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# THE TRUMPETER

*Voices From the*

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## **Toward a ReVisioning of Reality**

In the November 1984 *Harper's* magazine, Frederick Turner ("Escape from Modernism," pp. 47-55) writes of the change contemporary culture is undergoing, from an abstract Modernist approach to an organic, multi-dimensional, orientation. The technocratic philosophy we have been describing in these newsletters is a species of Modernism. Modernism holds the philosophy of reductionistic empiricism and technological supremacy. In the west Modernism has expressed itself in a variety of cultural forms, from the arts to engineering.

The underlying theme of the Modernist approach is that the world in itself is void of consciousness, value and meaning. All things, persons included, are reducible to their component parts (atomism) which obey neat, tight, fully determined, mechanistic laws. The world is treated only as resource, and values can be reduced to subjective, cultured human responses which are primarily emotive. These emotions are also explained by the Modernist reductively, i.e. in terms of social theory, but ultimately in terms of neuro-physiological entities and their function. Sociobiology reduces social processes to biological ones; chemistry reduces biological processes to chemical interactions; chemical interactions in turn can be reduced to the elements of physics. Physics, the Modernists thought, was the final line of reduction which would terminate with material objects, viz. atoms which interact only mechanically. Matter is inert stuff.

Contemporary physics has rejected this mechanistic picture. Matter disappears into energy and energy into light. The form and solidity of objects in the new vision, Turner says, is dictated by information. Information, of course, involves significant patterns and contexts of meaningfulness, otherwise it is not information, but only meaningless marks.

Turner says that the fundamental shift in ontology is nourished by theoretical physics, biology and other sciences. They are contributing to an emerging conception of reality which is radically different from the Modernist view. The movement is toward an outlook that is process and development oriented. It conceives reality as having order at many different levels, and this order is not incompatible with creativity and freedom. In fact, freedom and consciousness become part of the irreducible wholeness of reality and things. Aesthetic, moral and spiritual values are truly part of the sum total of reality. The world is not void of awareness, and creative human action is a paradigm of what evolutionary processes have produced. That those processes should have developed the human brain, with its built-in capacity to reward intimate love, creative thought, and artistic activity with "a natural high," tells us something, Turner thinks, about the kind of information that is encoded in our very genes. Although Turner does not explore this train of thought we can see one of its conclusions could be that love and learning are the two most progressive forces within us, which have their own reward, built-in by evolutionary forces. What does this tell

us about these forces and the reality they represent?

We must note here that frustration of learning and loving produce negative, sometimes demonic reactions, which are destructive and regressive. Some get endorphin rushes out of combat and aggression. This perception is reflected in the older Darwinistic, competitive paradigms of evolution, which are themselves under revision. (And which were, at least partially, projections of 19th century competitive, capitalist society.) Does our new knowledge of endorphin brain chemistry point toward an evolutionary ethic which holds that what is of value is development to higher states of integration and consciousness? As we know, the human organism thrives and enjoys life when it is growing, developing, and increasing in understanding. The pleasures of realizing optimum function of our higher faculties, Plato observed long before this chemistry was known, are unalloyed and pure. Virtuous action is its own reward. To act virtuously is to actualize our potential for wisdom, and this is good independent of the pleasure it gives us. That our bodies respond positively to virtue tells us something about nature, but clearly these positive states of consciousness are not reducible to chemical brain states. The ultimate realization of value is the ultimate pleasure; there are, however, corrupt pleasures, and pleasure is not the same thing as virtue.

In the new metaphysics that Turner discusses, matter is not dead, mechanical stuff, but a living energy, involved in a process of creative change and transformation of events and relationships, and through alteration of informational codes giving rise to new meanings. The underlying forms that decide the external, phenotypes of things that exist in the gross material world are themselves units of meaning which also reflect what they are in the biological, physiological, psychological, and so on, forms that they are, when alive with the flow of energy, and its concentration into stable patterns. They are more complexly laden with information the higher on the phylogenetic scale they are. In Turner's view, humans are among the most dense of all concentrations of information. Matter in the gross sense is only a reflection of the underlying information. Information requires meaningful patterns of context,

organization and story (purpose). Meaningfulness, in short, is to be found at the heart of reality. However, the way humans organize and use information is in part a culturally determined phenomenon. It could emphasize the aesthetic, or it could emphasize the purely economic. An ecological synthesis would integrate information around several themes in order to use it for practical ends and also to intensify our appreciation for a spectrum of natural intrinsic values.

The change in metaphysics we have described so far, although Turner does not note this, is compatible with the deep ecology, field-process conception of nature. For the follower of deep ecology, nature is a living, interrelated unity, whose relationships are not purely material and mechanistic, but also sensual, emotional, conceptual, valuational, developmental. Part of creating a new culture involves such a new vision with its associated conceptual maps. This work involves imagination, commitment and practical work. Practical work leads to new insights that feed the mind, but insight also comes in the context of reflection, contemplation, observation, meditation, and through ongoing philosophical inquiry. Part of the new culture will come from the context of art, where by art we mean aesthetics in the broad sense, including being able to appreciate values in nature and in other aesthetic contexts. Designing new practical objects and life styles involves dimensions of art.

For deep ecology, the aesthetic centre of nature, and its moral aspects, although separable in a logical sense, are different appearances of an underlying unity of value that permeates nature through and through. In contrast to Turner, deep ecology sees the re-animation (or re-enchantment) of the world as not requiring a projection onto nature of such "animate" devices as robots with "artificial intelligence," or "smart" toys, developed by exploiting the electrical bit handling capacities of the microprocessor.

The microprocessor, Turner writes, is like an icon, a symbol or a hieroglyph in that it pictures in its structure, what it at the same time does with electrical charges and information. This is one way to see it. However, a picture of an integrated circuit, also closely resembles the grid pattern of organization characteristic of modern

industrial cities, as seen from above. They too have three dimensional variations in energy density and organization. Both grid city and microchip reflect a certain pattern of thought which is characteristic of industrial organization (which reflects the stratified structures of chains of command in the military and government), modern formalism and logic, all of which are greatly different from the thought patterns of the primitive and the curvilinear patterns of nature. At another level, as a coding device used to manipulate electronically encoded information, the picture of the integrated circuit bears no direct correlation with the significance of the meaning of the codes that are embedded in the electronic forms (programs) which are maintained by the circuitry, when current flows through it.

Deep ecology does not project "living" artifacts in order to reconstruct the evolving world of nature. Deep ecology, and the general break with Modernism, sees the human presence as integral to the natural world. Humans will design new forms of activity appropriate to a natural world understood holistically in terms of a variety of meaningful ends.

