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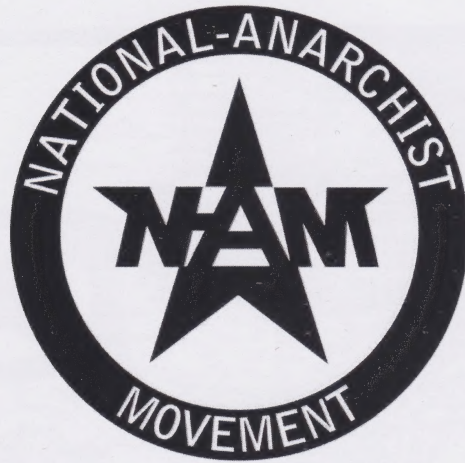
BEYOND LEFT AND RIGHT
SMASH ALL POLITICAL DOGMAS

Editorial
by Troy Southgate

The ideas contained in this magazine cover a vast range of subjects and have been produced by a truly international team of contributors. Therein lies the beauty of National-Anarchism, which, contrary to the decidedly internationalist proclivities of both Left and Right, offers a universalist concept that is able to manifest itself in a multitude of different ways.

National-Anarchism may seem exclusivist in the sense that we each wish to form tribes and communities in accordance with our own individual and/or collective aspirations – be they political, spiritual or otherwise - but the real value of this idea is that we can work alongside people from a wealth of different backgrounds who also recognise that, if we are to defeat the unprecedented march of globalisation, the ultimate key to success is unity-in-diversity. Be they Christian, Muslim, Jew, atheist, homosexual, straight, vegan, carnivore or otherwise, the transcendent complementarity that is generated between free spirits will ensure that National-Anarchists come to embody the particular within the general; the specific within the variegated; and, thus, the microcosm within the macrocosm. In a more philosophical regard, this timeless quest to resolve the problem of opposites can be seen in the yin and yang of Taoism, the non-dualism of Neoplatonism, Advaita Vedanta and Zen Buddhism, the fusion of subject and object in Friedrich Schelling, the dialectics of G. W. F. Hegel, the coincidentia oppositorum discussed by C. G. Jung and the conflict transformation theory according to Hector Sabelli. Providing all forms of hierarchy are voluntary and coercion is entirely absent, National-Anarchism has a place for everyone.

The publication that you are holding in your hands has proven to be an enormous undertaking and has involved twelve months of writing, editing, artistry, graphic design and contact work. Apart from our textual contributors, special appreciation goes to Adam Ormes for co-ordinating everything from behind the scenes; Kostas Kafritsas, for his graphic wizardry; and Zbigniew Boguslawski, a talented Polish artist who has worked tirelessly to meet a very tight schedule. Nobody has been paid for all the time and effort that has been donated to this project, but with sacrifice comes a sense of joy and the thrill of engaging in common struggle with like-minded souls. It is therefore our sincere wish that this magazine inspires you to the extent that you will go on to change your life and, by example, that of those around you.

The challenge of National Anarchism
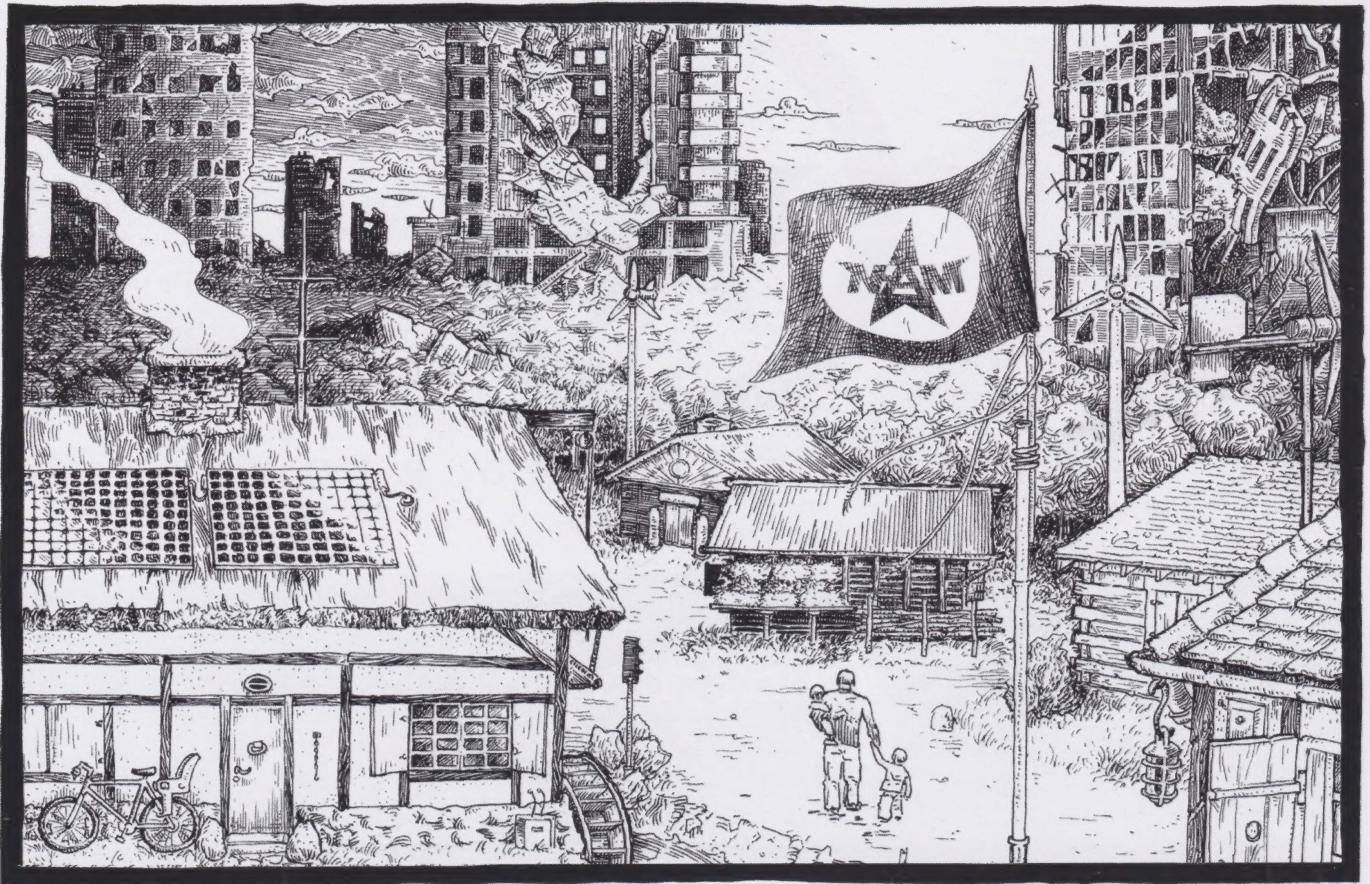
by Adam Ormes

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all argument, and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance. This principle is, contempt prior to examination."

- Attributed to William Paley

In approaching a term as contentious as 'National-Anarchism', I propose it might be wise to start by taking a moment to consider the subjectivity inherent in the act of conceptualisation. Despite having pondered this subject a good deal since having it brought to my attention around the age of 18 (by way of the late, great sage of the modern era, Robert Anton Wilson), I still find it necessary to remind myself on a regular basis of the following fact: that the concepts I've evolved over the course of my lifetime, through calibrating inherited linguistic structures with my own experience, may well have precious little correspondence with the concepts another person employs precisely the same words to describe.

Further, that this can only be the case, since no two human beings' experience is alike, and therefore each of us will have had a different contextual substrate from which our respective concepts will have been shaped. And subsequently, that I should never allow myself to assume that the concept I intend to transmit through the use of a word is the one that will be received in the mind of another. Hence, if one wishes to honestly approach the question of 'what is National-Anarchism?', then one must first take this into account. It is through inquiring further into the nature of this dynamic that I hope to shed some light on the term itself.

The extent to which such conceptual divergence occurs is subject to a number of factors, many of which are extremely subtle; it would however seem reasonable to expect that where culture (by this I mean both way of life/material culture, and cosmology/nonmaterial culture), and genetics are shared to a greater degree, the extent of variation in conceptual ideation between individuals will be lesser compared to where culture and genetics differ.

And whilst the influence of culture is fairly self-evident ('nurture'), the contribution made by genetics ('nature') might be harder for some to grasp. If, however, we uphold the possibility that one's ancestral experience is encoded within and inherited through the DNA, then we may possess a means of orientating ourselves within the murky realm of 'ethnicity'. In addition to these factors, one must also acknowledge the role of 'individuation' within individuals - a subject I'll return to later.

The critical element here seems to be that those who belong to an 'ethnic group' - to varying degrees, depending on how the term is defined - share a commonality of experience, and so possess a shared context from which to communicate about their situation. Thus, the extent to which the culture of one ethnic group differs from the next, and to which the group either keeps itself isolated from or intermarries with culturally distinct neighbouring groups, will be a major factor in informing the similarity of their 'experiential substrates'.

And even in cases where members of discrete cultures regularly mixed, incomers would still be brought into what might be described as the collectively-held informational field that constitutes the cultural inheritance of the group they've joined, while their offspring will likewise receive the genetic inheritance through the other parent. Hence, the defining characteristics of an ethnic group are therefore resilient to a certain amount of influx of 'new blood'. Nonetheless, it must be emphasised that instances of the mixing of completely disparate cultural-ethnic groups on the scale of what we see today would have been previously unimaginable - not least because the large discrepancies in the range of knowledge and skills required to survive in the places inhabited by different cultures would've meant that most people would have been completely out of their depth if transplanted to an unfamiliar bioregion, among unfamiliar people. Rapid urbanisation and globalisation have of course now significantly altered this terrain.

In times of yore, the sociopathic personalities that sought to appropriate the resources of autonomous peoples came to learn that to be effective in their goal, they needed to combine the use of physical force with a justificatory narrative that was well-tailored to the conceptual framework of the group in question. Whilst the uptake of this narrative might not have initially been great, pomp and bombast, combined with ongoing capture of slaves, brutalisation of dissenters and indoctrination of subsequent generations could broadly be relied upon to create a manageably docile citizenry over time. The nature of this dynamic is portrayed very clearly in James C. Scott's The Art of Not Being Governed, a study of southeast Asian hill tribes' relationship with valley civilisations, where he describes both the wholesale kidnapping of hill peoples into slavery in the valleys, and the continual attempts of captives to return to the hills where a less coercive existence was possible.

And yet, for the more enterprising empire builders, the limitations of this approach would soon become apparent, since the peculiarities of diverse cultures would require that a 'bespoke' narrative be created in each case – for example concocting a genealogy for the new ruling class that portrays them as being descended from the ancestral spirits of that people. To have to do so for each new group subsumed into the empire would be something of a strain on resources, and given that those resources were largely requisitioned from its conquered peoples, they would need to employ them judiciously to prevent the entire Ponzi scheme from collapsing – something that nonetheless happened on a regular basis. Far easier, therefore, to seek to standardise and homogenise the cultures and ethnicities in question to the point where an abstracted identity could be used to make overtures to an entire administrative area, rather than only to a few related tribes.

One should also note, for fairness' sake, that from time to time, benevolent beings have come into positions of influence within this impersonal expropriating machine, and striven to improve the lot of the wretched, stunted creatures that it held under its sway, perhaps partly a result of having themselves taken at face value the 'noble lies' empires spread amongst their subjects - a phenomenon which, conversely, lends undeserved legitimacy to the whole endeavour. But that ultimately, the effect of such interventions is severely limited by the fundamental disjuncture between what we might dare to call 'natural laws', and the anti-natural, cancerous basis upon which a centralised empire is founded.

And even more rarely, an understanding of this fact arose among larger segments of the subjugated, leading to wholesale 'reversions' to simpler, less coercive lifeways. However, such spontaneous manifestations either leave little mark on history, or suffer the iniquity of having their insights distorted into 'mysticisms' and are thereby co-opted into the canon of civilisation – Taoist teachings being a case in point.

Thus, countless empires - built by uprooted peoples - rose and then fell, often taking entire ecologies with them in the process; creating widespread social turmoil in which the capacity for ruthlessness became a prerequisite of survival. When the tide had receded, people once again regrouped into smaller, more autonomous units, albeit carrying the scars and traumas of what they had gone through. And with each ebb and flow, the boat of human consciousness was carried to new vistas both high and low, experiencing insights and ruptures never before known.

Wave after wave of empire building was somehow weathered by our forebears, whose cultures and genes we've inherited. Such were the forces that sculpted the languages that we speak. The substrate for our very thoughts was brought into being on an anvil of strife; percepts hammered into concepts, themselves forged into new hammers in an accelerating cycle of adaptation and maladaptation. One might take a moment to stop and ask oneself how many of our inventions have been created to address the problems caused by previous inventions?

What is significant is that with each turning of this cycle, the potential for the diversification of the psyche has increased. Novel environments, combined with novel means for the dissemination of narratives, creating endless bifurcations of cultures: from oral transmission to vellum, parchment, printing presses, and so forth - continuing to create new permutations, with the employment of mass propaganda technologies since the early 20th century leading to the propagation of untold follies and subsequent widespread brutalities. We have thus come to find ourselves aboard a ship of fools, each attempting to force their favoured dogma upon the others, yet all appear to proclaim that there is no alternative to the 'sea of civilisation' on which it sails.

One may argue that we are much the richer for certain aspects of arts, learning and technology that were much refined within these cultures; and therefore cannot simply write off their legacy. However this may be, the case for the prosecution rests on the fact that an awareness of how the civilisational model is fundamentally pathological seems not to have found its way into the 'source code' of subsequent iterations. This apparent inertia makes it hard to see how the civilisational impulse can be anything but highly destructive when viewed as a whole. The only potential exceptions I've encountered being the 'terra preta' cultures of the Amazon, as encountered by the explorer Orellana, and the still-extant Kogi culture of the isolated Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Colombia.

With the increasingly all-encompassing reach of digital media, I sense that aside from the very noticeable way in which the elites of the globalist empire are using them to remould their debt-slave subjects into rootless, mindless, emotionless, genderless automata ('Homo Economicus'), the primary drivers of our degeneracy may now be the technologies in and of themselves. Having perhaps inadvertently enabled some of us to gain a breadth of insight never afforded to our ancestors, and come into contact with those of like mind who we might have otherwise never known of, communications technologies now threaten to undermine, if not completely eviscerate that which makes us human.

Hence, once you have 'found the others', as the (very likely intelligence-service directed) counterculture phrase goes, what do you do with them? Some, it seems, direct their collective energies towards attempting to identify the defining characteristics of those that currently hold the reins of empire, which, depending on the colour of one's ideological lenses might be any combination of 'Whites', 'Zionists', 'Capitalists', 'Fascists', or 'Liberals', to name but a few. Such activity, however, seems to me in many cases to issue from the fallacy that 'the righteous people' - whoever they might be within a given belief system - could somehow assume control over the current highly centralised structures and steer them in a manner whereby the enormous concentrations of power wouldn't be abused.

Entertaining such a supposition appears to be the primary means by which one can avoid having to examine a fundamentally flawed article of faith: that a centralised civilisation is in any way a viable proposition. I would suggest, meanwhile, that the only means by which true, rather than token sovereignty and dignity can be achieved, is through the development of a radically different culture - one that has decentralised autonomy at its foundation. It would appear, however, that for the vast majority, entertaining the fantasy of imposing their preferred political system through the agency of the state is preferable to embarking upon the long, hard road of building said autonomy. We must, therefore, 'find the others' who have come to a point where they are ready to commit to such an undertaking.

And so, finally, on to the question of the word 'nation' in National-Anarchism. I would hope that by this point, the reader might be prepared to accept the possibility that it may not mean what they imagine it to mean.

The significance of the word 'nation' in this context is a common cause for confusion, which one might argue also functions as a filter for those in whom presumption outweighs curiosity. Whilst a name is ultimately of little significance - for it is the 'how' that matters, not the 'what' - somehow a name is needed to attempt to articulate a concept that is foreign to modern minds.

Thus to clarify: in my own conception, and seemingly in the minds of the others with whom I associate under the banner of N-AM, the words 'nation', 'folk' and 'tribe' are largely synonymous. The indigenous tribes of North America, for example, employ the term 'nation' in this very manner. Meanwhile, the more commonly conceived of idea currently associated with the term, that of 'the citizens of a nation-state', is a result of the term having been appropriated by the empire-building impulse described above.

It should quickly become evident to anybody that takes a few moments to engage with our community that we wholeheartedly reject the latter term and all it implies, whilst underlining the critical role of 'national' or 'tribal' consciousness in human relations. The word nation derives from 'natio': to be born, and hence points to the fact that the bonds of kinship are far stronger than that of any abstract ideology that centralising elites may foist upon the masses, for they are wrought of the love and respect that in normal conditions, will exist between family members - the frequent absence of which in today's times is surely a result of the wedges which the architects of empire have managed to drive between us.

We appear to find ourselves at a point of transition between two civilizational narratives: the 'old world order' of so-called 'traditional' authority structures – what was initially simply a sense of duty to one's kin, over time becoming increasingly coercive, with allegiances redirected to favour ruling elites, religion and the state, and enforced by the physical suppression of dissent; and the presently encroaching globalist 'new world order' of self-centred individualism, instant gratification and resultant pernicious debt-slavery, brought about through seduction.

Today there are many who strive for a restoration of 'old world order' values, whilst seemingly failing to notice how those values constitute a corruption of what they once signified, or indeed how changes in human consciousness have made their corruption inevitable. Meanwhile, those who oppose them in turn usually fail to see how the 'new world order' values that they typically espouse amount to much the same thing, albeit in a different flavour: a narrative employed to justify oligarchy - and thus the heart of the matter is never addressed. As Ezra Pound reputedly pointed out, "the technique of infamy is to invent two lies and to get people to argue heatedly over which one of them is true."

The reason I've decided to associate myself with National-Anarchism is because it's the only branch of political discourse I've come across that's prepared to earnestly broach the subject of the role that culture and ethnicity play in how mutualistic associations of sovereign individuals, assembled in the spirit of enlightened self-interest, can organise themselves in resistance to the state-corporate-usury complex. I view the combination of the terms 'national' and 'anarchist' as a form of what Hakim Bey calls 'poetic terrorism', employing the cognitive dissonance it can elicit to reflect on the manner in which political ideology has fragmented the wholeness of the human social ideal. For there is no reason that these principles should be divorced, other than our own rigid preconceptions, issuing from a fragmented psyche. One might also see such a juxtaposition serving as a verbal equivalent of the fearsome spirits placed at the entrances of Eastern temples, to deter those whose motivations are insincere; persevering in one's attempts to understand the significance of the words is a key to uncovering the riches that lie within.

What is being proposed here is much more than simply another form of collectivism. It is a recognition of the inherent need in human beings to both freely associate with others, and to possess a socio-cultural identity. Or, to come at it from another direction, that the coherent co-operation of individuals within communities is a prerequisite for their attaining any degree of autonomy from coercive systems. Further, that in order for these communities to meet their members' needs, they must seek to respect the sovereignty of individuals, while providing the individuals of which they consist with a sense of shared destiny. Somehow, in our strange times, the fact that this shared destiny might encompass one's ethnicity is considered taboo by many who would consider themselves 'respectable'. The mere mention of these ideas is sufficient to scramble the mind of such folk, and for some reason especially if the community in question is made up of people of European extraction...

With this said, the truth is that making the transition from an atomised, alienated modern existence to one that relies on extensive co-operation with others is no small task. What, then, will it take to midwife such associations into being in this age, given the decay of kin-based social structures and authentic group identity? It has been said in the context of contemporary identity politics that "our macro-politics have gone tribal because our micro-politics are no longer familial." [1] It might serve to inquire into this statement. An ever larger number of people have grown up in broken families, which in many cases have buckled under the strain of economic pressures (although, it should be emphasised that in many cultures, the rot had set in a long time prior). As such, a vanishing number of us have a relationship to our extended families that involves significant degrees of economic co-operation, and therefore lack any real understanding of what a strong family unit looks like – the decline of family trades being but one example of this.

It should also be acknowledged that the flight from family-based living situations has been driven by a genuine need for freedom of self-expression in people who are increasingly individuated and therefore at odds with their family's or culture's worldview; often manifesting in a seeking out of new opportunities and increased anonymity offered by urban life. Equally, the reality for many has been that their naïveté and vulnerability have been exploited by a ruthless capitalist class, resulting in debt-slavery, alienation, and a culture of mercantile nihilism. And so we find an uncomfortable tension between 'tradition' and 'modernity' – out of the pan, and into the fire, as it were. It may be that only once we've experienced the degradation of so-called 'independent' living for ourselves can we be motivated to realise the potential of the reforging of community, albeit one built up along very different lines to what we have ourselves known.

If I'm proposing that certain aspects of tribal life are called for in response to our current predicament, then which aspects do I have in mind, and how would one go about putting them into practice? To get right to the root of it, it's worth pointing out what is likely the most challenging aspect of this question for Westerners: that living as a 'nation' demands a strong commitment to the future prosperity of the group and its environs, to the degree of possessing a willingness to place the needs of the 'nation' above those of the individual when it is called for. It is likely the case that the inability to make such sacrifices accounts for the failure of most modern 'intentional communities', which are overwhelmingly bourgeois and utilitarian in their ethos. In other words, they lack a strong unifying principle that their members are willing to sacrifice themselves for.

It is quite understandable that this statement may evoke discomfort in some, especially given the manner in which such instincts have historically been exploited by ruling classes. However, what may be most significant here is scale. The notion of 'Dunbar's number' - of 150 being the maximum number of stable human relationships that an average human can sustain, beyond which it is believed that far more regulated forms of social structure are necessary - points to the possibility that human social dynamics are very different when one lives among people to whom one feels a close bond (and presumably therefore likewise shares a culture with). This does not mean that everyone must be best of friends or indeed self-sacrificing all of the time; simply, that when conflicts or demands do arise, the principle of group unity will tend to give precedence to feelings of animosity or selfishness, since for a sufficient proportion of the group, group unity is of utmost value.

Herein lies the 'anarchy' (self-rule) of our 'nations': through living in appropriately sized social groups informed by anarchist ethics, we remove the need for rigid hierarchies, thereby allowing individuals to freely find their own niches within the group – including that of the fringe-dweller – and for the group to find its own internal coherence. It is only in an environment where human social organisation is in alignment with 'natural order' (which, I contest, we can only guess at, given our current state of alienation therefrom) that innate intelligence and co-operation can truly unfold, and any kind of effective response to our current predicament ensue.

