Response to Book Review

Anarchists in Social Work: known to the Authorities "Anarchists in Social Work: known to the Authorities." Published by Martin S. Gilbert, 4, Sandhalt, Utverston, Cumbria, LAl2 9EQ, UK. 2~4. Pbk, 153pp. ills. Bibliog. ISBN 0-9549159-0-9 paper version £9.00 inc. p+p / pdf file free from www.anarchistsinsocialwork.org.uk C.D. £3.00

Richard Alexander in TL vol.4 number 4, reviewed this book remarking on a lack of theory. The criticism ignores our idea of "power-shedding"/ "closing the gap between client and worker". Nor does Richard acknowledge the dearth of radical social work literature in the past 25 years. But we make no apology. The book's "blurb" states that it "...has little theory. Rather, it consists of dispatches from the front line".

In reality, little social work time is spent in thinking about intellectual blueprints. At best you try to do the right thing at the right time. Professional social work is an activity of the here-and-now, just as so much anarchist activity stems from immediacy. A main tenant of anarchism is that we askew pre-set theories. These idea-deficits often work to the detriment of both anarchists and social workers. But it is very unfair to pick on this one book to make such comments.

Richard also suggests that this publication fails to speak with the clients voice. The illustrations do part of this task. A picture may "speak a thousand words" but not for this reviewer. All contributors using direct quotes and the passion in Mark A. Newns' writing, fail to let Richard hear those who give voice to the voiceless.

Based on empirical observations of 20 -30 years ago our book suggests how spaces for creative social work were found. In doing so it offers ideas that will be useable in less oppressive times.

Martin S. Gilbert

Friends of Total Liberty

The Match! A Journal of Ethical Anarchism; Post Office Box 3012, Tucson, Arizona 85702 USA $2.75 Send cash or stamps only.

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The Voluntaryist: P O Box 1275, Gramling SC 29348 USA. Edited by Carl Watner. $20.00 for six issues.

Freedom: from Freedom Press, in Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. 50p per issue.

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Northern Voices
Diverse and interesting libertarian magazine featuring a range of articles on life in Northern England and Wales. £1.20 (cash) Springbank, Hebden Bridge, HX7 7AA

The Dandelion (Individualist Anarchist) Subscriptions are $9.00 to people outside the USA. Available from Michael Coughlin, Post Office Box Number 205, Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54327 USA.

The Individual published by the Society for Individual Freedom, 6 Swan Terrace, Hastings TN34 3HT

The Free Press Death Ship published by Violet Jones, P. O. Box 55336, Hayward CA 94545, USA

Anchorage Anarchy is an occasional publication of the BAD Press, an anti-government anarchist project. It is edited by Joe Peacott. Subscriptions are available for $1.00per issue. BAD Press can be reached at PO Box 230332, Anchorage, AK 99523-0332, USA

The Libertarian Alliance publish a range of Broadsheet type leaflets from a Libertarian viewpoint on a wide range of topics. Their address is The Libertarian Alliance, Suite 35, Lansdowne Rd, Mayfair, London

An Anarchist Credo

- Anarchism is not terrorism or violence and Anarchists do not support, aid or sympathise with terrorists or so-called liberation movements.
- Anarchism does not mean irresponsibility, parasitism, criminality, nihilism or immoralism, but entails the highest level of ethics and personal responsibility.
- Anarchism does not mean hostility toward organisation. Anarchists only desire that all organisations be voluntary and that a peaceful social order will exist only when this is so.
- Anarchists are resolute anti-statists and do not defend either "limited states" or "welfare states".
- Anarchists are opposed to all coercion. Poverty, bigotry, sexism and environmental degradation cannot be successfully overcome through the State. Anarchists are therefore opposed to taxation, censorship, so-called affirmative action and government regulation.
- Anarchists do not need scapegoats. Poverty and environmental destruction are not ultimately caused by transnationals, IMF, the USA, the "developed world", imperialism, technology or any other devil figure, but are rooted in the power to coerce. Only the abolition of coercion will overcome these problems.
- Anarchism does not posit any particular economic system but only desires that the economy be non-coercive and composed of voluntary organisations.
- Anarchists are not utopians or sectarians, but are sympathetic to any effort to decrease statism and coercion and the replacement of authoritarian relations with voluntary ones.

Larry Gambone

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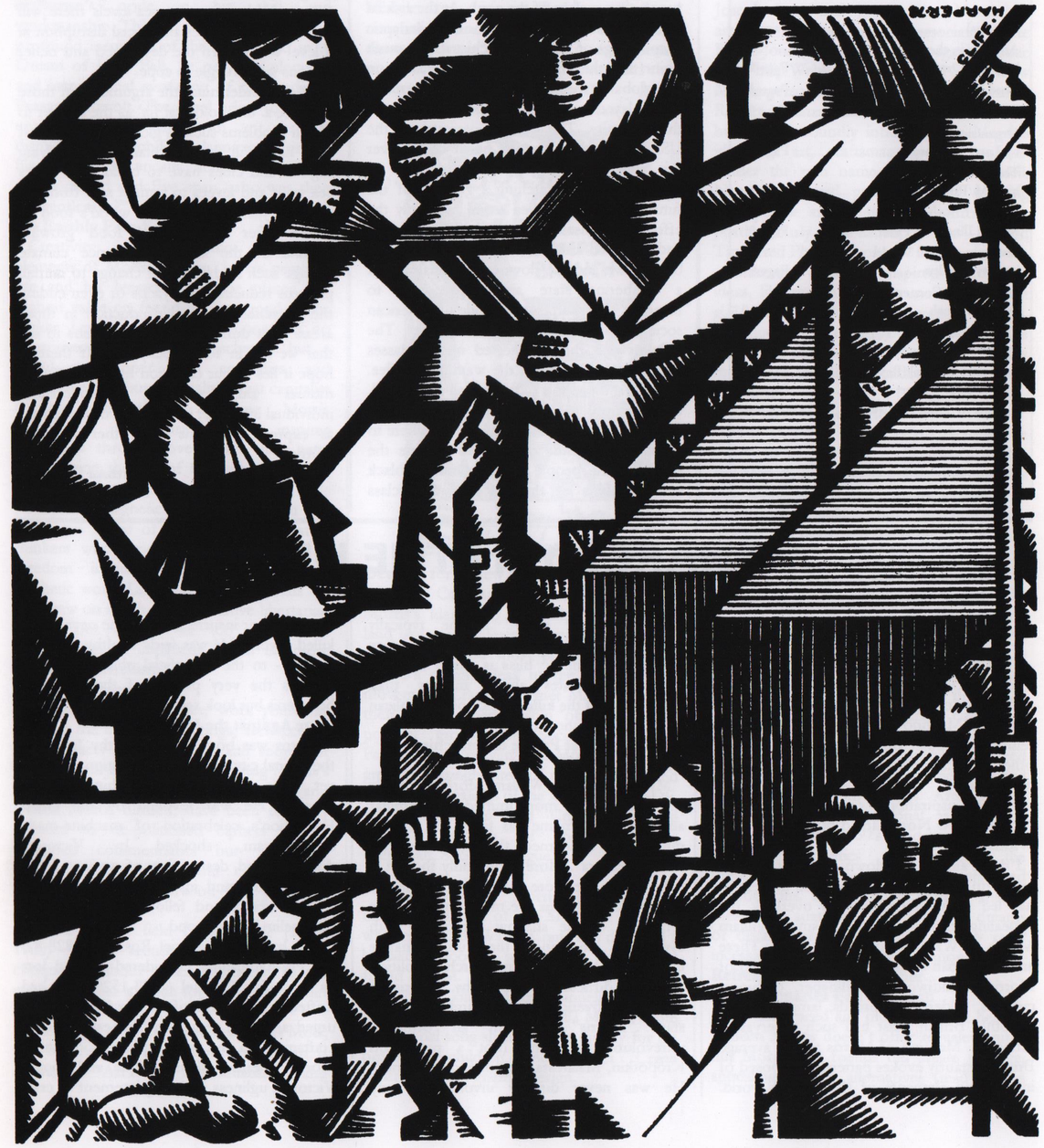

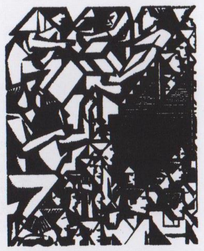

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EDITORIAL

THE tropical hurricane Katrina which struck the southern states of the USA in the last week of August brings to mind a short story by E M Forster published in 1905 under the title *The Machine Stops*. The tale related the fate of a character living within a society totally dependent on complex technology to communicate and to meet its everyday needs. Forster's story related the breakdown, initially gradual, and then catastrophic of that society, though it does end on a more hopeful note as the surviving inhabits escape their subterranean technologically driven cities to lead a more natural life on the life supporting surface of the earth. At the risk of sounding like some of the more apocalyptic outpourings of Green Anarchist it is a moot point that the effects of human activity on the global environment, ie global warming, have played a major contributing factor to this calamity. The vested interests of the USA government are still be in denial over this with their allegiance to the USA oil industry. We are catching a glimpse of the future of the developed world, not only the effects of a disastrous storm on a large city and the rural areas around it, but the social breakdown and the slowness and inability of a lumbering state and superpower to respond. The sharp social divide of American society was revealed for all to see. The affluent and the well-heeled middle-classes had been able to heed the warnings to flee. However, those too old, too frail and too ill, those simply too poor to own a car, or lacking funds for escape, lacking anywhere to go such as friends or relatives outside the stricken city, people overwhelmingly black and members of the so-called underclass were abandoned to their fate. It may never be clear how many died as a result.

The inability of a superpower to react quickly to *one* relatively limited incident is illuminating and raises basic questions about the near future. What will be the situation in 25, 50 or more year's time when global warming has moved on and such powerful storms are a *regular* feature of weather? This summer has seen drought in Spain and bush fires in Portugal, while to the north in France, Germany and Austria there have been deluges and floods. With drought rendering parts of the globe untenable for agriculture, with permanent flooding of low lying coastal and river delta regions across the world due to rising sea-levels there will be *billions* of refugees and social disruption at a level which even the developed and richer nations will struggle to cope.

All this undermines the arguments of those who see a 'technological fix' as the answer to global problems such as global warming. Just how high will the inhabitants of low lying regions and cities have to build their dykes sea walls and levees to remain safe from sea or river? Just where will the world's food be grown after the existing food growing regions of the world experience climate change such as drought or change to rainfall patterns reducing crop yields or even ending the possibility of food production in those areas? You don't have to be a genius to see that we are in for a rocky ride. If there is hope it lies in our common humanity and in mutual aid, voluntary co-operation, individual initiative; in the ideas of anarchism as expressed in this and other *Anarchist* journals.

Jonathan Simcock

ANARCHY IN THE UK

Anarchism is a joke in Britain, tell someone you are an anarchist and they think you're having a laugh. They associate anarchy with violence, chaos and disorder. When we bang on about Bakunin, Makhno and Durruti we merely reinforce popular prejudice. More than any other political philosophy anarchy begins at home and I think it's time we sought libertarian inspiration in our own back yard.