The shift in metaphysics we have been describing, it must be cautioned, is not incompatible with the technocratic impulse which would make us ruler "experts" over nature and society from a centralized, domineering position. Yet Turner and others think that the very technology that we have created, as a result of competitive forces, will as a matter of course open to individual and community possibilities for a decentralization that will regain community responsibility for local destiny and bioregional place. This might result in enhanced ecosystem quality, economic stability and human development. However, there is no guarantee that the technological forms developed will promote these desirable ends and moral evolution. Unless carefully undertaken, the shift Turner describes could be just a translation into other words and patterns the modern technocratic paradigms that have distorted human authenticity and relationships with nature. A change is taking place, but to have a cultural shift in paradigms that is transformational will require practical action in order to bring about

a fundamental change not only in consciousness but in social relationships and cultural practices. We can act practically in part by carefully thinking through the options and possibilities before us in terms of the ecology of culture, nature and self. As Michael Marien has observed in "The Transformation as Sandbox Syndrome," (*Rain*, Nov/Dec 1984, pp. 4-9), a shift to positive paradigms will accomplish nothing, if these "paradigms" are merely idle ideals. We have to create new paradigms and enliven them in practical ways, in order to realize their fullest cultural expression.

On the horizon we can see development of miniaturized technologies that will place low cost, custom design of all sorts of flexible systems of production within the reach of small organizations and locales. (Miniaturization is a natural process. It has practical thermodynamic value. It can maintain a valuable pattern while lessening its potential negative effects.) Properly designed such systems would have minor ecological impacts. These systems have great promise especially in the area of commodity production. In new, decentralized economic processes, art, service and entertainment will play alternative and expanded roles. New forms of avocation will develop, along with a re-visioning of work.

If it is to achieve low impact globally, a sound ecological approach will require that we solve massive problems connected with debt, population imbalances, misuse and under use of human talents, maldistribution of basic survival resources, widespread lack of means of livelihood, illiteracy, social disintegration, and most urgently the problem of ecocidal, nuclear war, whether intentional or accidental. All of these require major change in our thinking and practices. The environmental damage now being caused by conventional technologies is of grave international proportions. This is clear from such indicators as the death of forests in Europe and elsewhere, desertification, destruction of soils, pollution of air and water, acidification of lakes and streams, depletion of fisheries, increases in environmental diseases, and so on. The global character of these problems will require new forms of international order for their solution. Perception of the nature of the

problems related to the destruction of nature is now conveyed synoptically in new interdisciplinary theories and approaches, and graphically in such films as "Koyanisqatsi" and "The Gods Must be Crazy."

The paradigm shift we have been discussing in Volume I of **The Trumpeter** is consistent in basic metaphysics with the shift Turner describes in **Harpers**. However, he does not undertake to connect this with a new ecophilosophy or new paradigms for culture. He does not discuss ecosophy. In contrast, we have been attempting to gain perspective on the spectrum of major philosophies of nature. We have seen that from a broad perspective the older paradigms and world views are exemptionalist, that is, they exempt humans from natural, ecological constraints (in terms of their behaviour toward nature), because humans are thought to possess certain outstanding traits (intelligence) that make them exceptional and place them above nature.

The consequences of the exemptionalist paradigms of modern materialism or Modernism, are basically an exploitation oriented approach to human and natural relationships. It is that approach that we now want to temper and ultimately transform into an ecologically sound and humane one. At stake is nothing less than human survival. The perceived hostile nature of the world is primarily a projection of a "civilized" imagination's fear of losing control, which it tries to overcome by creating powerful but dangerous technologies. What we as moderns fear most, however, is other humans, other nations, who (we imagine) possess the technological power and the desire to invade, enslave or even destroy our way of life. And given modern technology, further increases in power run beyond the limits of security because they themselves become the primary threat to human survival. It is not nature that threatens human survival, but humans themselves. As Pogo said, "We have seen the enemy and he is us." Humans **are** exceptional in that they can consciously choose new cultural forms of life that are ecosophic. We are culture creating beings. We do not have to act mechanically, but can alter our cultural patterns. When patterns become maladaptive or are threats to survival, they must be changed.

The central problem for ecophilosophy

is how to develop a new ecological synthesis and new cultural practices that preserve abiding values, bring together a flowering of science, art and spiritual disciplines, and in turn give rise to appropriate technologies. This new culture should allow all to participate in its creative activities. The world will be experienced as deeply rich in every dimension that we can categorize: Aesthetic, moral, spiritual, psychological, physiological, biological, and so on. The new synthesis would bring together the best knowledge from these areas.

Contemporary specialism rests on a prior division of labor. Such a division can yield positive results, but ultimately, only if its findings are returned to form a more comprehensive, coherent view of the way the world (including human nature and nature) hangs together and works. Such a synthesis requires art as a unifying activity which would give this new synthesis its needed, unique, communal and personalized forms. The art of creating new cultural forms and themes has the character not only of science, but also of drama, festival and story. Celebrations of both individual and communal responsibility in relation to nature must become part of a new pagentry designed through broad citizen participation. A new ecological culture will define progress not only in material terms, but also in terms of aesthetic, moral and spiritual growth.

The Modernist approach defined progress primarily in terms of material measures. It makes progress in understanding the world by means of its division of labor which promotes knowledge required for prediction and practical action. Now we must use all of the fruits of this division of labor to create a whole and nourishing diet of knowledge within a vision of enlarged ends. The aim is to better understand the world **as a whole**, and as a result to recognize the maladaptive character of some of our cultural practices. We also want to develop activities which actualize human potentials, which are now being redefined in expanded ways by transpersonal psychology.

The results of our division of labor in knowledge must be reunified as a comprehensive understanding of life, which includes in its cosmology this new vision of human possibilities. Our

cultural adaptation to the world, as we more deeply understand it, must be a product of our best and deepest knowledge, intuitions, insights, and imagination. Such a re-visioning implies an enlarged conception of human knowing (a new epistemology). What is also required for such an ecophilosophical synthesis is the emergence of a deeper ecological sensibility. From the synthesis of our knowledge of nature we gain a sense of nature, and with our emotional, aesthetic, moral and spiritual responses (not reactions) we deepen in sensibilities and gain "a sense of the cosmos".

So far in **The Trumpeter** we have sketched a spectrum of attitudes toward nature based on their degree of separation or union with it. We have explored the conceptual topography of ecophilosophy. We now have some conception of the range of possible philosophies of nature that could (and do) inform the design of life styles, shelters, technologies, farming practices, festivals, arts and so on. We have reviewed Arne Naess's characterization of deep ecology and ecosophy and have added details drawn from other writers and from our own imaginations. In **The Trumpeter** we have noted that we will take deep ecology to represent a way, an approach, a form of inquiry, a means to deepen appreciation, related to better understanding nature in ourselves and in other beings. It is not a finished philosophy or a doctrine. It is an activity of deepening perception and appreciation of the intrinsic values of nature. This, of course, gives rise to a positive social movement and to certain precepts, slogans and mottos. Viewed as an activity involving inquiry and appreciation, deep ecology inquiry could transform our sensibilities in the required ecological direction.