Hence, the answer to all of the other 'what-if'? questions that are posed in attempting to imagine what such a world would look like on a larger scale is singular: we seek to create conditions that facilitate human intelligence and co-operation, and through this, to increase our ability to respond to whatever challenges we may encounter in the future. Without coherent social units, all other human endeavour is doomed to failure. Whereas if a means is found by which we may successfully rebuild community, then it will be a resource available to all. Effective innovations spread rapidly.

The accusations one can expect to be levelled at such an outlook are that it is parochial, insular, inward-looking, small-minded, sectarian, and so on. 'Tribal' has become a dirty word; the corollary to this being the idea that more 'enlightened' folk have the interests of all of humanity at heart. In most cases, what this amounts to in practice is looking after number one while cheerleading for the globalist project, and feeling a sense of moral superiority in doing so. After centuries of failed utopian politics, enacted in the name of religion, state, or nowadays, 'the global community', it would seem to me that what is needed first is to ensure that one's own house is in order, so to speak, before looking further afield – for anarchy begins at home. Or to paraphrase a certain American comedian, "if you think you can fly, try taking off from the ground first!"

Whether or not it's possible for a more complex society to exist without its historic pathologies (possibly along the lines of Rudolf Steiner's 'threefold commonwealth') is to my mind something of a moot point at present; for if we don't jump ship soon, then we are very likely going to sink. With that said, the Iroquois confederacy provides but one recorded historical precedent for how decentralised tribal units can co-operate in a broader context; while Proudhon's ideas for federalism give further hints at how the bigger picture might look. I for one do not propound the fallacy of 'closed systems', since they do not appear to exist in a natural state; communities therefore must have partially permeable membrane walls, as it were. Natural systems, meanwhile, strive for resilience through building diversity and redundancy. I'll leave it to the reader to determine whether the multiculturalism of the industrialised West constitutes a true diversity or simply a prelude to monoculturalism.

What is being sought here is an arrangement which puts the individual, their community, and 'the world' in right relationship. I am not suggesting that we ought to mimic tribal lifeways in all areas - only where they constitute an 'appropriate technology'. We may however find that if we allow ourselves to engage with such an avenue of inquiry, the insights may reach further than we had anticipated – as those who have encountered the work of Pierre Clastres will be aware.

Inasmuch as anything is clear with regards to the 'how' of this challenge, it seems that the only way to make any inroads into it is to cultivate real-life relationships with those with whom I share an affinity of culture and values, and likewise very practical things such as dietary requirements (which I might add, appear to be very much influenced by one's ancestry), as well as a desire to increase autonomy from the 'tech-debt slavery system'. As for how this relates to one's identity, my own ancestry is spread over a large expanse of northern Europe, and hence no single historical identity correlates well with my individual sensibilities.

While I feel a strong connection to the broader bioregion and its cultures, having grown up in a depressing megapolis, there's no place I can truly call 'home'. And given that so many of us today are either displaced former or alienated current urbanites, the question of 'where?' will in many cases require a good deal of consideration. It will in all likelihood be necessary that this be something of a non-analytical process, pursued by divining the degree of resonance between the coalescing group and the places, cultures and peoples it considers locating itself amidst, this inquiry in turn forming the kernel for a new kind of relationship with place.

Furthermore, the group will need to reach a strategic consensus around its economic arrangements - how the provision of its needs is to be achieved and resources delineated, and likewise, depending on the degree of independence sought between members, what means it will employ for assigning roles and responsibilities, and resolving conflicts that may arise. My feeling is that there is much to be learned from how anarchic outlaw communities such as pirates and Cossacks managed themselves through vesting authority in 'codes', or 'articles of agreement' and then holding council. If this worked for the most hot-blooded of men (apart from when it didn't!), then it might also work for your group. Historically effective ways of managing collectively-held resources, or commons, should also be studied (see the research of Elinor Ostrom for abundant examples), while the establishment of land trusts provides a means of removing land from the realm of market speculation.

As the industrial system that most of us still depend on for survival begins to falter under its own weight (while jettisoning humans in favour of robotics), and our health continues to be eroded through exposure to its pollutants, there is no time to waste. We need to learn how to restore vitality to both our bodies and soils, so that we can access proper nourishment for our communities (bearing in mind that most agricultural soils, even those under organic cultivation are increasingly bereft of nutrients), and likewise restore habitats for the wild creatures on the lands that we steward.

Further, since many of us are already poisoned to varying degrees, it's crucial to gain an understanding of which toxins have been released into the environment, and where possible, how to remove them from the body. The same applies to the mental pollutants and traumas that many of us have taken on. My advice is this: find a way to live and create livelihoods with those that you hold dear, and if you can, do so far enough away from large cities to be in with a decent chance of protecting what you build should the breakdown of society progress rapidly. Developing a shared sense of the sacred is likely essential. And do try to retain your sense of humour as you go about it - it may be one of our most valuable assets.

Territory, shelter, nutrient-dense food, unpolluted water, community, and meaning – all to be protected, cultivated, and passed down the generations. If anything of value is to have a chance of surviving the rising tide of insanity, then such 'refugia' must be established rapidly. In all probability it is those that are committed enough to their objective of living as a group, yet flexible enough to question their assumptions around how to attain it who will have most success. Further deteriorations in the quality of life will likely only serve to reinforce the need for such endeavours.

Should the Fates smile kindly on foolhardy humanity and permit us to go on inhabiting this beautiful planet, then perhaps such places can provide a seed stock for the proliferation of saner ways of life in times to come. While the detractors of National-Anarchism continue to waste their energies on attempting to discredit us based on intellectual positions that some of our number may or may not have once held, I propose that for those of us who practice the alchemy of continuously transforming our understanding, then applying it to the circumstances at hand, engaging with the process described above must find its way to the core of our endeavours. As certain alchemists were known to advise, 'festina lente' – 'make haste slowly'.

Note
[1] The Primal Scream of Identity Politics by Mary Eberstadt
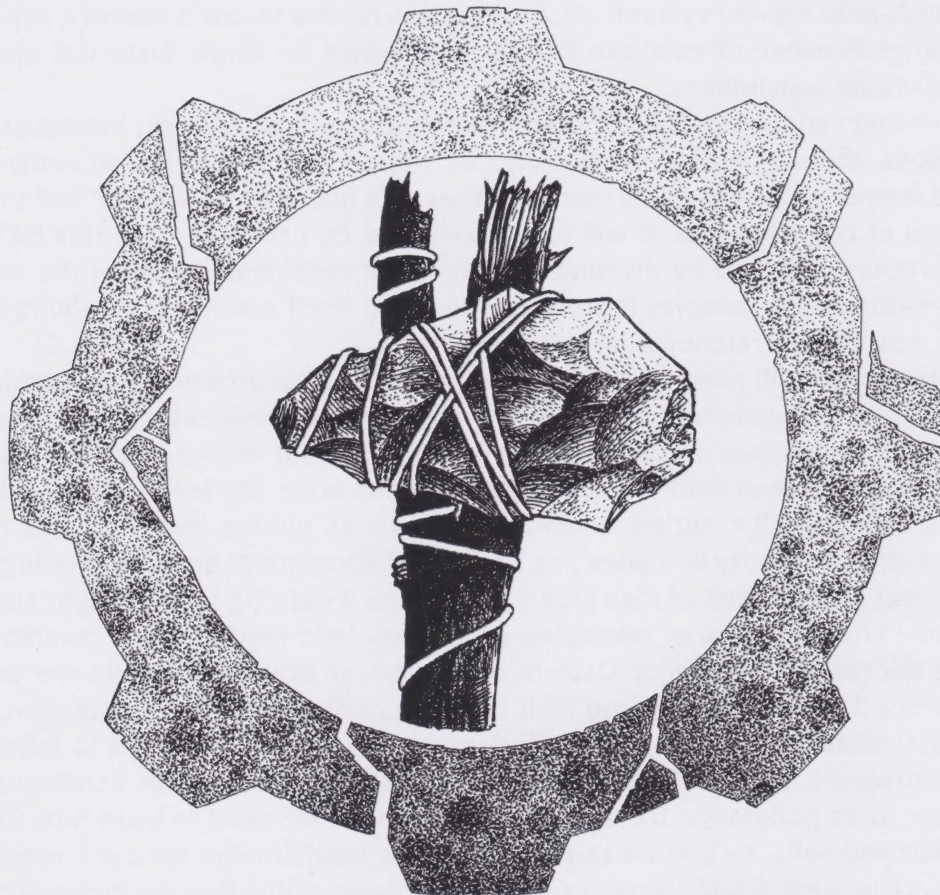
Birth against THE MODERN WORLD

by Hildr Jørgensen

All births used to happen at home, or in familiar surroundings, with familiar people. Women would go into labour spontaneously, following their instincts during the labour. Healthy babies were born and given every chance to thrive; the hormones of birth would then help the mother's first milk flow to nourish the baby.

At some point in time it was found that money and power could be made from turning labour from a natural part of life into a medical emergency. At around the same time the establishment propaganda began to preach that it was better to intervene in a birth and in a baby's first moments outside the womb than it was to allow the birth to happen naturally, and mothers began to believe it.

Rather than a tribal culture of trust and respect, there is instead now a culture of litigation, and decisions about birth by medical staff are usually made after asking the question "what can I do that will avoid somebody suing me", rather than asking what is best for the mother and baby.

Modern births often begin with being induced by manufactured oxytocin. This usually allows the physical aspects of birth to begin, but at the expense of the mother being able to naturally release this hormone when it's meant to be released, and for baby to be born when baby is meant to be born. Babies shut off a part of their brain when they are ready to be born naturally, but not when labour is synthetically induced, resulting in damage to the brain.

Babies don't have calendars or clocks in the womb, and a natural labour will begin whenever baby is ready, even if the doctor's calendar says otherwise. Labour pains are worse with the manufactured hormone, and the mother, already convinced that this is a medical emergency, is unable to understand labour pains as a part of birth and will often decide to use drugs to relieve the pain, leading to even more interventions and more troubles bonding with baby and producing milk.

Even if a mother in a hospital manages to avoid the pressure by medical staff to induce the labour, and has a natural birth, interventions to the baby often begin as soon as baby is born. Medical staff often clamp and cut the cord before the baby has all the blood in it, resulting in the baby losing up to 40% of their blood volume! No wonder the state recommendations are that babies need synthetic iron-fortified baby mush as their first solid food, something our ancestors never needed.

Baby eyes are squirted with a solution of silver nitrate, baby is jabbed with a needle filled with vitamin K preserved in heavy metals, and in the first day or two baby receives more heavy metals directly into their bloodstream from a vaccination against a disease only spread through sexual activity and needle sharing. It doesn't take long to realise that pharmaceutical companies are making a lot of profit through these routine baby interventions that our ancestors never needed - their traditional diets rich in vitamin K2.

All of these interventions lead to a weakened bond between mother and baby - often milk substitutes will need to be purchased as a result, and the baby begins life outside the womb as a weak creature, rather than beginning life in the best way possible to reach their full potential.

In contrast, it's possible to give birth outside this system - at home, surrounded by only those we allow into the home. While there are sometimes problems in homebirths, in most cases the outcomes for baby and mother are far better than hospital births. Homebirths are often remembered in a positive light, rather than the endless complaints of the soccer mums about their hospital births, and our daughters are more likely to pass positive views on birth on to their children, if we have had a good experience of it ourselves.

We are at the dawn of a new age, where we can take a stand to bring traditional tribal values back to life by living them - by viewing birth as a natural part of life and experiencing it as this, giving our children the best start to life, and passing these views on to our children, their children, and their future.

Deep roots are not reached by the frost

by Linda Hext

Today, it is quite feasible to be a 'member of civilisation' without having any sense of community. This is mirrored in the staggering number of pensioners who report feeling lonely, or the fact that one of the most common reasons to seek out therapy is depression stemming from feelings of loneliness and isolation. According to the study Lonely traits and concomitant physiological processes [1], loneliness affects people on a cellular level, causing their immunity to decline as a result of the chronic stress imposed upon the body. There are likewise links between loneliness and acts of violence. This may be due to the individual being led towards greater dissociation, stemming from the stress that is imposed by isolation - causing them to increasingly objectify others, and therefore being more easily rendered into perpetrators of atrocities.

Within this context, our doors serve as the bars of prison cells, shut in fear of one another. The intention of this observation is not to put fault on anyone - indeed perhaps we are all in part to blame.

However, the sheer sizes of current populations drive our societies to become a breeding ground for overwhelm; there are simply too many people for strong communities to form amidst the sensory overload that is urban life. This lack of connection can easily leave one feeling directionless, with few bearings to enable one to create a solid identity for oneself; meanwhile, given the financially insecure position of many people, it is no wonder that in the modern West, one finds growing suicide and depression.

This lack of identity in relation to both their peers and the environments modern people inhabit seems to be the catalyst for a harmful strain of nihilism, in which one may find oneself staring into an abyss, or indeed wanting to plunge into it - often subconsciously acting in self-destructive ways, since no purpose can be discerned in anything and no ideals are present to strive for. As Alain De Benoist stated, "since all values have become strictly personal, everything is now equal to everything: nothing equals nothing". Belonging and recognition are essential nutrients for man's process of self-actualisation - present even in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. When we build a community based on shared ideals and values to strive towards, it enables us to work together and allow each other the opportunity to find a place that is best suited to our own particular set of skills to ensure the survival of the tribe, thus enabling one to fulfil one's greatest potential - both in relation to oneself and one's environment, which itself creates positive feedback, further enriching quality of life.

If we start on a micro scale within the social dynamic and consider the family - the place that one could say was first hit in the deterioration of our societies, and indeed is one of the greatest assets to be destroyed should a state wish to breed complacent subjects with little direction or foundational integrity to be strong enough to fight conditioning and slavery - then it is evident that it takes more than two people to raise a child. As Aldous Huxley famously stated in Island, "It takes an entire village to raise a child". There will inevitably be moments in life where parents will require a helping hand with caring for their children and at such times. the benefits of a community built on warmth and respect that enable parents to trust cohabitants of their community become immediately apparent.

In this way, the common practice of handing over the future of our lineages to complete strangers who may subsequently teach our children whatever they desire, and hence indoctrinate them, can be overcome. Without strong roots, humankind perishes. Community acts as a vital place for us to set our roots in order to grow resilient, so as not to be blown over by winds of manipulation - conferring resilience through identity. Ergo the child's innate nature spawning from the bones of his being and his genetic makeup thrive, and a lineage is continued, preserved and strengthened.

If there is one common theme that I have come across repeatedly in my lifetime, it is the theme of balance. Whether it be death balancing out life, good balancing out evil or the heart balanced by logic, we encounter these dynamics in every aspect of our lives. It is a key aspect to sustainability in every environment, including the communal environment. Consequently, I'd propose that a sustainable communal environment would need to keep its structure simple in order to facilitate the upkeep of said balance, whilst leaving room for fluidity as regards potential changes in the structure when agreed upon by all those who comprise the community. Likewise, that the ideals upon which the foundations of said community are built are maintained, thus ensuring few ambiguities where greed and corruption may grow.

This should especially be mirrored in keeping the members of any given group under a certain threshold; any community with a problem of overpopulation or overabundance will inevitably perish. On that account, in order to breed strong and healthy folk brave enough to live their truths, we must first create fertile soils from which they may grow - for the roots that give them life are held within the community, which in turn acts as a direct reflection of the health of families that comprise it.

When man reaches a balance in his perception of the world around him and views himself as belonging to it rather than nature belonging to him, he is then not threatened by a communal life and realises that it is in his best interest, and that of his peers, for them to work together towards a simple yet sustainable life where deep bonds may be formed. The importance of working together to create strong networks and of respecting one another must never be forgotten if we wish to survive and even thrive, for it is through this that we are nurtured and receive our nourishment for life.

Note
[1] Lonely traits and concomitant physiological processes: The MacArthur social neuroscience studies: Cacioppo J.T., Ernst J.M., Burleson M.H., McClintock M.K., Malarkey W.B., Hawkley L.C., Kowalewski R.B., Berntson G.G. (2000) International Journal of Psychophysiology

ANARCHY AGAINST POLITICS
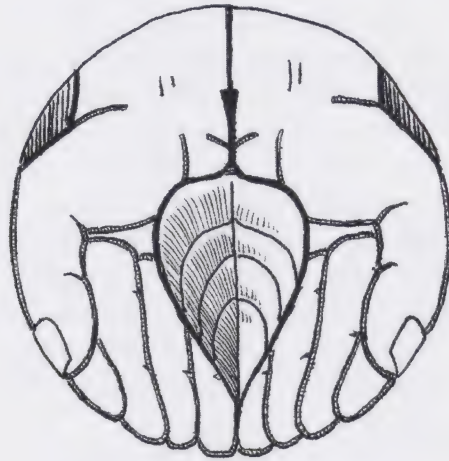
by Kostas Kafritsas

"The Hate continued exactly as before, except that the target had been changed. The thing that impressed Winston in looking back was that the speaker had switched from one line to the other actually in mid-sentence, not only without a pause, but without even breaking the syntax."

- George Orwell

The concept of politics is often defined, among other things, as a particular way of resolving conflicts based on negotiation between parties directly or indirectly involved; politics is the art of compromise. Within the confines of a system that encourages irrational behaviour and is biased towards the growth of government, the only rational response for an advocate of strict politics is to sell their politics, since people will usually follow. They'll go along with society's majority beliefs and established value systems even when they think them wrong, just for the sake of not causing any upset. This is conformity."

The political field is a field with a direct relation to power and authority. Thus, strengthening a political party through networks, processes and structures, not only recognizes such a political spectrum and background, but it also substantially reinforces it by providing the necessary social legitimisation, especially in periods of political, economic and social crisis. A clear statement of opposition against politics and the State is much easier because there is something in the nature of both that provokes rebellion: it is authority, it is force, it is a display of and infatuation with power.

It does not seek to ingratiate itself, to win over, to convert. Every time it intervenes, it does so with particularly poor grace. For by its very nature, it cannot persuade but must impose and exert force. However hard it may try to disguise this nature, it will still remain the violator of man's will and the permanent denial of his liberty.

Our well known Epicurus (341–270 BC) rejected superstition in favour of empiricism, believing that we can choose life without fearing death, and that tranquillity of mind could not be found in the political involvement. His contractarian theory of justice anticipated a philosophical tradition that looks for the source of morals in agreement ("neither to harm nor to be harmed"), whilst treating politics with sort of skepticism. Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics were all statists to various degrees, glorified political involvement, and devised political programs for their audiences of rich and well-connected aristocrats. Meanwhile, Epicurus focussed on the individual search for happiness, considering politics to be simply irrelevant. He had no political programme to offer and one finds no concept of collective virtues or order or justice in his teaching.

The Epicurean wise man will keep the covenant and not harm others not because he wishes to comply with some moral injunction being imposed from above, but simply because this is the best way to pursue his happiness and maintain tranquillity of mind.

During the final years of his life, the reactionary thinker Julius Evola had to face the question of how a radical traditionalist was to act in a world that had evolved into the opposite of what he stood for. Evola then recommended a detached life, or as the wisdom goes, "to be in the world, but not of it." He therefore advocated "apolitea" - the withdrawal from contemporary politics and abandonment of political activism.

WE DO WHAT WE ARE
WE BECOME WHAT WE DO

The main problem with parliamentary democracy is the fact that it is representative. Indeed, whilst it is possible for people to vote for a political party and elect a politician from their immediate locality, that individual cannot be recalled or replaced for several years, depending on the country concerned and the parliamentary system in question [1]. And as we know only too well, politicians are not very good at keeping their promises, and tend to get elected and then make a series of treacherous U-turns. So whilst a politician claims to represent your interests, he or she actually represents the interests of a party.

Instead of representative democracy, through which politicians serve their own interests at the expense of the community on behalf of the state, National-Anarchists believe in participation. And whilst National-Anarchists do not believe in applying centralised 'rule', we do accept that the actual form of decision-making is something that will be particular to each community. And in this case, community is the key word.

The fact that people have put so much power in the hands of the state has meant that the traditions and values of our communities are becoming eroded at an alarming rate. National laws and constitutions are a relatively modern phenomenon and to suppose that humans are incapable of organizing themselves into close-knit communities is to hand over total responsibility to the state.

Think yourself about it: do you really wish to leave things to the businessmen, the politicians, the councillors, the judges, the bailiffs, the tax collectors, the landlords, the soldiers, the police and the teachers? The system has definitely failed. Or would you prefer to see power, wealth and arms restored to the communities, where it belongs?

As a conclusion: the less we depend on the state and its institutions, the more irrelevant it will become. The less we are involved in political games and transitory tactics, the more our movement will keep its uniqueness and identity. The less we feed the system with comformity, the more people around us will start realizing that the political spectrum is weak and it can be defeated. It's in our hands to draw a clear line. We do what we are. We become what we do.

"There will be a qualitative transformation, a new living, life-giving revelation, a new heaven and a new earth, a young and mighty world in which all our present dissonances will be resolved into a harmonious whole."