Not Moscow Nor Madrid but Walthamstow

I don't aim to tear down anarchist pin-ups but I do suggest an appetite for the exotic has led many libertarians to overlook the appealing home grown anarchism of William Morris of Walthamstow (1834-1896). There are few British households entirely devoid of Morris's handiwork - wallpaper, cushions, curtains, folders, bedspreads, lamp shades – no other British artist had such a pervasive influence. Mention of Morris to the average Briton instantly evokes patterns composed of intertwined elements of the natural world. "The wallpaper man?" is the typically interrogative response. Conjuring up cosy images of domestic bliss is surely a better basis for debates about anarchy than invocations of the killing fields of Republican Spain or Revolutionary Russia.

From Anarchist Prince to Anarchist Prints

My advocacy of William Morris is partly practical, he is a more immediately familiar and appealing "name" as far as the British public are concerned than the anarchist "brand leaders". More profoundly though, I believe that the more one examines the life and works of Morris the more one becomes sensitised to the shallow nature of both everyday life and the unimaginative inadequacy of our current anarchist politics. It's not difficult to see why Morris is commonly overlooked by anarchists. For a start "Morris" is such an ordinary, unrevolutionary name (not a patch on Kropotkin, Malatesta, Stepniak or Bakunin). He was never directly involved in any revolution or insurrection and he never even killed anyone. He was fairly wealthy and very artistic - to the superficial observer Morris appears the very picture of the Victorian bourgeois but look again.

Rage Against the Machine

Morris was born into a wealthy family in the capital city of the richest nation on earth yet three things propelled him towards anarchy. He was revolted by the Great Exhibition's celebration of machine-made consumerism, shocked by Victorian disregard and destruction of ancient crafts and buildings and inspired and encouraged by the artistry and fellowship of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Led by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82) the Pre-Raphaelites considered art had lost its way after Raphael (1483-1520) and had drifted from art to artifice. The Brotherhood urged artists to return to "honest to God" craftsmanship and seek inspiration in nature. Morris extended their critique and rooted Victorian ugliness in the replacement of craft skills by machine-production and the all-out pursuit of profits.

Morris's critique of capitalism was based not so much on its unequal distribution of goods or profits but on what it did to people's creative spirit and how that resulted in products devoid of quality. It is a profoundly spiritual critique. Morris was no superficial reformer wishing workers to secure more crumbs from the rich man's table. Even if workers secured all the profits from their factory if uncreative mechanised production continued Morris would remain unimpressed.

He drew inspiration from the craft guilds of the middle ages and the medieval craftsman's pride in his skill and workmanship. This did not blind him to the profound inequities of the period and in A Dream of John Ball, he provides eloquent and inspirational evocation of the medieval Peasants' Revolt. The rebel priest John Ball urged fellowship and with an absolute dismissal of the nobility's claims to legitimacy his banner rhetorically demanded, "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?"

An Earthly Paradise

Creativity and fellowship were key elements of Morris's vision. In his personal life and his literary works he placed the highest value on friendship and good cheer. Unlike Lenin, Morris's revolutionary is no conspiratorial, self-denying schemer but a joyful practitioner who embodies and exemplifies the human qualities that capitalist society systematically represses. Morris accentuates the positive and inspires revolution through love rather than hate, emphasising the joy of fellowship over the hatred of the ruling class.

Morris's magnetic appeal drew in an enormous range of artists and imaginative thinkers who produced a huge legacy of freedom inspired literary, political and aesthetic work. Largely thanks to Morris we can draw on a rich seam of native libertarian culture but instead we too often look elsewhere in an impatient search for more incendiary anarchism.

Wilde and Free

Start with the wallpaper, work your way through the curtains, paintings, architecture, books, tracts and anecdotes and sooner or later you will find yourself exploring Morris's fellow travellers. Many of his associates, and indeed Morris himself, have been routinely reduced to de-politicised ciphers by ill-informed commentators but seek out perceptive biographies and examine the originals and you will soon find profound inspiration.

In the literary field Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) wittily reduced Morris's detailed critique of labour under capitalism to the epigram; "Man is made for something better than shifting dirt"!

But there's more to Wilde than Bons Mots, and his analysis of the importance of art is inspired; "Art is Individualism, and Individualism is a disturbing and disintegrating force. Therein lies its immense value. For what it seeks to disturb is monotony of type, slavery of custom, tyranny of habit, and the reduction of man to the level of the machine."

"The Soul's Slow Disentanglement"

Edward Carpenter (1844-1929) practised and extended Morris's ideas in pursuit of the simple life at Millthorpe, near Sheffield. Carpenter was deeply involved in the communitarian movement and believed involvement with the land and manual labour was good for the soul. He was convinced that pursuing a simple, largely self-sufficient lifestyle on his smallholding displaced materialism and enabled, "the soul's slow disentanglement". As a gay man Carpenter was actively involved in both sexual and class politics and enthusiastically defied conventional restraints in both areas.

Designs for a New Life

Whilst Carpenter and Wilde extended Morris's ideas into the fields of literature, land issues and lifestyle it was Walter Crane (1845-1915) who most effectively brought Morris's design ideas to the wider labour movement. Crane first met Morris through their mutual membership of the Marxist political group, the Social Democratic Federation. However, both Morris and Crane grew increasingly tired of the autocratic and duplicitous dealings of the leader of the SDF, H M Hyndman and Crane supported Morris's creation of the breakaway, libertarian, Socialist League.

Where William Morris designed the membership card of the SDF, the SL card was designed by Walter Crane and depicted a blacksmith looking suspiciously like his old friend WM. When mounted police notoriously killed Alfred Linnell during a political demonstration in 1887 Morris wrote a memorial song sheet to raise money for his orphaned children and Walter Crane contributed the graphic design.

When Walter Crane died even his estranged comrade Hyndman acknowledged his unique contribution in the SDF newspaper, Justice; "Nobody, not even William Morris, did more to make Art a direct helpmate to the Socialist propaganda. Nobody has had a greater influence on the minds of doubters who feared Socialism must be remote from and even destructive of the sense of beauty."

Morris and Co

Thanks to Morris and friends the late Victorian era was a ferment of original libertarian ideas and practice. Morris's circle embraced celebrity anarchists like Kropotkin and Stepniak as well as B-list libertarians like Joseph Lane and Frank Kitz. Numbered amongst Morris's artistic associates were Burne-Jones, Rossetti, De Morgan, Ashbee and Philip Webb. Whilst Bernard Shaw knew Morris personally an obscure scribbler called Robert Noonan remained outside the circle but was profoundly influenced by Morris's ideas on art, craftsmanship and politics. Under the pen name of Robert Tressell, Noonan inspired generations of working class people around the world through his posthumously published, "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists".

Interesting offshoots inspired by Morris's ideas, like the garden city movement, craft guilds and militant preservation groups, continued to flourish for twenty or so years after his death but the Arts & Crafts movement gradually abandoned its political radicalism.

"All Power to the Soviets!"

Four elements combined to destroy the influence of Morris's revolutionary vision. First the commercial instincts of companies like Liberty and Tiffany prompted them to adopt Morris-like, but machine-made, designs that destroyed the economic viability of genuine hand crafted items. The 1914-18 war then replaced the appeal of international fellowship with xenophobia. Thirdly the growing electoral success of the post war Labour party drew moderate socialists into the anti-revolutionary reformist net. Finally the "success" of the Russian revolution led most remaining radicals into disciplined conformity within the centrally controlled, Bolshevik style British Communist Party.

As the twentieth century advanced creativity and individuality became more and more divorced from politics. After a brief flowering of "the personal is political" activity in the 1960's and early 1970's mainstream politics now appears the preserve of bureaucrats, careerists and corporations. Inspiration is entirely absent. Meanwhile anarchists seek solace in dreams of distant revolutions whilst *Freedom* rants incessantly against the capitalist monster.

Refresh the Parts that Other Revolutionaries Fail to Reach

We don't need any more anarchist heroes, William Morris doesn't offer revealed truths but Morris and friends did create positive, appealing realistic alternatives (read "News

From Nowhere" to discover his alternative use for the Houses of Parliament). War, commercial pressures, parliamentary politics and Bolshevism eclipsed the vision for a while but I think it's time to have another look.

Alienation from soulless work, distrust of politicians and the ugliness of the built environment are live political issues but they were also central themes of the Arts & Crafts critique. But in contrast to our demoralised escapist response, for Morris and co, joy, creativity, beauty and fellowship were defining characteristics of all their political activities.

Christopher Draper

Postscript

Whereas most libertarian tracts are low on entertainment value the varied output of Morris and co refresh parts that other revolutionaries fail to reach. So comrades, look back in wonder and forward with inspiration.

Select Bibliography and Sources of Inspiration

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Rowbotham & Weeks. Socialism and the New life (Pluto, 1977)
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FC Ball Robert Tressell -One of the Damned Lawrence & Wishart 1979.
Tom Swan Edward Carpenter Fifield 1913
William Morris Gallery, Water House, Forest Road, Walthamstow

LAND NOTES

When I think about anarchism, there are two distinct sets of images that come to mind. On the one hand, there is the nineteenth century commitment to 'propaganda by deed' Ravachol, Bresci, Bonnot, spherical bombs with fizzing fuses, and, of course, Joseph Conrad's Verloc. The latter is misremembered by many as the epitome of the anarchist, when, in fact, Conrad drew him as an agent provocateur, a police agent. The other set of images arises from the writing of George Orwell, Colin Ward, and Alan Albon. Alan Albon had a column called 'Land Notes' in Freedom, when I first came across the paper, and wrote, in a conscious, reflective, fashion, about anarchism, in the mid-1980s. Albon died unexpectedly, after visiting New Zealand, where, I seem to remember, he had been planting trees. With his death, 'Land Notes' died too. There didn't appear to be anyone who could continue it. The column was, in a way, akin to Colin Ward's old New Statesman column, which I used to read in a local library while my small son read his way through marvelously anarchistic picture books, like Janet and Alan Ahlberg's Burglar Bill. And, before my time, both columns had a sort of forbear in Orwell's 'As I Please' in The Tribune.

Orwell wrote a famous 'As I Please' piece about the Vicar of Bray, in which he talked about planting roses in the little garden that he and Eileen O'Shaughnessy had at Wallington, where they struggled to keep the village shop, goats, and grow vegetables. I also remember reading a Colin Ward piece in The New Statesman about the days when corner shops carried 'how to' booklets on raising poultry, keeping bees, and rabbits, and other sub-pastoral activities for urban dwellers. I think it was also in a Ward piece that I learned that, until the, Second World War, hundreds of cows were kept in the East End of London by people making sure that they had a good supply of decent milk. All these activities - tree planting, rose growing, keeping a few hens, bee keeping, and vegetable growing on a small, human scale, seem to me to be intrinsically anarchistic. It's what people do in their back gardens, on their allotments, at the weekend, in the evening. It's personal, creative, it brings small amounts of freedom from big, commercial organisations, and it's not dictated by business, or organised by government.

About a year and a half ago, I moved to a terraced 1930s estate in the West Midlands, the area that was, once, Tolkein's 'Shire'. The estate is really just one road, built in an 'E' shape. The area is bounded by the history of the industrial revolution, with a canal, a railway, and a main road creating three sides of a large triangle, three stages of the industrial revolution. And buttressing the houses, and some 1950s council houses, are two swathes of allotments - known as the 'canalside', and the 'railwayside' allotments. These are of course the small, but strongly visible, and long-lasting remnants of the nineteenth-century land campaign associated with the radical, Henry George. He agitated for the break-up of big estates and the redistribution of land from the landowners to the people at large. He wasn't successful, but the powerful dropped some crumbs from their table - hence the 'canalside' and 'railwayside' allotments.

