusually contagious. The infected could stigmatize their entire family, so even close relations abandoned them. Over the last 40 years the people of India have changed their view of leprosy, a change in part attributable to Anandwan and its founder Baba Amte, who today in his 70's, fiery and controversial, is probably the most respected secular figure in the country.

In 1949, when Amte founded the community, he was a lawyer, activist, and Brahmin from a well-off family who had rejected his inheritance. As part of the core group in the Quit India movement, he helped Mahatma Gandhi and

Pandit Nehru lead the country to independence from the British. Like Gandhi, Amte tackled the entrenched caste system, challenging all taboos regarding the untouchables, those who did society's most degrading work. While organizing the untouchables in the city of Warora, he shocked people by taking on low-caste tasks, such as carrying human feces in a bucket on his head, even though he was an official of the city.

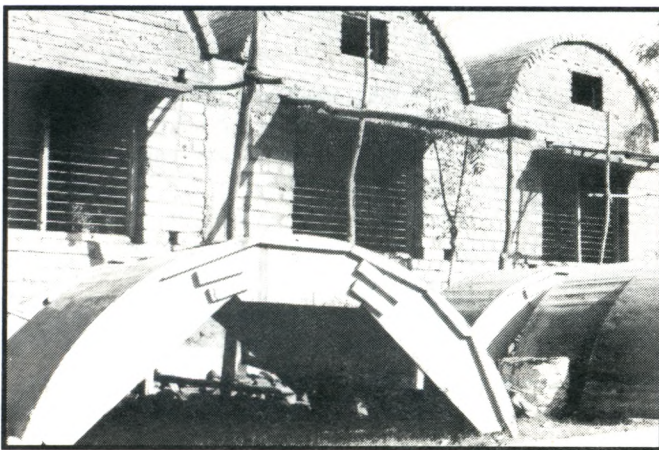
One evening, while doing this work, he stumbled upon an abandoned leprosy victim lying half-dead in a gutter. The sight of the man, whose flesh was being eaten by worms from lack of care, frightened Amte into running away. Ashamed with himself, he went back and took care of the man until he died. In short order this social activist resolved to change the lot of leprosy victims. He imagined that to give meaning to their lives, for them to regain self-respect and that of society, they must become independent and self-sufficient in all aspects. With his wife Tae, also a rebel from the upper classes, and a group of leprosy patients, he began to build Anandwan on abandoned land outside of Warora.

By modern standards, Anandwan is quite isolated. Leaving Bombay by the evening train on March 5, 1991, I traveled 16 hours west to Wardha, home to Gandhi's famous Sevagram Ashram, and then 4 hours south by bus to Warora. Instead of taking a cycle rickshaw, I covered the last 3 km of the journey on foot. It was not long after I walked through



Anandwan is one of the cleanest places I have ever seen in India, the result of strong feelings of responsibility among its inhabitants and conscious habits in dealing with communicable disease. The children walked with me a half km towards the main office buildings where I was to introduce myself. They were coming from a late afternoon game at their school, and were returning to Gokul [The Child Haven], a dormitory for children of leprosy patients in the infectious stage of the disease. The parents see their children often, and the evening separation at Anandwan is no problem since the traditional Indian extended family has

Left: Irrigation work on Shram Dan, a community workday every Sunday morning. Anandwan takes care of its needs directly. Take shelter, for example: they build these Egyptian-inspired houses (above and below) whose walls are dried soil blocks, and whose roofs are fired bricks. The high arched ceilings provide breezy cross-ventilation and the roofs, whitewashed with limestone, reflect sunlight.



Anandwan's gates before a group of 5 to 10 year old children accompanied me. Despite having been born and raised in India, my jeans, beard, backpack and curiosity made it obvious that I was a guest from far away. When I told them I came from the United States they replied "You are at war with Iraq!". They watch the news every evening on the community TV in a *chowk* [public yard]. Physical barriers, whether crippling diseases or miles of barren land, cannot isolate Anandwan. In fact, National news sometimes originates from here.

been extended to include the entire town.

The Anandwan hospital currently serves 1800 patients. The doctors are provided with food, shelter, clothing and a small stipend as are all other community members. One of the resident doctors gave me a guided tour of the hospital. We walked through a number of well-kept wards, a laboratory, kitchen, and office, meeting patients who had no complaints about the care. Since I'm a native speaker of Marathi, the most common language of this state of Maharashtra, I was able to communicate with everyone. Although some people travel to Anandwan from around the country, most come from this region: Amte realized long ago that it was impossible for all leprosy patients to move to intentional communities. For those who cannot come, Anandwan runs many extension programs.

No matter the handicap, everyone at Anandwan works. Current and ex-patients attend to all of the daily chores: gardening, milking cows and water buffalos, office work, cooking and cleaning. For many decades Anandwan residents produced everything they needed except salt and kerosene. Nowadays, the community finds itself stretched thin, due to increasing numbers of new patients, who come through an open door policy for anyone with leprosy or any other disability. Luckily with the help of sister communities such as Som-Nath, where recovered patients farm, they are able to meet their needs and produce an excess to sell.

The quality of produce from Anandwan's communities is the best in the region. Back in the 1950's, when Amte began to sell excess at the local market, he asked people to pay whatever they felt was fair for the beautiful vegetables. At first the other farmers thought they were being undersold, but eventually Amte's pricing encouraged them to chastise wealthy consumers if they didn't pay enough.

A problem arose when people realized the food was grown by victims of leprosy: buyers worried about infection.



Anadawan runs schools for children, university students, farmers, the blind, deaf and variously disabled. Above a young polio survivor studies hard, walking stick at hand.

The overcoming of such fear was very slow, but Amte made an offer to people in the nearby towns to come pick the produce themselves, incidentally getting them to see the community. Years later Anandwan began its Colleges, which now teach some 2,000 university-level students, and this also attracts people in the area curious to see why the community has so many visitors.



Community self-reliance combines unusually well with personal rehabilitation. Here leprosy patients weave mats and rugs for Anandwan's needs.

Bright and early Sunday morning I joined the community workday, *Shram Dan* [the gift of labor]. Hundreds of men, women, and children from Anandwan gathered to do their weekly work, and on that day the goal was to deepen an irrigation reservoir. I met children with artificial legs, missing hands, and leprosy patients with stubs for palms working with great purpose.

“Don’t worry about what you don’t have, find a use for what you do have”, says Sadashiv Tajne, 37, director of Sandhi Niketan [The House of Opportunity] at Anandwan. Unable to walk due to childhood polio, Sadashiv gets around on a hand-cranked tricycle. “I must stand on my own two feet”, he quips, “without being dependent on someone else. And I want to help other disabled people stand on their feet too.” He supervises the workshop complex where hundreds of current and ex-leprosy patients work alongside others with “disabilities”. Each person gets all his or her basic needs provided by the community economy: food, shelter, clothing and a small stipend. Everyone is encouraged to save money to make their lives easier in the event they leave Anandwan. Dr. Vikas Amte, Baba Amte’s son and the current director, says one of their missions is to move ex-leprosy patients back into society. When they do leave it is with self-respect and a useful, well-regarded skill.

The author, Arun Narayan Toké, is a long-time worker for both appropriate technology and social change. He founded and co-edits Skipping Stones, a superb multi-cultural children's participatory magazine, published quarterly. Subscriptions: \$15/year US, \$20/year for institutions, \$25/year world-wide, from P.O. Box 3939, Eugene, OR, 97403-0939.

Handicrafts, printing, carpentry, woodcarving, auto repair, bike repair, electrical repair, welding, well-digging, tailoring, spinning, weaving, silk production, tin work, shoemaking... everything that a town needs is provided by Anandwan's former and current patients. It is inspiring to see so many people overcoming such hardship, and accomplishing so much. Anandwan's "handicapped" citizens are known for their expertise and skill throughout the region, and at times act as teachers and advisors. In the workshops, men and women with deformed fingers or stubs work treadle machines sewing cloth into shirts, hospital uniforms or blouses. Their looms weave towels, *dhoti* (the traditional cloth a village man wraps below the waist), placemats and bedsheets for thousands of people.

Anandwan sits on rocky, dry land that was considered marginal when it was granted to the project; the current relatively high standard of living is built on the cooperation, labor and skill of all its patients. Because labor is like currency at Anandwan, hundreds of well-conceived projects have succeeded through workers's enthusiasm. I saw a forest

restoration research project on 50 hectares of land that supplies over 100,000 saplings a year for reforestation and fruit orchards. There are schools for blind, deaf-mute and handicapped children, as well as vocational and traditional crafts training centers. The town's Colleges, geared to help rural students, offer programs in sustainable agriculture. Anandwan uses the permacultural ideas they teach. Their water conservation and wastewater recycling projects are brilliant, and essential to survival in this drought prone area. Rainwater runs through underground channels, stalling evaporation, to various reservoirs. Graywater is recycled through small drainage canals into fish ponds.

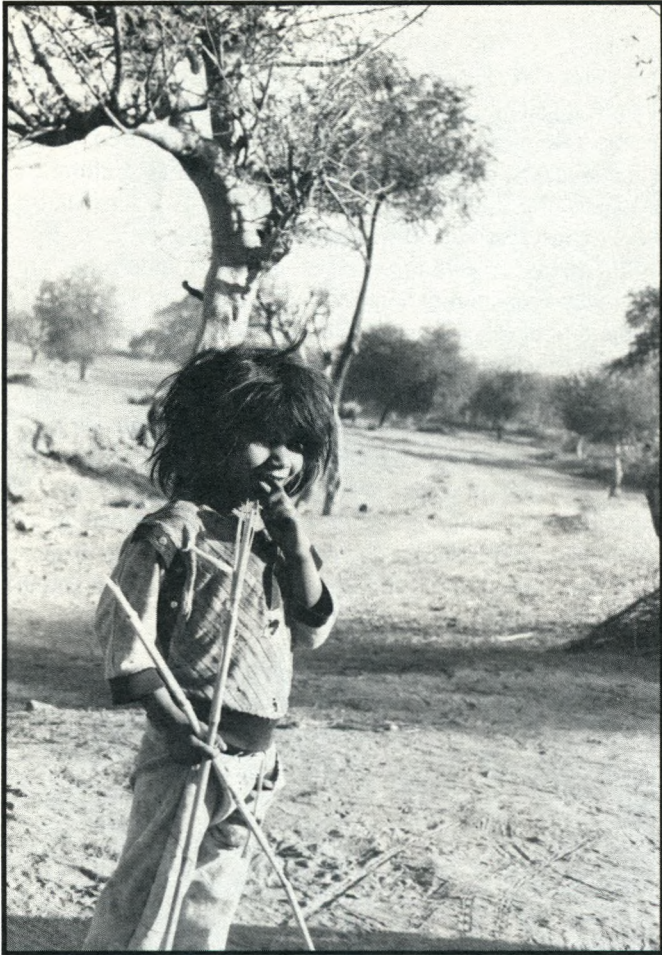
Energy conservation techniques are practiced, researched and broadcast to the region. Cooking gas is produced in methane digesters, and there are several solar demonstration projects. I was particularly taken by the beautiful, eye-catching low-cost housing, developed at Anandwan and based on Egyptian architecture [see page 23]. The construction minimizes use of timber, iron and the fuel to fire bricks.



The forest village of Hemalkasa is one of a chain of projects, supported by Anandwan, working for the native Madia Gond tribes. Its hospital is run by Baba Amte's son Prakesh and his wife Mandakini, both medical doctors. Years ago the forest people began to bring them orphaned animals, and diverse wildlife soon roamed the Amte household. The cross-species compatibility is extraordinary: one finds a handful of different orphaned species, from lion to deer, nursing at the same time from a single animal of yet another species. The commensal animals certainly deserve serious study by ethologists. The tribals provide the animals food in gratitude for the clinic, school, nursery and extension work done by the Amte's. Above, Prakesh Amte, with leopards and a lion who are close companions. Prakesh's father, Baba, ran away from home when he was young to live for a while with



the Madia Gond tribes. Above, another Anandwan project in Hemalkasa is the coordination of a school where indigenous people pass down traditional skills, crafts and ecological expertise. Here a tribe member learns how to construct a traditional basket.



A child from Choti Kasarawa, a relaxed village of Hindus and Muslims along the banks of the Narmada which the government intends to submerge.

Families have near total control over their living areas. Kitchen gardens and fruit trees surround their modest homes. The old and infirm live in housing clusters next door to families who can address their needs individually. School children and young adults live in dormitory-style buildings. A café is run cooperatively by the residents, generally catering to the many guests, visitors and office workers, offering snacks and *chai* (tea with milk, sugar and spices).

A family can choose to eat alone or with a group of their friends in a common dining hall. Vegetarian meals are made in the community kitchens, and residents can individually choose to cook fish or meat to add to these. Because dozens of kitchens and dining halls decentralize the community, one does not feel crowded. During the week of my visit, it was my privilege to join the Amte family and some of the other directors for many a meal. The food was typical Maharashtrian style -- something that I had grown up with in my first 20 years of life in Madhya Pradesh, where we spoke Marathi, ate Maharashtrian meals, *Dal* (lentil soup), rice, curried vegetables, *chapati*, *rayta* salad (raw cucumber, onions and tomatoes in yogurt), chutneys... I felt completely at home at Anandwan.

But this community does not only look after its own needs. It actively supports social and ecological awareness projects around the country. Among the most visible in recent years were the *Knit India* bicycle rallies and the fight against the Narmada valley dams, both led by founder Baba Amte.

In 1985, while working for the Center for Science and the Environment in New Delhi, I saw the *Knit India* bike group on a national tour, and heard Baba Amte speak at one rally. He was prominent, even as others spoke, since he cannot sit. With his bad back he can only walk, stand and lie down. No wonder he can't sit still, and is always burning to try out new ideas. The *Knit India* rallies attempt to pull together the national social fabric that has worn thin in the last decade. The Provinces of Punjab, Assam and Gujarat have especially been torn with ethnic and religious strife, endemic in a country whose government does not care adequately for impoverished citizens who are regularly ripped off. In the more explosive communities Amte facilitated a dialogue between factions, and tried to get them to cooperate in battling the organized power of corporations and the state.

Narmada: Amte's Last Project

Anandwan recently took a leading role in fighting the Indian government's gigantic and destructive plans for development. The dams of the Narmada valley will spur an ecological catastrophe, drown a rich agricultural region, force hundreds of thousands of subsistence farmers off their land, and submerge dense forests in which 75,000 tribal people live.

Narmada, the 1300 km long pristine, wild river that runs from east to west in central India, was until just this summer completely free running. As a child I remember going to its Hindu Shiva temples at Omkareshwar and Maheshwar. Millions of Hindus worship each year at these and other Shiva temples on *Narmada Mataji* [mother narmada], whose waters provide life to the peasants on her shores. The irrigation and power project scheme, planned with the help of the World Bank and other large financial institutions, envisions several superdams and some thirty medium-sized dams. The Sardar Sarovar dam alone will make over 100,000 refugees. The Narmada Sagar dam will submerge 40,000 hectares of pristine forest, and the Sardar Sarovar project 13,000 hectares.

Anandwan sponsored and organized a national conference attended by some 80 well-known and respected public environmental activists and scientists; they drafted and adopted the *Anandwan Declaration*, to voice their opposition to the construction of big dams in the countryside as a means of development. They organized an internationally televised protest of 30,000 people at the village of Harshud, one of a hundred that will be submerged if the Sardar Sarovar is completed.

The dams were initiated undemocratically, and have no relation to the needs of most people. The government has

gone to great lengths to woo people at the dam site in Gujarat, but many times more people upriver will suffer the consequences. This "divide and rule" strategy has obscured the inefficiency of moving torrents of dammed water through kilometers of expensive open canals. The more appropriate alternative is micro-dams and rainwater reservoirs, which are already planned by small communities. These more sensible plans, however, are having their monies drained by the big projects and their matching international development loans.

To those who will be refugees when the waters rise, it seems insane to spend billions, in an impoverished country, to drown fertile land in order to irrigate a piece of desert only a bit bigger. The government promises relocation programs that offer too little money and too poor land. Former farmers may move to the city to scavenge for food, as millions did after the building of dams in the questionable "green revolution" of the 1950's and 1960's. Because of silt and erosion, dams do not last as long as planned, and they rarely irrigate as much land as promised. The big dams never deliver enough water and power, especially to those in need, to make up for their social destruction. Good engineering is impossible when the real reasons for a project, greed and world trade, conflict with the stated reasons: to improve the life of the citizenry. The countryside then suffers to provide for urban economics.