- Mikhail Bakunin

Note:
[1] Max Weber "Rationalism and modern society, new translations on politics, bureaucracy and social stratification"
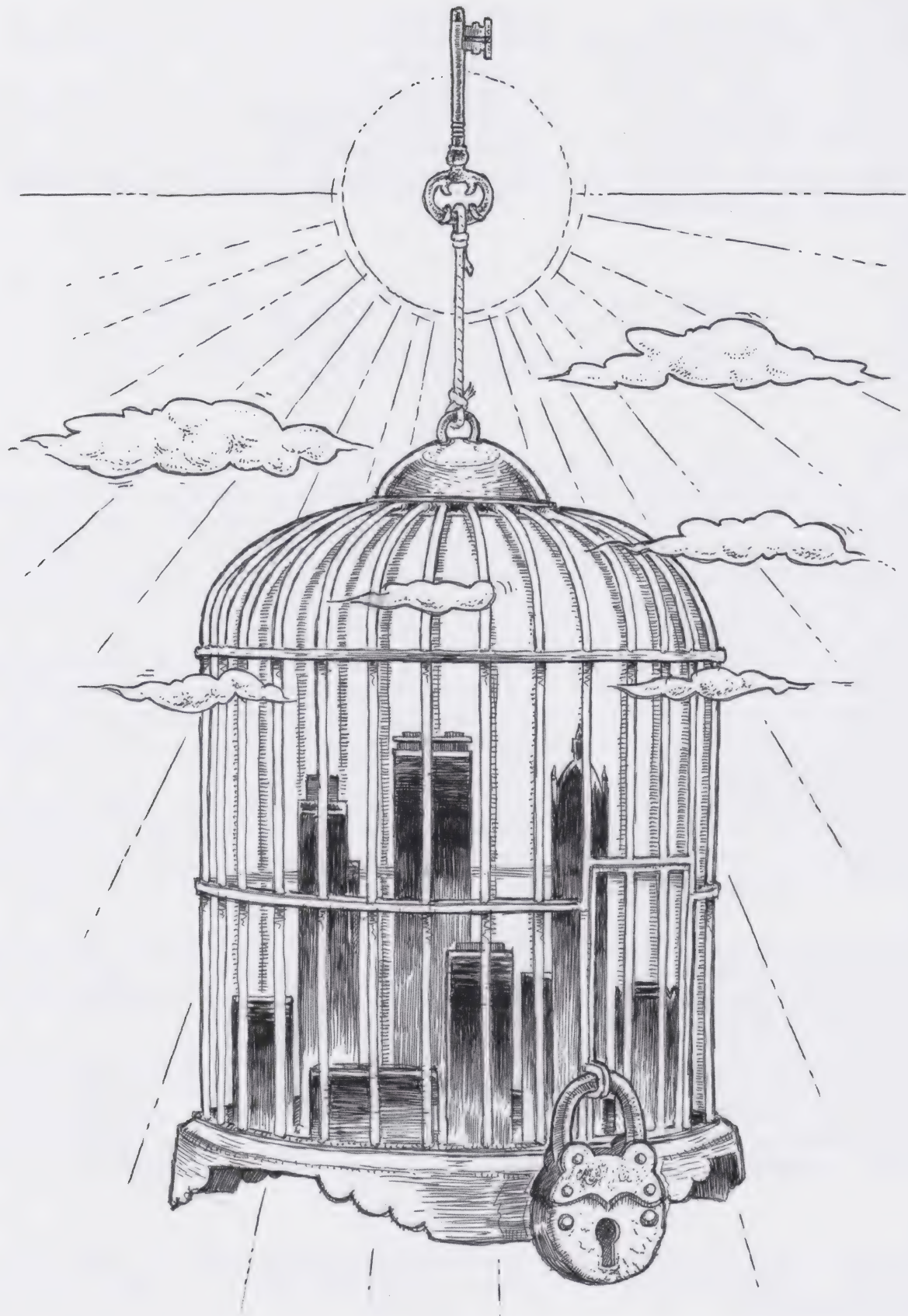
"What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night.
It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime.
It is the little shadow which runs across the grass
and loses itself in the sunset."

- Crowfoot (1830-1890), Blackfoot warrior of the Siksika Nation

AUTONOMMY AND INTROSPECTION

by Maykate Morris

In the world that many of us ultimately find ourselves a part of (after all, for many of us it isn't an actual choice, just something that we grow to realize as we become adults) it's difficult to separate identity from wage work and the distractions we use to blow off steam because of said wage work. It seems that many people cobble together bits of popular culture and the notion of having a career as a true calling into something that they consider their identity- a fictional creation completely void of self-examination and in total ignorance of their own inner workings. It must be then that we question how it is possible that without introspection, anyone can truly make decisions for themselves. Can a person ever know free thought without self-examination?

For those of us who can see the error in the ways of the modern world it can be a challenge to live amongst others who don't understand or who choose not to. As individuals, we can make our own way but what if you have a family? How can we encourage children to question things and trust themselves in decision making? One of the most important gifts we can pass onto our children is the ability to reflect. For this, it is essential to find confidence within oneself and to examine both one's own thoughts and actions and those of others. It is impossible to become a "free thinker" if one is unable to analyze the world around them without the input of others. Behaviors are passed from adults to children through modelling and example, and much less through taught lessons. It might seem that the ability to reflect on life is innate but in this world of distractions it would appear that is not the case. This means that a parent must put the effort into talking about experiences after they happen.

In my family we choose to ask questions that are objective to inspire thoughts on topics without injecting our own opinions or steering the conversation a certain way. It is important for your children to see you read, to see you sit in nature and do nothing, and to ask questions whose answers are complex. If we are always moving and continuously distracted, then these behaviors will become theirs. I would endeavor to say that each day should have a period of time designated for absolutely nothing which your children can use as they please. Many families fill their schedules with activities for their children these days. It leaves you to wonder when the children will have time to know themselves. Will they fear being alone? Silence? The dreaded "boredom"? The first step of free thought is trust in yourself and your own thought processes. Let us impart that to our children by changing our own behaviors and inspiring them to follow suit.

"You might think of the ethnosphere as being the sum total of all thoughts and dreams, myths, intuitions and inspirations brought into being by the human imagination since the dawn of consciousness... and just as the biosphere, the biological matrix of life, is today being severely compromised, so too is the ethnosphere. Only if anything at a far greater rate. The key indicator is language loss. There are at present some 6,000 languages. But of these fully half are not being taught to children. Which means that effectively, unless something changes, these languages are already dead."

Wade Davis, NPR interview

Ecology and the Ethnosphere
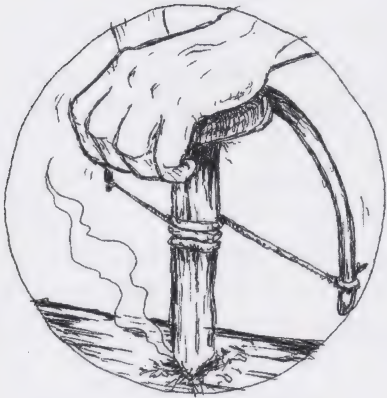
by Thom Forester

"70% of the world's languages were found within the planet's biodiversity hotspots. (...) Out of the 6,900 or more languages spoken on Earth, more than 4,800 occurred in regions containing high biodiversity. 3,202 languages, or almost 50% of the world's spoken languages, are found within the 35 hotspots. (...) As the world grows less biologically diverse, it is becoming less linguistically and culturally diverse as well. Species loss [is estimated to be] 1,000 times or more greater than historic rates, and linguists predict that 50–90% of the world's languages will disappear by the end of this century. (...) (I)t may well be that biodiversity evolved as part-and-parcel of cultural diversity, and vice versa."

Study: Co-occurrence of linguistic and biological diversity in biodiversity hotspots and high biodiversity wilderness areas. Department of Landscape Architecture, Pennsylvania State University; Merton College, Oxford University Gorenflo, Romaine, Mittermeier, Walker-Painemilla (2012)

Those last refuges of the natural world, and of the full expressions of a biological wholeness which took countless millennia to evolve - are, poetically enough, also the few remaining areas where regionally adapted 'local' cultures survive. Mankind's final reserves of truly endemic culture, home to what little remains of our once innumerable primordial legacies, just so happen to be the exact same territories in which the natural world still thrives unmolested. These patterns of human and biological diversity have recently been disclosed by mapping the contours of territorial, linguistic, and thus cultural divergence, overlapping and comparing biodiversity to cultural diversity.

The integrity of the ethnosphere is thus revealed as the human mechanism by which the ecological integrity of the Earth itself is sustained. Territories, and the human-scale communities which inhabit them, give rise to cultural beliefs and practices through the development of 'narratives of place', which define distinct ecological biomes. Territorial sovereignty is the surface-tension of life.

Ecological and ethnic diversity are wholly one and the same,
the latter being human-specific.

Until very recently, all human beings were animated by a radical sense of belonging to both place and people; these roots wound around and within us, and stretched back to the times of our earliest ancestors. Identity was not merely a cultural narrative designed to justify the status-quo, nor to encourage in-group stability and co-operation, or to prop-up social 'norms'; it was the very soul of the group. An articulation of its collective consciousness, as created collaboratively by thousands of generations of living, breathing, feeling beings all working together to define themselves and their place in the world. Folk-lore means 'what is learnt of, and by the people'. It is just as vital and inseparable a part of our being, thinking and 'doing' as language itself.

Folklore is an inclusive and truly democratic framework for the genesis and propagation of culture. It is communicated via traditional stories, songs and sayings which are the distillation of countless ancestral memories, and their elaboration into profound truths which have their origins in real-world-events. This generates unique forms of highly-accessible and easily memorable/retrievable information. As far as a means of building complex culture, it's nothing short of a stroke of genius.

These intricate cultural mythologies are - in another sense - narratives which define very real human interactions with the biosphere, and as such they are techniques of orchestration, means of resource appropriation and allocation; moralities and values which define the appropriateness of behaviour and technology alike. These 'stories' fulfil vital economic roles, defining the perceived viability of a given action within the context of the wider ecosystem of cultural potential; and in extension the ecological viability of a given culture. Myths can imbue mountains, rivers, plants and animals with a sacredness of value to the functioning of the natural world and everything in it. Other myths, like the myth of human-supremacy and 'progress' can be used to justify ecocide and ethnocide on a scale that is almost unimaginable, but no less real for its enormity.

Objective realities - or what little of them we may claim to experience - are not nearly as important as manifestations of belief: the ability of narratives to define the nature of our relationships to each other and to the non-human and external world is that which either sustains or destroys life. In this way, mythologies are not something which merely 'happen' in some materialist sense; they are not 'real' or measurable in physical space - instead they precede experience, and define the framework in which worlds are constructed. They are the means of measurement, not the unit thereof. The who (that sees) before the what (that is); the 'being' which precedes, observes and alters reality.

Myths are the foundational narratives through which we (all of us) perceive the world around us, and our place within it. Even in the diabolical materialist worldview, which now dominates most 'technologically advanced' nations, it is still our cultural narratives which define us and 'our world'. Refusal to recognise this fact - that we are forever and unavoidably animated by the mythos - only makes us ever more susceptible to the tall tales of the technocrats and their manufactured culture. Our problems today, mostly stem from the fact that we are raised on 'bad' myths, those that were disingenuously spun in order to disempower and deceive, or simply those which are inappropriate to our 'place-people' - to our ecological and ethnic sphere.

Regional cultures are the only hope
of preserving a viable biosphere.

We must learn to recognise which of our cultural narratives are no longer ecologically viable and change them to more accurately reflect the lore ('what is learnt') of each respective place and people. These lores will vary depending on the climate, geography, biodiversity, resource availability and also human factors like local traditions, historical narratives and land use patterns.

This may involve the recognition of precedents - that the deepest roots are likely the strongest, having existed in reciprocity with the spokes of life in that location for the longest. It may also involve a searching for elemental truths which, for whatever reason, are missing from the cultural landscape, but doubtless still await rediscovery in forbidden and long forgotten places.

We must anchor the unique soul of each locality into the soil which gave rise to it, revive stories which teach reverence for place, and instil a sense of belonging which manifests as a commonly understood 'guardianship' of the land - upheld as sacred. This will then inform everything we, as human-scale communities do within the ecology of our land, from guiding emergent technologies and land management practices, to celebrations of seasonal, historic and cultural importance.

The economic is the ecological

There is no vital difference, nor any separation between an 'economy' and the ecological 'system-of-systems' in which it operates. These words both refer to the same relationship between a land and its peoples. Any 'spectrum' of meaning which may exist between the words 'economy' and 'ecology' can only refer to the quality of this relationship, to the efficiency and viability of dynamic forms of interaction between land, people, plants and animals - the foundations of life itself.

Regional culture and economy is the only way we can ever achieve ecological harmony. At the very least, regionalism works by diffusing our various cultural 'disharmonies', ensuring that when a culture fails, it doesn't take the entire world down with it. As happened back during the days of the Mesopotamian civilisations, and then with the Greco-Roman; but now 'civilisation' has become truly global, so shall be its demise. Regional self-sufficiency is the only way to achieve ecological viability. The world cannot strive for sustainability unless comprised of sustainable components. Each nation, each place-people must be territorially sustainable and demand the same of their neighbours or the necessity of economic imperialism and ecological exploitation will continue.

The integrity of the ethnosphere cannot be sustained by arbitrarily delineated boundaries and gun-boat ecology, but by cultivating a sense of shared responsibility for protecting the Earth's eco-ethnosphere for future generations. By learning from endemic cultures, emulating the essence of their traditions, mythologies and sense of belonging, we may regain our place within the world, and make it once again somewhere worth living. Mankind's disharmonious cultures must reweave their roots back into their own bioregional substrates. This may be done through a process of necessitating - first materially and then as a consequence psychologically - a determination to become economically self-sufficient. This only becomes possible by returning to a culture, to a way of being with each other and the land that is both ecologically and territorially sustainable.

Territorial self-sufficiency is the opposite of economic imperialism. We are essentially talking about two economic models; one in which needs are met by the immediate place-people through reciprocal economics and local production/ distribution networks; and the other which relies on 'foreign labour' (slavery), remote production and mass-transportation. Either a group of people (a nation) is capable of feeding itself in perpetuity, from their immediate lands and via selective and non-coercive systems of free-trade* with other nations who are also capable of feeding their populations from their own lands. Or, they are bound to perpetuate economic imperialism. People are politically independent (free) to the degree that they are economically self-sufficient. The separation between land (ecology, local production) and the economy is fundamentally an enforced political separation, which defines the relationship in favour of urban cultural centres.

*free-trade: voluntary, non-coercive trade between two territorially sovereign nations.

Nations, borders and biology

When I say 'nation', or 'national' - I use it in the original sense, meaning any group of people capable of functioning as a coherent, self-sustaining 'macro-organism'. I do not mean a central state and its subjected citizenry, nor am I referring to any media-induced 'patriotic' caricature, or any similar cultural construct. I am talking of the tangible referent, a physical 'body' of people organised as such. Of the natural and self-evident truth of man, as a group-organism.

In a sense, I use 'nation' interchangeably with group. A group of humans is called a 'nation' or 'tribe'. This may consist of a small intentional community, an ancient island people who share history and culture, or even both simultaneously within the 'concentric circles of identity'. Being individual, family, tribe, nation, humanity and ultimately 'Earthling' - a broad denomination common to all Earthly lifeforms.

All 'organisms' from single celled Amoeba to the Hippopotamus possess characteristics which are widely accepted as evidence of their being 'alive' rather than 'inanimate'. They are as follows:

Homoeostasis: The ability to maintain internal stability, by adjusting cell-wall permeability and the concentration of internal substances.
Signalling: Perceiving and correctly responding to the micro-environment (internal variables).
Metabolism: Transformation of substance, for example food-to-energy and the elimination of waste.
Self-sustainability: The ability to self-maintain, by independent effort.
Reproduction: The ability to successfully breed and propagate one's own kind, multi-generationally.

These characteristics apply to all organisms and to all groups of organisms. Nations, tribes and even family units exhibit parallel behaviours. My time spent living with the 'adversarial culture' of land-rights activism clearly demonstrated a need to maintain stability and 'eliminate waste'. The first thing a group must establish is a means to rid themselves of dangerous, disruptive or parasitic elements, to maintain internal harmony or 'homoeostasis'. Without internal stability, metabolism (action, transformation) and signalling (perception, adaptation) cannot function.

Nations are incredibly complex organisms, though they are still defined by these characteristics. They maintain stability, recognise and respond to internal stimuli (as appropriate), they transform, adapt, self-sustain and reproduce. A simplistic way of describing an early nation-state would be as a 'tribe-of-tribes'. Although this does not disclose an important distinction between a tribe formed on the basis of familial bonds, held together by a shared sense of belonging and mutual self-interest (social, economic, protective) and a nation-state, consolidated by bloody conquest, kept in line by the ever-present fear of 'civil' violence and economically sustained by the systematic impoverishment of the peripheries (colonies and rural economies) by the appropriating centre.

Empire is an attempt to consolidate control over the life-processes of other groups/ nations/ peoples. The goal of imperialist forces is to prevent otherwise autonomous groups of people from functioning as coherent, stable and self-sustaining units. The reasoning is clear, and has been extensively explored in the literature of 'elite' kleptocrats since ancient times.

To understand the mechanisms of destabilisation and consolidation currently employed around the world, we can study these same processes as used by the 'great civilisations' that establishment historians almost universally regard as 'high-points' of human history, which were in fact colossal, multicultural slave empires. We are yet to see the full extent of cultural desolation, psychological dissociation and spiritual oppression required to enforce a truly centralised global economic, political and cultural order; the inefficiencies of which will undoubtedly require the complete destruction of the biosphere – inefficiencies which are an inherent and inseparable part the consolidation process. The active mechanisms of power-relations, monopoly and centralisation.

The idea that any organism, especially one as powerful and all-encompassing as a nation ought not to be in control of these, the most basic functions of its own life, via the regulation of internal processes so necessary for the survival of any group, indeed of any organism, is not only tyrannical to the highest degree; it is clearly and inescapably an attempt to undermine the very existence of the nation or group itself - likely for the purposes of predation and/or assimilation. The question is, do we want our communities to be intact human macro-organisms, capable of acting as independent, living, breathing entities in their own right? Or, do we want humanity to become a global hive-mind, with 'world leaders' being in charge of the life processes of us all?

From the streets in black, to a field in a wide brimmed hat
A Left Anarchist's journey to N-AM

by Gregor Elliott

I was pretty much born into an environment where I'd likely become an American leftist: my father was very active in his local machinist union and supported Democrats because they are the party of the workers, and my mother was a public-school teacher and librarian who always voted Democrat, but mainly because they were in favour of more government support of education (she has since wised up and quit voting altogether though, for similar reasons that I will discuss about myself later - go Mom!). My grandparents were farmers, and also supported Democrats because they were for giving more government subsidies to farms. My rebellion against my family, at least politically speaking, was never to question their left-leaning values for consideration of workers, education, and farmers, but to just become more radical than they were about it, i.e. to become a left anarchist. And I actually still am a left anarchist, but I do not now work with any others who call themselves that really because of what they have become. National-Anarchists, who are serious about being beyond left and right, are much more my compatriots these days, and here's my story, as briefly as I can tell it, of how I came to this place, and how I wish and hope that other left anarchists can do the same.

I started out as a Marxist in college, which is where I probably first started really thinking about politics on my own. This of course was its own kind of rebellion at the time (in the mid-nineties) because just on the thaw of the Cold War, all Americans, even run of the mill 'liberals', still hated 'commies'. Also, at the time, unlike in academia today, the influence of the Frankfurt School and associated New Left ideologies was not yet fully rampant and subsequently not beaten into students' heads. In fact, my interest in Marx was mostly met with light-hearted disdain from my professors. I guess they figured it was a phase, that would pass (and they were right!). But the point here is that I do remember a time when Marxism was still taboo, even in high academia, only the whispers of postmodern critical theory and such things were to yet be heard in any serious way. My, how things have changed!

In any case, once I stumbled around for a bit, trying to find my place in college, I settled upon Philosophy as a major and Classics as a minor. It was primarily via the former discipline that I discovered anarchist thought. I was mostly interested in metaphysics and epistemology - ethics seemed quite boring and flimsy at best, but social and political philosophy did interest me. Via my studies in that realm I became exposed to the thought of Robert Paul Wolff, one of the leading 'Philosophical Anarchists'. I accepted his argument that no state could ever be legitimate, and have been an anarchist ever since (well, except for a two-week period of enraged Leninist-Trotskyist brain damage from a brush with very charismatic folks in the Internationalist Socialist Organization, which I will mention later.) From there I of course started reading the greats - Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin. I became convinced that the only way to live and attempt to bring about leftist principles of care for all and equality was to get rid of the corporate state (a redundancy really), and become free for ourselves (no interim 'communist state' required).

I started grad school in the early 2000s, and continued to be a 'Philosophical' anarchist, which essentially means that you think no state is legitimate, but you aren't really planning to do anything about it. I continued to even vote throughout this time! Horror of horrors, I know, that an anarchist could ever vote. But that changed. I won't say who I voted for, but around this time I placed a check mark in a box for President of the United States for a horrid scoundrel, and I knew it. I walked out of the voting booth that day with a very heavy heart, and even though I knew then as well as now that voting is pointless, I still felt like I had put my seal of approval on a demon. I have not voted again, for both reasons, that it is pointless as far as actual impact on outcomes, and that it only continues to support the illusion of legitimacy of the state. It was in this feeling that my real anarchism began, but perhaps took a somewhat dark turn in years to follow.

After I graduated from grad school with a Master's in Philosophy (which in that discipline is essentially like dropping out), I could only find work in restaurants, and had moved to Austin, Texas, a very leftist city. I got involved in anti-war protests, with the black bloc crowd, and donned their uniform and behavior and ideals myself (being somewhat of a rivethead goth, I mean really, how could I turn down a group of fellow left anarchists that wear all black from head to toe?!). We waved the red and black flag and danced around the police with the fervour of bungee jumpers or rock climbers. But other than taking a tear gas canister to the shin once and then throwing it back, I never received any serious injuries or got in any real trouble. It was mostly in good fun for us, and it seemed so for the cops as well. I think they secretly liked us actually - we gave them a feeling of really doing their jobs and seeing some action, but without having to be under any real threat.

However, what is important about this time is that I believe that my left anarchist comrades were still very much anarchists, even by my standards today. In our spare time, when not huddling around peaceful hippie protestors to protect them, we only ever talked about building up anarchist communities in squat houses, which we also frequented a good bit, mostly for parties. But we did somewhat seriously discuss how we would start functioning communities in that way, and that that's how we would smash the state, by creating something better that didn't rely on it. However serious we might have been in our hearts about that kind of plan, we mostly just talked about our excitement with police run-in stories (bolstered a bit from reality I'm sure). But when the thrill is gone for such childish 'direct action', people drift away. This happened to me and most of my companions, whom I've lost touch with over the years.

I sort of just stuck with living life and not being very politically active for a few years, until the Occupy Movement, which Austin was one of the major cities that participated in that. I showed up in my full black bloc gear once again, ready to do battle after my break from it. Surprisingly I was one of the few that did, but there were a few others, and we mostly just did some police filming sorts of things. But the whole left vibe had changed since I'd taken a break. I tried to involve myself in several 'affinity groups', but now I kept being told, mostly by white college kids, to not talk too much, or get too active because I'm white and male, and we need to step aside so other dispossessed groups could get some of the spotlight I guess. This approach was quite new and somewhat shocking to me, even as a leftist for some time. As a left anarchist, I was ready to rally the troops, whatever colour their skin or sexual preferences, for we are all downtrodden by globalism. We did plenty of marches chanting 'banks got bailed out, we got sold out'. I took that to mean 'we all got sold out'. But the other 'activists' involved were quick to point out to me, that as a white person, I am the one doing the selling out, and it's okay to be active, but what's more important is to be a good 'ally' to the really dispossessed people. I tried to just keep my mouth shut about this, but I saw too many good ideas for action go away because the conversation just devolved into how to be most inclusive with it and not offend anyone about it. It's not that I think that people of colour and alternative sexual preferences or gender identities aren't dispossessed under global capitalism - most people of any kind genuinely are. But it's that I found it completely impotent to focus on those types of issues rather than the one real issue at stake – that the state is in cahoots with big business, and they don't give a fuck about any of us, so it's time to stand together with whoever we feel connected to in any way and do things our own way.