The area behind the terraces is split up into narrow gardens. Almost all the gardens are finished off with garages and sheds. There is an historical world of self-build happiness in these sheds and garages. You can trace the remains of the earliest sheds, with their 1930's rising suns, and carefully finished gable ends. Some are slowly decaying, covered in peeling tarpaper. Others are well-kept, painted in greens and browns every summer. A few years ago, there appears to have been a brick-built craze and a number of larger garages have similar roll doors, and metal clad roofs.

The buildings themselves are interesting, but what is in them is even more so. They contain the lives of people who like to work. Not, as William Morris pointed out, 'useless toil', but useful work. There is a large, brick-built garage across from my garden. It is a solidly built, 1960s affair. Inside, it is organised like an engineering workshop. It is, in fact, an engineering workshop, with bench-mounted lathes and drills, and walls of carefully arranged tools. This is, after all, the West Midlands, ancient home of light engineering. Just down from the workshop there is a do-it-yourself boxing gym. The bloke who owns it rolls up the door on warm evenings, and he and his mates punch bags of various types. Or, more frequently, talk about punching bags of various types. My next door neighbour repairs cars in his shed. He takes basket cases and transforms them into living things. A few yards from him, an old bloke spends a lot of time in his sagging, wooden garage; tinkering with bits of wood and metal, while whistling hymns to himself. But, best of all, is the chap on the corner. He has a larger garden, and he is building what is beginning to look as if it could be a South American shantytown. He already has a greenhouse, and two sheds, but is currently building a third shed out of old floorboards. And he's doing a good job.

All these garages and sheds are reached by a back road, of sorts. It's made up of broken bricks, bits of concrete, and the odd pothole. Without any formal organisation whatsoever, residents add rubble to the road. Last year, one Stakahanovite hero spent a good few weeks smashing endless amounts of rubble with a sledgehammer. He got rid of his rubble, and all of us got a better road.

The back road, the sheds, greenhouses, and garages, the paintwork, the wood, roofing felt, boxing kit, lathes, tomato plants, spare engines, the constant activity, constant work, are all signs of people; left to their own devices. They are making things, repairing things, maintaining things, and they are keeping this little world, between the canalside and the railwayside allotments, going. In a way, it's propaganda by deed.

Steve Cullen.

BOOK REVIEW

ANARCHISM - A documentary History of Libertarian Ideas by Robert Graham, editor. Blackrose Books. ISBN 1-55164-250-6

THIS excellent anthology of anarchist writings through the ages avoids the weaknesses of many previous compilations. It is not Euro-centric, almost thirty articles relate to Asia and Latin America, and most of these I have never seen before. Nor, are the "classics" a mere rehash of relatively well known writings, such as Bakunin on the state or Proudhon on government. We are offered a broad range of material by Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin or Malatesta, not just the old stand-bys.

Many early and forgotten anarchists are included and a number of articles, including one by Gustav Landauer, are translated into English for the first time. Even the most scholarly of anarchists will find new material here. Nor is anarchism is reduced just to economics or politics. Art, education, gender politics, law and morality have their sections. There is even an article on Wilhelm Reich.

"Anarchism" begins with the pre-anarchist thinking of Bao Jingyan, de la Boetie and Winstanley, follows through Enlightenment thinkers such as Godwin and on to the emergence of anarchism as a specific ideology in the 1840's. Then to the broad range of anarchist thinking and practice as it emerged around the world. There are sections on Anarcho-syndicalism, the Mexican Revolution, Latin America, China, Japan, the First World War, The Russian Revolution, The Inter-war Years and the Spanish Revolution. These sections include statements by relatively well known anarchists like Pelloutier, Makhno or Goldman as well as many lesser-known, but nonetheless important activists.

The book ends in 1939, but unlike non-anarchist compilers, editor Robert Graham does not kill off his subject at that date. He promises us a second volume from 1940 until the present. I can't wait to read it!

Larry Gambone

ORGANISING ANARCHY

Anarchism is all about organisation. Anarchists want horizontal, self-managed organisations, not hierarchical centralised ones. All anarchists think this way, but some prefer as few organised linkages as possible. However, anarchism is a generous philosophy and encompasses minimal organisation folks as well as social anarchists who believe in the necessity of large groups like syndicalist unions, communes and mutualist federations. Social anarchists envisage a world where voluntary associations, both large and small, replace both capitalism and government. (1)

This is all very well, but how do we get to that future place where voluntarism replaces coercion? An unspoken assumption exists among many anarchists that all we need do is make our propaganda, organise alternative institutions and somehow, one day, it will all happen. The masses will eventually adopt or, more likely, adapt our ideas and replace the present authoritarian system with a libertarian one. But I wouldn't hold my breath.

It is all very well for us to talk about federalism or self-management, but we have to go beyond such generalisations. People don't like vagueness or generalities. They want to know our concrete ideas for dealing with the problems they face in their living and working situations. Thus, anarchists need a programme. Yet what we usually offer is usually little more than a preamble to such a statement. We need to concretise concepts such as mutual aid, self-management, decentralism etc.

Not that a programme should be hide-bound or dogmatic, it should be more in the way of suggestions. Nor should it to be too long or minutely detailed. Most non-anarchist left-wing groups suffer from programmatic diarrhoea and this is something to be avoided. The idea is to show that we are serious about people's concerns without wanting to plan their lives.

There should be several programmes. Different, but aligned programmes are required for various geographic areas and different areas of concern. A national programme, for example, cannot be exactly the same as a programme for a local group. A programme aimed at workers will have to differ somewhat from one directed at the community as a whole.

A more programmatic approach is useless, however, as long as anarchists are divided into squabbling groups. Twenty programmes, each differing by one iota produced by twenty mutually hostile organisations would make us look ridiculous. Even more than vagueness, people are turned off by divisiveness. All the working people I have ever known who have expressed any sympathy for libertarian ideas have hated sectarian quarrels, seeing these as intellectual game playing. To the average person, all anarchists seem more or less the same, have the same goals and quibbles over minor points of doctrine make us look like we aren't serious.

Thus, as well as having a programme, we must eventually unite in a federation. This is only common sense, but sometimes common sense gets lost in the sectarian and ideological verbiage. At the very minimum, all social anarchists should ultimately belong to the same federation. I had a literally graphic illustration of this in Paris last October. The Federation Anarchiste (FA) unites most French anarchists, has a fine weekly newspaper and a radio station. I asked a member of the FA about the need for organisation, he pointed to a dull-looking photocopied leaflet and then to a large, glossy, multi-colored FA poster. "Which of these is more effective?" he asked. "You can only have effective propaganda like this poster by uniting anarchists within a federation like the FA.," he added.

The FA is an example of what is called the Synthesist Tendency. This concept attempts to unite all anarchists within one federation and was promoted by Sebastian Faure in the 1920's. The idea is that most anarchists have enough in common to work together. The FA is not alone in this regard, for the Spanish FAI and Italian IAS are also "Synthesist" organisations.

Some anarchists, concerned with the ease with which the Bolsheviks destroyed Russian Anarchism, felt the Synthesist concept of organisation to be too loose. Their chief spokesperson was Nestor Makhno, who

wanted a tighter organisation with a specifically libertarian communist programme. The group around Makhno became known as the Platformist Tendency. Unfortunately, in France at least, this Platformists caused disruption by causing splits in the anarchist movement and eventually destroying the, until then, successful weekly Le Libertaire. (2)

One could say that problem with the French Platformists was their programme was too narrow and their organisational structure too tight. If you restrict mass organisation to one ideology - libertarian communism for example - you will attract only those people sympathetic to libertarian communism. Other people, equally desirous of social change, but not of that ideology won't join the group and the anti-capitalist, anti-statist tendency as a whole is weakened.

I have nothing against different anarchist tendencies forming separate groups. It is necessary to do this to clarify your thinking. Different groups can also have a positive impact rather than just a negative, divisive one. A multiplicity of libertarian concepts can appeal to different sectors of the population and our message will be spread far and wide. Difference of opinion within anarchism ought not mean hostility and divisiveness. However, for those differing concepts to be successful in promoting the movement in general, at some point they have to come together, work out a common programme and unite in a federation.

We must dwell on what we have in common, rather than that which divides us. One of the old divisions - between anarchist communists and anarcho-syndicalists really doesn't exist any more. While only a minority of us are pacifists, anarchist practice is overwhelmingly non-violent. As long as an organisation is libertarian enough to allow members to opt out of an action they in all consciousness disagree with, they will work together on the 98% they see eye to eye on.

If vulgarized to the level of "anything goes" a Synthesist approach can be a problem. You end up with a mish-mash of contradictory actions and vague generalisations. (I would classify none of the Synthesist federations I am familiar as such.) A programme that is too narrow and an organisation that is too structured creates the opposite problem. Somehow we must take a middle course between these extremes. One might say we need Synthesists with a programme, or Platformists who are broad-minded.

Of course, there are genuine differences. One example is the difference between mutualist and libertarian communist concepts of economy. But this does not mean they cannot work together. Both believe in mutual aid, federalism and self-management. For the present time, practical measures incorporating these common ideals are quite enough on our plate without worrying about the ultimate direction of the economy five generations ahead.

Furthermore, a stateless economy is going to be a mixed economy. The nature of the economy will be up to personal choice. It will be up to the people how they organise production and consumption and not as at present, with bosses and politicians controlling everything. Some people will favour an economy of free exchange, and others will not. In a libertarian society no one will be in a position to force another person to exchange nor to forbid exchange. The libertarian communists of Spain did not try to force people to join their communes and I know of no mutualists who would stop libertarian communists from forming moneyless collectives.

1. I see the term "social anarchists" applying to all anarchists who see the need for some sort of large scale organisation, whether these are mutualist societies, trade unions or communes. Thus mutualist, syndicalist and libertarian communist anarchists are all social anarchists.

2. The new Platformists of the North Eastern Federation of Anarchist Communists (NEFAC) found in Canada and the USA are neither narrow or sectarian. In fact, the FA representative advised me to get in touch with NEFAC to see a Canadian example of a well functioning anarchist federation. At the international level the International Anarchist Federation unites Synthesists and Plaformists. International Libertarian Solidarity unites syndicalist unions like the Spanish CGT and the Swedish SAC with libertarian communists and Platformists.

Larry Gambone

THE TYRANNY OF CHARITY

Each day a vast amount of money pours into the charity coffers. In the papers, on the T.V. and radio, in the supermarket, people are exhorted to give as much as they can to charitable causes. Nothing wrong in that, you may say; isn't it a good idea to help? The basic principle is right, but as with any organisation within a governmental structure, all is not what it seems and in truth, charity appears to mask and perpetuate those problems they were set up to resolve.

In essence, charity is seen as a Good Thing. Many people have their favourite cause and give in the belief that they are helping to alleviate a particular problem or to give to those less fortunate than themselves. People are encouraged to be kind and co-operative but few ever ask why others are in these situations. Any discussion is accepting of the inequalities in society and that this is just the way things are. The fact that these inequalities arise from a hierarchical, governmental structure, bolstered by its corporate acolytes, does not feature in any discussion about what charity is all about. After all, "the poor are always with us" and charity has been an acceptable way of dealing with unequal issues since at least biblical times.