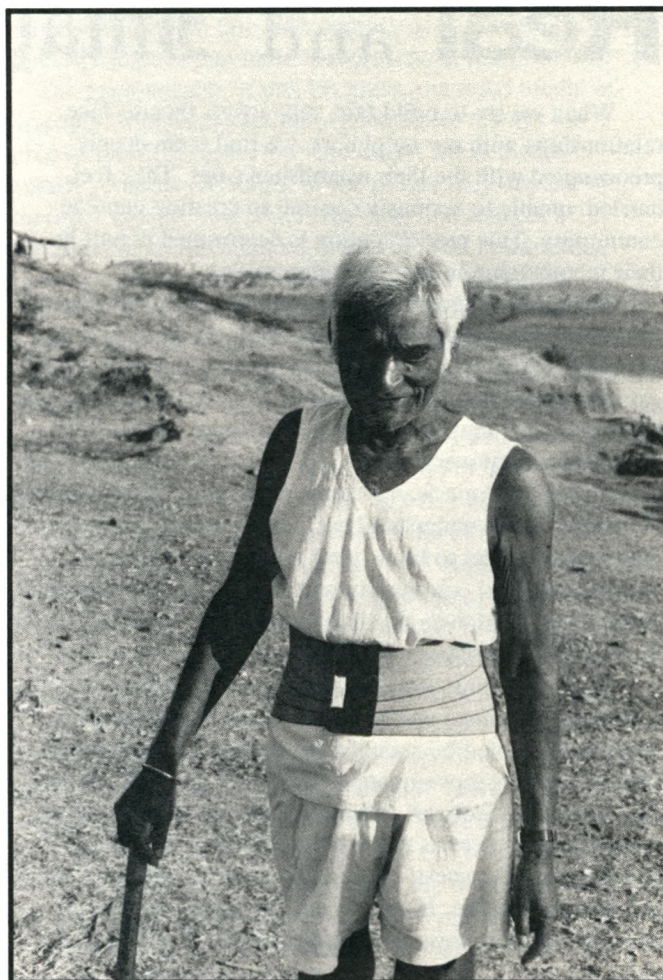
The river is now rising behind one dam after the rains of the monsoon season, according to Shriram Yadav of *Narmada Bachao Andolan*, a protest group that this year won the Swedish Right Livelihood Award. Yadav notes that the government has not even *contacted* several doomed villages. Perhaps on paper they have already been relocated. People's needs simply disappear in these great plans.

I went to interview Baba Amte on the banks of the Narmada -- he's camping out on its shores. He has taken a permanent leave from Anandwan -- his beloved friends, patients, ex-patients and family alike.

Baba is giving all he's got to stop the dam, even if that means drowning under its waters. He cannot allow the government to define *progress* as destruction. Development must come from the entire society, not dictated from above. That is why the Narmada Valley struggle is not just over a river. It's a battle in the long war for true democracy in India.

The common people effected must have a voice in the decisions. The politicians cannot hear their own conscience, let alone the voices of the poor, over the clamor of vested interests. If the government was really interested in development, says Baba, it would promote in these villages inexpensive appropriate technologies, already proven effective, such as methane digesters, improved low-fuel cookstoves, solar heating and rainwater catchments. It would promote literacy and education to liberate women, the lower castes and the poverty stricken.

Good planning includes sufficiency for all before excess for a few. Amte believes in an integrated approach to



Baba Amte, founder of Anandwan and one of the most respected figures in India, has moved to the banks of the Narmada River to organize hundreds of thousands of villagers against the dam that will destroy their homes.

development, seen at Anandwan, where everyone is taken into account and given responsibility. He has shown that physical leprosy can be cured, but he knows that the worst disease is in the minds of those who allow greed to dominate their actions.

Amte lives by the river trying to harness the power of his international reputation as a social worker. Perhaps the government would find awkward the public outcry over his drowning and that of hundreds of others in the region who refuse to leave their land. "Let's see how ruthless the state can be", he says, although he has few doubts about its ruthlessness. Such a sacrifice might have a great impact since Amte, a poet whose books are widely read, has published much about the ecological and political repercussions of big dams.

Redirecting the development of his country is Baba's final project. He feels a sacrifice is the best he can do with his frail body, given that he had a severe heart attack this summer. This is his ultimate commitment to the ideals he has articulated so well for so many years.

Real and Imagined Communities

When we try to build fair, supportive, face-to-face relationships with our neighbors, we find them deeply preoccupied with their established roles. They feel harried, unable to seriously commit to creating genuine community. This preoccupation is determined in part by their membership in fantasy communities.

The primary imaginary community is the Nation itself, full of unfathomably different interests, classes, opinions, religions, ethnicities and other sensibilities that somehow get forgotten when the Nation calls. The Nation has its own highly abstract morals, principles, language and history: unquestioned, universal and utopian. It is a collective dream, in our case the American Dream. Apparently since hundreds of millions of us understand each other so well, nobody really needs to get to know their neighbors.

The national community wins the struggle for people's attention without even needing to exist. But the existence of the nation's *image* has major repercussions.

When we think of nationalism we often think of massive chauvinism and severe minority repression: the term was invented by socialists to describe the rightward shift in national movements at the end of the 19th century. But many who feel part of such nations do not, of course, think of themselves as malevolent. Nationalists cherish feelings of selflessness, natural camaraderie, mutual support and mutual defense. If their ideals were self-consciously chauvinistic or repressive they would not be quite so popular. Yet the chauvinism and repression persist.

In the US we recently saw how easily national sentiment can be awakened by war. Yet such sentiment, manipulated into the collective consciousness, arousing strong emotions throughout the land, is a modern phenomenon. The history of widespread national ideology is very brief: even today, when our school maps are so neatly divided into colored compartments, many people in the world do not consider themselves to be part of any nation.

For most of this millennium, Kings, Queens and nobles in no way reflected the ethnicity of peoples in the territories they ruled. They very often did not speak the same language: the French spoken at the court of Louis XIV was a foreign language to most people in his Kingdom. England was ruled by a succession of Norman, Welsh, Scotch, Dutch, and German Kings. During World War I Britain's George V, as much a grandson of Queen Victoria as his enemy Kaiser Wilhelm, abandoned his German titles when faced with the surprising new force of British nationalism. In the 18th century the Hapsburgs ruled Austria in Latin, and in the 19th ruled Hungary in German. For centuries no one thought that ruler and ruled had much in common.

Contrast this with the 1871 creation of Germany as a state based in a nation of German peoples, where the Kaiser eventually declared himself as one with the commoner; after the First World War the commoner wanted a divorce, and sent Wilhelm off to a Dutch suburb. The situation would have been inconceivable to his royal Hohenzollern ancestors

one hundred years earlier.

National common interests, like the ones used to justify the First World War, are usually inventions. For example, today US leaders try to convince a suspicious public to unite in an economic fight with Japan. Yet in such an opera only the top shareholders in multinational corporations will win, not the average citizen. The idea that nations "fight" is sheer deception, a lesson only learned by the masses after they do all the fighting and reap no spoils. Stump thumping nationalist rhetoric has always had a hollow knock. This is especially true when it intimates purity.

In 1860, at the moment of Italy's unification, only 2½% of the population spoke Italian. Led by an elite group, who themselves had barely more than Italian in common, the country was "unified" with geographically and politically expedient boundaries, not ethnic, linguistic or historical ones. But at the first meeting of parliament in the new Italian kingdom, Massimo d'Azeglio reminded his colleagues that "having made Italy, now we have to make Italians." Making Italians, or any other nation's citizens, requires media.

In 15th century Europe, elites were producing increasing numbers of documents, matching the age's growth in commerce, population and state power. Merchants kept greater track of profits; churches and monarchies kept better tax records. The resulting expansion of literacy produced the debut of the printing press.

The growth of the new printing industry was phenomenal: in the 40 years following Gutenberg's Bible, published around 1456, some 20,000,000 volumes were printed. Within a hundred years, books were being published in everyday language, in vernaculars. Printing standardized languages and slowed down the rate of linguistic change for the expanding readership, though the educated merchant was still multilingual. By 1700, newspapers too reinforced linguistic stability, and a kind of elite camaraderie.

The newspaper is a daily affirmation of an imagined community: whoever reads what you do also speaks your language and gets news from the same source as you. Probably they were taught to read at a school much like yours. They were the sort you bumped into regularly. Even though you haven't met them all, you understand and identify with these anonymous readers. They are part of your 'nation'.

In part through this knitting effect of the press, the new commercial elite managed to provoke a few revolutions and create some new nation-states. The unexpected effect was the emergence of patriotism among the masses, who now felt they had a stake in the nation. Later, when industrialism overturned traditional lifestyles, creating massive migration, poverty and dependence, people flocked in desperation to learn an elite language and to join the nearest national movement.

Mass patriotism could provide great power. Napoléon had proven this by conquering Europe on the strength of

French revolutionary enthusiasm. But unfortunately, from the point of view of those with power, the masses tended to demand too much.

Instead of answering their demands directly, politicians learned to guide patriotism with various tricks: centralize government, create uniform schools, promote one language and alphabet and foster media to convey them. Invoke symbols to identify with, and search for internal and external enemies to help create a national consensus. Describe the nation, language and culture in natural, ancient and eternal terms, and reinterpret history accordingly. Create a positive image of the citizen. Promote the idea that everyone has equal rights, even if they don't, so that the community seems to share values and responsibilities. If necessary make the nation into a republic, to give an appearance of legitimacy, even though it's impossible for most people to run for office, or know anything about the people who do run. Promote talk about "National Interests", so that the state never seems partisan. If the administration has money, indoctrinate citizens through universal primary school and mandatory military service. Finally, get people to confuse themselves with the nation, replacing what "I" think with what "we" think, and refer to national conflicts as if they were personal ones. Identify the nation as an underdog, mistreated yet kind, ultimately victorious through sheer goodwill and hard work.

Despite these manipulations, not all of which were so conscious, nations sometimes fell out of control. Few leaders expected the kind of support they initially received during the First World War, which pitted Briton against German in an imaginary battle of ethnicity and morality, disguising the real battle over power blocks.

By the end of the 19th century the modern nation was an off-the-shelf model for rule. Japan is the classic example of a single-minded drive to create a Nation, made by the Meiji administration after the restoration of 1868. The modular nation took many forms: a single language wasn't even required. Switzerland with its many languages and dialects took on trappings of nationalism during its 600th

anniversary in 1891. Centennial anniversaries themselves were invented in the late 19th century as celebrations of the supposed Progress that nations represented and promoted.

The great heralds of this Progress, the mass media of newspaper, film, radio and television, were always the source of social amnesia they are today. Mass media naturally promote the ideals of the power they depend on, sometimes capital, sometimes the state. As sources of entertainment national media break up local community, discouraging people from entertaining and informing themselves, creating a national culture with a fantastic quality. The fantasy nation seems slow and stable, despite headlong falls into ecological disaster, social decay and war. Since national entertainment and news media are the scaffolding from which the national idea is built, in times of war the majority criticizes the media only in how well they represent the nation. Perhaps there is a fear that without an obedient mass media the nation could not exist.

Because of the dreamy nature of the national image, the culture can often absorb ideals such as ecology, community and cooperation without changing the way things actually work. But a deeply felt revelation *can* spread through the media, sparking direct action. No one could have predicted the 1968 spontaneous general strike in France in support of students at the Paris barricades, made possible through the same news agencies that kept Charles de Gaulle's conservative government in power. Contrast this direct revolutionary appeal to the public with the difficulties of revolutionaries in 18th century France, trying to contact the populace when most peasants spoke diverse non-French *patois*.

The partial success in breaking through the national fantasy in 1968's Paris implies that even after years of indoctrination citizens can indeed question their affiliations. But preparing people for the personal rejection of national identification must begin in times of peace, and at the grassroots. The people who will most surely fight the momentum and insanity of mass warfare are those who are secure in their local relations, ready to openly challenge deeply held beliefs at any time.



Reviews

Nations and Nationalism

Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality, Eric J. Hobsbawm, Cambridge University Press, 1990, \$19.95.

Startling questions, followed by probing analysis, sharp examples and surprising counterexamples mark this serial history of modern nationalism's development. Hobsbawm's approach is, as always, invigorating.

The French Revolution

Modern popular nationalism can first be seen in the form of social revolution in France, where patriotism spread widely through rebellion against nobility, and France's inspired revolutionary troops shattered Europe's professional military. This nationalism, however, was not ethnically chauvinistic, in fact *liberation* of those under monarchy was a major ideal -- eventually substantially accomplished through inspiration by the French.

French revolutionary nationalism could not be ethni-

cally or linguistically exclusionary: France was far from homogeneous. This was true also of the United States, where for decades politicians avoided the term *Nation* publicly, preferring the word *Union* and shying away from centralist rhetoric (the Federalists, who won the battle over national direction, wanted to centralize for primarily mercantilist, or state-led economic, reasons.)

Most people in French territory did not speak French at home, they spoke *patois*, the general name for any of perhaps thousands of languages and dialects of German, Celtic, Latin and neolithic heritage. The revolutionary government was against ethnic snobbery: when they encouraged the speaking of French they intended that people should be bilingual, with French as a second, common language. Though some of the urbane leaders of the revolution might have been suspicious of rurals who didn't speak French, there was serious social reasoning behind making the ability to speak French a citizenship requirement:

"All members of the sovereign (people) may occupy all public posts; it is desirable that all should fill them in rotation, before returning to their agricultural or mechanical occupations. This state of affairs confronts us with the following alternative. If the posts are occupied by men incapable of expressing themselves in, or writing, the national language, how can the rights of the citizens be safeguarded by documents whose texts contain terminological errors, ideas lacking precision -- in a word, all the symptoms of ignorance? If, on the other hand, such ignorance were to exclude men from public posts, we would soon see the rebirth of that aristocracy which once

used *patois* as a sign of protective affability when speaking to those it insolently called 'the lower orders' [*les petites gens*]. Soon society would once again be infected by 'the right sort of people' [*de gens comme il faut*]. Between two separated classes a sort of hierarchy will establish itself. Thus ignorance of the language would put at risk social welfare, or it would destroy equality." [Rapport, Abbé Grégoire]

This extended communal patriotism was not yet the Nationalism we know today.

Liberal Nationalism

Liberals were the prime organizers of national movements for most of the 19th century, especially when the revolutionary stage ended in Europe after 1848. Many envisaged their nation-states competing in the world-market, supported by increasingly centralized support for com-



Britannia and France offer cannonballs to China at teatime, opening more ports to their trading monopolies. As national governments competed for more markets and overseas resources, the British press imprints the emerging masses with positive images of international bravado, helping to set the stage for the First World War. Punch, 1858.

merce, at least so long as they weren't taxed. Liberals pushed the dissolving of "backwards" tradition in the countryside for the benefit of emerging industrialism.

Common coin among intellectuals in much of the 19th century was that a nation must be a certain size to compete. The ridiculing of the revolutions in the Balkans reflected this patronizing attitude towards small nations. They felt that economically prosperous states should continue to grow, eventually dividing the world into just a few nations, or perhaps one, with a single government and language.

National Self-determination Movements

As governments began to push peasants in large regions to choose just one language (when they spoke many), for example in a census, linguistic issues moved to the foreground of national politics. Before this, governments had only used the state language in a region to control and tax those worth bothering. As the entire country began to interest the state and capital more, a few linguistic communities fought against the bureaucracies trying to wipe them out. Many had never even thought of themselves as ethnically distinct before this time. Austria-Hungary was broken into two states as a result of these pressures.

National racism and xenophobia began to mark the state rhetoric of this time, taking advantage of the new migrations of people uprooted by capital's expansion. People supported the state if it could convince them that it served their interests, increasingly seen as ethnic and linguistic. Ethnic elites rallied around a national language and sometimes invented tradition. People followed the movement out of desperation. At the same time, states challenged by socialism tried to associate it (with some justice) with immigrants, and this fueled blind chauvinism.



The political success of British Imperialism rested in part on convincing citizens that triumphs of the British lion would lead to riches for all. Above, social imperialism's message in a frieze at Royal Albert Hall.

Uncontrolled xenophobia characterized the First World War, so at the war's end Woodrow Wilson and colleagues probably thought it natural to divide Europe into what they felt were nations deserving self-determination. But since all states so defined were in reality mixed bags ethnically, purity issues surfaced. In Turkey the immediate result was the massacre and expulsion of Armenians and Greeks. Wilson's dividing of Europe into supposedly pure nations, and another

depression in the capitalist economy that highlighted foreign dependency and competition, eventually led to the rise of Fascism.

Recent Good Books on Nationalism

Eric Hobsbawm, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of London, is of the opinion that the last twenty years or so have produced studies of Nationalism of better quality than any previous period of twice that length. In fact it is now standard to provide insight into the development of nationalism in any specific monograph on modern history. Here are some of Hobsbawm's favorites:

Hroch, Miroslav. *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge 1985). Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities* (Verso, 1983). Armstrong, J. *Nations Before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, 1982). Breuille, J. *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester, 1982). Cole, John W. and Wolf, Eric R. *The Hidden Frontier: Ecology and ethnicity in an alpine valley* (New York and London, 1974). Fishman, J. (editor) *Language Problems of Developing Countries* (New York, 1968). Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford 1983). Hobsbawm, E. J. and Ranger, Terence (editors) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983). Smith, A. D. *Theories of Nationalism* (2nd edition, London 1983). Szücs, Jenő. *Nation und Geschichte: Studien* (Budapest, 1981). Tilly, C. (editor) *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, 1975). Williams, Gwyn A. *The Welsh in their History* (London and Canberra, 1982) Especially the essay "When was Wales?".

Hobsbawm notes: "...the very fact that historians are at least beginning to make some progress in the study and analysis of nations and nationalism suggests that, as so often, the phenomenon is past its peak."

Nationalism and Colonialism

Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Benedict Anderson, 160 pp., Verso, 1983, \$13.95.

Besides his original title phrase, which is now widely used among historians of nationalism, Anderson's important book is particularly strong on colonial revolutionary and national movements. He expands on the primary contradiction of Empire that leads to nationalism: the attempt to both "civilize" natives and keep them under foot.