Luckily I did meet people through that movement that I still work with to this day, people that got tired of the constant diversions caused by the 'Oppression Olympics' - the phenomenon of trying to collect victimised identities for oneself, whoever has the most, or the most oppressed identities, wins, as one of those friends calls it. It only took a couple of months for me to just quit going to anything Occupy related. Though as I already mentioned, the Internationalist Socialist Organization (ISO) was more than happy to take me under their wing, and I made some quick 'friends' in that group. And at the time, Leninist Vanguardism was looking quite attractive to me as the only other people that surrounded me were so stupid, I came to the point that I reckoned that they needed to be led by great intellectuals and thinkers and movers and shakers – "maybe we really do need the Leninist state to get this riff raff in line, and these ISO people are at least smart and reading books". But alas, the first ISO conference I went to, all they could talk about was the struggle of 'people of colour' and how to fight things like 'Islamophobia'.

I also discovered they are really just a front for a very capitalist newspaper printing racket (to be a member you have to sell a certain number of their rag, not sure what happens if you don't, gulag? - I didn't stick around to find out!), that's actually quite successful, for someone.

It took a few years (and a bit of more Nouvelle Droite and radical traditionalist reading here and there) to get my political bearings back, but that's when I found out more about National-Anarchism (mostly via my love of neofolk music). Now, my 'activism' is mostly related to permaculture gardening and praising the heathen gods of my people, and seeing to the sustainability of the community that I want for myself and my family and close friends (though it turns out doing such things is quite scary to folks on the mainstream left and right). I still believe in core leftist ideals (mostly of the Kropotkin sort), that people should get a real return for their labour, or even be able to live in communities that are run so well that most in them don't even have to do much labour, and be able to live a decent life without having massive access to accumulated 'wealth'. I also want this for everyone, as any good leftist would, but I know that the only way we can get it is to build it ourselves, but let others build their lives how they want to as well. This seems obviously, to me anyway, the only way to be an 'anarchist' of any kind. A lot of left 'anarchists' I know think that the best way to realise anarchism is to somehow try to stop people from living their lives how they want on their own terms - to explore the art that they want, to live with whoever they want - because wanting to do any of those things a certain way is 'oppressive' to someone (even though it's not, and thinking so only perpetuates the oppression of globalism). I don't think it was always this way, but somewhere it happened that the left anarchist wing became less about empowering downtrodden people to make a new life for themselves without the state, and more about dictating what kind of life anyone should try to lead (a necessarily 'all inclusive' and self-flagellating one - well, at least if you're white). So, it looks like I'll have to just build the kind of community I want myself (which is really quite inclusive, but nobody gets any higher status for receiving gold medals in the Oppression Olympics) to get away from both the state and the left 'anarchists' spinning their wheels with 'construction of identity' theories!

And that's what I'm doing now, with more help and encouragement and support from National-Anarchists around the world than anyone else. I hope that many who came from the left like I did will eventually come to a similar conclusion, that anarchism is not about fighting fellow downtrodden people, it's not even really about fighting, it's just about breaking away and becoming self-sustaining. There will be a bowl of soup every day and plenty of fulfilling work to be done (but hopefully not too much) in my community real soon for anyone that sees eye to eye with our goals, and that's interested in real action, not on the streets, but in the fields and woods.

PAN-ANARCHISM AGAINST THE STATE PAN-SECESSIONISM AGAINST THE EMPIRE

TRIBE.RACE.ETHNICITY

by Piercarlo-Bòrmida

It is impossible to extract the individual from the community, since, as anthropologist Werner Schiffauer points out, "collective identity and individual identity are inextricably linked." The destruction of the matrix of elements that gives rise to disparate origins (ethnic, religious, etc.) and the subsequent eradication of communal roots dispossesses individual identities from their collective identity, bringing about a highly stressful and precarious state in individuals. This situation in turn causes a confusion in the group identity and may consequently engender a false ethnocultural pride. The widespread return of a variety of racial issues is increasingly noticeable, especially in large urban centres. National-Anarchist communities can provide a positive answer to this problem.

An understanding of tribe and ethnicity ought to be neither a taboo, nor a preconceived notion. As we have already said elsewhere, a National-Anarchist community can be based on any principle of association (dietary choices, sexual orientation, religion, etc.). In this particular context, I would like to focus on ethnicity.

Ethnicity is a more concrete and less abstract concept than race. It is historical, dynamic, complex, and rich: it encompasses culture and nature, genetics and environment, myth and destiny. Ethnicities are united by common history and passions, ways of feeling and seeing the world, affinity with blood and ties to their own land. Each and every person belongs to an ethnic group and it in turn belongs to us. There are micro-ethnicities and macro-ethnicities, much like a system of Russian dolls.

Nature, understood in a much broader sense than merely the biological, binds us from birth with cords that we can certainly sever, but that in fact we often reinforce. Man's propensity towards self-segregation - not imposed, but spontaneous - seems to be an anthropological constant. Humankind has, since its inception, always been a social being in which sociability is beholden to the twofold dynamic of cohesion and exclusion: the search for both a centre and a boundary that is defended, imposing "limits" - preventing chaotic contacts that generate anxiety, stress, and conflict.

These behaviours are the expression at the human level of a trend pervading living nature in a global way: the propensity to differentiation. In its cyclical processes, life creates a series of differences, aspiring to give a specific form to both collective bodies and individuals: heterogeneity constitutes its law, whilst in macrophysical systems, homogeneity prevails.

Just think of the incredible richness and variety of animal and plant species and the differences that we may find not only in physical features but also in behaviors among animals that are familiar to us. The living realm is characterized by being individualized: the differences between subjects and groups increase with each increase in the level of complexity. Any organism, so long as it lives, overcomes the forces of homogenization and levelling, resisting "entropic fatality" - that is to say those forces that rule over inert matter and which result in a loss of the dynamic ordering factors proper to the system. Groups of primates - and indeed other zoological orders - reject outsiders, and maintain a high degree of behavioral conformity within the group: individuals who deviate too far from preconceived behavioral modes, even when going through the after-effects of an illness, are violently assaulted by their companions, as was observed by famous ethologist Jane Goodall.

"The group is united against the outsider," says Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt. With suggestive words, Robert Ardrey reminded us that "as a member of a herd, a flock or a class the social animal belongs to a group differentiated from all other groups, and within it conquers a territory or a social rank, or a place on which to perch or rest, recognized as its own, distinguishing it from all the other members of the group, thus obtaining an identity." Differentiation always occurs on two complementary levels: that of the individual and that of the community. It is interesting to point out here that the results of studies of child psychology and human ethology converge to outline a similar picture. It should be stressed that the rejection of and the sense of unfamiliarity towards beings that are unknown to us is directed more towards individuals belonging to our own species rather than towards members of other species: the child is far more intimidated by the presence of foreign humans than that of wild animals.

Konrad Lorenz, in his main text of ethological philosophy, Behind the Mirror, wrote that "cultures that have reached a certain degree of reciprocal differentiation behave in a manner similar to that of different animal species - but it is important to emphasise the close degree of kinship - because it has never happened, as far as we know, that due to a divergent evolution, two cultural groups have differed so ethologically and ecologically from the point of view of being able to live next to each other peacefully in the same area (as, for example, those different kinds of ducks with no relationship to one another which do not enter into mutual competition)." Two points must be highlighted here: geographical proximity and partial similarity as essential factors of competition and clash. In particular, tensions arise not because they are too different, but because they are still too similar, and thus deal with the same ecological niches. Adapting to a number of norms within the group (which inevitably involves conformity) becomes a consolidating and differentiating factor with respect to the outside. The 'global village' metaphor needs to be replaced with that of an ocean (nature) in which many boats sail. The communion of elements of disparate origins, Eibl-Eibesfeldt forcefully declares, is antibiological, and unworkable without strong constraints, operating only in a totalitarian context: nothing is more distant from the National-Anarchist vision.

Therefore, all human cultures tend to isolate themselves from one another, acting as if they were different biological species. Cultural development certainly exists, but its basis is biological - that is, it is based on the above-mentioned tendency to reject outsiders and to establish and defend one's own specific identity. If it is the break-up of something qualitatively "different" to form a specific ethnic identity, then it seems illusory to believe that it can easily be forgotten: this can happen for a minority of people within the community or, even more easily, if they are separated from it, but not for the majority, which will always remain sensitive to the "mythical" memory: the voice of heredity - a decisive imprinting. In theory, the watering down of every community identity would seem to be the best solution to overcome racial tension, as the causes of tensions will be removed. Only the individual identities tolerated in an atomized society like ours would remain. But we forget that the tendency to form groups is not only part of the history of western people or of the contemporary so-called "primitive" tribes, but belongs to the human being in its perennial integrity; it constitutes, in fact, an essential, indispensable element that defines us.

The emergence of new ethnic clusters in cosmopolitan cities, as we have already mentioned, still proves this today! It reveals the existence of a complex series of bio-socio-cultural events that contrast with the "ideological" tendency, prevalent in mass societies, among which the internal contradictions of the global homogenisation process must be noted. Of course, speaking of identity must not lead to misunderstandings: we are far from considering this term as the expression of a closed, static, fatalistic reality. We consider it in a dynamic, open, interactive way: it is a perennial nucleus that is known to be an ever-new "form", adapted to changing times and external conditions. We could call it a harmonious law that determines certain structures or, if desired, certain proportions, but that can express itself in a thousand different ways, renewing itself.

Different ethnicities, both biological and cultural, closely related and intertwined, have very different concepts and perceptions on basic, central elements of everyday life such as privacy, personal space, environmental order, property, and boundaries. Their symbolic universes, which go far beyond the scope of sociological analyses, are quite simply very different - an open or closed door, a look, a silence, or a gesture, do not have the same meanings across different cultures. We therefore find distinct semantic systems to be lacking in mutual tonality, even among neighbouring ethnicities. Indeed, the roles played by certain factors may be diametrically opposite.

The creation of differentiated ethnic-cultural communities - separate National-Anarchist communities - should, among other things, allow people who live there to interact, to know each other, to create ever closer ties, following their own rhythms and customs, thereby reversing the processes of mutual exile so widespread in mass civilization. The creation of micro-communities would be very beneficial even in contexts that are free from ethnic tensions. In fact, the process of the progressive weakening of interpersonal bonds is a tremendous problem which makes the megalopoli unlivable, leading to the automation of social relationships and hence to an increase in violence typical of those environments populated by anonymous subjects, disconnected from both each other and their setting.

In general terms, Anthony Smith's understanding of the ethnic groups that continue to exist on the historical stage, is founded on five points:

1. Possessing specific origins
2. Having knowledge of one's past
3. Believing in one's own destiny
4. Having a specific collective culture
5. Sharing a singular community solidarity

I believe that the homogenisation of the planet must be fought against by small and self-sufficient communities that are both spiritually and economically cohesive, holding common goals; a society without roots and without spirituality cannot withstand long. It is an absolute priority to focus on alternative housing systems - this is not simply a case of changing our means of housing but also our way of living: improving social relationships, producing goods in a manner that respects the environment, and avoiding pursuing the sole purpose of profit. The benefits are numerous: sustainability from the point of view of housing and food, ethical jobs integrated into the local socio-economic context, cultural activities of communities that bring added value to their quality of life, new ways of living and building and incentives for self-building.

Until now, right-wing forces have walked the road of non-scientific nationalism, or, to put it better, a sentimental patriotism; their resultant confusion has dragged them into the worst imperialist aberrations. Meanwhile, as Francois Fontan points out: "Left forces, blinded by class problems, have not studied national affairs for a long time, and where they did - we think of Stalin - they have made confused, unrealistic and largely false attempts". National-Anarchism is an answer to this conundrum that combines ethology and ecology, nation and society.

ΕΘΝΟΓΕΝΕΣΙΣ
ethnogenesis

Ethnogenesis is the process by which "a people" is formed. It occurs in myriad ways, but the end result is always that a distinct tribal, cultural, or ethnic identity is produced, which differs in some ways from what came before, and which will continue to evolve from its new origin point.

For the most part, the reasons and drives underlying the generation of new identities differ in every single case, though a few common factors can be recognised in each.

For one, the historical identities of the peoples involved often feature heavily in the creation of new identities, though there are varying degrees of departure from some or all of the trends which had previously marked out that group or combination of groups.

Another common feature is disaster of some kind: often new identities are formed in response to large-scale changes in local economy, politics, demographics or religion, or in response to natural events like plagues and pandemic diseases, floods and earthquakes, extinction of prey animals and so on.

Frequently both kinds of disaster occur around the same time: natural events lead to changes in policy and practice, which in turn lead to disjunction between the identities of the past and the present. It's at this point that ethnogenesis occurs as a natural part of human social evolution.

Creating a tribe

The process of identity-generation is automatic in humans: it occurs naturally as a built-in response to the world. We absorb information from the outside and encode it internally as belief and behaviour. Education, parenting, social conditioning, cultural climate and all such things go into forming what could be called our "reciprocal identities."

These are passively absorbed identities, in that they are generally unchallenged.
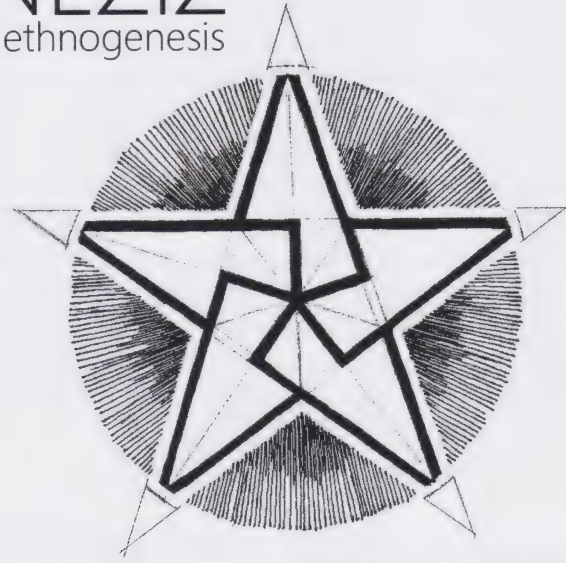
by Alexander Storrsson

It seems oddly rare for humans to question their life trajectories, even rarer for them to question the belief systems that have grown out of them. When this does happen, it's often in response to external factors forcing broad scale re-evaluation. Occasionally it's due to internal factors: we begin to realise due to latent intelligence or intuition that what we've been taught and what we're experiencing do not match up and we begin to question our identities and world-views as a result.

In cases of ethnogenesis, the normally automatic process of identity-generation becomes manual. Instead of receiving our identities from the world and passing them back out again in the form of reflexive action (a vicious cycle of conditioning if ever there was one), we develop our identities from within and begin to entrench them in the world through pointed and deliberate action.

We pick particular traits to emphasise, particular histories to adapt and adopt, particular circumstances to concern ourselves with and particular conditions to meet in the future. In a moment of time we set in motion the active instantiation of an ideal on earth. We decide to become what we want to be relative to what we know. Why do we want to be it? Because of our identities – the same identities that were formed from the old, automatic system of identity-generation that has been running in the background from the beginning.

Ethnogenesis of the sort described is thus a natural function in mankind. We are pre-programmed to put our minds to reshaping our identities in times of elevated stress as a means of consciously directing our evolution relative to changing pressures in the world. The ways in which we do this are many and varied, but the fact that we do it seems to be hard-wired: there comes a point in inevitable cultural decline where the only rational response to dearth and degradation is to recast ourselves according to principle rather than precedent. This is the consciously-driven process of ethnogenesis.

Three key ingredients

In the development of new tribal entities, certain basic factors need to be addressed. Essentially, these relate to the character and quality of the tribe-to-be: their origin, mission, and outlook on life, as well as relationships with others, cultural expression and so on.

An emphasis on ancestry can be expected to feature in any case of ethnogenesis. As the "ethno" component implies, the end result tends to be the production of both a culturally and genetically distinct population (though genetic distinction may take some time to come about). So we can see why ethnicity itself might play a substantial role in the formation of any new culture.

It's long been noted that population genetics are shaped in part by cultural factors – consider lactase retention amongst R1b-derived populations (a product of cattle herding, not the cause of it). The same root people can develop into two genetically distinct entities given enough time spent practising different cultures (e.g. nomadic pastoralists vs. settled agrarians). Differences in diet and day-to-day activity alter the epigenetic expression of the individual, which over time leads to genetic divergence between the two groups despite their living in the same environments.

Equally well, given a thousand years or more in a new land, any people will diverge noticeably from their relatives back home, even if they maintain the same tradition over time – hence the internal diversity found in all parts of the world, where large scale migrations brought massive foreign populations who diversified over time relative to their new locations.

This latter kind of divergence is obviously down to the interactions going on between the people and the land over time: people in different places are eating different foods, drinking different waters, engaging with different environments and experiencing different climates, and are being shaped by these factors as much as by cultural and political considerations, if not more so. Thus the land on which we live is one of the most important factors in the ethnogenetic process.

Beyond area and ancestry, the remaining aspect of ethnogenesis is "way of life." That is, the way in which people live their lives, the drives which motivate their actions and the beliefs that inform those drives. For ethnogenesis to be successful, the people must bear themselves in a way that constitutes an intelligent response to the situations they find themselves in. Even if based in large part on old traditions, it's likely that new traditions – ones agreed upon by common sentiment relative to current predicament, rather than historical precedent – will be tailor-made by the people to fit their needs in the moment, and will be updated accordingly as time changes.

Putting it all together

Ultimately, these three aspects of ethnogenesis can be expressed as three questions: "who have we been," "what are we faced with," and "what do we want to achieve?"

The first of these relates to the history of our people(s), as well as the history of the land to some degree. The second relates to the current situation that we find ourselves in, including the changing factors that are forcing us to re-evaluate our identities. The third relates to the outward expression of the people, i.e. what do we do relative to our history and our current situation.

All these three aspects are interlinked–ancestry is shaped by culture and land, land is shaped by ancestry and culture, and culture is the product of our ancestors in the land. What it means to be a tribe is to be a superorganism, transcending time and individuality. If we want to be sure of where we're going, we need to know where we are; and if we want to know where we are, it can help to know where we've been.

Thus, to engage on all three fronts, the historical-analytical, the present-practical, and the future-ideal, is a sure way forward in this process.

The aim is not to come to a "finished product" but to engage in continued investigation and discovery. That in itself is the bedrock on which any new culture will be founded. There will be no ethnogenesis without at least some deliberation on all of these three questions. These are the crucial aspects which we must wrap our heads around if we're to successfully navigate our metamorphosis through the coming age, such as will certainly be required.

Ethnogenesis in practice

Asking these questions in itself constitutes the work of ethnogenesis, with one sole addition: the sharing of information. It's all well and good for us to research these topics as individuals, but it's better for us to share what we find with each other actively.

Overall, the most effective thing one can do, and which seems to carry everything else in its wake, is to inspire and be inspired. The whole point of the tribe, of the ethnos, is to form a centre point for one's life, providing context and reference in an otherwise senseless world. The sharing of information is key in the process of developing this ethnos – not just information, but inspiration as well.

The spirit of a tribe has to be kept fresh and vibrant. To keep up with each other on these matters, such that we become a force of remembrance unto ourselves, will spur us on to maintain a momentum that would otherwise be hard held by our hands alone. Community is the key in finding out who we are as human beings: we are no longer born into our right communities in this modern world, but must go out and find them. They exist, and are waiting to be discovered by us.

Afterword

I've used the term ethnogenesis in at least two distinct senses through this article, though they are not unrelated. The first sense is the creation of the ethnos from the outside perspective: the real life events and happenings that lead to the emergence of distinct peoples. The second sense is the creation of the ethnos from the internal perspective: the subjective discovery and intuitive exploration of the self in the context of the wider whole. These two are related in that the one arises out of the other: the introspection which leads to the internal development of new identities, when shared with others, spawns an internal dialogue within communities. When these questions are raised and answers sought, narratives are developed in turn, and new tribal identities are born. The work of ethnogenesis constitutes a two-pronged attack: on the inner level, we discover who we are and who we want to be; on the outer level, we share this information with others and develop a community consensus as to our group identity.

In sharing this internal process with others we find like-mindedness, and discover that what we've been seeking in ourselves is clear in others in the outer world. These people constitute our tribe, I would say. We find them by pursuing these avenues of enquiry actively.

On one level, ethnogenesis is a cultural phenomenon which transcends the activities of any individual (with a few notable exceptions). In practice, ethnogenesis is the pursuit of each individual, in that it's the individual's desire to understand his or her own context that spurs the community on to discuss itself and develop.

If we want to see new tribal entities arising in the post-modern era, that would suggest that we're the ones to put the legwork in in these initial stages. That means to ask the questions mentioned previously, and to open ourselves to the answers that lie in wait for us. The information that we need is out there: we will find it if we pursue it. The inspiration we need is out there: we will find it if we seek it. The drive we need is in us: we already feel it and have but to let it manifest for us for it to blossom as willed activity. Again, ethnogenesis is a conscious process: we make the decision, engaging our own willpower, to undergo this process and discover our contexts. Again, it is a natural process: we can be sure that it will happen more and more amongst both individuals and communities as the world wakes up out of its communal funk.

The winds are picking up on the horizon: the evidence that this process is already underway in the world is that we're talking about it at all. That is the first step on the way: to discuss and discover. Enacting what we discover is the next. That will be the first step into a new world for many of us, but we will surely take it, if history is anything to go by.

Anarchism accepts the reality that people are not the same. They are as varied as their experiences, knowledge, and abilities. This stands in stark contrast to all other political ideologies, which demand uniformity and conformity behind one system, often dealing with followers of other ideologies with all the zeal of fundamentalist proselytisers, imbued with a missionary quest to convert others to their favored version of statist utopia. But there is an alternative, cognizant that human beings express the same multiplicity that exists within nature.