But what about those people who, for example, become disabled? The disability may have arisen because of an accident of birth or an unforeseen incident such as falling off a cliff, neither of which can be laid at the door of government. This is perfectly true (although in the case of such issues as thalidomide, both health policies and the conduct of pharmaceutical companies led to "accidents of birth"), but even if government does not actively create the position a person finds themselves in, it is in control of the means of alleviating the problem. For example, it is in control of the budget, which determines what care and medication the disabled receive, and the quality of those services. It has recently been noted that cancer victims are being denied life-saving drugs by the government-controlled agencies. And the fact that such illnesses as cancer may be caused by the stress of living in an unfree and unequal society would command an essay of its own.

Charity is big business as a result of the large amounts of money and gifts it receives. The larger organisations employ staff for the administration and the overall running of these businesses is overseen by the Charity Commissioners, a government organisation. Just a cursory glance at their website shows the huge number of charities which exist, many taking advantage of charitable status to offset payment of tax or other expenses and to maximise the value of the gifts. But the website will also shows a substantial number of investigations undertaken by the Commissioners into dodgy dealings by some of the charities, one of the most common issues being that someone has had their hand in the charity till.

It follows that where charity is given in terms of money or gifts, that it is wide open to the corruption which is endemic in a capitalist society. Not so with charitable acts, which require the interaction of human beings with each other. For example, a person trips over a loose flagstone in a busy street. It is guaranteed that someone will come to help them because fundamentally, the human being is a gregarious and kind creature. Apart from getting appropriate medical aid etc., the helper sees for themselves the damage caused by the flagstone. Even if they do nothing about it, like complaining to the local council, they will no doubt relate the incident to friends and family and grumble about the lack of maintenance and generally, the problem of the loose flagstone is highlighted. But ultimately, the helper has provided a humanitarian service to another without any question of government or money being involved in their act. As Walt Whitman said: "Behold, I do not give lectures or a little charity. When I give, I give myself".

By contrast, if there were collection boxes at supermarket doors or charity shops for "Victims of Loose Flagstones", it is axiomatic that people would pop money or goods into both without considering the damage done to those victims or, more especially, dealing with the basic problem of fixing the flagstone! Moreover, the helper may just pass the person by if they trip over on the basis that there is a charity there to help them or, more insidiously, that they may be dragged into a compensation claim by the victim. Money becomes the substitute for human help and severs people from each other, leaving them to look to government and the charitable organisations for help, rather than each other.

In this way, the abused child, the neglected old person next door can both be ignored because "the authorities" will sort it out. On a number of occasions the press has reported on some gross circumstance where neighbours knew something was wrong but did nothing because they thought "the authorities" i.e. social services and charities would sort it out or because they thought someone else would report the situation rather than becoming involved themselves.

So people become anaesthetised from the plight of others and, more importantly, fail to ask why the problem has arisen and what can be done about it. Much easier to pop a few coins in a box and not have to face, for example, a homeless person or ask why they are homeless or, perish the thought, offer them a room for the night!

Giving of money in this way allows the conscious to be salved and gives the seamy "feel good" factor without getting one's hands dirty in dealing with the poor etc. Acts of charity should not be conscious, indulgent acts deserving of congratulation: they should be freely given in a spirit of common humanity. But in a culture, which quite crudely, sees all problems as being solved by money, people become debased in their charitable dealings with others.

Worse still, they expect the recipients of their charitable largesse to be grateful, even deferential, endorsing the "feel good" factor. This is, of course, a reflection of the inequalities in society where those who have

and can choose, flaunt their power base over those who do not have their wealth etc. It has always been thus: the workhouse operated on the principle of the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor, the latter not attracting the same level of help as the former, despite their circumstances not being of their making. Oscar Wilde, like Nietzsche, considered it wrong for the rich to pity the poor and give charity and that there is no point to the poor feeling gratitude: "it is finer to take than to beg". Given that government takes away the individual's ability to achieve their full potential, this kind of giving is only a return of that which has been stolen.

And the indulgence of charitable giving can be seen in the parodied "charidee" of the celebrity culture, where on occasions, minor celebrities hitch their star to a particular charitable cause. They may have concern for that cause - as many people do for those they support - but it also does their careers no harm to be pictured with disabled children, rescued puppies and the like. Many people become well-known for their charitable work: the American, Carnegie, became famous for giving to charity but did nothing to ensure that workers who had made him wealthy had fair incomes or safe working areas.

This is not to entirely dismiss the hard work (and not just money) which people do give to charitable causes, but this work and money alleviates, at best, the symptoms of the causes they support. Ask this: with the millions which have poured into charitable coffers, just in recent years, why are the problems of homelessness, child abuse, animal cruelty etc. still with us and often on the increase? What have the charities been doing apart from sticking plasters over gaping wounds? Some charities do campaign for changes in the law to benefit their cause but in appealing to government and legislation, they are merely asking the hangman to use a different rope.

To be really effective for their organisations, charities should be actively campaigning against the causes that give rise to the formation of their charity. However, such action would have to be robust and militant but as the money-giving public are not encouraged to challenge and be radical, they are unlikely to support this kind of action. Nor is government likely to let it happen: consider animal rights activists who take direct action against animal testing laboratories - the law is swiftly changed to protect the corporate interests. Meanwhile, the accepted charitable face of animal cruelty - the RSPCA - takes no such action, even though their charitable aim is for animal welfare. The best a radical charity could do is to campaign for its own demise on the basis that the problem for which they were formed has been resolved!

But overall, charities are part of the governmental system and rather like God, if they didn't exist, it would be necessary to invent them. They are effectively the "sharing and caring" side of a governmental society which is anything but and which blinds its populace into believing it is doing good works when effectively, by accepting charity as the norm, they allow the inequalities and cruelty of government to continue. Until people scratch beneath the surface and ask why they need to put money into collecting boxes, then charity will continue to hold out its velvet glove covering its cold, steely hand.

J. M. Robinson

'An anarchist society, a society which organises itself without authority, is always in existence, like a seed beneath the snow, buried under the weight of the state and its bureaucracy, capitalism and its waste, privilege and its injustices, nationalism and its suicidal loyalties, religious differences and their superstitious separatism.'

Colin Ward

WORKER-COOPERATIVES AND ENDURING MENTAL ILLNESS

When a major flood hit Topeka, Kansas, in 1951, one psychologist from the Menninger clinic was astonished to see chronic schizophrenic patients - some of whom had been hospitalised for over twenty years - not only loading and placing sandbags with the rest of us, but effectively supervising us in the loading and placement of the bags. The patients kept this up for several days; then, once the emergency had passed, they resumed their backward existence cited in Madness and Modernity, Louis Sass, 1992

There are many images that come to motivate one later in life. At the time we don't always see the relevance of what is before us. Or maybe it just takes time for messages to sink into the psyche.

I always remember meeting Cyril. He was a park-keeper in Manchester and his duties ranged around six bowling greens all laid out around a central brick building. It was here that Cyril kept an unofficial open house. A kettle was always on the boil and people, mostly the lonely, came to gather around his quiet hospitality. Cyril rarely spoke and was occasionally in trouble with the Council for allowing people to sit in the large office. It was only after some local youths burned the place to the ground that I came to realise the importance of Cyril's unofficial centre of care and maintenance.

Much later I was running a weekly group in a large Huddersfield asylum. One of its members, the late Alan Hughes, was a skilled engineer with his own large workshop. The group became a weekly period of respite from all the routines of the hospital. As well as building a close fellowship the group became a hotbed of ideas. Some of our ideas included people taking risks with everyday life: making an evening visit to another ward or polishing someone's shoes. Our group, within the hospital itself, gradually became its own unofficial centre of care. Our values were different and we were strong enough to cast a critical eye on the hospital practices.

It was here that we formed Minnow. Alan was to move his workshop to larger premises and we were to set ourselves up as a printer's co-operative. I resigned my post and moved into the new factory with a mattress and a sleeping bag. In time those that could discharge themselves came along to. Under Alan's guidance we spent days assembling a fifty-foot continuous printing press capable of printing multi-colour headings on the early concertina-style computer paper. What a joyous atmosphere it was. People who had for years spent their time in ward day rooms were cheerfully sweeping floors and washing down windows.

It was inevitable that the authorities took a bleak, sometimes hostile, view of our activities. Mental Health services were reluctant to sanction activities that are outside of its control. A number of local charitable groups expressed their "concern". But we were not doing anything particularly illegal. What helped us considerably were one or two individual professionals within the system who realised the benefits towards their ex-patients. Indeed, a feature of our fellowship was the enormous increase in self-confidence. People gave their point of view and some of it was robust and uncompromising.

We had no method of payment. People lived on their benefits and attended, at least officially, as volunteers. What we did earn had to be ploughed back into rent and heavy utility bills. For all our members we provided transport and food. And sometimes the latter was in short supply. On more than a couple of occasions we waited on tenterhooks for a bill to paid and the cash to be rapidly transferred into a stack of corned-beef sandwiches.

Time itself was turned upon its head. The official nine to five routine does not suit the life-style of inward-looking loneliness. So we stayed open into the evenings and through the weekends. We recognised also that attendance had its own unofficial mirror. We learned from each other our strengths and fails. We knew when to leave alone and when to encourage. What really kept us together was a curious form of collective consciousness. There were no professionals to fall back on. Problems had to be dealt with together. Otherwise, we didn't eat. It could be as tough as that.

Another striking lesson, for me at least, was what happened to "symptoms" in this environment. I don't think the symptoms of enduring mental health problems ever actually disappeared. More, they took on a back seat to the daily tasks we performed. People could pace up and down for a time or mumble to themselves and it didn't seem to matter on a collective level. One gentleman, mostly mute, was content to sit at the end of the big press watching the paper feed through. Another was happy to walk several miles to hand-deliver a small print job.

I would be in error to paint a glowing image of Minnow. Things did go wrong. Alan, an otherwise expert engineer, would now and then retreat into an angry paranoid state and close the factory for a day. Altogether there were about twenty of us. Most were people with many years of institutional experiences finding themselves suddenly released into a world of collective responsibility. Arguments, when they did occur, were conducted without the aid of the more commonly understood social skills. But then there was never any violence and differences patched themselves up far faster than one would expect.

Sadly, the first of Mrs Thatcher's economic recessions hit us hard. Technology moved on as well. No one wanted the concertina computer paper anymore. After fourteen months Minnow collapsed in bankruptcy. We were no more. Most people returned to the embrace of official psychiatry.

Personally, I have never given up on trying to marry imaginative work projects with people labeled with life-long mental health problems. The two main hurdles to be overcome are professional protectionism and the growing sterile bureaucracy we all seem to be in hock to. Professionals are locked into battles as to whose rightful duty it is to manage mental illness. They will not surrender easily a position that has taken professions generations to secure. Secondly, the regulations surrounding benefit and health and safety have few leaky margins. Bureaucracy favours things to be tight and predictable. Theirs is a world unable to tolerate the power of irrational thought.