Anderson's reflections are very wide-ranging and coherent. Since he's a student of Southeast Asia, specializing in Indonesia, he isn't confined to the European nationalism that, partly because of the resulting two world wars, holds most historical attention. Indonesia is a particularly interesting case study: despite the hundreds of islands and ethnicities, native elites formed a single nation through the center of Dutch colonial administration.

He traces also the effect of media on imagined community from the beginnings of printing in Europe to modern revolutionary broadsides in the Third World.

Cities Against Centralization

by Greg Bryant

The Rise of Urbanization and the Decline of Citizenship, Murray Bookchin, Sierra Club Books, 1987, \$22.95. Also published as, **Urbanization Without Cities**, Black Rose Books, 1992, paperback \$19.95.

It might seem like cities are the last places we should look for ecological sensitivity and social cooperation. After all, "urbanization" is a word we often use to describe the obliteration of wild and rural habitat, and the urban and suburban varieties of human alienation. But it is only since the rise of industrialism, and the voracious economic growth that parallels it, that cities have come to remind us of little more than insensitive development.

In their defense, city dwellers could produce a long history of resistance to feudal militarism, national and imperial centralization, industrial power, and capital penetration. Certain peoples in towns and cities have represented the best of humanity through cooperative self-reliance, mutual respect and care, participatory democracy and widespread solidarity.

Murray Bookchin re-examines the history of the western world with an eye on urban folk's continuous battle against centralization and domination. He moves citizens and their political struggles to the foreground of urban history, challenging studies that unfortunately, for nearly a century, were written mostly for the benefit of professional urban planners, whose job was often to quiet civic participation.

Bookchin's account is a pioneer effort that challenges misleading images of modern industrial achievement and triumphant western democracy. What follows touches upon, by way of some substitute examples, only a few of the key points in his book, a series of unusual historical highlights relevant to modern ecological, political and social crises.

Communal Cohesion

Nearly 10,000 years ago some very lucky people found a terrific spot by a river in a rich forest not far from major runs of ruminant animals. *Catal Hüyük* is the name we now use for this site in Turkey. A city of some 6,000 people emerged, with houses pressed up so tightly against one another, without any streets, that the town was traversed on rooftop. Since these urbanites were capable of planting and harvesting, we call them neolithic. But the inhabitants of *Catal Hüyük*, the world's oldest known city, survived some 1,000 years overwhelmingly as hunter-gatherers. Such a lifestyle is usually considered nomadic, not urban.

Many other Mesopotamian cities, rooted in fertile river valleys, grew through reliance on improving agricultural techniques such as irrigation. Yet there is evidence of agriculture emerging very early without cities: the Wadi

Kubbaniya of prehistoric Egypt were nomads, using the planting and harvesting of crops as just one of many means of survival.

In other words, cities and agriculture do not necessarily require one another. Farming *usually* becomes a major tool for maintaining settlements in surroundings not so idyllic as *Catal Hüyük's*. The exceptions do not imply that the neolithic urban trend wasn't powerful, but they show that there must be other reasons why people pile upon one another besides the need to manage agricultural land.

Humans were not the first species to find that mutual aid and cooperation improves one's chances of survival. Our social flexibility certainly evolved before *Catal Hüyük* was founded. Probably very early on in that city's career, people encountered serious health and sanitation problems with the dense living, yet the community stayed together a thousand years. Those who were uncomfortable left, but those who stayed benefited from reduced environmental pressures, superseded by social pressures within a system protecting a large number of families.

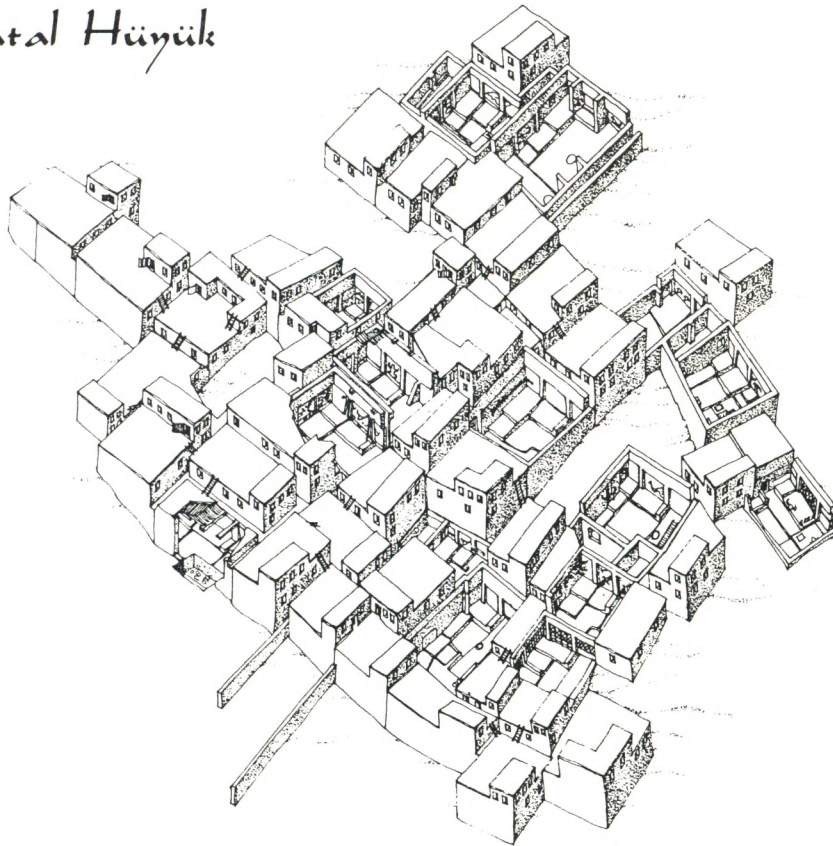
Commercial pressures, such as buying cheap and selling dear along trade routes, are often considered of primary importance in the formation of cities. In Western Europe nearly 1,000 years ago, rising population stimulated the rapid growth of towns and cities, which became centers of regional trade and craftwork. Yet commerce, of the kind that in the late middle ages gave magnates of trade and production great political power, was of little importance in the large cities of the ancient world, difficult as this may be to imagine.

Ancient Rome, which didn't develop a commercial port until it was already a major power in Western Europe, was mostly a center of consumption, military bureaucracy, and local production. This is not surprising -- a general rule for absolutist territorial states is that their largest cities produce very little. They are parasites, as Rousseau noted of 18th century Paris. There is some parallel to this in our own time: many of our biggest cities consume much more than they produce in tangible goods, even those which began as industrial manufacturing centers. But ancient west Europeans lacked *respect* for commerce -- buying and selling was done but there were no great ancient trading houses, nor a Roman bourgeoisie. Commerce as we know it did not rule the ancient world.

Looking only for the environmental, bureaucratic or commercial pressures that force people together into cities sidesteps what was to them an important cohesive force: community ideology. 2,300 years ago Aristotle protested against describing cities as strictly practical -- he felt that strong community was a high point of civilization.

Because of the pressures, towns pass a point where unorganized interfamily relations no longer seem suffi-

Catal Hüyük



ciently fruitful, and there is a need for broader discussion of community goals, ethical and practical. The society learns to depend upon this discussion, as well as the benefits and satisfaction of carrying out a community plan and seeing the results.

There are exceptions of course -- there is pervasive evidence of single-family homesteads, hamlets of a few isolated families, and hermits engaging in either tactical or psychological refuge. Most people lived in villages that needed to conduct rather little political discussion on a day-to-day basis. But for many others, the special kind of community feeling in those small pre-industrial towns and cities, once tasted, was difficult to get off the palate. When Sparta defeated democratic Manitea, dismantled the city and dispersed the inhabitants to villages, Xenophon implies that the Maniteans suffered mostly psychologically. When given a chance, they re-declared their city a generation later, under no strictly environmental or commercial pressure to do so. They just wanted their town back.

The city is the psychological and political center for much of recorded history, partly because that is where records are kept. But cities foster unusually vigorous social interaction. Urban communities can hold as strong a place in the human imagination as religions, ethnic groups, nations, kingdoms or empires. What we today call the Roman empire was in ancient times known mostly as Rome, the Eternal City. To destroy their rivals the Carthaginians, some Roman

senators felt they needed to destroy the city of Carthage itself, a difficult, rash, and genocidal deed whose ultimate consequence was the political collapse of the Roman republic.

Many cities developed gradually from villages, castles, churches or ports. But powerful ancient metropolises such as Rome, Carthage and Athens established many cities at one stroke to serve as outposts and colonies. Though quickly constructed for openly territorial purposes, these towns were still meant to satisfy very personal cravings for diversity and interaction.

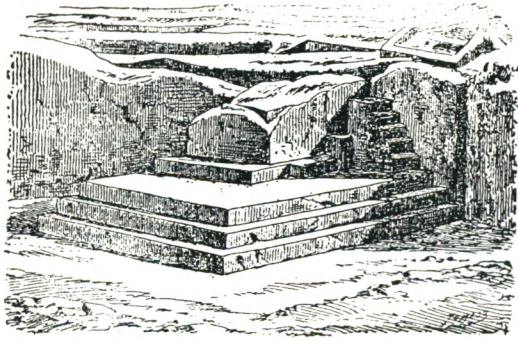
In most pre-industrial towns, ecologically responsible behavior was perfectly compatible with the city's peculiar, vibrant level of regular social contact. To imagine a kind of ecological city, one has to blink away modern urban impressions, and visualize cities based in and served by primarily rural economies, cities that produce goods mostly for their own or their region's consumption and where urbanites go to

help with their region's harvest. They are proudly local, willing to defend their city's and their region's autonomy. Their casual contact would seem to us today to be overwhelmingly personal. And in these cities we see the birth of the original form of politics: regular group discussion and face-to-face decision making. This kind of direct politics has almost disappeared in the mass media demagoguery of the modern age.

Today what we call politics is really statecraft, something done by professional politicians and those who imitate their individualistic manipulations in smaller groups. The change in the use of the word politics, with its root of *polis* or city, reflects the astounding changes that the world has undergone in the past two hundred years: among them the formation of the modern bureaucratic nation state and the invasion, through modern communication, of corporate values into our social relations. The original politics, that of the city, can be seen early in classical Athens.

The Athenian City-Democracy

An indication of unusually wide political participation in Athens is the torrent of criticism Greek political institutions received from Greek writers allied with the rich. In contrast, Roman institutions, constructed to the advantage of the wealthy, were rarely criticized by contemporary literate Romans.



What's left today of the speaker's platform at the Pnyx, the hillside site of the Athenian public assembly.

The Athenian assembly gathered around 40 times a year, attended by as much as 1/4 of the city's population. They were an experienced, politically active group, rich farmer and poor peasant citizens alike. When Theophrastus criticizes peasants, he complains that they inappropriately provide too much detail of assembly meetings to neighbors in the countryside who didn't make the gathering. We'd praise this today as healthy grassroots communications.

A staggering number of Athenian residents were involved in running the city and debating its future. It is difficult to compare its level of participatory democracy to any city of its size since. From the beginning of the 6th century B.C. for some two centuries, keen attendance at the open assembly, selection by lot of 500 new people every year to serve on the council, juries of up to 1,000 people, and scores of official posts rotating regularly, point to a depth of citizen participation at odds with modern ideas of politics.

Citizens participated broadly not only in decision-making, but in carrying out policy as well. When a decision to go to war was made, it was often a reluctant one since many of the people voting would themselves have to go to battle. Assemblies meeting to choose among such serious options were especially well attended. The close connection between decision and implementation gave demagogues a very difficult time in Athens -- no matter how well someone's speeches roused the crowd, if their policies did not work their influence quickly dissolved.

The citizens participated broadly not only in decision-making, but in carrying out policy as well.

Freedom of speech in Athens meant the freedom to speak and be heard by the entire assembly. It meant the freedom to present legislation and participate in the discussion prior to making decisions. The open public assembly then had full power to act -- the assembly even structurally dissolved itself for a short time in 411 BC. Of course, the bulk of public debate took place outside of the formal

meetings, where even non-citizens must have contributed.

A smaller council of 500 did what the full public assembly decided they should do, and these duties changed constantly. This holds a very important lesson: in responsible government, representatives shouldn't be given blanket power; instead, the full body politic must actively and regularly decide the limits of the officials' powers, to allow for changing circumstances. These specific limits must be determined in person, constraining somewhat the scale at which this kind of assembly system can be used. Athens was a very large body politic, perhaps a hundred thousand citizens, so various mechanisms were found to ensure that officials would not abuse their positions.

Most offices lasted for one year, could not be held twice, and were followed by a public review of behavior in office. Influence mongering was difficult since most offices were filled by a random drawing from among all citizens, i.e. sortition, rather than through campaigning. Not only did this prevent the buying of votes, but culturally it required a deep commitment to educating everyone well enough to be loyal, competent and principled public servants.

Followers add less to the strength of a community than independent, cooperative individuals.

Athenians were, in a sense, extremely well educated. This does not mean that they were literate, for this was mostly a verbal, interactive age. For these Greeks, education was not a systematic program of lectures and exams leading to certification, but rather the regular lessons and tests of daily life. In such an active political community no one could be shut out of unofficial discussion, since the future responsibilities of the average citizen would be very great.

This immersion into the community was what developed the distinctive individual. Rather than mold the citizen through the homogenization of formal education, as Sparta did, the Athenians felt that original individual character and opinion must develop in order to best serve the city. A follower adds less than an independent, thinking individual enlivening important discussions on community direction. This was the purpose of education, or *paideia*. Nietzsche's complaint that genius can develop only *against* the community doesn't take into account Athenian ideals of personal development, and instead reflects his generation's fear of the emerging impersonal era of mass politics.

Athenians not only encouraged individual ability -- laws often required paid officials or jurors to take *some* stand in a debate -- they also fought the creation of state structures that would limit the citizen. Athens had no bureaucracy to speak of, making the phrase "city-state" now applied to it seem inappropriate. The small administration changed every year. The judicial system was not run by judges, but by juries that were extremely large, discouraging bribery, and which were paid by the city and selected by lot. They were diversely

constituted and empowered to interpret law, evidence, custom and notions of justice in whatever way they felt fair. Yet courts were called only as a last resort in resolving a conflict: prosecutors were fined if unsuccessful, cutting down on unnecessary legal proceedings, and the overwhelming social preference was settlement through informal mediation or sometimes arbitration. Citizens over sixty years old were expected to make themselves available to anyone needing mediation.

Citizens over sixty years old were expected to be available to anyone needing mediation.

At every turn we see Athenians resisting state structure. They considered the maintenance of standing armies in times of peace a waste of the individual. In the end, however, they maintained a small empire, in part because of the employment opportunities its navy offered some of its poorer citizens. This was something of a circular trap they inherited: the poor could find few other jobs mostly because of the import of slaves captured in imperial looting.

Even within their empire the Athenians tried to convert others to a direct democratic model of government, and in most subject cities they counted on the support of the poor

and the hostility of the rich. They were well aware that their social and political achievements were unique -- the theme runs through the best of Greek drama. But their ideas of progress and empire were not boundless. For example, unlike many later empires they were acutely aware of the limited ability of their local ecology to sustain them.

Athens was the political center of a

rural region, more like a modern county than a city, with most of its wealthiest and poorest citizens living directly off the land. Since the citizens of Athens were overwhelmingly agriculturalists, it should not be surprising that self-reliance was the mark of success in this city. In fact, those who did not grow their own food were considered politically suspect -- how could they form an independent judgement if they were not independent in life? Because many of those who were not independent were urban manual workers, this



thinking is often misinterpreted as some general Greek disparagement of work, brought on by the over-dependence on slave labor. It was instead a disparagement of producers totally dependent on buyers, and of employee-employer dependent relationships. Most wealthy and poor citizens worked very hard for themselves and for the community.

The community was of course not always united and cooperative. The Greeks were keenly aware of the battle between rich and poor. The rich often put up much money to hold festivals, developing a patron-client relationship in city and countryside. This largesse was encouraged, and its influence held in check, by Athens' diverse political body.

Although it never developed the level of urban democracy Athens did, Rome experienced a warping of a similar patron-client relationship, one which took political power away from the poor and accountability away from the rich, a consequence of self-sustaining wars. This is the urban political atmosphere that spawned the gratuitous destruction and enslavement of Carthage, leading to a burden on Rome's poor and an attempt by the Gracchi brothers to relieve it.

Reforming the Republic

Roman tombstones always list the state offices held by the deceased during their lives, and classical Athenian tombstones never do. The rich in the city of Rome aspired to the bureaucracy, to powerful official positions that emerged from centuries of military growth. A magistrate's *imperium*, with its root sense of command, allowed him to place arbitrary punishments on the populace without appeal. This is a very long way from Athenian direct democracy.

In Rome the Republic held assemblies, but there was little discussion of issues. The existence of the assembly merely maintained a fiction of popular power. Citizens could only vote on legislation and candidates presented to them through the senate. The assembly became just another arena for political maneuvering among a corrupt elite, of a kind we are very familiar with today.



Senators were the senior members of the ruling class in Rome at the time of the Gracchi, whose rule came from centuries of military expansion. From the Altar-base of Domitius Ahenobarbus: taking the census, early 1st. c. B.C.