ANARCHISM WITHOUT ADJECTIVES
NATIONAL-ANARCHISM AND THE DIVERSITY OF COMMUNITIES

by Sean Jobst

One idea that overlaps with National-Anarchism is "Anarchism without Adjectives", because it accepts and embraces the plurality of anarchist approaches. This is fully compatible with the National-Anarchist acceptance of human diversity, that tribes and communities will naturally live differently than other communities and tribes. There is no universalist one-size-fits-all solution applicable to everyone. Whilst it is natural that various statists would advocate mass-conformity, it is reprehensible that there are many groups of so-called "anarchists" who demand authoritarian obedience to their own school.

We National-Anarchists are especially attacked because our vision stands in stark contrast to the conformity demanded by the loud and vocal group of Marxists masquerading as "anarchists". In the late 19th century, the most numerous group of anarchists were the French communist anarchists, who criticized some of the different anarchist approaches then prevalent in other countries such as Spain. Tired of the polemical infighting, the Spanish anarchist Fernando Tarrida del Mármol (1861-1915) proposed "Anarquismo sin adjetivos" in 1889. He rejected the communist (not to be confused with the statist Communist movement) claim to "purity", since "Anarchy is an axiom and the economic question something secondary". The divergent economic visions are of "secondary importance" to the primacy of uniting around the basics while still allowing for harmonious discussion: "In our conversations, in our conferences and our press, we do discuss economic questions, but these questions should never become the cause of division between anarchists." [1]

Despite his own communist approach, Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta (1853-1932) reached out to other anarchist schools because "it is not right for us, to say the least, to fall into strife over mere hypotheses." [2] The Austrian-German anarchist Max Nettlau (1865-1944) agreed that anarchists should unite around what all of them had in common, since "we cannot foresee the economic development of the future." [3] Nettlau recognized the validity of both communistic and individualist approaches as valid, and affirmed that each has a piece to the larger puzzle, since, as stated by Paul Avrich, "economic preferences will vary according to climate, customs, natural resources, and individual tastes, so that no single person or group can possess the correct solution."

Because human beings are both individuals and social beings, Nettlau foresaw the complementary function of communalist and individualist outlooks.

To only focus on one to the exclusion of the other would actually hinder people's confidence in anarchism, because it would be ignoring human nature. After all, how can a movement claim to be for freedom and yet deny people's right to their own chosen approach? "The anarchist movement ought to be one, relegating those economic differences as matters of nearest detail," Nettlau proposed. "The purely hypothetical character of these doctrines should prevent exclusionism from the beginning. Moreover, many misunderstandings are created by discussing the conflicting theories without considering in each case to which epoch of anarchist evolution an author refers. For anarchist society will not be a cast-iron mechanism but necessarily a developing organism to which different means and methods are most conducive at different times." [4] He elaborated further elsewhere:

"Let me imagine myself for a moment living in a free society. I should certainly have different occupations, manual and mental, requiring strength or skill. It would be very monotonous if the three or four groups with whom I would work (for I hope there will be no Syndicates then!) would be organized on exactly the same lines; I rather think that different degrees or forms of Communism will prevail in them. But might I not become tired of this, and wish for a spell of relative isolation, of Individualism? So I might turn to one of the many possible forms of 'equal exchange' Individualism. Perhaps people will do one thing when they are young and another thing when they grow older. Those who are but indifferent workers may continue with their groups; those who are efficient will lose patience at always working with beginners and will go ahead by themselves, unless a very altruist disposition makes it a pleasure to them to act as teachers or advisers to younger people. I also think that at the beginning I should adopt Communism with friends and Individualism with strangers, and shape my future life according to experience. Thus, a free and easy change from one variety of Communism to another, thence to any variety of Individualism, and so on, would be the most obvious and elementary thing in a really free society; and if any group of people tried to check this, to make one system predominant, they would be as bitterly fought as revolutionists fight the present system." [5]

Having moved ideologically among all the leading anarchist schools of thought at one point or another, the American Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912) realized that each had some validity but, seeing the contentious debates within America between the mostly native followers of the individualist Benjamin Tucker and the mostly immigrant followers of Wilhelm Most, she had moved towards Anarchism without Adjectives by 1901. She expressed her views in an essay simply named "Anarchism":

"It is not an economic system; it does not come to you with detailed plans of how you, the workers, are to conduct industry; nor systematized methods of exchange; nor careful paper organizations of 'the administration of things.' It simply calls upon the spirit of individuality to rise up from its abasement, and hold itself paramount in no matter what economic reorganization shall come about. Be men first of all, not held in slavery by the things you make; let your gospel be, 'Things for men, not men for things.'" [6]

Her basic principle of "freedom from compulsion" meant the principled de Cleyre found problems with all the various systems. She was a socialist until, as admitted by Emma Goldman, de Cleyre's "inherent love of liberty could not make peace with the state-ridden notions of socialism." She was then an individualist anarchist, but came to disagree with its economic doctrines because the "essential institutions of Commercialism are in themselves good, and are rendered vicious merely by the interference by the State." She was then a Mutualist, but rejected that approach too due to her pacifism. But finally with Anarchism without Adjectives, she found that simply "all methods are to individual capacity and decision". Any particularities are solely up to the free individual. As she writes in her essay "Anarchism":

"Socialism and Communism both demand a degree of joint effort and administration which would beget more regulation than is wholly consistent with ideal Anarchism; Individualism and Mutualism, resting upon property, involve a development of the private policeman not at all compatible with my notion of freedom....There is nothing un-Anarchistic about any of [these] until the element of compulsion enters and obliges unwilling persons to remain in a community whose economic arrangements they do not agree to. (When I say 'do not agree to' I do not mean that they have a mere distaste for....I mean serious differences which in their opinion threaten their essential liberties....) Therefore I say that each group of persons acting socially in freedom may choose any of the proposed systems, and be just as thorough-going Anarchists as those who select another."

Similarly, the French individualist anarchist Émile Armand (1872-1963) called for pluralistic economic structures coexisting within an anarchist society: "Here and there everything happening - here everyone receiving what they need, there each one getting whatever is needed according to their own capacity. Here, gift and barter - one product for another; there, exchange - product for representative value. Here, the producer is the owner of the product; there, the product is put to the possession of the collectivity."(7) Indeed, anyone aware of the intricate control the State has over all sectors of economic and social life (being as it is the convergence of government with banking and corporations) can only conclude that a multi-faceted approach is necessary to counterbalance the State - setting up grassroots institutions of free exchange and cooperation, various alternative currencies and means of exchange, and different non-corporate, non-consumerist economic structures that would begin to erode people's dependence and subservience to the coercive systems of the State.

The problem that I have personally found among the various libertarian and anarchist schools is their obsession with economics. Only National-Anarchism seems to focus more on the deeper non-economic realities, cutting through to the very heart of what makes individuals, tribes and communities alike - what they truly are as living organisms, not reduced to artificial economic whims. We all live on and share this Earth, coming from various tribes and communities; we all have our own unique experiences and talents. Why would one even desire for all to be the same and to conform to the same structure? Not only is this unrealistic, indeed a recipe for endless conflict, but it is likewise anti-human: ignoring that even as individuals we can and should evolve based on our experiences, interactions and acquired knowledge. This is why National-Anarchism truly is the best framework for realizing our potential: it manifests the very spirit of Anarchism without Adjectives, carried from the economic into the metaphysical.

Notes:
[1] Fernando Tarrida del Mármol, "Anarchism Without Adjectives," La Révolte, vol. 3 no. 51, Sept. 6-12, 1890.
[2] Quoted in Max Nettlau, A Short History of Anarchism, London: Freedom Press, 1996, pp. 198-199.
[3] ibid., p. 201.
[4] Nettlau, "Some criticism of some current anarchist beliefs," 1901.
[5] Nettlau, "Anarchism: Communist or Individualist?—Both," Mother Earth, vol. 9, no. 5, July 1914, pp. 170-175.
[6] Voltairine de Cleyre, "Anarchism," Free Society, 1901.
[7] Émile Armand, "Anarchist Individualism and Amorous Comradeship," 1907.

BEYOND LEFT AND RIGHT
PRELUDE TO THE FUTURE

A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE

by David Oakspawn

In this short article I will discuss the family unit, which I feel is crucial to how a society operates. My goal is to try to explain how the crass materialism of Western society leads to the erosion of said family unit, regardless of its cultural origins. I also intend to show how National-Anarchism can be a solution to this predicament, regardless of what parameters you choose to tie the core of your tribal identity to. Despite the narrow selection of choices that we are presented with, particularly when narrowly defined within the dialectical materialist paradigm, there are nonetheless many options outside of these which we are purposely not shown.

I am African-American (or considered as such; the truth is more complex from a genetic standpoint - to be more accurate, I am racially mixed). I was bought up fairly poor. Because of this, and due to the influence of the "American dream" so stressed in America, you are pushed to strive towards materialistic goals. Achieving material wealth becomes everything, even if it sometimes seems as if you are being taught otherwise (for example, through the medium of religion). The push of material wealth as being the defining component of what makes you an American is even more defined these days, particularly in the African-American community. But it was also this way, though less so, when I was growing up.

The history of African-Americans contributes to this - there is a paradoxical element within African-American society where on the one hand you criticise American culture as a whole but in another way you feel the need to belong to and achieve within it. There is always this desire to "make it", as defined by a bigger house, car, etc. In my family, there were always skeletons in the closet; some I didn't find out until I got older - there were things done from materialistic motivations, whilst being justified under the purview of "preserving the family unit", when in fact the modus operandi was the preservation of the self.

In the recent past, what is called African-American culture has been profoundly negatively influenced by what comes out of Hollywood. One of the main influences on African-American culture, for example, has been the glamorization of mafia movies coming out of Hollywood over the years. This has instilled a love of power, materialism, and "attitude" (by "attitude", I mean lack of empathy, arrogance, defining yourself by material things, etc.). In the modern era, you see rappers writing books on the subject of "power". You see a lot of reality shows stressing a "all I care about is getting mine, I couldn't care less about you" approach (this crass materialism is prevalent in all reality shows regardless of culture, by the way). You see less hip hop music stressing a positive message but instead a materialistic sensibility. Younger people appear unconcerned about upholding their communities; it is all about the "bottom line". All of this seems to be endorsed by the power elite at large, who ultimately control things. This does not mean that African-Americans do not bear some responsibility; but it is to say that the ruling elite in Western society endorses the messages that are disseminated. You can see it all throughout the media - a blind, solely materialistic parallax view. This, over generations, has created a vicious cycle; a never-ending feedback effect of perpetual decline.

African-American culture is not the only culture affected by this: it affects all cultures negatively in different ways, even though it may manifest differently depending on the culture it is filtered through. It filters down from the macrocosm to the microcosm; the family unit being the kernel of what makes ethnicity strong. The crass materialism of Western society and how it has affected my family has also affected my view on race in that I personally feel no strong connection to my race, even though I respect people that do. In the course of my life, I have seen the negative effects of Western society (through technology and otherwise) on the myriad of different cultures and families around me in many forms, some direct and some indirectly. The maintaining of the family unit is utterly crucial to those who wish to preserve an ethnic identity. I consider National-Anarchism to be a great solution to those who want to do so because it sets true morals, values, and ethics before dialectical materialism. This will also work for the best for others who choose to organize their tribal roots around identities other than ethnicity.

In this short essay my objective was to talk about my own experiences in Western society while also pointing out how my experiences tied to my view on race in the bigger picture. I also intended to express the universality of my experience where it comes to what people experience in Western society. This universalism ends up in destroying true diversity (to coin a phrase from my friend Troy Southgate) in the long run. True diversity should allow people to live according to the identity that they see fit; this includes ethnicity also. To make it abundantly clear, I personally wouldn't choose ethnicity as a defining characteristic of what I consider the defining aspects of my tribe and/or tribal identity due to my personal experiences. Ultimately it is up to everyone to freely choose what they define the parameters of their identity to be - something that is considered sovereign within National-Anarchist philosophy. That is why I think this approach is a natural one in an unnatural world.

better read than dead

Journeys in the Kali Yuga by Aki Cederberg

by Alexander Storrsson

Journeys in the Kali Yuga is a worthwhile read for any student of western or eastern spirituality, especially those with some understanding of the Indo-European spectrum. Aki has allowed himself an outsider's eye in the midst of deep engagement with an ancient, living spiritual tradition: as such, he is capable of reporting both on the external oddities he witnessed during his travels, such as we might guess at from afar, as well as the internal ecstasies he experienced under the guidance of gods, gurus, a sprinkling of ganja, and some good friends.

The story itself is compelling, varied enough in its flight from frenzy to felicity that it keeps one engaged throughout. There's little in the way of "technical references," as I would call them: the emphasis is on the broad experience gained from his trips to the Indian subcontinent and how they relate to his own native tradition, not on the convoluted subtleties that were no doubt the mainstay of any number of rituals and rites engaged in during the course of his journeys. The greater part of the book revolves around his initiation into one of the more clandestine sects of Indian holy men, and yet it is the atmosphere of this initiation, and of the experiences he had in the company of his new adopted spiritual family, that permeates the book, not occult jargon or endless lists of mantras and mudras. One need not be a student of Sanskrit or versed in any degree of Hindu lore to be able to understand perfectly not only what Aki is talking about, but especially what he gained from his experiences, because the essence of what is put forward is a timeless truth: that reality, in all its inconceivable vastness, is to be grasped from within one's tradition, one's tradition to be imparted by reality.

Sprinkled throughout the book are returns to the motherland, where Aki expresses the changes he recognises both in himself and in his understanding of the European tradition following his trips to India. The evolution of both his practice and his appreciation of the ancient European way is made very clear, especially in his interactions with both living friends and the ancient mounds where past glories reside, the stones and sacred spaces of Europe where once a world not unlike that found in India reigned. Even during the passages concerning India and Nepal, there are frequent references to similarities between Indian and European mythology, cosmology, ritual practice and philosophy - the near constant re-application of lessons learned in India to his own native northern tradition is refreshing, especially in a "spiritual market" saturated with unabashed hyper-orientalism.

Aki makes it plain that his own experience of "Hinduism" suggests strongly that it is a tribal tradition, therefore ultimately "off limits" to Westerners - if only in that our long-standing ethnocultural differences, based as they are on geographical and climatic differences, require us to tackle the mystery of reality from different angles. Nevertheless, he easily grasps the underlying current of wisdom that permeates both the Indian tradition and his own indigenous tradition, and therefore uses the experiences he goes through in India to support, even to fill out, his understanding of his own ancestors' way of belief and practice. To this end, this is a fantastic book: as a study of comparative mythology and magical theory, it is second to none that I have read before. There may be others of this calibre, but they are few and far between.

This is not the kind of book that a love-and-light, new age hippie will be happy to sink his teeth into. Nor is it necessarily for the hard-and-fast "Asatruar" who feel that they already know their own dilapidated tradition back-to-front because they read the Eddas once or twice. For those Europeans who are sincere in their desire to unfurl the mysteries of being from their near-lost heritage, and who would happily turn their gaze abroad if it would yield them insight about their own tradition - this is the book for them. Aki's journey in itself is the proof not only that the Indo-European tradition is a consolidated whole, but that it is a timeless and placeless tradition, capable of emerging in a vast array of forms that nevertheless all point back to one single truth and one single origin. The internal diversity of the Indo-European milieu is far from a weakness: it is an incredible strength, indicative of the adaptability of a way of life and vision that sees truth, reality, love and beauty as the objects of meaning, all else coincidental.

For those who believe that India is the place to go for all our spiritual revelations, this book is a firm but gentle "Stop!" sign. "Turn back - you missed a spot." Equally, for those who believe they have nothing to learn from anywhere beyond their own borders, this book is a gentle but firm push to explore foreign pastures, unknown lands, hidden worlds and nameless valleys where the true core and spirit of our ancestors' tradition is not only still alive, but burns brightly with the ancient flame that set all our peoples alight. It may be found in India, it may be found amongst the Parsis, it may be found in the Buddhist tradition anywhere in the world, but wherever it is found, if it is the true spirit that initiated all these diverse faiths and forms, it will be recognised as such. That recognition will lead to the reinstantiation of the ancient European tradition in time, as much as it has done for the Hindus and the Buddhists in times past. If that is our goal, Aki's book is a forward leap. I invite my fellow Europeans to investigate it, if they have a desire to know better the origin of their own tradition.

Desert Solitaire, by Edward Abbey

by Gregor Eugen Elliott

To me Edward Abbey himself is an anarchist's anarchist; he doesn't give two shits what anyone thinks of him - even other anarchists. I'm not familiar with all of his work, but Desert Solitaire was certainly a turning point for me to become a full-fledged anarchist - no more beating around the bush, as it were. Desert Solitaire is an autobiographical work about Abbey's time as a park ranger at Arches National Monument in Colorado, U.S.. In this book he basically argues that government attempts to set aside 'wilderness preserves' fail because they have to make profit, or justify financial expenditure in essentially human progress terms, i.e. they have to attract tourists ('Industrial Tourism' he calls it), or else they are of no value. He says: "There may be some among the readers of this book, like the earnest engineer, who believe without question that any and all forms of construction and development are intrinsic goods, in the national parks as well as anywhere else, who virtually identify quantity with quality and therefore assume that the greater the quantity of traffic, the higher the value received. There are some who frankly and boldly advocate the eradication of the last remnants of wilderness and the complete subjugation of nature to the requirements of - not man - but industry. This is a courageous view, admirable in its simplicity and power, and with the weight of all modern history behind it. It is also quite insane." Abbey certainly believes that we need to preserve wilderness areas, but for their own sake (and for ours, but not just for ours), not for the sake of bureaucratically inclined human beings, which wind up destroying what they are trying to preserve with such bureaucracy.

I have always considered myself an avid 'environmentalist', but until reading Desert Solitaire (which I acquired quite randomly, it being in the book collection of my ex-wife, and I picked it up on a whim after having read the description on the back) I was not exposed to the idea that government (at least 'big government') was necessarily set up in opposition to environmental concerns at a fundamental level. I had, until reading this book, just taken it for granted that we need some kind of government oversight to protect wilderness areas, or at best, I just hadn't thought about it much. Indeed, the truth is the opposite, as Abbey eloquently, but with real raw character, conveys in this book, that government cannot protect wilderness, but only further degrade and destroy it. From this it follows that the only way to really be an environmentalist is to be some kind of anarchist, opposed to the state.

But at an even deeper level - not just opposition to the state - I learned how to not merely be an anarchist, but a lover of freedom itself. Abbey says, of his solitary relationship with the desert wilderness surrounding him, 'love flowers best in openness in freedom.' We cannot coerce a love of the world around us; it must arise from our free exploration of it - to build a deeper and truer relationship with our surroundings in the wild. This I can tell you from my own experience is not what government sanctioned wilderness preserves are about, but I am thankful to Abbey for helping open my eyes to just how true that is.

Voltairine de Cleyre and "Anarchism Without Adjectives"

by Keith Preston

I first began to seriously study anarchist political thought during the late 1980s. I immediately noticed there was considerable diversity within the anarchist tradition, along with a range of ideologies and philosophies that overlapped with anarchism to a considerable degree. I recall wondering how one might go about deciding which of these was the most salutary. Fortunately, I found the answer to my question shortly thereafter. I discovered the anarchist historian Paul Avrich's work An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre, a biography of the early 20th century anarchist who coined the phrase "anarchism without adjectives." De Cleyre developed this concept in response to the disputes that existed at the time between mutualists, syndicalists, collectivists, individualists, and Tolstoyans. A similar tendency known as "synthesism" was developed by the Russian anarchist writer Voline during the same era. The central idea behind these concepts was the promotion of anarchist unity in diversity, and the championing of a social order offering the opportunity for self-determination for all. The realms of both anarchist schools of thought and modern societies in their entirety have become only more diverse in the present age. The need for a political outlook that is capable of addressing serious questions related to the existence of a plurality of values is ever more urgent.

When I discovered National-Anarchism many years after first discovering De Cleyre, I recognized in National-Anarchist thought a potential method for applying the ideas of "anarchism without adjectives" to the contemporary world. National-Anarchism essentially takes the plurality of anarchist economic systems and organizational forms that were championed by previous generations of anarchists without adjectives, and applies this concept not only to the growing array of anarchist tendencies of contemporary times, but the wider expansion of ideological and cultural diversity that has emerged in late modernity.

Alternative Green, the decentralist worldview of Richard Hunt

by Troy Southgate

Despite having been a comparatively enigmatic and little-known figure, Oxford anarchist Richard Hunt (1933-2012) went on to make an enormous impact on the fringes of radical English politics and eventually became a key influence on what later evolved into National-Anarchism. A talented artist, in his younger days Richard had worked at the BBC and even designed sets for cult shows like Doctor Who and Monty Python's Flying Circus.

As editor of Green Anarchist magazine, the popular format and style for which he was solely respon-
sible, Richard eventually upset his left-anarchist counterparts with his forthright views on patriarchy
and was eventually expelled from their ranks. Once he had established Alternative Green, on the
other hand, Richard opened a unique dialogue with the English Nationalist Movement (ENM) and its
later incarnation as the National Revolutionary Faction (NRF). Between them, these organisations -
both of which had already rejected the disastrous parliamentarianism of the reactionary right - were
busy campaigning against capitalism and communism and spent over ten years advocating full politi-
cal, social and economic decentralisation. The nationalists were also promoting racial separatism,
something Richard himself disagreed with, but this did not prevent them finding common ground
based on a belief in mutual respect and non-coercion. This was a mark of Richard's remarkable toler-
ance and open-mindedness, and I was proud to call him a personal friend.

In 1997 Richard published an excellent 225-page book called To End Poverty: The Starvation of the
Periphery by the Core and, by outlining his ideas in a concise and down-to-earth manner, the text re-
mains a valuable addition to the wider struggle against globalist exploitation. Beginning with an analy-
is of mankind in the so-called Third World, Richard demonstrates that - left to their own devices - the
African peoples are, contrary to what most people have been led to believe, neither malnourished nor
socially disadvantaged in any significant way. Using a variety of authoritative and reliable sources,
ranging from the sociological to the demographic, he insisted that we in the West have a great deal
to learn from these allegedly 'primitive' and 'backward' cultures.