An important insight of ecological consciousness is that reality is interrelated in many different ways and on many different levels. Human ecology, for example, includes each dimension of significance in human life. Thus, we cannot separate religion from ecology, nor patterns of attitudes from human emotions, and their effects on nature. These are all interrelated. Our total being and cultural processes determine the form of our interactions with nature, as a society. As Simon Weil observed, we tend to treat each other as we treat

nature and vice versa. Albert Schweitzer made the same observation in his reverence for life ethics. Our society in practice tends to reduce the value of every thing (even humans) to economic measures. But the many selves of nature are more than producing and consuming "units."

The self is like a miniature society, a miniature ecosystem, which functions in all of the same dimensions as the social organism. All of these interact in various ways in biospheric contexts. To see the world in this neo-organistic way is closer in spirit to Whitehead and Spinoza than to either the organicism of Social Darwinism, or that of atavistic cults. It has many affinities with the organicism of the primitive or primal mind. (Etymologically "primitive" means "original" or "first". We do not use the term here as a pejorative. The primitive is the oldest form of human culture as represented by many hunting and gathering societies.)

The primal (original) mind is aesthetic in its interactions with nature. As in the new ecological consciousness, it approaches nature in a synoptic way, not as fragmented parts, but as a significant, meaningful, organic whole. It is able to hold all of these meanings together in one whole consciousness both conceptually and through a visionary process. It is simultaneously aware of levels of significance, process and development. A tree, e.g., can be seen as an object, but it can also be seen as an aesthetic and integral element (and as a natural process) of a larger tapestry, which is part of the great spirit of natural beauty that animates ritual and ceremony celebrating nature's great art. (Think of the many levels of meaning inherent in the symbolism of the tree, e.g. family tree, tree of knowledge, etc., of the tree as part of an ecological community, and of the tree itself.) Nature's meanings and human understanding of them are literary, and the oldest literary forms are spoken stories. Stories integrate many diverse meanings in an artistic, dramatic and thematic way. The scientific approach unifies via mathematically expressible principles. They too have a beauty. Both the primitive mind and the new ecological mind are directly open, through story, to both a metaphoric, and an immediate experiential grasp of the architecture of

consciousness and the nature of reality. The modern mind is closed almost completely to these meanings, because all of its knowledge is mediated by reduction to literal, mechanistic materialism, and to static, formal structures, whose elements have no value or meaning in themselves.

For the primitive, and for a neo-primitive ecological sensibility, what we call the artistic, religious, scientific and technical are part of a unified way of life in each person as well as the culture as a whole. The sacred and the humorous are part of a whole celebratory process. For the mind of Modernism these are divided into separate components. The result is that the modern mind perceives the world as meaningless fragments. It cannot find the significance of its parts. The modern mind has the elements but sees not their full context. The elements and symbols on a map, get their meaning from the context, from the map as a whole, and through what it represents, such as land forms and human constructions. The parts only have function and meaning in relation to the whole. Thus Modernism is a captive of its own materialistic and atomistic mythology precisely because it believes myths are prescientific descriptions of the world which require analysis and reductive explanation. In this process their broader significance is lost. Modernism does not see that its own approach is based on myth, viz. the myth of the finality of the approach of reductive atomism and the myth of the machine. A central problem for the new culture will be the creation of new intentional myth in order to create a new intersubjective community based upon deep understanding of the ecology of reality. Many advertisers, TV programers, writers and film producers are involved in the creation of (unintentional) myth, and often in a negative sense. Such myth is fantasy and is manipulative. It is not created through participation, and in many cases reinforces or perpetuates confusion and emotional immaturity. A new conception of the "human story" will evolve with an expanded ecological consciousness.

In summary, here is an outline comparison of the features of Modernism, with those of an emerging ecophilosophical consciousness:

**Modernism:** 1. Reality is not personal; 2. Its order is the result of deterministic laws; 3. Humans can understand the laws governing this order; 4. Mastering this understanding leads to mastery of nature through technological design which aims to maximize utilities; 5. All meanings are reducible to one level which in itself has no significance; 6. Nature has only instrumental resource value and no meaning.

**Emerging Ecological Consciousness:** 1. Reality is personal and ordered; 2. This order is the result of multi-dimensional interrelationships of multitudes of conscious beings, each of whom strives for completion; 3. Fulfillment is found in continuous development and in authentic being; 4. Mastery of self is the key to appropriate design; 5. The powers of nature are in us and understanding nature's significance is possible only with the total unification of our powers for scientific, spiritual, aesthetic, moral and practical understanding; 6. Nature has inherent value and meaning.



#### **Anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism**

A new ecological synthesis points toward development of non-anthropocentric conceptions of nature. The followers of deep ecology think that this is a necessity, if we are to survive and to realize the best of human possibilities. The issue of anthropocentrism has recently been the focus of a disagreement between George Sessions and Henryk Skolimowski.

Sessions reviewed Skolimowski's book **Ecophilosophy** (see vol I, #2 of **The Trumpeter**) in **Environmental Ethics** 6 (1984), pp.167-74, and Skolimowski has replied to Sessions in **Environmental Ethics** 6, "The Dogma of Anti-Anthropocentrism and Ecophilosophy,"

(1984), pp. 283-288. (In this issue is also an article by Arne Naess, "A Defence of the Deep Ecology Movement" (pp. 265-70) which answers by way of a response to R. A. Watson's criticisms of deep ecology, some of Skolimowski's criticisms of Sessions. Naess points out that there is an important difference between the slogans of a movement and propositions in an academic theory. These have to be applied and evaluated in quite different ways. Some of the "principles" of deep ecology represent slogans of a movement, which from a theoretic perspective are not final.) The issue between Sessions and Skolimowski appears to be whether or not anthropocentrism is necessarily a bad thing (Sessions thinks that it is), and whether deep ecology is mistakenly founded on anti-anthropocentrism (Skolimowski thinks that it is).