Later projects have included a collective car park attendant/car wash scheme for a large chemical company. Our collective would supply one or two people on the gate and a small team of car wash operatives. The company, worried for some time about the security of its car park, at first was enthusiastic about the scheme but then their advisors pointed out the possibility of liability costs. I worked with others at attempting to present an idea for a small house to be built over a bus stop. Someone, whose duties would involve the environmental upkeep of the bus stop site, would occupy the house. Another failed project was to base a young man with vague learning difficulties in a suburban library set within a sheltered housing scheme for the elderly. Young Ronnie as he was called, would help in the library and become friends with the elderly, running errands, moving furniture, and so on. Again, factors such as liability, benefit entitlement and police checks grounded the scheme at the first stage of proposal. It is not so much that these projects are an answer to mental health problems, More, it is that anyone involved in mental health knows individuals who would fit exactly into such schemes. What a sad sterile world we live in. Everywhere you go you will see areas of environmental neglect which could be readily healed by a little imagination and a willingness to understand that mental illness will not always adapt to official beliefs of what should be or ought to be. I hold to Charles Dicken's simple maxim: that all most of us want out of life is to be enthusiastic about something. Sometimes enthusiasm can involve something very simple. All you need to do is generate some freedom and the beginnings of responsibility.

Peter Good

Living in a Small World; three sheds of nostalgia.

The roots reggae star, Capleton ('The Prophet'), has made some pretty good tunes. As is usual with roots reggae, there is plenty of 'message' in his music. There is a millenarian element to roots reggae that chimes with a certain strand of anarchism, an English sort of anarchism that grew out of the bible-based radicalism of the civil wars. It is a sense, a hopeful wish, that somehow, someday, there will be justice. It's part of the utopian tradition. One of the tracks on Capleton's album, Reign of Fire, is 'That Day Will Come', which is a powerful, Rastafarian, evocation of judgement day. Capleton berates the 'wicked' in the song, reminding them that it doesn't matter how powerful and strong they think they are, they will all face divine judgement. To most anarchists, it is wishful thinking, but it's a bloody good tune, and it has a refrain that's been going round in my head recently 'Who do you think you are? / We're living in a small world'.

It's a commonplace that we are living in a small world, but people who say this are usually referring to the impact of globalisation - aircraft, the internet, world finance, world cities, telecommunications, satellite TV. They are not usually referring to Capleton's religious sense of being constantly in the eye of an avenging god, and they probably don't have in mind the images that come to me when I hum, 'we're living in a small world'. To me, that image is focused on the local world of most people's day to day lives and the intimacy of our immediate surroundings which give a structure, and a backdrop, to our lives. That localism, that immediacy, that concrete reality is the space in which the spirit of anarchism lives.

Looking back over my life, it seems that it is the small and local that contain a good deal of life that can be seen to be good, in some ethically notable fashion. Except that I don't know that much about philosophy and ethics, so I'll have to go on instinct, I suppose. It seems to me that the large, the grandiose, and the glamorous, all, by definition, have little to do with the basics of anarchism. In a few years time London will be hosting the Olympics. The event will be on a lavish scale. It can only take place with big government, big business, and global communications. Hundreds of thousands will watch in the stadium, millions will watch in front of TV sets, a few thousand will participate, and a few hundreds will make a lot of money. These groups form a hierarchy: with movers and shakers at the pinnacle, then other assorted moneymakers, contestants, and, at the bottom, millions of passive spectators. Organised from above, directed from above, provided from above. It will, undoubtedly, be the biggest, the best, the most triumphant games ever. Until the next time. But it will not be very anarchist. For that, I think, you need small, not big. And, in my world, I am reminded of three buildings which were the antithesis of the world-class stadiums of an Olympic games.

For a few years when I was a child, my father worked for the local bus company, Crosville, first as a cleaner, then as a bus conductor, finally as a driver. That put him in the god class for a small boy in the 1960s, especially after a journey spent kneeling behind the driver's cab (the buses were of the Routemaster type) watching my dad tackling the huge steering wheel and massive handbrake. But better than that were the Saturday mornings when he was on the early shift, as I could go down to the local bus depot and meet him as he knocked off work. The depot was sandwiched between a bridge, the railway, and some terraces of red-bricked houses. It was made of greenpainted corrugated iron, and smelt of oil, grease, and diesel. I would walk across the slippery concrete apron into the gloom of the bus shed. You had to be careful in there, as in the half-light there were parked buses, and gaping black inspection pits. To my mind, there was bound to be a patch of oil that would, one Saturday, pitch me head first into the blackness of a pit. But it was worth running the risk, because at the back of the shed was a door into a long, narrow room. That was where the mechanics and drivers smoked, ate sandwiches, and drank tea. I would wait there for my dad, or, if he'd sped round his route he'd already be there, waiting, with a mug of tea. And I'd sit on one of the long benches by the pot-bellied stove, sipping at the tea one of the mechanics had given me, while my dad and the others talked, laughed, and smoked. They probably wouldn't have used the word, but those men were comrades, and their world was one of solidarity. Kids are sensitive to moods among adults, perhaps because when you are young you are not entirely sure what is going on, so mood matters as it tells you whether things are ok. And there was a sense of ease there, a sense of contentment. In that corrugated annex to the bus depot.

As befits a child's world, all the places precious to me were grouped fairly closely together. Almost across the road from the bus depot, but hidden by trees, and behind green wrought iron gates, was the place that would become my second shed of nostalgia. I was first taken there by one of the most straightforward, arid kindest, people I have ever known - a Welsh boy called Trevor Roberts. And the shed, or, rather, hut, was the headquarters of the local Cub Scout pack.

It was built of wood, as green as the Crosville bus depot, and surrounded by tall trees. In that place, which smelt of dust, and reverberated to the noise made by 30 small boys, I had some of the best times of my childhood. The cubs were run by a man who bore more than a passing resemblance to Arthur Lowe, the famous 'Captain Mainwaring' of the TV series, Dad's Army. But he was a good man, and that place was characterised by the anarchist virtues of voluntary association, co-operation, and education. None of us had to be there. Most boys ended up there in the same way that I did, by being brought along by a friend. The cub leaders were volunteers too. A local committee and the proceeds of our seasonal fairs and jumble sales sustained the hut and its running costs. Our time there was characterised by games that were largely uncompetitive, but hugely entertaining, by nonsense songs, and by education and learning. I learnt more in that hut that has remained with me, than years spent in school classrooms. I learnt to identify different trees and plants, how to do basic first aid, how to light fires, how to look after yourself on expeditions, the names of various star constellations, and how to rub along with a bunch of kids from different backgrounds. I valued, and value, all that sort of learning a good deal more than any maths or physics I was taught at school. And it all took place in an old green, wooden hut.

My third hut of nostalgia was in the car park down by the promenade. This hut was painted white, and was about as a big as a modern mobile home, the sort that isn't really mobile. It was mounted on a little concrete base, and there were a few steps up to the door, with a small window on each side. I first went there, with my dad and brother, on a cold, rainy day. I think we'd left my mum shopping in the co-op, which was nearby, but I'm not sure. This hut was a café, and in there, on that grey, rainy day, I drank the best tea, and ate the most perfect toasted teacakes in my life. The owner wore a white, wraparound apron, and that café was his. He was the sole worker, he exploited no one, and he was free, and independent. That was an anarchist life.

In the last few years, I came across two places that reminded me of my third hut of nostalgia. The first was a caravan on the North Norfolk coast. I'd been camping out on the shoreline, got up very early and walked the few miles to the next town. When I got there I used the municipal toilets to pee and wash, then crossed over to a caravan cafe run by a woman who served me toast and tea, which I ate while sitting on a plastic chair, breathing in the bright light of the east coast. The second such hut is in Windsor, by the Thames, where an amusingly grumpy bloke dispenses hot drinks, cake, and Kit Kats to locals enjoying the riverside. Both those places pleased me. They are proof that the third hut of nostalgia, marked by independence and freedom, is not just a thing of the past. And I hope neither are the other huts of nostalgia, with their anarchist hearts of freedom, comradeship, co-operation, the volunteer, equality, education, and tea and toast.

Steve Cullen

LISTENING TO CONSERVATIVES

James Bartholomew, *The Welfare State We're In*, Politicos, 2004, xiv+402pp, £18.99, hdbk.

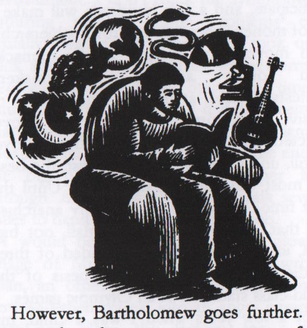
Theodore Dalrymple, *Our Culture, What's Left of It*, Ivan Dee, 2005, xi+341pp, £14.19, hdbk.

It is likely that many readers of *Total Liberty* will either not have heard of these two books or, if they have, dismissed them out of hand because of their authors. Both of them are closely associated with "conservative" publications: amongst others the *Daily Mail* in the case of Bartholomew and *The Spectator* in the case of Dalrymple. (Dalrymple is a pseudonym, by the way, adopted because of his work as a prison doctor.) This is pity, because both books have a great deal to offer libertarians, either directly or as food for thought. (They are also an aid to those of us who occasionally put pen to paper. Both are written in a lucid style that treats the reader as an intelligent adult.)

Bartholomew's work is the most direct of the two and offers a detailed yet accessible critique of the UK's Welfare State and by implication statism generally. By turns he studies social security, the NHS, education, housing, parenting and pensions. In every case his argument is threefold. First, he demonstrates that there was substantial non-state provision of these services *organised by and for ordinary folk* long before the arrival of the Welfare State and the new class of bureaucratic functionaries that run it.

Second, directly as a result of this, that the state - or rather, again, the functionaries that run it - essentially expropriated for its own ends from ordinary folk their painstakingly accumulated private financial and social resources in these areas.

Third, irrespective of the good intentions of those that created and latterly have sustained the Welfare State, in the end the state has provided a service almost certainly worse than if it had never interfered in these areas at all.



However, Bartholomew goes further. He notes the deeper consequences of the Welfare State: an increasingly violent society through the Welfare State's demoralisation and infantalisation of the population (which is the main focus of Dalrymple's book); massive tax increases that amongst other things have prevented more people beyond the richest few from "opting out" of the Welfare State; and a growth in the state in all areas leading to a decline in genuine personal freedom.

He also examines why people nevertheless continue to support the Welfare State. Above all he cites ignorance, fear, personal benefits from it and statist propaganda. He also looks at some options for the future but is not too optimistic, particularly for the likelihood of a peaceful political assault on the Welfare State.

If Bartholomew primarily but not only looks at some of the more material causes and consequences of our present malaise, then Dalrymple looks chiefly at the moral and intellectual causes and consequences. His book covers a number of topics, but I want to highlight just one: the descent into barbarism of an increasing number of people in Britain.

Dalrymple perhaps goes too far is his denunciation of individual aspects of modern culture (so-called, as he might say). But Dalrymple is a believer in what might be called Original Sin: the inherent capacity for evil that can be found in all of us unless we actively suppress it. His argues with great persuasiveness – and personal experience working in the education sector obliges me to agree with him – that we really have witnessed a catastrophic decline in notions of civilised behaviour. As he rightly says, "The first requirement of civilisation is that men should be willing to repress their basest instincts and appetites: failure to do so makes them, on account of their intelligence, far worse that mere beasts".