Whilst the agricultural conglomerates of Western Europe and North America are said to be at the
very forefront of the technological revolution, Richard questioned the entire nature of our economic
development by arguing that life was (and indeed, still is) a whole lot easier in hunter-gatherer societ-
ies. He certainly provides a strong case, for those tribes in the Third World which have decided to
abandon their natural way of life and embrace the cultivation of the soil as a means of avoiding the
hunger and poverty caused by increasing population levels have, inevitably, come to realise that a
comcomitant increase in labour soon results in what Richard described as the 'Leisure Preference'.
The evidence for this, as George Kingsley Zipf's Human Behaviour and the Principle of Least Effort
(1949) explains, is that in *"simple terms, the Principle of Least Effort means, for example, that a
person in solving his immediate problems will view these against the background of his probable
future problems, as estimated by himself. Moreover he will strive to solve his problems in such a way
as to minimize the total work that he must expend in solving both his immediate problems and his
probable future problems. That in turn means that the person will strive to minimize the probable av-
erage rate of his work-expenditure (over time). And in so doing he will be minimizing his effort, by
our definition of effort. Least effort, therefore, is a variant of least work."*

Indeed, as Richard correctly points out in his own work: *"How hard would you work if you were
warm and well-fed and all your family and friends were outside in the sun? How bored with leisure
would you have to get to go and work on a factory production line?"*

After studying the role of the dominant hierarchy which permeates both humanity and the animal
kingdom, he said that: *"Millions of years ago animals found that fighting to get the best mouthful of
meat from a carcass was a fairly silly way of going about things. They evolved a sustem we call the
'peck order' (or pecking order or rank order or dominance hierarchy). They all agreed to fight just
once to establish their position relative to each other. After that a look, or a peck, was enough to
remind the other of the result of that fight, so they didn't need to go on fighting."*

In the eyes of Richard's idiotic detractors, this approach is merely an example of the 'fascist author-
itarianism' which led to his expulsion from Green Anarchist circles. Whilst his analysis is fundamental-
ly correct, however, Richard also tried to draw what I believe is a slightly vague comparison between
the hunter-gatherer's fulfilment of his basic needs - i.e. food, shelter, clothing - and that of a modern
family with two cars: *"In our urban society one agreed measure is who has the bigger car. If you've
got two cars, even better. So the two-car garage does not contradict Leats Effort after all. It's a way of
asserting the peck order over your neighbour without having to hit him over the head every morning.
Conventional means to conventional goals. Keeping up with the Jones's is a very necessary pattern of
behaviour for keeping the peace in the community with Least Effort."*

Although Richard would undoubtedly agree that a ruling class or dominant elite has an interest in
maintaining its own position and of keeping its lesser rivals in check, he does appear to have missed
the point a little.

Within urban, capitalist societies, the attainment of wealth or material possessions is not always achieved in such a straightforward manner. Capitalists often rely on others to do all the pecking on their behalf. Furthermore, the capitalist entrepreneur may have the perceived advantage of owning two or three cars, but he may subsequently cause widespread redundancy for those over whom he wields power.

If those in the supermarket, the office or the factory attempt to peck back, they are dealt with ruthlessly. In other words, materialists are far more eager to display the spoils of 'free enterprise' than consciously strive towards maintaining the peace. Let's face it, even an inclination to keep the peace can be sacrificed on the high altar of capitalism and one only has to think of the financial motivation that drove the 'Iran-Contra' and 'Arms for Iraq' scandals. More importantly, perhaps, Richard argues that *"the Consumer Society, materialism [and] conspicuous consumption are all examples of this necessary behaviour. If we've got enough money to waste on electric toothbrushes, we must be well-off, high in the peck order."*

But whilst animals can 'rule the roost', so to speak, by employing little more than a studied glance, the more wealthy elements among our own species do not necessarily command respect from those at the opposite end of the artificial class spectrum. If anything, the affluent simply attract envy, bitterness and hostility. Rather than helping to maintain the peck order, therefore, the widening divisions between rich and poor are fuelled and exacerbated. Richard even says as much in his book, noting that in 'primitive' societies the wealth is shared because in *"small community wealth is a bit of an embarrassment."*

Whilst Richard saw little difference between the dog-eat-dog mentality of capitalist consumerism and the Social-Darwinism of the animal kingdom, he also believed that we humans are different to our fellow creatures in the sense that we have the ability to reason with a given situation and, if necessary, assist those others who may not be able to stand up to the unforgiving rigors of the peck order. Among the beasts, as in the capitalist marketplace, the weak inevitably go to the wall, but this sense of common fellowship represents a stateless support system in defence of the less able and is rather similar to Kropotkin's thoughts on mutualism. As far as Richard's thoughts on the 'Leisure Preference' and the 'Law of Least Effort' are concerned, however, National-Anarchists would wholeheartedly agree that, given half a chance, people certainly would revert to a lower level of technology if it led to an increase in leisure time.

Richard also made a serious attempt to tackle what he liked to describe as 'The Birth of Tyranny', examining the role of the dictator in societies such as Nyungu-ya-Mawe's Tanganyika, eighth-century Scotland, Ancient Crete and first-century Germania according to Tacitus. He believed that when a charismatic leader fights his way to the top of the pile, he maintains his position by rewarding his most loyal companions and allowing them to wallow in the spoils of war and then disarming the rest of the population as a prerequisite for total and utter control. Consequently, he argued, as the budding dictator begins to increase his power he can then *"extract the plunder without fighting by demanding 'gifts' from subordinate chiefs [...] This is the precursor of taxation. These 'gifts' are then distributed by the leader to the companions (which is what taxation is all about, taking from the many to give to the few)."*

At this point, hunter-gatherer societies develop a system of hierarchical obedience and, coupled with the fact that forms of conquest and primitive taxation inevitably create a wider availability of food and other materials, this leads to greater stability and an increase in the immediate population: *"It seems that populations grow when a group or family becomes no longer self-sufficient; when it is not limited by the amount of food on its own land. When it could get food from elsewhere, it could have more children."*

Richard denied that agriculture ever led to settlement and population growth, on the contrary, the population explosion actually preceded agriculture. In other words, people suddenly discovered that they had to work harder in order to ensure that enough food was produced to feed their offspring. But if agriculture did not cause settlement and population growth, then what did? Having already identified the role of the tyrant and his followers, Richard singled out the role of religion and explained that *"a shaman was able to instil religious obedience into the tribe and force them to hand over some of the results of their hunting and gathering. They fed a small elite who could settle down in a fortified place."*

Another of Richard's crucial ideas was that religion is also used to develop the concept of organised kingship and thus help maintain the ruling elite in the event of a tyrant's demise.
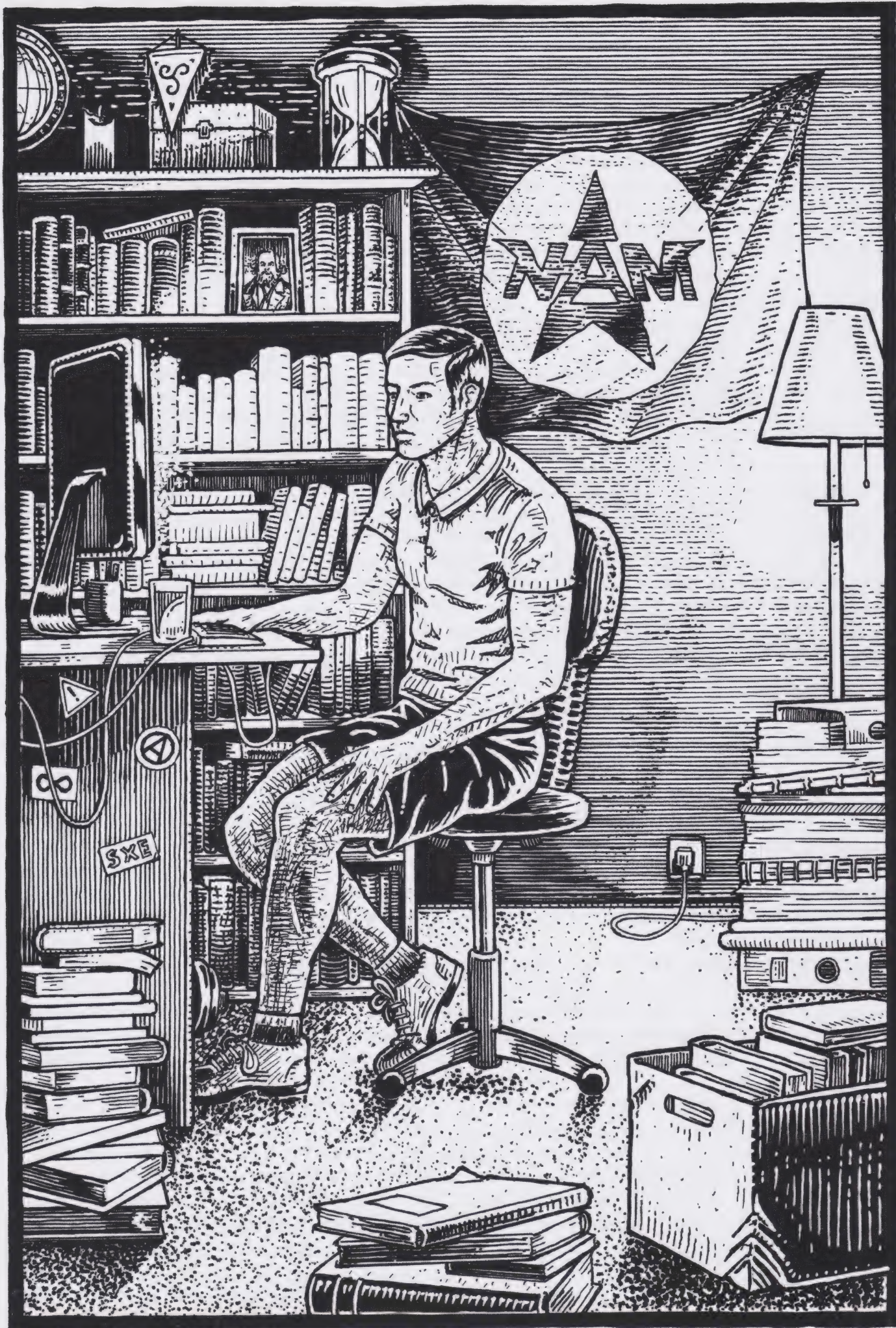
This, he believed, was achieved by creating the myth that the late dictator was directly descended from the gods and that, consequently, his son or daughter was cut from the very same cloth and must therefore succeed him. This kind of organised deception undoubtedly took place, certainly, although it seems rather unfair to dismiss all forms of spirituality as contrived superstition or man-made constructs that are designed to fool people into blind obedience. Richard nonetheless dismissed the possibility that a community might contain authentic psychics, seers and prophets altogether. Nonetheless, he did admit that there *"are persuasive examples of clairvoyance very often linked with religion. When a seer who is a successful healer and proven clairvoyant says with total conviction that there is a god, that's persuasive."*

Richard also made some excellent points in relation to the manner in which populations are manipulated in order for governments to safeguard against dissent and rebellion. The most interesting aspect of governmental control is the 'planting' of cities and towns: *"The cities of Mesopotamia greaw up around the castles, palaces and temples. They have no independent economic validity. They produced no wealth. They generate no jobs. It is the food from the peasants which generates the jobs. The cities are simply places where the extracted surplus is spent. If the king goes away and the surplus is no longer brought to the city, the city dies."*

He compared this process to the modern boom towns of North America, many of which are now empty and desolate or which have simply disappeared altogether. But whilst the fluctuating fortunes of trade are undoubtedly a major feature in the decline of cities, Richard also proved that there *"are other reasons for towns and cities, military and administrative, no more natural than cities built from the surplus expropriated from the periphery. Right from the beginning towns had been planted to control the local population. Today it's called 'hamletisation'. In East Timor, Guatemala etc., recalcitrant natives are forced into villages where any rebellious activity can be more easily suppressed. [...] The grid-iron pattern is an indication of towns planted by a government, whether for administrative, military, or, as we shall see later, tax-raising purposes."*

The judiciary also has a role to play within the spectrum of engineered urbanism, because the ruling class (or what Richard preferred to call 'the elite') must legitimise that which has been obtained - i.e. stolen - from the sweat of the people's brow: *"At first, 'Justice' took the crops, then it took the ground on which those crops were grown. The Lords in Britain, in their Parliament, passed the Acts of Enclosure, acknowledged as legalised theft, which took the people's land, making it into the private property of the rich. Those laws are still operating, enforced every day in nearly every case involving property. Final Appeal against these laws is to those very Lords in that same Parliament who made those laws."*

Throughout history, Richard argued, the 'elite' has tried to justify its 'superior' ability to rule by deploying all the usual methods of propaganda, embodied in texts such as Homer's Iliad and the anonymous Beowulf. Indeed, Richard believed that once kings had been presented with the 'divine right' to rule the folk sagas became redundant and were no longer written. This is not strictly true, of course. As is evidenced by Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain (1136), tales of heroism were still prevalent during the Middle Ages and although such propaganda has been watered-down in more recent times, the importance of the biopic is still encapsulated by Martin Gilbert's fawning appraisals of Winston Churchill or the media's stomach-churning adulation of European royalty.

Another example of the way in which Richard interpreted the exploitative behaviour of government, relates to extensive road-building and its use as a means of transporting wealth: *"In Mali in one year nine-tenths of the development aid was spent on roads. all but one of the roads went from the agricultural areas down towards the ports. The other went from nowhere to nowhere but was militarily important (for subduing its own people)."*

Governments also have an interest in creating a monopoly over arms and the ruling class, in order to hang on to power, sets out *"to disarm the people. It's a tricky operation because the elite still needs an armed force to discourage importunate neighbours. It seems usually that the freemen, the upper middle classes, kept their arms and an obligation to fight for the elite, while the poor, the slaves, serfs etc., the vast majority of the population, were forbidden to have arms."*

Profit-making, from Richard's perspective, was divided into three interlated trading zones: the periphery, the hinterland and the core: *"The city depends for its existence on removing the crops from its hinterland and periphery. Because of the cost of transport, the difficulty of control and the perishability of some of the crops, there is a pattern of concentric circles round the core supplying certain*

crops. The areas furthest away, the periphery, supply the finest products, tars, furs, wax, hides. The nearer parts of the periphery supply the timber, because of transport costs."

Richard was adamant that the exploitation of the periphery is currently being undertaken by the West at the expense of its Third World counterparts. In fact Richard was opposed to all forms of trade and believed that it destroys co-operation, thus making the periphery poorer: *"Therefore the traders had to force the periphery into trade [...] The core rulers supply arms, via the traders, to periphery rulers to suppress their own people and extract the crops to sell to the traders for use at the core. The periphery rulers depend on the traders for their income and power, and they depend on the core rulers for their guns."*

Richard was also astute enough to recognise the huge role that money and taxation play in this destructive formula: *"A government makes laws to give the monarch sole rights to all gold mines, 'Regalian Rights': it forbids anyone else to mint coinage; it forbids any other coinage to be used as legal tender, and then it forces taxes to be paid in its own coinage. So to obtain the coins to pay the taxes, the people must work for the elite, the only source of the coins. Or they must give their crops to the elite for the coins which they then give back in taxes."*

Ingenious, really, isn't it? Removing money from the equation altogether would certainly solve a few problems: *"All the things which had been desirable and obtainable would still be there, still available. It would mean only that those who manufactured the money could no longer remove the desitable objects with their enforced legal tender. Money is a means of taking wealth from the periphery and giving it to the core, taking it from the poor and giving it to the rich."*

Richard understood that if a king begins minting coins then his immediate neighbours are forced to mint their own coins in order to prevent their crops from being sold in exchange for his coins. Every king, therefore, has an interest in ensuring that his subjects become solely dependant on his coins. If the other countries weaken him to the extent that the people are using more than one currency, however, they will be able to take advantage of his crops. This, of course, is the same reasoning that led to the creation of a single European currency and governments realise that financial unity helps to retain the status quo. By contrast, operating trade sanctions against 'dissident' countries is used as a means of weakening their economies.

Richard also discussed the so-called 'class struggle' and believed that Marx had got things completely wrong: *"The class struggle is not between the bosses and the workers but between the bosses with the workers against the peasants. The bosses depend on a strong ruling class for the expropriation of their food. When a peasant moves to the town, he is selling out the other peasants. He is going over. The great divide is between those who produce the food and those who consume it."*

He suggests, therefore, that the ideal social stratum is comprised by producer-consumers, i.e. those who grow and eat their own food, make and wear their own clothes, and build and live in their own houses. In other words, those who have turned their backs on the System and achieved real autonomy by doing things for themselves and their communities.

The 'division of labour' was an important issue for Richard, too, a term which relates to the method used by capitalists to convince their workers that increased production leads to more profit for all concerned. Economists describe this as the 'trickle-down' effect. Richard explains: *"The traders and the industrialists would become wealthy and this wealth would 'trickle down' to the middle classes, then to the working classes and then to the peasants. This convenient theory happily justified forcing the peasants to produce more crops because, it was said, the crops would stimulate trade and industry which would then create wealth which in the end would trickle down back to the peasants and make them wealthier. It also justified driving them off their land so that it could both grow more cash crops to stimulate trade and force the peasants back into the factories which would then create wealth to trickle back to the workers. It did trickle down to the workers, but never back to the peasants."*

This notorious system has its roots in Adam Smith's The Wealth of Nations (1776), which is essentially the bible of modern capitalist economics. Richard suggested that Smith completely overlooked the fact that *"the wages of the lowest paid are determined not by the success of the firm but by the hungrier unemployed outside, prepared to work for even less."*

This maxim can also be applied on a national level as regards the capitalist theory of 'comparative advantage', which asserts that *"if two countries specialise in what each does best then more is produced. True."*

It then says that because of the increased production, the workers of each country get higher wages. Untrue, because like 'division of labour', while the rich of each country benefit, the wages of the lowest-paid are determined by other hungry countries."

Another area in which Richard had a keen interest was civilisational regression. He examined how empires such as Rome and China began to expand in accordance with their respective increases in population. Once a population begins to decline, however, it leads to abandoned fields and towns. Richard said that without increasing population, empires always risk losing the extensive control they wield over neighbouring territories, due to the huge expense and effort of maintaining them: *"The Roman Empire in the West crumbled from the edges. While it held onto the towns on its periphery and the roads connecting them, it lost control of the surrounding countryside; and so it lost the crops. So it could feed fewer soldiers. Its power to collect the taxes weakened. It lost more revenue. It lost more territories and their crops."*

Consequently, as the Germanic rebellion led by the Vandals, Huns and Goths systematically attacked the outermost fringes of the Empire, people began to leave the towns and return to their former lands. Thus, the cities fell into decay.

Richard also explained how the gradual development of technology allowed the Benedictine monks to build up a massive agricultural empire of their own by relying on the devious rivalries of their aristocratic benefactors. As far as their Cistercian brothers were concerned, the road from poverty to profit was inadvertent more than anything else and by planting monstaeries in the most uninhabitable parts of Europe, the Order had little choice but to opt for sheep farming rather than straightforward agriculture. Eventually, of course, the Cistercians managed to create a monopoly in the wool trade. Richard knew a great deal about the Church's involvement in the establishment of the early banking industry, too, although he never went on to explore the more dangerous rise of the Jewish moneylender.

One interesting connection that Richard made with the growth of the wool trade was its relationship with the emergence of the industrial mill. Between 1320 and 1470, he said, the seemingly unbridled growth of industry suddenly began to stagnate due to the lowering of the price of grain and the failure on the part of priests and princes to pay off their financiers. This caused large-scale devastation within the Italian banking industry, but why had the price of grain fallen so dramatically? To Richard's mind, this came about as a result of the planting of new towns on the periphery, a move which led to increasing competition between the old and new cores. This competition eventually caused the arrival of mercantilism and ruthless trade wars, culminating in the arrival of powerful nation-states: *"International trade is a dog-eat-dog exercise, a zero sum game; one succeeds because the other fails."*

This was followed by a policy of colonialism, an attempt to capture valuable raw materials overseas before other aspiring countries could do the same. On the domestic front, the British Isles were subject to a severe reduction in standards of living and the working classes found themselves producing not only for the rich, but also for their own kind. This was due to the fact that long hours meant that urban workers had no time left to make their own clothes and shoes. Meanwhile, on the periphery, increasing mechanisation led to redundancy and mass starvation. All in all, Richard was convinced that the disadvantages of economic growth are *"a high population which cannot feed itself; a large landless proletariat to provide factory fodder; a large internal demand and a large tax base; a protected home industry; untaxed imports of food and raw materials; high indirect taxes; high government expenditure on 'defence', and threatening neighbours."*

What happened in England also affected industrial growth elsewhere throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and, once the 1917 Soviet Revolution arrived, Lenin set about seizing crops and timber from the Russian peasantry and Stalin launched his large-scale industrialisation programme.

Turning now to the issue of trading blocs, and particularly that of the European Community, Richard explained that *"the Community, to be economically strong, needs a large periphery to exploit, i.e. more poor countries joining the Community. But if it has got to give them regional aid, it needs less poor countries. As we shall see with the Third World, aid can be very successful in increasing economic development and therefore poverty. So the contradiction will be resolved with aid which exploits, and rich members will recognise the benefits of increasing membership to the poorer countries."*

Richard thus exposed the sinister link between the trading bloc and spiralling Third World Debt: *"Throughout history as the core developed, its periphery starved to feed that core. And so it starves today."*

Richard wrote a great deal about how the Third World has suffered at the hands of international capitalism, beginning with how overt colonialism was replaced with a more subtle array of neo-colonialist 'alternatives' such as development, investment, loans and military aid. In reality, of course, whilst Third World countries will never be able to settle their debts with those who have plunged them head-first into poverty, their land is used to grow crops for capitalists abroad rather than alleviate poverty at home.

It is also worth mentioning Richard's dismissal of the Greens, not least as a result of their endless reliance on the tired constitutionalism of the ballot box. Their inability to understand the wider relationship between one thing and another, such as the naive proposal that indirect taxation on petrol would lead to fewer cars on the road, was said by Richard to result in an increase in the cost of living: *"Wages would go up so labour costs will go up, so more labour-saving machinery will be required, exactly the economic growth that the Greens deplore. There will be more unemployment. The poor will be poorer."*

So despite their friendly smiles and fetching cardigans, the Greens merely exacerbate the problems we face.