The senate was the key decision-making body of the Roman republic, basically an extremely exclusive lifelong club. There were no ways to work within the system: Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus attributed what early victories were made by the poor to riots and demonstrations.

The rulers of republican Rome succeeded in professionalizing politics, in making it less personal. In parallel, the poor lost their sense of community power, and very often community concern, at the center of this growing military-bureaucracy. It's easy to see the classical difference between democracies and republics -- in one the masses act, in the other they are acted for. But among representatives they occasionally find a champion.

Around 135 B.C. Tiberius Gracchus was elected a tribune of the people. He was unusually sensitive to his role, and risked a great deal to try to repair the lot of the poor Roman citizen. Tiberius prepared legislation and proposals for the approval of the open popular assembly that were traditionally considered the territory of the senatorial elite, a strategy for power redistribution that modern radical politicians might pursue. He had the assembly vote to remove from office tribunes in the pockets of the rich. He passed reforms to redistribute lands to the peasants, lands that had been taken by the rich to create plantations farmed with the new slaves from Carthage. For his trouble Tiberius was clubbed to death by a mob of senators.

Gaius Gracchus, Tiberius' brother, was later elected tribune and pursued the same course -- but he managed to create a serious problem for the elite of the Roman state by passing laws to remove the senate from complete power over the judicial system. He was assassinated by senate interests, and the city plunged into increasingly violent struggles for power until Augustus established himself as Rome's first Emperor.

The popular romantic notion that the senatorial republicans were in some way the "good guys" *versus* dictators and emperors, must be displaced with the evidence that it was the republican patricians' resistance to democratic reform, both urban and rural, that led to the destruction of stable city politics and eventually to Imperial rule.

Medieval Tensions

Around the 5th century, with the final collapse in western Europe of the Roman empire and its formalisms and codes, came the widespread community reassertion of informal local custom. Custom was both locally distinctive and unwritten. Throughout the middle ages political, legal and economic systems were flexible: indeed those three aspects were never considered individually. It was not until just before the early modern period in Europe, an era we associate with the Renaissance, that rigidity, formality and statecraft began again to seriously take hold of daily life.

Informal custom and local common sense were the primary guides for people in the middle ages, a time of unusually pervasive collective rule. This does not mean that an egalitarian ideology prevailed: a loose hierarchy was generally accepted as natural. But anyone with power had to

consult and come to agreement with their community. The basis of these communities were assemblies, either town assemblies where everyone could make themselves heard, or assemblies of nobles or representatives meeting with a king. The idea of hierarchy wasn't much questioned as long as the people in power acted responsibly, and as long as it was possible to check corruption. If rulers overtaxed those who provided their food, they might starve, so there were strong and deeply felt social obstacles to abuse. When there was abuse, it was considered the duty of those below to get rid of the abuser, despite lower social rank. It was at this time when we first see the word 'commune' take on its radical connotations: communities asserted themselves against the rising nobility.

With population increases leading to a strengthening of the formality of lordships and kingdoms in the 13th century, we see an increase in charters declaring town rights. These were typically explanations of existing custom presented to the nobility. Gradually the habit of consulting with the community at large gave way to government by committee, where not only did people need to evaluate their trust in nobility, but also their trust in representatives attending various, nearly invisible, small meetings. The transition to "committeism" was a subtle one, and though it surely seemed natural, it allowed bureaucracies to organize decision-making without involving the public.

The move from assemblies to committees surely seemed natural, but it allowed the state to more easily affect political outcomes.

Yet even in these growing states popular pressure could easily assert itself. Many communities and groups were easily organized in medieval times, through the informal 12th century guilds of family, friends, parish or craft, as well as through the more formal alliances of later centuries. There was no topic truly outside an organized community's domain: justice, public ownership, economic restrictions, parish priests, or revolt. When decisions were made, strong unanimity was most highly regarded, compromising consensus was accepted if unanimity was impossible, and voting was considered a distasteful necessity on occasion. Overall their cooperative decisions were successful in keeping harsh domination in check.

In prehistoric times, towns like Catal Hüyük survived because they represented advantageous cooperation, and the same can be said of many medieval towns and cities. But if their neighborhoods were run by conflicting crafts or families, the cities needed to form complex government to deal with internal conflict. Otherwise they would not continue to enjoy the benefits of communal living. Sometimes these actions led to further erosion of communal custom. In Italian communes a town leader, the *podestà*,

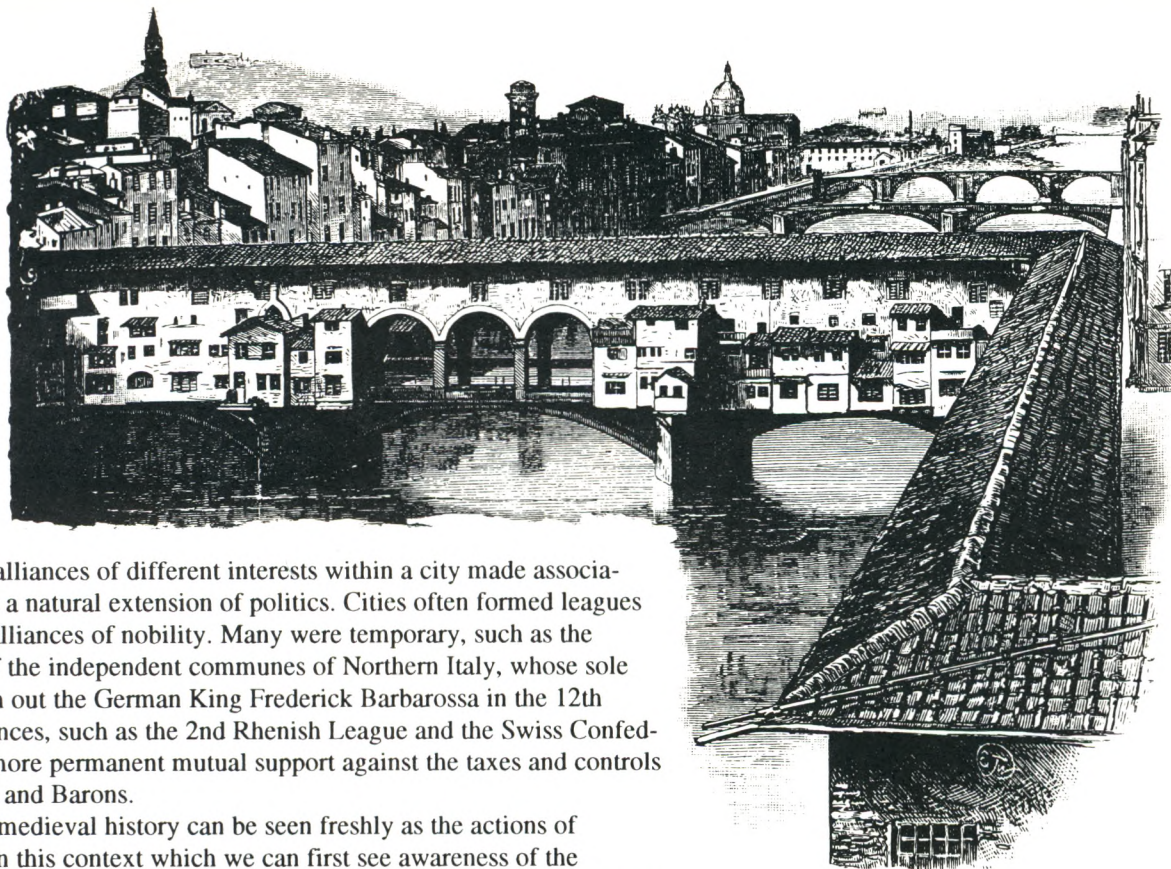
was often elected from outside, so as not to be partisan to neighborhood family disputes. But an outsider could not maintain custom and would lean increasingly on Roman and church-inspired formalisms.

The necessary alliances of different interests within a city made associations between cities a natural extension of politics. Cities often formed leagues in defence against alliances of nobility. Many were temporary, such as the Lombard League of the independent communes of Northern Italy, whose sole purpose was to push out the German King Frederick Barbarossa in the 12th century. Other alliances, such as the 2nd Rhenish League and the Swiss Confederation, aimed for more permanent mutual support against the taxes and controls of Kings, Emperors and Barons.

Most significant medieval history can be seen freshly as the actions of alliances, and it is in this context which we can first see awareness of the problems with territorial centralization. When King John was forced by a league of rebel Barons to sign the Magna Carta in 1215, the point was unrelated to modern democracy, and was instead the maintenance of local authorities against the King's abusive centralizing tendencies. Local control was maintained through an alliance against the center. Kings and Emperors were often *elected* positions, or treated as such, and the Magna Carta was just one written example of the commonly accepted responsibility of people lower in the hierarchy to keep those above from evading their collective responsibilities.



Long before the Magna Carta, it was considered the duty of those just below an abusive leader to rise up and reassert fair practice. The charter was one of hundreds of like documents intending to record common custom, in an age where writing things down was becoming more important.



A gallery passing over the Ponte Vecchio in Florence acted as a secret passage from the Uffizi to the Pitti Palace for the autocratic Medici family. In the 16th and 17th centuries many cities in Europe were disciplined forcefully and relentlessly as state power grew.

Cooperative associations were both pervasive and manifold in medieval times. In Bologna, a town where many teachers and students gathered as early as the 11th century, students felt cheated by both teachers who did not cover much ground and by townspeople who overcharged for lodging, clothing, food and books. The students formed a union, modeled after the guilds, and hence the name *Universitas*, University, meaning "all of us" -- a medieval alliance still with us today in greatly modified form.

In the 14th century many large scale alliances and interests became formalized. The Church, nobles and patricians formed estate committees to check the King's power within government. Demands for structural reform arose, even demands to be freed from the hierarchy. Switzerland is of course a prime example. In France in the 1350's Etienne Marcel tried to unite merchants, artisans and the peasants of the *Jacquerie* rebellions through the 3rd estate, an assembly meant to represent everyone neither noble nor clerical. His attempt to create a union against the King and nobility is of the same trend as Wat Tyler's successful British peasant revolt in 1381, and Cola di Rienzi's insurgent government in Rome in 1347. Cola called for an Italian confederation of communes, and 25 Guelf towns sent him representatives.

As trade increased and cities grew, monarchs tried whenever possible to tax their wealth, setting the economy of the cities against the territorial state. Many, such as the free cities within the Hapsburg Empire and their various leagues, resisted and maintained commercially supported independence for centuries.

However, the wealthy classes within the cities generally made political amends with the royalty of the solidifying territorial states, often against the interests of peasants or of rural barons. The territorial states swallowed the cities, their wealthy merchants, independent artisans and working poor alike. Urban governments then tended towards tyranny, maintained by gun and guile, but were plagued by insurrection.

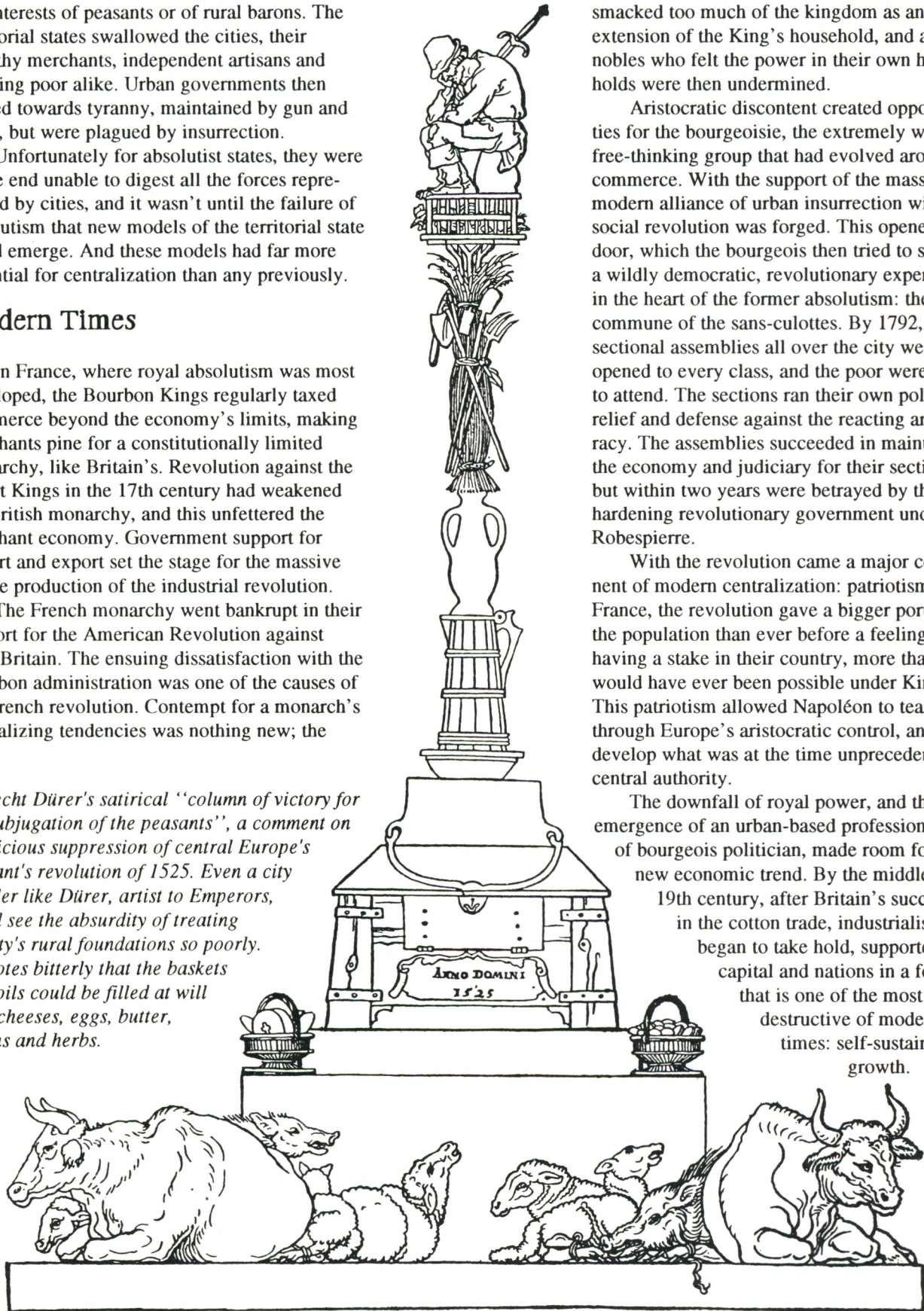
Unfortunately for absolutist states, they were in the end unable to digest all the forces represented by cities, and it wasn't until the failure of absolutism that new models of the territorial state could emerge. And these models had far more potential for centralization than any previously.

Modern Times

In France, where royal absolutism was most developed, the Bourbon Kings regularly taxed commerce beyond the economy's limits, making merchants pine for a constitutionally limited monarchy, like Britain's. Revolution against the Stuart Kings in the 17th century had weakened the British monarchy, and this unfettered the merchant economy. Government support for import and export set the stage for the massive textile production of the industrial revolution.

The French monarchy went bankrupt in their support for the American Revolution against rival Britain. The ensuing dissatisfaction with the Bourbon administration was one of the causes of the French revolution. Contempt for a monarch's centralizing tendencies was nothing new; the

Albrecht Dürer's satirical "column of victory for the subjugation of the peasants", a comment on the vicious suppression of central Europe's peasant's revolution of 1525. Even a city dweller like Dürer, artist to Emperors, could see the absurdity of treating society's rural foundations so poorly. He notes bitterly that the baskets of spoils could be filled at will with cheeses, eggs, butter, onions and herbs.



medieval rich were a united class only in the face of peasant rebellions. Positions like the prime minister, originally the King's valet, smacked too much of the kingdom as an extension of the King's household, and angered nobles who felt the power in their own households were then undermined.

Aristocratic discontent created opportunities for the bourgeoisie, the extremely wealthy, free-thinking group that had evolved around commerce. With the support of the masses the modern alliance of urban insurrection with social revolution was forged. This opened the door, which the bourgeois then tried to shut, on a wildly democratic, revolutionary experiment in the heart of the former absolutism: the Paris commune of the sans-culottes. By 1792, sectional assemblies all over the city were opened to every class, and the poor were paid to attend. The sections ran their own police, relief and defense against the reacting aristocracy. The assemblies succeeded in maintaining the economy and judiciary for their sections, but within two years were betrayed by the hardening revolutionary government under Robespierre.

With the revolution came a major component of modern centralization: patriotism. In France, the revolution gave a bigger portion of the population than ever before a feeling of having a stake in their country, more than would have ever been possible under Kings. This patriotism allowed Napoléon to tear through Europe's aristocratic control, and develop what was at the time unprecedented central authority.

The downfall of royal power, and the emergence of an urban-based professional class of bourgeois politician, made room for a new economic trend. By the middle of the 19th century, after Britain's successes in the cotton trade, industrialism began to take hold, supported by capital and nations in a force that is one of the most destructive of modern times: self-sustaining growth.

Transport costs had kept inland exploitation in check for centuries: the situation in 1800 was barely better than it was in ancient times, when it was cheaper to ship from Constantinople to Spain than overland 75 miles. But the railroad, invented originally to haul coal, opened the land for exploitation of people and resources. The return on money invested was phenomenal, making possible the colonization of both inland Europe and what was to become the third world.