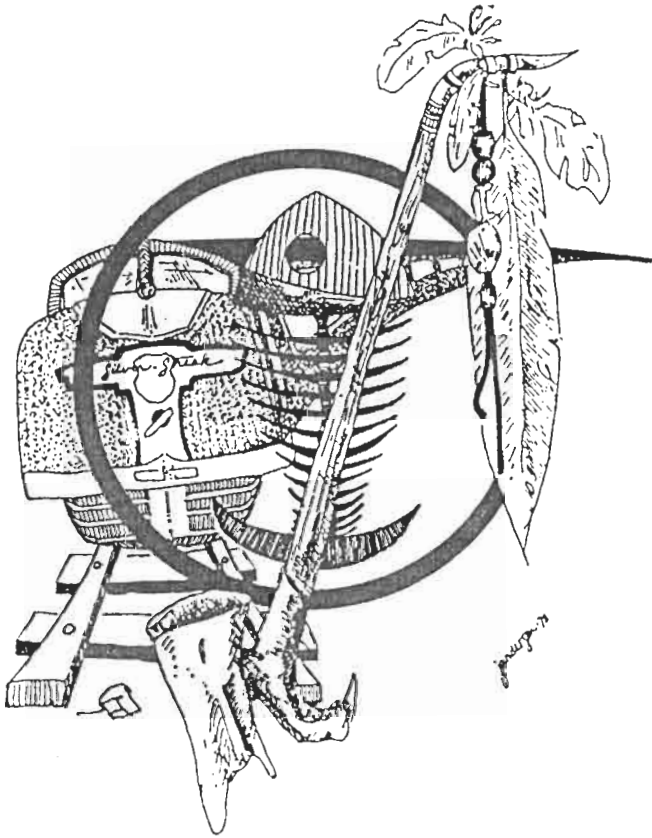
It is clear from his review that Sessions admires much that is in Skolimowski's book. He thinks that Skolimowski gives a very good diagnosis of the major problems for environmental philosophy, and also that he gives a good analysis of how the problems developed historically. He probably approves of Skolimowski's conception of reverential thinking in relation to nature, and his outline of the main features of a sound ecophilosophy.

However, Sessions disagrees with what he sees as implied by some of Skolimowski's positive recommendations for a new ecological humanism. Some of these echo Teilhard de Chardin's views on human destiny in relation to evolution. From this perspective our place in the biological scheme is at the top. This, Sessions thinks, can be too easily used to justify the development of technologies which will attempt to control evolution (algeny). Skolimowski, however, could deny that he would support algeny, for given the spiritual orientation of his ecophilosophy he could say that humans, as one of the most highly evolved forms of intelligence on the Earth, have a responsibility to allow other beings to flower in their own way. (If we help a pod of beached whales back into the ocean are we interfering with evolutionary forces? It could be argued that compassion is one of the highest forms of consciousness that evolution realizes.)

Sessions is also critical of Skolimowski's positive comments on Solari's controlled habitats. In Sessions's view, these totally designed living spaces isolate or separate humans from nature. For Sessions the negative features of the two contentious matters mentioned above are a result of an anthropocentrism that Skolimowski's book does not fully escape. Skolimowski does not dispute whether there is anthropocentrism here, but whether it is incompatible with a sound environmental ethic. Sessions thinks that to be fully compatible with human survival and progress requires a non-anthropocentric orientation, and this leads to a practical ethic. This ethic entails that we live close to and in harmony with nature as companions. It involves humility. We cannot assume that we know what is best for other organisms. As species they are not at our disposal. We must respect their ways.

The non-anthropocentrism we have so far attributed to Sessions does not compel him to accept, as Skolimowski claims, that the life of a mosquito is at least as important as the life of a human being. Nor is Sessions compelled to accept Skolimowski's claim that his position, and therefore deep ecology in general, attempts to base its philosophy on a negative principle, namely, anti-anthropocentrism. Sessions and other deep ecologists, so far as I can determine, urge that we look at the world in a non-anthropocentric way. Skolimowski claims that we cannot do this, for we can only think, perceive and act as humans. This is logically true, for we **are** humans. But humans, we note, are beings with a large capacity to empathetically enter and understand the world of other beings. Such art and imagination are not fantasy. In fact this capacity would be compatible with Skolimowski's observations about our state of development as one of the most complete and fully organized forms of life that evolution has created. Within our very organism are elements of the forms of life which preceded us and which are found in the wide spectrum of beings around us. The mammalian and reptilian brains are still deeply embedded in our conscious and unconscious processes. For ecopoets and deep ecologists an Earth consciousness lies deeply within us. As

Plato observed, each of us knows (in our entire being) far more of the Earth and harmonious living, than we are consciously aware that we know. But, he also observed, this knowing, to be conscious, has to be activated. The problem of education is how to activate this self originating, creative process of learning.



### Primitive and NeoPrimitive

The human child is naturally creative. In watching a child grow from birth through the early years one cannot but be amazed by their intuitive and creative capacities. The interest and intense concentration they give to the natural world is not something that we have to teach them. It is something that they quite naturally have. We have only to provide them with opportunities to discover things by enriching the home with possibilities similar to those found in the natural world. The native responses of children to the natural world have many points of contact with the primal mind. The primal mind is at the heart of many primitive cultures. The nature of the primitive ("original" or "first") will now be described.

Stanley Diamond (*In Search of the Primitive*, Transaction Books, New York, 1981) points out that civilization, i.e. urban societies, have always felt a need

to define the primitive in order to understand their civilization in contrast to it. In most cases, the primitive human has been seen as inferior to the civilized person. Modern civilization has defined this inferiority in relation to its own ideas of progress. As Modernists we think that the primitive's future is our past, and eventually our present. If they do not adopt modern culture and technology, they will make no progress. To be sure, not every modern thinker has seen it in this way, for some have seen the primitive as representing a superior form of human life to the alienated, self divided and conflicted state of persons in modern industrial society. In some cases the primitive has served as an example of the whole, natural, complete (ecologically sound) human life. The neoprimitive mind might be our future in a new ecological synthesis.

Stanley Diamond, with great insight, has accurately described the main features of the primitive person and culture. His description of primitive culture demands our full attention. Before we turn to this, let us note that civilizations have enduring dialectical conceptions of the nature of wilderness as well as the primitive. The primitive human, after all, is thought to live in the wilderness, that is, the wild-ness of nature. "Primitive" is often equated with "wild" and "uncivilized", which of course it is not. Nature is perceived as wild, untamed and filled with hostile forces, which it is not.

To imagine the other as untame is both threatening and attractive, especially to the modern mind. The civilized human has often feared all that was alien to, or other than what was perceived to be civilized; but what it meant to be civilized in that particular culture was rarely understood. The form of life it represents is taken for granted, since it defines the experienced reality. However, the imagined wildness of the primitive is also attractive as symbolizing freedom from the complex problems of a society that is depersonalizing. This is one reason we need a perspective that shows the natural contrast to the "civilized" state. As Diamond rightly observes, we can understand the nature of modern civilized life, only if we can get some basis for comparison to what it is not, and part of the problem is to see the other as it is, not as we have been led by preconceptions to believe it might be.



We have a compelling need to understand and to define the primitive and the wilderness, for they provide necessary orientation points for the new maps of cultural reality we must draw.

Quoting from Diamond, here are the main features of primitive culture as revealed by kinship systems:

1. Good nurturance. The infant's psycho-physiological contact with a "mothering one" is both extensive and intensive. ...

2. Many-sided, engaging personal relationships through all phases of the individual's life cycle, further developing and strengthening the sense of self, and others, for these are reciprocal processes. This dynamic, multi-layered sense, and actuality, of self, cannot be understood in the one dimensional terms of "ego" psychology; the primitive self cannot be reduced to an ego but is the result of a hierarchy of experiences, incorporated into an increasingly spiritualized being as maturation proceeds from birth through the multiple rebirths symbolized in the crisis rites....