Richard was absolutely convinced - and rightly so - that the only solution to the current crisis today is revolution on the periphery. In other words, just as the empires of the past were gradually broken up, so too will the global establishment and its powerful trading blocs. Politically, the seeds of destruction are there for all to see: *"While the political trend is to a smaller unit, the economic trend is still towards enlargement."*

Indeed, this is true of all the established doctrines - be they capitalist, communist or fascist - but the influence of Richard's ideas by way of Green Anarchism, Alternative Green and now National-Anarchism has changed everything. Richard was an ultra-devolutionist in the sense that he believed that the first step towards the realisation of English autonomy would be through the break up of the European Community, followed by the independence of Wales, Scotland and Ulster. Consequently, these nations would then break up into separate regions and the process is repeated again and again until the only units remaining will be self-sufficient, armed villages.

Although we must not be misled by the kind of fake devolution that has been offered by the controlled regionalists of Catalonia or during the anti-climax of Brexit, Richard is correct to suggest that the only way is down. He was shrewd enough to realise that this process will not take place in isolation, either, and that it must happen on an international scale in order to prevent a more powerful neighbour intervening as a means of enforcing its own imperialist strangehold on its smaller rivals. Radical decentralisation of this kind will lead to a radical shift in the social strata: *"As self-sufficiency increases, people move about less. Communities regain their strength. The social sanction by the community against anti-social behaviour gets stronger. There is less crime. Because of the community support there is less poverty and lineliness in old age. The community replaces the State in providing necessary welfare."*

It sounds marvellous, at least on paper, but Richard was never one to romanticise: *"It's a grubby sort of utopia, not cultured, or liberal, or advanced, or powerful. Instead, it will be warm and well-fed, kind, peaceful, lazy and parochial. And it will work because it has worked for hundreds of thousands of years."*

When Richard suffered a major stroke early into the twenty-first century and was forced to retire from active politics, it was a sad day for all of us. Myself, Adrian White and Wayne John Sturgeon managed to keep Alternative Green magazine alive but Richard eventually lost the fight and passed away in 2012. He was one of the great thinkers of the last century and his ideas are even more important now that we are moving towards greater mass production, yet more centralised government, increasing militarisation and thus widespread competition over the earth's dwindling resources. With National-Anarchism, therefore, we continue Richard's struggle.

Apart from the opening quotation from George Kingsley Zipf's Human Behaviour and the Principle of Least Effort, all subsequent quotes in this article were taken from Richard Hunt's 1997 work, To End Poverty: The Starvation of the Periphery by the Core.

Smash All Dogmas: Overcoming the Addiction to Ideology

by Keith Preston

Perhaps one of the most curious features of modernity is the way in which ideologies have replaced religions as a principal source of contentiousness. During the era of the nineteenth century, when the intellectual revolution of the Enlightenment was being institutionalized, a few perceptive thinkers recognized that the "death of God" did not mean the death of dogma. In 1844, Max Stirner noted that "our atheists are pious people," an acknowledgment that humanism and liberalism had replaced Christianity as the religion of the intellectual elite. Similarly, Friedrich Nietzsche's "Parable of the Madman" was rooted in the recognition of the consequences of the loss of faith, its metaphysical underpinnings, and its derivative traditions.

"What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?" (Nietzsche, The Gay Science, 1882)

The era of the twentieth century revealed that the Age of Faith gave way not to an Age of Reason, as Voltaire or Thomas Paine would have hoped for, but to an Age of Ideology. What were the great conflicts of the twentieth century, whether the two world wars or the Cold War, but wars of ideology that paralleled or exceeded the great wars of religion that had taken place during previous centuries?

Many different ideologies abound in the same manner that many different religious sects can be identified. Ideologies are typically grouped into the categories of Left and Right. The Left is thought to favor equality, progress, and universality, and leftists include liberals, progressives, socialists, social democrats, communists, left-libertarians, and left-anarchists. The Right is thought to favor hierarchy, tradition, and the particular, and rightists include conservatives, reactionaries, traditionalists, monarchists, right-libertarians, fascists, and national socialists. There are also a range of ideologies that defy the left/right model such as nationalism, populism, environmentalism, regionalism, feminism, and third positionism.

For their adherents, ideologies serve the same function that religions provide for their believers. None of them may be "true," as no one possesses complete knowledge. Instead, both religions and ideologies are collections of myths and archetypes that people use to give structure to their own psyche and form common bonds with others. Ideologies create narratives that also resemble those of religions. It does not matter so much whether it is true, is some cosmic sense, that the Buddha was born with the ability to walk and talk as an infant or had telepathic powers, or whether Jesus turned water into wine or resurrected himself and others from the grave, or whether Mohammed flew on a winged horse or possessed magical healing powers. The fact that the followers of the great religious traditions believe these things makes these archetypes real to them, and this belief motivates the adherents of the world's religions to action. Similarly, it does not matter so much whether narratives postulating the reality of "white privilege," the "Jewish conspiracy," historical materialism or that ancient Egyptian pharaohs were melanin-pigmented are objectively "true" or not. These concepts are real to their true believers because they think and act as if these are real.

A growing body of evidence has been accumulated which indicates that people choose their political beliefs and affiliations for reasons that cannot be explained in terms of rationality. For example, twin studies have indicated that a substantial portion of one's political outlook may be genetically hard wired. Indeed, there is a growing field of inquiry known as "genopolitics" that seeks to identify the relationship between genetic influences and one's political outlook. In a ground breaking article published in the American Political Science Review in 2005, political scientists John K. Alford, Carolyn Funk, and John R. Hibbing argued that research into the origins of the political beliefs held by individuals indicated the presence of primal mindsets that shape these beliefs.[1] Dozens of studies now exist in the fields of political science, psychology, neuroscience, and the cognitive sciences which indicate an individual's genetic predisposition to certain political beliefs, and that the roots of such beliefs develop in childhood.

Additional evidence also exists that a range of non-rational factors influence one's political judgments. For example, physically taller political candidates tend to be much more successful than shorter ones. Facial features and the quality of the prospective political leader's voice are also important determining factors in their likelihood of success.

For decades, psychologists have raised insights concerning the addictive nature of religious beliefs, and there is evidence that ideologies are similarly addictive. Ideological zealots require constant reinforcement of their beliefs, and breaking away from a deeply held ideological belief system can often be very painful psychologically in the same way that a loss of religious faith can also be very painful. Ideology provides a sense of certainty and purpose into an "all or nothing" state of mind. Ideological affiliation also provides one with a sense of belonging, and those who cease their affiliation with the group or repudiate the group's ideology are often regarded as traitors or moral defectives. Ideology shapes how one regards not only one's ideological allies but also one's opponents. Just as religious fundamentalists view their opponents as sinners in need of salvation, ideological fundamentalists view their opponents as wayward souls in need of enlightenment. However, those who do not share the ideology are also regarded as inferior in some way, whether morally, mentally, or intellectually. Complexity and ambiguity are seen not as challenges to be embraced but as threats to be avoided.

The question that subsequently arises involves the matter of how addiction to ideology can be overcome or avoided in the first place. A few basic principles might be applicable in this regard. One might be to safeguard against extreme positions that consider those with opposing views as enemies rather than as dissenters with whom disagreement can be held in good faith. It may also be healthy to maintain a skeptical approach to perspectives that purport to offer some grand explanatory theory of history, human nature, and social evolution. Grandiose propositions concerning human potential and capabilities also warrant caution. While in-group/out-group dichotomies are certainly a social and political reality, an over emphasis on these tends to creative divisiveness and bitter rivalries that become self-destructive. It is also appropriate to approach social, political, and economic questions in the same manner that one would expect medical science to be approached in the sense of favoring a pragmatic reliance on factual evidence rather than ossified dogma.

As an illustration, the economist Ha-Joon Chang has argued that there are nine basic schools of economic thought: classical, neo-classical, Austrian, Marxist, Keynesian, developmental, Schumpeterian, behavioral, and institutional. Rather than rigidly attaching one's self to a specific model of economic theory, would it not be more appropriate to examine specific claims made by contending schools on contentious economic questions on the basis of a reasoned consideration of the actual arguments and evidence? Similarly, attacks on the expressive freedoms of political dissenters have traditionally originated from the state. However, in the world of the twenty-first century such attacks are just as likely to originate from corporations, universities, or the mass media. As David Oakspawn has observed:

"Here we have a situation where government is not censoring speech, but private entities that has control and have a monopoly of and on the means of information combining to suppress free speech with the government enabling that power, banning free speech through the back door. This brings into question the idea of the so-called "free market" and makes it more obvious that it is time to think outside of the so-called "liberal," "conservative," "left," "right," "communist," "Nazi," "free market," "more government", or whatever dialectic that the narrow mental quicksand-ish paradigm can bring up."

Of course, in addition to genetic and psychological considerations that shape one's ideological outlook, there are also considerations of one's own immediate self-interest, and the interests of one's own reference groups. People adopt the political affiliations that they consider to be advantageous to the interests of their own tribe. Centuries of religious conflict in the Western world were ended only by the establishment of religious toleration and the de jour or de facto, depending on the nation, separation of religion and state. A similar question exists today concerning the possibility of ending, or at least reducing, conflict between ideological and political tribes by means of new paradigms such as that offered by National-Anarchism.

Ideological conflicts of the kinds that plague modern societies have emerged in direct parallel to the growth of the modern state. It is not coincidental that the most extreme forms of statism, such as Nazi and Communist totalitarianism, have also been among the most ideologically driven and rigid states.

In the media-driven, plutocratic liberal democracies that have become dominant in the present era, political conflict is largely a manifestation of different ideological tribes and their attendant reference groups attempting to gain hegemony within the state system. Consequently, so-called "democratic elections" simply become a means of deciding which ideological tribes will be allowed to repress or plunder their rivals. The rise of state-centric mass democracy and the parallel growth of multicultural-ism, which has the effect of eroding consensus regarding common civic values, guarantees the escala-tion of political conflict of the kind that is now developing virtually everywhere in the developed world.

National-Anarchism offers an antidote to this dilemma with its rejection of both statism and ideologi-cal universals. The National-Anarchist vision of decentralized, autonomous communities reflecting the shared values of their participants, while retaining the full rights of association and disassociation, pro-vides a practical framework for affording a reasonable degree of self-determination for all ideological tribes. National-Anarchism therefore has the potential to reverse the trend towards exacerbated social and political conflict that is now developing. Conflicts of these kinds ensure that violence, disharmony, and unhappiness will become more commonplace. The wars of religion that once plagued the Western world only ended when religion and state were effectively separated. It is reasonable to assume that wars of ideology will end only when ideology and state are separated in a similar manner.

Note

[1] Alford, J.R., Funk, C.L. & Hibbing, J.R. (2005, May 1). Are political orientations genetically transmit-ted? American Political Science Review, 99 (2), 153-167.

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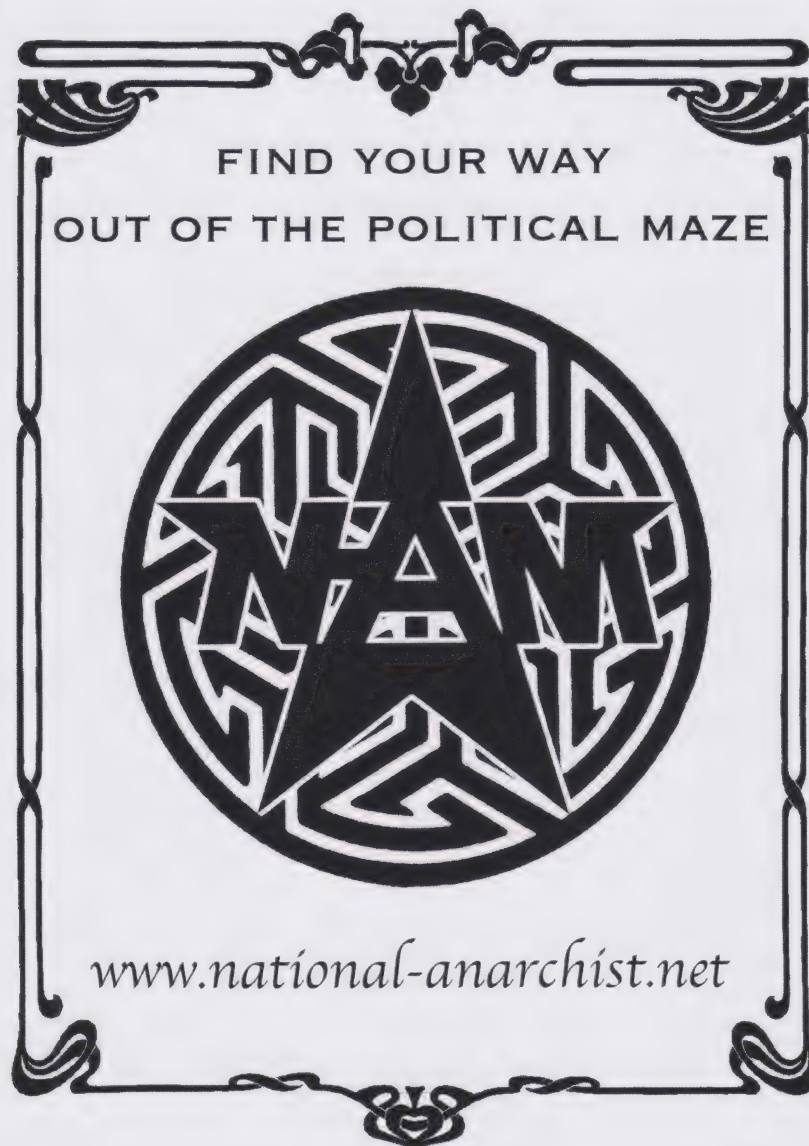
A Tlingit Nation

by Vince Rinehart

What would a Tlingit Nation look like? To answer that question, we might look to our past. At the time of contact with Russian explorers, and even in the days when the US Navy first began peering into southeast Alaska, the Tlingit Nation (if it could even be called that) was a decentralized network of clans and houses.

In the Tlingit world, clans are everything. Clans defined individuals; who they were related to, where they were from. Houses (a sub clan) were also the basic economic unit of the Tlingit. Clans and houses owned property, natural resources, hunting and fishing territory, and physical houses through a system of exclusionary collectivism and clan property. Clans also provided legal protection, both from war and from personal injury or loss. They were the institution that settled compensatory payments for crimes. The binding feature of the Tlingit was this common culture of clans, language, and history. The entire system was so useful for creating order in society that it dominated and defined Pacific Northwest Coast tribes from Yakutat on down to the Puget Sound. This same system of clan controlled territory can be found throughout the region. I speculate that this entire bioregion was so resource rich that it supported a large, semi-sedentary population of the sort and size that demands a complex social order to maintain peace and prosperity.

Why did we develop a clan based system? The dominant resource and source of food of southeast Alaska and all of the Pacific Northwest Coast from the Columbia River on up to the Copper River in Alaska has always been salmon. Salmon, of course, are nearly impossible to control or privatize, unlike productive farm lands or domesticated animals such as cattle. Allowing for individual fisherman to have full access to catch as many fish as he can would lead to the tragedy of the commons. So rather than privatize the resource, access to it was tightly controlled through clan based fishing rights over various stretches of territory. If you belonged to a clan, you had a right to fish that clan's fishing territory. Overfishing was prevented by restricting access to clan members only, and through social norms that emphasized resource preservation rather than over extraction. Clans that did poorly at this likely starved, their territory taken over by clans that could sustain yields over the long run.

My proposal is simple; make clans economically, politically and legally relevant again through a decentralized system of clan resource control, clan and tribal law, and clan alliances to protect Tlingit wide interests in the political realm. Where this isn't possible, make at least the spirit of clan property, political organization, and clan and tribal law relevant. What does that mean? Make our political organizations, economic arrangements and system of justice work for us again rather than against us. The coming of the white man to Tlingit Country has brought many changes to our lives. While the white man is here to stay (I firmly DO NOT support any sort of ethnic cleansing or ethnic conflict in our region) we should be free to order our Tlingit communities as we see fit.

How do we make it happen? My proposed strategy to achieve this is broken into two general areas, which will overlap in some cases:

The Institution Approach

· Use existing town and village level governments to protect Tlingit interests across the Tlingit Nation. I think this is already happening, but we need to step things up a notch. For example, southeast Alaska, to put it crudely, is basically one enormous salmon factory. This salmon, of course, directly supports our people. Our village, town and city governments should be unified in protecting our salmon runs from mining and logging interests in the region, activities that pollute and ruin salmon runs under current extraction practices.

· Shift the focus of our village corporations from resource extraction (such as logging) to building resilient villages. This means growing a food and fuel forest instead of a pulp forest. It may even mean micro loans for small scale, decentralized manufacturing.

It means building a village economy instead of exporting logs, an activity that provides only sporadic employment and sporadic dividend checks. The low hanging fruit that we should be focusing on is energy. Our villages pay up to five times the national average for electricity. In this price range, biomass electricity generation, and wind and water power become economically viable. A diversified energy source beyond diesel would go a long way. And that's just the beginning.

· Tribal Law: next time you have a dispute with another Tlingit in your community, go to your clan or house leader for his wisdom and guidance. Maybe even ask him to talk to the offender's clan or house leader about settling the dispute. Start with little things. Maybe your neighbor's teenager is a little out of control and being a nuisance. Maybe he's dating your daughter.... you get the idea. As our clan leaders build their capacity to be more than just cultural leaders, they will be able to handle bigger and bigger issues. Also, tell your clan leader that you are at his disposal if he needs you. Maybe a young member of your clan needs a little bit of guidance and you can reach out to him or her. Your clan leader can start to take care of connecting those sorts of dots for people.

If we began to build in these three realms: the political, economic and social, we will in effect be building a de facto Tlingit Nation. We will start to bypass Anglo institutions and instead utilize and build Tlingit institutions. In effect, we will build a shadow Tlingit government. Eventually, we may even have the capacity to seize control of our old fishing and hunting territories. I view this as necessary for the survival of our people. The US is in troubling times. Promises once made to Indian people will ultimately go unanswered, and we will be left to our own devices for survival again. It is time not for the US to undo the wrongs against us, instead it is time for us to take control of our own destiny. That is the Tlingit way of old.

The Grass Roots Approach (AKA what you can start doing right now, on your own):

For now, I give you Deep Green Resistance's strategy, which is straight out of the Open Source Warfare manual. Obviously we will have different goals and objectives, but we should copy the nature of their strategy.

Decisive Ecological Warfare

Goal 1: To disrupt and dismantle industrial civilization; to thereby remove the ability of the powerful to exploit the marginalized and destroy the planet.

This movement's second goal both depends on and assists the first:

Goal 2: To defend and rebuild just, sustainable, and autonomous human communities, and, as part of that, to assist in the recovery of the land.

To accomplish these goals requires several broad strategies involving large numbers of people in many different organizations, both aboveground and underground. The primary strategies needed in this theoretical scenario include the following: Strategy A: Engage in direct militant actions against industrial infrastructure, especially energy infrastructure.

Strategy B: Aid and participate in ongoing social and ecological justice struggles; promote equality and undermine exploitation by those in power.

Strategy C: Defend the land and prevent the expansion of industrial logging, mining, construction, and so on, such that more intact land and species will remain when civilization does collapse.

Strategy D: Build and mobilize resistance organizations that will support the above activities, including decentralized training, recruitment, logistical support, and so on.

Strategy E: Rebuild a sustainable subsistence base for human societies (including perennial polycultures for food) and localized democratic communities that uphold human rights.

The first phase is Networking & Mobilization. The second phase is Sabotage & Asymmetric Action. The third phase is Systems Disruption. And the fourth and final phase is Decisive Dismantling of Infrastructure.

For anyone not willing or able to actively join our movement, build a Resilient Community. Troubled times not of our making are ahead. We're just trying to survive the whole mess, and maybe clean up a little afterwards.

The seizure of our most important resource, salmon, by the US and State of Alaska has been disastrous to our people. The bombardment of our villages to subdue us, the diseases that weakened us, the boarding schools to change us, and the ordering of our lives under the white system of private property has all been our undoing. We exhibit high levels of poverty in a region that has one of the highest costs of living in the country. Anglo style social service agencies have supplanted the family functions and the safety net that clans once provided. Our way forward is to embrace our past. It is to reorder our lives around these institutions in order of most important to least: family, house, clan, and ultimately tribe. We need a true tribal nation. We need to resurrect the Tlingit Nation.

An Anarchist View of Women and the Feminist Flaw

by Maritsa Solares Rico

"The import is not the kind of work woman does, but rather the quality of the work she furnishes... Her development, her freedom, her independence, must come from and through herself. First, by asserting herself as a personality, and not as a sex commodity. Second, by refusing the right to anyone over her body; by refusing to bear children, unless she wants them; by refusing to be a servant to God, the State, society, the husband, the family, etc., by making her life simpler, but deeper and richer. That is, by trying to learn the meaning and substance of life in all its complexities, by freeing herself from the fear of public opinion and public condemnation. Only that, and not the ballot, will set woman free, will make her a force hitherto unknown in the world, a force for real love, for peace, for harmony; a force of divine fire, of life-giving; a creator of free men and women."

- From 'Woman Suffrage' by Emma Goldman (1910)

Does the world need feminism? Are those that cry out against current feminist manifestations simply denying a reality that remains unfavourable to half the world's population or are they right - is my perception distorted? In order to attempt to answer these questions and understand the issue better, I have read several books on women, some feminists and some not.

An interesting book to read on the subject of women and anarchism is Martha Acklebergs's "Free Women of Spain" about the Spanish female anarchist group Mujeres Libres (Free Women). It is important to realise that these women, although they argued for (and took) organisational autonomy with regard to the mainstream libertarian movement (the CNT anarcho-syndicalist union; FAI anarchists and FIJL libertarian youth), on an individual basis they came from and were mostly militants within those organisations as well. They therefore were social revolutionaries, but revolutionaries who saw that existing revolutionary organisations, for all their rhetoric, were failing to properly represent women's aspirations and were even, in some cases reproducing attitudes towards women (even fellow militants) that were at best patronising and at worst abusive. However, because of the class basis of their political orientation, they were not interested in what they described as middle class 'feminism' which they saw as merely advocating women's rights to take their place in the hierarchy of an unequal society, which, in itself, would do nothing to liberate the majority of women (or men).

While anarchism should be, almost by definition, not male chauvinistic, this used to be true only in the public sphere. In the domestic realm, anarchist men still expected women to be subservient. The private, so-called female jobs, were not believed to be as important as the public tasks undertaken by the men. Precisely because of this, women were also thought of as less active because who could dedicate themselves to greater causes while caring for an elderly relative or a baby? Who could expand their knowledge, create art, be an activist in between laundry and cooking? Women were equals in the workplace but they were also expected to perform the tasks that they had traditionally done if, for example, there was a meal to be made or cleaning to be done at a meeting.