He also knows who to blame, and in the first instance it is not the "feral youths" with their "hoodies", but earlier generations of middle-class "intellectuals" who saw no reason why the (perhaps sometimes unjustifiably tight) constraints imposed by "bourgeois" society should interfere with their own pleasures. As the much-travelled Dalrymple ponders when observing in an expensive restaurant a middle-class Panamanian who earlier that day had been engaged in violent rioting for the fun of it, "How much destruction did he think his country could bear before his own life might be affected, his own life compromised?" To apply this to Britain today, we might ask, "Just how much protection do you think that your gated community will offer you? You have to leave its confines sometimes."

But these are not just the moans of the "reactionary". It ought to be the attitude of all of us who value genuine, reciprocal individual liberty. Let me cite some witnesses. The pages of *The Cunningham Amendment*, co-created by Dr Peter Good, a frequent contributor to *Total Liberty*, are constantly at pains to distinguish between "freedom" and "license". As a recent issue said, "Freedom only counts when it's linked to responsibility. Every action carries consequences. The deal with Freedom is that you take responsibility for them. Licence means anything goes. Do what you will and bollocks to the consequences. Know the difference."

My own organisation, the classical liberal Society for Individual Freedom, has as its stated aim "To promote responsible individual freedom". Responsible both to others and ourselves.

Most powerfully, an earlier edition of *Total Liberty* carried Larry Gambone's brilliant article 'The Plague of the Law Locusts'. Gambone distinguished more clearly than I have ever seen elsewhere the difference between "individualism", which he describes as "a situation of maximum liberty and a minimum of coercion", and "narcissism", which he describes as "a maximum of consumer goods to satisfy every little childish whim and a minimum of voluntary social restraints such as manners and consideration for others." Dalrymple, Bartholomew, Gambone and I are individualists. It is narcissism that we reject. So must we all if we are to create and sustain a society worthy of that title and worth living in.

Nigel Meek

Biographical note: Nigel Meek is the editorial director and membership director of both the Libertarian Alliance (www.libertarian.co.uk) and the Society for Individual Freedom (www.individualist.org.uk).

THE PRIMAL WOUND

Many thousands of years ago, all the people of the world believed in the same Way of Life, that of harmony with the Universe. IROQUOIS ADDRESS TO THE WESTERN WORLD, 1976

...the prevailing viewpoint among the peoples of the Earth was that the planet itself was a living creature... (They) *also believed that the Earth was a female being, the actual mother of life.* Carolyn Merchant THE DEATH OF NATURE

Among "primitive people" *...no command-obedience is in force.* Pierre Clastres, SOCIETY AGAINST THE STATE.

The "desire for the absolute...something atavistic from the ancient steppe." Hugh Graham, THE VESTIBULE OF HELL

"Most authority commences as the raw power of the gangster..." Harold Barclay, PEOPLE WITHOUT GOVERNMENT

From around the age of twelve I thought the world was run by lunatics. Nature, though often cruel, seemed governed by some inner logic or possessed a level of harmony rarely found among the humans I encountered. The longer I lived the more convinced I became that humans were basically crazy, and perhaps this was just the way it was, and always had been.

When I studied anthropology at university, I read about so-called primitive societies like those of the San, Australian Aboriginals, Inuit and Andaman Islanders, who were not tormented by the neuroses and psychoses of the "civilised" world. They lived "naturally" - ate when hungry, slept when tired, had no bosses or any other bullying, exploiting, elite, had no hang-ups about the body and its functions and were "permissive" in their child-rearing. The Andaman islanders, for example, had gender equality, very little negative mythology, and did not see the world as inherently evil, unlike the "civilised" people. (1)

Since our Paleolithic ancestors most likely lived in ways similar to the residual "primitives", they too must have been free of these afflictions. Mental illness was not an innate human condition. Of course, there are organic causes for mental disturbance, such as brain damage or chemical imbalances, but these account for only a minority of cases. In the main, mental illness had to have *social* causes. It was how society was arranged that lay at the root of the problem.

The arrangement in the "civilised" world, and virtually a definition of the word civilisation, was hierarchy and power, in other words, authoritarianism. Among the "civilised", certain people, almost always a minority of male adults, had the right to dominate, torment and exploit others. These conditions did not exist among truly "primitive" people. Authoritarian relationships were lacking among these mentally healthy, but technologically backward peoples.

Freud claimed that repression was necessary for the development of civilisation. Repression of the natural and instinctual seemed an understandable basis for technological development. How much work would be done if everyone came and went as they pleased, or decided to stay home and make love instead of going to the salt mines? Why misogyny was also on the list of "necessary" repressions, I could not fully understand, but the degradation and humiliation of women always seemed an important part of the brutal package called civilisation.

In the late 1970's - early 80's, I read the anti-civilisation writings of the "primitivist" thinkers like John Zerzan and Fredy Perlman. They believe civilisation a disastrous mistake and the only solution is returning to the hunting and gathering existence of our ancestors. "Technology" was the problem and we had better get rid of it right away. Some choice! Either live in a cave or be tormented by lunatics! The "primitivists" solution - return to the Paleolithic - required the death of 99% of the population - a ghastly "final solution" to the problem of mental illness! On the other hand, the "civilised" lunatics could turn the world into a cinder. One could easily become a pessimist. I chose not to.

Why? In spite of repression, people still fight for liberty. In spite of the failures, the fact people have tried over and over again to establish sane, natural relations with each other and with nature, made me believe that not all was lost. As Loreena McKinnet sings, "the spirit never dies", and this was evidence for me that authoritarian insanity was not the only possible human condition. Not much to go on, but this was more or less what I thought for the next 20 years.

Back in the Nineteenth Century, Bachofen and Engels, proposed the existence of a matriarchal stage of history preceding our own patriarchal civilisation. The belief in an original "matriarchal" culture had its origins in the 19th Century belief that phylogeny recapitulates ontogeny. This idea was found particularly in early 19th Century German thought, going back to philosophical idealism. (2.)

Matriarchal society gave high status to women, was egalitarian and lacked repression and violence. It supposedly grew out of the discovery of agriculture by women and was replaced by patriarchy when men took over the main economic role with the invention of the plough. There was no archeological evidence for a matriarchal society. Anthropologists wrote about matrilineal societies, (decent through the female side) but matrilineal did not equal matriarchal, even though the status of women was usually higher in a matrilineal society than in a fully patriarchal order. (3.)

Feminists adopted the Bachofen-Engels conception. Some denied the historical existence of matriarchy, but all believed patriarchy had reduced women to chattel and

was also responsible for the violence and madness found in so-called civilisation. The Marxist class model was applied to women, with men in the role of capitalists and women as the proletarians. How patriarchy came about no one knew for sure, but at some point it certainly involved the conquest and suppression of women. Recent archeological discoveries in Turkey (Catyl Huyuk) and the Minoan civilisation of Crete, both of which appeared to be women-friendly societies, gave new life to the Bachofen-Engels thesis. But there was no solid proof of the existence of a sane, non-violent, pro-woman ancient society. Nor was there any proof of a conquest. Discussion remained within the bounds of myth and speculation.

The proof came in the 1980's with the work of the eminent archeologist Dr. Marija Gimbutas. What she found was not matriarchy, but what the late Terrance McKenna called a "partnership" society. (4) According to Gimbutas, a goddess-worshipping partnership civilisation existed in Turkey and Eastern Europe thousands of years before Egypt and Sumeria flourished. And "civilisation" was an apt term to describe these societies, for they were urban, had solidly built houses, practiced trade, used metals and had a form of writing.

While Dr. Gimbutas' concept of a pan-European Goddess Culture has been harshly criticized by other archeologists, they support her evidence that the Neolithic civilisation of Europe was peaceful and egalitarian. Dr. Gimbutas also discovered archeological evidence the partnership civilisations were conquered by "dominator culture" nomad barbarians who imposed their violent, authoritarian, world-hating, misogynist, child-abusing ways upon Europe and all the other places they overran.

This act of conquest and imposition I call the Primal Wound. Partnership cultures, lacking rigid hierarchy and authoritarianism, are mentally healthy. Dominator culture inequality and violence gave rise to the neuroses and psychoses generally associated with civilisation. Dominator culture splits humans from each other and humanity from nature, giving rise to alienation. Thus we are wounded.

THE PALEOLITHIC CONTINUUM

There have been major advances in paleontology and other related sciences in the two decades since Dr. Gimbutas issued her challenge to orthodox archeology. As I write, new discoveries are being made. One change is there is less of a strong division between the Paleolithic and Mesolithic. For the anthropologist, Pierre Clastres, the important changes in the structure of society did not occur during the Neolithic period, since the organisational system was not radically altered then. (5.)

Proto agriculture has been found to be rooted in the Paleolithic, the harvesting of grain of goes back more than 20,000 years. Each year pushes back the origins of true horticulture and agriculture. These same people engaged in rudimentary forms of writing, calendar and star map making. (6.) Forget the crude visions of the cave dwellers! Mesolithic houses 30 m square of wood and plaster, were found in Lepenski Vir, Danube. (7.) A Paleolithic long house 30 meters long was unearthed near the Don River, (8.) and a hectare of cobbled pavements were discovered, indicating the existence of a large village site in the Durgone in France. (9.)

Scholars have come to realise water craft capable of making long distance, or even trans-oceanic voyages, might go back 50,000 years. Some now hypothesize the Americas were initially populated by people following the ice floes in boats. Even when the ocean level was at its lowest during the Ice Ages, it still required a voyage out of sight of land of more than 100 miles to cross over from New Guinea to Australia. And Australia has been inhabited for at least 50,000 years.

Humans have had the same brain structure for 200,000 years. This means Cro-Magnon man is no different from modern man. It doesn't take a genius to realise if you spill some seeds on the ground they will sprout into plants. The taming of dogs seems to go back to the beginning of Homo sapiens and it wouldn't take a cave-dwelling Einstein to figure out that maybe other animals could also be domesticated. Paintings and drawings are symbols, there is no reason other, simpler symbols would not be created as a form of permanent communication.

My suggestion is if early humans did not farm or write, this was not out of stupidity, but rather that they didn't need to. When the time arose, say due to population pressures, or the extinction of large animals, humans simply applied what they already knew. The viewpoint of early humans as slack-jawed idiots is ultimately rooted in 19th Century racism, the cult of Progress and social Darwinism. This ideological view has what develops earliest has to be inferior and 'primitive'. Early humanity was equated with existing non-white 'primitives' who were considered sub-human by these racists.

THE CIVILISATION OF OLD EUROPE

Recent studies show "repeatedly" that agriculture is not a necessary precondition for hierarchical society. Inequality is more "than just an epiphenomenon... {of agriculture}" (10.)
While some horticultural societies are statist the majority are egalitarian, (11.)

By 7000 BC a Neolithic civilisation had arisen in S.E. Europe and within a few hundred years spread to Central Europe. This culture was brought to Europe with the arrival of small, dark-haired Mediterranean peoples from Asia Minor, and was quickly adopted by the aboriginal (Cro-Magnon descended) tall, large-bodied, Paleolithic hunter-gatherer population. (12.) The newcomers occupied areas unused by the hunter-gather aboriginals, such as river valleys and loess plains, and thus conflict was avoided. (13.) The Paleolithic survived in isolated pockets on marginal lands unsuitable for horticulture or pasturage until at least 3000 BC. (14.)