3. Various forms of institutionalized deviancy. These have the effect of accommodating idiosyncratic individuals to the group while permitting unconventional behavior. In such cases the deviant... does not become a social derelict....

4. The celebration, and fusion, of the sacred and the natural, the individual and society, in ritual. Through ritual life culminates in the form of drama; social and existential anxieties are creatively used.

5. Direct engagement with nature and natural physiological functions. Thus the sense of reality is heightened to the point where it sometimes seems to "blaze." It is at this point that the experiences of the primitive and the mystic converge, for mysticism is no more than reality, perceived at its ultimate subjective pitch.... Merely filthy or nasty attitudes about natural functions are rare---although broad, even wild (trickster) humor---is commonplace....

6. Active and manifold participation in culture. This, together with the preceding, contributes to feelings of individual worth, dignity and competence.

7. ... (T)he natural environment is perceived more esthetically than is commonly the case in civilization.

Artisanship is highly prized and widespread among primitives; the continuous contact with finely and individually made everyday objects helps to make personal, and charge with meaning primitive surroundings....

8. Socio-economic support as a natural inheritance. Conversely stated, socio-economic risk is equitably distributed throughout society. Therefore, no crippling anxieties or doubts about personal worth derive from that fundamental source. This, in addition to all preceding points, explains the minimal occurrence, or absence, of civilized types of "crime" in primitive society." (pp. 170-171)

A few pages later Diamond observes: "The vision of Man that resolves out of close study of primitive society is clearly the antithesis of Man in maximally politicized civilizations, such as our own. We may put the matter as follows---differential social existence actualizes certain potentials of being and nullifies others. Moreover, each quality has its negative. Where we, as noted no longer ritualize our cultural existence, except through the residual, passive-defensive and compulsive means metaphorically documented by Freud, they, the primitives, symbolize their personal perception and mastery of their environment through rituals that renew human, social, and natural existence. The potential negative in the primitive experience is the denial of nature as a paradigm of processes of which Man is a manifestation, but perhaps not the center. The negative of our notions of science is in Man splitting himself into object and observer, and the concomitant loss of the person as an integrated subject, as a partner in a universe of persons." (p. 174)

The implications of Diamond's observations for the problem of creating new cultural forms that are ecosophic are quite clear. How can our new cultural synthesis draw from this understanding of primitive life positive features needed to realize a better human culture? We are seeking genuine transformation, i.e. movement to a culture that is harmonious with our natural needs as revealed by primitive culture.

Today modern technological culture is moving away from mechanical technologies, to hybrid devices and then to logical, electronic forms of technology. (There is

also the bionic, which is just developing; it is too early to tell what forms it will take, although we can hazard some good guesses.) The watch serves to illustrate this. The technological revolution of modern industrial society became possible with the development of clocks. Clocks were first purely mechanical and were powered by counterweights and/or main springs. Then they were built using electric power in place of springs. Today there are clocks that are fully electronic. They have no moving parts, and they can store and display a wealth of information.

The complexity of the modern social technostructure is reflected in part in the complexity of microprocessor and computer system organizations. The technostructure produces highly complex interconnected systems whose extremely technical devices are simple to operate. So simple to operate will they become that they will be part of a new environment which will have almost as much mystery to most of us, as nature has for the primitive. (This has been well illustrated in countless science fiction and other stories of people moved from one context to the other. In familiar settings we take a lot for granted.) The neoprimitive confronts the mystery inherent in both the technostructure and in nature, neither of which can be fully understood in detail, but only in terms of relationships between wholes and significant patterns of activity and process. The problem for the ecophilosopher is how to re-vision the world to contain this awareness of mystery and join it to the mystery of nature, so that both enter into a unified drama in which all players have understandable roles. The emerging technostructure (like nature) is so information dense that it can be assimilated fully only at the level of archetypal themes.

Diamond puts the problem of a new cultural synthesis to philosophical anthropologists in the following way: "The problem, and it remains the central problem of anthropology, is to help conceptualize contemporary forms that will reunite man with his past, reconcile the primitive with the civilized, making progress without distortion theoretically possible, or, at least, enabling us to experience the qualities that primitive peoples routinely display. This, in turn,

demands innovation of the highest order, even if nourished on despair, innovation equivalent to the genius that one detects, for example, behind the kinship paradigms of primitive people." (p. 175) Innovation involves actualizing the creative and mysterious dimensions of nature and spontaneous intelligent human action. The neoprimitive brings the science of modern life into personal synthesis with the primal drama.



Let us consider some examples of visions of primitive and neoprimitive in contemporary culture. These are illustrated in such films as "Never Cry Wolf" and "The Gods Must Be Crazy." In "Never. . ." the modern, urban, scientific mind, Tyler, descends to the wilderness to study wolves. He carries within him fears of the wild and the alien. There he encounters the primal mind in the Inuit, Uteck, and then makes contact with the mysterious presence of consciousness (wolf) in nature. In relation to civilization the scientist's return to nature leads him to see the returning representatives of urban society as alien. Uteck's mythic, literary understanding of the wolf as kinder spirit carries the same basic understanding of the wolf (and cariboo) that the scientist himself is led to, except for the scientist aspects of this can be objectified in measurement. Nonetheless, his research also becomes a personal vision quest close in spirit to that of the primitive or primal mind (culture). The film ends with the two representatives of the respective cultures playing, learning a new game together, viz. juggling.

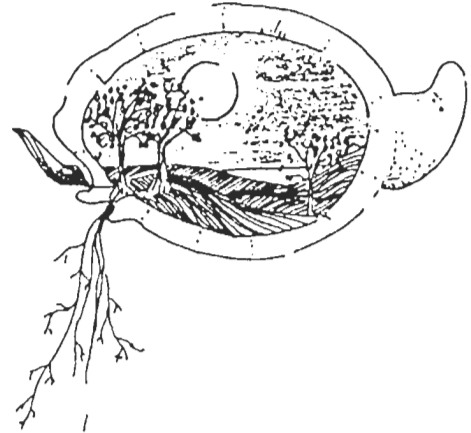
In "The Gods Must Be Crazy," scientist and primitive also meet, and their adventure is one of cooperation against the alien (revolutionary and urban) threat from outside the primitive setting of nature. The main character is a Kalahari Bushman named Xi, who finds an alien object, a Coke bottle, in the desert. It becomes a divisive thing in his otherwise peaceful, playful, gentle extended family. Xi decides to take the bottle back to the Gods, which ultimately

leads him to "the edge of the world", where he tosses the bottle off a sheer cliff into a mist shrouded valley. His adventures with the scientist occur enroute. The film shows the dramatic contrasts between the people of the Kalahari, with their quiet way of life in nature, and the frenetic life of modern urban dwellers. The contrast is humorous and painful it is so extreme. The scientist, Andrew, as a field microbiologist has gone back into nature, and although he uses some of the most up to date scientific equipment, his jeep is a wreck (the culture of the machine is in decay). He seems to have little knowledge of how to make it function properly. His trusty assistant, Mpudi, is a jack of all trades mechanic who can cope with both bushman language and disintegrating jeep. (There is a similiar intermediary in "Never".) When the chips are down the scientist and the Bushman rescue hostages from the revolutionaries by using their respective skills and knowledge related to nature. They carry out the rescue without serious casualties on either side. Their cooperative encounter produces nothing but positive results. The film manages to visually convey the spectrum of human adaptations to nature, running from simple hunting and gathering, then basic agriculture, next mechanical competence and finally highly technologized modern society.