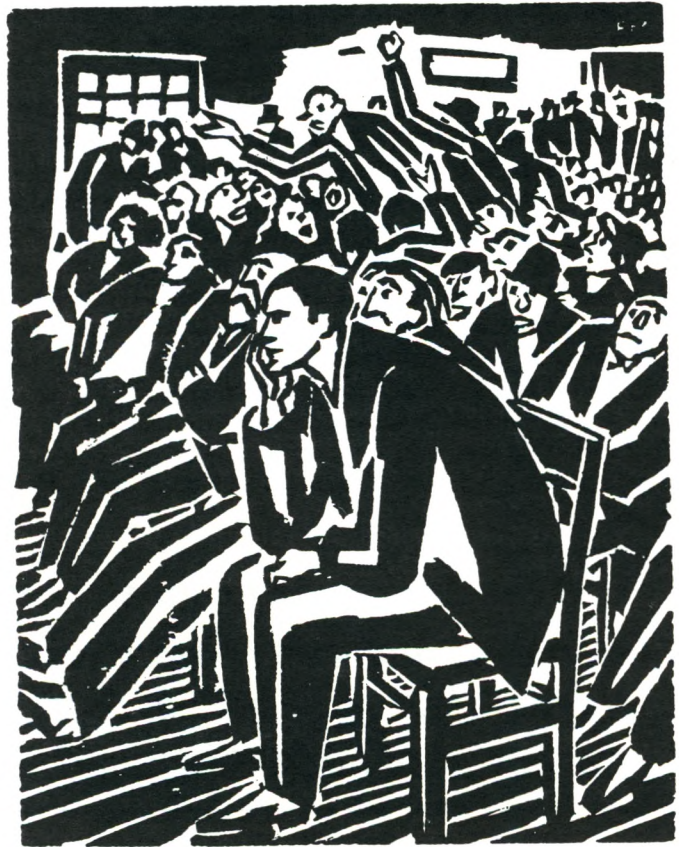
In hard times, the Paris sans-culottes proved that self-rule by ordinary folk worked even in one of the world's largest cities.

Expectations on investment returns were high, and the economic pressure on borrowed money has continued to drive capital and technology into every corner of natural and human existence. For the sake of profit, ancient lifestyles were uprooted, spawning romanticism, starvation, migration and the dissolution of medieval agrarian self-sufficiency. When the economy slowed down towards the end of the 19th century, formally laissez-faire states began to panic and compete with each other for markets and resources, leading to the 20th century's unprecedented new wars.

Transactions within the tight trading districts of cities facilitated this growth, but cities cannot be completely blamed for the new phenomenon. The industrial revolution started in the countryside, spawning new cities as it grew successful. Cities and their citizens can most usefully be seen as tools of the process, but not passive ones: they resisted many changes along the way.

Artisans involved in export production, such as home weavers who were paid to use hand looms well into the industrial revolution, were completely lost as automation began to take over. They resisted and played a major role in the first half of the 19th century, such as in the nationally organized Chartist movement in Britain, and in most of the revolutions leading to the continent wide rebellions in 1848. Guilds, and later labor unions, were often banned because of the insurrectionary potential of artisans, and central city police forces now first appeared to put down riots over food and living/working conditions. Rioting occurred more often in cities than in the countryside in part because their were obvious sites for protest. The rural situation was much worse, however. In Ireland the famine of 1846-1848, when one million died and another million emigrated, was a consequence of the pressure for rents by absentee landlords.

A civic resistance now fought the massive centralization taking place for the sake of capital. In the worst of times in Europe, both before the 1848 revolts and after the depression starting in the 1870's, mutual aid societies, revolutionary organizations and socialist groups pushed their way onto the political stage, leading many nationalist movements and



toppling many monarchs. These groups pushed for democracy, usually in the form of electoral republicanism. It must be said that modern democracy developed in *reaction* to capitalism, mostly in the second half of the 19th century, and in spite of the hesitance of a liberal commercial class who at the time paid mostly lip-service to equal rights.

The corporate elite looked for easier game to exploit than the newly enfranchised people in their own countries. They began to look towards overseas conquest, and the popular support it would bring in the industrialized world. This mix of mass politics and gunboat economic growth ended in territorial wars by countries no longer satisfied with the kind of sophisticated, bounded political treaties Bismark was so good at forging in the late 19th century. Industry and capital grew in great leaps, and national ambitions replaced civic ones as cities grew larger and more impersonal. When conditions grew bad enough in cities to affect the wealthy, greater expenditure and management was forthcoming in the form of planning.

Local exploitation sparked global migration, so within cities to this day, we see very strong immigrant neighborhoods not so easily assimilated to corporate consumer culture. Cities are still hotbeds of activism, their needs and density allowing cooperation that is not detectable, for example, in the suburbs of the United States, where much of the country lives. It is difficult to imagine insurrection in suburbia, with political discussion limited by distances and a prevailing tendency to 'hire' government to do politics and run cities. In suburbia we can see considerable loss of social

cohesion, and it has become obvious that, to use Bookchin's phrase, society's grassroots are turning to straw.

When urban governments find themselves without money, as they do today, public volunteerism begins to look more attractive. But officials still hold onto the decision-making power, both because that is what they know how to do and because citizens believe that the city is a business for which one must employ professionals. But what better way to satisfy increasing numbers of volunteer citizens than to give them back the ability to make decisions? Decentralized cities can run with much less money than centrally administered ones because the work that gets done is for your friends and neighbors, who pay you back in similar fashion without participating in the cash network. Athens and the first Paris commune were both such "amateur cities", where the government's role is to help organize, not to force ideas or perform services.

What better way to satisfy increasing numbers of volunteer citizens than to give them back the power to make decisions?

The ideals of city-democracy have not disappeared. Town meetings, still common in New England, have a respectable resonance in US culture, and these kind of assemblies are the key to uniting people on the local level. In confederation it is still possible that assemblies in towns, cities and the countryside can break up the enormous centralized power of wasteful, hulking nation states.



Murray Bookchin is a key member of **The Social Ecology Project** (P.O. Box 111, Burlington, VT 05402), which prints a compendium of "**Readings in Libertarian Municipalism**" (117 pages, \$9 Postpaid). They recommend Bookchin's *The Limits of the City*, as well as *Urbanization Without Cities*. Here is their full reading list:

Ancient Greece:

Finley, M.I. *Democracy: Ancient and Modern*. Rutgers University Press, 1972. **Forrest, W.G.** *The Emergence of Greek Democracy*. McGraw-Hill, 1966. **Jaeger, Werner.** *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*. Oxford University Press, 1939. **Polanyi, Karl.** *Primitive, Archaic and Modern Economics*. Beacon Press, 1968. **Webster, T.B.L.** *Life in Classical Athens*. London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1969. **Zimmern, Alfred.** *The Greek Commonwealth*. Modern library editions.

Early Modern Europe:

Barber, Benjamin. *The Death of Communal Liberty*. Princeton University Press, 1974. **Barber, Benjamin R.** *Superman and Common Men: Freedom, Anarchy and the Revolution*. Praeger. **Gutkind, E.A.** *Twilight of the Cities*. Free Press, 1962. **Martines, Lauro.** *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy*. Vintage, 1979. **Mumford, Lewis.** *The City in History*. Harcourt Brace, 1961. **Mundy, John H.** *Europe in the High Middle Ages*. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1973. **Waley, Daniel.** *The Italian City-Republics*. McGraw-hill, 1969. **Zagorin, Perez.** *Rebels and Rulers*. 1500-1600, Vol. 1. Cambridge, 1982.

American & French Revolutions:

Breen, T.H. *Puritans and Adventurers: Change and Persistence in Early America*. Oxford, 1980. **Douglass, Elisha P.** *Rebels and Democrats: The Struggle for Equal Political Rights and Majority Rule During the American Revolution*. Quadrangle, 1955. **Furet F., C. Mazauric, and L. Bergeron** "The Sans-culottes and the French Revolution" in (Jeffry Kaplow, Ed.) *New Perspectives on the French Revolution*. Wiley, 1965. **Jensen, Merrill** *The New Nation: a History of the United States During the Confederation. 1781-1789*. Vintage, 1950. **Kammen, Michael** *Deputies and Liberties: The Origins of Representative Government in Colonial America*. Knopf, 1969. **Palmer, R.R.** *The Age of Democratic Revolutions*. Princeton, 1958. **Soboul, Albert** *The Sans-culottes: The Popular Movement and Revolutionary Government, 1793-1794*. Anchor/Doubleday, 1972. **Szatmary, David P.** *Shays' Rebellion*. Amherst, 1980. **Thompson, J. M.** *The French Revolution*. Basil Blackwell, 1943 (especially pages 280-282, 295-298).

19th Century:

Binkley, Robert C. *Realism and Nationalism: 1852-1871*. Harper & Row, 1935 (especially chapters 9-11). **Livingston, W.S.** "A Note on the Nature of Federalism", *Political Science Quarterly*, 1952: 81-95. **Riker, William H.** *Federalism: Origins, Operation, Significance*. (Boston, 1964). **Where, K.C.** *Federal Government* (London, 1946).

20th Century:

Berg, Peter, Beryl Magilavy, Seth Zuckerman *A Green City Program for San Francisco Bay Area Cities and Towns*. Planet Drum, 1989. **Bookchin, Murray.** *The Spanish Anarchists*. Harper & Row, 1977. **Castells, Manuel.** "The Making of an Urban Social Movement: the Citizen Movement in Madrid towards the End of the Franquist Era" part 5 in *The City and the Grassroots: a Cross Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. University of California, 1983. **Gerecke, Kent, Ed.** *The Canadian City*. Black Rose, 1991. **Gordon, David, Ed.** *Green Cities: Ecologically Sound Approaches to Urban Space*. Black Rose, 1990. **Kotler, Milton** *Neighborhood Government*. Bobbs-Merrill, 1969. **Roussopoulos, Dimitrios, Ed.** *The City and Radical Social Change*. Black Rose, 1982. **Schecter, Stephen** *The Politics of Urban Liberation*. Black Rose, 1978.

Greens

The hard-hitting newsletter of the Social Ecology Project, **Green Perspectives**, is available (address at left) for \$10 for 12 issues (overseas \$14). Social Ecology is a distinctive, well considered synthesis of social and ecological activism. This practical opinion letter provides coherent analysis of current events and current strategy in terms of ecology, human rights, decentralism and confederalism. Provocative and polemical, Janet Biehl, Murray Bookchin, Chuck Morse and Gary Sisco criticize their best friends' mistakes as readily as establishment profligacy. This is important reading for activists.

These Burlington greens bring their theoretical care to the **Institute For Social Ecology**, an ambitious and well-received program in ecology, appropriate technology, politics and sociology. Established in 1974 and matriculating through Goddard College, the institute offers a year long **master's program** as well as **summer courses**. The instructors are internationally known activists, and all the graduates we know rave about it. Contact: The Institute For Social Ecology, P.O. Box 89, Plainfield, VT 05667, phone:(802) 454-8493 (Dan Chodorkoff, Director).

The Book **Defending the Earth**, by Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman (1991), is available for \$10.00 from **South End Press**, 116 Saint Botolph Street, Boston, MA 02115 USA or **Black Rose Books**, 3981 Boul. St-Laurent, #444, Montréal, H2W 1Y5, Québec, Canada.

Defending The Earth is a tidy and satisfying exercise in constructive debate on the practical and philosophical conflicts between deep ecology and social ecology. If you know radical conservationists who are unaware of social issues, or socialists who are skeptical of wilderness activism, this brief, conversational book will give them pause.

Organized by New York's **Learning Alliance** (494 Broadway, New York, NY, 1001, phone: (212) 226-7171), the dialogue between Foreman and Bookchin should be a model for dealing with friction between movements. Steve Chase provides a fine historical introduction on utopian dreams of a farmed versus a wild earth. Bookchin and Foreman reject both visions, and present complementary, rather than competing, strategies towards achieving justice for humanity and the rest of the natural world.

The Left Green Network is a continental alliance for social ecology, anticapitalism, confederal libertarian municipalism and independent politics. They publish the organizing bulletin **Left Green Notes**, available for \$10/year and \$14 overseas from: LGN Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 366, Iowa City, IA 52244.

The Left Greens are on their second issue of a lively new journal of detailed analysis, theory and strategy, **Regeneration**. "A Magazine of Left Green Social Thought", *Regeneration's* second issue reported on coalition building efforts over toxics in poor neighborhoods, and the economic and political problems in recycling efforts. Subscriptions to the quarterly are \$10/year, from: WD Press, P.O. Box 24115, St. Louis MO, 63130.

Some of the staff of *Regeneration* in St.Louis produce the monthly **Gateway Greens' Compost-Dispatch**, an organizing bulletin and forum for Green activists at the old gateway to the West. From: Gateway Green Alliance, P.O. Box 8094, St.Louis, Missouri 63156.

One of the broadest samplings from green and ecology organizations in the US can be found in **Green Letter**, (\$20/four issues, The Tides Foundation/Green Letter, P.O. Box 14141, San Francisco, CA 94114). One-fourth of its pages are committed to *official* news of the US Greens, mostly opinion pieces about building the movement. A subscription to Green Letter comes with green membership, \$25/year to **The Greens (USA)**, Box 30208, Kansas City, MO 64112.

In Canada, the **Confederation of Municipal Greens** is putting inter-community solidarity to the test, organizing in Montréal, Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Québec City, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Kingston. Attend the next face-to-face meeting of these left greens in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, in May of 1992. They publish a bulletin, **The Citizen**, for \$16/year (10 issues). Contact the CMG Clearinghouse, 51 Lee Avenue., Toronto, Ontario, M4E 2P1, phone: (416) 694-2666 (Mike McConkey, Editor).

EcoSocialist Review is a high-energy quarterly opinion letter associated with the Environmental Commission of the Democratic Socialists of America. Although the DSA itself often acts unafraid of big left coalitions, national democratic socialist governments and party politics, this journal pays unusually close attention to decentralists and eco-anarchists. Here, as a consequence, state-reform strategies react frothily with state-undermining ones. \$15/year from Chicago Democratic Socialists of America, 1608 N. Milwaukee, 4th Floor, Chicago, IL 60647, phone: (312) 752-3562.

Berkeley's **Ecology Center Terrain** is an impressive, long-running, monthly ecology tabloid distributed free in the Bay Area (but people outside should subscribe with a \$25/year donation to The Ecology Center, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94702, phone: (415) 548-2220). The Center is at the heart of dozens of community projects, and *Terrain's* pages reflect this frenetic activity.

M.I. Finley

As if people needed any more excuses to get lost in the past, Moses Finley, the most sophisticated ancient historian of our century, made the study of the classical Mediterranean world of utmost modern relevance.

We put too much of ourselves into our descriptions of other societies, and the difficulty in discovering our unquestioned assumptions becomes nearly insurmountable when the culture under study disappears. But the role ancient history plays in modern education makes it crucial to see clearly the nature of what we profess to be our western heritage. Finley may not have been the first to uncover this point, but he was the most keen and politically radical in making it. His books are models of care, rigor and dynamism.

We have no room for reviews just now, but we can heartily recommend an introductory book, **The Ancient Greeks** published by Penguin; two books of essays on epistemological problems in history, **Ancient History: Evidence and Models** and **The Use and Abuse of History** published by Penguin Books after his death; his polemic **Democracy, Ancient and Modern** by Rutgers University Press and the excellent **Politics in the Ancient World**, Wiles lectures published by Cambridge; and finally **The Ancient Economy**, from the University of California press.

Lateral Medieval Relationships

Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe

900-1300, Susan Reynolds, Oxford University Press, 1984, \$19.95

Reynolds is a superb social historian whose thesis, that collective behavior among medieval commoners was quite sophisticated, wasn't given much academic attention before her book made a splash in the mid-1980's. In law studies, for example, the tendency was to see the 12th century's discovery of Greek and Roman classics as a rebirth of intelligent, fair judiciary amidst a barbarous and rigid court system. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Rigid laws and summary executions were the hallmark of the age *after* the classics took hold, since their spread corresponds to a time of state expansion, when Lords shirked their local responsibilities and feudalism began to solidify. The supposedly advanced legal distinction between evidence and law grew sharper as power behind law grew, making fairness less a concern than legal obedience. This inflexibility is our inheritance, seen today when judges incorrectly instruct jurors, whose role is a remnant of the older communal trials, that they cannot decide the law.

From 900-1300 people's involvement in politics or law, for there was no distinction, was ruled by community responsibility, flexible local customs and common sense. It was widely recognized that communities take care of their own, and the right to be tried in your own town was a pervasive principle. Trial ordeals, such as the scalding of a hand with acquittal if it healed properly, were uncommon

procedures that would be carried out only with consensus, always accompanied by lengthy debate over substantial issues. Importantly, accepting ordeals as arbiters did not necessarily imply belief in divine intervention, any more than accepting a jury's verdict implies belief in juror infallibility. Sentences were not often harsh, or even carried out: the trial itself was in many instances considered sanction enough. Rule by custom aimed at equity, justice and *reconciliation* in equal parts.

Reynolds demonstrates that this was not the Christian age most people imagine, and the evidence that it was peculiarly superstitious is poor. The church's influence was concentrated on leadership and in the few cities. Parishes were created through lay initiative, attested to by the extent to which rural custom shapes modern Christian celebration.