The two peoples interbred and future innovations came through internal social evolution. (15.) Neolithic Old Europe (hereafter OE) had well-built (timber, stone or plaster) houses, villages based upon farming, crafts such as weaving and pottery, and long-distance trade. (Obsidian, marble, flint, sea shell, salt, later on, copper)(16.) Interestingly enough, OE Neolithic women wore tight, ankle-length skirts, lots of jewelry, make-up and ankle-length boots or moccasins. They even curled their hair! (17.) (I saw a drawing of the 16 year old Danish Bog Girl who died about 4000 years ago. I kid you not, she was wearing a mini-skirt and a bare-midriff tee shirt! Some things never change…)

The period, 5500-3500 BC, saw the development of full size towns. One of these in the Ukraine, had 10,000 inhabitants living in twelve concentric rings of houses. (18.) This Chalcolithic (Copper Culture) had two-story, multi-roomed houses, potters wheels, kilns, copper-mining-smelting and sailing ships. (19.) The use of copper by Pre-Cucutenai (Ukraine) and Vinca (Yugoslavia) cultures goes back to 3800 BC. (20.)

There were a number of large two-story structures. These were temples with work shops on the first floor. The temples were communal (perhaps clan-based in the large towns) and were devoted to goddesses. (21.) They were definitely not palaces for kings. (22.) The workshops, both temple-connected and non-temple, were devoted to pottery and weaving. It appears from models found, that these pottery factories were run and operated by women. (23.)

Most interesting of all, by 5300 BC at the latest, the OE culture had a form of script, based in part upon symbols that were already thousands of years old. This was almost 2000 years before the alleged inventors of writing, the Egyptians and Sumerians began making signs on papyrus and clay tablets. OE script remains undeciphered, as we have no idea what language they spoke. In Western Europe, the same sort of culture was responsible for building the megaliths and passage graves.

Towns, public architecture, writing, crafts, metals, trade. There is no doubt that OE fits the definition of civilisation in its material culture. However, most definitions of civilisation include the existence of the state and class division. How does OE fair in that regard?

Villages and towns were built upon the plains, lake, sea and river shores and not upon hilltops. Nor were there any fortifications or defensive perimeters. Many villages were surrounded by shallow ditches or low fences, but these were presumably to keep animals out. (24.) Nor is there any evidence of warfare, such as burnt villages or mass graves of the massacred - until this

civilisation was destroyed by invaders. The thick mounds (tells) left from the settlements show a long period of uninterrupted habitation. (25.) Aside from a few hunting implements, no weapons have been found in graves. (26.) The evidence shows that OE culture was peaceful, a society perhaps of peasant village federations.

The passage graves were communal in nature, each belonging to a village or clan. (27.) There is no evidence of a hierarchy of wealth in these graves. Symbolic items are buried with the dead, not masses of treasure. There is no evidence for a hierarchical structure during the Megalithic period of Old Europe. (28.) Megalithic Europe was marked by monumental architecture, yet no *individual* displays of wealth and power. Equal numbers of males and females were interred. The most honored dead, however, were the women elders. (29.) (Perhaps these were the Clan Mothers and shamans.) The later Chalcolithic culture had large cemeteries, but little inequality in grave goods; beads, pendants and little figurines only. (30.) Even during late pre-historic Europe little inequality existed. (31.)

There does not appear to be economic inequality in the villages either. The largest houses are no more than 4 times greater than the smallest. Most large structures appear to be communal. The way houses were placed in some villages indicates extended families lived together in clusters of houses. House size may then indicate nuclear family size and not differences in wealth. Many Northern OE people also lived in communal long-houses like Native Americans.

Old European spirituality and philosophy evolved directly from the beliefs of the Paleolithic hunters who painted those marvelous cave paintings. The central belief seems to have been that everything is alive and therefore ought to be respected. Paleolithic people saw themselves as part of a larger whole or totality. All creatures, all things, were part of the web of life and every act, no matter how insignificant, had meaning. Life and death were not polar opposites but part of a continuum, since nothing, or at least a part, never dies. The sacred was not demarcated, for existence itself was deemed sacred.

It wasn't enough to understand this intellectually, people had to truly feel it, to experience it directly. Some people have an innate ability to contact the numinous. These men and women were the shamans, who served as guides to the initiates. Everyone could contact this unity through rituals where the ingestion of psychedelic plants was combined with dancing, chanting, drumming and fasting. People did not fear death since they directly experienced continuity.

With partnership cultures no separate evil cosmic force exists. There is creation and there is dissolution. There is dark and light, negative and positive. However, this opposition is not real. Both aspects are needed for such "opposition" to exist. Both sides are ultimately part of one whole existence. There is no sense of alienation or duality. Nature/divine, man/woman are not split from each other. It's not difficult to understand how such the beliefs and practices would sustain mental health. For partnership society, spirituality is not reduced to a rigid doctrine, belief or theology, but is a way of life, integrated into daily existence. There is no repression. If people fast or go without sex, it is for a ritual purpose and not because enjoying food or sex is supposedly sinful.

How do we know what our ancestors believed? Such evidence in pre-literate cultures can only be based upon artifacts coupled with a knowledge and understanding of symbols, mythology and psychology. Ancient Europeans appear to have some sort of goddess or female-based symbolism. Hundreds of female figures and symbols that relate to female or goddess themes have been found in Paleolithic settings. Some of these date far back. The Venus of Laussel, has an ox horn in hand (goddess symbol) and dates from circa 30,000 BC. Very few, if any, male figures and male symbols have been discovered. Combine this evidence with obvious shaman figures in cave paintings and you have to conclude that some sort of female-symbol using, shamanistic belief system was involved. (32.)

THE KURGAN INVADERS FROM THE STEPPES

The Kurgan peoples were the descendants of the Paleolithic hunters who lived on the plains near the Ural Mountains. They became nomadic herders of cattle and horses and were dominated by a warrior caste. Kurgan society was misogynist, hierarchical and warlike. They used weapons unknown in Old Europe such as horse-drawn chariots and bronze swords. Kurgan villages were fortified and on hilltops. Graves were almost exclusively male and an elite was buried in barbaric splendor with wealth and sacrificed slaves and horses. Suttee was practiced, as well as human sacrifice to their Sky God. Women were chattel and polygamy was the norm for the warrior chieftains. (33.)

Europe was invaded in several waves, the first of which about 4000 BC. (34.) temporarily destroyed the OE culture of Hungary and Romania. The second invasion circa 3500 BC, destroyed the Cucuteni Culture of the Ukraine. (The people with the cities of concentric circles) turning the area "into a pale reflection of former times." where "all the settlements... suddenly ceased and disappeared." (35.) The Kurgan influence can be seen during the shift from the Chalcolithic to the Bronze Age a period marked by increasing use of defensive measures, replacement of collective burial by individual burial, and greater inequality of wealth. (36.)

The third wave, 3000 BC, destroyed the whole of Greece except for Crete. The masses of burned villages "speaks for a gruesome take-over." (37.) The Bell Beaker People, who were the European descendants of the Kurgans, then seized the Megalith Cultures of Western Europe around 2100 BC. The first mass burial of war dead in France, circa 2000 BC - evidence of arrow heads - was found at La Vaucause and corresponds with the arrival of Beaker People.(38.) No evidence has been found for the disruption of Provincal culture prior to this. About the same time forts were built in Spain. (39.) After the arrival of the Beaker People in Ireland, around 2000 BC, inequality begins. Few women or children are found in burials and the graves are individual rather than collective. (40.) During the Late Bronze Age, Ireland becomes very violent with the discovery of "formidable arsenals of weapons" and the development of fortified hilltop villages. (41.)

Aside from the isolated OE outposts of Crete, Sardinia and Malta, Europe collapsed into a Dark Age. (42.) Writing, high temperature pottery and casting of copper disappeared. (43.) Indeed, some areas previously of high culture, such as the Ukraine, did not recover for thousands of years from the horrific onslaught of the barbarian invaders.

The destruction of the OE partnership culture and its replacement by a dominator culture did not come about through some sort of social evolution. Nor was its decline a result of the dialectical unfolding of contradictions within that society. It was destroyed through *conquest.* (44.)

In a dominator society, such as that of the Kurgan invaders, the animistic beliefs are pushed to one side and the spiritual is usurped by the Sky God. The Sun God, (or whatever tribal god resides in the sky,) does not give birth to existence, but creates it the way a potter molds a pot. The divine and nature are separated and reality is now split into "higher" and "lower" forms, since the god is superior to his creation. The divine and the spiritual, are above and below lies the lesser world of material existence. Out from this split, slither most of the other dichotomies, which plague humanity until this very day. (45.)

Existence is no longer worth of respect and some things deserve a great deal more respect than others. Hence, men vs. women, young vs. old, humans vs. animals, "noble" humans vs. "common" humans, and humanity vs. nature. It now comes easy to rationalize the domination and exploitation of other people and the environment. Life and death, once seen as a continuum, are now polar opposites and death is feared. Subconsciously aware of their crimes, dominator cultures believe in punishment in the afterlife.

The Sky God is modeled on the tribal war chief or king, a sadist who not only pillages other societies but also inflicts punishment upon his followers. This sky monster can only be placated with human blood. Society is permeated with both real and imaginary fears and thus slips into generalised

psychosis. Evidence for this is found in the prevalence of human sacrifice among dominator cultures.

With the development of a power hierarchy, trust breaks down within society. In many senses society ceases to exist at all, as everyone is at everyone else's throat. Women and children, treated with contempt, naturally hid their true feelings. So too, the slaves and tax-drained peasants. Thus arose those ancient dominator culture clichés, "women are devious", "slaves (or workers) are lazy and dishonest" and "children are innately wicked."

A hierarchy of power means continual struggle within the hierarchy, as those who have power seek to maintain it and those with less power seek to replace those at the top. With power struggles comes back-stabbing hypocrisy and the rise of self-serving "yes men". Other dominator cultures are enemies and wars of revenge and conquest are incessant.

Polygamy meant some men were left without wives. This is especially true of societies practicing female infanticide at a time when women died in great numbers in child-birth. Inheritance through the male side (patrilineality) meant it was important who the father was and female sexuality, out of necessity, became highly restricted. Male sexuality, limited by sexual repression and polygamy flowed into unhealthy channels such as rape, incest, bestiality and pedophilia. In order to combat these perversions, sexual repression increased and vice was practiced hypocritically, in secret. Prostitution was invented and women were now divided between those who are "bad" (and free with their sexuality) and those who were "good", (who keep their knees together and their mouths shut.)

Within such an authoritarian, and therefore divisive and brutal system, violence and the threat of violence became the usual method of social control. Child abuse, wife-beating, the flogging of slaves and tax-avoiding peasants was endemic, indeed, "natural" and divinely sanctioned. The brutality of the masters became replicated among the dominated. The rod was the norm among the once "permissive" peasantry. Each generation crushes the self-esteem of its children, turning them into neurotics and sociopaths, and in this manner the authoritarian madness perpetuates itself through history. *Humanity descends into Hell.*(46.)