In David James Duncan's **The River Why** the main character, Gus, is led back to his original (primal) mind by submerging himself in the river and in the quest for its fish. He catches more than fish. He returns to the original, natural mind of nature within himself, by being totally immersed in nature. In "Starwars" (and this was also a recurring theme in the "Startrek" TV series) there is, in a sense, a reverse movement, viz. to bring the primal consciousness into the technostructure. Some of that structure is animated by "friendly", interactive robots, but the primal rituals connected with mastering "the force" have nothing to do with the technostructure. It (the technostructure) becomes a backdrop for the romantic, heroic tale. Technology becomes subservient to spontaneous, intuitive, human intelligence. Finally, Paul Shepard's book **The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game** provides a theoretical description of a neoprimitive consciousness.

## The Elements of Cultural Synthesis

I. Profound changes are in progress in our central conceptions of reality. This cultural shift should not (and probably cannot) be engineered, or controlled through centralized manipulation. Let us hope that the new organicism is not just a different verbal form of underlying social mechanism. We hope that the movement to a new, organic, ecological paradigm will avoid the atavism and irrationality of some older forms of organicism. It must know the essential contexts of its bioregions.



The development of a new ecological synthesis and a new ecological sensibility involves the following creative objectives: 1. A new metaphysics or conception of reality that involves the perception of its interrelational fields and processes, and that does not separate dimensions of value from that total reality; 2. A new conception of knowing and understanding that includes forms of wisdom and intuitive sources of knowing that are not merely reducible to bits of sensory data; 3. A new conception of the human place in the Great Chain of Being that embraces all of nature, including human life in its fullest development, i.e. a new vision of the total ecological context; 4. New conceptions, methods and activities for drawing together art, science and spiritual disciplines as comprehensive and creative responses that actualize widening patterns and spheres of meaning and significance; 5. The development of new, and the revitalizing of old, methods and practices for fully developing all dimensions of the human person, as a process of life-long learning; 6. The creation of new forms or cultural

practice and exchange that reintroduce significant ritual into various dimensions of our daily lives, especially those that involve work, economics and production; 7. Finally, the creation of new cultural mythic forms, stories, festivals and celebrations that give all persons in our culture a full sense of participating in our deepest understanding of the mysteries of nature and the sense of human life. (See Dolores LaChapelle's **Earth Wisdom**, Finn Hill Arts, Silverton (1978), for illuminating discussions of symbols, rituals and celebrations in relation to number 7.)

These are some of the major tasks for ecophilosophy. In future issues we will explore how ecophilosophy can contribute to new forms of practice in a variety of contexts such as wilderness studies and travel, farming, design of technology, forms of self discipline, and so on.

II. In broad perspectives we can say that the wisdom of the **Old Ways** is the wisdom embedded in the primitive mode of life as Diamond describes it. Its wisdom is an ecosophy which produces a social order that serves individual needs at the same time as it provides a sound basis for community. It does not separate the human player from the human worker, nor the sacred from the profane. It is a unified approach to the world in which higher levels of meaningfulness are celebrated as central to the sense of life. In the **Middle Period**, we have the way of the agricultural order that reached its maturity in ancient times around 500-200 B. C. It was here that the perennial wisdom developed from an understanding embedded in the forms of mysticism central to the beginnings of almost every major world religion (most of which developed during this era). The Old Ways involve forms of (nature) mysticism which have points of contact with the mysticism of the perennial wisdom. The wisdom of the **Modern Way** is that it provides a new beginning growing out of the loss of the perennial wisdom, as a culturally vital practice, and the degeneration of its external forms into religious dogma and superstition, often in conflict with direct observations. The rise of modern science and humanism emphasized the necessary role of human reason, experimentation, and observation to gain an **effective** understanding of the world. The Old Ways also have elements of this intense observational orientation.

But the modern mind developed this into more and more specialized, intellectual, and abstract forms which it reified and then projected upon itself as a civilization. Modern forms fragmented not only science and art but society and person as well.

The detailed knowledge of nature and the technological power that results from the Modernist approach now forces us to confront the limits of its orientation. From the vantage point of the end of the Modern Way, we can look forward to **New Ways**, perhaps a neoprimitive culture, where "primitive" implies nothing rude or crude, but rather emphasizes the features we have outlined, along with other primal elements of human nature. Its priorities would be creation and maintenance of cultural forms that speak to all of our concerns. If cultural forms do not intelligently cultivate complete human development, then many will seek substitute gratifications and fulfillments in pseudo sciences, superstition, cults and the like, or withdraw into depression, despair and nihilism. Having a clear understanding of the realms of fulfillment possible, we will have reason for hope, and hope is a condition for positive response.

#### Further Reflections on Ecopoetry

In the last **Trumpeter** there was a brief description and some samples of ecopoetry. Here are some observations by Gary Snyder that are a perfect addition to what was said then. Snyder once said: "As a poet I hold the most archaic values on earth. They go back to the Paleolithic: the fertility of the soil, the magic of the animals. The power-vision of solitude, the terrifying initiation and rebirth, the love and ecstasy of the damned, the common work of the tribe. (new paragraph) There is a level of mind which must be distinguished from the purely ecstatic, where the most immediate and personal perceptions fuse with the archetypal and ritual relationships of human society to the universe. Poetry made from here is not "automatic," but it is often effortless; and it does not exclude the pleasure of occasional intellectual ingenuity and allusion. My best poems flow from such a state; they have... a tendency... toward exploring the architecture of consciousness." (As quoted by Diamond, op.

cit. p. 173) This statement seems a perfect description of that creative, receptive, yet active state that is ecosophic. When one is in that state the poetry that emerges quite naturally is ecopoetry. It is filled with the imagery of the Earth, not only as one imagines it, but also **as it is** in itself, and as it is in us in the deepest recesses of the self, which includes all of nature at the trans-historical level. Consciousness is not limited to the narrow historical ego. (Microcosm and macrocosm reflect one another.)