Quod omnes similiter tangit ab omnibus comprobetur, ["what touches all should be approved by all"] was a principle that penetrated the economic and political lives of peasants in this age. Villages managed their harvests and could determine their wages, prices and barter arrangements. They negotiated collectively, held lands, funds and parish in common, and were flexible in regards to ideas of ownership and collective responsibility. Together they negotiated or fought for independence from arbitrary or unfair treatment from lords, bishops and Kings. Such community independence was considered normal, not revolutionary in the modern historical sense.

Everyone considered it a right and duty to participate in governing the community. The citizens often participated

through loose collective social groups, early guilds, that didn't have any legal definition, despite the search for one by modern legal scholars. When a group didn't have a seal it didn't mean it wasn't legitimate, just that it had no seal. There is record of a group of prisoners in a large city who *had* a seal, an unlikely candidate for legal corporate status in the modern sense.

Guilds in this period were loose groups of men and women who often had dinner



together, kept the peace, might have religious affinity, and took oaths of mutual support. The first town governments were often pre-existing guilds. Like mutual support societies of 19th century, guilds flourished throughout Europe in times of migration, when people needed each other's help within a new community. The evidence is that discussion in these medieval towns, even without literacy or classics, was of a high level, and should be viewed with more respect.

Ages of Hobsbawm

The Age of Revolution, Mentor, 1962, \$5.95; **The Age of Capital**, Meridian, 1979, \$4.95; **The Age of Empire**, Pantheon, 1987, \$22.95, paperback: Vintage, \$12.95.

It was in the 19th century, the long or *historian's* 19th from 1789 to 1914, that modern politics, economics and social relations destroyed lifestyles that had endured for millennia. Today there is no exact turning back, as became clear to people fighting the rise of capitalism, industrialism, alienation and nationalism. But the profound social changes that took place in one century indicate the great potential for future change, perhaps for the better if we make it so.

Eric Hobsbawm is a radical modern left activist, an elder in the movement, unquenchably controversial and analytically sharp. He uncovers a long 19th that most people in the 20th century could never imagine. He is interested in how all aspects of the 19th century hang together: ideology, social relations, science, art, economics and politics. His method is systematic, thought-provoking, deeply reflective, and only poorly reflected in these brief summaries.

During The Age of Revolution (1789-1848), the following English words took their modern meaning: industry, industrialist, factory, middle class, working class, capitalism, socialism, aristocracy, railway, liberal, conservative, nationality, scientist, engineer, proletariat, economic crisis, journalism, strike, and pauperism.

In the greatest and quickest transformations in human history since ancient times the bourgeoisie, a conquering business class ironically advocating freedom, dominated the new industrial workplace. Their success, depending on the defeat of feudalism and absolute monarchy, was made by the ideological force of the French revolution, and the destructive force of the industrial revolution.

Industrialism began in Britain, but this was because the British were technically superior. They were leagues behind the French, whose support for science (especially after the revolution), through unique institutions like the École Polytechnique, contrasted sharply with Britain's suspicion of it. The

Right: French rebels inspired revolution across Europe throughout the first half of the 19th century. Punch, 1848.

French produced far more sophisticated technology, such as the programmable Jacquard Loom (1804). The Germans also had advanced technical training through the Bergakademie. English education was a joke: those in industry who were educated came from Scotland.

The technical inventions of the Industrial Revolution were very modest: the types of devices inventive artisans had produced in workshops for centuries. What spurred the industrial revolution was growth in a market that had already been profitable without technical change: cotton. Cotton came from British colonies, much of it from the Southern US -- this was the reason the British were on the South's side in the civil war. If the British could sell goods freely in the US, they would buy the south's cotton, but this meant the north couldn't protect its industries from imports.

The markets for Britain's finished cotton goods were also mostly overseas. It was the British navy that made monopoly of source and supply possible. It forced, for the first time in history, the east to import more from the west

Paris Fashions for 1848.



than visa-versa. Wherever the British empire expanded, so did the market for Lancashire's Mills. Britain imposed itself as workshop to the world, and it came to dominate the 19th century in every way. When no country on the continent could afford to defeat Napoléon, the English economy brought him down without skipping a beat.

British industrialism was built in the homes of domestic producers, not in centralized factories. Factories took their roles later, and only in parts of the textile industry, spinning a generation before weaving. Coal was heavily mined, but mostly for heating. But the mining of coal eventually led to its use as fuel in engines, which pulled ore from mines along tracks, leading to the railroad. Excess cash from cotton was invested in railroads, whose success in creating markets and hauling resources furthered the economics of iron, steel and fuels.

To today's world, the French revolution's consequences were as important as the industrial revolution's, despite modern conservative attempts to deny this. Conservatives at the time would never have considered trivializing the revolution: they fought against its effects with well-founded

anxiety. For example, it was the first great movement of *ideas* in Western Christendom that had an effect on Islam, and an almost immediate one at that. Another side effect: the more radical side of the revolution, the Jacobin, encouraged a revolt in Haiti, which Napoléon was never able to recapture. Hence the Louisiana purchase, which turned the US into a continent wide power.

The French Revolution revealed the shape of all subsequent bourgeois revolutions: moderate reformers mobilize the masses; the masses push beyond moderate aims; the moderates split, some joining the reaction and others trying to use and control the masses.

The revolution led to the near disappearance of medieval estates: the Holy Roman Empire, the Genoa and Venice



Science was not introduced into the school curriculum to foster genius and the pursuit of the unknown, but to create an army of competent technicians for industry and the pursuit of profit. A woodcut of Frans Masereel, 1922.

republics, episcopal principalities etc. Territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence became the new model for states, even after the defeat of Napoléon, who led this trend. So, for example, Austria acquired Salzburg from the Catholic church during Napoléon's time, but after his defeat wouldn't consider giving it back.

Economically, the revolution kept big-business from developing in France like it did in Britain. For a century France remained a nation of corner grocers, peasant smallholders and café proprietors. As a result the new industrial working class, the proletariat, developed faster in Britain.

In this period the proletariat became a major political force. The reaction of workers to the horrid new conditions in cities led political movements like Chartism, ambitious attempts to set up national general unions, and a serious attempt by followers of Robert Owen to bypass capitalism with an alternative co-op economy.

Radical activists tried to ally themselves with peasantry with mixed success, since they themselves were urban based. They had an easier time in more advanced industrial countries, where peasants were being uprooted and sent to cities to work. Big business, in both industry and agriculture,



In 1848, Punch predicts that police in 1850 will be fully armed and more ruthless than the army. Modern city police forces were organized to suppress riots over inequities resulting from the fast spread of capitalism and industry.

made people more dependent on hard work in cities, to support increasing numbers of capitalists. Peasants were forced to the city through the break up of common lands, an act known as *enclosure*. Legal emancipation of the serfs tended to take from them more than it gave. For example, in Prussia it provided for freedom from forced labor, but took away a serf's lands, common land, and Lord's assistance. Without these customary rights they couldn't make it, either starving or selling their land for pittance to business sharks, so they migrated and struggled to get work in the city. As factories started moving in, industrialism dumped the artisans that had helped create it. The skilled laboring poor were separated from their employers physically, moved out of the buildings they used to share, developing class hatred, city ghettos and numerous revolutions.

For conservative thinkers associated with royal and church classes, *reason* became the culprit for both revolutions, industrial and social. It was with this group that the Enlightenment developed a bad reputation: they supposed that revolutions were caused by the wrong thoughts.

THE AGE OF CAPITAL (1848~1875). The last of the revolutions of "the springtime of the peoples", in 1848, ended with the election of Napoléon III by a France that didn't want to be the revolutionary vanguard anymore. While in most countries absolute monarchies were restored, Napoléon III instead embarked upon the first mass public relations campaign. The middle and working classes, liberalism, nationalism, and democracy were now permanent issues on the political scene. The challenge for Napoléon III was to make this benefit the upper classes and those in power.

This became easier as Capital was engaged in an unprecedented global expansion. For some twenty years a few people actually began to believe that capitalism might be "the end of history". That notion didn't last long.

The British industrial revolution swallowed the French political revolution, and the wealthy, self-confident Bourgeois ceased to be any kind of revolutionary force. From a spot on the fringes of business liberalism, socialism finally moved to the front-stage in revolutionary activity. But revolution was less likely to be successful while the



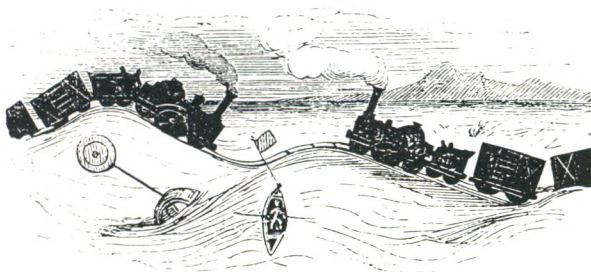
Despite lip-service to freedom, the heyday of capitalism (1848 to the 1870's) was an age when it was considered perfectly natural for a "man of talent" to take advantage of workers who were not seen as fully evolved human beings.

economy was in an upswing. During this shortage of opportunity Marx wrote the first volume of *Das Kapital*.

The wealth Europe extracted during this global expansion made for the heyday of absolute monarchy in the Hapsburg, Prussian and Russian empires. National governments grew more complex, supporting business but developing their own interests and momenta.

The railway, combining iron and coal, opened the world to capital, and everywhere except the US, trade protectionism disappeared. The US and Australian gold rushes opened up the entire Pacific to shipping, migration, and exploitation. With this expansion, *internationalism* moved to the forefront of ideas, resulting in the universal postal union (1875), the internationalist movement in labor, and attempts at world languages like Esperanto. But world economic unification increased dependence and interaction among nations, accentuating national territorialism and competition over markets and resources. This helped drive national ethnic unifications, such as in Italy and Germany.

Primary education began to expand, as did technical schools and scientific training. The point of science in schools was not to produce great scientists, but to create competent technicians for industry: the mass-production of engineers. Oil begins to be used for chemical synthesis by the end of this period, resulting in synthetic dyes (mauve was first), photography and explosives. Mass-production of machinery takes off in the US, and the first device that was the result of modern scientific inquiry, the telegraph, becomes pervasive and transforms journalism.



Profits from the cotton industries went to the new Railroads. In 1858, Punch scoffs at a plan to build one over water, as if "capital does not get sunk rapidly enough into railways".

Journalists could report on the many international events now of significance to their local readership: the plundering, the economic tensions, the smothering of revolts in Paraguay, China, and the US. They began to report on the anthropology of new peoples encountered overseas.

The man of property found a conflict between his egalitarian ideology and his unequal relations with anyone not a white businessmen. He resolved the problem by considering himself of a superior race: the Enlightenment didn't apply to women and foreigners. He considered himself the product of Progress, warping evolutionary theory into social Darwinism: history's march produced the Enlightened Business Man, most fit and ready to dominate.

He might try to dominate, but popular demand for democracy was growing, though completely implemented nowhere. Where voting occurred in Europe, as occasionally in France, the bourgeois parties called themselves liberal, reform, progressive, republican, radical and finally radical socialist. Of course when they would win elections, usually due to their superior funds, they'd shift back to the middle.

Because bourgeois industrialism was associated with liberalism, the church became part of a peasant/royalist conservatism. But in Latin America parts of the church stayed on the anti-business side permanently, leading in part to modern liberation theology.

Working-class organization persisted in mutual aid societies and co-ops, generally for production on continent, and generally for retail shops in Britain. Trade unions and strikes were usually illegal. But after a slump in the middle 1860's new unions sprang up, and one of the few revolutions in Europe, the Paris commune of 1871, frightened the wits out of the bourgeois, who reacted with pronounced violence. By now the business class was against any social change.

The intoxicated captains of industry encouraged, by their behavior, the rise of individualism. The nuclear family arose as a protection of the individual's lair against society, disconnected by new cash relationships that replaced everything from barter to slavery. When the depression came, to stay for some twenty years starting in the 1870's, it effected the entire world at once and business individualism and nationalism merged in the struggle for economic dominance.

The Age of Empire (1875-1914): During the *belle époque*, there was one chief nightmare among business liberals. If your agriculture, mining, and industry are carried out by "the colored races", you become completely dependent on them... and they will demand emancipation.

The business class regularly preached freedom, but they meant their own freedom to exploit others. As Anatole France observed, "The law in its majestic equality gives every man the same right to dine at the Ritz and to sleep under a bridge." These contradictions led to the strange death of bourgeois liberalism, pushed to self-destruct in WWI by the new business conservatives and mass politics.

Advertising was invented to sell to the masses the products of industrial production and imperial exploitation. It sold cinema, the five cent or nickelodeon pictures, which

rose to lavishness in only a few years: the first accessible mass media. Businessmen made fortunes in these new markets, but the consumables and the buying clout of the masses made it harder to keep them in their political place.

There was still not much democracy. Even by 1914 half the male working class in Britain was disenfranchised by voting limitations. Ruling classes discussed their problems less honestly now since the public was listening. But as the pressure for enfranchisement grew, former liberal businessmen became openly conservative. They didn't like these new changes. The government, for its part, tried to adjust by launching mass spectacles to promote nationalistic trust in the state. It worked. At the start of the war, from 1914 to 1915, 2 million British volunteered to be cannon fodder.

Some governments began social programs to undermine socialism, but this didn't always work because the programs were so modest. *Progress* had a negative impact on most people, so riots and peasant revolts became regular headaches for most governments.

Separation between the wealthy and the workers had increased, reinforced by repression-minded city planners. So socialists found their own alternatives. Thousands of buying, processing and marketing co-ops for farmers flourished in each country. Wherever European workers gained the upper hand they created scores of co-ops, mutual support groups and strong unions. The French radicals even had something like the modern "small is beautiful" platform, promoting small farms, small businesses, and small communities.

Craft workers and skilled journeymen, forsaken by industry, formed the most active, educated element in new socialist movements. But conspicuous consumption, a phrase coined in this age, or elite spending behavior, could gainfully employ a handful of these craftspeople. This helped the radical arts-and-crafts movement thrive, eventually led by artists such as William Morris, a socialist and naturalist. This movement spawned enlightened town planning, *art nouveau* and other progressive activities.

Later, many artists reacted to *art nouveau's* anti-capitalist, anti-industrialist messages, and instead celebrated Modernity and Progress. Art's *avant garde* lost its natural lines and materials and adopted geometric, artificial ones.

The working class became extremely well organized in this period, despite anti-union employers, and the educated



By the end of the 19th century the bourgeoisie were uncertain of the destination of the train they had boarded, the one called Progress. Enlightenment-inspired notions they had abandoned were firing up the masses, and Capitalism was taking a right turn towards war.

artisans helped raise class consciousness, one of their most useful organizing concepts. As the nation-state grew in stature national unions followed, but this made socialism vulnerable to nationalism's rightward turn. Migration, created by capitalism's advances, was a major contributor to nationalism: when you are in a different land you either suddenly cherish your heritage, or suddenly disregard it. You may take up the new heritage with desperate zeal.

How to deal with the volatile nature of nationalism, and the increasing power of the right, was debated hotly among socialists. Fabian or evolutionary socialists took the view that through gradual compromise they could head towards socialism. Revolutionary socialists felt that progress could only come quickly at a ripe opportunity, and that the Fabians would end up losing all sight of socialism. This debate was paralleled by one within biology over the speed at which species evolved.

As proto-industry was swept away by factories, domestic production transformed from a family enterprise into underpaid work for women. Factories separated household from place of work, keeping women at home and out of the "recognized" economy. In the days of subsistence agriculture no one would have claimed women's work unimportant, but in this age even domestics doing the same housework as wives were considered employed. Factories made wives into unregarded slaves.

This was an age of unusual missionary zeal to convert the "primitives", usually the victims of the overtly celebrated Imperialism. Despite slavery's undoing, official racism continued unabated, and became incorporated into purity myths, like that of the white Anglo-Saxon cowboys (the chief contributors to cowboy culture and vocabulary were Mexican). From the colonies came the *evolués*, "the evolved colored ones", who learned that there was much support for indigenous revolutionaries at center of the empire. A young Gandhi wrote a guide to English life for fellow Indians, and when he went to Britain he hung out with local vegetarians, who tended to be progressive types. Making his way around the Empire, he learned to successfully organize in South Africa, fighting there for the rights of Indian workers.

Gandhi was able to do all this partly because of his formal education in English. Primary education was slowly broadening in Britain, but formal education's main function was not utilitarian: no one needed Greek and Latin. The point of a higher education was to prove that your children came from a background that gave them leisure to postpone earning a living. Fraternities, leagues and colleges were popular because they allowed a child to enter the right social groups. It meant a cultural change for the aspiring European: sports for the upper class meant riding and hunting, but the first mass working-class spectator sport was cycling.

Among educated liberals involved in philosophy, science and art, there was much disposal of old ideas. Einstein is an example of someone starting from scratch, doing very well without makeshift physical notions such as "ether" if it couldn't make sense in theory or be seen in practice. If the liberal business class that made the world

was disappearing, everything could be questioned.

The industrial powers were carving up the world into economic colonies, searching for markets. As competition heated up, the Empires at home could play at "social imperialism": reduce domestic discontent through mass propaganda promising prosperity through war. Empire made good ideological cement both within the country and the commonwealth.