The above description of dominator beliefs and their results is only a model. In reality what occurred after the invasions was a good deal more complicated. The invaders merely super-imposed their beliefs upon the conquered and a synthesis developed between the sky god and shamanic-goddess cultures. In Greece, Rome, India, Egypt and Babylon, all areas taken over by dominator culture, goddess cults and mystery societies remained an outlet for the oppressed and those who sought an immanent divinity.

Early dominator societies did not try to stamp out the old beliefs, their system was authoritarian, but not totalitarian. That would come later...

Some of the people invaded by the Kurgans descendants were able to resist. The Kurgans were few in number, forming a tiny overlord class. Whatever the reason, cultures like the Teutons and Celts were highly OE. Rather than despotic kingship, they practiced tribal democracy, land holding was communal, and women had many rights. The Celts were essentially goddess worshipers and the Druids a shamanistic organisation. The period immediately after the Beaker People conquest of Ireland was less violent than thought. Most metal objects found are tools, few are weapons. (47).OE remnants such as the Basques and Baltic peoples (like the Lithuanians) successfully resisted dominator culture until the late Middle Ages. Peasants everywhere tended to pursue their traditional partnership beliefs and practices - when the dominators weren't looking. There was always pressure to retain (or re-introduce) communal land holding, local democracy, matrilineal descent, sexual freedom and the female aspect of the divine. We see this during the Middle Ages with the immense popularity of the Cult of Mary, the so-called witches, Maypole dancing, and the peasant revolts to take back the land stolen from them by the gangster "nobles."

CLIMATE AS A DETERMINING FACTOR

The Paleolithic peoples of Europe who evolved into OE culture lived in areas where a sedentary life style was possible. The coastal plains, lake shores and river valleys were rich in fish, game and edible wild plants. A sedentary lifestyle tends to favour women and children and to allow for the development a host of peaceful technologies. However, during the Magdelanean Period, the climate became wet and the hoofed animals fled for the steppes of Asia with many hunters following them. (48.) These Paleolithic hunters of the Steppes, whose descendants became the Kurgan invaders, had a much more limited environment, one which induced nomadism.

Neolithic OE culture arose during another, later warm, damp period. About the same time, the melt water of the remaining Ice Age glaciers inundated the coastal plains. The resulting population movement away from the coasts put pressure on the hunting/gathering economy and possibly led to the development of agriculture. The climate remained warm throughout the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods of Old Europe (7000-3000 BC) (49.) Thus, agriculture expanded north and west. (50.)

Under ideal climatic conditions, pastoral peoples keep to the plains. But when adverse conditions occur, herders will, out of necessity, leave their environmental niche and invade the river valleys. It is of interest that the climate became progressively warmer and drier around the same period (circa 3000 BC) the Kurgan people invaded Old Europe. (51.) According to The American Geographical Union, "The transition to today's arid climate was not gradual, but occurred in two specific episodes. The first, which was less severe, occurred between 6,700 and 5,500 years ago. The second, which was brutal, lasted from 4,000 to 3,600 years ago. Summer temperatures increased sharply, and precipitation decreased, according to carbon-14 dating. This event devastated ancient civilisations and their socio-economic systems." 52. It seems the warming conditions that made for the spread north and west of OE civilisation also lead to its destruction. The same climatic changes created desertification in Asia, driving the herders west to conquer the agriculturalists.

In the book, SAHARASIA, Dr. James DeMeo examines in great detail these same climatic changes and their negative effects. Famine and conflict over scarce resources due to rapid desertification of the Sahara and Central Asia created a psychological-cultural shock engendering mass psychosis among the survivors. 53. This suffering gave rise to a violent and extremely negative world-view, the ideological roots of patriarchal-authoritarian culture. Important aspects of this new culture included the dictatorial warrior-king, a cruel, demanding sky god, a class of slaves and a subordinate role for women and children. These are, of course, the characteristics of the Kurgan invaders.

DeMeo also examines other cultures and their relationship to dersertification. He finds a remarkable correlation between the rapid spread of deserts and authoritarianism. Where areas become desert, groups emerge which conquer other peoples, imposing a State and a brutal, sacrificial religion on them. Deserts in existence *prior* to human habitation, such as the Australian and the Kalahari, did not have this negative effect on the humans that migrated there. (The Kung of the Kalahari and the Australian Aboriginals are not noted for either authoritarianism or sexual repression) This process only occurs when an *existing* population is subjected to the shock of desertification.

De Meo also undertakes a massive, exhausting and first time, comparison of hundreds of cultures for their degree of sexual and gender repression, absence or presence of war, violent religious beliefs, polygamy, genital mutilation, sutee and human sacrifice.

CHILDHOOD IN TWO CULTURES

Dominator culture sees the world as a threat and prepares its children for this frightening world by bringing them up with restrictions and cruelty, to "toughen them up." Partnership culture, on the other hand, sees the world as largely benevolent - if treated with respect. Children are brought up in freedom and with kindness.

Sexual initiation usually occurs among young teenagers. This may happen naturally as an outgrowth of childhood sex-games,

which in their society are not proscribed. In partnership societies a father or mother may ask an older boy or girl to initiate their child. Sexual congress with a priestess or priest as with Tantric Yoga and the rites of Sumerian temples is another method.

Dominator society, however, restricts the sexuality of the young. This is most severe with young women. Among upper class young men heterosexual initiation takes the form of seduction and rape of lower class girls. First sexual experiences are often homosexual, as sexual apartheid and hyper-masculinity lead to a climate of misogynist homosexuality. Battlefield homosexual rape is sometimes practiced as with the Yamomani, as a means to degrade the enemy (Implying they are like women.) Seduction or rape of young boys becomes a popular pastime among adult males.

Partnership societies generally don't stigmatize homosexuality. Effeminate males in Native American society dressed as women and married other men. There were female war chiefs who had wives. It is dominator society that makes homosexuality an issue, and as we have seen, in true psychopathic fashion, actively promotes it. In many dominator cultures only the passive role is considered homosexual, and therefore condemned, since the male is acting in a supposed feminine role. Finally, with the Hebrews, homosexuality, both active and passive, was condemned and through the Bible, homophobia passed into Christian culture.

THE PERPETUAL CRISIS OF DOMINATOR SOCIETY

Dominator society cannot help but be in a perpetual state of crisis because it is *born in crime.* Its original sin is the stripping of unity from the world and humankind - the evil of dualism. As a social system, it is based upon a protection racket imposed upon a foreign peasantry. "We will protect you from those other guys, if you give us half your crop. If you don't give us half your crop, we'll take all of it and rape your wife to boot." At any sign of weakness on the part of the authorities, the peasants resist taxation and the gangster-class is starved of wealth. Slaves drag their feet at work, and given an opportunity, will run away. Women and children are tempted to revenge themselves upon their tormentors. (Hence the frequent stories of parricide, poisonings, and treason in dominator society.)

Hierarchy creates an impossible situation for those at the top, automatically producing bureaucracy, and therefore corruption and inefficiency. The rulers are perpetually starved for information and always act in ignorance. The sort of people attracted to power are yes men, who tell their bosses what they want to hear, rather than the truth. Typically, the errors of the elite are blamed on their subordinates which causes resentment in the lower levels of the human dog-pile. Such power struggles are both divisive and diverting. The power lust of weak psychopathic egos breeds empire. Empire in turn leads to imperial over-extension and a weakening of the home base. Empire gives rise to the parasitic megalopolis, a breeding ground for epidemic disease and mass producer of irreparable environmental damage.

In an attempt to minimise conflict and keep power concentrated, parasite-classes make top-level positions hereditary. Kings, once elected by a Council of Elders, eventually become hereditary despots. After a couple of generations, inbreeding results in a weakening of the stock. The insane and the feeble-minded take command. The organisation breaks down and the system slides into decadence. Outside dominator forces, seeing a chance for booty, invade. Or, the lower ranks of the hierarchy revolt and seize power. Either way, after a period of chaos, a new dynasty emerges and the whole cycle of misery begins anew. Out of an internal dynamic, dominator society is in a state of perpetual insecurity and the cyclical pattern of the rise and fall of civilisations is the result. Contemporary pseudo-democracy where one chooses one's dictators every four or five years isn't much different. *The dominator system is not a society, so much as a human meat grinder with the worst psychopaths turning the handle.*

Larry Gambone

NOTES

1. Campbell, Joseph, PRIMITIVE MYTHOLOGY, Vol. 1 p. 367
2. email discussion with Ed D'Angelo
3. Mary Douglas Interview. Her experience with matrilineal societies in Africa was that while the society as a whole was egalitarian, the women had no real power. One society, the Lele were egalitarian to an extreme but were also self-tormented by fears of sorcery. From ORIGINAL MINDS by Eleanor Wachtel, Harpers 2003, pp 331-2
4. Just to get one straw man out of the way, a partnership society does not mean a perfect anarcha-communist utopia, nor any kind of primordial Eden. It is however, a society without a state and classes and is thus very egalitarian, especially when compared to dominator societies.
5. Barclay Harold, People Without Government, Kahn and Avril, 1990, p.142
6. Rudgley, Richard, Lost Civilisations Of the Stone Age, Random House 1999 pps.72,92
7. Tringham, Ruth, Hunters, Fishers, Farmers Of Eastern Europe, 6000-3000 BC Hutchinson 1971, p. 54
8. Hadingham, Evan, Secrets Of The Ice Age, Heineman, 1979 p.157
9. ibid, p. 159
10. Feinman, G.M., Price D., Foundations of Social Inequality, Plenum 1995, p. 251
11. Barclay, p. 56
12. Tringham, p. 71
13. ibid, pps 68, 71
14. Hadingham, p. 284
15. Tringham, pps., 73, 99, 104
16. Gimbutas, p.48
17. ibid, Pps.273, 279
18. Gimbutas P.105
19. ibid, Pps. 52, 64
20. Tringham, 197
21. Campbell, 396
22. Gimbutas P. 94
23. ibid, Pps. 107, 123
24. Tringham, 162
25. ibid, 90
26. Gimbutas, Pps. 105, 352, Tringham, 87, 124
27. Gimbutas, 219
28. ibid, 339
29. ibid, 388-89
30. Tringham, 154
31. Feinman, 249
32. Campbell, 375, 376
33. Gimbutas, 352, 361 It should be pointed out that not all nomadic herding cultures are authoritarian, as for example the cattle herders of East Africa
34. Tringham, 108
35. Gimbutas, 366, Tringham, 205
36. Feinman, 244
37. Gimbutas, 389
38. Phillips, 130
39. ibid, 141
40. Flanagan, 111
41. ibid, 157, 161
42. Phillips, 146
43. Tringham, 206
44. Gimbutas, 396
45. Political dualism, which leads to persecution and violence is rooted in religious dualism. See Graham 79
46. According to Riane Eisler, humanity has taken a 5000 year detour from partnership society, Merchant, 35
47. Flanagan, 122
48. Campbell, 377
49. Tringham, 31
50. ibid, 73
51. ibid, 205
52. American Geographical Union Press release July 7 1999
53. Saharasia ought to be read by everyone interested in then origins of authoritarianism and mental illness. It is available for $34.00 US from Natural Energy Works, Box 1148, Ashland OR 97520 USA

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