There is an anecdote regarding the famous commander of the Iron Column during the Spanish Civil War, Durruti, which illustrates this point. Durruti was at home and a comrade came to see him. He found the commander bathing his small daughter and making dinner for himself and his family, as his wife was out. The other man, shocked, asked him why he was doing that, that it was not his place. Durruti then proceeded to explain that it was indeed his place if his wife was working to care for his home, and not spend his time in bars, and furthermore, if he hadn't understood this basic fact that he had not, in fact, grasped anything about anarchism.

I also found the book The Female Woman by Arianna Stassinopoulos / Huffington - first published in 1973 - particularly interesting, although she often suggests that men have it worse than women in general in Western countries, which is factually dubious. In it, the author places the emphasis on arguing that women´s liberation not only does little to help women, but seeks to eliminate "the very nature of women and, in the guise of liberation, seeks to enslave her." She makes a good point when she says that some feminists insist on separating the different aspects of women - making the reproductive and biological parts seem a burden, while placing more value on their intellectual aspirations. In this observation I agree with her. It would seem that to be a modern, 'liberated' woman, you must rebel against your nature and only or mostly aspire to develop your intellectual and economic capacities whilst rejecting your biological capacity to bear children, as if these two aspects weren't compatible.

Basically, the problem with liberal feminism is that it encourages women to separate these aspects and forces us to choose one or the other; the 'right' one being our professional capacity and the 'less right' one being our more nurturing, maternal and personal side. In truth however both of these two aspects are intrinsically ours and there is no need to segregate and choose. This approach cannot achieve justice even for women, let alone for anyone else.

"The trouble is, this feminism is focused on encouraging educated middle-class women to "lean in" and "crack the glass ceiling" – in other words, to climb the corporate ladder. Therefore, its beneficiaries can only be women of the professional-managerial class. And absent structural changes in capitalist society, those women can only benefit by leaning on others — by offloading their own care work and housework onto low-waged, precarious workers, typically racialized and/or immigrant women. So this is not, and cannot be, a feminism for all women! But that is not all. Mainstream feminism has adopted a thin, market-centered view of equality, which dovetails neatly with the prevailing neoliberal corporate view. So it tends to fall into line with an especially predatory, winner-takes-all form of capitalism that is fattening investors by cannibalizing the living standards of everyone else. And worse still, this feminism is supplying an alibi for these predations - increasingly, it is liberal feminist thinking that supplies the charisma, the aura of emancipation, on which neoliberalism draws to legitimate its vast upward redistribution of wealth."

- Nancy Fraser interview, "A Feminism Where 'Lean In' Means Leaning On Others"

"...the achievement of full freedom for women (all women, not a privileged few) presupposes such profound economic, social and political changes that, were such a historical development to take place, the present status quo could not and would not survive."

- Hester Eisenstein

Capitalism does not favour the existence of close knit communities. On the contrary, it seeks to isolate us and make us dependent on the state which, as Nancy Fraser says, lacks the structures to substitute these support systems. In this way, it is a direct attack on families in general and on women in particular, hindering their everyday lives and forcing them to effectively choose which capacity they wish to develop, the professional or the personal, and in choosing the former makes them complicit with inequalities towards other, less empowered women.

For centuries, women have been limited to domesticity, with little attention being paid to their aspirations and qualities outside of that sphere. Often women bore the brunt of raising their children, looking after the elderly or ill and organising all the household tasks, which in a predominantly rural economy included feeding cattle, tending to a vegetable garden, and ensuring the well being of every member of the family.

All the women I know who have families assume organisational duties, modified according to the particular circumstances of their household or business based on anarchist principles, albeit unknowingly. Women organise their houses and jobs so as not to leave anyone or anything behind. Special attention is given to the least capable. Nevertheless, everyone is expected to contribute according to their capacity and everyone has a place and a specific weight to pull in the unit.

An anarchist-minded woman in charge of a group of people will try her best to get everyone to collaborate and to make sure no one is left out; to encourage and protect without coddling or manipulating. An anarchist-minded woman is not afraid of assuming responsibilities or being unpopular at times. We are aware of the potential of our people and we expect them to do their best.

An anarchist woman is a doer, always looking for ways to improve the communication and efficiency in her group of influence. An anarchist woman knows that in order for us to have our needs met, there must be a high level of co-operation, because nobody can survive alone in this world. Anarchism works as a dual relationship of satisfying the individual needs, but all the while keeping these needs in check with the greater interest of the group. In this sense, both the individual and the family can evolve to a greater level of development. Peggy Kornegger, an anarcha-feminist theoretician, saw that feminism did relate to anarchism through the "emphasis on the small group as a basic organisational unit, on the personal and political, on anti-authoritarianism and on spontaneous direct action which was essentially anarchism".

As an anarchist, what I wish for families and women is this: a tribe, a community that offers mutual support and aid because that's precisely what's most sorely missing. A community that everyone participates and is invested in. Only this way can we achieve true justice and equity, where freedom may be understood, as Errico Malatesta proposed, "not as an abstract concept but as the possibility of action".

Plantago Plantain Wegbrade (Waybread)

A Powerful and Useful Healing Herb and Food Plant

by Gregor Elliott

And, you, Wegbrade, mother of herbs, open to the east, mighty within; carts rolled over you, women rode over you, over you brides cried out, bulls snorted over you. All you withstood then, and were crushed; So you withstand poison and contagion and the loathsome one who travels through the land.

- Woden's Nine Herbs Charm

In Old English, what is commonly referred to now in Europe and European colony countries as 'plantain' or 'plantago', was called 'wegbrade', which would become in modern English, 'way-bread'. In this word, 'bread' does not mean a food made from leavened grain, but it simply means 'broad', and thus 'way+bread' refers to how the plant has broad leaves, and grows alongside the roadway. The Nine Herbs Charm, quoted above, gives this plant high praise indeed, calling it the 'mother of herbs', and essentially saying that its strength to endure anything (which is true - it is a very hearty plant, with tough veins in the leaves that can be used to make strong cordage, and its seed stalk can become almost woody) is the source of its power against illnesses. We can know here that the healing properties of this plant were well known to the English, and likely other European peoples as well.

The Native people in America called this plant 'white man's foot', because it was said that wherever Europeans settled, this plant grew, and since then there was a taboo among Natives to use the plant or collect it for any purpose. But at least one person, Tom Brown Jr., an Apache trained outdoorsmen, includes it in his Field Guide to Edible and Medicinal Wild Plants, relaying the above mentioned Native taboo against its use, but arguing that it is so powerful that all people must learn how to benefit from it. In this article, I will seek to do just that, and elucidate some of the practical experience I have with its use, and my own findings for the great effectiveness of wegbrade (which I call it because I myself am English descended, and am a native English speaker, and I also find 'plantain' to be a confusing term for it, as this term also applies to a small banana like plant that is not related at all.).

In general, wegbrade, as a food plant, has young leaves that are an excellent cooked green, and the seeds can be collected to cook in with other things, or I've heard one can even make something like peanut butter from them. (I have not tried that myself.) I find collecting the seeds to be a bit difficult to get a very large amount to do much with. But I have harvested them (which you do by drying the seed stalk, and then simply blowing the husk away to be left with the tiny black seeds in your hand) to simply add them to other dishes as they are a nutritional boost to any dish - high in protein and various minerals. I have mostly used it as a cooked green myself. It tastes a bit like spinach with a slightly more pungent flavour. It is also nutritionally comparable to spinach. The older leaves are almost impossible to eat, because, as has already been mentioned, they have very strong vein fibers in them. However, the older leaves seem to hold the strongest medicine, which is where this plant really excels. Thus as a medicinal plant, it can be used externally to treat essentially any wound or skin irritation, as it is antiseptic generally, but antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal specifically. It can also be taken internally for upper respiratory problems and for stomach complaints of a pathogen-created kind, both also because of its strong antiseptic properties.

I have personal experience with all of the above. I grew up knowing of the medicinal uses of this plant, as it grows everywhere in my native Tennessee, and I come from the people there who still held (though less so over time) much herb lore from our European homeland and what was derived from local flora post colonization. Where I'm from, it was used essentially in place of a band aid, or rolled up and put under a band aid over any kid's wound. I can say for certain it makes cuts heal faster than they seem like they should. As an adult, the first time I started using this plant again, because it was abundant in a field I lived near, I had taken quite a large slice from my finger while handling a very sharp knife. I cut it all the way down to where the bone could be seen. I immediately put cayenne pepper on it (which helps to coagulate the blood), and bandaged it. I then went to collect some fresh wegbrade leaf down the street. Once I removed the initial wound dressing, I replaced it with gauze with the leaf underneath it, having put it in my mouth to slightly chew it - this is called a 'spit poultice'. I continued changing out dressings with wegbrade leaf on them for about a week. But within three days the wound had closed sufficiently, and by the end of the week, it was fully closed, and only barely pink, with no pain to the touch. Now there is hardly even a scar on that deep wound. Such healing time is abnormally fast by anyone's standards.

In the area of Texas that I now live, we also have a horrible fire ant infestation, they are everywhere. I also react quite strongly to their bites, which I get commonly on my usually sandaled feet. The bite on my skin tends to itch, get red and swollen, and then in a couple of days it blisters up, and remains itchy and painful for about two weeks - unless I put a spit poultice of wegbrade on it, in which case the bite is typically healed by the next day, like it never happened. I tend to ensure that I do not get horribly sunburned, but I have used a cooled off infusion (steep the leaves as you would a tea, but be very generous with the amounts, and let cool in the refrigerator or a cooler with ice) on other people's sunburns and they claim it helps for sure.

I am also not very prone to upper respiratory problems, but my children are always coming down with something, so I have given some wegbrade to them in infusion form (with lots of honey of course) and it seems to help relieve their coughs and stuffy noses. I can assure that this plant is completely safe to use on small children, but I am personally not certain about infants. I have only used it with my own children from two and up. I am somewhat more prone to stomach problems, and always use a bit of wegbrade tea to alleviate those, and such problems usually don't last much more than a day or two, whereas without wegbrade, they could last closer to a week in my experience.

I should add that I have found that the absolute best way to use wegbrade for any ailments is to use the fresh leaves, either applied directly externally in spit poultice or band aid form, or as an infusion externally or internally. However, it is possible to also make tinctures and salves with wegbrade, if you do not have an immediate source, and need to store something with the medicinal benefits of wegbrade. A tincture can be made from the leaves of the plant by packing a jar tight with them, and then filling the jar with pure grain alcohol, moonshine, or vodka, and then the jar is allowed to sit in a cool dark cabinet for at least a month, and shaken every day.

Though this does make an effective tincture, I have found that the potency is at least cut in half vs. usage of the fresh herb. I personally find it better to make sure to have some on hand at all times, by finding it around where I live, or now I grow several species of it for myself to have them around all of the time. But the tincture can be used externally, applied to the skin directly (and of course the clear liquor is a sanitizing agent on its own), or added into water or juice by the teaspoon full. I would say that 8 or 9 teaspoons of tincture equal one small bundle of fresh herb infused. A better way I have found to store wegbrade for medicinal use is to extract it into olive or coconut oil, or alternatively tallow/lard with a small quantity of vegetable oil to soften it when it cools to room temperature, whereby you also pack a jar with the fresh leaves, then place that jar in a pan with a bit of water on your stove top (known as a double boiler or bain-marie). Pour your oil of choice into the jar, over the fresh leaves, and let it sit on the stove, on the lowest heat, for 6 or 7 hours, letting the medicinal agents from the plant extract into the oil. Then pour the oil out of the jar into another container, holding the leaves in the jar with a spoon, pressing them to squeeze out the last bits of oil (use this 'leaf sludge' immediately on the skin, as it is viable medicine itself at this point, but won't be for long, though you can store it in a refrigerator or cooler for a few days). This makes a very multi-purpose form of medicinal wegbrade for topical and internal use. You can apply it also to the skin externally, or use it to cook into your food. I have found that the reduction in potency is not as bad with an oil infusion/salve version of wegbrade vs. the tincture, and this is my preferred method of storing this plant. I have discovered that drying the plant renders it almost completely ineffective, and though many sources say this can be done, I do not recommend it. The medicinal qualities of the plant must either be used fresh from the ground, or extracted into another form with some loss of effectiveness, but not complete loss.

I have found wegbrade to be one of the most powerful healing herbs made available to us by our great goddess of healing, Eir (or Airmid, if you prefer the Goidelic spelling of her name), and made known to us by the wisdom of Woden. It is kind of an all-heal plant, as it can be used for many common ailments. It is definitely a go-to plant that I use quite frequently, at home and in the wilderness, and I hope that this has helped inspire you to discover its power and usefulness as well.


Further comments from Adam Ormes:

Few people seem to be aware of that wegbrade is also a powerful anti-histamine. I employed a vodka tincture very successfully this summer to fend off grass pollen hayfever, something that has previously been debilitating for me. I'm therefore very grateful to have learned of her gifts, and recommend that anyone who suffers from allergies of any sort experiment with them – far better than using pharmaceutical antihistamines, which make you drowsy and who knows what else. Indeed, I suspect that with the assault that our immune systems are currently weathering, we could all likely do with some. Meanwhile, her anti-inflammatory properties account for the leaves' ability to calm bites and stings - a good deal more effective than the much vaunted dock leaf in soothing nettle stings, for example, and as testimony to her potency, I've also found them to be very effective on wasp stings. Fortunately for those of us in temperate climates, she is one of the more common plants around after grass.

Also worth noting is the fact that wegbrade comes in a variety of forms, depending on what part of the world one lives in, all of which have somewhat differing properties, so you'll need to do some research into which Plantago species grow where you live and how they are employed. Having questioned Gregor on the subject, he said that in his experience they all appear to have similar medicinal properties when tinctured or made into ointment; however, the only one he finds suitable for eating is Plantago major, whilst Plantago asiatica (naturalised in the U.S.) is unsuitable for making into tea due to its irritant hairs. A good herbal from one's region ought to provide ample information on such things.

ZERO.WASTE
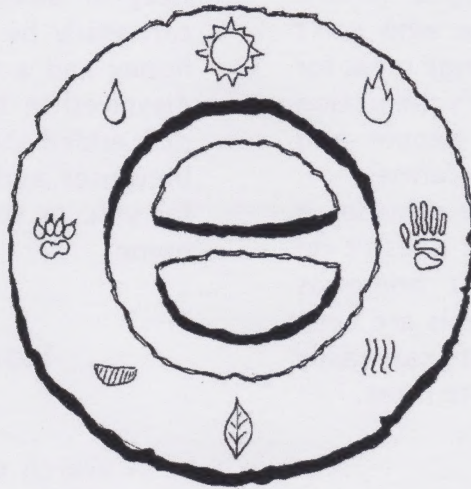
by Hildr Jørgensen

"Who will collect the garbage?" is often a normie's next question after asking about the roads when confronted with the idea of a society without government. For millennia our ancestors lived without plastic and produced no garbage, with some thought it's possible to also produce no waste. For primitivists this an easy direction to go in, but for others it's often difficult to know where to start. This is what I'll address in this article.

Cooking from scratch

For someone eating a lot of processed foods, it can be confronting to address their household waste. Cooking from scratch is a good starting point, because once a family's cooking is based on fresh foods such as vegetables, fruits, meats, eggs, nuts, grains and so on, it becomes much easier to source unpackaged ingredients, and the only wastes left behind are things that can be composted or fed to animals. Cooking from scratch is an essential step towards relying only on local foods and self sufficiency.

Dairy

For a family with a backyard, it often makes sense to keep a goat or two in the yard for an easy year-round, zero waste source of protein, vitamins and minerals, along with manure for the garden. For people who don't wish to do this, there are some smaller dairy farms that use returnable glass bottles, or there is the option of eliminating dairy and making lots of bone broth instead.

Pantry staples

Online searches for local bulk food stores and health food stores can result in finding shops where you can take your own containers, or use their paper bags, to buy foods you're used to using in the kitchen. Another option is to contact local farmers and find out if they can sell directly, or to talk to friends and neighbours about forming a co-op to buy food in bulk.

Meat, seafood and deli foods

Many butchers, fishmongers and delicatessens will happily fill your containers for

you. As more people become aware of zero waste options more shops become familiar with the process of taring a container on the scales and filling it with a weight or amount. For those who can't find suitable shops, or free range meat for sale in small quantities, there's the option of teaming up with other people and buying a whole animal from a farmer.

One eighth of a beef cow provides a good amount of each cut but doesn't require as many containers at home as larger amounts. Smaller animals are even easier, and poultry and rabbits can easily be kept at home for zero waste meat.

Vegetables

Vegetables can be grown at home or in community gardens, or traded with those who have more land to grow them. Some greengrocers will sell everything (or almost everything) unpackaged, others may have unpackaged vegetables in storage that they can sell to you instead of the plastic-wrapped ones on the shelf.

I have witnessed some shops locally deciding to sell all their vegetables without packaging, and this will happen more frequently as more people become aware of the problems of plastic packaging.

Drinks

With some forethought there is no need to buy bottled water. Unfortunately, the water that comes out of taps today is often filled with things we'd rather not drink. There are filters that can remove this, starting from a DIY sand filter and running to more complicated filters that will remove fluoride. Once a good source of water has been found, it's easy enough to bring bottles with you out of the house.
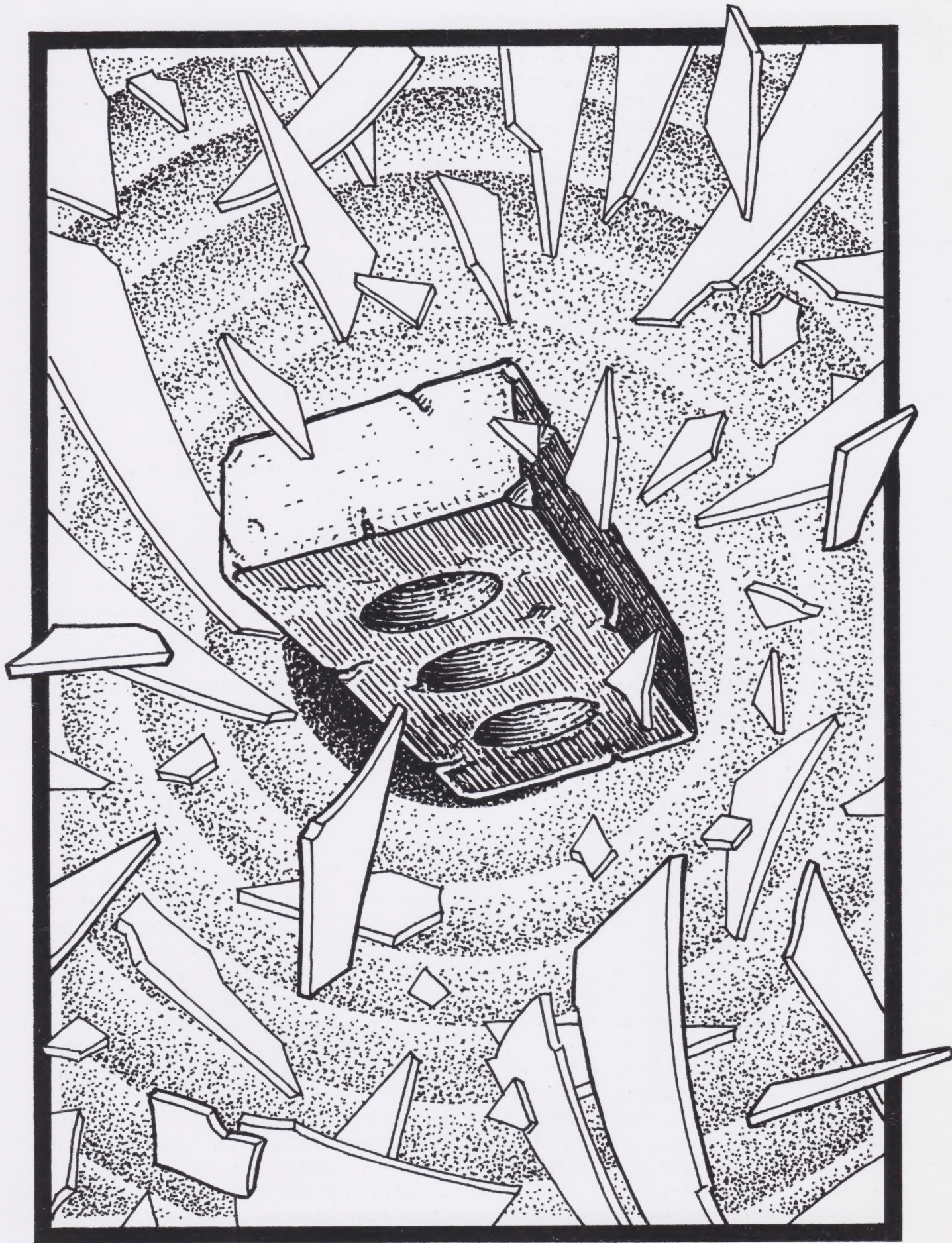
For other drinks, homemade ones are a healthy and zero waste option. Kombucha is a fizzy probiotic drink that is very easy to make at home, and satisfies cravings for fizzy or alcoholic drinks. Chocolate milk can easily be made with a tablespoon of honey and a tablespoon of cacao powder dissolved in hot water and half a litre of milk added and shaken about in a jar. Some breweries and vineyards will refill bottles for you, or you can make these things at home.

Household needs

A search on the internet for anything you're looking for will result in directions for DIY reusable options, or ready-made nappies, cleaning supplies and so on. For household cleaning, vinegar is easily made at home or bought in bulk and will do most jobs. For any questions about where to find plastic-free supplies locally, or what to do to clean, make or repair one thing or another, there are zero waste groups and blogs on social media where it's easy to ask questions.

More benefits
of zero waste

Cutting out processed foods results in healthier eating, and an easier path to self-sufficiency. The extra thought needed sometimes to navigate the modern world with a commitment to zero waste results in a better ability to face challenges and find positive solutions, something that is often missing in modern life. Housework is more enjoyable when using natural, hand-made cleaning supplies with pleasant scents rather than the onslaught of Made-in-China toxic products that are encountered in many modern homes. New skills like making yoghurt, cheese, and sauerkraut are easily learned and will help towards future self-sufficiency.

SMASH THE OVERTON WINDOW