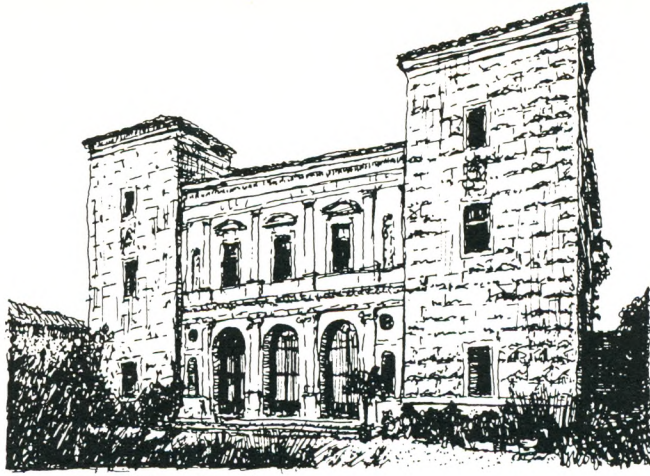
The developed countries played risky games with each other: military brinksmanship. 'Don't do that or we'll start a war', and other threats. More territory came under dispute, and powerful alliances coalesced. By building a shiny new fleet with the latest industrial technology, Germany implicitly challenged England's precious navy. Tension mounted. No one wanted war, since most royal families were related, and from all signs they didn't expect it. But the objectives of Nations had changed. Pushed by economic growth, states no longer had limited demands that could be met through royal marriages. Territorial demands grew testier, and with the availability of armaments it became tempting to forget the diplomatic solution. These were the conditions that led to the unprecedented violence of the first World War.

Hobsbawm writes, "What distinguishes the various members of the ideological family descended from humanism and the Enlightenment, liberal, socialist, communist, or anarchist, is not the gentle anarchy which is the utopia of all of them, but the methods of achieving it."

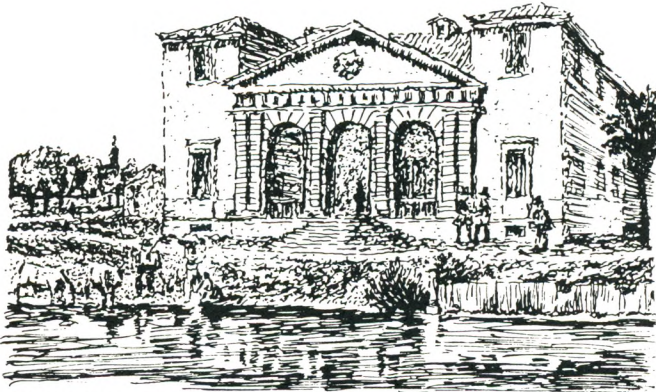
A magazine like *Rain*, sympathetic to the new left, left-greens, anarchists, social ecologists and decentralists, should spare a word on Hobsbawm's politics: he has trouble with anarchy as *strategy*, because of his traumatic experience during the war Spain lost against Fascism from 1936-39 (from his book *Revolutionaries*, Quartet, 1973): "I still recall in the very earliest days of that war, the small town of Puigcerda in the Pyrenees, a little revolutionary republic, filled with free men and women, guns and an immensity of discussion. A few trucks stood in the plaza. When anyone felt like going to fight on the Aragonese front, he went to the trucks. When a truck was full, it went to the front. Presumably, when the volunteers wanted to come back, they came back. The phrase *C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre* ['it's great, but it's not war'] should have been invented for such a situation. It was marvellous, but the main effect of this experience on me was that it took twenty years before I was prepared to see Spanish Anarchism as anything but a tragic farce.

"It was much more than this. And yet, no amount of sympathy can alter the fact that anarchism as a revolutionary movement has failed, that it has almost been designed for failure."

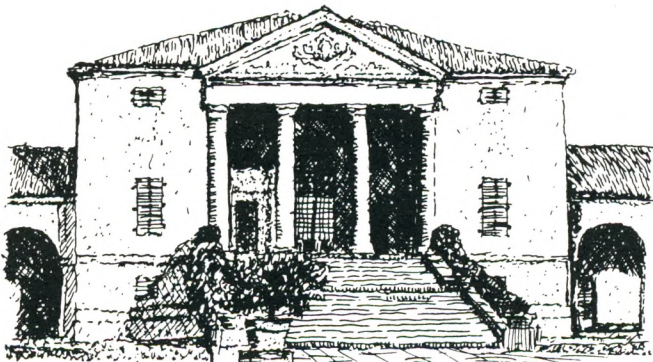
Of course, all revolutions have failed in some monumental way. But small disagreements over what constitutes anarchist strategy could never make Hobsbawm a less important read for all social activists.



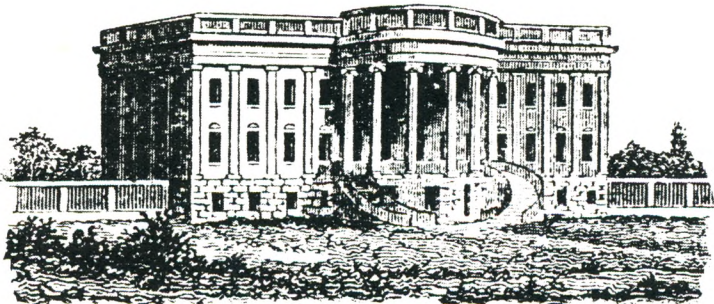
CRICOLI: Villa Trissino.



BAGNOLO DI LONIGO: Villa Pisani (after Marco Moro).



FANZOLO DI VEDELAGO: Villa Emo, mid-16th century.



The belligerent origins of the Palladian Villa: medieval towers flanking the loggia, or columned arcade, of the more open, public living space. Palladio softened the towers, making them into wings, and classicized the loggia. Top three from Hands-On, Hands-Off.

Using Ancient Architecture: Hands-on, Hands off

Hands-on, Hands-off, Experiencing History Through Architecture, Harris Stone, 1991, \$18.00, Monthly Review Press, 122 West 27th Street, New York, NY 10001.

In a key essay within this book, which is handwritten and filled with sketches, a group of faculty and students, on a summer project in historic preservation, arrive at an ancient farmstead outside Siena. They are so confused by the jumbled remains of a thousand years of construction, repairs, and adapted uses of the buildings, that they cannot decide what restoring such a complex could possibly mean. What parts do we restore and why? A local artisan accompanying them answers by starting to fix things, leading them to ceaseless fascinating discoveries. They discover that getting involved in work at the site begins the process of making it meaningful for the present.

Two main approaches to historic reconstruction are *hands-off*, meticulous archaeology and art history, and *hands-on*, preservation and renewed use. A problem with the hands-off approach is a tendency to allow a structure to fall down rather than risk modification before documentation; the problem with the hands-on approach is it can be driven by capital development and speculation, warping into designs entirely alien to the history and construction of the original structure.

Working out in the field, the approach often depends on the energy that can be spent on the project. The students knocked down an ancient wall, then rebuilt it with better drainage, because otherwise the wall would fall down on its own, since no one would pay for more expensive preservation techniques. The rebuilding can deepen the workers understanding of the history of the structure, which is necessary to determine future use. But documentation and construction skills are not enough: there must also be a point of view as to what part of history needs to be revealed to a future visitor or tenant.

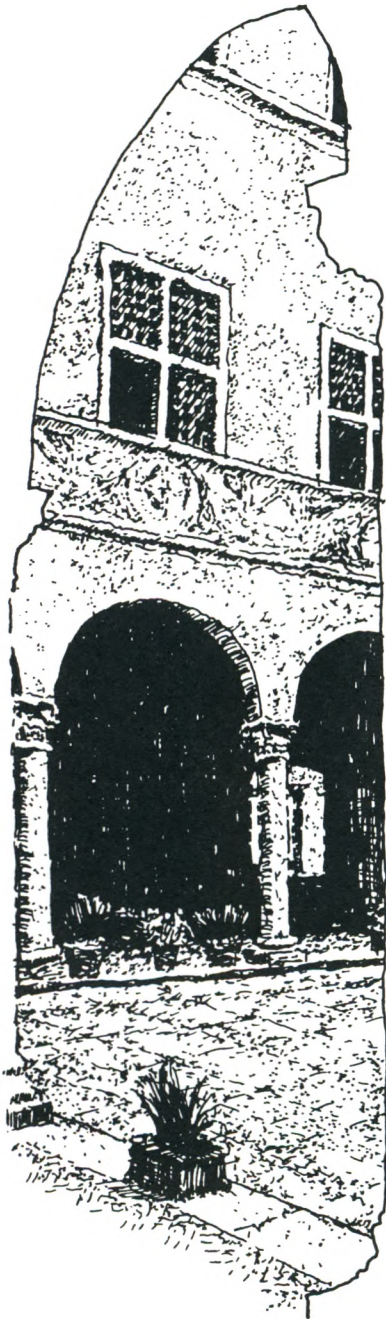
A castle is a remnant of war, and we don't want it to be used for war again but at the same time we don't want to forget the past and just let castles become fairy tale tourist hotels. Stone's book takes us through dozens of successful and suggestive projects of *meaningful* restoration.

At the Castelvecchio of Verona, the curator Scarpa wanted visitors to realize that the art displayed in the museum was mostly stolen, hundreds of years past, from bloody raids on other towns and castles. So he scattered the artwork around the great halls haphazardly, as if it were bounty unloaded in a hurry, seeming terribly out of place as one stumbles upon one treasure after another.

Associating architecture with modern expression can act as a restoration. Dance and music are more closely related to architecture than painting and sculpture are: if one excludes from the latter community murals and participatory sculpture, as many traditional art historians have. Stone describes

and draws many exciting, poignant dances that tell stories in ancient spaces -- such as a modern dance through some buildings in the Italian countryside, audience in tow, near the setting for a story by Dante of the Lady Pia, unjustly banished by her husband to die in a tower.

This is a source book on making history come alive, and about better living through touching the past. The book itself engages history in a sophisticated, inspiring and highly original manner.



Palazzo Piccolomini, a Quattrocento attempt to move the public loggia inside, into the courtyard, amidst a burden of militaristic feudal architectural trends.

This Season From Lonely Planet

In a collective exercise, thousands of travelers using Lonely Planet travel guides send corrections and updates to the publisher for subsequent editions. In the complimentary copy they get they'll find themselves credited for helping. We mention Lonely Planet in part because the company aggressively funds a number of progressive causes around the world, such as Greenpeace's Pacific campaign against French nuclear testing.



Lonely Planet helped pioneer off-the-beaten-track, shoestring and third world travel back in the early 1970's. In part through their influence, many mainstream travel publishers went the same route, so today LP doesn't seem to offer particularly radical advice on what to see and do. The guides help vegetarians and naturists find their way around, which is much appreciated, but they don't particularly help ecological or social activists.

In the current season's batch of books, the writer who stands out is Joe Cummings, who has done some serious economic, political and social homework. He wrote the new edition of **China: A Travel Survival Kit** (every edition of a LP guide is an improvement over the previous one). He also wrote the *Laos* section of **Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia**, but unfortunately did not write the rest of the book, which is not as well informed. Cummings is not himself a radical, but he has enough experience in the third world to understand why one might become one.

Another new book, **Yemen: A Travel Survival Kit** is the first Western guide published for this new nation, a "scoop" like many other LP guides. Since Yemen is only now modernizing, it is one of the few countries left where one can get a true taste of medieval Islam. The little book is interesting mainly for historical reasons: it was written while the two Yemens, one with a Marxist and the other with a right-wing military government, unified to take advantage of oil found on their border and to become independent of Saudi bullying. During the Persian Gulf war Yemen then took an independent stance, sensibly asking for both withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and of US troops from Saudi Arabia. Yemenis in Saudi were tortured as a result.

Lonely Planet guides emphasize *how* to travel: the signs, the system and how the buses work. Besides the three above, out of this season the guides to the **Philippines**, **Japan**, and **East Africa** are sensitive and can be recommended, as can their excellent and unusual little phrase books for **Mandarin** and **Thai Hill Tribe Languages**. LP also prints a **free** travel newsletter: write Lonely Planet Publications, P.O.Box 2001A, Berkeley, CA 94702.

Communities

Living Longer, Living Better: *Adventures in Community Housing For Those in the Second Half of Life*, Jane Porcino, 1991, The Continuum Publishing Company, \$15.95.

Many who live in the suburbs are dependent on someone else to get them to shopping, work, social activities and healthcare. The elderly, the very young, those on medication, the tired, injured, differently-abled and the poor are often particularly constrained. There are, however, alternatives that free us from dependence on cars and foster real community feeling.

Living Longer, Living Better uncovers those often hidden housing options. The people interviewed are "maintaining a lifestyle that offers them both privacy and community, more housing for less money, and social contact with those of similar interests".

This book is not a guide to individual communities. It is an exploration of the increased independence and interdependence of different community living options. Though written with older people in mind, it is useful to any person looking for an extended family or genuine support network.

One concept that has potential in any organization of shared values is the structured community, used within the Catholic Church, called **Teams**. Small groups of families formally commit themselves to each other "to share joys and sorrows, to help in times of need, to share construction, gardening, and cooking skills, and to delight in each family's growth." The Teams encourage the development of trust and hospitality, for example when Team members leave their kids with others and then visit international Team members.

Cohousing has sparked much interest lately. Pioneered in Denmark in 1972, cohousing consists of closely built individual homes and one common house, through which people learn to know and care about each other. In the common house, dinner may be shared seven nights a week, each person taking turns with preparation. This lowers food costs and frees time formerly dedicated to daily cooking. Common houses are used for childcare, guest rooms, exercise areas, community stores, etc. In cohousing design, cars are kept at the perimeter so that children and adults can play safely. Community space helps develop real support networks for young families and the elderly, radically decreasing the need to drive. Each resident serves on a task committee in lieu of professional management, cutting costs and increasing community involvement. The book outlines the basic steps

necessary to form a cohousing group. For more information contact The CoHousing Company, 48 Shattuck Square, Suite 15, Berkeley, CA 94704 (415) 549-9980.

ECHO (Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity) homes or "elder cottages" help you share your life with elderly relatives. In Amish communities, when the younger couples take over the farming, the elders move to a nearby small house and supervise the farm. Elder cottages are prefabricated homes similarly placed in the backyard of a family member, with installation costs of about \$18,000. The proximity encourages the sharing of meals, childcare, and social time without giving up independence and privacy. Those interested in ECHO housing can contact: Coastal Colony Corporation, 2923 Meadow View, Manheim, PA 17545.

Communes, condominiums, continuing care communities, life-care communities, enriched housing, cooperative housing, home-sharing, one-to-one sharing, intentional communities, small-group living and retirement communities are each covered from the view of present or past participants. This gives the reader a sense of which kind of community meets which needs.

The book cautions that community living isn't for everyone, it is "appropriate for anyone who enjoys being with people, communicates well with others, is flexible and open-minded, finds living alone unappealing, and who needs housing and companionship. People who are not right for shared living are those who are fussy, rigid, and demanding in their daily-life patterns", or who wish to remain so.

Primarily about the U.S., the book also covers community living in parts of Europe. The extensive bibliography and resource list provide detailed access to all kinds of community living. So... *don't be lonely anymore*, read this book!

Below: Jeu De Boules, Vence, Gwendolen Raverat, 1922.



Biotechnology

Biotechnology: An Activist's Handbook. 1991. Published by the Vermont Biotechnology Working Group. \$2 from Rural Vermont, 15 Barre St., Montpelier, VT 05602.

Agriculture's chemical revolution promised higher yields and fewer pests. But yields have reached a plateau. Insects and diseases evolve resistance to the pesticides. Increased use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers deplete our soils, pollute our waters and poison field workers. For the sake of short-term profit, practices that could preserve the land for future generations are forsaken.

The Handbook makes it clear that **Biotechnology's** agricultural promises may disguise even more subtle and dangerous economic and ecological unbalancing effects than the chemical revolution's. Biotechnology is a collection of related techniques, each based upon the successful simulation of basic biochemical and genetic processes. Some of the techniques, like test tube fertilization of eggs, are less dangerous than genetic engineering, the splicing of genetic material. Science can provide no exact means of predicting the reaction of a given natural system to genetically altered organisms, since it actively maintains complex equilibria. What kind of damage will occur before genetic engineering is carefully regulated? But more to the point, *why* take a technocratic approach to providing food when basic social problems, such as maldistribution of land, lie at the heart of modern hunger and population growth?

Even before the advent of direct genetic manipulation, introduced species had proven their ability to wreak havoc in native ecosystems. The disturbances are only rarely solved through the introduction of known predators, since they too react unpredictably to the new environment, and to human distribution. So what human agency could judge the safety of a totally new, genetically altered organism, one whose special-purpose genes will migrate and mutate into the entire biosphere?

One of biotechnology's most profitable products will apparently be **herbicide-tolerant plants** which allow increased herbicide use for weeds, without killing the plant itself. Combined marketing is intended for bioengineered seeds and pesticides that will not effect the resulting plant, making farmers even more dependent on chemical companies than they are today. Herbicide-tolerance may transfer, via cross pollination, into weedy relatives of the crop plants. The gene pool of untampered-with natural plants will become more shallow as resistance-engineered flora dominate the agricultural landscape.