### Consciousness and Literalized Metaphor

I. Contemporary transpersonal psychologies seek to understand the larger self and the trans-human, naturalistic basis of the deepest forms of subconscious, conscious and supraconscious life. These are revealed in many different ways. Transpersonal psychology attempts to understand the whole spectrum of development open to humans, from the prepersonal stages of dependency to personal independence and finally to transpersonal interdependence. It seeks to uncover the meanings of various practices and symbols in terms of this spectrum of development. This spectrum shows up in various literary forms and can be manifest in our ready choice of metaphor and analogy and in a large variety of totemic and other ritual practices and spiritual disciplines. One of the pitfalls of the modern mind is that it tends to literalize metaphor because it tries to reduce everything to one level of meaning. It reifies the result, and then turns the resulting abstract "entities" into concrete "realities". Its vision of a

deterministic world void of value and meaning is a reflection of this process of projection of literalized, reified metaphors onto the world, and then it treats these as if they were reality. (E.g. consider that we first attempt to systematize thinking in a formal way. We then define thinking as this procedure. In turn we use this as a basis for building hardware and writing software that will enable us to work through these formal matrices in a mechanical fashion. When we succeed in creating a computer that will duplicate this formal pattern of organization, we erroneously conclude that the computer can think. We then turn around and use the computer as an analogue to the human brain and then equate the brain with the mind. Thus we "conclude" that the mind is just a "biocomputer.")

The later Wittgenstein said one of his main aims was to undermine this limited, abstract, reductionist, intellectual approach to life. He saw this as a central fault in professional, academic philosophy. It tends to focus on language as if it must adhere to some abstract, perfect "logic". This is why he tried, by means of an aesthetic approach, to deliteralize our ways (as philosophers) of seeing human linguistic activity. He would have us think of philosophy more as an art than as a science of logic. Its purpose is ongoing discovery of ever new ways of seeing, not to construct linear, terminal, formal structures. (The latter lead to rigidity and mechanization of mind over the fully sensitive, intelligent, spontaneous human.) There can be no perfect, formal, logical language that mirrors reality (which is ultimately mysterious), and native languages reflect this fact, since they evolved as forms of life adapted to a world that has certain known patterns within a larger mystery. We must adapt to the unknown and the unknowable as well as to the known. Hence, philosophy as therapy removes misconceptions which prevent our native wit, and the genius of our natural languages, from functioning in a healthy way. The aim of philosophy is a sound human understanding that enables us to live properly. Its aim is not a static doctrine. (For an account of this interpretation of Wittgenstein see James Edwards's excellent book **Ethics Without Philosophy**, University of Southern Florida, Tampa (1982).)

When we apply these lessons to the philosophy of nature, the result is the reappearance of the mystery of the world, which is reflected in the multi-dimensional character of our language as a form of life, that was not produced by a theoretical, abstract process, but creatively, as a process of ongoing, artful adjustment to a changing world.

The new ecological synthesis requires that we see through the language of the literalized metaphors of the machine. We must see beyond the extension of this mechanism (which is reflected in our conception of thought as a programmed series of steps, and in such words as "artificial intelligence," "computer literacy," and "bioengineering") to new forms of life and community that incorporate all dimensions of meaning and not merely those measured by the metaphor of machines, production, and short term gain. War and competitive sports metaphors are not the sorts of replacements we need. Wilderness travel and ocean cruising might be more appropriate sources.

Progress will be re-visioned in terms of metaphors for transformational processes that run through a lifetime of deepening wisdom and spiritual growth. Our culture grows with and reflects our selves, just as our selves reflect the state of our culture. We can react in determined and mechanical ways, perpetrating and perpetuating good or bad social forms, or we can understand the nature of these forms and change them to ones more appropriate to our context. Whatever forms we adopt must be enlived or enspirited, rather than mechanical and rote.

II. Studying other cultures can be an exercise in ethnocentrism. But the new ecological anthropology and the new metaphysics call our attention to the fact that we are participants and shapers of an **experienced reality**. This forces us to recognize that our culture is only one amongst many adaptive possibilities. Seeing this involves, in a sense, moving to a meta-level of practical thought. This is what is involved in consciously shifting paradigms. A core truth in mystical traditions is that transformation of our spiritual life, or change in our basic mode of being, is something we can choose to undergo. It is said that spiritual development involves

expansion of the capacity to love. But can we **choose** a path of love?

III. Kant claimed (in the **Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals**) that the Gospels (In Matthew 5-7 for example) could not have commanded love, except as a rational, practical duty. This is a form of love that follows the requirements of the moral law as self imposed by rational beings. Kant said that to "feel love" is an inclination (desire) and as such cannot be commanded. We either feel it or we do not. Looking at the passages in the Gospels suggests a third form of love that lies beyond the two possibilities Kant described. The Gospels in places seem to command that we spiritually transcend the dicotomy between duty (objective reason) and inclination (subjective emotion). To choose the path of this love is to give up the dicotomies of judgement that lead us to think that the historical ego confirms the existence of everything else, or that our current historical consciousness is the highest and final state of awareness. To transcend is to integrate the energies of subjective emotion and objective action in a higher form of being which can be described as intelligent, compassionate understanding. This is the love that is said by mystics, sages and saints to be at the very heart of reality, understood at the deepest levels of subjective intensity. This form of love is a unifying ground for an enriched understanding of nature. Its perceptions of nature are radically different from those conditioned by Modernism. (Reality is alive with subjects, who can be our companions.)

Love in the sense described above is a unifying force that enables us to know nature **as it is**. The particular person and nature are unified in spirit (reciprocity of consciousness), in a community of meaning and significance that produces a harmony with the highest aesthetic and moral resonance. It is in such a love that the dialectical opposition of the universal (object) and the particular (subject) are resolved, in which the visible and the invisible fuse and reveal themselves through one unified consciousness, which in human form in our context leads to the creation of new cultural forms.

The planetary person described in earlier editions of **The Trumpeter** not only has local and global concerns, but

is planetary in the sense of being whole and complete through an ecological consciousness, not apart from the world, but unified (through love) with it. Compassionate understanding and action is this love in practice. The designers who would produce whole and nourishing art, and new, ecologically sound, appropriate technologies, must themselves be such whole persons. An ecosophic art informs and enlarges our sensibilities and therefore makes manifest our vision of a new cultural synthesis. Appropriate technology and good work become this art in terms of productive processes. Ecosophy as ecological (contextual) wisdom and harmony would be the natural result of the actualization of the whole person. If we are one of the most advanced forms of conscious life on the Earth, should we not be capable of creating cultural forms that are benign? Some of the cultural elements which promote the realization of this wholeness have been outlined. Now we need more fully to explore their implications in specific contexts.

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#### FILMS

We have mentioned or discussed three films in this issue of *The Trumpeter*. These are three recent, excellent films which bring out the contrast between the primitive and the modern, the urban and wilderness. They are: "Never Cry Wolf," based on a book by Farley Mowatt of the same name; "Koyanasqatsi," a word in Navaho that means world out of balance; and "The Gods Must Be Crazy," a film which makes its points partly through humor. We have already discussed two of these films and will restrict our final comments to "Koyanasqatsi." This film, unlike the other two, does not have a major plot and story in the normal sense, but it has as its central point to illustrate how and in what ways modern life is out of balance with nature and a sustainable future. There are no central characters, no background narration, as there is in "The Gods Must Be Crazy." It is cinemagraphic art united with music composed, not as background, but as part of the film's message. The film portrays all forms of landscape and human constructions with profound intellectual and emotional affect. Visual and aural are part of an integral, total aesthetic experience. It is a powerful,

artistically satisfying and deeply moving film. All three films mentioned would be worth showing in environmentally related classes. They would stimulate discussion, suggest exercises in construction of myth and drama about the environment, and stimulate ecophilosophical reflection. Thinking about them helps one to realize that ecophilosophy involves not only consciousness of ecology but attempting to understand the ecology of consciousness.



#### BOOK NOTES

\*\* We have discussed at length Stanley Diamond's excellent book *In Search of the Primitive*, Transaction Books, New York, 1982. This is one of those rare books that combines insight, practical sense, sound scholarship and a coherent overall understanding of its subject. The parts of the book we have considered here are representative of its high quality. But they by no means convey the breadth of subjects over which Diamond ranges. From the book of Job and Plato's Republic to the world of the primitive, and on to the technological society, Diamond's observations and arguments represent

outstanding anthropological insight and philosophical acumen in the understanding of human history and culture. This is a book that is essential reading to all who would embark on ecophilosophy. \*\* We have only mentioned in passing a novel by David James Duncan, **The River Why**, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1983. This is a first novel for both the Sierra Club and Mr. Duncan. It is a brilliant beginning. The book is written with great sensitivity and talent for humor, pathos, character, story and nature. Although Mr. Duncan claims not to be representing any particular environmental philosophy, his novel is a rich source of story which illustrates various themes and topics of vital interest to environmental studies. The book takes one into the mysteries of nature. It also conveys a vision of a nature unified by love. \*\* For an overview of Modernism in the context of the larger spectrum of philosophies in Western society see Huston Smith's recent book, **Beyond the Post Modern Mind**, Crossroads, New York, 1982. Smith has also written an excellent introductory book on comparative religion titled **The Religions of Man**, Harper and Row, New York, 1965. In **Beyond...** Smith presents detailed philosophical-historical analyses of our current situation in western culture. He is provocative and insightful, and his helpful analyses of our philosophical problems are of direct practical relevance. \*\* A new collection of essays with deep ecology dimensions came out of the proceedings of a conference held last year at York. The title: **The Paradox of Environmentalism**. It contains excellent essays by John Livingston, Neil Everndon, Stephen Fox, Stephen Kline and Arne Naess. It can be obtained by writing to Neil Everndon, Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto, Ont. The articles consider a wide range of topics and contain some state of the art observations about the philosophical and practical dimensions of the environmental problems we face, and how a reconceptualization of our relationships with nature and the character of the natural world is necessary to this process.

#### PERIODICALS AND MAGAZINES

**Connexions: A Digest of Resources and Groups for Social Change**, Quarterly, \$10 (Canadian) per year, from: Connexions, 427 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ont. M5S 1X7, Canada. This journal, as the title implies, focuses on groups dedicated to social change. It reports on publications and groups under various subject headings such as media, health, energy, and so on. It also presents synopses of Canadian periodicals devoted to alternative approaches and has an announcements section. \*\* **In Context**, is a relatively new quarterly published by the Context Foundation. Editorial address: P.O. box 215, Sequim, Wash. 98382. The subscription address is: P.O. Box 2107, Seattle, Wash. 98103. The price is \$14 U.S. per year. **In Context** has published six issues, each on a different topic. Topics have included, Being a Planetary Villager, Rediscovering the North American Vision, The Foundations of Peace, Art and Ceremony in Sustainable Culture, Economics in an Intelligent Universe, and The Way of Learning. Each issue that I have read has made positive contributions to a new cultural vision. It is well worth the subscription price. \*\* **Probe Post** has the subtitle "Canada's Environmental Magazine," and is \$10 (Can.) a year, from Probe Post, 12 Madison Ave., Toronto, Ont. M5R 2S1. This periodical contains much useful information and a good sampling of the sorts of discussions on issues that are subject of a wider debate. A recent issue had articles on such topics as, EDB, an upper Ottawa street dump, environmental pollution and global climatic change, soft energy systems, and an ecology house. In addition, each issue contains reviews, editorials, letters, and announcements about events.

#### ORGANIZATIONS AND NEWSLETTERS

\*\* **New Options** is a newsletter published by Mark Satin, author of **New Age Politics**, and formerly of Vancouver, B. C. The newsletter is published in Washington, D. C. It presents several short discussions under various headings, letters, notes on conferences and the



like relevant to new social options. I have read two issues and was impressed with the information they had on issues relevant to economics, politics and social change. Published every four weeks, the subscription is \$25 (U.S.) per year. Write to New Options, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N. W., Ste. 924, Washington, D. C. 20036. \*\* **Earthbank News** is published by the EarthBank Association, P. O. Box 87, Clinton, Wash. 98236. It is \$15 (U.S., \$5 of which is for a lifetime membership in EarthBank). This is the best newsletter I have seen on alternative financial systems, alternative economic organizations, socially responsible investing, local initiatives for creation of new work, and the general issues of economic democracy and alternative, creative entrepreneurialism. A recent issue, for example, had a good account of the Mondragon cooperatives of the Basque region of Spain. It reported on a conference held recently at the Chinook Learning Center in Clinton, Washington, which is associated with EarthBank. The newsletter contains, in short space, a wealth of information and ideas on the topics (plus others) that I have mentioned. EarthBank is currently working to establish a credit union to help finance local and regional businesses committed to social responsibility and ecological integrity.

#### FUTURE ISSUES

As mentioned in earlier **Trumpeters**, Vol. 2, no. 1, will focus on agriculture

and ecological philosophies of farming. Vol. 2, no. 2, will feature discussions of wilderness. Wilderness poetry, poetry on farming, illustrations and short reflections are all welcome. Please contribute short discussions (200-500 words) so that many perspectives can be aired. Also in some future issue will be an ongoing "ecostory," if there are network members interested in taking a turn at writing an episode. Details and the beginning of the story will appear in one of the numbers of Vol. 2. Other topics for future issues will be announced in nos. 1 & 2.

#### Network Subscription Information

**The Trumpeter** is published quarterly. Membership for 1985 is \$5.00. A complete set of past newsletters, Vol. I, nos. 1-5, is still available for \$5.50 postpaid. Please make cheques payable to LightStar, 1138 Richardson St., Victoria, B. C., Canada, V8V 3C8.

**Peace be with you all; have a loving holiday season.**

Alan Drengson

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