Perhaps a more familiar biotech product is **Bovine Growth Hormone** (also known by its generic scientific name, Bovine Somatotropin). Daily injections of BGH into a cow, and into its high-energy feed, will increase milk yields 10-25%. The cow's immune system weakens, her fertility decreases, her mammary glands become painful and inflamed (mastitis), there is increased stress on her body

structure from extra udder weight, irritation at the point of injection, increased lactation failure and a proliferation of veterinarian bills. The calves she manages to birth have increased deformities. In the booklet one Minnesota farmer using BGH on his cows says, "See how thin she looks? She's working off all that flesh to produce milk." Approximately 200 to 400 herds in eleven states are testing BGH and are marketing the milk and meat, from these almost purposely diseased animals, *without warnings to consumers*.

No long term studies on the human health effects of the milk has been done. The altered nutritional quality of the milk (increased fat, decreased protein) and the increased levels of cell-stimulating factors, which could promote cancer in adults and premature growth and breast stimulation in infants, points at least to the need for regulation and labeling.

The similar **Porcine Growth Hormone** decreases a pig's back fat, making leaner meat. But the animals must be raised indoors or they'll be chilled. Indoor confinement increases the spread of disease and consequently antibiotic use. The maintenance costs are very high. Small farmers can't compete with big business using these technologies: it's just too expensive.

The Handbook states that regulations for releases of Genetically Engineered Organisms into the environment "have weak public information requirements and current laws lack standards for protection of workers or environmental monitoring." There have been cases of unsanctioned, illegal releases in Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas and several in California. Engineered organisms from "noncommercial" laboratories are exempt from regulation.

Medical biotechnology is touted as the means for solution of humanity's most difficult medical problems. Yet, medical biotechnology has little to offer in the majority of the world's health problems, which stem not from missing designer hormones but from poor diets, polluted water, lack of basic education and lack of medicine for treatable infectious diseases. In fact, the existence of a biotech economy hinders such basic health programs, since these cannot easily make the profit that biotech does, and so cannot find funding or capital. Biotechnology has produced a few products for a few people, such as the "first wave" which used bacteria to synthesize well-understood active substances such as insulin, blood clotting factor and human growth hormone. But often natural versions were available and comparably priced. And there is inevitable risk in genetically altered bacteria synthesizing human-*designed* hormones whose effect on people is less well understood than human-*discovered* ones.

The environmental, health and ethical problems related to biotechnology need to be addressed by government and by the people, via increased education and regulation. *The Handbook* is a great start and covers, in addition to what's above, biotech labs in low-income neighborhoods, biotechnology resisters, and municipal action.

RUSH

The non-profit *Responsible Urban Neighborhood Technology (RUNT)*, 3116 North Williams, Portland, OR 97227, works from an appropriate technology demonstration home, the **Elliot Energy House**. If you live in Portland, becoming a member (\$25, \$15 if you "live lightly") gets you use of the community meeting space, gives you permission to borrow books from the RUNT library, and puts you on a mailing list to receive notices of projects & events. *The Green City Working Group* for the Columbia-Willamette region meets here bi-weekly. Contact (503) 284-7868 about RUNT activities.

The Campaign to Oppose the Return of the Khmer Rouge (CORKR) is fighting against US foreign policy in Kampuchea. The US rebuilt the killing fields' armies and has now moved them into government, in order to make things difficult for Vietnam and move Indochina further towards export capitalism. Contact them (or contribute) at, 318 4th St., NE, Washington, DC 20002, phone: (202) 544-8446, fax: (202) 675-1010.

The **Asia Resource Center** (publishers of *Indochina Newsletter*, \$12/year) distributes videos, slide shows, books, magazines and exhibits on Asian problems. They also maintain an excellent speakers' bureau. Among the magazines they distribute are *AMPO*, the progressive English-language journal from Japan (\$28/year) and the opposition *Taiwan Communique* (\$12/year). Their slide shows include an exposé of a Dole pineapple plantation in Thailand, and of the regime in Burma. Videos on Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam, as well as a video on *Vietnamese* missing after the war, are available from: Asia Resource Center, P.O. Box 15275, Washington, DC 20003, (202) 547-1114.

Women Fight Back publishes the testimony of women discriminated against, harassed and ignored. It is sent to CEO's, the media and the government to put women's trials directly in front of the powerful people who continue to condone misogyny and objectification. Bundles of 100 are available for \$50 a month. Subscription \$36/12 issues. P.O. Box 161775, Cupertino CA, 95016.

The New Settler Interview is a pleasant monthly of Interviews with activists, members of the alternative scene and others in the communities along California's north coast. Always inquisitive and surprising, this is newsprint breakfast reading that really touches people. \$12.50 for 12 issues from: P.O. Box 730, Willits, CA 95490.

The Tide is a political action newsletter for environmentalists who want to lobby Washington, D.C. from home. For \$24/ year, you get a monthly newsletter stuffed with

congressional activity, fax numbers, and postcards on which your name is conveniently pre-printed. The Tide's publishers, *Gaia Communications*, want to reach people who feel that Washington is unmovable: enough letters can help stop some really horrendous legislation. 8205 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite #1-308, West Hollywood CA, 90046-5912, phone: (213) 654-3453, fax:(213) 937-0635.

The *Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center* is guiding a tour this March to the **Mondragon Cooperatives**. With sales of \$1.5 Billion last year, including the largest appliance producer in Spain, Mondragon is the largest nexus of worker-owned firms in the developed world, emerging in spite of Franco. Find out how they did it, and see first hand some of the problems with co-op capitalism. IJPC, 215 E.14th St., Cincinnati, Ohio 45210, phone: (513) 579-8547.

Rural Southern Voice for Peace (RSVP) teaches outreach techniques to anti-war groups. Their biggest success is the **Listening Project**, a lengthy interview that activists hold directly with those in the opposite camp, waylaying them for the survey in shopping malls and the like. **Depolarizing** techniques like this are demonstrably more effective than protests in certain situations, such as when jobs are at stake. Subscribe to their bi-monthly magazine for \$25/year to support their work, RSVP-FOR, 1898 Hannah Branch Road, Burnsville, NC 28714, phone: (704) 675-5933.

The Iowa Idea comes to us from Iowa City, where an openly socialist radical sits on the city council. The councilor, Karen Kubby, also writes for this monthly newsletter, and it's energizing to hear from someone fighting hard on the inside. The Iowa Idea is free (but donate something) from: Iowa Socialist Party, Box 924, Iowa City, Iowa 52244.

Small Town is a bi-monthly for anyone interested in small town health in the US. This important journal provides completely original research into local problem-solving, for \$30/year. From the Small Towns Institute, P.O. Box 517, Ellensburg, WA 98926, phone: (509) 925-1830.

Options Magazine is the progressive voice of Marin County, California. A quarterly steeped in regional politics and activism, it networks its readers to locals working on every ecological, peace and justice issue conceivable. *Very* lively. \$10/year from P.O. Box 580, Forest Knolls, CA 94933.

TRANET is the alternative movement's primary networking newsletter. The non-profit *Transnational Network for Appropriate Technology* produces a flood of succinct abstracts on events, opportunities, projects and literature, much like the few you see on these two pages. In fact, TRANET took on RAIN's subscription obligations during our 5-year break. The crucial bi-monthly is available for \$30/year, from Box 567, Rangeley, ME, 04970, (207) 864-2252.

Anarchy: The Journal of Desire Armed is packed with reviews of the alternative press, news of dicey activism, and radical dissection of almost everything. Among US journals in print, it is probably the least constrained in probing personal and social issues. The pulsing, collectively produced quarterly is \$12 for six issues from: C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO 65205-1446.

Every year **The Other Economic Summit** (TOES) holds an effective counter-summit to the infamous G-7 economic negotiations among leaders from the US, Japan, Great Britain, Canada, France, Germany and Italy. In this hemisphere they fight the mutually abusive free trade and GATT agreements, and provide big media with alternative economic proposals. Their 28-page quarterly newsletter comes with membership, \$30/year if you live in a G-7 country, \$20/year otherwise: TOES/Americas, P.O. Box 12003, Austin TX 78711, phone: (512) 476-4130, fax: (512) 476-4759.

The Left Business Observer is a favorite of ours: sharp, short and amusing. It tears into the workings of national and international capitalism, with an eye for current trends. One cannot find a more agreeable guide through enemy territory. Only \$20/year (11 issues). LBO, 250 W 85 Street, NY, NY 10024-3217, phone: (212) 874-4020.

In Portland, Oregon the *Institute for Science, Technology and Public Policy* is hosting a lecture by Nobel-winning chemist **Ilya Prigogine** on the necessary change from an artificial, deterministic theory of systems to one more sensitive to pervasive, active self-organization. Radical evolutionary biologist **Lynn Margulis** discusses the central role of cooperation in evolution. **March 6th** and **May 1st** respectively. Tickets from ISEPP, 1717 SW Park, Suite 1500, Portland, OR, 97201, phone: (503) 228-3999.

A conference entitled **EcoVillage: Planning for Sustainable Living** begins **April 30** at Cornell University. It's sponsored by the Eco-Justice Project, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, (607) 255-9240.

Co-op America's annual **Directory of Socially and Environmentally Responsible Businesses** lists over 500 national businesses who've shown commitment to something other than simple profit. For a copy, send \$2 to Co-op America, 2100 M Street NW #403, Washington, D.C. 20063. If you know a business who should be a member, have them call (800) 424-2667.

The staff at **Co-op America Quarterly** works hard both to ferret out sensitive businesses and alert us to exploitative ones. Although openly enthusiastic about working alternatives to capitalism, Co-op America's strength at the moment lies mostly in reforming certain sectors of the market economy. \$20/year from 2100 M Street NW #403, Washington, D.C. 20063.

Impact Visuals is a world-wide cooperative of photographers and graphic artists concerned about social issues. Their work is first-rate and topical. If you need artwork send \$15 for a yearly subscription to their monthly index, packed with timely photos from which you can rent a print for a reasonable fee. They have around 50 photographers in the US and 30 or so individuals scattered around the globe, as well as affiliated co-ops working from South Africa, Denmark, Brazil, England and the Netherlands. Besides the index, they also arrange assignments. For the index write Impact Visuals, 28 West 27 Street., Suite 901, NY, NY 10001, phone: (212) 683-9688, fax: (212) 725-8318.

Susan Meeker-Lowry's quarterly **Catalyst: Economics for the Living Earth**, is perfect for outreach, a highly personal look at positive work towards alternative economics. We'd recommend getting a subscription for anyone interested in environmental and community issues who needs a gentle, jargon-free introduction to rethinking capitalism. \$25/year from Catalyst, Box 1308, Montpelier, Vermont 05601.

Natural Life is a new name for the Canadian *Positive Vibrations*, an affable bi-monthly that searches for sustainable projects, movement lessons and appropriate ideas. The current issue touches on bicycle guerilla street theatre, the homesteading movement in British Columbia and cooperative games, and provides a guide to starting buyer's clubs. US \$24/year, Canada \$21/year from: The Alternative Press, 195 Markville Rd., Unionville, Ontario, L3R 4V8 Canada, phone: (416) 470-7930.

The software package **Risk Assistant** is designed to give everyone access to the Environmental Protection Agency's hazard standards for multiple substances under numerous scenarios. Rather than hiring an expensive consultant, or waiting five years for the government or a corporation to do it, you can produce a report on accumulated and specific risks to lend credence to your claims. Developed with government sponsorship, it costs around \$200 from: Thistle Publishing, P.O. Box 1327, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1327, phone: (703) 684-5203, fax: (703) 684-7704.

A round, snazzy, **high-end solar box cooker** is available for around \$200 from Synchronos Design, P.O. Box 10657, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87184, phone: (505) 897-1440. It looks classy enough to fit into an upper-middle class picnic, and in such a setting it might just get the wheels turning over the immediate potential of direct sunlight.



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From 16 to 48 pages. \$2 each (postpaid).

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\$5 each (postpaid):

Knowing Home: Studies for a possible Portland, 1981,
88 pages.

Vol. XIV, No. 1, Winter/Spring 1991 - Laos; Switzerland;
The Oregon Experiment Revisited. 48 pages.

**Complete set of everything on this page,
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Raindrops

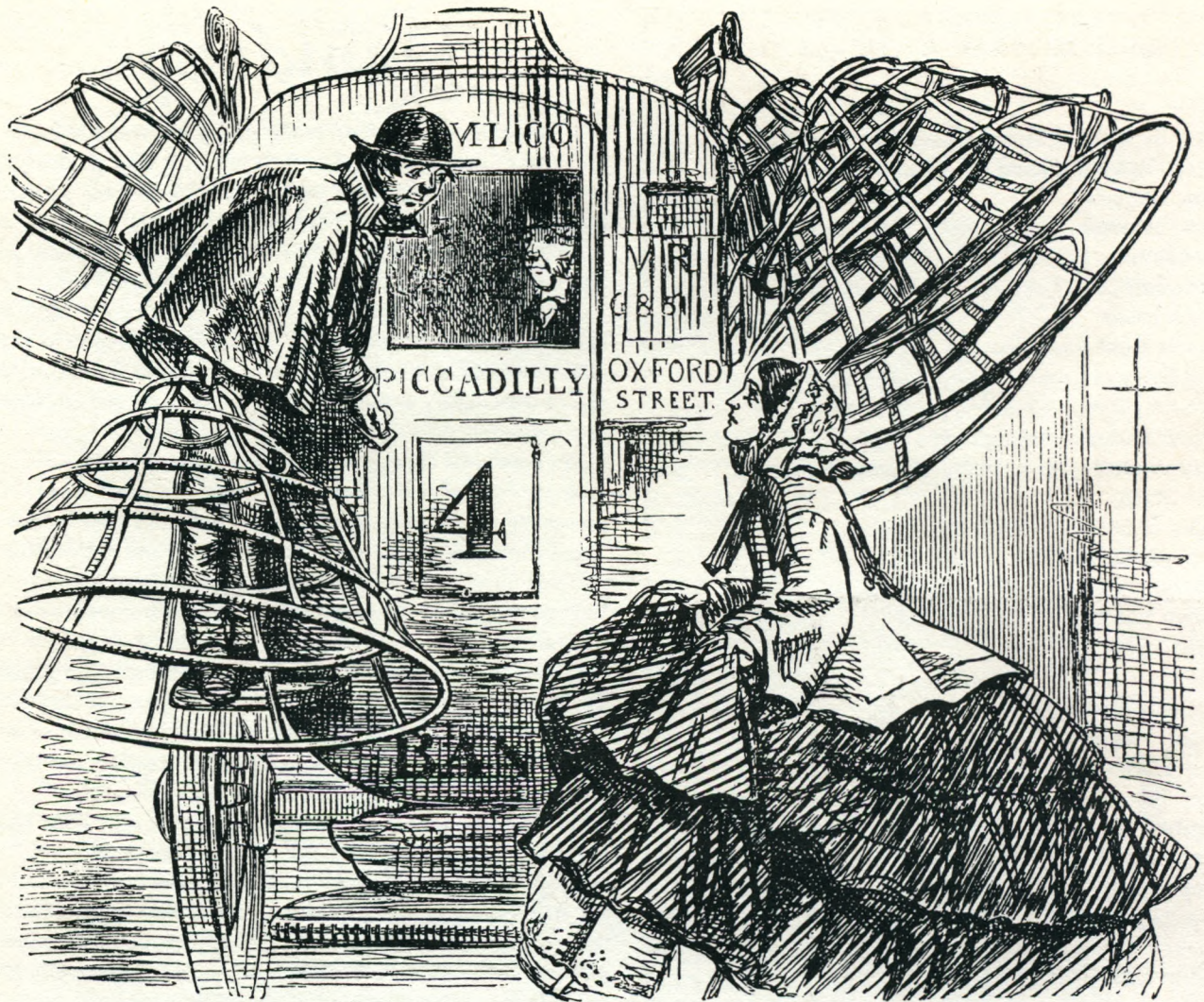
Given the current worldwide slump, these could be great times for organizers to reach out with radical ideas; but because of the slump there are no funds to do mass outreach. So now is the time for all the talk about mutual aid, low-cost neighbor-to-neighbor projects, cooperative development and alternative community economics to be put to the test.

Although the alternative economy in Eugene struggles to avoid established economics like it would have to in any other town, there are problems here that are rather unlike the rest of the country's. We have thousands of people interested in or experienced with worker's co-ops, buyer's co-ops, barter networks, energy efficiency and social justice projects, but they all saw some of the biggest and most promising programs disappear under Reagan's false Boom Years *cum* government cutbacks. Burn-out and skepticism rule just now, but this may soon turn around. On balance, Eugene is *lucky* to have significant remnants of an alternative infrastructure. We'll report on these in the future.

Rain is embarking on a project to create an Appropriate Technology school and neighborhood co-op organizing center. Our city is in a budget shortfall, and we're out to demonstrate that neighborhoods can administer themselves through direct democracy and face-to-face economic relations. We are getting involved in part because we'd like to further test the principles that we espouse, making us better able to report on good projects we run into. But we are also joining this project to get community support for doing a higher level of research into appropriate technologies and social models. Without such support, we would be unlikely to publish this much material on a quarterly basis, and we hope that our publishing will in return support all communities, not just our own.



Right: Workbike activist Jan VanderTuin (left) and Rain editor Danielle Janes discuss transportation alternatives.



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